

LONGFORD COUNTY COUNCIL

Draft Strategic Policy Committee Scheme 2019 - 2024

Longford County Council

Strategic Policy Committee Draft Scheme 2019 - 2024

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LONGFORD COUNTY COUNCIL

STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE SCHEME 2019 - 2024

# Introduction

The statutory basis for establishment of Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs) is set out in Section 48 of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended by Section 41 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014.

The SPCs

* Assist the Council in the formulation, development and review of policy;
* Reflect the major functions or services of a local authority;
* Are tailored to the size, membership and administrative resources of the Council; and
* Have one third of their membership drawn from sectors relevant to the work of the Committee.

SPCs have a major role in assisting and advising the Council in relation to functions of a strategic statutory nature. They also have functions in other areas including the establishment of priorities for particular services. The SPC system is intended to give councillors and relevant sectoral interests an opportunity for full involvement in the policy-making process from the early stages, when policy options are more fluid. The SPCs provide elected members with external views as they discharge their strategic role in the development of the local authority, including their policy development and oversight roles within the local authority.

While the role of each SPC is to assist the Council in the formulation and development of policy, the final policy decisions rest ultimately with the full Council.

# Strategic Policy Committee Framework

Longford County Council, at its Annual General Meeting held on 7th June, 2019, appointed the Chairpersons Designate in respect of the four Strategic Policy Committees. Together with the Cathaoirleach, the Chairpersons Designate form the Corporate Policy Group.

The Corporate Policy Group considered the manner in which the Strategic Policy Committees have operated to date in County Longford and had regard to feedback from the PPN and the various guidelines issued by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government when considering how the Strategic Policy Committees can most effectively be established and operated for the period 2019 – 2024. The recommendation of the Corporate Policy Group to approve a draft for public consultation was approved by Longford County Council at its meeting on 11th September 2019.

Following consideration of the Chief Executive’s report on submissions received during the consultation period, which recommended a number of amendments to the draft scheme, Longford County Council adopted this revised Strategic Policy Committee Scheme for County Longford for 2019 – 2024 on XX December 2019.

Four Strategic Policy Committees will be established as follows:

* Climate Action and Planning Strategic Policy Committee
* Placemaking Strategic Policy Committee (to include Economic Development and Enterprise)
* Strategic Infrastructure Strategic Policy Committee
* Governance Strategic Policy Committee

# Policy Configuration

Each Strategic Policy Committee will focus attention on the development of policy along the following broad lines. In some cases, it may be appropriate that a number of Strategic Policy Committees will work together.

## Climate Action and Planning Strategic Policy Committee

* Climate Change Adaptation Strategy
* Energy and Buildings
* Flood Resilience
* Public Awareness and Education
* Water Quality Management Plan
* Forward Planning
* Development Plans
* Monitoring and Review of County Development Plan
* Planning and Development Control Policy
* Urban Design and Renewal
* Conservation of Built Heritage
* Building Control
* Water Safety
* Civil Defence
* Emergency Planning
* Fire Prevention, Fire Protection and Fire Safety
* Dangerous Buildings and Dangerous Places
* Vacant Sites Levy
* Derelict Sites
* Taking in Charge of Estates
* Burial Ground Provision and Maintenance
* Policy Relating to Land Drainage and River Drainage
* Pollution Control Policy
* Waste Management Policy
* Litter Prevention and Litter Control
* Animal Health and Food Protection Policy
* Control of Animals
* Biodiversity
* Environment

## Placemaking Strategic Policy Committee

## (to include Economic Development and Enterprise)

* Preparation, implementation and review of the economic and community elements of the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP),
* Oversight of the operation of the Local Enterprise Office (LEO)
* Industrial/Economic Development Policies
* Social Inclusion
* Community Development
* Urban and Rural Renewal and Regeneration Policies
* Tourism Development Policies
* Historical, Heritage and Conservation Policies
* Ageing
* Library Development Policies
* Artistic and Cultural Policies
* Provision of Recreational and Sporting Facilities
* Sports Participation and Facilities
* Development of Links with Educational Facilities

## Strategic Infrastructure Strategic Policy Committee

* Social Housing and Estate Management
* Housing Construction
* Refurbishment Programme
* Homeless Strategy
* Policy Relating to Letting Priorities
* Voluntary Housing
* Control of the Private Rented Housing Sector
* Financial Assistance for Persons in need of Housing
* Traveller Accommodation and Facilities for Travellers
* Providing Facilities for Persons with Disabilities
* Road Development and Road Maintenance Policy
* Transportation Policy
* Traffic Management and Car Parking Policy
* Public Lighting Policy
* Local Improvement Schemes
* Provision of Pedestrian Crossings
* Road Safety

## Governance Strategic Policy Committee

* Risk Management
* Health and Safety
* Control and Compliance
* Ethics
* ICT

# Membership and Composition of Strategic Policy Committees

Membership of Strategic Policy Committees will comprise representation from Longford County Council and the sectoral interest groups.

