

MINUTES OF CLIMATE AND BIODIVERSITY ACTION SPC HELD VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON 16th JULY 2020

PRESENT:

Elected Members:

Councillor Rory O'Connor
Councillor Dermot O'Brien
Councillor Lourda Scott.
Councillor Peir Leonard.
Councillors Jody Neary

Members from External Sectors:

Sharon Jackson, Environment/Conservation Pillar West Wicklow
Gary McKenzie, Business/Commercial Pillar

Officials Present:

Breege Kilkenny, Director of Services.
Theresa O'Brien, Senior Executive Officer.
Marc Devereux, Senior Engineer.
Deirdre Burns, Heritage Officer.
Mary Cahill, Senior Executive Engineer.
Jim Callery, Environmental Awareness Officer.

Guest:

Judy Osborne, PPN

Note: CAT = Climate Action Team

Item 1. To note the minutes of the meeting held on 6th May 2020

Everyone was happy with the content of the minutes and they were approved.

Item 2. Presentation from Co. Wicklow PPN on their Tree Management Survey/Submission - Sharon Jackson and Judy Osborne (Refer to presentation)

Sharon Jackson presented the findings of a consultation with the members of the PPN on the proposed Tree Policy for Wicklow County Council.

Cllr Scott: Mapping is essential to know what we already have on the ground and to identify areas that are suitable for planting.

Cllr Leonard: All trees should be protected by default. Is there a need for a County Arborist? WCC should have a policy regarding tree removal and a record of same.

Deirdre Burns: Submissions reflect what WCC have been hearing for many years. However, it must be noted that there are limitations to what a Tree Policy can and can't do.

Judy Osborne: There is a lack of understanding of the role of the Council with regard to trees. What will the status of the plan be once it is adopted?

Cllr O'Connor: We will keep this topic on the agenda for all meetings.

Item 3. To discuss the use of Glyphosates within Wicklow County Council

Mary Cahill told the committee that the CAT had met with the MDs and discussed their use of Glyphosates. The CAT will research alternatives to glyphosates and propose to the MDs for use.

Cllr Scott: DCC had carried out a pilot study in Stoneybatter in 2018 where they tried out a number of alternatives. She will forward an email with the report of the findings of this study.

Item 4. Climate Action to receive an update

Mary Cahill updated the committee on the following (Refer to presentation):

- a. Implementation of the Climate Action Adaptation Strategy
- b. Local Authority Climate Action Charter
- c. EV Charging Points
- d. Tree Management Policy for County Wicklow
- e. Funding options available

Item 5. Biodiversity - to receive an update on the following:

Deirdre Burns updated the committee on the following (Refer to presentation):

- a. Implementation of the Pollinator Plan
- b. Brittas Bay Biodiversity Project
- c. Swift Project
- d. Awareness raising initiatives

Item 6 : Environmental Awareness

Jim Callery updated the committee on the following :

- a. Environmental Awareness on-going projects

Item 7 :Energy – To receive an update on energy efficiency and emissions .

Marc Devereux updated the committee on the following (Refer to presentation):

- b. Energy efficiency projects and progress to meet targets.

Item 8 :County Development Plan – Presentation from Bernie Harvey.

Bernie Harvey gave a presentation on how Climate Action will be incorporated in the County Development Plan which is presently being reviewed.

Bernie explained that the CDP is a land use framework and basically sets out the rules which apply to planning.

WCC received 150 submissions on the proposed plan and a CE Report which addressed these submissions will be reviewed by the members at the full council meeting to be held on 7th September.

The Plan will go on public display in February 2021 for 10 weeks and it is expected that the plan will be finalised for adoption Q4 of 2021.

Cllr Leonard: Can there be an objective in the CDP to get the maximum use of council owned land for biodiversity. Bernie Harvey responded stating that should be addressed by Corporate Estate having a policy rather than being a policy in the CDP.

Item 9: AOB

Following the presentations there were no items raised that had not been addressed within the agenda

THAT CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING