

12th March 2018

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

**Chairperson's Report for the Environment Strategic Policy Committee Meeting of 26th
February, 2018**

Item 1: Minutes of Environment SPC Meeting held on 11th December, 2017

On the proposal of Cllr. Gilligan and seconded by Cllr. Hourigan, the minutes of the previous Committee Meeting of the 11th December, 2017 were unanimously agreed and adopted.

Item 2 : Revised Notice of Motion submitted by Cmhlr. S. Ó Ceallaigh

“I will move at the next Meeting that the Council will not allow any public park to be closed, in its entirety, in order to benefit private, profit-making events, without prior agreement at Municipal/Metropolitan District level as appropriate.”

Cmhlr. O’Ceallaigh stated that he had not agreed any variation from the text of the notice of motion agreed at the SPC meeting held on 11th December, 2017. He asserted that the revised notice of motion now before the Members had been amended. He stated that he was unaware of any proposal to bring his motion back to the SPC for further consideration. He pointed out he was opposed to any plan that might allow closure of a public park in its entirety and that he would vote against the motion now before the SPC if it received consideration at this meeting.

The Members agreed to defer any consideration of this revised notice of motion until the Members received clarification in respect of Cmhlr. O’Ceallaigh’s objection.

The Chairperson and the Director of Service agreed to investigate the circumstances of the referral of the revised notice of motion to the Environment SPC.

Item 3: Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Pond

“I will move at the next Meeting that as Kilmurry Cemetery is almost full, Limerick City and County Council would immediately begin the process of acquiring a suitable site in the area for a new Burial Ground”.

Cllr. Pond outlined that the current burial ground at Kilmurry has almost reached capacity. He pointed out that the Castletroy/Monaleen area currently has a population of approximately 15,000 people and that there is a need for the Council to now start planning for a new burial ground to accommodate future need. He pointed out that many families from outside the area have also purchased plots in Kilmurry cemetery.

The Director of Service outlined the text of the formal reply given to the Members.

He pointed out that the provision and development of burial grounds should be undertaken within the context of the availability of appropriate sites, the financial resources available to secure and develop sites and the availability of burial plots in other cemeteries.

He explained that there are almost 7,000 burial plots (6,900) currently available within burial grounds in the Metropolitan area (including extensions etc. under construction). He explained that there were five hundred and seventy four burials in these burial grounds during 2017 and that many of these burials took place in existing burial plots.

Mr. Lehane explained that it is clear that the current burial grounds within the Metropolitan District have the capacity to meet the need for new burial plots for at least the next 15 years based on the rate of burials as outlined above.

He advised that the Council must also have regard to the projected growth in the use of Crematoria and the possibility of developing Columbarium walls to facilitate interment of ashes.

Mr. Lehane pointed out that, having regard to the above, the Council does not believe that there is a compelling need to acquire a site for the development of a new burial ground in the Kilmurry area at this time. He also pointed out that financial resources are not available for this proposed facility. He sought clarification as to whether the community could provide its own burial ground in the area.

Cllr. Pond re-stated his view that the community in Castletroy and Monaleen have expressed a strong wish to have the opportunity of securing a burial plot in their own locality. He called on the Council to provide the resources to pursue this proposed facility.

On the proposition of Cllr. Pond, seconded by Cllr. Ryan, the Members approved the following recommendation to full Council.

“That as Kilmurry Cemetery is almost full, Limerick City and County Council would immediately begin the process of acquiring a suitable site in the area for a new Burial Ground.”

Item 4: Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Loftus

“I will move at the next Meeting that Limerick City and County Council initiate Environmental Awareness classes and lectures in all Primary and Secondary Schools throughout the City and County”.

In moving his motion, Cllr. Loftus stated that an understanding of environmental awareness is extremely important for all children from an early age. He pointed out that currently people just throw away rubbish around the city centre without any regard for the environment. He stated that a lot of this rubbish ends up in the river. He pointed out that if we teach our children the correct way to do things, then they will pass this knowledge on to their children also.

The Environmental Awareness Officer read out the reply to the notice of motion given to Members and explained how the Green Schools programme operates.

Ms. McDonnell also explained that the Council works closely with schools to encourage them to register and participate in initiatives such as Team Limerick Clean Up, National Spring Clean Junkature, schools battery initiatives etc.

On the proposition of Cllr. Loftus, seconded by Cllr. Gilligan, the Members approved the following recommendation to full Council.

