

Chairperson's Report of the Blended Meeting of Limerick City & County Council Climate Action, Biodiversity and Environment Strategic Policy Committee held on Tuesday 9th April 2024 at 2.30pm.

Item 1 – Adopt minutes of the Climate Action, Biodiversity and Environment Strategic Policy Committee Meeting held on 20th February 2024.

The minutes of the meeting held on 20th February 2024 were proposed by Cllr. Scanlan and seconded by Cllr. O'Donoghue.

Item 2 – Clean Air Together – Limerick, presentation and discussion, Cathal Brodie, Senior Executive Scientist.

Mr. Brodie gave a detailed presentation regarding the Clean Air Together programme which will be implanted in Limerick this year. This programme, which is run by the EPA, has previously been rolled out in Dublin and Cork and volunteers measuring air quality in the vicinity of their homes over a 4-week period. Approximately 700 participants are expected to take part in the programme in Limerick. Which will include engagement with schools. The citizen measurements will help the EPA develop air pollutant mapping and forecasting models for the whole of Ireland. Citizen measurements help in the development and maintenance of the EPA's air quality modelling and forecasting work developed through the LIFE Emerald project.

Councillors broadly welcomed the project but expressed concern that more action should be taken to improve air quality in Limerick.

Item 3 -- Noise Action Plan 2024, presentation and discussion on next steps – Simon Jennings, Executive Scientist

Mr. Jennings gave an update on the Draft County Limerick Noise Action Plan 2024-2028 and the Draft Agglomeration of Limerick Noise Action Plan 2024-2028 (includes part of County Clare) which are both at Public Consultation stage on MyPoint Limerick from 5th April 2024 to 17th May 2024. Once the Public Consultation period has closed submissions made will be added and the final Noise Action Plans will be put forward on 18th July 2024. The NAP focuses on the harmful effects of noise created by major roads and

explores measures to mitigate these effects. Quiet areas such as Parks within Limerick City and County have also been studied.

Committee members questioned Mr Jennings regarding a number of specific issues in areas of the city and county including Croom town Park, Oola, Lough Gur and in regard to the development of the M20.

Item 4 – Tree Strategy, Update on public consultations, Cathal Brodie, Senior Executive Scientist

Mr. Brodie stated that the Limerick City and County Tree Policy 2024 – 2030 had just undergone 6 weeks of public consultation. No submissions were received. Therefore, he is now proposing forwarding this to full Council.

This was agreed by all - proposed by Cllr. Scanlan and seconded by Cllr. Secas.

Item 5 – Presentation and Discussion of the discussion paper on the Biodiversity plan for Limerick City and County – Sinead McDonnell – Biodiversity Officer

The members congratulated Ms. McDonnell on her appointment as Biodiversity Officer and Ms. McDonnell gave a detailed presentation on the Draft Discussion paper for LCCC Draft Local Authority Action Plan 2024/5-2030 and stated that the Biodiversity Officer programme is through The Heritage Council. In Q1/Q2 2025 the final LCCC Biodiversity Plan will be published following consultation(submissions can be made on My Point Limerick up to 27th May 2024), drafting, Environmental Screening and going to Full Council. The 3 pillars of this plan are Biosphere, Society and Economy. Humans are included re Biodiversity(variety).

A discussion took place specifically regarding the consultation process, new approaches to hedgerow laying and maintenance and the conservation of protected species.

Item 6 – Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor E. O'Donovan (to be referred to the Climate Action, Biodiversity and Environment Strategic Policy Committee)

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that this Council develop a clean air strategy for the Metropolitan area with a specific focus on the Mungret/Raheen/Dooradoyle areas.

Response:

The air quality in the Metropolitan Area of Limerick is generally good and meets EU norms. There have been no exceedances of the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2011 that warrant the Council to prepare an Air Quality Management Plan or Clean Air Strategy.

Significant effort has been made by the Council to develop its air quality monitoring system and statutory responsibilities and initiatives are undertaken to lower the levels of pollutants throughout the Metropolitan Area by implementation of the Air Pollution Act, 1987 (and associated regulations e.g. the Solid Fuel Regulations), expansion of walking and cycling routes, improved public realm and promoting the development of green infrastructure. In addition, the Council provides real-time online data to the public, and reports on air quality monthly, to promote and increase awareness of the importance of clean air, and

the links between cleaner air and better health. The responsibility for the regulation of emissions from large industrial sources that influence air quality in the Metropolitan Area (including the Mungret, Raheen and Dooradoyle areas) rests with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Where there are reports of alleged air pollution caused by large industrial sites the Council liaises with the EPA and provides support as may be requested.

Cllr. O'Donovan stated that Limerick has been identified by the Irish Times as one of the worst areas in the Country re air pollutants. Therefore, a pro-active air quality plan is required. Limerick City West data has already been collected that proves poor air quality.

This motion was proposed by Cllr. O'Donovan and Seconded by Cllr. Egan

Item 7 – Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor E. O'Donovan (to be referred to the Climate Action, Biodiversity and Environment Strategic Policy Committee)

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that dog wash facilities be installed close to dog parks in Limerick.

Response:

The Council have no plans to install dog wash facilities. However, the Council are considering installing a tap in the Dog Park area in Mungret Park for drinking water, which could be used for cleaning purposes if required.

Cllr. O'Donovan stated that we now have a dog park in Mungret and will have one in Newcastle West soon but these facilities can get muddy due to bad weather. The public have reached out to her re dog wash facilities.

Cllr. Egan stated that he has no issue with the proposal but raised a concern as to how it would be funded.

This motion was proposed by Cllr. O'Donovan and Seconded by Ms. M Hayes

Cllr. Collins (B) expressed good wishes to all in the upcoming local elections and closed the meeting.

Cllr Bridie Collins

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

16/05/2024