

MINUTES

Transportation, Safety and Emergency Services

STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

26 June 2020

Attendees:

Councillor Joseph Neville
Councillor Anne Connolly
Councillor Angela Feeney
Councillor Nuala Killeen
Councillor Peter Hamilton
Councillor Mark Stafford
Cormac Brown
Brian Purcell
Gerry Dornan

Also Present

Tadhg McDonnell, Director of Services
John Coppinger, Senior Engineer
David Reel A/Senior Engineer
Pamela Pender, A/SEO.
Declan Keogh, Roads Safety, Cycling and Sustainable Transport Officer.
Marie Kelly, Assistant Staff Officer.

Apologies:

Gerry Halton
Cllr Paul Ward



Item 1. Introduction

Cathaoirleach Joseph Neville welcomed all members of the SPC and round the table introductions took place. He outlined to the members of the SPC that their role was to influence policy.

The Director of Services gave the members a brief background to SPC

- Established 10 years ago
- SPCs are tasked to develop Policies, with recommendations put forward to CPG for endorsement and then to full council for approval

Item 2 – Minutes-2 May 2019

The minutes of the Meeting of 02th May 2019 were noted and taken as read.

Item 3 – Standing Orders and Code of Conduct

A copy of the standing orders was circulated prior to the meeting and noted.

The Director of Services referred to them and that the onus was on everyone to familiarise themselves with the orders.

Item 4 – Declarations of Interest

ClIr Neville expressed the importance of this practice particularly to the new members and noted.

Item 5 – Meeting Calendar 2020

The following dates were noted:

- Thursday 1st October @ 2.00pm.
- Thursday 5th November @ 2.00pm.

Item 6- Update from Director of Services

The Director of Services, Tadhg McDonnell, gave the members a briefing on the following aspects of the Roads & Transportation Infrastructure in Kildare:

- Operating Environment
- Funding
- Departmental Approvals
- Legislation

The timeframe for commencing Scheme taking account of the National policy and Guidelines. Phase 0 stage will see schemes submitted to the Department of Transport for consideration and approval with funding to be identified. The delivery of Projects and Schemes are subject to audit by the National Oversight Audit Committee (NAOC). They must also be delivered in compliance with the Public Spending Code and Capital Works Management Framework. The Department works within the legal framework relating to the provision and maintenance of roads and the statutory legislation of the Road Traffic Act and Health and Safety Legislation. The Director also advised members that Health & Safety and Emergency Services form part of the Directorate. It was proposed that a presentation would be given by the Chief Fire Officer and Health & Safety Officer at the October and November meetings.

Members were advised that a meeting was held between Iarnród Éireann and Kildare County Council in mid-June 2020. The meetings outlined the proposals for the DART expansion on the Maynooth & Kildare lines.

John Coppinger, Senior Engineer expressed his wished to extend the line future into Co.Kildare – Kildare being the Greater Dublin Area. He reiterated that Iarnród Éireann are driving this project and that they hope to multiply current capacity. NTA are pushing the project with further meetings arranged for the coming months.

Item 7- Road Safety, Cycling and Sustainable Transport Officer

Declan Keogh, Road Safety, Cycling and Sustainable Transport Officer (RCSTO) was welcomed to the meeting and he updated the members on work to date and forthcoming events.

The members raised the following points:

- Clarification on the Cycle Café Scheme.
- Electric Vehicles points in the Áras Chill Dara, Devoy Park
- 'School Street' pilot scheme
- Barrow Blueway

Declan informed them that the purpose of a Cycle Café is to promote cycling and provide cyclists with a 'Pit Stop' to allow them a refreshment and use of their facilities along their route, the use of a bicycle repair unit if required and to take advantage of local attractions, amenities and tourism. This scheme will proceed in 2021.

Declan confirmed to the members that a circular was received from the Department of Transport informing the Council that Bike Week would link up with mobility week in September 2020.

