

**Minutes of Meeting of Planning & Emergency Services Strategic Policy Committee held on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2019 at 9.30a.m. in Thurles Municipal District Council Chamber, Castle Avenue, Thurles.**

**Present:** In the Chair - Cllr. Phyll Bugler  
Councillors – Micheál Lowry, Michael O’Meara, Joe Hannigan, John Carroll, Michael Fitzgerald, Ger Darcy, Marie Murphy.  
John O’Shaughnessy.

**In Attendance:** Sharon Kennedy, Acting Director of Services  
Brian Beck, Senior Planner  
Dave Carroll, Chief Fire Officer  
Brian Clancy, Administrative Officer

**Apologies:** Cllr. Roger Kennedy, Tim Harty, Karl Cashen, Director of Services, Nuala O’Connell, Senior Executive Planner, Caroline Conway, Senior Executive Planner.

**1. Introductions**

Cllr. P. Bugler welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Planning and Emergency Services SPC since the Local Elections in May 2019. All present introduced themselves. Cllr. Bugler congratulated Sharon Kennedy on her appointment as Director of Services with Offaly County Council from January 2020.

**2. Role of SPC**

Sharon Kennedy, Acting Director of Services gave a presentation on the role of the SPC. The principal points were as follows:

**Background to the establishment of the SPCs**

- Statutory basis for SPCs set out in Section 48 of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended by Section 41 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014.
- Strategic Policy Scheme 2019- 2024 adopted by TCC September 2019.
- 6 SPCs including Planning and Emergency Services SPC.

**Role of SPC**

- SPCs facilitate engagement and input from local sectoral representatives, working alongside the elected members of the Council, in the preparation, development and review of policies.
- SPCs provide advice and make recommendations on policy matters through the Chairperson of the SPC to the full Council.
- The Council retains its function as the decision-making authority and makes the final decision on all matters of policy.

- The SPCs policy making and strategic role is fundamental to the SPC concept. The SPCs are not involved in the day to day operation of the Council or other non-policy matters.

### **SPC Work Programme**

- Each SPC must agree its annual programme, linked to the strategic policies in the Council's Corporate Plan.
- Each SPC's work will take account of the Council's overall corporate policy and objectives, comply with statutory provisions, integrate with statutory plans where relevant, and link realistically to financial resources.
- Each SPC may decide on appropriate consultative arrangements, having regard to statutory provision, the interests already represented on the SPC and any guidelines provided by the Council.

### **Planning & Emergency SPC Membership**

10 elected members

6 sectoral members:

- Agriculture and Farming (1)
- Business and Commercial (1)
- Development and Construction (1)
- Public Participation Network (3)
  - ✓ Environment/Conservation;
  - ✓ Community/Voluntary;
  - ✓ Social Inclusion.

### **How the Meetings operate**

- Meetings of SPC's will normally be held on a quarterly basis; in any event, not less than 3 meetings of every SPC will take place annually.
- Meetings shall be conducted in an informal manner at venues and times to be decided annually in advance by the SPC.
- External nominees should be familiar with the subject area of their committees.
- Where agreement is reached on recommendations of an SPC to the full Council the Chairperson of the SPC or his/her nominee presents the recommendation to full Council.
- The outcome of the Council considerations of the SPC's recommendation should likewise be reported back to the SPC and Sectoral Representatives should also report to their relevant bodies

### **Planning and Emergency Services**

- Planning Section administers the Planning legislation as contained in the Planning and Development Act 2000 and the various Regulations made thereunder.
- Emergency Services includes Tipperary Fire & Rescue Services and Civil Defence.

