

Kilkenny PPN Representative Report on SPC3 Meeting

Reporting Representative Name: Mary T. Brennan (Environmental Pillar)

Committee: SPC3

Date: December 12th 2018 Time: 14 h

Venue: County Hall

Key Issues

1. Vacant Site Levy: An update was provided which outlined the process of surveying sites for inclusion on the register and the process of giving notice to owners. An improved process has been put in place for 2019. The register is available on the Council's website.
2. Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy. The completed strategy is to be published by Dec 14th and councillors will be briefed on it. It will guide the County Development Plan. The importance of including climate adaptation measures and climate mitigations measures were discussed.
3. Local Area Plans: Public consultations have been held in Thomastown and Callan. The plans include the provision of serviced sites for housing. The draft plans will be on display until Dec 20th and submissions are invited. Recommendations will then be drawn up by the Chief Executive and the plans will be brought to Council in January.
4. Solar Energy Update: There is no fully developed policy at national level, so each application is dealt with on an individual basis by the Planners. Factors taken into account include size of solar farm, quality of agricultural land and distance from ESB substation. It is likely that the grid line routes and their suitability for accommodating renewable energy will be the main factor in determining distribution of solar farms in the County. It was noted that planning permission must be obtained from the County Council prior to requesting connection to the grid. The importance of a land use planning strategy was emphasized, also the need for the County Development Plan to address micro-generation of energy including biodigesters, wind, solar, hydro and biomass crops i.e. local production of energy for local consumption.
5. AOB
 - Kilkenny Women and the 1918 elections: I gave a brief outline of the role of the Kilkenny Suffrage Society in seeking the vote for women – the 100th anniversary of the 1918 elections in which women could vote in parliamentary elections for the first time, will be on Dec 14th.
 - Housing Policy in Villages and Rural Areas: Some parishes have no nucleated villages so a question was asked about how rural housing policy deals with that. At present the Planners make decisions based on economic and social need. The Council also aim to provide serviced sites in villages because of the desirability of clustering people where there are services.
 - Derelict Sites: There is no register for derelict sites on the Council's website. The meeting was informed that this is under review and a composite site register for the County will be developed. The potential importance of these sites for social housing and for heritage if they are listed structures was discussed.

Decisions made: Recommendation to County Council to address micro-generation of energy in the Development Plan.

Did you make any contributions to this meeting? Comments on No. 1, 2 and 5 above.

Do you require feedback from the PPN on any issue raised? No

Date of next meeting: February 23th 2018

Signature: *Mary T. Brennan*