

**Comhairle Contae Fingal
Fingal County Council**

Minutes of Howth SAAO Management Committee

Wednesday, 26th June, 2024

- Dougal Cousins, Therese Casey, Edgar McLoughlin, Lisa Doyle, Mary O'Connor, Mary Tubridy, Jacqueline Feeley, Cllr David Healy, Cllr Joan Hopkins, Cllr Cathal Haughey, Eoin Quinlan, Philp O'Connor, Killian O'Sullivan, Caroline Gore-Grimes, Fearghal McSweeney, Hans Visser, Nessa O'Brien, Zer Barokas, SORCHA King,
- Apologies: Conn Redmond, Cllr Brian McDonagh

- Philip welcomed all members and meeting began with all members introducing themselves for benefit of members attending for the first time

- Minutes Proposed by Dougal Seconded by Jacqueline.

- SAAO/3: Lisa Doyle spoke on SAAO/3. An update on the Goat Grazing just needs approval from Director of Services of Planning.

- The Sport Ireland Report for Pathways was discussed in which 45 elements were identified for improvement. It has to be decided what is feasible pricewise and tenders are being sought. David Daly circulated this report to all members

- Nessa spoke on a cycling group at the Castle moving debris to make bike ramps – this will be referred to the Council.

- SAAO/4: Mary Tubridy took Committee through SAAO/4 – It was asked if there was any timescale on producing the design guidelines, Killian O'Sullivan will follow up on this.

- The Heritage Council Board is visiting Fingal this year – Disappointed that FCC didn't organise a presentation on the SAAO or SAC. Lisa is going on trip to Ireland's Eye with Board members will cover some aspects of the SAAO. It was asked should the Council's Heritage Officer be invited to attend a meeting? It was agreed later on that the Chair will write an invitation letter to Heritage Officer asking her to attend a meeting.

- Under the Management Plan for the SAC Mairead Stack wanted it minuted that she different recollection of what was discussed on the Howth Head Management Plan site visit. NPWS did not refute that Dry Heath was to be the only habitat on Howth Heath and stated that is the EU Habitats Directive that requires that the designated habitat is conserved. At that meeting, it was agreed that a soil map would be useful to establish where dry heath would

occur. She stated that it is the European Commission, not the NPWS that is requiring that Dry Heath is the priority habitat to be conserved on site

- At Red Rock it was brought to the members about the possibility of cattle grazing as it is the more cost effective option and also is more environmentally friendly and also is a great interest to the public, this was agreed unanimously by the Committee. On the cattle grazing as mentioned it is awaiting Director approval and the Chair will send a letter to Matthew McAleese. Issues over licences and insurance were discussed.
- SAAO/5 – Jacqueline took the Committee through SAAO/5 and led off by thanking Solomon for sending a bundle of enforcement forms.
- Jacqueline also thanked the Council for carrying out works at Cowbooter Lane.
- Sub Committee was disappointed by lack of progress on getting a Social Media Person in place. Hans explained that this was due to the change in staff and that Lisa will pursue this, was asked by the Committee if this could be in place before the Maritime festival.
- Recent public events have been a success with much buy in and attendance by the public. A schedule of events was circulated by Hans. Autumn events in which Committee members are invited to attend are the Maritime Festival and the Annual Public Meeting held in the Yacht Club on the 2nd of October.
- The signage at Green Hallows Quarry was discussed. The Committee has requested a clear “right of way” sign to be erected and also thanked Council for the new signs put in place.
- Fearghal gave an update on outstanding enforcement matters, an enforcement matter was discussed and the enforcement section will open an investigation into this.
- Other matters arising – Edgar wanted Sub Committee report to include his name in attendance. this has been done.
- A biodiversity report has been recommended for Cooke’s Quarry and the legalities of such were discussed, Mairéad Stack stated that the NPWS can’t facilitate a meeting between FCC and private landowners. But can certainly talk to private landowners who won’t engage with FCC where their activities or lack of, are having an impact on the SAC.
- SAAO/6 – Dougal spoke for SAAO/6 and asked if the regular meetings held with Biodiversity and Operations could resume, assurances that these meetings would resume was given at the meeting.

- More gardening waste has been dumped on the entrance of a SAAO pathway. There are plans to install a CCTV camera and Howth Pathways are happy to assist Operations to clear area when camera is installed.
- The legal status of rights of way was discussed, these routes are not marked on the Development Plan maps but are on the official Howth SAAO map. The system to resolve this matter is above the remit of this Committee. What routes are protected on the map to be discussed at a future Sub Committee meeting.
- SAAO/7: Hans had nothing to report on this matter
- SAAO/8: AOB – Mairéad Stack said was great to be here in person, and reaffirmed that the NPWS wants to work with people, if anyone has any questions or queries, contact her and to remind that any Plans or Projects within the SAC need AA Screening.'
- Meeting closed with Dougal giving a commendation to Melissa Jueken who will be leaving her role after such great work. Melissa was also presented with a framed drawing done by David Wilson. Melissa spoke and thanked to Committee. Philip thanked Melissa again as the meeting ended.
- The meeting was concluded at 16:47.
- Next meeting scheduled for Wednesday 18th September 2024.