

COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

Email: Corporate.Services@fingal.ie

County Hall
Swords
Co Dublin

Tuesday, 31st May 2026

**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 **Hybrid in Conference Room 3A6 - County
Hall, Swords/ MS Teams at 4.30 pm on Tuesday, 23rd June, 2026** to
consider the following Agenda.

Yours faithfully

**Aoife Sheridan
Meetings Administrator
Corporate Services**

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A G E N D A

1 Confirmation and Re-affirmation of Minutes

- a Confirmation and Re-Affirmation of Amended Minutes of the Climate Action, Biodiversity, Environment Strategic Policy Committee meeting held on 26th November 2025**
- b Confirmation and Re-Affirmation of Minutes of the Climate Action, Biodiversity, Environment Strategic Policy Committee meeting held on 24th March 2026**

2 District Heating Projects

MOTIONS

3 Councillor JK. Onwumereh - Updates on Priority Actions on Fingal Biodiversity Plans for 2025

"That the Chief Executive provides an update on the Priority Actions on the Fingal Biodiversity Plans for 2025 and to confirm how successful the plan was."

4 Councillor D. Healy - District Heating Projects

"That the Council, working with Codema, Dublin CARO and other appropriate bodies, produce or commission a report on the potential for additional District Heating projects in Fingal including projects which would a) use existing or planned sewage treatment plants and networks as a heat source; b) use seawater as a heat source; c) use Metrolink tunnels/stations as a heat source and supply heat to i) facilities and businesses with high year-round hot water/heat demand such as restaurants, cafés, manufacturing, ii) hard to retrofit historic towns such as Howth, Malahide, Skerries, Balbriggan including liaising with relevant partners with a view to putting in place a pipeline of projects; ensuring that current infrastructural projects are designed with appropriate heat extraction or delivery elements or with the ability to retrofit them easily and cost-effectively."

Comhairle Contae Fine Gall Fingal County Council

Minutes of Climate Action, Biodiversity, Environment Strategic Policy Committee

**Wednesday, 26th November, 2025
Room 3A6, County Hall, Swords / MS Teams at 4.30pm**

PRESENT

Council Members:

Joe Newman,
Helen Redwood,
David Healy,
JK Onwumereh,
Siobhan Shovlin,

Non-Council Members:

Paul Flynn (IFA),
Sarah Zimmerman (PPN)

Apologies for inability to attend were received for Tara Byrne

The Chairperson, Councillor Joe Newman, presided.

OFFICIALS PRESENT

Catherine O' Donovan, Senior Executive Officer, John Daly, Senior Engineer, Bridget Loughlin, Climate Action Coordinator, Hans Visser, Senior Executive Parks and Landscape Officer, Aoife Sheridan, Senior Executive Officer, Alison Foster, Senior Staff Officer, Daire Bracken, Senior Executive Architect, Grainne Carroll, Administrative Officer, Maria Hand, Senior Staff Officer, Catherine McQuaid, Grant Thornton, Jennifer Fahy, Grant Thornton

CABE/19/25 (Agenda Item No 1)

Confirmation and Re-Affirmation of Minutes of the Climate Action, Biodiversity, Environment SPC meeting held on Tuesday 16th September 2025

Minutes of the Climate Action, Biodiversity, Environment SPC Meeting held on Tuesday 16th of September 2025 which had been circulated were **CONSIDERED**.

It was then **PROPOSED** by Councillor D. Healy, seconded by Councillor J. Newman and **RESOLVED** –

“That the minutes of the Climate Action, Biodiversity, Environment SPC Meeting held on Tuesday 16th of September 2025 be **ADOPTED.**”

CABE/20/25 (Agenda Item No 2)

Draft Fingal Sustainability Strategy

Catherine McQuaid from Grant Thornton, gave a presentation on Future Fingal: Sustainable Fingal Strategy which gave an update on the key findings from the workshops conducted to date and outlined the next steps of the strategy.

Feedback from Members to the Consultants was noted for consideration.

