

COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

Email: Corporate.Services@fingal.ie

County Hall
Swords
Co Dublin

Tuesday 25th February 2025

**To Each Member of the Climate Action, Biodiversity, Environment
Strategic Policy Committee**

Dear Member

A meeting of the **Climate Action, Biodiversity, Environment Strategic
Policy Committee** will be held in **Room 3A6, County Hall, Swords at
4.30pm on Tuesday, 25th March, 2025** to consider the following Agenda.

Yours faithfully

**Ciara O hAodha
Meetings Administrator
Corporate Services**

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A G E N D A

- 1 Confirmation and Re-Affirmation of Minutes of the Climate Action, Biodiversity, Environment SPC meeting held on Tuesday 17th December 2024**
- 2 Progress report on Climate Action Plan 2024 - 2029**
- 3 Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections (RMCEI) Review 2024 and Inspection Plan 2025**
- 4 Strategic Policy Committee Works Programme 2025**

MOTIONS

- 5 Councillor D. Healy - Development of a Lighting Policy**

“That this Strategic Policy Committee initiate a process, including consultation with the public, stakeholders and experts, considering any existing reviews of best practice, to make a policy on artificial light in the environment, in order to inform both the development and maintenance of lighting by the Council and the regulation of lighting in the planning process, which would take account of biodiversity impacts, energy efficiency, amenity, safety and technological innovation.”

- 6 Councillor J. Newman - PFAS Issue**

“That the Chief Executive provide a report including information on locations that contain or may contain PFAS in the Fingal Local Authority area, to set out what documentation the Council has in relation to PFAS sites, and to provide information on how the public can access this information.”

Comhairle Contae Fingal Fingal County Council

Minutes of Climate Action, Biodiversity, Environment Strategic Policy Committee

Tuesday, 17th December, 2024 at 4.30pm

PRESENT

Attending Remotely:

Cllr. Joe Newman, Cllr. JK Onwumereh, Cllr. Paul Mulville, Tara Byrne (env), Paul Flynn (IFA), Sarah Zimmerman (PPN)

Apologies: Cllr. David Healy, Cllr. Siobhan Shovlin, Cllr. Brian McDonagh

The Chairperson, Cllr. Joe Newman , presided.

OFFICIALS PRESENT

Officials:

David Storey, Director of Services; John Daly, Senior Engineer; Catherine O'Donovan, Senior Executive Officer; Grainne Carroll, Administrative Officer, Bridget Loughlin, Climate Action Coordinator, Ronan O'Reilly, Executive Engineer, Sinead Fox, Community Climate Action Officer, Niamh Moran, Climate Action Officer, Orla Healy, Climate Action Graduate, Maria Hand, Senior Staff Officer

CABE/9/24 (Agenda Item No 1)

Confirmation and Re-Affirmation of Minutes of the Climate Action, Biodiversity & Environment SPC meeting held on Tuesday 26th March 2024

The minutes of the last meeting held on the 26th March were **PROPOSED** by Councillor J. Newman, seconded by Councillor JK. Onwumereh.

"That the minutes of the Climate Action, Biodiversity & Environment SPC Meeting held on the 26th March were **AGREED**."

CABE/10/24 (Agenda Item No 2)

Community Climate Action Fund

A presentation detailing the grant/application process on the Community Climate Action fund along with examples of the applications received was given by Sinead Fox.

Presentation Noted

CABE/11/24 (Agenda Item No 3)

Councillor JK. Onwumereh - Promoting Sustainable Climate Action in Fingal Schools - AI099742

“That the Chief Executive provide an overview of the programs of work for Climate Action and Environmental Awareness specifically in relation to primary and secondary school children.”

The motion, in the name of Councillor JK. Onwumereh was proposed by JK. Onwumereh and seconded by Councillor. J. Newman

Response:

The Climate Awareness and the Environmental Awareness Sections of the Environment Department, roll out awareness programs for primary and secondary school students to educate and raise awareness around climate action and the environment. Examples of these programs include: -

1. Green Schools Program

The Green Schools Program is operated in partnership with An Taisce and Local Authorities. The Environmental Awareness Officer works closely with schools on the ground to help them achieve their flag status.

