

Laois County Council

Meeting Record

File Ref: Env/SPC	Date/Time: 4 th March 2024 at 2.00 pm	Executive Conference Room Áras an Chontae
Subject:	Transportation, Environment & Emergency Services Strategic Policy Committee	
Present:	Cllr. John Joe Fennelly, Chair Cllr. Ben Brennan Cllr. Paddy Bracken	Mr. John Talbot, Agricultural Rep Mr. John Killeen, Construction Rep Ms. Deirdre O'Connell
In attendance:	Mr. Adrian Barrett, Senior Engineer Mr. James Dowling, Senior Executive Engineer Ms. Fiona Skehan, Administrative Officer	
Apologies:	Cllr's Wm Aird and Marie Tuohy Mr. Simon Walton, Director of Services Mr. Paul McLoughlin, Senior Engineer	
ITEM	DESCRIPTION	ACTION REQUIRED
1	Quorum Present Cllr. Fennelly opened the meeting by welcoming the committee and advised quorum was in place.	
2.	Confirmation of Minutes of SPC Meeting held on 5th December 2023 Proposed by Cllr. Bracken Seconded by Mr. Talbot	
3	None	
4	<p>Progress Report from Director of Services</p> <p>(a) Pedestrian Crossings</p> <p>Mr. Barrett circulated the draft pedestrian crossings policy following feedback received from members of the SPC, which has now been incorporated into the document.</p> <p>Mr. Dowling gave a summary on the key points of the document.</p> <p>A discussion ensued with regards to new guidance expected on Zebra crossings that new installs will require signage and there may be no requirement for belisha beacons.</p> <p>Mr. Barrett advised that in the absence of such guidance that it is likely this will be an option and subject to road safety audit. As with housing estates once there is a public light at the crossing, no beacon flashing light is necessary. There may likely be a sliding scale of options for zebra crossings and approved by the members.</p> <p>Chair asked that all committee members read the document and forward feedback for consideration and inclusion to the policy. The final draft will be considered at the next SPC with a view to putting to the full council for approval.</p>	Feedback for next meeting

	<p>(b) Road Safety Plan 2024 - 2030 Mr. Barrett advised that the draft document is still a work in progress and will be brought to the next SPC meeting for consideration.</p>	
5	<p><u>Presentation by Re-Turn</u></p> <p>G. McCann, Head of Regulatory Affairs, Re-Turn presented the members with an overview of the new Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) which commenced on 1st February 2024.</p> <p>In summary: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advised that all retailers have installed reverse vending machines (RVM) which can be used by consumers to return PET and aluminium cans. The consumer is not restricted in using RVM at another retailer's RVM, can use any RVM. - There is a 4-month transition from old PET/aluminium to new which includes RI specific bar codes to deter fraud between NI and RI. - Enforcement and DRS Regulations have the role of the LA's. - Communications will be in the form of logos, Retailer toolkit, social media branding and guidance manuals/documents. - There are exemptions for small to medium retailers if they have less than 250 sq. metres of space for the RVM. The retailer is not exempt from charging the 15c or 25c on the PET or aluminium bottles/cans. - The charge will be shown as a separate item on the consumer's receipt. <p>Ms. McCann opened the floor for questions.</p> <p>Clr. Fennelly asked if the price of the RVM's was a challenge for retailers in rural areas and it would be beneficial to make a presentation to Tidy Towns? Ms. McCann advised that there is a €6,000 grant available but to date very little take up. Re-turn is looking at additional financial supports.</p> <p>Ms. McCann explained that the handling fee was causing a lack of understanding with retailers. While the Capital outlay was attractive after the retailer sees the benefits in the first six months.</p> <p>Ms. McCann also advised that the DRS is being rolled out in phases:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Retailers from 1-Feb-2024 2. Non retailers (which would include Tidy Towns) 3. Festivals and events <p>Clr. Bracken asked why Aldi and Lidl are excluded from the map and why the scheme only includes beverage cans?</p> <p>Ms. McCann advised that while not on the map, many Aldi and Lidl retailers have RVM in situ.</p> <p>Ms. McCann also advised that food cans were not part of the initial scope for the scheme. It will likely be part of the scheme down the road.</p> <p>The chair thanked Ms. McCann for the presentation.</p>	

6	<p><u>Correspondence/AOB</u> No correspondence received.</p> <p>Cllr. Brennan asked if there was a speed limit review being carried out by the council this year? Mr. Barrett advised that the council was waiting on the Department to circulation new guidelines in relation to speed limits, which is imminent.</p> <p>Cllr. Bracken stated that the current process in place to manage public lights faults/damage or lights blown is not satisfactory. All members agreed to invite the ESB and Killaree Lighting Services to the next SPC meeting.</p> <p>Mr. Talbot asked if there was any further progress made following audit of the N77 Portlaoise to Abbeyleix road, in particular, when a car is turning right off the N77 at junctions Raheen, Corbally, Bondra and Tunduff. Mr. Barrett advised that the council is not responsible for the N77, it is TII. The council meets regularly with TII and will raise this issue at the next meeting.</p>	<p>To advise PL section</p> <p>Mr. Dowling to follow up with TII</p>
7	<p>Date of next Meeting Monday 8th April 2024 at 2pm This concluded the business of the meeting.</p>	<p>FS to book EC room</p>

Signed: _____

John Joe Fennelly
Cllr. John Joe Fennelly
SPC Chairperson

Date: _____

8/4/23