

**Comhairle Contae Fine Gall
Fingal County Council**

Minutes of Marine and Coastal Management Strategic Policy Committee

Wednesday, 29th November, 2023

PRESENT

Councillor E. O'Brien	Councillor T. O'Leary
Councillor B. Dennehy	Councillor A. Henchy
Councillor R. O'Donoghue	Councillor D. Healy
Councillor P. Mulville	Maire O'Brien PPN
Councillor C. Boland	James Magrane IFA
Councillor K. Power	Maire O'Brien PPN

Apologies for inability to attend were received for Councillor Ann Graves

The Area Chairperson, Councillor E. O'Brien presided.

OFFICIALS PRESENT

David Storey, Director of Services, Mary Daly, Director of Services, Catherine O'Donovan, Senior Executive Officer, Paul Smyth, Senior Executive Officer, John Daly, Senior Engineer, Hans Visser, Senior Exec Parks, Kevin Halpenny, Senior Parks Superintendent, David Leslie, Senior Communications Officer, Grainne Carroll, Administrative Officer.

Michael Lanigan Reporter Dublin Enquirer

MCM/18/23 (Agenda Item No 1)

Confirmation and Re-Affirmation of Minutes of the Marine and Coastal
Management SPC meeting held on the 21st of September 2023

The minutes of the last meeting held on 21st September 2023 were proposed by Councillor Eoghan O'Brien and seconded by Councillor David Healy.

The minutes of the meetings of the 21st September 2023, were **AGREED**

MCM/19/23 (Agenda Item No 2)
Policy for Management of Beaches and Dunes

It was **AGREED** by the members to take Item 4 'Dune and Beach Management for Coastal Protection' submitted by Cllr David Healy with this Headed Item.

Kevin Halpenny read the report as follows:

The current Fingal Biodiversity Action Plan 2022 – 2030 includes the following action:

Biodiversity Action Plan No. 76

Action: Review beach management practices of FCC in context of management of SAC's and SPA's.

Objective: To assess the impact of beach cleaning operations on the ecology of the beach and dunes habitats and associated flora & fauna species.

KPI: Beach cleaning operations reviewed and amended where necessary by Fingal County Council

It is currently planned to undertake Action No, 76 during the 2nd implementation period of the Biodiversity Action Plan which runs from 2027 to 2030.

The presentation was **NOTED**

MCM/20/23 (Agenda Item No 4)
Councillor D. Healy - Update on Dune and Beach Management for Coastal Protection

"That the Chief Executive provide an update on the development of a policy for the management of beaches and dunes aimed at protecting them from erosion and encouraging the growth of dunes and beaches as coastal protection for developed areas of Fingal, particularly in the context of rising sea levels, as agreed at the March meeting."

Report:

The current Fingal Biodiversity Action Plan 2022 – 2030 includes the following action:

Biodiversity Action Plan No. 76

Action: Review beach management practices of FCC in context of management of SAC's and SPA's.

Objective: To assess the impact of beach cleaning operations on the ecology of the beach and dunes habitats and associated flora & fauna species.

KPI: Beach cleaning operations reviewed and amended where necessary by Fingal County Council

The current priority actions for the Marine and Coastal SPC in the first implementation period 2023-2026 period are:

Biodiversity Action Plan No. 57: Restore marine ecosystem along Fingal coast by supporting restoration projects of Oyster beds, Shellfish beds, Seagrass beds and Kelp stands.

Biodiversity Action Plan No. 92: Establish a monitoring programme on coastal dynamics along the Fingal Coast.

It is currently planned to undertake Action No, 76 during the 2nd implementation period.

Following a discussion on the development of a policy for Management of Beaches and Dunes, it was agreed that a review of the beach cleaning operations would be undertaken.

The report was **Noted**.

MCM/21/23 (Agenda Item No 3)

Draft Harbour Byelaws

Report provided by Paul Smyth who gave an overview on the submissions received on the recent public consultation. This was followed by discussion and questions from the members.

The presentation was **NOTED**.

