



KILDARE COUNTY COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES & WATER STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE 6TH DECEMBER 2017 @ 2:15PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, ÁRAS CHILL DARA

PRESENT:

Councillors: Seán Power, Íde Cussen, Brendan Young, Michael Coleman,
Fintan Brett, Fiona McLoughlin Healy, Anthony Larkin

Sectoral Interests: Deirdre Lane

Officials: Joe Boland, Director of Services
Liam Dunne, Senior Executive Officer
Michael Holligan, Senior Engineer
Brian O’Gorman, Administrative Officer
Cora Dempsey, Assistant Staff Officer
Marie Callaghan, Assistant Staff Officer

Apologies: Tom Malone

1. MINUTES

Minutes of meeting of the 8th November 2017 were agreed.

Proposed by Cllr Young and seconded by Cllr Cussen

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

Cllr Power confirmed that the joint meeting on Signage had been rescheduled to today, 6th December 2017 and that the members of the Economic Development & Planning SPC would be joining this committee at 3:30pm. A representative from Planning, Environment and Transportation would each make a presentation and there would be an opportunity to ask questions afterwards.

3. CORRESPONDENCE

Circular re National Waste Enforcement Priorities 2018

Correspondence noted.

4. DRAFT CEMETERY BYE-LAWS

Liam Dunne circulated the Draft Kildare County Council (Cemeteries) Bye-Laws 2018 setting out the regulations of cemeteries. Clarification of the public consultation process was sought and it was confirmed that the draft bye-laws would be presented to Full Council, amendments could be made at this stage and then they will go out for public consultation. This is another opportunity for cemetery committees to make further comments. All submissions made will be considered and the draft will again be presented to the SPC and then finally to Full Council again.

The following issues were listed as possible concerns

- 10. Is there a description of what sufficiently strong material is
- 17. Register of burials kept in a residence – is this in steel cabinet
- 21. Perhaps the use of cameras could be permitted – video for people abroad
- 27. Seating – what happens existing benches
- 28. Removal of items – these could be of sentimental value
- 31. Lawn cemetery – could kerbing, level with ground be permitted

It was **RESOLVED** to present these Draft Kildare County Council (Cemeteries) Bye-Laws 2018 to Full Council for authorisation to proceed to go on public display. Proposed by Cllr Fintan Brett and seconded by Cllr Anthony Larkin.

5. TIDY TOWNS REPORT 2017

Cora Dempsey made a presentation on the Tidy Towns Update 2017. Thirty seven towns and villages competed nationally and there were ten medal winners, including gold for Straffan, Naas, Maynooth and Leixlip. A new initiative in 2017 was the signing of a three year partnership agreement between Kildare County Council and Kildare GAA to encourage further local collaboration. Plans for 2018 – the Green Kilometre competition, held in Athy, will be rolled out across the county. The grant scheme for Kildare for 2018 will be €76,000.

The following issues were noted

- Maynooth TT proactive however a recycling event in Celbridge was not well attended
- Could the master composting class be rolled out for other green groups
- A networking meeting will be held in January 2018 for groups to reflect on 2017 and identify where improvements can be made. Focus will be on environmental issues and there will also be a presentation on how to fill out the application forms. Information can be channelled through this network.
- Support was expressed for the great work by the Kill and Naas groups
- Could Tidy Towns be linked into general recycling activities
- Provision of a electrical WEEE hardstand should be considered more by local GAA clubs as this is part of the marking system
- Request to extend pathways will be referred to the Parks Department
- Request for suppliers to only use recyclable material will be referred to our regional lead

6. REFERRED FROM CELBRIDGE/LEIXLIP MUNICIPAL DISTRICT – CLLR ÍDE CUSSEN

Caretaking Arrangements at Donaghcomper Cemetery

Cllr Cussen enquired as to what criteria has to be met before a permanent caretaker could be appointed for Donaghcomper cemetery.

Liam Dunne stated that there are permanent caretakers in Newbridge, Athy, Naas and Leixlip. He provided figures for the main cemeteries:

110 Newbridge, 60 Athy, 51 Naas, 45 Leixlip, 36 Celbridge

It was indicated that generally 40/45 burials a year would warrant a permanent caretaker. The number of burials would be monitored and the appointment of a caretaker could be reviewed annually.

7. REQUEST FROM CLLR FINTAN BRETT

“That KCC put in place a plan to target with both covert CCTV and wardens specific dumping and dog fouling black spots in the various MDs”

Fintan Brett spoke on his motion.

Not all members felt that CCTV would be useful as returns are limited and costs are high. Other methods of deterrents were discussed:

- It was felt that signs may be more effective – highlighting the health risks associated with dog fouling. An awareness campaign might be more beneficial than just issuing fines.
- Erection of signage stating “*mobile cameras in use*”, even if not
- It was felt that a blitz in the blackspot areas was required.
- Free dog poop bags when you licence your dog
- Are bye-laws needed
- Use of dash cams for Litter Wardens

Joe Boland agreed to this request but stressed that CCTV monitoring is not as successful as generally thought. It would form part of an overall approach. A pilot scheme, of two weeks surveillance, could be investigated. Only useful footage is returned to the Council by the CCTV company. However, identifying the person involved would be extremely difficult. He suggested that an advertising campaign, similar to the one to encourage licensing dogs, be used.

