

PLANNING & RURAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 12TH NOVEMBER 2024 AT 9.30A IN THE SEMINOLE
ROOM, COUNTY BUILDINGS, WICKLOW

Present: Cllr. Edward Timmins, Cllr. Patsy Glennon, Cllr. Peter Stapleton, Jim Wood, Paul Armstrong,

In attendance: L. Earls, S. Walsh, Stephen Clarke, D. Burns

Apologies: Cllr. Gail Dunne, Cllr. Sylvester Bourke Tessa Stewart,

Item 1: Welcome & Introductions

Cllr Timmins welcomed those present and introductions were made.

Item 2: Overview of the role of the Planning & Rural Development SPC

The members received a presentation from Leonora Earls, Director of Services, outlining the structure of the Planning Section and the role of the SPC within same. A copy of the presentation was circulated.

A short discussion followed in relation to Derelict & Vacant Sites. Sorcha Walsh, Senior Planner, outlined the mechanism of both. Members were also advised that other elements of Vacancy are dealt with through the Housing Section with a team in place to identify and reach out to owners with grant information.

Stephen Clarke, Regeneration Officer, outlined examples of properties currently receiving funding through the Urban Regeneration & Development Fund (URDF). This funding is currently only available to larger towns i.e. Arklow, Bray and Wicklow. Stephen Clarke also gave a brief outline of the CPO process, advising that this too is only available in larger towns.

Members were encouraged to advise the Planning Authority of suitable buildings for consideration under a scheme.

Item 3: Adoption of Minutes of Meeting held on 23rd February 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 23rd February 2024 were proposed by Cllr. Timmins and taken as given.

Item 4: Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising.

Item 5: Update on the Planning & Rural Development goals as set out in the Wicklow County Council Corporate Plan 2024 – 2029:

Leonora Earls referred back to the presentation at Item 2 and reiterated that all SPC actions feed into the Wicklow County Council Climate Action Plan.

It was advised that Leader Funding can be applied for by Town Teams but not by WCC.

There are three new Town Teams, Newtownmountkennedy, Kilcoole and Baltinglass. In answer to a question on same it was advised that, following engagement with community groups, WCC nominate towns for the creation of new Town Teams.

Item 6: Consider Training Dates for SPC Members:

Tuesday 19th November: Training for all SPC Members

Friday 22nd November: Training for Planning & Rural Development SPC Members

Other Matters:

Cllr. Timmins advised that Members can bring topics for inclusion on the Agenda of future meetings.

In relation to the Town Plan for Blessington, Cllr. Glennon advised that a lot of representatives felt that none of their suggestions were taken on board. Leonora Earls advised that suggestions for areas of active open space were taken into account. She also advised that the plan is at draft stage and she doesn't envisage that this will be the final plan.

It was further advised that the Local Area Plan is prepared by the Chief Executive who doesn't have to consult with the public or members, as is the case with the County Development Plan. WCC see it as a collaborative process with workshops used to keep Members up to date but not for Members to direct. Sorcha Walsh said that WCC will explain as to why suggestions were not taken on board if required.

In response to a question from Jim Wood as to whether all plans will be reviewed following the revision of the National Planning Framework, Sorcha Walsh advised that each county will have new targets and a variation to the County Development Plan will take place.

Item 7:

There will be 4 meetings of the SPC in 2025 and dates will be circulated shortly.

It was agreed that a meeting will take place on December 12th at 11.30 when the committee will receive a presentation on the Planning Act.

No other business.