

**Minutes of meeting Climate Action, Environment, Recreation & Amenity
Strategic Policy Committee held on Wednesday the 30th November, 2022
via Microsoft Teams & in Council Chamber, City Hall, College Road, Galway.**

Presiding: Cllr. M. O'Connor

Present: Cllr. D. Lyons, Cllr. O. Hanley, Cllr. D McDonnell, Cllr. T O'Flaherty, Cllr. N Murphy, Ms. E. Hough, Ms. C. Stanley, Mr. B Smyth, Mr. P. Greene, DOS, Ms. S. Connolly, SE, Mr. D. Redington, A/SEE, Ms. L. Smyth, A/SEPS, Ms. P. Fahy, ASO, Ms. P Kearney, Biodiversity Officer, Mr. U Finn, SE, Ms. M. Keane, SO, Prof John Sweeney, (ICARUS), Mr. Chris Nolan, Ms. Leitzia Gorini Coady & Ms. Michelle Chiperi, SAUTI Youth.

Absent/Apologies: Cllr. C. Connolly, Cllr. J. Connolly, Mr. C. Ryan

Item 1. Minutes of Meeting held on the 28th September, 2022

The Minutes of the SPC meeting held on the 28th September, 2022 were proposed by Cllr. D. Lyons and seconded by Cllr. T. D. McDonnell and adopted by members.

Cllr. Terry O'Flaherty expressed sympathy on the death of Mr. Joe Greaney a former employee of Galway City Council.

Item 2. Matters Arising

The members requested updates on the following:

- The use of turf from the Environmental Awareness Officer.
- If there is a timeframe for the replacement of Mr. Paul Batty, Executive Engineer as the item relating to the Climate Change Bureau was not on the agenda for discussion and deferred at the earlier meeting
- Timeframes for the following: Part 8 for Renmore Playground, Kingston and South Park Master Plans, the Ball Wall at McGrath's Field and Audit of the Kissing Gates and reference was made to a recent installation of a gate at Ballybane
- A request was made for a short pathway to be installed from the old entrance to Shangort at McGraths Field Playground
- Date for a meeting of the Waterways Stakeholder Group to discuss the Green Spaces Strategy & Blue Spaces Strategy which were not included in the Draft Programme of works for 2023
- The appointment of a Tree Officer
- A request was made to ensure that documentation relating to SPC meetings to issue at least two weeks in advance of the SPC meeting
- Why Draft work programme does not list Kissing Gates

The queries were responded to by the Executive as follows:

- The Green Space Strategy tenders were received this week which need to be analysed and it is expected to commence the strategy over the coming weeks
- It is expected that a Tree Officer will be appointed in early 2023
- Works at McGraths field are due to commence early next year
- An apology was issued for the late circulation of SPC documentation, and a commitment made to circulate a minimum of one week in advance going forward
- Will look at reconvening a meeting of the Waterways Stakeholder Group
- The ball wall locations will be re-examined before progressing same
- In relation to Masterplans a framework approach is being undertaken to pre-qualification stage. It is expected to have approximately 5 consultants on this framework which will then expedite the tender process.
- The Climate Change Bureau is now under the directorate of Ms. Patricia Philbin, Director of Services for Infrastructure Development, Planning & Climate Change and there is no replacement for Paul Batty to date
- As Mr. T. McCusker has an educational role the matter raised in relation to the use of turf will be referred to him to be examined
- An update on Kissing Gates audit will be given at the next SPC meeting and the recent barrier installed at Ballybane to disrupt anti-social behaviour was activated by the Housing Department on receipt of requests from Elected Members, Residents and Gardai

Item 3. Irish Climate Analysis and Research Units (ICARUS)

Professor John Sweeney gave a presentation to members.

The members thanked Mr. Sweeney for the excellent presentation and made the following comments:

- The 1.5 degree increase is hard to relay to people
- The recent rezoning of flood plains in the Development Plan and the Galway City Ring Road were raised
- As we are also facing a biodiversity crisis, we need to protect our green spaces and reference was made to the destruction of old biodiversity and replacement with new biodiversity
- The business community should have been involved in the first stage of the Climate Adaptation Strategy
- Concerns were raised in relation to the removal of car parking in the city centre as it contributes to the commercial rates
- The shortage in supply of electric vehicles as Galway City Council planned to purchase 12 electric vehicles, however, could only purchase 4 due to shortage
- Good progress made with retrofitting of Local Authority Units
- The need for additional staff to implement the national plans issued to Local Authorities to implement
- A request was made for Prof Sweeney to give his presentation to full Council

Item 4. SAUTI Galway

Ms. Chiperi from SAUTI Youth gave a presentation to members.

The members thanked Ms. Chiperi for her excellent presentation and the following queries were raised by members:

- Clarification was sought if SAUTI has a direct Galway City Council contact person to get updates in relation to progress on the plans
- Impressed with the group in their comparison with plans in the Development Plan
- Ms. S. Connolly confirmed that she linked in with SAUTI when a Tanzanian youth group visited Galway recently. The group visited Lough Atalia and the greening of laneways and were impressed on how clean Galway City is. Following their visit to Galway the group are planning to harvest their own water supply
- A request was made to have a youth representative on the SPC committee however, it is a long process. It was noted that Wicklow County Council has a member on the SPC committee through An Comhairle Og. Members were supportive however there are legalities nationally that must be adhered to.

Item 5 (A). Proposed meeting dates for 2023

- Proposed by Cllr. D. Lyons and was seconded by Cllr. T.O. Flaherty
 - Dates were confirmed as follows: Wednesdays at 2.30pm on the following dates 22nd February, 24th May, 27th September and 29th November 2023

Item 5 (B) Draft Work Programme for 2023

- After a discussion it was agreed to include in the Draft Work Programme for 2023 update on Masterplans and updates on strategies and to circulate to members for discussion with their relevant groups for ratification at the February SPC meeting.
- It was clarified that additional projects may be included in the programme of works during the year should they arise.

Item No. 8. AOB

A request was made by Cllr. Lyons for the executive to convey the SPC's member's gratitude to Mr. P. Batty for all his hard work and commitment and to wish him well in his new role and Cllr. O'Flaherty seconded.

The Meeting concluded.