### 3-5. Presentations

Brian Beck, Senior Planner gave a presentation on Planning which incorporated item 4 - Project Ireland 2040 Urban & Rural Regeneration Funds and item 5 - County Development Plan and replied to queries raised. The principal points were as follows:

#### National and Regional Planning

- Local Government Reform Act
- County Development Plans
- Project Ireland 2040: National Planning Framework
- Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy, December, 2019
- County Development Plan, 2020-2022
- 

#### Variations and Strategies 2015-2020

- New Written Statements
- Rural House Design Guide
- Housing Strategy
- Renewable Energy Strategy
- Wind Energy Strategy
- Landscape Character Assessment
- Variation – Vacant Sites
- New Settlement Plan for Fethard
- Review of Settlement Plans for villages (ongoing)  
Cluster Guidelines

#### Statutory Plans

Statutory Plan	Expiry Date	Settlement Hierarchy
North Tipperary County Development Plan 2010-2016 (extended)	None	N/A
South Tipperary County Development Plan 2009-2015 (extended)	None	N/A
Clonmel Environs and Development Plan 2013-2019 (extended)	None	Key Town (RSES)
Nenagh Town and Environs Development Plan 2013-2017 (extended)	None	Key Town (RSES)
Thurles and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015 (extended)	None	Key Town (RSES)
Carrick on Suir Town Development Plan 2013-2019 (extended)	None	District Town
Roscrea Local Area Plan 2012-2018 (extended)	17 <sup>th</sup> June, 2023	District Town
Tipperary Tipperary Town and Environs Development Plan 2013-2019 (extended)	None	District Town

Cashel and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015 (extended)	None	District Town
Templemore Town and Environs Development Plan 2012-2018 (extended)	None	District Town
Cahir Local Area Plan 2011-2017 (extended)	20 <sup>th</sup> October, 2020	District Town

### **Project Ireland 2040**

- URDF
- RRDF
- Climate Action Fund
- Disruptive Technologies Fund

### **Project Work and Guidelines**

- Town and Village Renewal
  - Roscrea Signage Strategy
  - Burke Street Pocket Park, Fethard
  - Carrick on Suir Public Realm
  - Thurles Regeneration Strategy
- Conservation Grant Schemes
- Town Wall Schemes (Clonmel, Carrick on Suir, Fethard and Cashel)
- SEAI Research Programme in Community Investment in Renewable Energy
- Cluster Housing Guidelines

### **Conferences and Seminars**

- Energy in Agriculture 2016-19, Gurteen College, Ballingarry, Roscrea, Co. Tipperary, <http://energyinagriculture.ie>
- Event to promote Near Zero Energy Buildings was held in the Anner Hotel in Thurles on the 26<sup>th</sup> Nov, 2019.
- An IPI event on 'Technologies in Planning', was held in the Nenagh Civic Office 29<sup>th</sup> June, 2017.
- Seminar for the general public, on the Conservation of Heritage Buildings, Thurles 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017.

### **Plan Making Priorities 2020**

- County Development Plan
- Review of the Cahir Local Area Plan 2011
- Record of Protected structures
- Architectural Conservation Areas
- Masterplanning & Land Activation
- Research & Development – Rural Housing

### **Public Engagement**

- How we'll publish information & where to find it
  - Website; Print Press; Social Media; Civic Offices and Library

- How to make your submission
  - Online submission form; email; by letter
- Information sessions & consultation;
  - Each Plan will have formal consultation and information published
- Ask
  - Write, call, tweet, email us to find out more

#### **County Development Plan**

- Vision & Development Framework
- Background Research & Survey
- Environmental Assessments (SEA/AA/SFRA)
- 2 year process
- Role of the Elected Members
- Role of the Planning Regulator

#### **Projects to deliver Project Ireland 2040**

- Planning for our Elderly Population
- Protecting and enhancing our Natural and Built Heritage
- Developing our Tourism Potential...etc.

