

MINUTES OF THE CLIMATE & BIODIVERSITY ACTION STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 28TH APRIL AT 10.30AM

PRESENT: Cllr. Lourda Scott (Cathaoirleach)
Cllr. Peir Leonard
Cllr. Rory O'Connor
Ms. Sharon Jackson
Mr. Justin Ivory
Mr. Gary McKenzie

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms. Breege Kilkenny, Director of Services
Ms. Jackie Carroll, Senior Executive Officer
Mr. Marc Devereux, Senior Engineer
Ms. Mary Cahill, Senior Executive Engineer
Ms. Deirdre Burns, Heritage Officer
Mr. Jim Callery, Environmental Awareness Officer
Mr. Paul Brophy, Executive Technician

APOLOGIES: Cllr. Dermot O'Brien
Cllr. Jodie Neary
Ms. Franny Raven

Item 1: Minutes of Meeting held on 17th of February 2022

The Minutes of the Climate and Biodiversity Action Strategic Policy Committee held on the 17th of February 2022 were proposed by Cllr. Peir Leonard and seconded by Cllr. Lourda Scott..

Item 2: Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

Item 3: Receive presentation on the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP)

The members received a comprehensive presentation on the LECP and welcomed that a priority focus is being placed on the requirement for the plan to include Climate Change and its impact on both the economy and the community. The input of the SPC and the PPN and other stakeholders will inform the scope of the plan. It was noted that increasingly, climate and biodiversity action is embedded in the community actions.

A comprehensive discussion ensued, with issues raised including Biodiversity measures, Sustainable economic development goals, Public Realm development and the importance of measuring targets.

The timeline for the implementation of the plan has been extended until end 2022. The Advisory group will include representation from Climate Action, Planning and the PPN.

Item 4: Glyphosate Policy

The revised Glyphosate Policy was considered by the members and discussed at length and it was noted that the matter had been discussed with the District Engineers, with some concern expressed regarding resource constraints and change to work practises. It was noted that the Tidy Towns would promote the policy and that the criteria for judging included awareness of biodiversity and retention of habitats.

The following actions were agreed:

- Training programme to be devised and rolled out.
- Social Media campaign required, to promote awareness and to include commercial suppliers.
- Consider liaising with judging board of Tidy Towns to emphasise the implementation of the policy.
- To be included on App produced for Tree Management Policy

The policy will now go to full Council for consideration and adoption at the June meeting (proposed by Cllr. Rory O'Connor, seconded by Cllr. Peir Leonard and agreed by all members).

Item 5: Update on Implementation of the Tree Management Policy

The members were updated on the implementation of the Tree Management Policy. Following discussions with the District Engineers, it was agreed that Arborist will carry out a survey in one major town in each District in 2022 – funded by Environmental Section (Climate Action budget). Budgetary provision must be made by the Districts thereafter. Again it was noted that some concern was expressed by the Districts regarding resources.

The IT section continues to work on the development of the App for recording the survey and management information. The Blueskies mapping has been purchased by Wicklow County Council and shared with other organisations. M Cahill will liaise with the IT section to determine if there is a way to share the maps on a public domain.

Item 6: Public Lighting Policy

It was agreed that the presentation on Night Skies would be beneficial for the Transportation, Water and Emergency Services (TWES) Strategic Policy Committee to receive, which would further inform them of the importance of including provision for same in its Public Lighting Policy. It is envisaged that other relevant stakeholders will be involved in this process also. Their next meeting is on 23rd June.

Item 7: Any Other Business

Following query on Natural Corridors, the members were advised that the County Development Plan Green Infrastructure Policy has mapped all green spaces. When drafting the Local Area Plans further habitat surveys can be undertaken.

The B-Line project was mentioned as a model that could be used within the Corridors. The B-Lines are a series of 'wildlife corridors' running through the countryside and towns, which link existing wildlife areas together, creating a network that will weave across the landscape.

The members and staff congratulated Jim Callery, Environmental Awareness Officer on winning a Gold Medal in the LAMA Awards for his Sustainable Development Goals mapping tool.