The presentation was **NOTED.**

CABE/21/25 (Agenda Item No 3)

Land Acquisition for Biodiversity Action Plan Implementation

Hans Visser gave a presentation on the Land Acquisition Actions which was followed by questions/answers from the Members.

The presentation was **NOTED.**

CABE/22/25 (Agenda Item No 4)

Strategic Policy Committee Work Programme 2025 Update

An update was given to the members on the following 2025 Programmes:

- RMCEI Plan
- Climate Action Plan - Implementation Plan
- Water Framework Directive River Basin Management Plan – Implementation in Fingal
- Biodiversity Implementation Plan
- Litter Management Plan
- National Waste Management Plan for Circular Economy

- o Fingal Reusable Cup Project
- o Malahide Concerts 2025
- o District Heating
- Bathing Water Quality Report 2025

The update was **Noted**

CABE/23/25 (Agenda Item No 5)

Councillor D. Healy - Sustainable Water Management and Biodiversity Enhancement Measures in the Council's own Developments

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

Motion: Councillor D. Healy

"That the Chief Executive report on the progress of implementing sustainable water management and biodiversity enhancement measures in the Council's own developments".

Report:

Surface Water and Flood management on all developments must comply with the Sustainable Drainage & Flood Management objectives in the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the Development Plan as well as the requirements of the Fingal Green Blue Infrastructure Guidance and the Fingal Green & Blue Roof Guidance.

FCC have a number of developments in progress that take into account Sustainable Drainage & Flood Management objectives in the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 and the Fingal Biodiversity Action Plan along with assessing projects under the relevant indicators in the selected Building Environmental Assessment Methods of the Irish Green Building Councils Home Performance Index or BREEAM as appropriate. The indicators sit under Land Use and Ecology which support biodiversity policies.

Green roofs are being provided on a number of apartment buildings including Church Fields, Ballymastone, Mooretown and Seatown Road with green roof

currently proposed for Woodside. The urban infill development at 30-32 North Street is to incorporate a green roof over the bike store, rainwater butts, permeable paving in the courtyard space and beneath the car parking and tree pits.

A number of Public Buildings recently constructed or in progress incorporate green roofs including Meakstown Community Centre, Baldoyle Racecourse Community Centre, Skerries Library and Swords Cultural Quarter. These also include tree pits, permeable paving and planting. The Meakstown Community Centre also features a rain garden swale and the Baldoyle Community Centre parking spaces have been constructed in permeable grasscrete.

All the above projects use native planning in the landscaping proposals. The schemes incorporate nest boxes for swifts, swallows and/or house martins as appropriate. Lighting proposals are bat sensitive and incorporate bat boxes where relevant.

The Building Environmental Assessment Methods adopted include biodiversity assessment in terms of impact, net gain and/or ecology green points as appropriate.

Source of report: Daire Bracken, Senior Executive Architect/Colin Gallagher, Senior Engineer, Planning Strategic & Infrastructure

The report was **Accepted**

The Meeting concluded at 17:44

CHAIRPERSON

DATED

**Comhairle Contae Fine Gall
Fingal County Council**

**Minutes of Climate Action, Biodiversity, Environment
Strategic Policy Committee**

**Tuesday, 24th March, 2026
Room 3A6, County Hall, Swords/MS Teams at 4:30pm**

PRESENT

Council Members:

Cllr Joe Newman,
Cllr David Healy,
Cllr Joan Hopkins,

Non-Council Members:

Paul Flynn (IFA),
Sarah Zimmerman (PPN)

Apologies for inability to attend were received for Councillor Brian McDonagh

The Chairperson, Councillor Joe Newman, presided.

OFFICIALS PRESENT

Davd Storey, Director of Services, Catherine O' Donovan, Senior Executive Officer, John Daly, Senior Engineer, David T Byrne, Senior Executive Engineer, Enda Hoey, Senior Executive Scientist, Bridget Loughlin Climate Action Coordinator, Jennifer Muscheidt, Environmental Awareness Officer, Kevin Halpenny, Senior Executive Parks and Landscape officer, Hans Visser, Senior Executive Parks and Landscape Officer, Grainne Carroll, Administrative Officer, Maria Hand, Senior Staff Officer.

