**Minutes of Strategic Policy Committee 4**

**Environmental Protection, Climate Action & Energy**

**2nd May 2024**

**Council Chamber/Hybrid**

**In the Chair:** Cllr. Joe Lyons

**In Attendance:** Cllr Deirdre Cullen, Cllr. Maria Dollard, Cllr Denis Hynes, Cllr David Fitzgerald, Ms. Mary Rice, Mr. James Murphy,

**Also Present:** Mr. Sean McKeown, Director of Service; Mr. Michael Arthurs, Senior Executive Officer, Ms Anne Maria Walsh, Senior Executive Officer, Ms. Catherine Millea

Apologies: Cllr. Mary Hilda Cavanagh, Mr. Tim Butler

**Item 1 Declaration of interests**

None reported.

**Item 2 Confirmation of Minutes**

Proposed by Cllr Maria Dollard seconded by Ms Mary Rice and agreed: *“the minutes of SPC4 meeting held on the 7th February 2024, are hereby adopted,”*.

**Item 3Matters Arising**

Ms Mary Rice requested that the Agenda and any other correspondence in relation to the meeting be sent out two weeks before the date of the next meeting.

**Item 4 Progress Report by Director of Services**

Sean McKeown presented the Director’s Report. This Report was sent out to all Committee

Members prior to the meeting.

Chairman Joe Lyons enquired about the number of buildings in Council ownership.

Sean McKeown replied that the Council’s housing stock is separate to Council buildings.

Cllr Maria Dollard made enquiries about the 3 bin system. She stated that some people do not

need 3 bins. She also enquired about illegal waste collectors and if the Council has had any

success in identifying these people.

Cllr Joe Lyons asked if the environment staff can sit down with the Service Providers and try and

establish who are the people that do not use bins.

Sean McKeown advised the meeting that there are approximately 35,000 households in the county. He also advised that letters had recently gone out to a number of estates in the city and county asking people to complete an online questionnaire declaring what they do with their waste. Mr. McKeown stated there is a €75 Fixed Payment Notice penalty for failing to complete the questionnaire. He also stated that the onus is on the householder to prove what they do with their waste.

Mr. McKeown also advised that there has been 1 successful prosecution against an illegal Service Provider.

Michael Arthurs advised the meeting that Council staff will be engaging with legal Service Providers in the coming weeks.

James Murphy stated that the IFA are grateful for the delay in farm inspections due to the inclement weather. He also requested that Farm Inspectors be conscious of possible volatile situations due to the stress currently on farmers.

Sean McKeown advised that 81 Farm Inspections were carried out in 2022 and that only 3 were cross reported. He stated that farmers respond positively to advice given by the Inspectors.

James Murphy responded by stating that farmers are continually taking steps to improve.

Cllr Maria Dollard expressed concern over the boy-racers in Woodies car park. She enquired if this noise is covered under Kilkenny County Council’s Noise Action Plan.

Sean McKeown advised that it is the volume of road traffic on regional roads that comes under the NAP. He also advised that the issue of the boy-racers should be reported to the Gardai as an anti-social activity.

**Item 5 Bye Laws for St. Kieran’s Cemetery**

Ms Anne Maria Walsh gave an outline of the new draft Bye-laws for St Kieran’s Cemetery. She advised that the Bye Laws would replace the Rules & Regulations 1932, would go to public Consultation, that there would be a scale of charges and that it is a Reserved function.

Cllr David Fitzgerald enquired about regulations in relation to the erection of monuments and about general conduct in a graveyard.

Anne Maria Walsh advised that the Bye Laws will outline the size for monuments and there is also a section on anti social behaviour. She also advised that the Bye Laws will go on public display and the public will have an opportunity to submit any comments.

Cllr Joe Lyons enquired if these new Bye Laws would apply to other graveyards.

AM Walsh advised that they will only apply to St. Kieran’s Cemetery and the Columbarium Wall.

Sean McKeown also advised that a review of the other active graveyards in the county is currently underway and it is hoped a have a draft for the next SPC 4 meeting.

Cllr Maria Dollard raised concern over the possible removal of a number of trees during the construction of the Loughmacask link road at Talbots Inch linking up to the new CBS school. She stated that these trees which are 22 years old will be removed for the widening of the road. She also stated that we need to be looking after what we have and that we need to be thinking ahead.

Sean McKeown stated that SPC 4 does not have specific control over this issue. He also stated that he was aware of an undertaking that was made at the planning stage to keep as many trees as possible. He said that as a Local Authority we are planting thousands of trees annually and that as many trees as possible will be saved. He also stated that any trees removed will be replaced.

Mary Rice voiced her concern over a tree that was removed at the site of the new library. She stated that biodiversity needs to be considered first and that trees should only be removed when there is a serious issue.

Sean McKeown responded that trees are only removed when absolutely necessary. He also advised that Bernadette Moloney is currently drafting a Bio-diversity Plan.

Cllr Maria Dollard stated “the best tree is the one that is already there”

**Item 6 Any other business**

The Chairman Cllr Joe Lyons thanked everyone for their contributions over the term and wished everyone the best of luck in the upcoming local elections.

Sean McKeown thanked the Chair and all previous Chair’s. He also wished all candidates the best of luck in the local elections.