

MINUTES

Transportation, Safety and Emergency Services

STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

01 September 2022

Attendees:

Councillor Paul Ward; Councillor Anne Connolly; Councillor Angela Feeney.
Councillor Colm Kenny; Councillor Nuala Killeen (via teams); Councillor Mark Stafford; Brian Purcell and Gerry Dornan.

Also Present:

Evelyn Wright, Director of Services; Dónal Hodgins Senior Engineer, Niall O’Riordan, Senior Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Pamela Pender, A/Senior Executive Officer and Gillian Whitty, Clerical Officer.

Apologies:

Councillor Joe Neville; Stephen Deegan SE

Introduction

Cathaoirleach Paul Ward welcomed all the members of the SPC to the September meeting and welcomed Donal Hodgins and Niall O’Riordan to the meeting.

Item 1 – Minutes- 05th May 2022

On the proposal of Councillor Angela Feeney and seconded by Councillor Anne Connolly the minutes of 05th May 2022 were approved and taken as read.

Item 2- Special Meeting – 12th May 2022

On the proposal of Councillor Angela Feeney and seconded by Councillor Anne Connolly the minutes of 12th May 2022 were approved and taken as read.

Item 3 – Declarations of Interest

No Comment.

Item 4 – Update from Director of Services

The Director of Services, Evelyn Wright apologised on behalf of Stephen Deegan, Senior Engineer, that he was unable to give an update on the full capital programme today, but he will give an update at the November SPC meeting.

Evelyn Wright, DOS explained that upon rejection of the speed limit bye laws review by the members in the July meeting, KCC has submitted an appeal to the new Regional Appeals Panel in the Dept. of Transport. The Panel will review the appeal and the outcome will be shared with all elected members and members of the SPC.

Evelyn Wright, DOS attended a meeting with the Road Safety Task Force on speeding, with groups sharing data and information on speeding and non-compliance. It was chaired by Professor Denis Cusack and when the information is received it will be shared with the SPC.

Dept. of Rural & Community development had a meeting regarding rural public transport which the NTA also attended in relation to rural bus connects. Local link has secured funding with KCC's help to provide a shuttle service for the Ukrainian refugees in Bert House, Athy. This does not however include school transport.

Planning SPC and S254 licences for use of footpaths as public realm spaces.
Roads/planning looking at enforcement and proper management of these licenses.

NTA dutch cycling study tour is scheduled for the 3rd week of Oct. The group will be made up of elected members, SPC members and officials. The aim of the trip is to bring awareness of what other countries are doing, which will support and assist rolling out Active travel programme in Kildare. Looking for nominees today, however there may be an opportunity to go and visit again next year.

Questions:

Cllr Paul Ward asked is anyone interested in this trip – Brian Purcell and Cllr Angela Feeney expressed their interest. Gerry Dornan had been before on this tour and said it is an eye opener and a great insight to what can be achieved.

Cllr Angela Feeney acknowledge it sounded like a great trip. She also asked if some insight could be provided into the underspend in active travel programme.

Evelyn Wright, DOS & Donal Hodgins, SE met with the NTA, to discuss the work programme for the Active Travel team and also to avail of NTA funding opportunities that may arise. Kildare have 10 out of 12 staff and are therefore constrained by resources. Active Travel team doing an excellent job and are looking at new ways to share information with members of the public.

Cllr Mark Stafford referred to an email from James Doyle, Senior Staff officer, in relation to pay parking meters. The biggest problem arises when meters are broken and people don't know to use another meter or they use another one but its different zones. Electronic Permits what are they?

Cllr Stafford also referred to using Bert House as an example of accommodation for Ukranian refugees, and the talks of modular homes in Rathangan. He would like to know how was the bus decided on or acquired for Athy?

Evelyn Wright, DOS advised that the electronic permits are for applying online. OPW are currently liaising with KCC in relation to a potential site in Rathangan.

Cllr Colm Kenny asked for an update on the roll out of cycling signs 1/1.5meter distance?

Evelyn Wright, DOS confirmed the speed limit review is the priority at the moment and we await the outcome of that.

Item 5 – Update from Donal Hodgins, Senior Engineer Sustainable Transport Team

3 KPI's to consider – money spent, KM built and progress of projects. NTA allocations for project, e.g. Green Lane Leixlip, an assessment of the cost of consultation, design and construction is carried out and we get an allocation based on that. Progress has started on projects, but they are not at the point of drawing down funding from the Department. This year we thought we would spend €8m – spent €13m. Projects moving forward is more important than how much is spent. To

get projects to the construction stage will naturally draw down money. We have 10 out of 12 staff. Not all staff are trained in active travel and standards have changed so there is a level of training required to bring all staff to the same level. Last year we spent €4m and this year it has more than doubled - great reflection of the teams achievement and support from the SPC is very positive.

Part 8 – Green Lane, Leixlip and Meadow cycle track – consultation phase completed. Celbridge Bridge and Craddockstown cycle track – brought back as Part 8 reports next month. Naas/Kill Scheme starting P8 and there are 5 other schemes due to start the Part 8 process this year.

Questions:

Cllr Colm Kenny – Timeline on Sallins greenway?

Donal Hodgins, SE – Consultation by the end of the year. With so many projects coming up we don't want the public to feel they didn't have time to engage. Local authorities have been requested to identify a Pathfinder project which will be delivered before 2025, an exemplar project would probably be the best description of what this is.