136 schools across Fingal are active in the Green Schools Program. The 10-Flag program includes Litter and Waste, Energy, Water, Travel, Biodiversity and Global Citizenship. We facilitate assessments for the purpose of awarding flags. We also provide funding assistance and information to the schools and roll out several workshops themes every year to complement their efforts in achieving the Green Schools Flags.

2. Relove Fashion Workshops

Relove Fashion is a Sustainable Fashion competition open to young people of secondary school age across the Republic of Ireland. The competition was developed and is funded through a partnership between the Regional Waste Management Planning Offices, The Government of Ireland and the Rediscovery Centre, Ireland’s National Centre for the Circular Economy. Fingal County Council promotes the initiative in secondary schools and assists students with their competition entries, offering free workshops and prizes to participating students. These workshops are run by Circular Fashion Ireland and highlight the devastating impacts of the fashion industry on the Climate, the need for change and the recognition of young people’s pivotal role in shaping innovative solutions and are proving extremely popular.

3. Repaired Musical Instruments

The RePlay.ie initiative is an ongoing circular economy initiative by Fingal County Council. Musical instruments that have been discarded in the recycling centre's are repaired and then circulated back into the community. Schools participate by receiving lots of instruments every year from guitars and keyboards to drums and fiddles.

4. School Composting Project

Fingal County Council funds schools to participate in the Composting for Schools Program. This in-depth program is suitable for both primary and post primary schools and helps support each school's journey in managing litter, food and landscape waste and compost. It is a perfect program to compliment Green School projects, and in particular the litter and waste theme. Approximately 70 schools across Fingal have signed up to this project to date. Many schools were provided with wormeries for food waste and leaf-mould cages to compost leaves.

5. Picker Pals

Picker Pals is an excellent initiative where 1st and 2nd Class students of primary schools can sign up to receive a take-home pack full of activities to include fun story and activity books, songs, interactive tv sessions, litter picking equipment and teacher support materials all designed to encourage young children to pick up their litter after themselves. The program is sponsored by Fingal County Council. The pack is circulated around the class with each child and their family members given the opportunity to keep the picker pals pack for a week and record their experience. There are 87 classrooms across Fingal on the Picker Pals Program.

6. Christmas Upcycling Workshops

Fingal County Council ran a number of hands-on workshops that combine upcycling with the principles of the circular economy, just in time for the holiday season. These workshops focus on creating unique Christmas decorations from repurposed materials, providing participants with a sustainable and creative way to celebrate. Attendees learn techniques for transforming everyday items into festive decor, reducing waste and promoting environmentally friendly practices. By encouraging the reuse of materials, Fingal County Council aims to foster a circular economy mindset, empowering the community to give items a second life and make environmentally conscious choices. This has proven hugely

popular with primary schools with approximately 12 schools participating in 2024 and a waiting list in place. We hope to increase this number for 2025.

7. Halloween costume/Christmas jumper swap shops

The Environmental Awareness Officer commenced the roll-out of several swap-shops in primary schools in 2024 to include Halloween Costumes and Christmas Jumpers. This is to promote fashion sustainability and educate students on the circular economy.

8. Rubbish Film Festival

Fingal County Council signed up to 'The Rubbish Film Festival' for the first time in 2024. This involves a 2-day workshop for post-primary schools to teach students how to create their own short film to raise awareness amongst their peers around climate change/action. Films are made using mobile digital technology, iPads and accessories which are supplied by the facilitator along with resources and software. Workshops include instruction and practical activities on SDGs. Students research, initiate and create a 1-minute short film to inform and educate their peers on Climate Action. Schools across approximately 15 Local Authorities participate in this programme annually and it culminates in an award ceremony with the best videos winning an award.

