



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Climate Action, Environment and Emergency Services SPC 18th October 2021, Virtual Meeting, 2.30pm

Attendees Councillors: - Cllr Eugene Cassidy (Chairperson) attended in person, Cllr Tom Behan, Cllr Joe Bonner, Cllr Ronan Moore, Cllr Gillian Toole, Cllr Sharon Tolan (as mover of Motion at Item 2)

Apologies:

Attendees Sectoral Representatives: - None

Officials: Dara McGowan, Larry Whelan, Francis Hughes, Bernadine Carry, Caroline Corrigan & Emmet Conboy.

Item	Discussion / Action
1.	<p>Confirmation of Minutes of the Climate Action, Environment and Emergency Services & Planning, Economic Development, Enterprise and European Affairs Joint Strategic Policy Committee meeting held on the 2nd July 2021.</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting were adopted on the proposal of Cllr Gillian Toole and seconded by Cllr Tom Behan</p>
2.	<p>To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr Sharon Tolan for the October Full Council Agenda but referred to the Climate Action, Environment and Emergency Services SPC</p> <p><i>“In light of the overwhelming success of car free beaches in Meath, from both a public and an environmental perspective, I call on Meath County Council to make this ban of vehicles from the beaches permanent, with the exception of the disability and age friendly parking provision already made.”</i></p> <p>Larry Whelan gave a short presentation setting out the background to the current prohibition of vehicles from the beaches apart from the special provision made for parking by the Disabled and Older people at the entrance area to Bettystown Beach. The presentation highlighted the various developments arising with regard to identifying and delivery of alternative parking locations in the general area including arrangements at Colaiste Na hInse , the new Tara Spine Road Car Park, Funtasia commercial car park, and revisions to layouts at Laytown car-park.</p> <p>The presentation also highlighted other actions which served to ensure that the prohibition and alternative parking ran efficiently and effectively including the facilitation of trading on the beach, access for a local business, ease of access via Brookville Lane and Warden supervision of the disabled & age friendly area.</p>



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	<p>The Members acknowledged the efforts made to put in place the alternative parking arrangements which facilitates a continuation of the prohibition of parking on the beach, an arrangement they suggested has found favour with a majority of beach users. Points made in the discussion that followed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The additional spaces now available has addressed some previous concerns about the impact on local residents• No parking on the beaches has made a huge difference to people's enjoyment of the facilities and when footfall has been very high.• Impact for local businesses has been very positive• Garda enforcement in respect of parking on double yellow lines has led to much more orderly parking.• The prohibition of parking should continue all beaches and meeting objectives of both the County Development Plan and the Beach Management Plan• Provision being made to trial a Hidden Disability scheme within the Disabled / Age Friendly area. <p><i>The Members in supporting the motion recommended that it be placed before the full Council at the November Meeting.</i></p>
3.	<p>To receive a report on Educational Environmental activities</p> <p>Bernadine Carry made a presentation on various environmental initiatives which the Council are promoting including Schools programmes, the Green Kilometre scheme and associated saplings distribution, litter and dog fouling campaigns, bonfire safety, food waste digester trials.</p> <p>The Members acknowledged the work being undertaken in this area and noted projects being planned for 2022.</p>
4.	<p>To receive a report on the publication of the Draft River Basin Management Plan</p> <p>Larry Whelan made a presentation in respect of the publication of the draft RBMP and highlighted the extensive period of public consultation until the end of March 2022. He confirmed that LAWPRO are currently developing a template presentation to be used by Local Authorities when briefing elected members at MD, SPC or full Council level in the coming months. The Members noted the position.</p>
5.	<p>To receive an update on Local, Regional and National Climate Action Activities.</p> <p>Caroline Corrigan made a presentation setting out the position in respect of various initiatives and projects which the Council are pursuing at local, regional and national level and in collaboration with other stakeholders in many cases.</p>



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	<p>The presentation also referred to various legislative provisions including the recent enactment of the Climate Change Act and the resulting obligations placed on Local Authorities and other public bodies to prepare Climate Action Plans incorporating both Adaptation and Mitigation measures within a prescribed timeframe.</p> <p>The Members welcomed the presentation and commented on the very significant workload which the Climate Action team are involved in.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>To consider a Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr Tom Behan.</p> <p>Calling on Meath County Council to enter into an agreement with the relevant stake holders to set about a programme of replanting marram grass along the dunes area in Coastal Meath that would set about to replenish the area that has been drastically eroded over the past number of months owing to increased footfall and coastal erosion".</p> <p>Response Issued: The Council is prepared to work with the various stakeholders in implementing various measures which serve to protect and enhance the dunes system along our coastline and including with private landowners as some of the dunes are in private ownership.</p> <p>The Council are about to submit an application to the OPW for funding to engage Consultants to undertake a coastal flooding and erosion risk management study -following discussions with the OPW It is clear that nature based solutions particularly at sensitive Natural Ecosystems such as our Dunes systems are now being considered for funding and it is timely that we will be providing for same in the funding application.</p> <p>It is also pointed out that some years back An Taisce published a document titled "A Practical Guide to Marram Grass Planting: A Natural Coastal Defence" and have provided advices and guidance's to various groups involved in Dune rehabilitation works – it is understood that groups along the Meath coastline have availed of such guidance and advices.</p> <p>There may also be some funding options for groups engaged in such works including the Community Environment Action Fund (formerly known as Local Agenda 21)</p> <p>Cllr Behan welcomed the response and looks forward to the Council working with the local Tidy Towns Committee and Laytown/Bettystown Golf Club</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>To consider a Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr Tom Behan</p> <p><i>"To call on Meath County Council in conjunction with the environmental department to erect signage at Mornington Beach alerting the public to the dangers around this area particularly with sea swimming and strong currents at this location."</i></p>



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	Response: Larry Whelan confirmed that some signage was on order – Cllr Behan welcomed this.
8.	To receive a copy of correspondences from Fermanagh & Omagh District Council <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Protection of Native Honeybees – Noted by the Members who agreed the matter should be referred to the relevant Minister.2. Rights of Nature - the contents were noted by the Members and it was agreed to issue a response to the Chief Executive signaling that the SPC note the request and will review their progress in the future.
9.	AOB – None

Recommendation to the Corporate Policy Group (CPG)

Agenda Item no. 2 Refers: To approve Motion as outlined and refer to the November Full Council meeting for adoption.