



KILDARE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Environmental and Water SPC
held in the Council Chamber, Áras Chill Dara, Devoy Park, Naas
on Thursday 25 May 2017 at 2:30pm**

- Present:** Councillor S. Power (in the chair)
Councillors Michael Coleman, Carmel Kelly, Fintan Brett, Anne Breen, Brendan Weld, Padraig McEvoy, Tim Durkan, Ide Cussen, Thomas Redmond, Fiona McLoughlin-Healy, Reada Cronin, Murty Aspell, Aoife Breslin.
- Also Present:** Mr. Tom Malone, I.F.A.,
- Apologies:** Councillors Brendan Young and Sorcha O'Neill.
Ms Deirdre Lane.
- In Attendance:** Mr. Joe Boland, Director of Services, Mr. Liam Dunne, Senior Executive Officer, Mr. Dara Wyer, Environmental Awareness Officer, Mr. Brian O'Gorman, Administrative Officer, Mr. Aidan Murray, Senior Engineer, Mr. John MacNamara, Community Warden, Mr. John Fallon, Environmental Overseer, Ms. Julie Duffin, Community Warden, Ms. Majella Boyle, Meetings Secretary.
- Also Present:** Mr. John Dooley, Lecturer in Electronic Engineering, Maynooth University

1. Welcome – SPC Chairman Sean Power

At the outset, Councillor Power welcomed the members and staff to the meeting. He stated that this meeting was taking place as a result of a motion carried forward from the Maynooth Municipal District Meeting as follows and he asked that the members not deviate from the motion;

“That the council convene a meeting of all interested parties to consider and discuss what measures should be put in place to stop the indiscriminate dumping of rubbish in the rural areas of the county”.

Mr. Boland then went through the running order of the agenda for the benefit of the meeting.

2. National Context

To receive a presentation from Brian White, Waste Enforcement Regional Lead Authorities (WERLAs)

Mr. White thanked the Director for inviting him to the meeting and stated that he was grateful for the assistance Kildare had given him in the past. Mr. White then gave a presentation to the council which included an overview of WERLA and its main functions, the National Priorities for 2017, the Illegal Dumping Initiative 2017 and the Kildare County Council submission for Roseberry. Mr. White also advised regarding waste issues including legislation.

In response to a query from Councillor McEvoy, Mr. White confirmed that deposit and return schemes and bring back in order to re-use schemes were being considered by the Department at present. In response to a query from Councillor Redmond regarding deposit and return schemes on glass or metals, Mr. White stated that the glass and metal market is very sensitive to market fluctuations. He further stated that it was on the table for discussion but that there was not a demand for such an initiative at present.

Councillor Cronin expressed concern regarding the use of drones which had been suggested together with smart technology and CCTV as part of the National Illegal Dumping Initiative. She stated that there was distrust in the institutions of the state at present and she queried if any other organisations or groups had raised concerns regarding their use. In response, Mr. White confirmed that no other organisation had raised issues regarding the use of drones. He stated that there are onerous licence conditions in relation to their use and that Local Authorities would have to deal with each of those issues within their own areas.

Councillor Cussen welcomed the €20,000 grant approval in respect of the “Clean and Green” at Roseberry Bog in Newbridge, however she stated that this would not deal with fly-tipping throughout the length and breadth of the county. Councillor Cussen also queried the position regarding the pay by weight scheme and she asked how random dumping was being dealt with. In response, Mr. White stated that local enforcement is a matter for Local Authorities to deal with through the Litter Warden Service. In relation to Councillor Cussen’s query regarding pay by weight, Mr. White stated that the Department was working with the Irish Waste Management Association in relation to this matter. Councillor Cussen further stated that there were 7,000 additional houses coming on stream in the Celbridge/Leixlip/Maynooth area however she noted that there were no more bins proposed to be sited in those areas.

Councillor McLoughlin-Healy asked if there were any plans for sharing information on successful projects. Mr. White confirmed that there would be information sharing and advised that a leaflet detailing successful projects would be available publically.

Councillor Weld acknowledged the hard work being undertaken by the litter wardens and stated that the council should be able to ‘name and shame’ convicted offenders in the local papers. Mr. White stated that he would take this matter up with the Eastern Midlands WERLA and he suggested that the council contact the directors of the North Inner City and Ballymun, Dublin for further information in this regard.

Councillor Power asked regarding the European Directive for Pharmaceutical Companies in relation to 'track and trace' strategies and Mr. White confirmed that this matter was being considered at present.

Councillor Power thanked Mr. White for his presentation and for attending the meeting. Mr. White then withdrew from the meeting.