He discussed sustainable transport options with more emphasis on walking given the increase in activity during the Covid-19 restrictions. Declan confirmed that the Cycling Forum last met in February 2019. It was proposed that an update could be given from the Cycling Forum at the Oct SPC.

Declan confirmed notification that the Barrow Blueway work will commence in mid July 2020 which would be a great boost to the south of the county. He assured the members that his role in this project would be to promote it and link up with Kildare Fáilte and Local Enterprise Office (LEO).

In the area of Shared Cycle and Walkways, he expressed his gratitude to Cllr Pdraig McEvoy and major stakeholders for the works that have taken place for students in Clane coming from the Ballinagappa road side of the town, via the GAA grounds and a new housing development to gain access to the primary and secondary schools on the Prosperous Road in Clane, Co. Kildare.

Declan confirmed to the members that prior to Covid-19 agreement was given that 2 charging points will govern 4 car par spaces in the car park of Kildare County Council, Áras Chill Dara, Devoy Park, Naas.

The Committee was also given an update on the 'School Street' pilot scheme for Athy and Monasterevin. The two streets that have been chosen as pilot locations for this scheme, covering 5 schools in total are Athy- Mount Hawkins Street and Monasterevin- Drogheda Street. Kildare County Council has invited the public to participate in a survey regarding this proposed 12-month pilot scheme. Participants will be asked a number of questions and comments are welcome via the online Public Consultation Portal on Kildare County Council website. A 'School Street' will make temporary closures to a street or road on which a school is located to ensure school-goers can travel to and from school using a more sustainable mode of transport such as walking or cycling.

The Committee was assured that the duration of the programme would be 12 months which would result in a good report. He expressed his concerns regarding the importance of traffic management for these areas. He anticipated that this scheme, if successful, would be rolled out to other towns within the county.

Declan concluded his briefing that Green Schools and reports from An-Taisce which give recommendations on their findings. Road Safety- together with everyone working together to make it a safer county.

It was agreed to take Item 8 and Item 10 together.

Item 8- Proposed Work Plan 2020

Item10- Motions refereed from previous Meetings

The Director of Services reiterated that the purpose of the SPC is to develop Policies, to strive towards what can be delivered for the benefit of the County. A lengthy discussion did take place on the proposed work programme for 2020 based on Workplan 2019 for the previous SPC and referrals from MD and KCC meetings.

It was agreed by all that Committee members would submit to Cllr Neville any items they wished to see on the Workplan 2020 by Friday 3rd July. A final list would then circulate to Committee members to vote on each item and those with highest votes would be placed on the Workplan 2020 and presented at the next SPC meeting.

Item 9- Covid 19

The Director of Services informed the members that society interaction is very different post Covid-19. All society must take responsibility for safety. Businesses want customers but there are conflicts out there, no on street parking will send shoppers out of town and the council must be careful not to do that. Businesses have raised concerns regarding meeting the social distance requirements upon reopening and have requested use of public space. A decision has been made for such applications to be considered by way of Section 254 licence.

David Reel, A/Senior Engineer informed the members that details of applications for submission under Section 254, Planning and Development Act 2000 and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 is available from the Planning Department in Kildare County Council. This licence would enhance businesses, but certain Government regulations must be adhered to. It has been agreed that the fee associated with the licence application is to be waived where applications relate to the use of open space to facilitate reopening of premises and compliance with social distance requirements. This area requires a level of consistency in the county. He conveyed that business may need to be prompted that the 254 licence is available. At present, the planning department has only received 2-3 applications per each Municipal District.

Brian Purcell requested that the 254 Licence applications to be distributed to the committee members so that he could circulate to the Chamber of Commerce. Cllr Neville agreed to circulate and email which was issued to all Council members regarding the initiative.

The Director of Services informed the members that a circular was distributed from the Department highlighting the impacts of Covid-19 and the provision of additional. There is funding available and he assured the members that the council will be applying for this revenue.

The next meeting will be held on 1st October 2020.