“That Limerick City and County Council initiate Environmental Awareness classes and lectures in all Primary and Secondary Schools throughout the City and County”

The Director of Service advised the Members that the Council will, having regard to its available resources, continue to work with schools across the city and county with a view to raising environmental awareness and facilitating the introduction of initiatives to support enhanced environmental performance.

Item 5: Presentation from the River Shannon Protection Alliance

Mr. Gerard Siney of the River Shannon Protection Alliance (RSPA) gave a presentation to the Members in relation to Irish Water's proposal to abstract 330 million litres per day from the River Shannon.

The main points from Mr. Siney's presentation included the following:

- Irish Water plans to construct a 172 Kilometre pipeline from the Parteen Basin to Dublin. Mr Siney asserted that the cost of the abstraction proposal has risen to €2 billion, where the initial suggested cost was €1.2 billion.
- Mr. Siney asserted that there is not a shortage of water available in the Dublin region. He explained that water leakage is leading to difficulties. He argued that repairing the leaking pipes in the Dublin area would solve any current or future water shortages.
- Mr. Siney outlined that this mega-scheme will take at least 10 years to complete, with water being continually lost through leakage during this period.
- He asserted that Irish Water's claim that Dublin will have a major water deficit by 2050 is false, and based on incorrect data.
- He argued that, if allowed to proceed, this needless scheme would result in major collateral damage, economically, environmentally, and socially.
- He also argued that Irish Water have refused to properly consider viable alternative sources of additional water known to exist in volume close to Dublin in favour of a "one size fits all" massive pipeline.
- He offered the view that desalination also offered a viable alternative to this project.

The Members thanked Mr. Siney for his presentation and agreed, following discussion, to invite Irish Water to attend the next SPC meeting to give a presentation.

Item 6: Presentation on Environmental Awareness Initiatives – Ms. Sinead McDonnell

Ms. Sinead McDonnell, Environmental Awareness Officer gave a presentation on Environmental Awareness initiatives supported by Limerick City & County Council.

Ms. McDonnell advised the Members that the Environmental Awareness section of the Council are actively involved in the promotion and running of some of the following initiatives throughout Limerick City and County:

- Green Schools.
- Waste and litter prevention/awareness promotions and activities.
- Tidy Towns.

- Local Agenda 21.
- Team Limerick Cleanup.
- Limerick Going for Gold incorporating Limerick in Bloom.
- Fairtrade.

Ms. Mc Donnell stated that registration for Team Limerick Cleanup 4 (TLC 4) is now open at the following website: www.teamlimerickcleanup.ie

She advised the Members that in 2017, 550 groups comprising of 16,799 volunteers took part in TLC3. She further advised that Mr. Binman crews collected 68 tonnes of litter at 244 collection points.

The Members thanked Ms. McDonnell for her presentation and commended the work done by the Council in developing, supporting and promoting environmental awareness activities and initiatives.

Cllr. Hurley suggested consideration be given to launching a future TLC campaign at a litter blackspot in Limerick.

The Members invited Ms. McDonnell to make another presentation to the SPC following the completion of TLC4.

Item 7: Report on Pilot Project for the Upgrade and Maintenance of Strategic Roundabouts

The Senior Executive Officer advised the Members that Limerick City & County Council is considering the introduction of a pilot scheme to upgrade and enhance a number of strategic roundabouts on key approaches to and within the Metropolitan District.

He advised that the Council propose to advertise for expressions of interest from companies that may be interested in sponsoring the enhancement of roundabouts. He outlined that the proposed initial pilot scheme will be limited to four strategic roundabouts.

The Members welcomed this initiative and expressed their support for the pilot scheme.

Ms. Vrieling suggested that the Council should engage with local nurseries to ascertain if they are interested in tendering for the upgrade and enhancement of roundabouts in their local area.

In response to queries from the Members, the Senior Executive Officer explained that the Council would enter into an appropriate licence agreement with the successful tenderer in relation to the upgrade and maintenance of the roundabout. He advised the Members that

the Council would retain all rights in relation to the provision, extent and nature of signage etc. on the roundabout.

He clarified that key roundabouts currently maintained by the Council's Parks and Landscaping service will not be included in the pilot project.

The Meeting then concluded.

Summary of Recommendations to Full Council

Recommendation 1:

"That as Kilmurry Cemetery is almost full, Limerick City and County Council would immediately begin the process of acquiring a suitable site in the area for a new Burial Ground."

Recommendation 2:

"That Limerick City and County Council initiate Environmental Awareness classes and lectures in all Primary and Secondary Schools throughout the City and County."

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Jerome Scanlan

Chairperson of the Environment Strategic Policy Committee