MOTIONS

MCM/22/23 (Agenda Item No 5)

PPN Representative M. O'Brien - Monitoring of Beach Sand Level and Dune Erosion along the Coast of Fingal

"That the Chief Executive engage with an academic institution to initiate monitoring of the beach sand level and dune erosion and accumulation along the coast of Fingal with a view to mapping vulnerable areas to supplement OPW's Pilot Coastal Monitoring Survey Programme, Communities could be engaged for example through clean coast groups such as 'Ground truthing' to increase knowledge which would help to develop an ecosystem and nature based solutions to coastal erosion challenges along our coastline."

(http://www.floodinfo.ie/map/coastal_monitoring_map/)

Report:

The Council is continuing to work with the Office of Public Works (OPW) on the development of a standard for National Coastal Monitoring. The process for the development of this standardised approach is nearing completion. To this end, Rogerstown Outer Estuary has been included by the OPW as a pilot site for coastal monitoring in Ireland. When the coastal monitoring process is extended countrywide, the data for Fingal from this monitoring will be made available to FCC and their consultants and used to assist future decision making in relation to appropriate management of Coastal Change for the entirety of the coastline in Fingal. When the monitoring process is in place, the Council will review how best to use this information in the context of relevant Development Plan objectives and related policies.

Following a discussion on the monitoring of beach sand levels and dune erosion in Fingal, it was agreed that this SPC would write to the OPW for a presentation at a future SPC Meeting.

The report was **Noted**.

MCM/23/23 (Agenda Item No 6)

Councillor T. O'Leary - Presentation - Initial Concept Plan for the Renewable Energy Port - Gormanston County Meath

"That this Committee invite the Bremore Port Proposal team led by Drogheda Port to make a detailed presentation of the initial concept plan for the Renewable Energy Port at Gormanston County Meath, the port ambit and sea walls extend into the Fingal coastal area under this Committees remit and various studies in the seawater are needed to progress the proposal that go as far as Skerries noting the proposers hope to submit a planning application in 18 months approximately."

Report:

If the motion is passed, an invitation will be issued to the Drogheda Port Company Bremore Port proposal team to make a presentation on the concept plan for the Renewable Energy Port at Gormanston, Co Meath.

This motion, in the name of Councillor T. O'Leary, was proposed by Councillor T. O'Leary and seconded by Councillor O'Brien.

The motion was **Agreed**.

MCM/24/23 (Agenda Item No 7)

Councillor C. Boland - Pedestrian Boardwalks by the Sea

"That this Committee recommends in order to maximise the tourist potential and enjoyment of our coastline in areas of scenic or activity engagement, which are difficult to access by all, yet present opportunity to maximise coastal enjoyment, that consideration and feasibility be given to providing suitable pedestrian boardwalks either natural or manmade to enable all to come closer to the therapy of the sea, for example providing a boardwalk from the slipway at Skerries Sailing Club to the commencement of the pier."

Report:

The Fingal Coastal Way greenway extending from Newbridge Demesne in Donabate to the Fingal county boundary, north of Balbriggan. The overall length of the scheme will be approximately 32km, depending on the final route selected. The Fingal Coastal Way is envisaged to be a flagship scheme for tourism in the county with the potential to promote and enhance the local tourist economy.

The proposed greenway will bring direct improved, safe access to amenities including links to shops, schools, sports clubs and other local facilities located along it.

A discussion was held by Members and Officials on the feasibility of providing boardwalks at coastal areas in Fingal. It was advised that access points and routes will be linked as part of the Fingal Greenway.

This motion, in the name of Councillor C. Boland, was proposed by Councillor C. Boland and seconded by Councillor O'Brien.

The motion was **Agreed**.

MCM/25/23 (Agenda Item No)

AOB

AOB

Cllr O'Brien invited suggestions from SPC Members for the 2024 Marine and Coastal Management SPC Works Programme.

Cllr Mulville requested that the fisheries be invited to attend the next SPC to give a presentation.

David Storey advised that an invitation has been extended to MARA to attend an SPC Meeting to give a presentation however no response has yet been received.

The Meeting concluded at 17:50

CHAIRPERSON

DATED