

Planning & Environment SPC
18th December 2017
Railway Room, County Hall

Attendance

Cllr Maria Doyle	Louth County Council (Chairperson)
Cllr Tom Cunningham	Louth County Council
Cllr Antóin Watters	Louth County Council
Cllr John McGahon	Louth County Council
Cllr Peter Savage	Louth County Council
Richard Barry	Community & Voluntary Rep
Michael Smyth	Agricultural Rep
Eddie Phelan	Business/Commercial Rep
Anthony Abbot King	Senior Planner
Sinead McVerry	Senior Staff Officer
Damien Holmes	Executive Scientist

Apologies

Cllr Anne Campbell	Louth County Council
Breffni Martin	Environment Conservation Rep

Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting which took place on Wednesday 9th September 2017 were proposed by Cllr John McGahon and seconded by Richard Barry.

Matters Arising

Vacant Site Register which was discussed at previous SPC meeting, Cllr Doyle requested an update and Anthony Abbot King, Senior Planner advised no further update but it is anticipated there will be a return to the matter in 2018.

Local Needs Access Policy, it was stated at previous SPC meeting that the Department have issued a direction to local authorities to leave the matter as is and await further direction from central government at end of 2017, however it was noted no further direction has been issued to date.

Discharge of raw sewerage into the Irish Sea, the matter was raised at the previous meeting and it was agreed to discuss with Cllr Savage and agree how to progress the matter.

National Planning Framework 2040

Anthony Abbot King, Senior Planner advised the SPC members Louth County Council made a submission at issues paper stage of the National Planning Framework 2040 public

consultation, the submission highlighted the importance of the Dublin – Belfast Economic Corridor as the principal growth agglomerate on the island. It also outlined the importance of Dundalk and Drogheda as potential national growth centres.

When the draft National Planning Framework 2040 was produced it duly acknowledged the significance of the Belfast- Dublin Economic Corridor and the important spatial location of Dundalk/Newry. It also outlined the alternative city strategy and advocated development in brown field sites and infill development sites.

LCC made a further submission in November 2017 on the draft National Planning Framework 2040, in total over 1000 submissions were received on foot of the draft.

It is anticipated the National Planning Framework 2040 will be adopted in 2018.

Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy

Louth is currently located in the Eastern Midland Region this is the fastest growing region in the state with over 2.3 million people and 1 million jobs. The issues paper was published in November 2017 and submissions are welcome until 26th January 2017.

AAK stated LCC intend to make a submission based on the submissions previously made to the National Planning Framework 2040.

It was agreed meetings administrator will circulate link pertaining to Easter & Midland Regional Assembly : Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy to all SPC members.

Environment : LCC Recycling Policy

Chairperson Maria Doyle informed the members she had requested this item be placed on the SPC Agenda. She give a quick synopsis of the background of the issue pertaining from the council's decision to withdraw plastic recycling facilities from LCC bring banks throughout the County. The matter was discussed at the annual budget meeting to discuss the adoption of the 2018 budget, it was noted the executive advised it would cost in the region of €135,000 to return the plastic bring banks. The executive also stated 80% of the county was covered by a green bin collection and that a number of local authorities have started to phase out this service and that it would not have a significant effect on key Performance Indicators. Subsequently it was agreed the SPC would be the best vehicle for consideration of LCC recycling policy and any possible amendments.

At the December 2017 SPC meeting some SPC members acknowledged the amount of €130,000 to retain the plastic bottle bins in place was a significant amount of money.

Following a general discussion a number of members made points regarding the impact the withdrawal of the plastic recycling facilities would have on the blue flag beaches in Co Louth and concerns they would lose marks in Tidy Towns Competitions. In addition concerns were raised regarding the potential contamination of glass bins.

It was suggested a targeted approach should be adopted with regard to provision of plastic recycling services. It was suggested that the SPC would need further information on waste collection in Co Louth and up to date data in order to make an informed decision regarding any possible policy amendments.

It was agreed there should be liaison with litter wardens to determine if there has been an increase in the volume of fly tipping offences since the removal of the plastic recycling services at recycling bring banks.

It was also suggested arranging for council lorry to call to recycling sites in mid louth and other rural areas to avert the issue of fly tipping and contamination of existing recycling bins in situ.

Damien Holmes Executive Scientist informed the meeting that to date the LA had received no complainants from waste companies servicing the bottle banks regarding the contamination of the bottle banks. He also advised the meeting that in 2017, 212 tonnes of plastic had been collected from plastic recycling centres in Co Louth and noted this was not a particularly significant figure.

He also advised the members that it was anticipated the local authority would have further data/information by mid 2018 and this would be forwarded to the SPC members for consideration.

Ensuing out of the discussion the following actions were agreed:

- Chairperson Doyle asked the SPC members to consider the current recycling policy and to come back to the SPC with amendments /suggestions.
- It was agreed the SPC would adopt an evidenced based targeted approach with regard to provision of plastic recycling services.
- It was agreed the executive would assist the SPC and provide any relevant and available data and information to inform any amendments to policy.
- SPC members also called for up to date data from two council operated recycling centres to determine whether there is an increase in the number of people coming to these centres with large volumes of plastic since the removal of the plastic recycling services at bring banks.
- It was requested that LCC executive provide confirmation that removal of plastic recycling facilities at bring banks will not have an effect on the 3 Blue Flag beaches in Co Louth.
- The SPC members agreed to keep this item on the Agenda for the next SPC meeting.

Agreement of SPC dates for 2018

The following dates were agreed for Planning & Environment SPC meetings in 2018. It was noted that a number of members expressed difficulty in making the 3.30pm start time due to work commitments and it was agreed to commence the meetings at the later time of 4.30pm. with the intention of having the meetings finished by 5.45pm as it is noted County Hall closes at 6.00pm.

- Wednesday 7th March 2018
- Wednesday 6th June 2018
- Wednesday 5th September 2018
- Wednesday 5th December 2018

The meeting concluded at 3.15pm and the next meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 7th March 2017 at 4.30pm in the Cooley Room, County Hall.

Signed _____

Chairperson

Signed _____

Meetings Administrator

Signed _____

Senior Executive Officer