

**Minute of Strategic Policy Committee 5
Environmental Protection, Water Services & Energy
held on Thursday, 14th April, 2016 at 3pm in Council Chamber**

In the Chair: Cllr. Maurice Shortall

In Attendance: Cllr. John Brennan, Cllr Breda Gardner, Cllr. Ger Frisby, Cllr. Pat Dunphy, Mr. James Murphy

Other Councillors present: Cllr. Tomás Breathnach, Cllr. David Fitzgerald, Cllr. Seán Tyrrell, Cllr. Patrick McKee, Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick

Also Present: Ms. Mary Mulholland, Director of Service
Ms. Bernadette Moloney, Environmental Awareness Officer
Mr. Michael Nugent, Enforcement Officer
Ms. Pauline McDonagh, SRWMO

Apologies: Ms. Sadhbh O'Neill, Cllr Joe Malone, Mr. Owen Sweeney

Item 1 **Minute of SPC5 Meeting held on the 11th February, 2016**
Proposed by Cllr. Gardner seconded by Cllr. Brennan and agreed:- “that the minute of SPC5 held on the 11th February, 2016, a copy of which was circulated to each member with the agenda, is hereby adopted”.

Item 2 **Information on the Amenity Grants (Graveyards)**
The scheme will be advertised as soon as possible. The types of work eligible include upkeep, maintenance, historical studies etc. It is not necessarily aimed at one of the active Council graveyards. Any community group will be eligible.
Discussion took place on requirement for insurance for community groups, status of H&S surveys of active graveyards and closing date for grant scheme. Contributions from Cllrs. Gardner, McKee, Breathnach and Brennan.

Item 3 **Pay By Weight – Information Session**
A pay by weight mechanism for household refuse is being introduced nationwide in July. Ms. M. Mulholland made a presentation outlining how the scheme will operate and its impact on householders.

Ms P. McDonagh of the Southern Region Waste Office then made a presentation on the Regional Awareness Campaign Schedule.

A full discussion on the issues then took place.

Concerns were raised with regard to the possibility of increased illegal dumping should householders' costs rise, and the impact of this on cash-strapped families. It was noted that 47% of households in Kilkenny do not have a kerbside collection service. This needs further examination to assess the reason why. Increased costs could make the scheme unattractive for householders and drive more people out of the kerbside system. In many rural areas in particular, there is little competition between waste collectors. Ireland should introduce a bottle / container deposit and return scheme, similar to that operating in other EU countries. Some Councillors queried the wheelie bin microchip. The intention of the system is to educate householders to reduce the amount of waste they produce. There has been no engagement with customers yet by the waste collectors. Concern was also expressed that waste might accumulate in back yards. A substantial awareness campaign will be required to ensure householders know their obligations. The standing charge was queried and that it might be a disincentive to using the service. Any additional cost to householders could cause public disquiet. The Council should be allowed to name and shame illegal dumpers. There is a connection between unregulated waste collectors and incidents of large scale dumping. Further investigation is required in areas where there is no kerbside collection. An extension of kerbside by waste collectors may be required to combat this. Pay to use units will be retrofitted to allow for pay by weight and customer recording. At recycling centres including Dunmore, pay by weight will only be required on residual waste and not recycling. Concerns were expressed that the timeline for introduction was too short and wasn't practical. People will need time to get used to the new setup. There should be incentives for the producers and manufacturers to reduce amount of packaging etc. so it is not all on the householder. Concerns expressed that householders in rural areas may end up paying higher charges. The Environment Section should lobby for more staff to address some of the awareness and enforcement issues.

Contributions from Cllrs. Shortall, Gardner, McKee, Breathnach, Tyrrell, Fitzpatrick and Brennan.

Item 4 AOB

Cllsr. Dunphy and Breathnach raised the issue of leakage on the water supply network in Mooncoin. Ms. Mulholland agreed to raise the issue with Irish Water.

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Thursday 8th September, 2016 at 3:00pm.