9. Climate Literacy Workshops

This is an 8-week themed module program for post-primary schools covering: the science of climate change, sustainable development, climate justice, the plastic crisis, fast fashion, sustainable transport, biodiversity loss, food and soil. There is also a teacher training element where teachers receive Climate Literacy resources incl. background to all topics, classroom activities and printable materials so that they can roll out the program themselves in the future to students. 10 Fingal Schools signed up to this Program in 2024.

There are three climate action in Fingal's Climate Action Plan 2024 – 2029 specifically relating to schools and they are climate action C6, C7 & C8. Fingal County Council is committed to raising awareness and educating Fingal's young people on the detrimental impacts of litter/waste on the environment and climate. Our campaigns, educational programmes, and strategic initiatives aim to mobilize young people and we will continue to roll-out the above programmes as well as any new initiatives within our resources.

Report Accepted

CABE/12/24 (Agenda Item No 4)

Councillor D. Healy - Electric Vehicle Charging - AI099767

Motion: “That the Chief Executive report on the progress of the rollout of electric vehicle charging infrastructure in the County, both on Council managed land and on other car park, and on the financial arrangements and revenue resulting from charging infrastructure on Council-managed land.”

The motion, in the name of Councillor D. Healy was proposed by Councillor J. Newman and seconded by Councillor JK. Onwumereh.

Report:

The four Dublin Local Authorities launched the Electric Vehicle Charge Point (EVCP) Infrastructure rollout in October 2024 following the successful appointment of ePower as the charge point operator (CPO) and preferred tenderer for the provision of the infrastructure and ongoing service contract. The initial contract is for the provision of up to 200 EVCP's at 50no local authority owned or operated sites across the four Dublin Authorities. These sites are typically local authority car parks, libraries, public parks and community centers. The works contract should be complete within two years.

Over the past 2 months the Council has worked with ePower to progress the initial list of sites and we have engaged with ESB networks to establish the timelines and complexities around the provision of the required electrical supplies. Most sites have been surveyed and site designs are being developed and agreed at present. ESB connection applications have been made.

The four Dublin Local Authorities are also engaged with Zero Emission Vehicles Ireland (ZEVI) to secure funding for the provision of the enabling infrastructure. ZEVI will finance the provision of the enabling infrastructure, and the CPO will provide the chargers. The CPO will pay the Council a concession for the use of the charging bay.

The first sites should commence construction in February 2025 and go live in April / May 2025. The completion of the initial contract of 50 sites will be dependent on electricity connections being provided, however it is anticipated that the majority will be complete within one year. ESB networks are doing a huge amount of work nationally to make the required grid upgrades to support the provision of this infrastructure.

A full Councillor briefing will be organized with ePower before the first sites go live, end Q1 2025.

The current list of initial sites is as follows. This list is subject to electrical connections being technically and financially viable and as such is subject to change.

- Quay Street Car Park Balbriggan
- Baldoyle Racecourse Park
- Portmarnock Sports and Leisure Centre
- Liam Rodgers Community Centre
- Donabate Portrane Community Centre
- Bridgefield Car Park Malahide
- South Strand St, Skerries
- Lusk Sports Hub
- Howth Harbour Carpark
- River Valley Carpark
- Echlin Court, Rush
- Malahide Town Park
- Porterstown Park, Castleknock
- St. Catherine's Park, Lucan

Report Accepted

AOB

Councillor J. Newman requested that training be provided for the new SPC committee members.

Maria Hand to forward link to Climate Action Plan to committee members.

The Meeting concluded at 17:12

AREA CHAIRPERSON

DATED

**COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL
FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CLIMATE ACTION, BIODIVERSITY, ENVIRONMENT STRATEGIC
POLICY COMMITTEE**

TUESDAY 25TH MARCH 2025

ITEM NO. 02

REPORT ON CLIMATE ACTION PLAN 2024 - 2029

Presentation provided at the meeting.

