

Minutes of the Economic Development Strategic Policy Committee Meeting

Monday, 5th September 2022 at 11.00am

Present: Cllr Pat McMahon, Chairperson
Cllr P.J. Ryan
Cllr Michael Begley
Cllr P.J. Kelly
Cllr Gabriel Keating
Cllr Johnny Flynn
Cllr Pat Daly
Mr Pat Morris
Mr Patrick Keogh
Ms Emma Karran
Ms Elaine D'Alton
Ms Rosaleen O'Reilly
Liam Conneally, Director of Service
Helen Quinn, A/Senior Planner
Linda Earlie, SEDO
Valerie Fleming, Assistant Staff Officer

Apologies: Mr Seamus Ryan

1. Minutes of Economic Development SPC meeting 20th June 2022.

Emma Karran requested that item no.3 of the minutes be amended to read "*Emma Karran stated that SFPCo does not appear to be aligned with national policy regarding LNG and requested that the Port Company undertake a new risk assessment*".

The minutes, including the above amendment, of the Economic Development SPC meeting held on 20th June 2022 were proposed by Cllr Pat Daly, seconded by Cllr P.J. Ryan and agreed.

2. LECP Advisory Steering Group Nominations

Nominations were sought for one elected member and one other member of the Economic Development Strategic Policy Committee to sit on the LECP Advisory Steering Group.

Emma Karran was proposed by Cllr Johnny Flynn and seconded by Cllr Gabriel Keating.

Cllr Johnny Flynn was proposed Cllr Pat Daly and Cllr Flynn declined the proposal.

Cllr Gabriel Keating was proposed Cllr Johnny Flynn and seconded by Cllrs P.J. Ryan and P.J. Kelly.

It was agreed that Emma Karran and Cllr Gabriel Keating would be the Economic Development SPC reps on the LECP Advisory Steering Group.

Elaine D'Alton referred to the Clare Anti-Poverty Strategy and stated that LECP Advisory Steering Group members should have a working knowledge of this document.

Cllr Johnny Flynn requested a copy of the Clare Anti-Poverty Strategy.

3. Planning

- Update on County Development Plan

Helen Quinn, A/Senior Planner, provided an update on the Draft Clare County Development Plan 2023 - 2029. Workshops are continuing with Elected Members to facilitate their consideration of the Chief Executive's Report on the 1,015 public submissions and any amendments made by elected members will be placed on public display at the beginning of December 2022.

Emma Karran referred to the planning permission granted to Ennis Data Centre which has been appealed to An Bord Pleanála. Cllr Pat McMahon stated that as this project was private and within the statutory planning process it could not be discussed at the Economic Development SPC meeting.

Cllr P.J. Ryan asked if the Department have issued any guidance regarding Wind Farm applications. Helen Quinn responded that Departmental guidance is due to issue in the coming months following which local authorities will be obliged to produce new Wind Energy Guidelines for their jurisdictions.

Cllr Pat Daly asked if it was possible to get a breakdown per Municipal District of submissions received on the draft County Development Plan and Helen responded that she would circulate this information to the SPC members following the meeting.

- Biodiversity – update regarding Biodiversity Officer post

Helen Quinn outlined that an application was made in July 2022 to fund the position of a Biodiversity Officer and a response is awaited on this application.

4. Maritime Area Planning Act 2021

Liam Conneally gave a presentation on the Maritime Area Planning Act 2021 which governs applications for development permission requiring maritime area consent within the nearshore and offshore maritime area.

Pat Morris referred to his request that both Moneypoint and Eirgrid be invited to address the Economic SPC and asked how they are managing the offshore wind energy sequencing system.

Cllr P.J. Ryan asked if the new board will also have control of commercial development and if West Clare is at an advantage due to its suitability for Offshore Renewable Energy floatation devices.

Cllr Michael Begley highlighted that Co. Clare currently does not benefit from the 400KV lines supplying Dublin from Moneypoint and asked what proposals there are to ensure Clare benefits from Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) developments.

Cllr Johnny Flynn agreed that any economic benefits from development off Clare's coast must be retained in Clare and generally in the coastal communities.

Liam Conneally responded that an invitation has issued to the ESB who have confirmed they will attend the December 2022 Economic Development SPC meeting. He confirmed that the synchronous compensator at Moneypoint will soon be operational and will manage the stability of ORE entering the national grid. It is anticipated that Ireland will become an exporter of green energy into the future which would result in significant economic development opportunities and income to the State.

Liam advised that the Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA) when in place will have a greater brief than wind energy.

Cllr P.J. Kelly expressed his disappointment that Moneypoint is not being promoted as a trans-shipment port. Cllr P.J. Ryan supported Cllr Kelly's comment.

Cllr Johnny Flynn stated that recommendations must be made to Government to ensure that ORE generated off the coast of Clare does not bypass the county.

5. AOB

There was no AOB to be discussed.

The meeting then concluded.

Signed: _____
Cllr Pat McMahon, Chairperson

Date: _____

Signed: _____
Liam Conneally,
Director of Economic Development.

Date: _____