

REPORT

Meeting of Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning SPC

Council Chamber, City Hall, Merchant's Quay, Limerick

Monday, 9th October 2017

Brian Thompson - PPN Representative for Community and Voluntary Sector

SPC Chair has now rotated to Cllr. Vivienne Crowley (FF) from Cllr. Noel Gleeson (FF). Cllr Gleeson thanked a lot of people who helped him in his term.

1. **MINUTES** adopted of the last meeting.

2. **MOTION:** Cllr. Cian Prendiville proposed the following motion and a debate ensued:

That the Council look to amend the Development Plan to ban the development of incineration, gasification, fracking, and other environmentally damaging and destructive industries in Co. Limerick.

- CP spoke in support of the motion: Policy of State lags behind the people's wishes and generally accepted environmental practice in not banning these industries. Mid West already has enough environmental threats in the Irish Cement incinerator and Aughinish Alumina, and fracking itself is already banned at national level. Limerick should be in forefront of starting an environmental debate on degrading industries.
- Most Councillors who spoke supported the motion but there were a few who opposed it. I spoke to support it. The main issue is about where waste comes from and how to prevent it in the first place while re-using and recycling the waste that is produced, and to have a policy of sustainable energy sourcing rather than fossil fuels.
- Legal Advice from Solicitors, sought by the executive, was reported to the Committee: That gasification and incineration, as energy producing processes from waste could not be banned as the approved Regional Waste Management Plan included this as one of the supported forms of waste management.
- This advice was challenged by various councillors and by me. An environmental perspective on the issue might look at EU Environmental Directives in this regard and come to a different legal view.
- There is a motion in the main Council meeting on Monday next to challenge this advice and support the motion, and Cllr. Prendiville was happy to defer the motion for the main meeting's decision.

3. FORWARD PLANNING UPDATE: Officials advised schedule of forthcoming issues for the Council:

- Variations to City Development Plan 2010
 - Rezoning to assist Residential Development.
 - Change to the Plan's wording with regard to the Adare Bypass and its route. This is to allow more options to be considered for the route.
- Castletroy Local Area Plan
 - First draft of issues on display till 6th November
 - Final Draft on display in early 2018
- Hospital Local Area Plan
 - Amendment on display till 6th November
 - CEO Report on the issue - 15th Dec 2017
- Caherconlish Local Area Plan
 - CEO Report for Cappamore/Kilmallock Municipal Meeting in October
- City Centre Health Check – survey of City Centre area examining occupancy/vacancy/footfall etc. Survey is complete and currently being mapped.
- Limerick Heritage Plan 2017-2030: Outlines broad aims and objectives, and policy is in place to support any actions when funding opportunities arise.
- Draft National Adaptation Framework (NAF) for Climate Change currently on display until 27th October. Implications for zoning, infrastructure, flood risk areas, energy provision and transport and emergency planning. Local Adaptation Plans required to be complete by 10th March 2018.

4. NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK (NPF):

National Planning Framework (NPF) DRAFT was outlined in a presentation:

- Nationally
 - 20% increase of 2016 population by 2040 = 5.75 million.
 - >65 age will double to 1.3 million or 23% of total.
 - 500,000 new houses and 660,000 new jobs required.
- Targets for Southern Region:
 - a growth in population of 350,000 – 375,000 (2 million total)
 - increase in jobs – 220,000 additional (880,000 in total)
- Target Growth for Limerick City: 52,000
- The 5 main cities will accommodate 50% of all national growth
- Northern, Western and Southern Regions combined will grow at comparable rates to Eastern and Midland
- Renewal of existing built-up areas is the focus – 40% of new housing to be delivered within existing built-up areas of cities, towns and villages by re-developing derelict and under-utilised land.

- Refocus Planning / Development to enable a national transition to an environmentally sustainable economy
- Statutory arrangements between spatial and transport planning in the Greater Dublin Area will be extended to other cities.
- NPF will be underpinned by legislation and independent Office for Planning Regulation.
- Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies: follow through to regional and local level
- Statutory Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan for Limerick and surrounds as a whole envisages planning across Co. Clare boundary (as it would in Waterford/Kilkenny and between Cork City and County). City viewed in holistic way considering the whole area it affects rather than the lines on a map.
- Submissions period is to 3rd November 2017. I noted to the Committee again the unrealistic nature of this period for meaningful submissions by Community and Voluntary Organisations. Plan was only published on 26th September and is 150 pages long and has complex subject matter. This gives voluntary organisations a period of five and a half weeks to read digest and formulate a submission.
- Work on ten year National Investment Plan 2018 – 27 underway by Dept of Finance / Public Expenditure in tandem.
- NPF will be brought back to Government in December for decision on a final Plan.
- NPF can be seen at <http://npf.ie/>

5. **DIGITAL STRATEGY:**

Council's Digital Strategy was outlined in a presentation:

- Council is engaging with technology to provide better services to citizens.
- Plan for 2018 infrastructure is Broadband, Smart Communities, CCTV, WiFi, Data Network.
- Strategy involves:
 - Consultation
 - Information and Marketing
 - Service integration
 - Infrastructure development
 - Data and Analytics
 - Innovation
- There are 125 programmes involved and many of these are either already implemented or are in train. The balance are already planned for.
- Online services from the Council / Smarter Travel / Smart buildings and districts / Measuring footfall/ Website development (limerick.ie) etc are examples of what this means for Limerick.
- Limerick signed up to international digital charter along with other smart cities.
- General praise for the initiative all round.

6. **Next Meeting is Monday 4th December 2017**

Groups are welcome to submit any policy concerns to me for bringing forward.