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**COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL
FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CLIMATE ACTION, BIODIVERSITY, ENVIRONMENT STRATEGIC
POLICY COMMITTEE**

TUESDAY 25TH MARCH 2025

ITEM NO. 03

**RECOMMENDED MINIMUM CRITERIA FOR ENVIRONMENTAL
INSPECTIONS (RMCEI) REVIEW 2024 AND INSPECTION PLAN 2025**

Presentation provided at the meeting.

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**COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL
FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CLIMATE ACTION, BIODIVERSITY, ENVIRONMENT STRATEGIC
POLICY COMMITTEE**

TUESDAY 25TH MARCH 2025

ITEM NO. 04

STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE WORKS PROGRAMME 2025

Presentation provided at the meeting.

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COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

CLIMATE ACTION, BIODIVERSITY, ENVIRONMENT STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 25TH MARCH 2025

ITEM NO. 05

DEVELOPMENT OF A LIGHTING POLICY

Motion: Councillor D. Healy

“That this Strategic Policy Committee initiate a process, including consultation with the public, stakeholders and experts, considering any existing reviews of best practice, to make a policy on artificial light in the environment, in order to inform both the development and maintenance of lighting by the Council and the regulation of lighting in the planning process, which would take account of biodiversity impacts, energy efficiency, amenity, safety and technological innovation.”

Report:

Fingal County Council Public Lighting follow best practice in all our operations and requirements through our training, membership of a professional lighting body, and our interactions with other local authorities, lighting professionals, and manufacturers.

We regularly liaise with colleagues in the public lighting sections of other local authorities, especially Dublin City Council (DCC), South Dublin County Council, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, and Cork City Council, to collaborate and share information on public lighting matters and projects undertaken in each county. These four councils along with Fingal, comprise the five local authorities with the largest public lighting stocks in the country and the only councils with dedicated public lighting divisions. Fingal County Council Public Lighting are second only to DCC in terms of the number of public lights we maintain.

We are members of the Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP), and regularly attend seminars and conferences on lighting, as well as training on the software used in the industry, when there are changes to the relevant standards or

National Rules for Electrical Installations, or when new technologies in exterior lighting emerge. We also regularly engage with other lighting professionals including consultants and manufacturers, to discuss changes in technology or issues encountered. In addition, all engineers and inspectors in Public Lighting undertake the Exterior Lighting Technology Diploma course run by the ILP.

All exterior lighting schemes installed within the council area are required to comply with the requirements and specifications of the Public Lighting section. In addition they must adhere to the council's policies and strategy documents such as: The Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029; The Fingal County Council Corporate Plan 2025-2029; The Fingal County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029; and Forest of Fingal – A tree strategy for Fingal; with regards to energy use and climate change, minimising obtrusive light (i.e. light spill and light pollution), as well as protecting and promoting the environment, biodiversity, and the unique urban, rural and coastal areas of the county.

The recommendations stated in the relevant guidance notes and technical reports published by professional lighting institutions like the ILP, on topics such as reducing obtrusive light or lighting in environmentally sensitive areas, also need to be taken into account in all lighting designs.

The Public Lighting General Specification sets out the standards that public lighting schemes and their associated electrical installations, within Fingal County Council, must comply with, as well as detailing the types of equipment that are acceptable. This document also lays out the procedures to be followed and the documentation to be provided, at design, construction, and completion stages, to get a lighting scheme approved, connected, and potentially taken in charge.

There is also a requirement that all lighting schemes are designed and installed to be the most energy efficient while achieving the required lighting levels.

With regards to reducing obtrusive light, to ensure there is minimal obtrusive light from any lighting scheme installed in the county, Public Lighting require that designers of all lighting scheme need to ensure there is no upward light, with all lights mounted at zero degree tilt, parallel to the ground., and that they take account of the recommendations stated in Guidance Note *GN01/21 – The Reduction of Obtrusive Light*, published by the Institution of Lighting Professionals, in the lighting design. This includes ensuring the lighting scheme is appropriate to the relevant environmental zone and providing additional lighting calculation reports specifically for obtrusive light. The Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 acknowledges that “*At present there are no Irish Guidelines in relation to the control of light pollution*”. However, it does refer to the contents of GN01 and requires all new lighting schemes to be designed to the appropriate environmental zone and meet all council standards.

