

**MINUTE OF THE PLANNING DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE  
HELD ON THE 11<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2019, AT COUNTY BUILDINGS, BUILDINGS, COMMENCING AT  
11.00 A.M.**

**PRESENT:** Cllr. Sylvester Bourke, Chairman  
Ms. Joan Campbell  
Mr. Conor McCarthy, Arklow Chamber of Commerce  
Mr. Jim Woods, CIF  
Cllr. Shay Cullen  
Cllr. Stephen Matthews

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr. Sean Quirke, Director of Services  
Ms. Breege Kilkenny  
Ms. Sorcha Walsh, Senior Planner  
Ms. Karina Fitzgerald, Senior Executive Planner  
Ms. Siobhan O'Brien, Administrative Officer  
Ms. Theresa O'Brien, Senior Executive Officer  
Mr. Michael McNamara, Administrative Officer  
Mr. Marc Devereux, Senior Engineer  
Mr. Ian Davis, Manager, Pure Project

**APOLOGIES:** Cllr. Patsy Glennon  
Cllr. Edward Timmins  
Mr. Fergal Keogh, Senior Engineer

**Item 1: Introductions of the Members of the SPC**

The Chairman introduced and welcomed the Members of the SPC. He stated that this SPC was the Planning SPC as well as the Environmental SPC. The Chairman confirmed that he was sharing the Chairman position with Cllr. Edward Timmins. Cllr. Timmins would be taking over the position of Chairman in 2 years time.

**Item 2: Present the Strategic Policy Committee Scheme**

Ms. T. O'Brien went through the Scheme, adopted by Members of Wicklow County Council on the 2<sup>nd</sup> September, 2019, which had been circulated to the Members.

**Item 4: To receive a presentation on PURE (Protecting Uplands & Rural Environments)**

Mr. I. Davis, Manager, PURE Project gave a detailed presentation to the Members. Pure was launched in 2006 to deal with illegal dumping. The Project has been extended numerous times since 2006 and is due to finish in December 2019. A submission has been made to the Department to seek funding to extend the Scheme for a further period of ten years. The Project is made up of multi Agencies with Wicklow County Council being the lead partner. The Project has been successful in cleaning up over 11,000 illegal dumping sites with 3,400 tonnes having been removed which equates to 400,000 bin bags. Mr. Davis highlighted the fact that the Pure Project was working and the benefits were being seen in the County. In 2007 360 tonnes of waste was removed which was reduced by 45% in 2017. In 2008, 440 tonnes were removed as compared with only 160 tonnes in 2018, which is a reduction of 65%.

Mr. Davis outlined the database which he had set up in order to record the exact location and make up of illegal dumping sites.

Media awareness and attention was seen as a vital part of the Project. Mr. Davis explained some of the initiatives which had been undertaken by the Project:

- Working with primary school students
- Pure animation where the students create short movies
- Pure music
- Pure theatre
- Pure wisdom where the young children speak of what they understand about illegal dumping
- Multi media exhibitions
- Website
- You Tube Channel
- Twitter
- Facebook
- Viral videos
- Gala evening where 22 groups received recognition and a cheque for €250 which went back into the Community.
- Pure Mile Calendar which would be launched soon.

3 – 4 people have been prosecuted for illegal dumping in the County and these prosecutions have also been reported on in the media to highlight the fact that the Pure Project are prosecuting the offenders.

Pure Mile – this has been a very successful project. In 2010, when the project was set up, 6 miles were included, in 2019; 550 miles of roads, mountains, etc are included. They have 2500 volunteers who are imperative to making the project a success.

A copy of the Project Evaluation and Submission of Extension 2019 document, which had been forwarded to the Department to seek approval for an extension of 10 years, was circulated to the Members.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Davis for his presentation and hoped that the extension for a further period of ten years would be extended.

On the suggestion of Ms. J. Campbell, it was agreed that the SPC would write to the Department supporting the Project's application for a further extension.

Mr. S. Quirke stated that some of the waste which ended up in the Wicklow Uplands originated from North Dublin. Mr. Quirke stated that the Local Authority's litter wardens were very proactive in dealing with illegal dumping. He referred to one case whereby someone had posted on social media that they were looking for a waste collector. A man arrived, put the waste into the car, the Gardai were called, the man had his car seized as there was no tax or insurance on the car.

Following a query from Cllr. S. Mathews, Mr. I. Davis stated that the Project covered all of County Wicklow.

