

**Minutes of Meeting of the Physical Development Strategic Policy Committee held on Monday
26th February, 2018 at 3:30 pm in the Council Chamber,
Áras Contae an Chláir, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.**

Present:

SPC Members

Cllr. J. Cooney, Chair
Cllr. J. Breen
Cllr. A. O’Callaghan
Cllr. C. Curtin
Cllr. M. Hillery
Mr. J. Corbett
Mr. J. Higgins
D. M. Wise

Staff of Clare County Council

Mr. J. Leahy, S.E., Environment
Mr. A. Kelly, Chief Fire Officer
Mr. J. Corry, A.O. Roads Section.
Mr. S. Lenihan, S.E. Water Services.
Ms. M. Eustace, A.S.O. Environment Section
Mr. Tom Tiernan, S.E., Transportation

Apologies: Ms. A. Haugh, Director of Physical Development, Cllr. B. Slattery, Cllr. C. Crowe.

Item 1 - Confirmation of Minutes of SPC Meeting of 27th November, 2017.

The minutes were proposed by Cllr. J. Breen and seconded by Cllr. A. O’Callaghan.

There were no matters arising

Item 2 – Fire Service Overview:-

Mr. A. Kelly, Chief Fire Officer gave a Presentation to the meeting on the Fire Service. He outlined the role of the Fire & Building Control Section and listed some items for consideration by the SPC such as

- The Review of the 2014 – 2019 Fire & Emergency Operations Plan
- The Preparation of the 2019 – 2020 Fire & Emergency Operations Plan and
- Reconstituting the “Keeping Communities Safe” committee.

Cllr. Curtin commended the work of Adrian Kelly and his team and advised that he would be guided by their best advice in reconstituting the “Keeping Communities Safe” committee .

John Higgins also thanked Adrian Kelly for the excellent presentation and asked if inspections were being carried out on new building developments.

A. Kelly in responding to Cllr. Curtin said his view on setting up the committee was that it may be premature. He continued that he would carry out a review internally rather than set up a committee without any terms of reference. Cllr. Curtin agreed this was an appropriate step and asked that he would report back via the SPC. It was proposed to bring this matter back before

the September meeting of the SPC. This was Proposed by Cllr. Curtin and Seconded by Cllr. Hillery.

A. Kelly in addressing Mr. Higgins question responded that the Building Control Regulations came into force in 1992 and were self regulatory. He indicated that in Clare, there were three staff in Building Control who carry out inspections. During the boom construction period, the aim of the Fire & Building Control Section was to ensure that all the main developers were the subject of at least one inspection, in addition to carrying out targeted inspections across the various building types. Since 2014, the Building Control Amendment Regulations included additional signoff and certification, together with the requirement for Assigned Certifiers to be employed on projects.

He continued that the resources of the Retained Fire Service were challenging at the moment, and he added that he was presently down 7 members of staff & that the recruitment of individuals to fill these positions was currently going through the interview process– this is a similar scenario across the country.

Item 3 – Rural Roads, CIS 2018 and LIS 2018:-

Community Involvement Scheme:

J. Corry advised that the CIS scheme for 2018 was recently advertised, with a tight window for applications to be submitted by March 9th. He added that applications had been invited from communities who may be interested in availing of the scheme and that these would form the basis for the Councils application for funding which must be submitted to the Dept by March 23rd.

Local Improvement Scheme:

J. Corry indicated that no formal notification had been received yet from the Dept of Community & Rural Development regarding the LIS scheme for 2018. He advised that he anticipated that a decision would be due on same shortly. He further added that 230 applications were received to date for the LIS scheme. He added that the 29th of March was the deadline for receipt of completed applications. He further added that Clare County Council was in a position to carry out works in excess of €1m under this scheme in 2017.

Cllr. Curtin and Cllr. Hillery commended the Senior Engineer and J. Corry on their work to date on these schemes. Cllr. Cooney agreed and commended the spending of €1m.

Item 4 – Climate Change:-

Mr. J. Leahy updated the SPC on Climate Change.

He indicated that there had been a number of developments in relation to Climate Change recently

1 – Climate Change Regional Offices

2 – National Development Plan (Project Ireland 2040)

He mentioned that Climate Change Regional Offices were being set up and staff appointments were being made on the basis of a shared service. He added that there would be four regional offices: Dublin Metropolitan area, Eastern and Midlands Region, Atlantic Seaboard North and Atlantic Seaboard South

He indicated that County Clare was part of the Atlantic Seaboard South. The lead county is Cork, which includes Cork County Council in conjunction with UCC and Cork Institute of Technology. The process will commence with a regional plan and then to develop local plans. The Regional Offices will work with each Local Authority to develop adaptation plans tailored to suit the particular county.

The National Development Plan includes details in relation to the transition to a low carbon and climate resilient society. Strategic investment priorities are listed from 2018 to 2027. These are high level national priorities. An allocation of €21.8 billion is intended over the lifetime of the plan, of which €7.6 billion will be from central exchequer funding and €14.2 billion from non exchequer funding.

The focus of investment will include the following:

- Investment in energy efficiency with upgrades to private homes, to achieve a BER rating of 'B';
- Renewable heat support scheme for businesses;
- Renewable electricity support scheme (large energy users/businesses);
- There is a national target to have 0.5m electric vehicles on the roads by 2030;
- To expand the re-fuelling network for alternatively fuelled vehicles and
- Conversion of Moneypoint Electricity Plant to end the burning of coal by 2025.

Cllr. Hillery asked if there would be another source of fuel at Moneypoint.

J. Leahy responded that there would be a conversion and that there was no mention of a closure of the plant.

Cllr. Curtin queried the position regarding LED lighting.

J. Leahy advised that Clare was in the first group for consideration for funding for converting over 14,000 lights at a proposed cost of €6.7m to replace them.

T. Tiernan added that Clare Co Council would need to survey existing public lighting infrastructure. He added that a percentage of columns in Clare would need to be replaced very soon. He indicated that the savings which would be generated as a result of the conversion to LED lighting would reduce energy costs & that it would also be likely that maintenance costs would also reduce.

J. Corbett proposed that the Council install a charging point for electric vehicles at Clare Co Council headquarters as a Pilot scheme. D. M. Au Wise seconded this proposal.

Item 5 – Any Other Business:-

Cllr. Cooney thanked Tom Tiernan for his work over the years as Senior Engineer, Transportation and wished him well in his upcoming retirement. These comments were echoed by all present.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed:

Cllr. Joe Cooney
Chairperson

Date:

Signed:

John Corry
Administrative Officer

Date:
