



Comhairle Cathrach
& Contae **Luimnigh**
Limerick City
& County Council

Seirbhísí Corparáideacha,
Comhairle Cathrach agus Contae Luimnigh,
Ceanncheathrú Chorparáideach,
Cé na gCeannaithe,
Luimneach

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20th November, 2024.

To: The Mayor, Príomh Chomhairleoir and Each Member of Limerick City and County Council

Re: Draft Strategic Policy Committee Scheme 2024-2029

A Chomhairleoir, a chara,

The Draft Strategic Policy Committee Scheme 2024-2029 was considered at the September 2024 meeting of Limerick City and County Council. Following approval of the Draft Scheme, it was placed on public display and the national key stakeholders were circulated with draft copies and invited to make submissions. Three submissions (enclosed) were received by the closing date of the 8th of November. These were considered by the Corporate Policy Group and it was agreed to amend Section 5 of the draft scheme.

I attach herewith Draft Strategic Policy Committee Scheme 2024-2029, which has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of Section 48 of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended by Section 41 of the Local Government Reform act, 2014 and respectfully request that the Council:

- Adopt the "Strategic Policy Scheme 2024-2029" as circulated
- Appoint Elected Members to the five Strategic Policy Committees

Is mise le meas,

Ciara Farrell,
Senior Executive Officer,
Corporate Services, Governance and Customer Services.



Comhairle Cathrach
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Limerick City
& County Council

Strategic Policy Committee Scheme

2024 - 2029

1. Introduction

The statutory basis for Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs) is set out in the Local Government Act, 2001 (Section 48) as amended by Section 41 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014, which provides that “a Local Authority shall establish committees to be known as Strategic Policy Committees to consider matters connected with the formulation, development, monitoring and review of policy which relate to the functions of the Local Authority and advise the authority on those matters.” Furthermore Section 48(1A) of the 2001 Act, as inserted by Section 41(a) of the Local Government Reform Act 2014, requires that at least one of the SPCs that is established shall be to consider matters which relate to the functions of the local authority in relation to economic development and enterprise support. All SPCs should consider climate as a cross-cutting issue in their work programmes. Limerick City and County Council, at its Annual Meeting on 21st June, 2024, appointed 5 Chairs of Strategic Policy Committees.

In accordance with Guidelines issued by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, there is a requirement that Strategic Policy Committee:

- Meetings should normally be held four times yearly at suitable times for all SPC members, a calendar of meetings to be agreed
- Have an annual work programme which should be linked to the local authority's Corporate Plan and Mayoral Programme and updated regularly as necessary
- Assist the Council in the formulation, development and review of policy for consideration and final decision by the full Council.
- Reflect the major functions or services of a local authority within a broader context
- Are tailored to the size, membership and administrative resources of the local authority
- Have a minimum one third of their membership drawn from sectors relevant to the committees' work
- SPC Chairs should hold office for a minimum of three years which could be renewed by the Council
- A Director of Service will attend meetings and provide support for each SPC

2. Role of Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs)

The Council is and remains the decision making Authority and it is the task of the SPCs, as committees of the Council, to advise and assist the Council in the formulation, development and review of policy. The remit of the SPCs is to deal only with policy matters and as such they are strategic in nature. They have no remit in relation to routine operational matters regarding the delivery of services. The SPC system is intended to give Councillors and relevant Sectoral Interests an opportunity for full involvement in the policy making process from the early stages. There is a requirement on each SPC to have regard to the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSES) prepared by the Regional Assembly. SPCs can provide advice and assistance to the Council in the preparation of individual Service Delivery Plans and in setting out the related objectives, strategies, standards and performance indicators.

3. Corporate Policy Group (CPG)

The Corporate Policy Group (CPG) comprises of:

- (a) the Mayor of Limerick (Chair);
- (b) the Príomh Chomhairleoir;
- (c) the Chairs of each of the Strategic Policy Committees;
- (d) in the case where a Municipal District is without an SPC chair, a representative of the District concerned.

Role of the CPG

- play a key role in preparing the budget ;
- provide input to the full council on any matter of general concern to the council either on its own initiative or following a request from the council;
- determine whether a function will be discharged at the municipal district or authority level, where reference in relation to this question is made to it;
- monitor overall performance of a local authority, including in relation to matters of governance and oversight, in particular through consideration of reports of the Audit Committee, Local Government Auditor and National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC), and in accordance with the local government code of governance;
- deal with overall issues in relation to service delivery plans, customer service, value for money, etc., (individual SPCs would deal with such issues in their work insofar as their particular service remit was concerned);
- approve the work programmes of the SPCs and monitor their achievement;
- coordinate the work of the SPCs;
- request SPCs to consider particular policy issues where appropriate;
- provide feedback to the SPCs on council policy and views in areas relevant to the SPCs;
- Be consulted in the preparation of the Corporate Plan
- Advise and assist the Príomh Chomhairleoir in the setting of the agenda for Council meetings.

4. Strategic Policy Committees 2024-2029 – Structure and Membership

Five Strategic Policy Committees are proposed as follows:

- Home and Social Development
- Travel and Transportation
- Economic Development, Enterprise, Tourism and Planning
- Community, Leisure, Arts, Heritage and Culture
- Climate Action, Biodiversity and Environment

Each SPC shall consist of 16 Elected Members and 8 sectoral interest nominees except in the case of the Community, Leisure, Arts, Heritage and Culture SPC whereby the sectoral interest nominees will be 10.

Each Councillor shall sit on 2 SPCs.

The Council appoint the Chairperson of each SPC. The Chairperson will hold office for a minimum period of 3 years and the overall spread of SPC Chairs must, in accordance with the guidelines, reflect the political representational spread on the full Council.

Membership of the SPCs (both Councillors and Sectoral Representatives) shall be for the lifetime of the Council. Casual vacancies which arise will be filled by the sector involved. Nominating bodies may also de-select their nominees.

Ethics

Part 15 (except sections 171, 175 and 178) of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended, applies to a member of a committee of a local authority.

In carrying out their functions under this or any other enactment, it is the duty of every member and every employee of a local authority and of every member of every committee to maintain proper standards of integrity, conduct and concern for the public interest.

An employee or a member of a local authority or of a committee of a local authority shall not seek, exact or accept from any person, other than from the local authority concerned, any remuneration, fee, reward or other favour for anything done or not done by virtue of his or her employment or office, and a code of conduct under section 169 may include guidance for the purposes of this subsection.

Where pecuniary or other beneficial interest: A member is obliged to disclose to meeting chair or administrator, withdraw from the meeting while the matter is discussed/considered, take no part in discussion/consideration and refrain from voting on it, neither influence nor seek to influence decision.

Lobbying

The Standards in Public Office Commission has advised that the Regulation of Lobbying legislation is applicable to Strategic Policy Committees.

As outlined in their guidance available on www.lobbying.ie;

Individuals and organisations who participate in Strategic Policy Committees or Advisory Groups established by a public body may have obligations under the Regulation of Lobbying Act.

Where such a working group's membership comprises of at least one person who, for the purposes of the Act, is a DPO, it may be the case that communications within the group could be considered lobbying communications. The person making these communications may be required to register as a lobbyist and to submit a return of this communication to the Lobbying Register.

However, the Act provides for an exception from the requirement to register in such cases once specified transparency criteria have been put in place. A [Transparency Code](#) was published by the Minister for Finance & Public Expenditure and Reform to address exactly this situation. Communications between members of working groups about the work of the group would be exempt where the group in question complies with the Transparency Code.

If you are leading or participating in an advisory group, task force or Strategic Policy Committee, you need to be aware that in some cases the communications that take

place within the group could be considered lobbying. You should check, therefore, that the group is adhering to the Transparency Code. Where a member of the group avails of the opportunity to speak to the DPO who is also a member about a separate relevant matter that would not enjoy the exemption and may have to be registered.

<https://www.lobbying.ie/help-resources/guidance-notes/strategic-policy-committees-advisory-groups-and-the-regulation-of-lobbying/>

Sectoral Representation

The following Sectors will provide representation on SPC Committees, where appropriate:

- Agriculture / Farming;
- Environment / Conservation;
- Development / Construction;
- Business / Commercial;
- Trade Union;
- Community / Voluntary;
- Social inclusion

Sectors to be asked to bear in mind the objective of achieving a 40% gender balance in the making of appointments, as well as the need to foster social inclusiveness and equality when selecting their representatives.

The Nomination Process

The nomination process for the Agricultural/Farming, Business/Commercial, Development/Construction and the Trade Union sectors will be facilitated by the National Pillars. (For national pillar contacts, see **Appendix 1**). The Environmental/Conservation sector will be facilitated by the Environmental Pillar and the associated Environmental College under the Public Participation Network (PPN) arrangements. Membership of this Electoral College will be validated by the environmental pillar. The Environmental/Conservation, Community/Voluntary and Social Inclusion sectors will be determined on the basis of the local nomination process through the PPN.

Member Organisations when joining the PPN must opt to be a part of one of three electoral colleges within the PPN:

- Environment
- Social Inclusion
- Community and Voluntary

To join the Environmental Electoral College under the PPN, an organisation's primary objectives and activities must be environmental (i.e. ecological) protection and/or environmental sustainability.

To join the Social Inclusion Electoral College an organisation's primary objectives and activities must focus on social inclusion/social justice/equality.

Organisations whose primary objectives are other than those listed above will be members of the Community and Voluntary Electoral College.

MEMBERSHIP

The following are the proposed SPCs and Membership.

Strategic Policy Committee	Elected Members	Sectoral Interests
Home and Social Development	16	8
Travel and Transportation	16	8
Economic Development, Enterprise, Tourism and Planning	16	8
Community, Leisure, Arts, Heritage and Culture	16	10
Climate Action, Biodiversity and Environment	16	8
Total	80	42

SECTORAL REPRESENTATION ON STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEES

Limerick City and County Council	Economic Development, Enterprise, Tourism and Planning	Climate Action, Biodiversity and Environment	Travel and Transportation	Home and Social Development	Community, Leisure, Arts, Heritage and Culture
Agriculture/ Farming	1	2	1		1
Environment/ Conservation	1	2	1		1
Development /Construction	1		1	1	1
Business/ Commercial	2	2	1	1	1
Trade Union			1	1	
Community/ Voluntary	2	2	2	4	4
Social Inclusion	1		1	1	2
TOTAL	8	8	8	8	10

5. Adoption of SPC Scheme

Following adoption by Limerick City and County Council of the new SPC scheme, with or without amendment, nominations will be sought for representatives to the SPCs. In the case of the National Key Stakeholder Pillars (i.e. Business/Employers Pillar, Trade Union Pillar, Farming/Agricultural Pillar and Environmental Pillar), Limerick City and County Council will write to the contact persons enclosing the adopted scheme and seek the nominations of those pillars for their particular SPCs as outlined in the adopted scheme.

With regard to the Community/Voluntary/Social Inclusion and Environmental/ Conservation Sectors, the Council will write to the PPN secretariat, enclosing a copy of the scheme and requesting selection of their representatives for the SPCs as set out in the adopted Scheme.

Appendix 1

National Contact Points of Key Stakeholders

Pillar	Name & Address	Telephone and e-mail
Farming	Irish Farmers Association (IFA) Irish Farm Centre Bluebell Dublin 12	info@ifa.ie
Business	Chambers Ireland 22-24 Lower Mount Street, Dublin 2	info@chambers.ie
Trade Unions	Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) Head Office 31-32 Parnell Square Dublin 1	deirdre.manion@ictu.ie 01 8897726
Environment	Irish Environmental Network Macro Community Resource Centre 1 Green St Dublin 7	office@ien.ie 01 8780116



PPN Limerick Submission to 2024-2029 Draft Strategic Policy Committee Scheme

Date	29 th of October, 2024
Contact for this Submission	Lorraine Broderick Resource Worker, PPN Limerick ppn@limerick.ie
Contributors	PPN Limerick Secretariat, Resource Worker, Plenary
Context	<p>Setup following Local Government reform in 2014, Public Participation Network Limerick (PPNL) is an independent network of community, environment and social inclusion organisations, working to build a better county for the community of Limerick. The PPN is co-ordinated by its Resource Worker, reporting to the PPN Plenary through the Voluntary Secretariat.</p> <p>PPN Limerick has 228 member organisations. These members are based across Limerick City and County. The PPN is the prescribed body to nominate community, environment and social inclusion representation onto various Council structures, including the SPCs.</p>

Introduction

Limerick PPN welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the new Strategic Policy Scheme. The PPN is committed to providing high quality community, voluntary, social inclusion and environmental representation on Limerick County Council Strategic Policy Committees.

The PPN is committed to providing on-going support to PPN Representatives who sit on Limerick County Council Structures. This includes on-going training, the servicing and development of PPN Linkage Groups, policy development, and so on.

The PPN wishes to highlight the Linkage Group structures that are in place to support PPN Representatives on Council structures. Linkage Groups are Thematic Networks of Community Groups who meet at least 3 times per year. Linkage Groups are representative of the geographical

spread and diverse community of County Limerick. Linkage Groups nominate and provide a mandate to PPN Representatives on policy issues that are relevant to the structure they sit on. The current has 5 Linkage Groups are:

- 1. Community, Leisure and Culture
- 2. Climate Action, Biodiversity and the Environment
- 3. Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning
- 4. Home and Social Development
- 5. Travel and Transportation

PPN Representatives will be supported by their Linkage Groups to regularly report back to the wider PPN membership through PPN Plenary meetings, e-newsletters and the PPN Secretariat.

General observations on the Scheme

4. Strategic Policy Committees 2024-2029- Structure and Membership

PPNL welcomes the inclusion of detail relating to **Ethics** and **Lobbying** in the draft Scheme. This detail mirrors PPNL’s existing governance relating to the nomination of representatives.

The Nomination Process

PPNL welcomes the inclusion of further detail acknowledging the PPN’s designated authority regarding nominations to the Community/ Voluntary, Environmental and Social Inclusion Electoral Colleges.

Membership

The Draft Scheme names 24 seats for PPN Representatives, in line with the 2019-2024 Scheme.

Limerick 40 Councillors	Home and Social Development	Travel and Transportation	Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning	Community, Leisure and Culture	Climate Change and Environment				5 SPC's	205,444
Councillors	16	16	16	16	16				80	53% C&V 14
All Sectoral Interests	8	8	8	10	8				42	S.I. 5
PPN Reps	5	4	4	7	4				24	57% Env 5

We have been advised that there will be two additional Representatives on the Climate action, Biodiversity and Environment (CABE) SPC and two less on the Home and Social Development (H&SD) SPC.

PPNL welcomes the addition of two seats on CABE, nonetheless the potential loss of two seats on H&SD is concerning. Housing is one of the largest issues we face at present, affecting the lives of

people across socio-economic lines. Having the Community/ Voluntary and social inclusion sector lose representation on this committee at this time is not satisfactory.

The Makeup of the H&SD SPC, at 8 members remains the same as the previous scheme, with no additional seats for other stakeholders i.e. Development/ Construction (1), Business/ Commercial (1) or the trade union sector (1).

PPNL wishes to be advised in what manner the 2 seats will be allocated, given that the PPN has nomination rights for the remaining Community/ Voluntary (4) and Social Inclusion (1) Seats detailed in the draft Scheme.

Adoption of SPC Scheme

“With regard to the Community/ Voluntary/ Social Inclusion and Environmental/ Conservation Sectors, the Council will write to the PPN Secretariat, enclosing a copy of the Scheme and requesting selection of their representatives for the SPCs as set out in the adopted Scheme”.

PPN Limerick has a set nomination process, which takes approximately 5-6 weeks.

This comprises of a week of preparing documentation and opening nominations.

Nominations remain open for 2 weeks.

One week where nominations are processed, with elections prepared where necessary.

Elections are launched and open from Monday-Friday the following week.

Appointments to SPCs are required to be submitted to the next Full Council Meeting.

It is of the upmost importance that LCCC request these Nominations at the earliest possible time following the Draft Schemes adoption so that we may begin our process.

It must be noted that SPC Meetings should not take place until all members of the Committee are in place. This will be after the Full Council Meeting following the completion of the PPNL Nomination process.

PPNL requests that the PPN Administration be included in the circulation of all Arrangements for meetings and Notice of Meetings.

This will allow the Administration and Secretariat to monitor and support the engagement of their Representatives. PPN administration is ppn@limerick.ie

4. Notice of Meetings

(b) In so far as practical meeting documentation should be circulated ten days in advance of a meeting to allow sectoral representatives an opportunity to consult within their sector in relation to same. Lack of receipt of documentation by any member or members of the committee shall not affect the validity of the meeting.

Submission of items for the Agenda are required 12 days before the Meeting but the above states that documentation will be, “ as far as practical”, circulated 10 days before the Meeting.

The PPN representatives are volunteers and inconsistent communication of the Agenda and documentation inhibits meaningful engagement by our Members of the Committees.

PPNL aim to hold Linkage group meetings in advance of each SPC Meeting. In order for the Representatives to discuss the upcoming meeting appropriately and have the opportunity to submit to the SPC they require access to the agenda.

PPNL acknowledges administration issues when formalising Agendas and submit that as Members of the Committee having a draft Agenda available could be appropriate.

It would circumvent issues detailed in this item if the order of business included a standing PPNL item. We would ask that the Chairs and administration of the SPC's consider this proposal.

The Secretariat and Administration of PPN Limerick looks forward to working with the Committees in the coming years.



Environmental Pillar

The Environmental Pillar

The Macro Centre

1 Green St

Dublin 7

Web: www.environmentalpillar.ie

Stakeholder submission regarding the Draft Limerick Council Strategic Policy Committee Scheme

From the Environmental Pillar

November 5th 2024

Dear Madam/Sir

The Environmental Pillar, a coalition of 34 National Environmental Organisations and a national Social Partner, welcomes the opportunity to participate in this consultation, and hopes that our constructive comments will be helpful in striking the right balance of expertise and engagement amongst the 'other sectors' across the proposed SPCs. The Environmental Pillar is a part of the Irish Environmental Network, and is responding as a stakeholder in these consultations.

The overarching driver of policy creation in the county must be for sustainable development. This requires the integration of social, environmental and economic considerations in all aspects of decision-making.

The Environmental Pillar welcomes the inclusion of Environmental Representatives on four of the five SPCs, and particularly welcomes the inclusion of two Environmental Representatives on the Climate Action, Biodiversity and Environment SPC. We have some additional comments on representation and remit below.

This is particularly relevant today in the context of the Dail's declaration of a National Climate Change and Biodiversity Emergency, the national Climate Action Plan, and National Biodiversity Action Plan. In this context, the policies developed by the SPCs over the next 5 years will be critical in enabling the County Council to play its part in both mitigation and adaptation of climate change and reversing the rapid decline in our essential biodiversity.

With this in mind we would respectfully propose the following underlying dimensions for the Scheme and for its operation, as well as a number of specific items.

Underlying Dimensions

Both Climate Change and Biodiversity are cross-cutting issues that can be impacted for better and for worse by policies developed in all four of the proposed SPCs. As such we suggest that these two very serious concerns are included in the workplan and deliberations as a part of the work of each SPC, and that the Corporate Policy Group ensures that all proposed policies being put forward from the SPCs are Climate and Biodiversity proofed.



Environmental Pillar

Similarly, Local Authorities are expected to assist in the delivery of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as outlined in the SDG National Implementation Plan. These 17 interlocking goals should be the foundation stones on which all policies are built. This intention requires the Authority to think globally and to act locally. The SDGs clearly provide the structure and guidance in which to develop and implement all policies within the remit of the Council. The SDGs are built around the understanding that a healthy natural environment is the basis for all human wellbeing, as is shown in the diagram below. The essential foundations for a healthy human society are a thriving biodiversity and healthy ecosystems in a stable and benign atmosphere. The economic systems need to nurture and support the natural environment and in so doing support the wellbeing of humanity, which is only one of the estimated 2 billion species on our shared planet.

