

Minutes of Planning & Support Infrastructure Strategic Policy Committee Meeting held on the zoom platform on the 9th December, 2020 at 3 p.m.

In Attendance

Cllr. Maria Doyle	Louth County Council
Cllr. Edel Corrigan	Louth County Council
Cllr. Hugh Conlon	Louth County Council
Eddie Phelan,	Business Sector
Richie Barry	Community – Tallanstown Tidy Towns

Officials

Joanna Kelly, Senior Planner
John O' Hagan, Senior Engineer
Colette Moss, SEO
Caitriona Kiernan, Staff Officer

Minutes of Meeting

Minutes of the Planning & Support Infrastructure SPC meeting held on the 28th October, 2020 were proposed by Cllr. Edel Corrigan and seconded by Cllr. Hugh Conlon.

Matters arising from SPC meeting of the 28th October, 2020

Cllr. Doyle flagged that the closing date for submissions to the draft County Development Plan was the 23rd December at noon.

Cllr. Doyle also raised the need to think about policy work programme going forward and consider how the SPC could feed into future review of policies e.g. Dundalk taxi stand by-laws. Colette Moss indicated that there was a presentation made to the MD Meeting on taxi by-laws and she would check to see if this was policy and would revert next week.

Other Queries

Cllr. Corrigan raised a query in respect of community engagement and was there anyway of setting out a policy regarding community engagement in the County Development Plan and influencing planning conditions. Reference was made to UK Government contracts and that there were stipulations there around contractor's obligations regarding community engagement and bonds.

John O'Hagan indicated that the design phase builds in non-statutory public consultation requirements. (e.g. Clanbrassil Street, newsletter and 5 meetings). Cllr Doyle queried whether this consultation works. J O'Hagan indicates that it does work and gives a head up to local businesses that may be affected in the next phase and works progress and how to manage access.

Eddie Phelan policy area is develop a charter for community engagement and building management and manage best practice. Developers could set out how their planning applications could set out they have signed up to this charter and it is a way to stay out of the quagmire of the legislation

Eddie Phelan indicated that caution need to be given exercised as any such proposals cannot contradict national legislation and the requirement for consultation will be used by some to frustrate development process. He also queried how do you put a value on social disruption and ultimately any fund/additional levies would get passed onto the consumer.

Cllr. Conlon supports Cllr Corrigan on this point and considers that this is something that should be addressed at national level.

John O'Hagan suggested that funding available for public projects is also a factor that should be considered.

Cllr. Corrigan suggested that there could be regulations around community consultation when it comes to contractors. The use of IT could be looked at particularly as to directing the public in how to engage in the process. It was suggested that a charter on community engagement and building programme could be prepared.

Planning

Cllr Conlon queried when members would receive the submission and when would amendments be considered.

Joanna Kelly outlined that the closing date was the 23rd December at noon and that all submissions were being uploaded to the website for viewing in line with our statutory obligations. The CE report would be prepared for March in accordance with statutory requirements. Thereafter you have a period of time to consider the CE report and prepare amendments on foot of that report. Any material amendments required will be required to go back on public display.

Cllr. Corrigan queried if zoom meetings could continue given the heightened awareness around planning. The senior planner indicated that the forward planning section were happy to accommodate any queries people had regarding the plan and planning would continue with including zoom meetings. Jkelly indicated that while there is a lot of concerns around one off housing, this is not being translated into submissions. Jkelly indicated that planners are happy to help explain to people how to make a submission and indicated that it is always the last week when the bulk of submissions are made.

Infrastructure

The Senior Engineer set out that he was happy to commence work on public light policy and it would be ready by the end of February.

John O'Hagan indicated that the NTA had just issued a press release regarding €50m cycling and walking fund for Leinster area. Louth will most likely be applying but timescale to spend money was a factor to consider. Infrastructure would have an idea of projects but need to consider if planning is required. If works are emergency works there is provision in the Act where they don't require permission.

Cllr. Corrigan indicated that there was a lack of community engagement around provision of cycle lanes and that they are not being utilized.

The Senior Engineer indicated that as part of the LAP process local transport plans would be prepared and will look at trip generation by people, schools so as to establish transport and travel patterns. These plans would target transportation hubs i.e. how to join bus to train station and schools to residential areas. J. O'Hagan to send on press release from NTA. There was potential to look at 'go slow' areas i.e. 30 kph in town centres.

Cllr Doyle indicated that she was keen to look at by-laws in housing estates again.

Further queries

Eddie Phelan suggested a policy area would include listed buildings and that a policy around engagement on the re-development, re-purposing of these in order to revitalise our towns. The Senior planner considered this is an area that could be explored given extent of protected structures in Drogheda and Dundalk.

Richie Barry raised the issue of bring banks and schemes that were implemented by community. He indicated that funding had been reduced from €500 to €200. This was very unfortunate for the year that was in it. Concerns were raised around Christmas and overflow issues. J O'Hagan queried who funds these banks?

Next Meeting

It was agreed the next SPC meeting would be held on 20th January 2021.

It was also agreed that the SPC would be held in mid-January, mid-April, mid-July and mid-October.