Cllr Brett stressed that there is ongoing adverse media on dog fouling and would like the pilot scheme to be followed up. The chairperson suggested that this be included in our next “THINK IN”.

8. MOTION FROM DEIRDRE LANE

"Should Kildare County Council suspend adding Hydroflurosilicic acid chemicals to drinking water until the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment and the Department of Health provide documentary evidence that the chemicals are safe and are not a health risk "

This matter was deferred to the next meeting.

9. REQUEST FROM DEIRDRE LANE FOR A STANDING ITEM – OBJECTIVES OF LECP

"That an update on the relevant water and environmental objectives in the local economic and community plan (LECP) be scheduled at each Environmental Service & Water SPC "

This matter was deferred to the next meeting.

10. SIGNAGE

JOINT MEETING BETWEEN THE ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES & WATER SPC AND THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING SPC.

Seán Power welcomed the Chairperson, Committee and officials from the Economic Development and Planning SPC to the meeting. A representative from the Planning, Environment and Transport Departments would each give an overview of signage. The meeting would then be opened to the floor for contributions and it would revert back to the next meeting with an action plan

Planning

Martin Dowling, Executive Planner spoke on the Policy on Signage, which was adopted on the 29th April 2013. He acknowledged that it is a complicated area and hoped to simplify it – it is part and parcel of the built environment. The Council's aim is to manage signage and provide a level playing pitch for all commercial users. The policy works in conjunction with National Plans, Litter and Roads Acts.

He outlined that some signage is exempt - eg "Property for Sale"; signs on private property; fundraiser election and circus posters. Other signage, eg sandwich boards are covered by Section 254 Licence and other signage requires planning permission. Signage over 7 years old may be unauthorised and immune from planning enforcement.

One of the most topical issues currently is electronic signs. The council try talking to the owners first before issuing fines or taking legal action.

Environment

John Tynan, Community Warden read out his report on signage in Newbridge. He gave a history of the some of the problems he has encountered, solutions he put in place, and fines issued.

He presented photographs on the different types of signs on display in Newbridge, explaining which ones may or may not be enforceable. He clarified that his powers come from Section 19(1) of the Litter Pollution Act 1997 as amended. He emphasised that this section may exempt a sign on private property from a fine if **“... person is authorised in advance to do so in writing by such owner, occupier or person in charge”**.

Transportation

David Reel, District Engineer spoke on Transportation issues - Regulatory Signage; Traffic Signs Manual 2010; National Motorway TII; Urban Renewal Schemes; signage giving updates on road projects.

When managing signage consideration has to be given to finding a balance - maximising the aesthetic appeal of a town, considering requests from Tidy Town Groups, decluttering of signage, including traders and bus signs.

Naas MD is currently carrying out a pilot scheme in Naas where it will streamline all signs – removal / replacement of defunct signage, This scheme covers public signs in public places. It should be noted that new signage indicating a 30kpm speed limit will be supplied to housing estates as part of the speed limit review.

Various speakers then raised the following issues:

- How to address problem areas / sandwich boards / recidivism
- If no action taken against a business then a second business will follow suit
- Needs of the community
- Access groups – issues raised in November 2016
- Council should be more proactive
- Maintenance of signs – old or obsolete
- Too many signs – similar to background noise
- Electronic signs alternating for community / business information
- Who deals with Tidy Town Complaints – in Planning
- Could Bye-Laws be considered / public realm plan

- Is there any marketing survey on use of signs
- Across the board collaboration needed – Council / community / business
- Benefit of sign is personal but cost is social / cost of enforcement
- Request for protocol – where complaints should go
- Prompt social awareness – use social media
- Use of sticker “Not Approved” to go on unauthorised signage
- Could Information signs / electronic or manual be considered
- Collaboration between groups – devise strategy
- Use of CRM to log complaints – record of data/statistics
- Review of Signage Policy
 - cover scale of sign (40ft containers)
 - How to enforce policy / how effective is it
 - How does the policy feed into County Development Plan

The following issues were clarified

- Policy is a set of guidelines for use on receipt of an application for Planning Permission or Section 254 – allows consistency / fairness throughout county
- Policy does not govern unauthorised signs
- free standing trailers need a Section 254 Licence
- Planning – if the issue is enforceable then Planning will act
- There can be conflicting representations for or against a particular sign
- No longer the same need for signage as business now have Post codes
- Collaboration needed between Tidy Towns / Chamber of Commerce / Business to address the issue
- each case has to be looked at individually to see if unauthorised,
 - burden of proof on the Council
- Environment carried out a survey on sandwich boards in Naas following reps from Access Group – second stage letter to issue
- Investigation of signage is hugely demanding on resources
 - court cases can take 2 years
 - safety of staff
 - legacy issues

Actions

- Bye-Laws could be investigated
- Pilot Town to be considered
 - Involve Tidy Towns / Chamber of Commerce / Business
 - Intensive programme – 3 years – photographic evidence
- Consideration could be given to removal of old / obsolete signage
- Pilot Scheme on electronic sign – similar to Athy

Cllr Power thanked Members of both Committees for their time and contributions.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

THIS CONCLUDED THE MEETING.