



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí

Cork County Council

***Strategic Policy Committee Scheme
2024-2029***

***Scéim an Choiste um Beartais Straitéiseacha
2024 – 2029***

The statutory basis for SPCs is set out in section 48 of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended by section 48(1a) of the Local Government Reform Act 2014.

Circular LG09/2024 dated 7th June 2024, outlines the requirement for each Local Authority following the local elections to establish new Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs) in line with revised guidelines published by the Department in June 2024 for Establishment and Operation of Corporate Policy Groups (CPGs) and Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs). The guidelines seek to ensure there is a clear understanding of the work of SPCs and includes guidance on incorporating climate action into SPC work groups.

The Council has decided to include minor modifications to the SPC structure by the introduction of an additional SPC – Coastal, Marine and Flood Policy

ROLE OF THE COUNCIL

Cork County Council delivers a wide range of services and provides infrastructure to all of the citizens of the County. The day-to-day delivery of services is the responsibility of the Chief Executive, Management Team, and Staff, while 55 Elected Members perform the Council's Democratic / Representational Role.

ROLE OF THE STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEES (SPC)

The Council is and will continue to be the decision-making authority. It is the SPCs' task to assist the Council in the formulation, development, and review of policy. It is intended that the SPC system will give Councillors and sectoral interests an opportunity to be fully involved in the policy making process from an early stage when policy options are more fluid. SPCs prepare the groundwork for policies which are then decided on by the Council, including as appropriate at municipal district level. Each SPC is required to have regard to the **Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy prepared by the Regional Assembly**.

ROLE OF CORPORATE POLICY GROUP (CPG)

The role of the CPG is strategic, and it links and co-ordinates the work of the different SPCs. The Corporate Policy Group also recommends issues to be considered by the SPCs. The SPC Administrator on behalf of the Chair will send a report to Full Council on work of SPC on a quarterly basis. Chairs of SPCs should report back from Full Council to their committees and reps of each MD to their respective MD areas. In addition, CPG

- Full Council may directly refer matters to SPC for discussion/consideration.
- Play a key role in preparing the budget.
- Provide input to Full Council on any matter of general concern to the Council either on its own initiative or following a request from the Council.
- Monitor overall performance of a Local Authority including in relation to matters of governance and oversight, in particular in relation to consideration of reports of Audit Committee, Local Government Auditor and National Oversight Audit Commission.

- Request SPCs to consider particular policy issues where appropriate.
- Be consulted in preparation of the Corporate Plan.
- Approve the work programmes of the SPCs and monitor their achievement.
- The approved minutes of the CPG meetings will be circulated to all Elected Members.
- Ensure that SPC members receive timely updates from the CPG.

PROPOSED STRUCTURE

- The Scheme provides for the establishment of nine Strategic Policy Committees having a county wide remit.
- Committees will have a maximum of 24 members, a minimum of one third of whom will be drawn from relevant sectoral interests.
- Each Member of Cork County Council will be a member of two SPCs.
- Each SPC will meet at least once every three months and will regulate its own business and proceedings subject to the Council's Standing Orders.
- The appointment of SPC Chairs and membership of the SPCs (both Councillors and sectoral representatives) shall be for the lifetime of the Council.
- Each SPC will agree an annual work programme which is linked to the strategic policies in the Councils Corporate Plan. The work programmes should be reviewed and updated regularly.
- Each SPC will be required to consider Climate Action and Climate Impacts as part of all policies that form part of its work programme. All work programmes of each SPC and the CPG should ensure that all proposed policies put forward from the SPCs are climate and biodiversity proofed and all SPCs should consider climate action as a cross cutting issue in their work programme.

The proposed structure is set out in Appendix I

PARTICIPANTS

SPC Councillor Membership will reflect the proportionality and distribution of elected representation on the full Council.

External representation on the SPCs will reflect the following:

- The need to represent a spread of relevant interests.
- The need for balance between divergent interests.
- The range of groups within each sector.
- A commitment to foster economic development and social inclusiveness.
- Gender balance.

Groups / Associations / Organisations represented on the SPC structure should be active in the local authority area, be broadly representative and accountable and should have a broad sectoral remit.

It is proposed that the following sectors will be represented on the Council's SPC structure:

- Agriculture / Farming (Rural Authorities)

- Development / Construction
- Business / Commercial
- Trade Union
- Environment / Conservation
- Community / Voluntary
- Social Inclusion
- Other groups relevant to the business of an SPC

The nomination of representatives from the Agriculture / Farming, Business Commercial, (including Development / Construction), Trade Union and Environment sectors will be facilitated by the National Pillars. The contact points for those sectors are set out in Appendix II.

The Environmental, Community/Voluntary and Social Inclusion Sectors will be determined on the basis of the local nomination process through the Public Participation Network (PPN)

Nominations from the other sectors will be facilitated by Cork County Council.

