



To: Cathaoirleach and Each Member of Kilkenny County Council

Re: Hedge Cutting Policy Document

Date: 12th January 2021

A Chara

Between the 1st March and 31st August each year it is an offence under Section 40 (1)(a) of the **Wildlife Act 1976 as amended by the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Heritage Act 2018** to cut, grub, burn or otherwise destroy any vegetation growing on any land not then cultivated or growing in any hedge or ditch. Exceptions exist in respect of certain works relating to agriculture, fisheries development works, forestry work, public safety, road and other construction works and noxious weeds.

As a group, SPC 2 Transportation Policy/ Mobility and Water Services chaired by Cllr Matt Doran reviewed and prepared a Policy on Hedge Cutting for the County in line with national guidelines. Kilkenny County Council had been following the national guidelines on managing roadside hedge rows but had no County policy in place.

Hedge Cutting is not the responsibility of Local Authorities. However, Local Authorities have powers under Section 70 of the 1993 Roads Act to issue Notices and/or take immediate action if deemed necessary.

This document covers both the challenges and the benefits of maintaining hedge rows and the procedures for ensuring proper maintenance is in place. It is a useful reference document for the Elected Members/the public and the staff involved in the management of roadside hedgerows.

In conclusion, I recommend adoption of the Hedge Cutting Policy in line with the details set out in this memo to Elected Members.

Tim Butler
Director of Services