3. Local Context

To receive a presentation from Dara Wyer, Environmental Awareness Officer

Mr. Wyer, Environmental Awareness Officer advised the members regarding raising the awareness of litter in Kildare. He outlined the initiatives that are taking place over the country including details of the National Spring Clean, the Lily White Clean Up, the Gum Litter Taskforce, the 'Any Bag Any Bin' Campaign, details of the Kildare Green Kilometre Competition and the on-going Schools Education including information regarding the green schools campaign, green flags, junior Tidy Towns and the Neat Street Schools Project.

4. Local Issues

To receive a presentation from a Litter Warden's perspective

Mr. MacNamara, Community Warden then gave a presentation to the members which outlined the process involved in the issuing of litter fines and the difficulties being encountered in dealing with fly-tipping complaints. He also outlined possible solutions including the effective use of technology, mobile CCTV and the possible use of drones. The presentation also mentioned a number of local pride initiatives including Monread Park, Naas, Maryville Estate in Kildare Town and Dun Brinn Estate in Athy.

5. Open Discussion

Mr. Aidan Murray, Senior Engineer, advised the members that the dumping of construction and demolition (C&D) rubble, was also a serious problem in the county. He stated that there is a charge per tonne to dispose of this waste and, as a result, dumping of this nature regularly takes place, with bog areas often being the biggest targets. He stated that there is a reluctance on people to come forward with information on the culprits as there may be criminal elements. Mr. Murray acknowledged that the law is relatively weak and he stated that staffing restraints make the situations harder to monitor.

In relation to the Roseberry Bog project, Mr. Murray stated that the area was chosen for grant assistance. He stated that it has a very active residents association who undertake a lot of the work themselves and the council then removes the waste for them. Mr. Murray referred to the Mouds Bog in Roseberry as a national conservation area and stated that they did have drones which he confirmed are used for the location of litter only.

Mr. Murray also spoke of the benefits of education in the area of litter prevention and he outlined the programme due to be undertaken in schools in the county before the end of the year.

Mr. Malone I.F.A. stated that farmers often bear the brunt of fly-tipping. He stated that they as a farming body have to be compliant with waste disposal. He stated that the restriction on hedge cutting between 1 March and 31 August may be contributing to dumping as he felt that overgrown areas are an invitation for fly-tipping to occur. .

Councillor McLoughlin-Healy referred again to the Roseberry Bog project. She stated that she failed to see how educating children in the schools would have any bearing on the actual people dumping the waste and she suggested that long-term surveillance be organised in those areas. She further complained regarding the amount of unauthorised signage in the Kildare/Newbridge Municipal District area, and queried where this activity was on the list of priorities.

Mr. Wyer advised the meeting that there is 10,000kms of verge in Kildare and Mr. Murray stated that unfortunately convictions do not always stop people from offending again.

Councillor McLoughlin-Healy stated that there was a lack of enforcement with regard to signage. Mr. Dunne explained that temporary signage is dealt with by the Environment Section while applications for permission for permanent signage is dealt with by the Planning Section. Councillor Cussen stated that she was waiting for a survey of the signs in her area. She also asked for a breakdown of the types of littering taking place and she asked which type was more prolific. Councillor Cussen further stated that public bins in cemeteries were being used by people to dispose of private domestic refuse and she felt that the 'any bag any bin' scheme was not effective. She asked what types of actions our neighbouring counties were undertaking and if there could be a joint process between the Gardaí and the Local Authority.

Councillor Kelly noted that there were 7 Wardens in County Kildare (5 Litter Wardens and 2 Community Wardens) and she asked if there were any plans to increase those numbers.

Councillor Cronin stated that more bins were needed in the Celbridge/Leixlip/ Maynooth Municipal District. In relation to the dumping of construction and demolition waste, she suggested that the onus be placed on the developers to account for where they are dumping their waste. She also agreed that a naming and shaming policy should be in place.

Councillor McEvoy acknowledged the hard work being carried out by John Fallon and his crew. He suggested that information graphics could be presented on a target facebook site to create talking points to help raise awareness. Councillor McLoughlin-Healy asked about the on-going dumping of rubble from new graves in graveyards. Mr. Dunne stated that arrangements for the disposal of material from burial plots will be considered in the context of the current proposal to introduce cemetery byelaws. However, it is current practise in the majority of cemeteries that an area is designated to store this material on a temporary basis.

Some of the members then left the meeting to attend the Cycle Forum meeting which was scheduled for 4:00pm.

Councillor Brett referred to leaflet drops to houses offering waste collection services and he asked if any of these services had ever been followed up to ensure that they had the permits required to undertake these services.