CABE/1/26 (Agenda Item No 1)

**Confirmation and Re-Affirmation of Minutes of the Climate Action,
Biodiversity, Environment Strategic Policy Committee meeting held on
Wednesday 26th November 2025**

The minutes of the meeting of the 26th of November 2025 were proposed by Councillor D. Healy and seconded by Councillor J. Newman. Councillor D. Healy

requested an amendment to the Minutes regarding Agenda Item No. 2, Draft Fingal Sustainability Strategy (CABE/20/25) to include a note that 'Feedback from Members to the Consultants was noted for consideration'. Minutes to be amended and brought to June SPC meeting for approval.

CABE/2/26 (Agenda Item No 2)

Recommendation for Approval of the Anti-Litter Anti-Graffiti Grant

A presentation was given to the members by Jennifer Muscheidt, Environmental Awareness Officer.

The presentation was **NOTED**.

It was proposed by Paul Flynn and seconded by Councillor D. Healy

"Recommendation for approval of the Anti-Litter Anti-Graffiti grant to be given at the next CPG meeting."

CABE/3/26 (Agenda Item No 3)

Environmental Inspections Plan (RMCEI) Review 2025 and 2026

A presentation was given to the members by Enda Hoey, Senior Executive Scientist.

The presentation was **NOTED**.

CABE/4/26 (Agenda Item No 4)

Climate Action Plan Progress Report

Bridget Loughlin, Climate Action Coordinator gave a progress report on the Climate Action Plan. Members were advised that the full report will go to the Council meeting in May 2026.

The report was **NOTED**

CABE/5/26 (Agenda Item No 5)

Councillor JK. Onwumereh - Updates on Priority Actions on Fingal Biodiversity Plans for 2025

It was **AGREED** to defer this item to the next meeting in June.

CABE/6/26 (Agenda Item No 6)

P. Flynn - Policy Change - Waste Water Treatment Plant

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

Motion:

“That the Chief Executive write to the Minister of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the EPA to change the policy on wastewater treatment plants being allowed to release raw sewage into rivers and estuaries.”

Report:

The main regulation of wastewater discharges in Ireland is the Urban Wastewater Directive, implemented by the European Union (WasteWater Discharge) Regulations 2007 to 2020. The Minister has also issued in 1995 “Procedures and Criteria in relation to Storm Overflows” which are included in wastewater discharge licences.

The Water Action Plan 2024 includes the following action (with a target date of Q2 2028):

“Following the expected recast Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive the DHLGH will update the criteria for the performance of Combined Storm Water Overflows.”

The Urban Wastewater treatment directive which has not yet been transposed into Irish Law.

The directive requires the preparation of integrated urban wastewater management plans which are to include the following:

“2. Objectives for the reduction of pollution from storm water overflows, including the following:

(a) an indicative non-binding objective that storm water overflow represents a small percentage that cannot be more than 2 % of the annual collected urban wastewater load calculated in dry weather conditions; this indicative non-binding objective shall be met by:

(i) 31 December 2039 for all agglomerations of 100 000 p.e. and above;

(ii) 31 December 2045 for agglomerations of 10 000 p.e. and above referred to in Article 5;”

(b) the progressive reduction of macroplastics.

Depending on agglomeration size these plans are required to be prepared by 31 December 2039

The adoption of regulations and the transposition of the directive are matters for the Minister and Oireachtas, the implementation of the regulations will be a matter for the Environmental Agency.

Releases from wastewater treatment plants due to mechanical failure are not permitted under the licencing arrangements, and the EPA expect licence holders to maintain their plant to prevent mechanical breakdown. However, some degree of mechanical breakdown (including blockages) is inevitable.

The motion was **AGREED**.