Mr. C. McCarthy referred to the provision of civic amenity sites and that the only place householders had to dispose of waste, which would not fit into the wheelie bins, was in Carrickmines. He stated that a site should be available in County Wicklow. Cllr. S. Cullen stated that people could bring their waste to Fassaroe. Cllr. S. Mathews stated that Greenstar had advertised their prices for the

disposal of waste at their facilities. It was however pointed out that a lot of the waste found dumped illegally could actually be recycled.

Members of the public were being made aware that waste collectors needed a waste collection permit.

Ms. J. Campbell queried whether tyres could be recycled. Mr. I. Davis responded by saying that new Tyre Legislation had recently come into force. The tyres are brought to Repak who dispose of the tyres in a responsible manner.

The Chairman queried whether the Pure Project had been nominated for any Award such as the Local Government Award. Mr. Davis confirmed that he wasn't aware of any nominations which the Chairman stated should be considered.

Cllr. S. Cullen congratulated Mr. I. Davis for his work to date and felt that the Project would not have been as successful if it wasn't for Mr. Davis' input.

#### **Item 4 Forward Planning Update**

Mr. S. Quirke stated that the County Development Plan would be one of the key pieces of policy that the Members of the SPC would be dealing with.

Ms. S. Walsh gave an update in relation to the County Development Plan. The current Development Plan was adopted in 2016 and lasts for six years. In year four, the Planning Authority is obliged to start the review of the Plan and to have it adopted within 2 years. A National Planning Framework and Regional Plan have recently been adopted which resulted in Wicklow County Council, within six months of the date of the adoption of the Regional Plan to either review or vary the Wicklow County Development Plan. Following discussion it was agreed that Wicklow County Council would review the Plan rather than vary it. An advertisement issued on Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> November, 2019, stating that the Local Authority was commencing the review of the County Development Plan and stating that submissions on members of the public's opinions on planning in County Wicklow can be received up to the 10<sup>th</sup> January 2020. Extra time was given for receipt of submissions as the period went over the Christmas period.

An Issues Booklet has been produced and is available online, at Wicklow County Council Offices, Municipal District Offices and at libraries. Posters have also been produced which are available in Wicklow County Council Offices and the Municipal District Offices.

Public meetings are being held in the next 3 weeks around the County in Greystones, Baltinglass, Bray, Wicklow, Arklow, Blessington and Tinahely. These are informal meetings where members of the public can drop in and discuss issues with the Planners. Community Groups / Interest Groups are being invited to one on one meetings with the Planners.

Ms. S. Walsh circulated a timeframe for the preparation and completion of the County Development Plan 2021 – 2027. Members of the Council would not get a proposed draft for their consideration under Summer 2020.

Cllr. S. Mathews queried if the process could be streamlined as much as possible and if Members could opt in for hard copies and that all reports, etc. would be available in soft copy format. He felt that this recommendation should be put forward to the full Members of the Council.

Mr. S. Quirke confirmed that people are being put in the direction of the website and that it is much easier to collate the information if it is received in soft copy.

Previously Ms. Walsh confirmed that the Council had issued each of the Members with a memory stick with the initial documents on it but when the memory stick was to be updated with more reports, the memory sticks had been lost or misplaced. She confirmed that it can be quite costly to print copies of reports if such printing was done in 'drips and drabs'. She stated that all documents are available online and no passwords were required to view same. A number of copies of the 2016 County Development Plan were printed, however only one copy has been sold to a member of the public. It was felt that members of the public didn't want it in hard format.

Ms. Walsh confirmed that the National Planning Framework and Regional Plan had set out clear policies and objectives which have to be reflected in the County Development Plan. The population target for the County has been set by the National Planning Framework, details of which have been stated in the Background Issues Paper.

Following a query, Ms. Walsh referred to the Local Area Plans and stated that these were under the County Development Plan. The Plans for towns with a population of under 5,000 in size or target population of under 5,000, would be within the County Development Plan, these towns included Aughrim, Avoca, Donard. The only exception to this was Rathdrum as this area traditionally had its own Plan. However, consideration was being given to including Rathdrum within the Plan.

Following the review of the County Development Plan work will commence on the review of the Local Area Plans for the larger areas such as Bray, Greystones (Delgany and Kilcoole), Wicklow & Rathnew, Arklow, Newtownmountkennedy and Blessington.

Ms. Walsh confirmed that submissions regarding the zoning of land could not be accepted at this stage of the process and such submissions would be declared invalid. Submissions could only be accepted on the strategic planning of the County at this stage.