Each Strategic Policy Committee will have a minimum total membership of nine subject to a minimum representation of one third of the members on each committee being nominees of sectoral interest groups.

## Elected Members of Longford County Council

* Each Member of Longford County Council will be appointed as a member of a particular Strategic Policy Committee for the life of the Council.
* If a Member ceases to be a Member of Longford County Council their membership of the Strategic Policy Committee will automatically cease.
* A Member of Longford County Council may not be nominated to represent a sectoral interest group on any Strategic Policy Committee.
* Five Members of Longford County Council will be nominated to each SPC

## Representatives of Sectoral Interest Groups

The following seven sectors shall be represented on at least one Strategic Policy Committees.

* Agriculture and Farming
* Business /Employers
* Development / Construction
* Trade Union
* Environmental / Conservation
* Community and Voluntary
* Social Inclusion

The following principles apply with regard to the selection of groups and associations for a particular sector.

* Groups and associations must be active within County Longford and have a county wide impact or, at a minimum, relevance in a locality or number of localities in the area.
* Groups and associations must be open to new members, hold both Annual General Meetings and regular meetings, and should be broadly representative and accountable.
* Single interest groups may be considered. Groups formed around specific single local issues shall not be eligible to be represented on Strategic Policy Committees.
* Local Development Agencies represented at Strategy Group/LCDC level shall not be eligible to be represented on a Strategic Policy Committee.
* The nomination of sectoral representatives is the responsibility of each sector and should be conducted through the PPN where appropriate.
* To ensure that each Sector is appropriately represented on a Strategic Policy Committee, Longford County Council reserves the right to recommend that nominees have a broad knowledge and/or expertise in a particular area of relevance.
* Sectoral nominees retain membership of the Strategic Policy Committee for the life of the committee.
* If a sectoral representative ceases to be a member of a Strategic Policy Committee within the life of that committee, the nominating sector may appoint another representative to fill the vacated position.
* A nominating sector may deselect its nominee if it considers it necessary and will be required to notify the Council of any changes in this regard. Any notification that is submitted must be duly authorised and must indicate the date from which the nomination will no longer be valid. In such a case or when a casual vacancy occurs the relevant sector shall be entitled to nominate a replacement representative.

In addition to the representation of the above seven sectors on the SPC’s, a nominee of County Longford Tourism Committee will be appointed to the Placemaking Strategic Policy Committee.

# Membership of Strategic Policy Committees 2019 – 2024

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strategic  Policy  Committee | County Council Members | Sectoral Representatives | Total | Chair | Nominees |
| Climate Action and Planning | Councillors – 5  Mark Casey (BMD)  Uruemu Adejinmi (LMD)  Gerard Hagan (LMD)  Garry Murtagh (GMD)  Peggy Nolan (LMD) | Sectoral Representatives - 5  Agriculture & Farming  Business / Employers  Community & Voluntary  2 Environmental / Conservation | 10 | Councillors – 5  Year 1 Gerard Hagan  Year 2 Gerard Hagan  Year 3 Garry Murtagh  Year 4 Garry Murtagh  Year 5 Gerard Hagan | Andrew McHugh  Sharon Devlin  Marcella O’Connor  Francesca Pawelczyk  Anna Delaney |
| Placemaking Strategic Policy Committee  (to include Economic Development and Enterprise) | Councillors –  Martin Monaghan (LMD)  Colm Murray (BMD)  Gerard Farrell (BMD)  P.J. Reilly (GMD)  Paul Ross (BMD) | Sectoral Representatives - 5  Business / Employers  Social Inclusion  Community & Voluntary  County Tourism Committee  Development / Construction | 10 | Councillors – 5  Year 1 Colm Murray  Year 2 Gerard Farrell  Year 3 Gerard Farrell  Year 4 Paul Ross  Year 5 Paul Ross | Niamh Donlon  Louise Lovett  Breda Murphy  Matt Farrell  Vincent Fay |
| Strategic Infrastructure Strategic Policy Committee | Councillors –  Paraic Brady (GMD)  Colm Murray (BMD)  Turlough McGovern (GMD)  Pat O’Toole (BMD)  Gerry Warnock (LMD) | Sectoral Representatives - 5  Development / Construction  Community & Voluntary  Environmental / Conservation  Agriculture & Farming  Social Inclusion - Disability | 10 | Councillors – 5  Year 1 Paraic Brady  Year 2 Turlough McGovern  Year 3 Turlough McGovern  Year 4 Colm Murray  Year 5 Paraic Brady | Fiona Fenelon  Maria Keelty  Stephanie Igoe  Damien O Reilly  Tess Murphy. |
| Governance Strategic Policy Committee | Councillors –  Seamus Butler (LMD)  John Browne (LMD)  Mick Cahill (BMD)  Micheál Carrigy (GMD)  P.J. Reilly (GMD) | Sectoral Representatives – 5  Business / Employers  2 Community & Voluntary  Trade Union  Social Inclusion | 10 | Councillors – 5  Year 1 Seamus Butler  Year 2 Mick Cahill  Year 3 Mick Cahill  Year 4 P.J. Reilly  Year 5 P.J. Reilly | Fulton Grant  Pamela Martin  Teresa Kearney  Brendan Murtagh  Karie Murray |
| **TOTAL** | **20** | **20** | **40** |  |  |