The Meeting concluded at 18:11

CHAIRPERSON

DATED

**COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL
FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL**

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

TUESDAY 23RD JUNE 2025

ITEM NO. 02

DISTRICT HEATING PROJECTS

Presentation will be provided at the meeting.

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COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

CLIMATE ACTION, BIODIVERSITY, ENVIRONMENT STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

TUESDAY 23RD JUNE 2026

ITEM NO. 03

UPDATES ON PRIORITY ACTIONS ON FINGAL BIODIVERSITY PLANS FOR 2025

MOTION: Councillor JK Onwumereh

"That the Chief Executive provides an update on the Priority Actions on the Fingal Biodiversity Plans for 2025 and to confirm how successful the plan was."

Report:

52 actions were originally planned for implementation in 2025 as set out in the implementation plan developed by the Biodiversity forum. The implementation of 38 actions is either ongoing or completed and 14 actions were not progressed implemented for various reasons.

No.	ACTION	2025 UPDATE
1	Implement Masterplan for Rogerstown Inner Estuary and prepare & implement masterplan for Rogerstown Outer Estuary	Tree planting, Bat boxes installation and sowing of sacrificial crops in Turvey Nature Park completed
2	Continue to support Little Tern and Ringed Plover conservation project at tip of Portrane	Annual project undertaken by Fingal Branch Birdwatch volunteers and supported by FCC. 14 birds successfully fledged this year.

5	Prepare and implement masterplan for Malahide Estuary SAC & SPA, including Cave's Marsh	Masterplan not progressed due to lack of funding,
6	Develop artificial nesting platforms Malahide estuary	Research into design options ongoing
7	Restore Wintering bird roosting site at Cave's Marsh in Malahide	Not progressed due to lack of funding
8	Organise clean-up of mudflats in Malahide Estuary once a year	Not progressed due to lack of funding
9	Maintain the verge along the coast Road between Portmarnock & Malahide as a wildflower meadow	Completed in early September
10	Prepare and implement masterplan for Baldoyle bay SAC & SPA	Primary focus is on the development of the Racecourse Park
12	Develop and implement detailed management plan for the Howth Head SAC & SPA	Management plan at 2 nd draft stage. To be completed in 2026
13	Develop and implement Operational Plans for Howth Head SAAO and Liffey Valley SAAO	Invasive species control, pathway repairs, heathland restoration and goat grazing project on Howth implemented. Wardening and visitor management scheme implemented on Irelands Eye. First meeting organised with South Dublin Co Co to discuss Liffey Valley SAAO.
14	Support implementation of Dublin Bay Biosphere Nature Conservation Strategy, Education & Awareness strategy	New MOU signed between biosphere partners for period 2025-2030
15	Develop management plans for key winter bird sites identified in satellite tagging programs	Not progressed yet. Current focus is on identifying all relevant sites for migratory birds in Fingal and elsewhere in Dublin.
17	Prepare and implement masterplan for Ward River Valley Park	Development of masterplan ongoing.
20	Seek to establish an ecological corridor to link the Royal Canal, the Tolka River and the Liffey Valley	Awaiting final design Royal Greenway

25	Manage linear calcareous grassland strip along the Canal at Clonsilla	Lands at School house site subject to masterplan by Planning Dept.
26	Control invasive species in Fingal	Control works carried out on Himalayan Balsam, Giant Hogweed, Veldtgrass, Snowberry, Cherry Laurel and Rhododendron. Japanese knotweed control programme halted due to lack of funding.
27	Prepare biodiversity plans for golf courses in conjunction with golf course owners to enhance their grounds for Biodiversity	No progress made due to lack of staff time.
29	Prepare planning & design guidance for incorporating nesting facilities in building facades	Guidance document at 2 nd draft stage
30	Prepare guidance document and training on quality rating and management prescription of hedgerows in open space for FCC Operations and developers	Guidance document at 2 nd draft stage
31	Prepare promotional guidance on how to incorporate biodiversity in development and infrastructure projects	Guidance document at 1 st draft stage.
35	Pilot a biodiversity inclusive design for a social housing estate with green roofs, green walls, wetland & pond SUDS, green carparking, nest boxes in facades, wildflower meadows and wildlife friendly shrubs and trees in open space.	Demonstration pilot project on biodiversity inclusive housing in Malahide cancelled. Dept of Housing is not prepared to fund the biodiversity enhancement measures.
36	All Council housing, parks and infrastructure projects to include biodiversity enhancement proposals	Not progressed
37	Develop pesticide use policy for Fingal County Council	Not progressed due to lack of funding
38	Support and promote All Ireland Pollinator Plan Actions for Councils and monitor resulting changes	Monitoring report submitted for 2025 to NBRC