In response to a query from John O’Shaughnessy, Brian Beck stated a copy of the Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) adopted on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2019 effective from January 2020 will be available in the New Year. Cllr. P. Bugler noted the Tipperary County Council Regional Assembly members were outvoted on our submission to have Newport and Ballina included in the Limerick Metropolitan Area following a direction from the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government. In response to a query from Cllr. G. Darcy, Brian Beck stated as we can’t zone unserviced land in rural villages this is one of the reasons Cluster Housing Guidelines were developed. The implications of the decree from the European Court of Justice in the Flemish case in relation to local need is currently being examined by the Department. The Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) is now responsible for assessing how local authority and regional assembly policies fit with national policies to ensure overall coherence and consistency. A key starting point for this will be information and training for elected members and officials so that planning authorities will know the criteria to be applied by the OPR. Cllr. M. Fitzgerald expressed concerns that while our towns and villages may grow, farmers’ sons and daughters may have difficulties getting planning permission and our new County Development Plan has to be more friendly to people living in rural areas and the elected members should consider employing a consultant to enable them to have a more pro-active input. Sharon Kennedy stated the Chief Executive is the advisor to the Members in all matters relating to the Council including Planning and while acknowledging the new National and Regional Plans would be very challenging for everyone it is important that Members and officials work together to find workable solutions. Cllr. M. O’Meara stated that more creative thinking is required in relation to rural one-offs and the Members’ local knowledge should be trusted. Cllr. J. Hannigan stated we need to be innovative in relation to applications for one –offs in high amenity areas. John O’Shaughnessy stated that as a builder the provision of, for example, 35 units per hectare would be unviable as there is no market for this level of high density. Cllr. M. Murphy favoured on site meetings with the planners and stated the Councillors

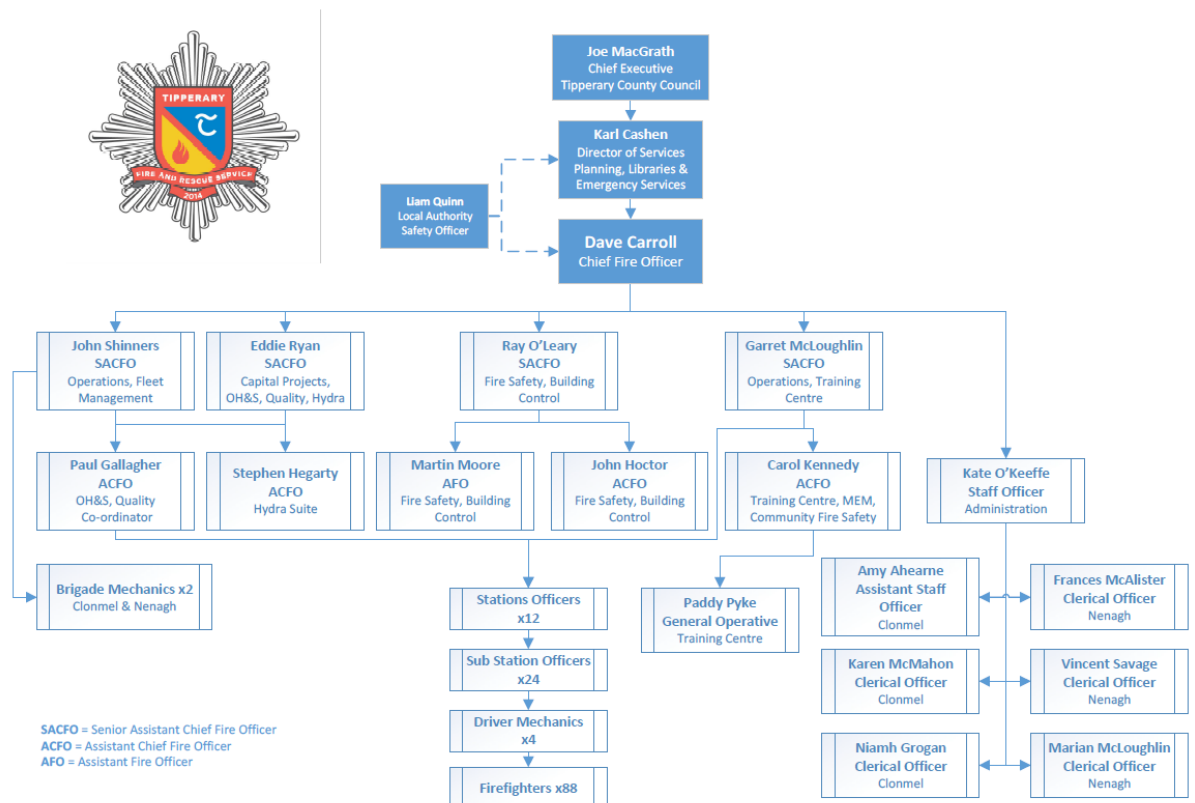
would be getting the criticism if there are problems with the implementation of policy in the new County Development Plan. She also stated there needs to be an incentive to provide additional electric vehicle charging points with developments. Brian Beck advised that in order to promote the rollout of EV charging infrastructure there is a reduction proposed in car parking charges to be levied in the Draft Development Contribution Scheme 2020 to be put before the December 2019 Monthly Meeting for adoption with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020. Cllr. G. Darcy stated that refusal meetings can be useful and can help in resolving issues in some cases. Brian Beck stated that locals should be allowed build in rural areas where possible and creative thinking will be required as decisions must be based on the Housing Need Demand Assessment. There will be two way communication with the Members to bring everyone along insofar as possible going forward.

