

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

**Chairperson's Report of the Climate Action, Biodiversity and Environment Strategic Policy
Committee Meeting held on 9 July 2020.**

**Item 1: Adopt Minutes of Climate Action, Biodiversity and Environment Strategic Policy
Committee of the 11th February 2020**

The minutes were proposed by Cllr. Collins (B) and, seconded by Cllr. Secas, and adopted.

Item 2: Director's Update:

Mr. Kennedy presented the Director's Report including updates on the following items raised at the SPC meeting of 11th February 2020 relating to

- Correspondence from the Office of Public Works relating to the build-up of debris at the River Deel estuary.
- Update on contact with other local authorities regarding the findings of their investigations into LA kerbside household waste collection
- Update on the Development of a Management Plan for the Westfields Wetlands

Cllr Sheahan (M) asked that the Director's Report be emailed to the SPC prior to or during the meeting. This was agreed.

Item 3. Presentation from Planning & Enforcement on Waste Enforcement Activities for 2019 and the proposed program for 2020.

Kathleen White, Administrative Officer, Planning & Enforcement gave a presentation on Waste Enforcement Activities for 2019 and the programme for 2020.

Key points included:

- Details of the number of litter related prosecutions in 2018, 2019 and 2020 to date.
- Details of awareness campaigns relating to dog fouling.
- Update on investigations into illegal waste collectors.

- Kerbside collection rate.
- Expenditure on litter related activities in 2019.
- Anti-Dumping Initiative grants for 2019.

The members thanked Ms White for her presentation.

Item 4. Update on European Green Leaf Award 2020 Programme of Activities and Presentation on Grass Cutting Regimes

Ms. Goggin gave an update on the European Green Leaf. Because of Covid 19 they have had to relook and rethink all the events and put them online. Events are held as webinars and put up on YouTube.

Ms. Goggin updated the members on the development of Grassland Management Policy. The key points were:

- Traditional approach is to intensively manage grass where nature is being more and more squeezed out.
- Encourage hay meadows for a high species diversity by different mowing regimes.
- Intensively managed grazing and silage ground tends to have much lower species diversity.
- Urban greenspace and other uncultivated lands becoming important refuges for biodiversity.
- All Ireland Pollinator Plan – One third of our bee species are threatened with extinction from Ireland.
- Cities of at least 20,000 to develop ambitious Urban Greening Plans by the end of 2021.
- Different mowing regimes give different results.

Ms. Goggin spoke about what Limerick City and County Council have been doing in this area:

- The Let it Bee programme in 2019 proved to be very positive. Grass cutting was delayed in some areas for a few weeks so that the dandelions could flower and provide valuable food for pollinators. This was continued in 2020 on the Condell Road, Childers Rd, Dock Rd Roundabout to Quinn's Cross and a small area in Castletroy Park.
- The Corbally Meadow and Mt. St Lawrence cemetery provide a rich and diverse habitat.

The members thanked Ms. Goggin for her presentation.

Item 5. To consider the Draft Metropolitan District of Limerick (Parking Places) (Amendment) Bye-Laws 2020

Item 6. To consider the Draft Municipal District of Newcastle West (Parking Places) (Amendment) Bye-Laws 2020

Item 7. To consider the Draft Municipal District of Cappamore-Kilmallock (Parking Places) (Amendment) Bye-Laws 2020

Mr McGuigan noted that Items 5, 6 and 7 were on the agenda to bring to the attention of the members of the CABE SPC. A presentation on the Draft Bye-Laws was previously given to the Travel and Transports SPC and the bye-laws had gone to the relevant municipal and metropolitan district meetings for approval to go to public consultation. The members noted the presentation.

Item 8. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor C. Sheehan (deferred from Metro Meeting)

"I will move at the next Metropolitan Meeting of Limerick City and County Council that the Council consider having a "no burn night" banning the lighting of solid fuel fires for one night in late Spring 2020 when the weather is mild to combat the poor air quality in Limerick caused by the burning of solid fuels/coal".

In a written reply Mr. Kennedy stated that according to the EPA Air Quality in Ireland 2018 report, the main source of particulates in air pollution in Ireland, especially the smaller and more dangerous PM2.5 particles, is solid fuel burning for home heating.

In this context, a "no burn night" would serve to raise awareness of this issue. However, it would not be feasible to have a mandatory ban on burning solid fuel and the public could only be encouraged to participate in such an initiative on a voluntary basis.

Members expressed concern regarding the wording of the motion, which could be construed as being a mandatory action. Members suggested that the word "ban" be removed and replaced by the word "voluntary". Cllr Carey stated he would support the Motion if it were reworded.