39	Develop a grass maintenance policy for open spaces including options for grass disposal from wildflower meadows	Open Space mapping will be completed.
40	Implement Tidy Towns Biodiversity Action Plans	2025 Actions for Tidy Towns groups identified and actioned where possible
41	Organise and monitor the effects of a biodiversity makeover of 3 housing estates in Fingal in conjunction with local residents and FCC Operations Department	5 housing estates have been selected: Castleway in Malahide, Seatown in Swords, St Catherines estate in Rush, Portergate in Clonsilla and the open space at Ongar, Dublin 15.
45	Develop SUDS demonstration sites in the Tolka Valley, Ward River Valley, Balbriggan town Park and Rogerstown estuary	Not progressed due to lack of staff time.
46	Prepare and implement woodland management plans in Fingal Demesnes and parks	Felling licence received for Newbridge Demesne. Control of Cherry Laurel, Snowberry and Bamboo continued in St. Catherines Park. Cherry Laurel control continued in Newbridge Demesne. Preparation of Woodland management plans for Malahide and Ardgillan Demesnes commenced.
48	Identify and acquire where possible, Climate buffer sites where flood defence features can be removed or relocated to increase flood capacity of rivers and estuaries	Sites identified. Not progressed due to lack of funding
51	Acquire and/or lease lands at Rogerstown, Broadmeadow and Baldoyle estuaries	No authorization received to acquire lands that were for sale.
52	Support reintroduction of Osprey in Fingal and install artificial nest platforms near estuaries	Suitable locations for Osprey nest platforms have been identified.
56	Carry out feasibility studies of developing a Marine Protection Area along the Fingal Coast and on the restoration of Oyster beds, Shellfish beds, Seagrass beds and Kelp stands	Not progressed due to absence of Marine Biodiversity Officer

57	Restore marine ecosystem along Fingal coast by supporting restoration projects of Oyster beds, Shellfish beds, Seagrass beds and Kelp stands	TCD Oyster restoration trial started at Malahide Marina. Awaiting MARA approval for larger scale Oysterbed restoration trials in Malahide Estuary, Rogerstown Estuary and Irelands Eye.
58	Develop Newbridge Farm as a national hub for the promotion of Irish rare farm breeds	Support funding provided to Bó Riabhach cattle Society for DNA analysis of Bó Riabhach cattle.
59	Use native Irish farm breeds for conservation grazing schemes	Ongoing
62	Develop Bird of Prey Conservation project with local farmers including raising awareness of the impacts of Rodenticide use and its proper application	Not progressed due to lack of funding
63	Develop demonstration farm(s) for biodiversity conservation e.g. hedgerow management, field margins, river management, soil improvement, Integrated pest management, nest boxes etc.	Not progressed due to lack of funding
65	Fund satellite tracking studies of winter birds listed as qualifying features in SPA's	Awaiting final PhD report on 4 bird species. Brent Geese study completed.
68	Carry out Otter survey all of rivers in Fingal	Otter survey of Fingal rivers and coast completed.
69	Carry out urban bird and bat survey	Urban Swift survey completed in all towns and villages in Fingal
70	Undertake study to identify the habitats and species at risk of climate change	Not progressed due to lack of funding
71	Explore funding models for carbon offsetting to fund wetland and woodland development	Specification developed for tender.
84	Undertake surveys of obstacles to fish passage for freshwater migratory fish species and identify mitigation options on all rivers	Fish pass at Ushers Lake completed. Study on fish migration barriers structures upstream from Ushers Lake completed.

