

**Minutes of Meeting Climate Action, Environment, Recreation & Amenity  
Strategic Policy Committee Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020  
held in the Council Chamber, City Hall and via Zoom**

Presiding: Cllr. M. O'Connor

Present: Cllr. D. McDonnell, Cllr. D. Lyons, Cllr. T. O' Flaherty, Cllr. C. Connolly, Cllr. N. Murphy, Cllr. O. Hanley, Cllr. J. Connolly, Mr. B. Smyth, Ms. C. Stanley, Mr. C. Ryan

Mr. D. Mahon, A/Director of Services, Ms. C. Kilcoyne, Senior Engineer, Ms. H. McDonagh, Administrative Officer, Mr. D. Skene, Senior Executive Engineer, Mr. P. Batty, Executive Engineer, Mr. R. O' Reilly, Senior Executive Engineer, Ms. F. Griffin, Assistant Staff Officer

Apologies: Ms. E. Hough

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Cllr. M. O'Connor opened the Meeting by welcoming Cllr. N Murphy to the Committee. She clarified that this Meeting was a Special Meeting to conclude the Agenda of the 26<sup>th</sup> May, SPC Meeting.

**Item 7            Climate Change Adaption Plan**

Following on from the last SPC Meeting where Mr. P. Batty delivered a presentation, he advised the members that progress on implementing the plan had been delayed by Covid 19 crisis. The Climate Action Monitoring Group will meet before the next SPC meeting and a further update will be given at the next appropriate SPC meeting. Mr. D. Mahon stated that Local Authorities are preparing a business case for additional resources, potentially two or three positions. He also advised that these new positions if approved, will not take away from recruitment of the positions that were suspended due to Covid 19. There is also a national push for Bio-Diversity Officers.

**Item 4            Cemeteries Development 2020 – 2022**

Mr. D. Skene delivered a presentation on cemeteries development which included information on a number of new plots at Ragoon created during the lockdown and new urn burial plots currently in construction at Bohermore Cemetery. The following comments/queries were raised by the members:

- Current status of the proposed new cemetery site on the east side of the City
- Did the discovery of granite in the ground reduce the potential number of plots in Ragoon and does it affect the number of burials one plot can facilitate
- Is the Council looking at another site for the west side of the city
- Can vacant plots/empty green space gaps in the older parts of the cemeteries be used going forward for additional space
- There is a number of small cemeteries in the City, what is the status of these, could they also be used to create additional plots
- Bio-diversity surrounding burial options should be considered by the Council
- Crematorium
- Clarification in relation to green spaces in older parts of the cemetery.

It was agreed written responses to the queries raised would be issued to the members.

Cllr. C. Connolly asked for an update on motions passed by Council on signage placed at the cemetery. Mr. D. Mahon replied stating that he cannot recall any motion in the last two years on this item. Cllr. M. O' Connor suggested that Cllr. C. Connolly submit a motion to Galway City Council for consideration.

#### **Item 6           CFRAM - Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management**

Mr. R. O'Reilly provided an update on CFRAMs by referring to the document previously circulated to the members. The following comments/queries were raised by the members:

- Cllr. N. Murphy asked if he could have a copy of information previously circulated to members as he is new to the Committee
- How will the scheme integrate with the Mobility Plan and other projects around the City
- Is the funding sufficient to complete the project
- How much input will the OPW have on the project
- Is there engagement with the business owners in Salthill on the project
- Given the timeline of 90 Months, is this for the entire project as one or will it be broken into numerous projects
- How will the Spanish Arch /Public Realm works be funded, is this GCC funding

It was agreed that written responses to the queries raised would be issued to the members along with the circulation of any requested documentation.

#### **Item 8           Derelict Sites**

Ms. H. McDonagh provided a brief outline on the report previous circulated to the members on Derelict Sites. The following comments/queries were raised by the members:

- The status of various sites around the city that are not included on the Register
- In relation to levies applied in the last year, what is the current status re payment
- Why is there a lot of discretion given to land owners
- Can Galway City Council acquire the properties in cases where the owner is not engaging
- Louth County Council acquired 50 properties through the CPO process, why can't Galway City Council do the same
- Several queries were raised in relation to a Section 11 Notice and in particular the demolition Notice served on the former Corrib Great Southern Hotel.
- It was stated there was not enough information in the report circulated and a request was made for owner details in relation to properties on the Register.

Ms. H McDonagh and Mr. D. Mahon responded to the queries raised as follows: The sites on the Register currently are not the only sites that Galway City Council are pursuing under Derelict Sites, there was over 90 inspections carried out last year on sites throughout the City. Discussions are on-going with owners where possible to address the dereliction and to prevent the sites being entered on the Register. Difficulty in contacting owners in some cases. Information in relation to individual payments cannot be provided due to Data Protection legislation. The Compulsory Purchase Order process can be utilized under the Derelict Sites legislation however the Local Authority must have the funds to buy the site in the first place and must have a use for the property. The properties acquired in Louth was carried out under Housing legislation, Galway City Council take a different approach and it seems to work well. Ownership details cannot be disclosed. It was also stated that the report circulated included the procedure for dealing with Derelict Sites, current status of sites on the Register etc. and is considered a sufficient report for the Policy making Committee. It was agreed that further clarification in relation to Section 11 Notices issued on two properties in the City would follow via a written response to members.

**Item 9****AOB**

- Queries were raised in relation to the increase of vermin sightings across the City – Ms. C. Kilcoyne advised that Galway City Council are aware of the issue and a report is currently being compiled.
- The issue of increased litter around the city especially takeaway packaging was raised – Ms. Kilcoyne advised that they are looking at setting up a meeting with takeaway owners to discuss same.
- It was asked if the volunteer litter pick/spring clean was operational again – Ms. Kilcoyne said this needed to be confirmed and will follow up on same.
- Ms. C. Kilcoyne advised there is an issue with green waste being left for collection by residents in estates, this is attracting more rubbish and it has been decided that this green waste will no longer be collected, notification will issue via social media and the local press for a change in practice. There will however be a new initiative in which Galway City Council will visit each estate 2 days a year (one before bird nesting season and one after) to collect trimmings which will then be mulched on site and reused in our Forest Parks.
- It was requested that the use of pesticides be highlighted with residents.

Meeting concluded.