### Presentation on Tipperary Fire & Rescue Service

Dave Carroll, Chief Fire Officer, gave a presentation to the meeting on the Tipperary Fire and Rescue Service and replied to queries raised. The principal points were as follows:

#### Local Authority Fire Services

- Introduction
- Structure
- Legislation
- Funding
- Fire Service Operations
- Fire Safety & Prevention
- Community Fire Safety
- Major Emergency Management
- Reserved Functions



## **Legislation 1**

- **Fire Services Act 1981 & 2003**
  - Sets responsibilities (Section 10)
  - Training (Section 15)
  - Obligations with regard to Fire Safety ( Section 18)
  - Potentially Dangerous Building (Section 19)
  - Fire Safety Notices and Closure Notices ( Section 20 )
  - Powers of Inspection (Section 22)
  - Fire and Emergency Operations Plan (Section 26)
  - Ancillary Powers ( Section 28)
  - False alarms (Section 30)

## **Legislation 2**

- **Building Control Acts 1990 & 2007**
  - Building Regulations Parts A - M
  - Building Control Regulations
    - Fire Safety Certificates
    - Disability Access Certificates
    - Commencement Notices
  - BCMS
  - Assigned Certifier etc only since 1<sup>st</sup> March 2014
  - Certificates of Completion
  - Construction Products Directive

### Other Legislation

- Explosives, Dangerous Substances, Licencing, SEVESO

## **Funding**

- Capital funding from Dept. for Fire Stations, Fire Appliances, ICT Infrastructure, Equipment etc.
- Revenue Budget in Local Authority
- Average Cost Per Head Population (NOAC 2014)
  - Retained = €43
  - Fulltime = €93
- Income
  - Fire Charges
  - Various fees

## **Operational Response**

- Fires (inc. False Alarms)
- Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs)
- Hazardous Materials
- Swiftwater Rescue (Clonmel)
- Severe Weather
  - Flooding
  - Trees down

### **Mobilisation**

- Munster Regional Control Centre
  - Pre-Determined Attendances (PDAs)
  - PDA is dependent on Location  
and Incident Type
- Rostered Senior Fire Officers

### **Fire Safety/Prevention & Building Control**

- Increase Smoke Alarm Ownership and Testing
- Fire Safety Talks / Demonstrations
- Smoke Detector Scheme
- Primary Schools Programme (3rd class)
- Home Fire Safety Visits
- Wildfire Campaign
- Fire Safety Week
- Community Events
- Social Media
- Road Safety

### **Major Emergency Management**

- Major Emergency Plan (MEP)
- Major Emergency Management Committee (MEMC)
- Sub – Plans
  - Flood response
  - Severe weather
  - Section Plans
- External Emergency Plans SEVESO Site
- Mass Fatalities Capability
- National/Regional Coordination

