

MINUTE OF THE CLIMATE ACTION & BIODIVERSITY STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 22nd OF OCTOBER 2021 AT 2.30PM BY ZOOM

PRESENT: Cllr. Rory O'Connor (Chairperson)
Cllr. Lourda Scott
Cllr. Peir Leonard
Cllr. Dermot O'Brien
Cllr. Jodie Neary
Ms. Sharon Jackson
Ms. Franny Raven
Mr. Justin Ivory

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms. Jackie Carroll, Senior Executive Officer
Ms. Mary Cahill, Senior Executive Engineer
Ms. Deirdre Burns, Heritage Officer
Mr. Jim Callery, Environmental Awareness Officer
Mr. Marc Devereux, Senior Engineer

APOLOGIES: Ms. Breege Kilkenny, Director of Services, Planning, Environment

Item 1: Minutes of Meeting held on 9th of September 2021

The Minutes of the Climate Action and Biodiversity Strategic Policy Committee held on the 9th of September 2021 were proposed by Cllr. Rory O'Connor, seconded by Cllr. Lourda Scott and agreed as amended.

Item 2: Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising from the Minutes.

Item 3: Tree Management Policy

The Cathaoirleach commended the team on their ongoing work on the Tree Management Policy, following which the members received a presentation on the amendments made to the Policy on foot of the comprehensive submissions.

Clarification was requested in relation to tree felling and how enforcement and penalties work and a conversation ensued in relation to Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's)

The Committee was given a comprehensive overview on the possible steps available and it was also confirmed that Tree Felling Orders are regulated by the Forestry Service which is based in the Department of Agriculture. Exemptions are not defined by the Council but are based on Forestry legislation and so it is the responsibility of the Forestry Service to pursue those in breach of same.

The Committee was advised that the Council is often asked to provide commentary to the Forest Service to mitigate and stop water pollution when forestry is removed. It was confirmed also that

the Forest Service hold a register which can be viewed as necessary and that there are a range of guidelines in place.

Regarding the view that the Council should be encouraged to increase their use of TPOs, the members were advised that TPOs are set down every 6 years in conjunction with the County Development Plan (CDP) following the associated public consultation process. It was noted that it is not logistically feasible to add TPOs outside of this process as this would require amendment to the CDP.

It was suggested that an appendix on the steps involved in applying for a TPO should be added to the Policy document along with an explanation of the British Standards which would provide clarity to what the BS numbers refer.

The preferred approach to 'a culture of living with trees' a biodiversity approach. It was noted that some trees in urban settings might be planted in the wrong place or have served their purpose. The Policy can help in developing a culture around it, educating people to place more value on trees. It was agreed that another type of protection in addition to TPOs would be welcome.

Referencing the CDP a question was raised about introducing tighter guidelines for developers and the suggested use of hedgerows and not walls in new estates, Ms. D. Burns confirmed that there is the possibility to produce supplementary guidance on planting for biodiversity and what we would like planted.

A discussion ensued regarding accessibility of the document and suggestions were made regarding an executive summary and the protocol. It was agreed that FAQs and further information, together with a 'how to' guide would be prepared for the website.

Clarification was sought on legislation referencing the Wildlife Act and it was confirmed cutting back on cultivated land is exempt but a stance has been taken by the NPWS that essential works to trees should not be cut during the wildlife period except in an emergency situation. It was confirmed that it is not the Council's own legalisation and does not extend to private gardens where you can cut your hedge but is an offence if there is a nesting bird.

Following agreement by the members that they were not in a position to approve the document on the day, it was agreed that the draft document would be reissued to members for proofing only or commentary if it is felt that any submission was misinterpreted. The Committee agreed that the Policy was nearly complete with minor amendments required.

ITEM 4: ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Native Oyster Reef Restoration Ireland (NORRI) event - It was noted that the NORRI event in Arklow Library was taking place on 22nd of October 2021 but numbers were limited.

Habitats Directive – it was noted that the EC has issued a guidance document on the Habitats Directive. It was agreed that an ecologist would be invited to present to the members at a future meeting on this matter.

Biodiversity Action Plan – noted that there is no strict timeline with this plan but rather it is a living document.

Community Allotments – it was requested that the developing and mapping of areas for use as community allotments be included on a future agenda of the SPC.

That concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____
Chairman

Date: _____

1. The first part of the document is a list of names and titles, including the names of the authors and the titles of their works. This list is organized in a structured manner, likely serving as a table of contents or a reference list.

2. The second part of the document contains a series of numbered entries, each corresponding to a name and title from the first part. These entries likely provide additional information, such as dates, locations, or specific details related to each work or author.

3. The third part of the document appears to be a continuation of the numbered entries, possibly providing further details or a summary of the information presented in the previous sections. The entries are organized in a clear, sequential format.

4. The fourth part of the document contains a final section, which may be a concluding statement, a summary, or a list of references. This section likely ties together the information presented throughout the document.