Groups / Associations / Organisations who wish to register their interest in participating in the SPC process should do so on the attached form (Appendix III).

SPC MEETINGS - PROCEDURES

- Procedures for SPC meetings are set out in Cork County Council's Standing Orders.
- A calendar of meetings shall be agreed at the start of each year.
- In as far as possible all members of the SPC should be involved in setting up the agenda.
- SPCs are generally held four times per year at a time suitable to SPC members.
`Documentation concerning SPC meetings should be sent five clear days in advance of meetings with minutes of meetings being circulated in a timely manner.
- The quorum for an SPC shall be all the membership of that Committee divided by three, any fraction being disregarded, subject to such quorum being not less than three members.
- SPC meetings generally take place during the day, but the timing of the meeting will be decided by each SPC in conjunction with Corporate Services.
- Training and Development should be provided to all SPC Members. Training requirements to be discussed and agreed between Chairs of SPCs and members.
- Annual programme of works to be agreed by CPG.

Expenses will be paid by the Local Authority to any SPC Member who do not receive expenses from their own organisation in respect of attendance at SPC meetings.

ETHICS FRAMEWORK & LOBBYING

All Member of the SPC committees should be aware of and understand the Ethics Framework for the Local Government Sector as set out under Part 15 of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended).

In carrying out their functions under this or any other enactment it is the duty of every Member and employee of a local authority and of every member of every committee to maintain proper standards of integrity, conduct and concern for public interest.

The Standards in Public Office Commission has advised that the Regulation of Lobbying legislation is applicable to Strategic Policy Committees

Cognisance should be taken of the legal obligation of Members in respect of lobbying and ethics framework.

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRS DESIGNATE

Cork County Council at its meeting of the 21st June 2024 and 9th September, 2024 appointed Councillors to be the Chairs Designate to each SPC as follows:

Strategic Policy Committee	Chair
Planning & Strategic Development	Cllr. Michael Hegarty
Environment, Climate Action & Biodiversity	Cllr. Gillian Coughlan
Economic Development & Enterprise	Cllr. Gearoid Murphy
Tourism	Cllr. Ben Dalton O’Sullivan
Housing	Cllr. Seamus McGrath
Roads & Transportation	Cllr. Cathal Rasmussen
Social Inclusion, Community & Rural Development	Cllr. John Paul O’Shea
Arts Culture & Languages	Cllr. Sinead Sheppard
Coastal, Marine & Flood Policy	Cllr. Audrey Buckley

Under this scheme and in line with Standing Orders each Elected Member will become a member of two Strategic Policy Committees. Elected Members were appointed to each SPC on the 23rd September, 2024. (Appendix IV)

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

In July Cork County Council approved the draft SPC scheme for public consultation and the Scheme was advertised on Friday 23rd August with closing date of Friday 20th September 2024. Submissions and nominations were also invited from the relevant pillars – Agriculture/Farming, Business Commercial (including Development/Construction), Trade Union and from the PPN.

Nominations from “other sectors” if appropriate will also be facilitated by Cork County Council.

Five submissions were received during this period (Appendix V)

Cognisance was given to all points made in all the submissions received and Cork County Council has built in elements of the submissions in the SPC Scheme for adoption by Elected Members.

There are a number of points made that can be examined by the various SPCs.

1. Work programme of each SPC and its Minutes will reflect their role and operations. Terms of Reference will be developed for each SPC.
2. Establish Irish Gaeltacht Sub-Committee
3. Housing & Population Development Strategy for each Gaeltacht Language Planning area.
4. Overview of the role of the PPN presentation to be made to each SPC.
5. Overview of the role of Health Ireland LG to be sent/presented to Social Inclusion SPC.
6. Allow local wellbeing structures/initiatives to input into SPCs where relevant and provide training for SPC members on the importance of wellbeing and methods to integrate it into policy making.

These will be brought to their attention in due course and built into the Annual Work Programme where applicable.

APPENDIX I

SPC STRUCTURE

SPC 1		Planning & Strategic Development
Elected Members		13
	<i>Members of Cork County Council</i>	13
Sectoral		7
	<i>Agriculture/Farming</i>	1
	<i>Business/Commercial</i>	1
	<i>Trade Union</i>	1
	<i>Environment / Conservation</i>	1
	<i>Development / Construction</i>	1
	<i>Community / Voluntary</i>	1
	<i>Social Inclusion</i>	1
	<i>Others</i>	0
Total Membership		20

SPC 2		Environment, Climate Action & Biodiversity
Elected Members		13
	<i>Members of Cork County Council</i>	13
Sectoral		8
	<i>Agriculture/Farming</i>	1
	<i>Business/Commercial</i>	1
	<i>Trade Union</i>	1
	<i>Environment / Conservation</i>	1
	<i>Development / Construction</i>	1
	<i>Community / Voluntary</i>	1
	<i>Social Inclusion</i>	1
	<i>Others</i>	1
Total Membership		21

