

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF JOINT MEETING OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENTERPRISE AND PLANNING STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE (SPC) AND THE CLIMATE ACTION, BIODIVERSITY & ENVIRONMENT SPC HELD REMOTELY ON MONDAY 22nd FEBRUARY, 2021 at 2PM.**

**PRESENT IN THE CHAIR:** Councillor Eddie Ryan

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Councillors: Sharon Benson, Daniel Butler, P.J. Carey, Bridie Collins, James Collins, John Egan, Liam Galvin, Sean Hartigan, Stephen Keary, Michael Murphy, Emmett O'Brien, Jerry O'Dea, John O'Donoghue, Olivia O'Sullivan, Martin Ryan, Jerome Scanlan, Elena Secas, John Sheahan, Kevin Sheahan, Michael Sheahan, Catherine Slattery, Sasa Novak Uí Chonchúir, Abul Kalam Azad Talukder, Adam Teskey

**SECTORAL INTERESTS/ PPN NOMINEES:** Aidan Gleeson, (Agriculture/Farming), Michelle Hayes (Environment/Conservation), Liz Gabbett (Environment/Conservation). Declan Hehir (PPN), Brian Thompson (PPN),

**OFFICIALS PRESENT:**

Vincent Murray, Economic Development, Pat Fitzgerald, Cecilia Larkin, Rory Corbett, Trade & Investment; Stephane Duclot, Planning & Env. Services; Maria Woods, Karen Burke, Forward Planning; Mike Cantwell, LEO/Innovate; Rosie Webb, Urban Innovation; Laura Ryan, Marketing & Communications; Gordon Daly, Community Development; Paraic Rattigan, MW Regional Enterprise; Sonja Reidy, Water Services; Brian Kennedy, Dara McGuigan, Brid Quinn, May Fitzgerald, Physical Development; Brid Burke, Economic Development.

**Apologies:** Cllr. Michael Collins, Dr. C. Cahill, (Business/Commercial), Thomas Blackburn (Agriculture/Farming), Seamus Hoyne (Business/Commercial)

**Item 1**

**National Water Resources Plan (NWRP) Draft Framework Consultation 2 – To consider submission from Limerick City and County Council**

Ms. Sonja Reidy, SEO Water Services, gave a presentation on the National Water Resources Plan to members of both the Economic Development, Enterprise & Planning SPC and the Climate Action, Biodiversity & Environment(CABE) SPC at meetings on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> February respectively.

Phase 1 of the NWRP includes the Draft Framework Plan which is currently under public consultation and submissions can be made up to 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2021 and

Phase 2 of the NWRP requires that a Water Resource Plan be prepared for Limerick City and County Council to identify plans to provide a security of supply for towns, villages and settlements in Limerick, with accompanying timeframe and budget. This Plan is essential to enable Limerick City & County Council to achieve the objectives of the National Planning Framework NPF and the RSES through its own City & County Development Plan.

Ms. Reidy outlined the recommendations arising from each SPC, which she stated were very similar to the executive considerations as outlined below:

- No Finance model identified
- Not time specific

- Not aligned with National Development Plan
- Not aligned with National Planning Framework
- Not aligned with Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy
- Not aligned with City and County Development Plans
- No opportunity to achieve network improvements as part of transport route provision /upgrades
- Need to achieve security of supply for Limerick
- Need to achieve opportunities for growth in line with national, regional and local plans and strategies requires water supply capacity.

Many members also highlighted their objection to the extraction of water from the River Shannon to service water supply issues in Dublin and that the efforts of Irish Water should be concentrated in relation to repairing leaks in the existing networks in Dublin and Limerick, which was agreed at (CABE) SPC meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> February.

While members expressed concern over the lack of water and sewerage facilities in towns and villages in Limerick, they asked that Irish Water be requested to prepare a detailed Programme of Works for Limerick City and County.

Ms. Reidy stated that the NWRP only relates to water supply, but she could highlight the lack of sewage treatment facilities in County Limerick in the submission to Irish Water.

Members highlighted a number of Road Schemes which had commenced (N21 Newcastle West and N21 Abbeyfeale Road Schemes) and requested that Irish Water supply investment programme should be aligned with these developments.

They also requested that a plan showing the existing grid for water supply in Limerick City and County be prepared, identifying areas with less than adequate water supply.

As members felt that staff of Limerick City and County Council were most experienced in the area of water infrastructure, they requested that sufficient resources be made available to the Water Services Section to enable such projects be undertaken by the Local Authority staff and not outsourced to Irish Water.

Replying to members, Ms. Reidy stated that substantial works had recently been carried out to the Croom Water Supply Scheme and a work proposal had been put to Irish Water re other locations, but due to a limited budget in Irish Water, the majority of water works being carried out in the Limerick area included repairs to the existing network.

She also confirmed that she would raise the issue regarding the replacement of asbestos pipes in the submission to Irish Water, even though they had no targeted plan for dealing with it.

On the proposal of Cllr. Galvin, seconded by Cllr. K Sheahan, it was unanimously agreed to call on the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage to provide funding for the necessary sewerage treatment plants for the County and City of Limerick and also the provision of an adequate water supply.

It was also agreed that this Notice of Motion be circulated to all TD's in Limerick

Ms. Reidy informed members that a submission was being prepared in response to review of the National Development Plan and one of the major issues raised was the lack of investment in Irish Water to provide water /sewerage infrastructure in Limerick.

She also informed members of a workshop being organised by Irish Water for Councillors on 22<sup>nd</sup> March and encouraged members to attend and express their views.

M. Hayes queried if the invitation can be extended to include both PPN and Sectoral Interest Representatives also.

In reply to members requesting a meeting with Irish Water, D. McGuigan stated that with agreement of both Chairpersons of the SPC's, a meeting can be arranged with Irish Water to discuss this matter further.

Ms. Reidy informed members that she would finalise the submission and circulate to administrators of both SPC's for circulation to members, prior to submission to Irish Water before the deadline of 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2021.

Members requested that the submission, once agreed, be circulated to all members of Council and that Ms. Reidy be requested to give a detailed presentation to the Full Council meeting.

All members of Climate Action, Biodiversity & Environment SPC vacated the meeting at this point.

### **Any Other Business**

The Chairman informed members that the Government's SME Task Force had published its report entitled the National SME and Entrepreneurship Growth Plan, which Limerick City & County Council had made a submission through the Economic Development, Enterprise & Planning SPC. He expressed concern that there was no follow up with SME's following the publication of this report and encouraged both the executive and members to review the Plan and proceed with the recommendations outlined.

While members welcomed the publication of the Plan, they expressed concern that the recommendations were geared towards high performance SME's and did not reflect the severe pressure that sole traders were experiencing during Level 5, Covid-19 restrictions.

It was agreed that a meeting to discuss the SME Report would take place in the coming weeks.

P. Fitzgerald informed members that the April SPC Meeting will focus on job creation and maintenance. Representatives from the IDA, Limerick Chamber of Commerce and Enterprise Ireland will be invited to attend to hear their proposals for supporting businesses in the Mid-West.

That concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

**Councillor Eddie Ryan,  
Chairperson**