



Comhairle Cathrach & Contae Phort Láirge
Waterford City & County Council

**Strategic Policy Committee
Standing Orders**

Draft - December 2021

Document Information

Title	Strategic Policy Committee Standing Orders
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Version	2
Date discussed in workshop with Plenary Council	25 th November 2021
Date presented to CPG	1 st December 2021
Date Approved by Plenary Council	

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Standing Orders for SPCs of Waterford City and County Council

Strategic Policy Committees

The Strategic Policy Committees of Waterford City & County Council are:

1. Economic Development and Enterprise Support
2. Environment, Biodiversity and Climate Action
3. Transportation and Infrastructure
4. Housing, Community, Culture, Fire, Sport & Recreation
5. Planning

It shall be the function of the Strategic Policy Committees to consider matters connected with the formulation, development, monitoring and review of policy in relation to the functions of the SPC and the Local Authority and to advise the Authority on those matters.

The Strategic Policy Committees shall be constituted in accordance with an SPC scheme as adopted by the Council, current scheme adopted by council on the 12th September 2019.

The standing orders for Strategic Policy Committees shall apply together with the provisions of Section 48 of the Local Government Act, 2001 as amended by Section 41 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 and any other enactment to the operation of the Strategic Policy Committees.

a) Meetings

- i) Each Strategic Policy Committee shall meet as often as required and at least four times a year to deal with the business assigned to it.
- ii) The dates, times and locations of the SPC meetings are matters for each individual SPC to determine.
- iii) Where possible a calendar of meetings should be agreed at the start of each year.
- iv) The durations of SPC Meetings will be for an hour and a half, on agreement of the committee members the standing orders can be extended to complete the business of the meeting up to a maximum of 30 minutes.
- v) Notice of Meetings, along with a copy of the Agenda and relevant documents will be issued 5 working days before the day of the meeting.
- vi) The Agenda of the meeting will be available on the Council website once approved.
- vii) Members of a committee shall not be entitled to nominate a substitute to attend meetings in their place.
- viii) Where meetings are held online the attendance record is to be downloaded (from online platform) and kept as a record with the minutes.

b) Quorum

The Quorum for a meeting will be one-fourth of the total number of members of the SPC plus one or, where one-fourth of such total number is not a whole number, the quorum is the next highest whole number plus one.

Of this number there should be three elected members present.

c) Members

- i)** An SPC shall have one-third of its membership drawn from sectors relevant to the Committee's work.
- ii)** Every member of the Council shall be a member of an SPC, but shall not be a member of more than two.
- iii)** All members of a Committee shall hold office for the lifetime of the Council, unless their term ends. Any resignations before the end of the term will be made in writing and it is the responsibility of the nominating body to replace the member.
- iv)** All members of an SPC must complete and return a Declaration of Interests form upon being nominated to a Committee.
- v)** In the event of an elected member failing to attend 2 consecutive meetings of the Committee without reason, a warning shall be issued to the elected member by the relevant director of service. In the case of a sectoral representative a copy of the warning letter will be sent to the organisation they represent. All warnings will be advised to the meetings administrator who will keep on record for the duration of the current council term.
- vi)** In the event of a sectoral representative member failing to attend 3 consecutive meetings without reason, the nominating body will be requested to nominate a replacement.
- vii)** The Executive are not members of the committee and do not have a vote

d) Chairperson

- i)** The Chairperson for each SPC will be elected by the full Council at the AGM following the local elections. They are appointed for a minimum of three years and the overall spread of the SPC chairs must, in accordance with the guidelines, reflect the elected representational spread on the full council. Any change required to the SPC chair shall require approval of council by resolution at a full plenary council meeting.
- ii)** In the absence of the Chair the meeting shall select a member to preside who must be a Councillor.

e) Replacement of an SPC Member

Any SPC member who resigns or is otherwise disqualified from membership of a Strategic Policy Committee under the provisions of the LG Act 2001, as amended by the Local Government Reform Act 2014 shall be replaced as soon as possible, by

resolution of the Council. This provision will apply to both elected and non-elected members.

f) Minutes

The minutes of every Committee meeting shall be signed by the Chairperson and contain particulars of the names of the members present at the meeting, and the decisions arrived at or recommendations which the Committee make. Minutes once approved will be made available on the council website. In the case of meetings held online the signing of minutes by the Chairperson will be carried out at the next available opportunity.

g) Order of Business

A roll call will be carried out for online meetings. For in person meetings an attendance sheet must be completed.

- i)** Confirmation of minutes
- ii)** Matters Arising Information items submitted by members for written reply
- iii)** Business submitted by the Director of Services (if any)
- iv)** Business referred from the Council (if any)
- v)** Business referred from the Corporate Policy Group (if any)
- vi)** Correspondence
- vii)** Any other business

Any items of business referred to the SPC from Council or Corporate Policy Group needs to be reported back on to the Councils Meeting Administrator so they can be included on the appropriate agenda. Proposer of such a motion can attend the relevant SPC (if not a member already) in order to present the motion. This elected member does not have voting rights at the meeting.

h) Rules of Debate

- i)** Each member of the Committee shall have the right to speak on an issue and the Chairperson shall ensure that all members have an opportunity to contribute to debates and discussion.
- ii)** Each member shall be allowed to speak for not more than 2 minutes on an issue.
- iii)** The Committee shall, as far as possible, arrive at all decisions and recommendations by consensus.
- iv)** Voting may be by show of hands or by roll call at the requests of any member.
- v)** The Chair may call to order any member who in the opinion of the Chair is behaving in a disorderly, improper, or offensive manner, or by otherwise disrupting the business of the meeting.
- vi)** If the member persists in disregarding the ruling of the Chair, the Chairperson may give directions for the removal of the member and such other directions as are necessary for restoring order to the proceedings.
- vii)** The ruling of the Chairperson on a point of order shall be final.

i) Confidential Material

- i) Certain matters which arise for discussion by the SPC may be confidential and it is a matter for the Chairperson to declare that confidentiality shall be maintained on the issue.
- ii) It shall be the responsibility of each member of a Committee to ensure that confidentiality is maintained.

j) Business not Reached

- i) When at a meeting the whole business set down for such meeting has not been reached, such business shall be set down to be dealt with at the next meeting of the Committee.
- ii) Items re-entered from a previous meeting shall retain their position on the agenda in accordance with the Order of Business.
- iii) Items may be withdrawn by the member who submitted them.

k) Report of Chairperson and Recommendations

The Chairperson shall prepare a written report with the Director of Service and SPC administrator outlining a summary of the work of the SPC. The report along with approved minutes will be circulated to the Corporate Policy Group on a quarterly basis and included in CPG minutes that are circulated to the council members. The report should reflect the issues considered by the Committee and the final recommendations(s) of the Committee.

l) Sub-Committees

- i) The Committee shall be entitled to establish sub-Committees (working groups) to examine particular policy issues at any one time. These sub committees are to have a timeline for completion of their work. The members will then provide a report of their work and findings to the SPC.
- ii) Composition of sub-committees/working groups to be comprised of a mix of the membership of the Committee.
- iii) The SPC Chairperson is an ex-officio Chair of any sub committee if she/he so wishes, or an ordinary member of it if she/he prefers

m) Suspension of Standing Orders

Standing Orders may, at any time by consent of a majority of the total membership of a Committee, be suspended for the purpose of any specific business before the Committee.