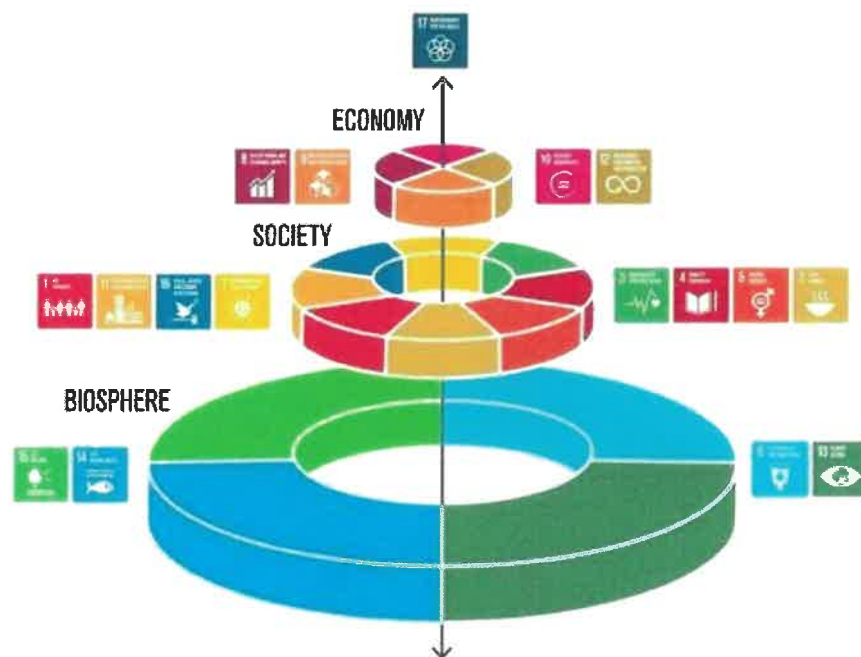


Diagram illustrating the relationship between the 17 SDGs

Taking all of the above into account, we ask the question, does the proposed make-up of the SPCs provide the necessary other sector expertise to enable a holistic approach to the policy development processes in each of the SPCs?

We would suggest that the answer should be yes, but that this might require some changes to representation of the other sectors on the SPCs.

Proposed Changes to the Draft Scheme

1. Inclusion of Climate Action and Biodiversity Protection across all SPCs



Environmental Pillar

The Revised Guidelines for Establishment and Operation of CPGs and SPCs prepared by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in June 2024 has outlined many suggestions that are not included in this draft. It states that “each SPC is required to consider climate action and climate impacts as part of any and all policies that form part of its work programme” and that “All SPCs should consider climate action as a cross-cutting issue in their work programmes.”

This is not mentioned in the Draft Scheme. We recommend the inclusion of this statement of intent in the Scheme.

2. What is Climate Action? The remit of all SPCs.

In light of climate action and impacts requiring consideration in each SPC, we would strongly recommend the inclusion of ‘Climate Action’ and ‘Biodiversity Action’ written into the remit for each SPC.

No written remit is included in the draft scheme. It would have been helpful to include a remit for each SPC so that the role of each SPC is better understood.

Climate Action includes action for biodiversity. The two topics are intrinsically linked, and they must both be considered together, as actions for one will affect the other.

The Revised Guidelines outline this connection in stating that:

Climate action should be considered in its widest sense, to include biodiversity action, water quality action, sustainable land use, energy (source and usage), resource management, sustainable transport/mobility, air quality/emissions, soil quality, waste management, community action, etc., and other related issues – reflecting the complex and integrated nature of climate action.

Even though they are both linked, we believe it is helpful to name both climate and biodiversity separately so as to ensure one is not forgotten over the other.

This will help to ensure that these vital and cross-cutting issues are not overlooked in the work of the SPCs. It will also help to ensure that the Local Authority can successfully support and implement the actions outlined in the county’s Climate Action Plan and Biodiversity Action Plan.

3. Effective Representation for Climate and Biodiversity

We welcome the inclusion of Environmental Representatives on four of the five SPCs. Action for climate and biodiversity cannot be effectively considered without specific expertise in climate and biodiversity on each SPC. Ensuring that a seat is available for an environmental representative is vital to achieve this representation.

Climate action and impacts need to be effectively considered in the discussion of policies across all SPCs, and so we strongly suggest the inclusion of Environmental seats on all SPCs.



Environmental Pillar

The revised guidelines suggest that “when an SPC ‘majors’ in the area of a PPN College, it may benefit from more than one representation by that College.” We strongly support this, and welcome the inclusion of 2 Environmental Representatives on the Climate Action, Biodiversity and Environment SPC.

In addition to the Environmental Representative(s) on each SPC, we would also recommend that at least one other SPC member on all SPCs, whether councillor or sectoral representative, have a broad knowledge of climate and biodiversity issues.

There is no reason why the percentage of other sector representatives could not be greater than in the Draft Scheme, given the flexibility outlined in ‘Revised Guidelines for Establishment and Operation’ for CPGs and SPCs. This would allow for further seats for PPN Representatives.

The PPN should have at least three seats on each SPC, one for each Electoral College (environment, social inclusion, community/voluntary).

It should also be noted that the positions for Sectoral Representation are vital for the inclusion of the community voice and expertise voices on the SPCs. Where seats for Sectoral Representatives cannot be filled, the seats should remain unfilled until a Representative is available. It is imperative that positions for Sectoral Representatives are not removed or reassigned if they are not able to be filled. The option for inclusion of these Representatives must always remain.