Evelyn Wright, DOS in terms of workload and demands on sections, the work the Active Travel team are doing in bringing projects to Planning stages, sees Roads putting pressure on the Planning department and we need to be cognisant of that, keeping relationships positive between departments.

Gerry Dornan – When will you be able to reveal the pathfinder?

Donal Hodgins, SE – Application to be lodged at the end of next week. This is a specific project and very detailed, an announcement will follow for successful projects.

Evelyn Wright, DOS – meeting with other Departments to help prepare the Pathfinder application. This is a new initiative from the Dept. that we must respond to and deliver.

Cllr Anne Connolly – South Kildare shouldn't be forgotten – only one project ongoing and plenty of projects on waiting lists.

Donal Hodgins, SE – cycle parking initiative whereby a school or sports club will pilot, in each MD, free cycle parking initiative and these facilities should be installed

by end of year. Vulnerable road user improvement project funded by NTA to update signalised crossings to latest technology with the oldest equipment being done first.

Cllr Mark Stafford – Announcement of the LIS – Kildare second lowest uptake. Why are Kildare not availing of the funding? The funding may end at some stage. It seems that urban projects are being prioritised over rural.

Evelyn – LIS & CIS allocation in each MD. KD/NB and Athy have schemes coming forward. There is a body of work behind each scheme, but they are moved to the following year if not processed. We have 2500km of roadway in the county and the Department are satisfied that the LIS Scheme should continue.

Cllr Nuala Killeen – email to Pamela with questions for Donal and they will be passed on due to the technical issues experienced on the day.

Item 6 - Presentation from the Fire Department by Senior Assistant Chief Fire Officer Niall O’Riordan

Questions:

Cllr Paul Ward – thanked Niall for presentation. Is there a point when the retained post is no longer sufficient and are we becoming a training ground for everyone else? In relation to the next station principal operated by the call centre, for places like Kilcock which is on the border with Meath will the operator contact Meath Fire Station or Kildare?

Niall O’Riordan – Area Risk Categorization which determines the need for full time service. A new risk categorization is due. The cost difference between running fulltime and retained service is massive for e.g. the costs for one of the outer stations is about €350,000 p/year to run but if we were to run it as a full time station it would be over €3m. The next station principle only works when bordering counties also operate this.

Brian Purcell – how long is training?

Niall O’Riordan – 8/9 weeks training in the first year of service. Kildare fire service pride themselves on training our fire fighters very well. Lots of on-the-job exposure with over 300 calls a year.

Cllr Mark Stafford – asked about refurbishments in the stations, annual licensing and if there was an update on the red house.

Niall O’Riordan– Maynooth building a new station. In relation to the Red House, it doesn’t have a valid fire cert for the accommodation they are looking for and IPAS have been advised to apply for a new fire cert.

Cllr Colm Kenny – Huge commitment from the crews and staff. Remembered a simple fire in a barn but the cost to get the gear uncontaminated was very big after asbestos being present. Less bog and gorse fire this year? What is the fire crew in the Curragh doing and can they be utilised to assist?

Niall O’Riordan – Bog outside Nurney has been on fire. There have been gorse fires on the Curragh but nothing to the scale previously seen. Curragh Fire service are Private, they are a part of the Dept of Defence and do not operate under the same legislation and laws. Essentially a private service to protect the Stores and Magazine in the Curragh.

Cllr Colm Kenny- queried the use of drone technology.

Niall O’Riordan – Kildare Fire Service haven’t used them too much; experience to date hasn’t been successful. Dublin Fire Department have drones and utilise them very well.

Cllr Paul Ward – Thanked Niall and wishes to pass the thanks and appreciation of the elected members and citizens of Kildare to all members of the fire service .

Item 7 – Age Friendly Signage

Evelyn Wright, DOS addressed this issue which was referred from the MD for age friendly spaces. It will become part of the county parking policy framework. Policy’s

will have to be set out as part of the framework and this is going to be circulated to all members for their comments on designated spaces, signage, pay and display, if more spaces are to be identified and what is the policy going forward. Seeking input from members on these issues.

Item 8 – Electric Vehicles Charges at Residential Properties and Apartments

Evelyn Wright, DOS and Pamela Pender A/SEO met with ZEVI (zero emissions vehicles Ireland) Ireland, a sub-unit under the Department of Transport with responsibility for implementing the Govt. strategy on EV charging points. It is expected that the final Strategy document will be available in 2023 when details of funding and OGP frameworks will become available. ZEVI confirmed that there is some funding currently available for pilot projects. KCC will utilise this opportunity in Maynooth (decarbonisation zone) trialling EV charging points (a community charging hub). KCC is also looking at E-bike parking which the NTA are overseeing. There is no policy for the installation of community hubs in every town at this time, it is expected details will emerge from the national Strategy document. Questions like what model will it take, renting spaces for other companies to provide service, will we take commission, questions like these will come back to the SPC. Hoping to progress Maynooth and have operational by the end of the year.

Item 9


Deferred until the next SPC.

Any other Business

Cllr Paul Ward discussed that maybe the members would consider returning to Microsoft Teams from the next meeting 03rd November 2022 as agreement would have to be made by all members of Transportation SPC. The next meeting will be held via MS Teams.

Cllr Ward concluded the meeting and thanked everyone for their attendance and contributions.

The next meeting will be held on 03rd November 2022 MS Teams.


10.11.22