Ms. S. Walsh stated that population targets were given to the Planning Authority and it will be during the review of the County Development Plan that targets will be set. However, the Planning Authority has been advised that the growth of Bray can come out of a different allocation as long as it is agreed with the Regional Assembly and other Councils in the area. If this happens the allocation that is given to County Wicklow would be more generous. If Bray is to come out of Wicklow's targets the figures would have to be reduced which would have the effect that less land may be zoned.

Ms. Walsh stated that consideration had to be given to the overall sustainability and services availability within the town when projecting growth figures.

Ms. J. Campbell referred to the amount of people travelling the N.11 on a daily basis to work in Dublin. She stated that houses should follow jobs and that the houses should be affordable. Developers are stating that they can't make money on building houses.

Mr. J. Woods stated that, in his experience, no one wants houses around them. He stated the CIF didn't mind where the houses were built but just wanted demand to be increased.

Cllr. S. Mathews referred to the Office of the Planning Regulator and it was confirmed that the Regulator was not in place during the review of the previous Plan. He felt that the Regulator would scrutinise the plans in greater detail than the Minister so he stated that the policies and objectives

set out in the Regional Plan and National Planning Framework would have to be reflected in the County Development Plan.

Mr. S. Quirke stated that the Planning Authority had met with the Planning Regulator and advised him that Wicklow County Council were preparing to commence the review of the County Development Plan.

**Item 6: To Decide on Work Programme for the SPC for Submission to the Corporate Policy Group**

Ms. T. O'Brien confirmed that the County Development Plan is one of the main items that the SPC Members were going to consider.

Mr. S. Quirke suggested that Members consider the matter and that the matter would be put onto the next Agenda of the SPC.

The Chairman referred to a 'hobby horse' which he would like to have included on the Agenda. This initiative was similar to a pilot scheme currently taking place in Supervalu in Monaghan whereby money is refunded to the customer for bringing back plastic bottles.

Mr. C. McCarthy queried if a copy of the last SPC's work schedule could be circulated to the Members. Previous works schedules had not been compiled but it was agreed a list of policies that were discussed by the previous SPC Members would be circulated.

Mr. S. Quirke referred to the current Development Contribution Scheme and queried whether this should be included as an item for a future meeting. Following a query from Ms. J. Campbell, Mr. Quirke confirmed that levies were charged on all planning permissions granted for residential units and commercial properties and that these monies were used to fund roads, footpaths, community development, Town and Village Renewal etc. A copy of the current Development Contribution scheme would be circulated and queried whether the Members should look at the Scheme and can make recommendations to the full Council as to whether the levies should be reduced / increased or stay the same.

Ms. J. Campbell stated that she must declare her interest in this. She is currently working with a Community Group in Delgany who feel that the Village has now become a crossroads. She queried where the money was going to as the footpaths, etc. was not being provided in the area. Mr. Quirke confirmed that the money was collected for the whole of County Wicklow and may not be used in the particular area where it is collected. He stated that developers of certain developments often have to put in footpaths, etc and that offsets would be given against their development contributions. It is possible to apply special contributions on specific developments in order to provide improvement works.

Cllr. S. Cullen referred to rural planning and that he felt that it was hard to justify the development contributions on rural planning permissions of €5,000 - €10,000 when the applicants are providing their own services and all that the Council is doing in the area is upgrading a road.

Ms. J. Campbell suggested that the Planning Authority might include self sufficient regeneration energy system within developments. It was agreed that Ms. Campbell would get more information on the system for the Members.

**Item 7: To set a schedule of meetings for 2020**

The Members approved the draft schedule circulated with the Agenda.

**Item 8: Any Other Business**

*Allotments*

Cllr. S. Mathews referred to the provision of allotments and felt that these provided a lot of benefits in terms of community facilities and asked that these be discussed at a future meeting.

Ms. Walsh confirmed that the current County Development Plan did contain policies in relation to allotments and that the issue was probably one of implementation rather than putting new policies in place.

*Christmas Lunch*

It was agreed that a luncheon would be arranged in early December.

*Mr. S. Quirke, Director of Services*

It was confirmed that this was Mr. Quirke's first and last meeting of the SPC.

Cllr. S. Cullen thanked Mr. Quirke for his contribution and that Mr. Quirke had always treated everyone very fairly over the years.

That concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman

Date: \_\_\_\_\_