		Consultants appointed to come up with options for 6 weirs on the Broadmeadow River. IFI Funding application successful for options assessment of fish migration barriers (7 historical weirs) on the Liffey between Dublin Bay and Leixlip. IFI Funding application successfully removed 3 barriers on the Matt River in Balbriggan.
87	Carry out breeding bird, flora and invertebrate studies in Turvey Nature Reserve, Donabate	Butterfly survey and aquatic invertebrates' studies completed at Turvey Nature Park
93	Re-develop Fingal Biodiversity website and social media channels	Website text under preparation
94	Organise a monthly program of events e.g. walks, talks and practical conservation outings	Only program of biodiversity events in Howth funded through SAAO. No funding available for county wide program of events.
95	Develop a Nature Education Centre for Dublin in Turvey Nature Park	Preparation of tender specification has started
97	Run a nature education program for primary and secondary schools	Nature education programme in place for 3 primary schools in Howth funded through Howth SAAO and two in Balbriggan funded through the Our Balbriggan programme. No funding available for county wide nature education programme.
99	Organise training days for County Council staff and politicians regarding biodiversity	Training day on Green Roof Design organised for FCC staff
100	Develop operational procedures with respect to Council work that may impact on SAC's and SPA's and protected species	Operational procedures completed for Water Services Dept re cleaning of surface water outfalls.

Source of Report: Hans Visser, Senior Executive Biodiversity Officer, Parks & Green Infrastructure Division

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COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

CLIMATE ACTION, BIODIVERSITY, ENVIRONMENT STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

TUESDAY 23RD JUNE 2026

ITEM NO. 04

DISTRICT HEATING PROJECTS

Motion: Councillor D. Healy

“That the Council, working with Codema, Dublin CARO and other appropriate bodies, produce or commission a report on the potential for additional District Heating projects in Fingal including projects which would:

- a) use existing or planned sewage treatment plants and networks as a heat source;
- b) use seawater as a heat source;
- c) use Metrolink tunnels/stations

as a heat source and supply heat to:

- a) facilities and businesses with high year-round hot water/heat demand such as restaurants, cafés, manufacturing,
- b) hard to retrofit historic towns such as Howth, Malahide, Skerries, Balbriggan including liaising with relevant partners with a view to putting in place a pipeline of projects; ensuring that current infrastructural projects are designed with appropriate heat extraction or delivery elements or with the ability to retrofit them easily and cost-effectively.”

Report:

The SEAI published in May a “Comprehensive Assessment of the Potential for Efficient Heating and Cooling in Ireland”. which is a requirement of the Energy Efficiency Directive. The Scope of the assessment includes district heating. The

assessment includes a map at Small Area Statistic of heating and cooling demand and a map of larger waste heat sources (power stations, data centres, industrial sites, wastewater treatment sites & waste to energy facilities). The report identifies financially feasible district heating potential of 4.5 TWh/yr of heat.

To go beyond the detail in the SEAI report to assess the feasibility at a local level would be a significant undertaking requiring outline design, consultation with potential waste heat suppliers, detailed costing and financial analysis.

Currently the Council is progressing a district heating scheme in the North Blanchardstown Area using data centre heat. To date the Council has spent euro 129k (not including internal staff resources) from its own resources and is awaiting decisions on funding for the next stage of planning, tender design and procurement. It will then have to submit an application for capital funding (max 50%) and secure the balance from its own resources or enter a joint venture with a private sector operator. Given the cost, current focus on the Blanchardstown Scheme, uncertainty regarding central government funding it is not recommended that the study proposed progress now.

Source of Report:
John Daly, Senior Engineer, ECAATS