In environmentally sensitive areas, such as where bats are present, additional restrictions are required on a lighting scheme, and the recommendations stated in Guidance Note *GN08/23 – Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night*, published by the Institution of Lighting Professionals and the Bat Conservation Trust UK, must be included in any design.

The Public Lighting General Specification is also part of the council's Taking in Charge Policy and Specification.

All developments must be constructed to the Council's Taking in Charge (TIC) Standards, regardless of whether they are offered for TIC or not. This is also stated in Section 14.9.6 Taking in Charge and Management Companies, of the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029.

All developments with a public lighting element are reviewed against all the above requirements and policy documents throughout the planning process (application, compliance, construction, and completion stages).

The Public Lighting General Specification document is kept under constant review and is updated when there are changes to lighting standards, electrical standards, ESB requirements, Fingal policy documents, or the requirements of the Public Lighting section.

The Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 includes several policies and objectives surrounding lighting and avoiding/minimising any adverse impacts of lighting and obtrusive light on sensitive habitats, improving energy efficiency, and reducing carbon emissions. Chapter 11 Infrastructure and Utilities, with particular reference to Section 11.9 Air, Noise, Light Policies and Objectives, and Section 11.9.3 Light, sets out the policies and objectives around light pollution, the design of lighting schemes and lighting new developments. Chapter 14 Development Management Standards, with particular reference to Section 14.20.18 Light Pollution, sets out the policies and objectives for new lighting schemes to design out light pollution and take account of the appropriate lighting environmental zone in the design. In addition, there are many objectives and policies with regards to lighting in terms of biodiversity and climate change, also stated within the plan:

To further protect biodiversity in parks or open green spaces, where Public Lighting are requested to provide lighting in such areas, they are considered on a case-by-case basis. The provision of lighting in parks and green spaces is only considered in specific circumstances when certain criteria are met. These criteria include:

- The path through the green space/park area provides the most direct link between key community services (e.g. between a train station and shopping

centre or housing precinct) and does not have sufficient lighting along the key pathway(s) or pedestrian routes.

- Are there any trees along the path. If there are trees, is there a minimum of seven (7) metres clearance in all directions between the trees and any proposed public lighting infrastructure, as per the Forest of Fingal – A tree strategy for Fingal policy document.
- The path is not in a woodlands area.
- There are no alternative well-lit routes in the vicinity.

All public lighting maintenance and new works undertaken by the Public Lighting section, are carried out by our public lighting contractor in accordance with the terms, and works requirements and specifications, set out in the Public Lighting Maintenance and New Works contract.

Source of report:

Ms. K Leeson, Senior Executive Engineer, Public Lighting, Operations Department

COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

CLIMATE ACTION, BIODIVERSITY, ENVIRONMENT STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 25TH MARCH 2025

ITEM NO. 06

PFAS ISSUE

Motion: Councillor J. Newman

"That the Chief Executive provide a report including information on locations that contain or may contain PFAS in the Fingal Local Authority area, to set out what documentation the Council has in relation to PFAS sites, and to provide information on how the public can access this information."

Report:

The only information on PFAS contamination of surface and groundwater is that for Dublin Airport. Daa have made information available on their website here <https://www.dublinairport.com/corporate/environmental-social-governance/sustainability>

The EPA have undertaken some monitoring of the rivers around the airport and this is available on www.catchments.ie

https://www.catchments.ie/data/#/waterbody/IE_EA_08W010300?_k=r5yehb

https://www.catchments.ie/data/#/waterbody/IE_EA_09S071100?_k=o1i3b3

Source of report:

Source John Daly, Senior Engineer, Environment, Climate Action, Active Travel & Sports Department

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