

14th July, 2017

To the Mayor and Each Member of Limerick City and County Council

Chairperson's Report for the Environment Strategic Policy Committee Meeting of the 26th
June, 2017

Item 1: Minutes of Environment SPC Meeting held on 10th April, 2017

On the proposal of Cllr. Scanlan, seconded by Mr. M. McConnell, the minutes of the previous Committee Meeting of the 10th April, 2017 were unanimously agreed and adopted.

Item 2: Motion submitted by Ms. Anneke Vrieling on behalf of the P.P.N. Environmental Linkage group

"I will move at the next meeting that Limerick City and County Council ban the sale and release of Sky Lanterns (Chinese Lanterns) and ban the release of helium balloons".

Moving the motion, Ms. Vrieling explained that released helium balloons, including those marketed as 'biodegradable latex', return to earth as litter. She advised that many animals, both marine and terrestrial, mistake them for food or get entangled in the attached plastic ribbons.

She stressed the need for awareness of these issues to be raised at both a national and a local level.

The Director of Service read out the reply to the motion, as circulated to the Members, including the proposed recommendation to full Council.

Following discussion by the Members, the following recommendation to full Council was proposed by Ms. Vrieling, seconded by Cllr. Hurley and unanimously agreed;

"That Limerick City and County Council calls on the Government to regulate the use and sale of sky lanterns and the use of helium balloons to provide for similar controls to those that are in place to control the use and sale of fireworks."

Item 3: Presentation on the Draft River Basin Management Plan – Ms. Anne Goggin

Ms. Goggin gave a presentation on the Draft River Basin Management Plan. She outlined that a River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) must be prepared for Ireland under the Water Framework Directive (WFD) 2000. She explained that one of the main objectives of the WFD is “to achieve good ecological status in all waters”.

Ms. Goggin explained that the RBMP must identify the significant pressures on water quality and set out a programme of measures to address these pressures.

She outlined that the newly-established Local Authority Water Communities Office (LAWCO) is responsible for engaging and consulting on the draft RBMP at a local level, facilitating a bottom up approach to water quality and addressing the need for improved communication and public engagement.

Ms. Goggin explained that the Draft River Basin Management Plan was published on 28th February, 2017 with a 6 month public consultation process in place. She advised that the closing date for submissions is 31st August, 2017.

In response to queries from the Members, Ms. Goggin explained that the role of the elected representatives in this process is to encourage members of the public to make submissions on the draft RBMP.

Item 4: Review of TLC3 and Results of the Waste Characterisation Study – Ms. Sinead McDonnell

Ms. Sinead McDonnell provided a review of Team Limerick Cleanup 3 (TLC) and updated the Members on the results of the waste characterisation study carried out this year.

She advised the Members that a long term approach must be taken to tackle the problem of littering and she explained that a range of solutions involving a large number of stakeholders are required.

Suggestions were made by the Members in relation to the following:

- The promotion of the use of re-usable bottles in schools.
- Boiling water and putting it in the fridge instead of buying water in plastic bottles.
- Limiting the use of small plastic bags, styrofoam packaging and plastic wrapping for fruit and vegetables in supermarkets.

Members pointed out that if this type of waste is not generated in the first place then we will avoid the need to dispose of it later.

In response to queries from the Members as to how these littering issues might be addressed, Ms. McDonnell explained the Council could make recommendations to central Government with a view to securing appropriate legislation or other initiatives to tackle these issues.

The following recommendations were proposed by Cllr Collins and seconded by Cllr Hurley and unanimously agreed.

- I. *“That Limerick City & County Council communicate its concerns in relation to the continued growth of this type of litter and request that the Department of Communications, Climate Change Action & Environment (DCCAE) explore options to influence the use of this type of “one use” item at producer level including, but not limited to, a levy on “one use” items along the lines of the successful plastic bag tax or a deposit and return scheme etc.”*
- II. *“That Limerick City and County Council form a policy in relation to the use of “one use items” (disposable items)”.*

The Meeting then concluded.

Summary of Recommendations to Full Council

Recommendation 1: regarding the regulation of sky lanterns and helium balloons

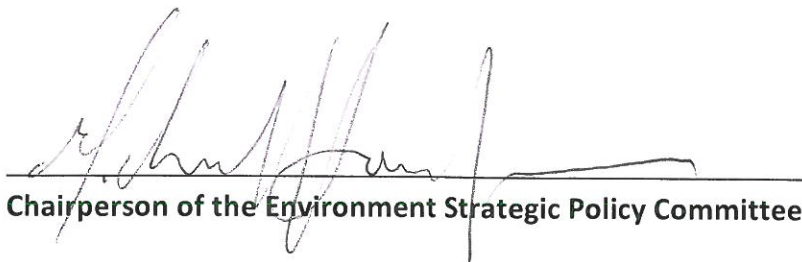
“That Limerick City and County Council calls on the Government to regulate the use and sale of sky lanterns and the use of helium balloons to provide for similar controls to those that are in place to control the use and sale of fireworks.”

Recommendation 2: regarding minimisation of “one-use” items for the purpose of litter management and waste minimisation

“That Limerick City & County Council communicate its concerns in relation to the continued growth of this type of litter and request that the Department of Communications, Climate Change Action & Environment (DCCAE) explore options to influence the use of this type of “one use” item at producer level including, but not limited to, a levy on “one use” items along the lines of the successful plastic bag tax or a deposit and return scheme etc.”

Recommendation 3: regarding the development of a Council policy in relation to “one-use” items for the purpose of litter management and waste minimisation

“That Limerick City and County Council form a policy in relation to the use of “one use items” (disposable items)”.



Chairperson of the Environment Strategic Policy Committee