SPC 3		Economic Development & Enterprise
Elected Members		12
	<i>Members of Cork County Council</i>	12
Sectoral		9
	<i>Agriculture/Farming</i>	1
	<i>Business/Commercial</i>	1

<i>Trade Union</i>	1
<i>Environment / Conservation</i>	1
<i>Development / Construction</i>	1
<i>Community / Voluntary</i>	1
<i>Social Inclusion</i>	1
<i>Others</i>	2

Total Membership	21
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SPC 4 Tourism

Elected Members	12
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<i>Members of Cork County Council</i>	12
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Sectoral	8
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<i>Agriculture/Farming</i>	1
<i>Business/Commercial</i>	2
<i>Trade Union</i>	0
<i>Environment / Conservation</i>	1
<i>Development / Construction</i>	0
<i>Community / Voluntary</i>	1
<i>Social Inclusion</i>	1
<i>Others</i>	2

Total Membership	20
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SPC 5 Housing

Elected Members	12
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<i>Members of Cork County Council</i>	12
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Sectoral	7
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<i>Agriculture/Farming</i>	0
<i>Business/Commercial</i>	0
<i>Trade Union</i>	0
<i>Environment / Conservation</i>	1
<i>Development / Construction</i>	1
<i>Community / Voluntary</i>	1
<i>Social Inclusion</i>	1
<i>Others</i>	3

Total Membership	19
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SPC 6 Roads & Transportation

Elected Members	12
<i>Members of Cork County Council</i>	12
Sectoral	10
<i>Agriculture/Farming</i>	1
<i>Business/Commercial</i>	0
<i>Trade Union</i>	1
<i>Environment / Conservation</i>	1
<i>Development / Construction</i>	1
<i>Community / Voluntary</i>	1
<i>Social Inclusion</i>	1
<i>Others</i>	4
Total Membership	22

SPC 7 Social Inclusion, Community & Rural Development

Elected Members	12
<i>Members of Cork County Council</i>	12
Sectoral	8
<i>Agriculture/Farming</i>	0
<i>Business/Commercial</i>	1
<i>Trade Union</i>	0
<i>Environment / Conservation</i>	1
<i>Development / Construction</i>	0
<i>Community / Voluntary</i>	1
<i>Social Inclusion</i>	1
<i>Others</i>	4
Total Membership	20

SPC 8 Arts, Culture & Languages

Elected Members	12
<i>Members of Cork County Council</i>	12
Sectoral	8
<i>Agriculture/Farming</i>	0

<i>Business/Commercial</i>	1
<i>Trade Union</i>	1
<i>Environment / Conservation</i>	1
<i>Development / Construction</i>	0
<i>Community / Voluntary</i>	1
<i>Social Inclusion</i>	1
<i>Others</i>	3

Total Membership	20
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SPC 9

Coastal, Marine & Flood Policy

Elected Members	12
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<i>Members of Cork County Council</i>	12
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Sectoral	8
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<i>Agriculture/Farming</i>	1
<i>Business/Commercial</i>	1
<i>Trade Union</i>	0
<i>Environment / Conservation</i>	1
<i>Development / Construction</i>	0
<i>Community / Voluntary</i>	1
<i>Social Inclusion</i>	1
<i>Others</i>	3

Total Membership	20
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APPENDIX II

SECTOR CONTACT DETAILS

Pillar	Name & Address	Telephone & Email
Farming	James Kelly	
	Irish Farmers Association (IFA) Irish Farm Centre Bluebell Dublin 12	01 – 4260323 JamesKelly@ifa.ie
Business	Conor Healy	
	Cork Chamber Fitzgerald House Summerhill North Cork	021 – 4509044 087 – 9471858 CHealy@corkchamber.ie
Trade Unions	Deirdre Manion	
	Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) Head Office 31-32 Parnell Square Dublin 1	01-8897777 Deirdre.manion@ictu.ie
Environment	Morrin Drislane	
	PPN Co-ordinator Cork County Council Business Growth Hub Cork County Council Campus Carrigrohane Road Cork	021 – 4285340/086-1283967 Morrin.Drislane@corkcoco.ie

APPENDIX III

**CORK COUNTY COUNCIL
APPLICATION FORM FOR NOMINATION TO
STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEES**

Name of applicant body: _____

Address: _____

Date of establishment: _____

State aims and purpose of your organisation: _____

With which sector would you most readily identify your organisation:
(tick one only please)

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Agriculture / Farming | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Environment / Conservation / Culture | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Development / Construction | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Business / Commercial | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Trade Union | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Community / Voluntary / Social Inclusion | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Name and address of person to whom correspondence is to be sent:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel. No: _____

How often does your organisation hold meetings: _____

Date of your last AGM: _____

State your total membership: _____

Names of Officers Chairman: _____

Treasurer: _____

Secretary: _____

Please specify the type of Strategic Policy Committee on which your organisation seeks representation:

1st preference: _____

2nd preference: _____

[While every effort will be made to accommodate preferences, final decisions will ultimately rest with the Local Authority, having regard to the likely degree of interest, the limited number of S.P.C. places available and the need to have a balanced constituency for each S.P.C.]