### **Training Courses**

- |                                     |                            |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Recruit Induction                 | Pump Operator              |
| • Confined Space                    | Major Emergency Management |
| • Emergency Medical First Responder | Breathing Apparatus        |
| • Compartment Fire Behaviour        | Auditor(OHSAS & ISO 9001)  |
| • Working at Height                 | Winch                      |
| • Water Safety Awareness            | Incident Command           |
| • Aerial Appliance                  | Fire Engineering           |
| • Hazardous Materials               | CISM                       |
| • Emergency Fire Appliance Driver   | CAFS                       |
| • Water Rescue                      | Manual Handling            |
| • Wildland Fire Fighting            |                            |
| • Heavy Transport Rescue            |                            |
| • Abrasive Wheels                   |                            |
| • Safety Management                 |                            |
| • Line Manager                      |                            |



## Reserved Functions

### Section 26 of the Fire Services Act, 1981 & 2003, states:

*"Each Fire Authority which maintains a Fire Brigade shall prepare (and, as occasion requires, revise) plans for fire and emergency operations showing the provision made by it in respect of:*

- *Organisation*
- *Fire Stations*
- *Appliances*
- *Equipment*
- *Water supplies and extinguishing agents*
- *Training*
- *Operational procedure and such other matters as may be relevant for dealing with operations of an emergency nature under Section 25*

### What is a S.26 Plan?

- This plan sets out current arrangements within the Fire Authority, but it also sets out strategic plans and targets for the Fire Authority for the next 5 years.
- This plan shall be reviewed from time to time as deemed appropriate, but in any case it shall be reviewed at least once every 5 years.
- **It should be noted that the above function is a reserved function under Section 26(3) of Fire Services Act 1981 & 2003.**

### The Plan!

1. Purpose & Scope
2. Executive Summary
3. Organisation
4. Fire Stations
5. Fire Appliances
6. Equipment & PPE
7. Water Supplies
8. Training
9. Health & Safety
10. Communication
11. Operational Roles & Procedures
12. Operational Standards
13. Fire Safety
14. Major Emergency Management

### What is HYDRA?

- Evolved from Hillsborough 1989
- A tool to practice Decision Making
- Immersive Technology
- A safe, clean training environment
- Wider application than just Fire Service  
85 Sites Worldwide

Videos were also shown in relation to Blue Light Awareness and the HYDRA training facility which can be accessed at the following links

<https://www.facebook.com/TipperaryFireandRescue/videos/890575974644538/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aFCajUs9-6I>

Dave Carroll stated there are 12 Fire Stations in the County with 129 Firefighters in a Retained Brigade dealing with approx. 1800 incidents per year. Cllr. M. Murphy stated she was a member of the HYDRA Audit Committee and asked that the SPC be given a tour of the HYDRA Training facility in Clonmel, Dave said he would arrange. Cllr. J. Hannigan asked if a Safety Audit of quays could be carried out as there had been issues in relation to lack of barriers at access points to Lough Derg. Dave Carroll stated he would check who has responsibility in this area and revert. Replying to Cllr. M. O'Meara Dave Carroll advised that the requirement to provide fire alarms in properties is set out in the Building Regulations.

Cllr. P. Bugler thanked Brian Beck and Dave Carroll for their presentations.

#### **6. Dates/venue of future meetings**

It was agreed to hold future meetings of the Planning & Emergency Services SPC at Thurles MD Offices, the next meeting to be held in Spring 2020, the date will be decided in consultation with the Chair of the SPC.

#### **7. Any other business**

Brian Clancy circulated a copy of the current SPC Standing Orders which are being reviewed and are due to be put forward for ratification at the December 2019 Monthly Meeting of the Council. Any proposed amendments the members of the SPC wish to have included should be forwarded to Ger Walsh, Meetings Administrator, in advance of the meeting to be held on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

This concluded the business of the Meeting.