



Comhairle Contae **Lú** **Louth** County Council

Strategic Policy Scheme (SPC) 2019- 24

The Role of Strategic Policy Committee's

The Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) in the agreed structure should

- Assist the Council in formulation, development and review of policy, linked to the Council's corporate plan;
- Reflect the major functions of the local authority within the broader context;
- Reflect the size, membership and administrative resources of a local authority;
- Have one third of the membership of Committees from sectors relevant to the committees' work;
- Report directly to the council, through the Chairperson at the appropriate monthly meeting;
- Meet about four times a year
- Engage fully with the community and all relevant sectors and encourage public participation;

The SPC's should have a county-wide perspective. The Chairpersons of the SPC's sits on the Corporate Policy Group.

Considering all matters it is proposed that the Louth County Council, Strategic Policy Committee Scheme will have the following specific functions, listed as follows:-

- **Economic Development and Enterprise Support**
 - Economic Development & Enterprise
 - Tourism
 - Town centre regeneration & Retail
 - Cross Border & European Issues
- **Planning & Support Infrastructure**
 - County Development Plan & Local Area Plans
 - Transportation
 - Other Infrastructure including broadband
 - Emergency Services
- **Housing**
 - Rebuilding Ireland
 - Traveller Accommodation
 - Homelessness
- **Community, Quality of Life and Creativity**
 - Community Support & Development
 - The Arts, Heritage & Libraries including Creative Ireland
 - Friendly for all ages & abilities

- **Climate Action & Energy**
 - Climate Action and Adaptation
 - Environmental & Waste Management
 - Energy & Renewables

Each Chairperson shall hold office for a minimum of three years which can be reviewed by the Council only at Annual Council Meeting.

All Councillors should serve on one Policy Committee. A person ceasing to be a Councillor should also cease membership of the Policy Committee.

The Policy Committees and Chairpersons need to represent a balance of relevant interests and encourage representation of groups from disadvantaged areas. They must also strive to achieve gender balance. Sectoral interests may be represented on more than one Policy Committee and the County Council decides the Sectoral Interest on Policy Committees. The National Guidelines recommend the following national sectors are represented on at least one SPC.

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

Lobbying Act 2015 – Transparency Code

The Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015 (the Act) is designed to provide information to the public regarding who is lobbying whom about what. Individuals and organisations who participate in Strategic Policy Committees established by local authorities may have obligations under the Act.

A critical element of public policy formulation by the Strategic Policy Committees is the availability to the local authorities of expertise, skills and knowledge from persons outside of the public service. Where membership of the Committee comprises of at least one person who, for the purposes of the Act is a Designated Public Official, 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 and Public Expenditure and Reform to address this situation. Communications between members of Strategic Policy Committee about the work of the Committee would be exempt where the group in question complies with the Transparency Code.

Nomination Process

The designations of these pillars originate from a national process and provide the representatives to the local authority. These are the farming and agricultural organisations pillar, business and employer's organisation pillar and trade union organisations pillar and the environmental pillar.

Nominations for the Community and Voluntary & Social Inclusions representation will be drawn from the Public Participation Network.(PPN) Generally for a sectoral interest, in this grouping to be considered for inclusion in a Strategic Policy Committee, it is recommended that:-

- Groups should be active in the local authority area and have a county wide mandate
- Groups should be open to new members and be structured in accordance with normal procedures
- Exclusively single issue groups should be avoided

Sectoral interests, once recommended, should:-

- Select its own nominee
- The Local Authority may request that the nominee should have relevant knowledge and experience
- Be allowed one month to make the selection of the nominee
- Failure by any Sector to make a nomination will require the Local Authority to decide by way of lot

Having regarded the above process the following is agreed:-

Strategic Policy Committee – Economic Development and Enterprise Support

Sector	Organisation
Agriculture/Farming	Farming Pillar
Development/Construction	Business Pillar
Business/Commercial	Business Pillar
Community/Voluntary	PPN College
Social Inclusion	PPN College

Strategic Policy Committee – Planning & Support Infrastructure

Sector	Organisation
Business/Commercial	Business Pillar
Environmental/Conservation	PPN College
Community/Voluntary	PPN College
Agriculture/Farming	Farming Pillar
Social Inclusion	PPN College

Strategic Policy Committee – Housing

Sector	Organisation
Development/Construction	Business Pillar
Environmental/Conservation	National Environmental Pillar
Trade Unions	Trade Unions Pillar
Social Inclusion	PPN College
Environmental	PPN College

Strategic Policy Committee – Climate Action & Energy

Sector	Organisation
Business Commercial	Business Pillar
Environmental/Conservation	National Environmental Pillar
Environmental/Conservation	PPN College
Community/Voluntary	PPN College
Agriculture/Farming	Farming Pillar

Strategic Policy Committee – Community, Quality of Life & Creativity

Sector	Organisation
Environment/Conservation	PPN College
Social Inclusion	PPN College
Arts	PPN College
Sport	PPN College
Youth	PPN College

Overall Membership of Committees

The following configuration is proposed:-

Committee	Councillors	Sectoral Interests	Total
Economic Development and Enterprise Support	6	5	11
Planning & Infrastructure Support	5	5	10
Housing	6	5	11
Climate Action & Sustainability	6	5	11
Community, Quality of Life & Creativity	6	5	11
Total	29	25	54

Each SPC will develop a work plan for itself. The Chair of the SPC will be responsible for communicating to the SPC members in relation to issues raised at the CPG. The agenda and timing of meetings is a matter for the SPC to decide in consultation with the Louth County Council official's co-ordinating the SPC.