Signed: _____
Secretary

Completed application form must be returned to the Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services, Cork County Council, County Hall, Cork or emailed to corporateservices@corkcoco.ie by Friday 20th September, 2024.

APPENDIX IV

STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEES 2024

<p>SPC 1</p> <p><i>Planning & Strategic Development</i></p> <p>Total Number of Members – 13</p> <p>Chair – Councillor Michael Hegarty</p>	<p>Councillors</p> <p>Patrick Gerard Murphy, Seamus McGrath, Eoghan Kenny, Anthony Barry, Bernard Moynihan, Gearóid Murphy, Ann Marie Ahern, Liam Madden, Eileen Lynch, Ann Bambury, Finbarr Harrington, Nelius Cotter</p>
<p>SPC 2</p> <p><i>Environment, Climate Action & Biodiversity</i></p> <p>Total Number of Members – 13</p> <p>Chair – Councillor Gillian Coughlan</p>	<p>Councillors</p> <p>Patrick Gerard Murphy, Martin Coughlan, Jack White, Audrey Buckley, Michael Looney, William O’ Leary, Liam Quaide, John Michael Foley, Peter O’ Donoghue, John Buckley, Daniel Sexton, Isobel Towse</p>
<p>SPC 3</p> <p><i>Economic Development and Enterprise</i></p> <p>Total Number of Members – 12</p> <p>Chair – Councillor Gearoid Murphy</p>	<p>Councillors</p> <p>Alan Coleman, Frank O’ Flynn, Ian Doyle, Bernard Moynihan, Gobnait Moynihan, Sheila O’ Callaghan, Marie O’ Sullivan, Pat Hayes, John Collins, John Michael Foley, Nelius Cotter</p>
<p>SPC 4</p> <p><i>Tourism</i></p> <p>Total Number of Members – 12</p> <p>Chair – Councillor Ben Dalton O’ Sullivan</p>	<p>Councillors</p> <p>Alan Coleman, Mary Linehan Foley,</p> <p>Jack White, Joe Carroll, Deirdre O’Brien, Marie O’Sullivan, Deirdre Kelly, Pat Hayes, Caroline Cronin, Dominic Finn, Noel O’ Donovan</p>
<p>SPC 5</p> <p><i>Housing</i></p> <p>Total Number of Members – 12</p> <p>Chair – Councillor Seamus McGrath</p>	<p>Councillors</p> <p>Noel McCarthy, Sinead Sheppard, Frank O’ Flynn, Cathal Rasmussen, Ted Lucey, Mary Linehan Foley, Ann Marie Ahern, Ben Dalton O’ Sullivan, Una McCarthy, Eoghan Fahy, Ger Curley.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">SPC 6</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Roads and Transportation</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Total Number of Members – 12</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chair – Councillor Cathal Rasmussen</p>	<p>Councillors</p> <p>Michael Creed, Ted Lucey, Una McCarthy, Eoghan Kenny, Gobnait Moynihan, Tony O’ Shea, Michael Looney, John Collins, Finbarr Harrington, Eoghan Fahy, Patrick Mulcahy</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">SPC 7</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Social Inclusion Community and Rural Development</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Total Number of Members – 12</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chair – Councillor John Paul O’ Shea</p>	<p>Councillors</p> <p>Michael Creed, Noel McCarthy, Danny Collins, Deirdre O’ Brien, Gillian Coughlan, Tony O’ Shea, Deirdre Kelly, Eileen Lynch, Ann Bambury, Peter O’ Donoghue, Trish Murphy</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">SPC 8</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Arts Culture and Languages</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Total Number of Members – 12</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chair – Councillor Sinead Sheppard</p>	<p>Councillors</p> <p>John Paul O’ Shea, Martin Coughlan, Ian Doyle, Sheila O’ Callaghan, Liam Quaide, Liam Madden, Ger Curley, Dominic Finn, Trish Murphy, Rory Cocking, Isobel Towse.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">SPC 9</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Coastal Marine and Flood Policy</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Total Number of Members – 12</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chair – Councillor Audrey Buckley</p>	<p>Councillors</p> <p>Michael Hegarty, Anthony Barry, Joe Carroll, Danny Collins, William O’ Leary, Caroline Cronin, John Buckley, Rory Cocking, Patrick Mulcahy, Noel O’ Donovan, Daniel Sexton</p>