4. Operation of the Scheme and the SPCs

a. We strongly suggest the following points be added to the Draft Scheme:

i. A meeting between the full Council and the collective Sectoral Representatives should be held once a year.

ii. We support the Guidelines in their statement: “Local authorities should ensure that documentation concerning SPC meetings is sent well in advance of the meetings, ideally four weeks in advance.”

We would recommend the inclusion of this timeframe in the final SPC Scheme.

It is essential that all SPC members are given sufficient time to prepare for the meetings and to consult with the members of their nominating bodies in order to create the best foundation for meaningful debate.

iii. Meeting schedules are agreed by all members of the SPC. We welcome the inclusion of this in the statement “Meetings should normally be held four times yearly at suitable times for all SPC members, a calendar of meetings to be agreed.” It must also be the case that changes in that schedule are also only made following consultation with all the members of the committee. The timing and location of meetings should also be arranged by agreement amongst the committee members to facilitate maximum participation and, as far as is possible, proximity to public



Environmental Pillar

transport. Potential meeting times should be flexible, with the potential for evening meetings available to accommodate voluntary representatives.

iv. To facilitate the SPC in its policy making role, the SPC members should be consulted at an early stage and provided with all relevant background information.

v. Where nominated Other Sector representatives have difficulty participating in person, for good reason, it should be made possible for them to participate remotely.

vi. All members of the SPC should be able to add relevant items to the agenda of forthcoming meetings. Items that have not been reached should be automatically added to the next meetings agenda.

vii. Recommendations from an SPC to the Council may, where a consensus isn't possible, include a minority report or statement. This will give the Council the benefit of the full range of expertise and opinion.

b. Training: The Revised Guidelines suggest that:

Training programmes would be valuable for SPC members, and consideration of needs in this regard should be included in the Training and Development Programme for Councillors. Effective meeting skills would be useful for SPC chairs and training on policy areas would be significant for all SPC members. Policy development/research skills and facilitation skills would be valuable for Directors of Service and their support staff.

We suggest that an outline of training is included in the Scheme, and that the training includes all SPC nominees. Many of the Other Sector nominees, as well as some of the newly elected Councillors will be new to the SPCs and to committee structures and working. As the SPCs will generally only meet 4 times a year, some Committee Members may find it very hard to adopt to this new working environment, and consequently may feel unable to participate fully. In the case of the voluntary Other Sector Members may result in frustration and a tail off in attendance.

Training in advance of the first meetings of the SPCs, on the role of the SPCs, meeting skills and policy creation processes, would be an essential foundation on which to build their success. This should include training in conflict resolution. With the inclusion of climate action in each SPC, training on climate issues and how they overlap with the remit of each SPC would also be prudent for all SPC members.

5. Adoption of the Scheme

In '5. Adoption of SPC Scheme' it says; "In addition, the Local Authority will write to the national contact of the environmental sector seeking the validation of nominees to the Environment Electoral College under the PPN." This is not necessary. The national contact



Environmental Pillar

for the environmental sector is the Environmental Pillar, which is the national stakeholder in this case. The Environmental Pillar has a pre-arranged agreement with the Public Participation Network that all nominees for the environmental sector will be nominated from local groups through the PPN, upon agreement that environmental groups are validated by the Environmental Pillar upon joining the PPN Environmental College. As membership of this Electoral College will be validated by the environmental pillar at a national level, it is understood that nominees will have suitable environmental experience when nominated through the PPN.

Section 5 also includes the following which correctly outlines the process: "With regard to the Community/Voluntary/Social Inclusion and Environmental/ Conservation Sectors, the Council will write to the PPN secretariat, enclosing a copy of the scheme and requesting selection of their representatives for the SPCs as set out in the adopted Scheme."

We would suggest removing the sentence "In addition, the Local Authority will write to the national contact of the environmental sector seeking the validation of nominees to the Environment Electoral College under the PPN", as this is not necessary to the process.

Thank you for your attention. We trust that you find the above a useful addition to your deliberations, and that you are able to incorporate our suggestions into your final draft of the Scheme. Creating a strong SPC Scheme that includes meaningful participation through the PPN will strengthen the functionality of the SPCs, and enhance local policy creation by including and appreciating local knowledge and experience as an integral part of the process.

