

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

Chairperson's Report of the Meeting of the Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning of Monday 9th October, 2023.

Item 1 - Adopt minutes of the Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning Strategic Policy Committee Meeting held on 10 July, 2023.

The minutes of the meeting held on 10th July 2023 were proposed by Cllr. Egan and seconded by Cllr Ryan (E).

Item 2 - Presentation on the Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce Report: Next Steps

Mr O'Sullivan gave a presentation on the recently published Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce Report. It focussed on three main areas: 1. Protect Economic Progress; 2. Identify New Opportunities; 3. Provide Practical Recommendations.

The presentation outlined the potential to create an energy-based industry, which would include the manufacture, construction and deployment of wind turbines, and the potential to onshore, the electricity generated in Foynes. This has the potential to create up to 10,000 jobs. The report recommended the establishment of a national agency, which would oversee the bringing of this power onshore.

Mr O'Sullivan stated that the Council could support the Report's recommendations by:

- Supporting investment in improved roads, data, electricity & housing infrastructure
- Encouraging efforts on employment retention through addressing energy security, cost and decarbonisation: biomethane, solar and wind.
- Encourage the improvement of existing and the development of new amenities, prior to the Ryder Cup.
- Supporting the delivery of the agreed 2032 Power Onshore Plan.
- Supporting the development of Foynes Port.
- Support the development of 'shovel ready' industrial sites to enable value-add.

The members welcomed the Report.

The Members asked what engagement the Taskforce had with public utility companies, national and local policies to achieving decarbonisation, and funding for the recommendations? Mr O'Sullivan responded to the Member's questions.

Mr Murray concluded that the Council would be reviewing the valuation base and rates in general, and rates for energy companies.

Item 3 – Presentation on the 12 Monthly Monitoring Report for the Limerick Development Plan

Ms Maria Woods gave a presentation on the Year 1 Monitoring Report for the Development Plan. She advised that the focus of this report was on the housing supply against the housing targets in the Plan.

The review found that the estimated population growth figures in the Plan are still valid. The Core Strategy identified a requirement for an additional 15,500 additional households by 2028. On an annualised basis the review found that a shortfall on the annual target of 1,832 houses in Year 1.

Ms Woods advised that the Year 2 review will look at all aspects of the Development Plan and not just at the Core Strategy and housing.

The Members asked about proposals for additional commercial office space at the Cleeves site; growth figures in the city area. Mr Murray and Ms Woods responded to the Member's items.

Item 4 – Presentation on the Emerging Arthur's Quay Framework Plan

Ms D Murray of Metropolitan Workshop outlined progress to date on the Framework Plan.

She outlined that there are a number of parcels of land being looked at, and at present there are a number of constraints at Arthur's Quay, namely that there is a lack of permeability and that it is too car focussed.

Challenges identified at this point are flood defence proposals; roads and traffic; quality and use of existing green space; buildings and retail offering. Opportunities identified include public space; the river; face buildings towards the river; reduce car access in parts; view of mountains/hills.

Ms Murray provided examples of urban enhancement schemes from around Europe which were at planning stage; under construction; or completed.

The members welcomed the presentation and asked about the following items: whether retail is included in the framework options, and whether retail is an appropriate option; has undergrounding the road through Arthur's Quay been considered; who commissioned the Framework Report; has LCC spoken with UL regarding its city centre building; how to encourage businesses and people back to the city centre; the need for ambition for the city centre and flexibility in the Framework Plan. Ms Murray answered the Member's queries.

Item 5 - Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor S. Novak Uí Chonchuir (referred from Meeting of Metropolitan District of Limerick held on 10th July, 2023)

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that a City Centre Forum be established, comprising Councillors from all three Metropolitan Wards, to ensure balanced and sustainable economic and physical development of the city centre.

In proposing the Motion Cllr Novak Uí Chonchuir said that it related to the core city centre area. There is a need to tackle dereliction and cleanliness, encourage city centre living, support retail and generate employment. We must create a successful and thriving city centre.

Cllr J Egan seconded the Motion.

Mr Murray responded to the Motion, and agreed to circulate a written response.

Cllr Novak Uí Chonchuir thanked the Director for his response.

Item 6 - Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Leddin (referred from Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick held on 18th September, 2023)

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that the Council undertake a review of our strategy and policies to attract and maintain business, in particular retail, in the core city centre area.

In proposing the Motion Cllr Leddin said that there was a need for a good mix of offer in the city centre. He believed there was a disconnect between business owners in the city centre, and the strategic vision for the area. He called for greater engagement with business owners to explain what was contained in the vision and plans.

Cllr Novak Uí Chonchuir seconded the Motion.

Mr Murray responded to the Motion, and agreed to circulate the written response he discussed.

Cllr Leddin thanked the Director for his response.

Item 7 - Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor C. Sheehan (referred from Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick held on 18th September, 2023)

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick for a presentation from the Economic Directorate on Cruises Street and that the Council convenes a working group with all relevant stakeholders including Councillors to consider the future of Cruises Street and address the level of vacancy and dereliction on the street.

Ms C Larkin advised the committee that Cllr C Sheehan had asked that this Motion be deferred until the next meeting of the Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning SPC.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Is mise le meas,

Bridie Collins

Chairperson of the Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning Strategic Policy Committee