Mr. John Dooley from Maynooth University advised the meeting that satellites are taking pictures of us on a continuous basis. He stated that drones are very useful tools and they, together with the use of CCTV footage, are a great help in supporting evidence . He stated that drones were particularly useful in the overall fight as cloud coverage can often hamper satellite imagery. He advised the meeting regarding incentives in the education of children and of their “fun theory” initiatives including smart bins. He stated that there were over 80 public bins on the Maynooth Campus and he fully supported the ‘any bag any bin’ campaign. He stated that CCTV cameras could be placed at key times on popular dog walking routes to identify offenders. He also advised regarding DNA sampling of dog faeces although he acknowledged that this would be a very expensive option to trace offenders. Mr. Dooley stated that CCTV cameras are a very

effective litter deterrent at bottle banks as they found that one of the main ways to reduce littering is to make people feel like they are being watched.

Mr. John Fallon advised the meeting that the environment crew operate 5 days a week. He advised the members that in addition to their scheduled work, the crew also deal with approximately 400 complaints per annum and that 300 tonnes of waste is collection from illegal dumping per year. He stated that the types of litter ranges from household domestic refuse to bulky items e.g. mattresses and sofas. He also noted that electrical goods are still disposed of illegally even though these items can be disposed of free of charge.

Councillor Coleman queried if it was cost effective to bring offenders through the courts. Mr. Dunne stated that the council makes a call on enforcement and if they feel that a case warrants court action, they will take such action.

Councillor Breen asked regarding the procedure in removing dead animals e.g. dogs, cats. Mr. MacNamara advised the meeting that the council has an arrangement with Barrack Gate Veterinary Services to deal with such cases.

Councillor Weld stated that littering was getting out of hand and he felt that more cameras and more enforcement was needed.

In response to a query from Cllr Fiona McLoughlin Healy regarding spoil from the graves in the cemetery in Newbridge, Mr. Dunne advised the meeting that it had been removed and that he was looking at options regarding a more regulated arrangement. It was agreed that the caretaker would verbally request undertakers to use the bunker there at present. This item would be included for consideration as part of the proposed Cemetery Bye-Laws.

Mr. Boland stated that some very good points had been raised. He stated that illegal waste collectors were among the biggest contributors to illegal dumping and he agreed with Councillor Brett that these collectors should be investigated in collaboration with the Gardaí. He also agreed that covert CCTV cameras were needed to monitor litter blackspots. He stated that he also agreed with putting the onus on developers in relation to the disposal of construction and demolition waste. Mr. Boland agreed that a better effort needed to be made to tackle illegal signage and he stated that enforcement needed to be increased. In response to Councillor Kelly's query regarding the possibility of increasing the number of litter wardens, Mr. Boland stated that he would look at this issue seriously in the context of the next budget. He confirmed however that there were plans to take on another environmental overseer.

Councillor Cussen asked if the members could review the Litter Management Plan.

Councillor Cussen referred to a motion submitted in the name of Councillor Lynch as follows;

“That this council makes itself a lead partner in proactively organising an ongoing countywide tender for the collection of household waste refuse once a month at centrally designated sites. The assigned contractor would work out a scheme whereby residents could pay per bag or weight for household waste. There should be no direct cost to the council, instead we should use the councils ability to use economies of scale to reduce the individual price for residents e.g. on a certain Saturday 8am-5pm at a central point in Newbridge, residents could pay discounted rates to dispose of household refuse in a responsible manner into a waste operators lorry or large skip for a reduced rate. This could move from municipal district to municipal district on a monthly basis”.

It was agreed that this motion would be discussed at the next SPC meeting.

6. Agree an Action Plan

Councillor Power and Mr. Boland then gave an outline of the proposed actions;

1. Enforcement

(a) Waste Management

- Dealing decisively with litter black spots (waste attracts waste) through covert cameras
- Extending the definition of an ‘unfit person’
- Strengthening legislation for serious offences (particularly unauthorised collections)
- Placing the onus on developers for construction and demolition waste and possible collaboration with Building Control
- More intensive enforcement of litter blackspots

(b) Litter Pollution

- Naming and shaming
- Introduce an Information Graphics initiative
- Considered Review of the Litter Management Plan

2. Community Engagement

- Strengthening interaction with community groups
- Building on the collaboration which existed with community groups in the area of local clean-ups
- Build on the Lily White Clean up Day
- Monitor outcome of new Kildare Green Kilometre initiative
- Examine the feasibility of extending the hazardous waste collection pilot project.

3. Interaction with internal and external Agencies

- Ensure a greater focus on illegal signage in conjunction with the Planning Department
- Greater collaboration with Garda Surveillance Unit regarding 'Man in a Van'

The meeting concluded.