Kind regards

Catherine O'Toole

Development Officer

Irish Environmental Network

Mobile: 00353 (0)87 7804505

Email: catherine@ien.ie

Teideal:

An Ghaeilge i gComhairle Cathrach & Contae Luimnigh

I limistéar Comhairle Cathrach & Contae Luimnigh, de réir daonáirimh 2022, tá:

- 7,021 duine le Gaeilge an-mhaith acu
- 25,160 duine le Gaeilge mhaith acu
- 1,853 ag caint Gaeilge go laethúil lasmuigh den chóras oideachais

Tá ról ríthábhachtach le himirt ag Comhairle Cathrach & Contae Luimnigh i soláthar/in éascú seirbhísí trí mheán na Gaeilge, (m.sh. sa spórt, san fhorbairt tithíochta, san fhorbairt phobail, srl..) don phobal seo agus do dhaoine, dar ndóigh, a mbeadh spéis acu Gaeilge a fhoghlaim agus a úsáid níos mó.

Is fiú a chur san áireamh:

- I suirbhé neamhspleách a rinne *Ireland Thinks* i 2024, chuir breis is triúr as cúigear in iúl gur mhaith leo níos mó deiseanna a bheith acu le Gaeilge a úsáid
- Le hAcht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (Leasú) 2021 i bhfeidhm anois, tá na dualgais bhreise seo a leanas ar na hударáis áitiúla le cur i gcrích maidir leis an nGaeilge:
 - 20% d'fhógraíocht na Comhairle le bheith i nGaeilge
 - sprioc earcaíochta 2030: go mbeidh 20% de dhaoine a earcófar sa Chomhairle faoi dheireadh 2030 inniúil ar an nGaeilge agus ar an mBéarla
 - Margaíocht na Comhairle le teacht faoi Acht na dTeangacha
 - Comhlachtaí a mbaineann an Chomhairle úsáid astu le seirbhísí a chur ar fáil don phobal ar son na Comhairle le teacht faoi Acht na dTeangacha ... agus tuilleadh nach iad

Moladh

1. An Ghaeilge a chur san áireamh go saineúil i dteideal agus i gcuspoirí Choiste um Beartais Straitéiseacha agus fochoiste Gaeilge a bhunú láithreach bonn faoi chúram an CBS céanna.

Tá an cur chuige seo curtha i bhfeidhm cheana féin ag roinnt Comhairlí eile ina ndrúacht-scéim CBS:

Comhairle Contae Átha Cliath Theas - Arts, Culture, Gaeilge, Heritage and Libraries

Comhairle Cathrach Bhaile Átha Cliath - CBS Pobail, Gaeilge, Spóirt & Cultúir

Comhairle Contae Chiarraí - Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht SPC

Comhairle Chontae na Mí - Community & Cultural Development & Gaeltacht Affairs

Comhairle Chontae Mhuineacháin - Tourism, Rural and Community Development, An Ghaeilge and Cultural Services

Comhairle Chontae an Chabháin - Cultural Development, Irish Language and Sport

Beidh sé mar dhualgas ar an bhfochoiste seo straitéis & moltaí a chur le chéile maidir le cur chun cinn na Gaeilge san údarás áitiúil agus i measc an phobail i limistéar feidhme an údaráis áitiúil, agus iad a chur ar aghaidh chuig an CBS.

Má roghnaítear an cur chuige seo, ba chóir go mbeadh ar a laghad ionadaí amháin ón bpobal atá páirteach i gcur chun cinn na Gaeilge i limistéar feidhme an údaráis áitiúil ar an CBS féin chomh maith le cinntiú go mbeidh ionadaíocht don teanga óna lucht úsáide i limistéir na Comhairle.

Moltar go mbeidh ionadaíocht ar an bhfochoiste Gaeilge ag na daoine seo a leanas:

- Comhairleoirí
- Ionadaithe ó ghrúpaí pobail atá páirteach i gcur chun cinn na Gaeilge i limistéar feidhme an údaráis áitiúil
- Baill foirne leis an tacaíocht chuí a chur ar fáil don fhochoiste ar nós aon CBS eile

1. 'Pobal na Gaeilge' a chur san áireamh go sonrach mar earnáil ar liosta na n-earnálacha as a dtagann na hionadaithe do na CBS éagsúla (ina measc: talmhaíocht/feirmeoireacht, oideachas, tráchtáil/gnó)