In response, Mr. Kennedy noted that the Notice of Motion could be amended and asked Cllr Sheehan (C) to consider a new wording. Cllr Sheehan (C) proposed the following re-worded Motion:

"I will move at the next Meeting of Limerick City and County Council that the Council considers having a voluntary "no burn night" to raise awareness around the lighting of solid fuel fires for one night in late Spring 2021."

It was agreed that the Motion would be forwarded to Council for consideration.

Item 9. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor S. Hartigan (deferred from Metro Meeting)

"I wish to propose a motion that Limerick City and County Council review its tender process for weed control service contract to eliminate unnecessary herbicide application, reducing the frequency of spraying and reduce the volume of herbicides used".

In a written reply Mr. Kennedy stated that Physical Development Directorate is currently carrying out a full review of where, how and why the Council uses use herbicides. The objective is to identify opportunities to reduce usage. He advised that while it may not fully

eliminate the use of Glyphosate in the short to medium term, there is scope to reduce it significantly.

Cllr Hartigan thanked Mr. Kennedy and welcomed his response.

Item 10. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor M. Sheahan (deferred from Metro Meeting)

“I move that the Council consider providing a public toilet facility at the Castletroy Public Park for the Park users and visitors similar to those already provided at the People’s Park, Shelbourne Park and the new Mungret Park”.

In a written reply, Mr. Kennedy stated that similar toilets installed at the People's Park, Shelbourne Park and Mungret Park are leased on a long-term basis from a supplier at an annual rental and maintenance cost to the Council of between €20,000 and €26,000 ex VAT per unit. He added that provision of a toilet at Castletroy Neighbourhood Park could be considered in the preparation of the 2021 budget, as will its implications on future budgets for ongoing maintenance.

Cllr Sheahan (M) thanked Mr. Kennedy for his response.

Item 11. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor M. Sheahan (deferred from Metro Meeting)

“I move that the Council and the OPW immediately advance the Annacotty and Mountshannon Road Flood Alleviation Scheme as a stand-alone project similar to the Castleconnell Flood Alleviation Project.”

In a written response Mr. Kennedy confirmed that LCCC has established that the progression of areas within the Limerick City and Environs AFA as separate projects is contrary to Planning Legislation, as in-combination or cumulative effects need to be considered within the EIA. LCCC / OPW intend to progress the Limerick City and Environs Scheme as one project but will avail of opportunities to advance the planning approval and/or construction of the Annacotty section in advance of the remainder of the city scheme, should these be available.

Ms. S Kennedy advised that tender documents for the appointment of consultants for the Limerick City and Environs scheme are being finalised and that part of the consultant's duties will be to develop an EIAR for the scheme.

Ms S Kennedy noted that a legal opinion had been received which advised that the consent for Annacotty works is a project as defined in the legislation and that the Courts had set out requirements for the effect of the scheme to be considered with other approved schemes.

Item 12. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor C. Sheehan (deferred from Full Council Meeting)

“I will move at the next Meeting that the Council write to the Minister for Agriculture requesting the establishment of a National Animal Cruelty Register to make it harder for people who are banned from owning animals to obtain new animals; that the Council amend the Control of Horses Bye-Laws to ban horses in housing estates; and that the Council engage with the relevant authorities on education and outreach programme around the care of horses”.

The motion was proposed by Cllr Sheehan (C) and seconded by Cllr Benson.

In a written reply Mr. Kennedy stated that the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine has confirmed that at present there is no national animal cruelty register, nor does there appear to be any register of people who have received convictions for animal cruelty.

It was agreed that the Council would write to the Minister calling for a national animal cruelty register.

Cllr Sheehan (C) thanked the Director for his response and welcomed the proposal to write to the Minister.

Item 13. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor S. Novak Uí Chonchúir (deferred from Metro Meeting)

“I will move at the next meeting that the Council introduces a litter bin tagging system (QR codes) to identify each of its bins with a unique identifier number and QR code in order to map locations and maintain bin records to ensure that litter bins (including dog waste bins) are adequately serviced and maintained and that bins are located in the most appropriate locations to cater for levels of demand. This system should also allow for the public to scan the QR code and report any issues that they might encounter”.

In a written reply, Mr. Kennedy stated that a review of the litterbin service for the Metropolitan area is currently being carried out. The Council is considering options for improved service delivery. The budget implications of this will have to be considered in the formulation of future budgets.

Cllr Novak Uí Chonchúir thanked the Director for his response.

The Chair concluded the meeting.

Jerome Scanlan

Chairperson of the Climate Action, Biodiversity and Environment Strategic Policy Committee

Recommendation 1:

That the Notice of Motion proposed by Cllr Sheehan (C) and seconded by Cllr Carey, as set out hereafter be sent to Full Council for consideration at its next meeting: *“I will move at the next Meeting of Limerick City and County Council that the Council considers having a voluntary “no burn night” to raise awareness around the lighting of solid fuel fires for one night in late Spring 2021.”*