# Nomination Process

The following nomination process will apply in respect of the sectoral representatives.

* The nomination process for the Agriculture and Farming sector will be facilitated by the Farming and Agriculture National Pillar who will nominate two members.
* The nomination process for the Business/Employers Sector and the Development/Construction Sector will be facilitated by the Business & Employers National Pillar who will nominate five members.
* The nomination process for the Trade Union sector will be facilitated by the Trade Union Pillar who will nominate one member.
* The nomination process in respect of the Environmental/Conservation Sector will be facilitated by the Environmental Pillar and the associated Environmental College under the Public Participation Network who will nominate three members.
* The nomination process in respect of the Community and Voluntary Sector and the Social Inclusion Sector will be facilitated by the Public Participation Network who will nominate eight members.
* County Longford Tourism Committee will nominate one member.Administrative Matters relating to the Operation of Strategic Policy Committees

Preparation for Meetings and Conduct of Meetings

Each individual Strategic Policy Committee will at its inaugural meeting determine how matters relating to the preparation and conduct of meetings can best be managed. These will be documented in the agreed Standing Orders. The Standing Orders will also reflect that the Chair (Elected Member) has the casting vote and quorums for meetings to remain at three.

The following issues will be agreed:

* Procedures before and during meetings
* Training for members of the Strategic Policy Committees
* Linkages between the Strategic Policy Committee, the County Council, local agencies and sectoral interest groups
* Assistance from Public Authorities
* Expenses
* Data Protection Records Retention Policy in respect of meeting agendas & minutes

Chairpersons of Strategic Policy Committees

* In the event that a Chairperson of a Strategic Policy Committee relinquishes the Chair, they will continue to be a member of that Strategic Policy Committee for the remainder of the life of the Council.
* The Chairpersons of the Strategic Policy Committees will, by agreement, serve for terms as agreed at the Annual Meeting of the Council.
* At the Annual General Meeting of the Council held on 7th June, 2019 the Chairpersons designate were appointed and the Members who will succeed to the Chairs were also selected.

# Lobbying Act 2015 – Transparency Code

The Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015 (the Act) is designed to provide information to the public regarding who is lobbying whom about what. Individuals and organisations who participate in Strategic Policy Committees established by local authorities may have obligations under the Act.

A critical element of public policy formulation by the Strategic Policy Committees is the availability to the local authorities of expertise, skills and knowledge from persons outside of the public service.

Where membership of the Committee comprises of at least one person who, for the purposes of the Act is a Designated Public Official, it may be the case that communications within the group could be considered lobbying communications. The person making these communications may be required to register as a lobbyist and to submit a return of this communication to the Lobbying Register.

However, the Act provides for an exception from the requirement to register in such cases once specified transparency criteria have been put in place. A transparency code was published by the Minister for Finance and Public Expenditure and Reform to address this situation. Communications between members of Strategic Policy Committee about the work of the Committee would be exempt where the group in question complies with the Transparency Code.

# Circulation of Draft and Adoption of SPC Scheme

# This draft Strategic Policy Scheme 2019-2024 was considered by Longford County Council at its meeting on 11th September 2019. The adopted draft was published to afford opportunity for comment or observations in relation to same. Submissions on the Draft were accepted up to October 24th. The Council considered all submissions received and a number of amendments were made to the Draft Scheme. The final Strategic Policy Scheme was adopted at the Council meeting on XX December 2019.

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# Cathaoirleach Director of Services