

# **Transportation, Safety and Emergency Services Strategic Policy Committee**

**Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday, 10 May 2023 at 2 p.m. through Microsoft Teams meeting.**

**Attendees:** Councillor Joseph Neville, Councillor Anne Connolly.  
Councillor Angela Feeney; Councillor Nuala Killeen.  
Mr Darren Devane; Mr Brian Purcell and Mr Gerry Dornan.

**Also Present:** Ms Celina Barrett, A/Director of Services; Mr Alan Dunney, Director of Services, Planning, Enterprise, Economic Development Emergency Services, Mr Stephen Deegan, Senior Engineer; Mr Dónal Hodgins, Senior Engineer; Mr Jonathan Hennessy, Senior Executive Engineer, Mr Cyril Buggie Maynooth Municipal District Engineer, Mr Mark McLoughlin, A/Senior Executive Officer; Ms Marie Kelly, Assistant Staff Officer.

**Guests:** Councillor Bill Clear and Councillor Tim Durkan.

**Apologies:** Cathaoirleach Paul Ward, Councillor Mark Stafford; Councillor Colm Kenny and Mr Declan Keogh, Road Safety, Cycling and Sustainable Transport Officer.

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## **Introduction**

Councillor Joseph Neville acted as Cathaoirleach and welcomed all the members of the SPC to the May meeting.

### **Item 1 – Minutes- 2 February 2023**

On the proposal of Councillor Angela Feeney and seconded by Councillor Anne Connolly, the minutes of 2 February 2023 were approved.

## **Item 2 – Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Joseph Neville advised the members that it was requirement for members to declare potential conflicts of interest or pecuniary interests for item under discussion at the meeting. The item was noted.

## **Item 3 – Update from Director of Services**

Ms. Celina Barrett, A/Director of Services, Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces thanked Councillor Neville. She proceeded with introduction to Mr Alan Dunney, Director of Services, Planning, Enterprise, Economic Development and Emergency Services. She highlighted that Emergency Services is now under the planning remit.

Ms Celina Barrett provided an update on the following projects:

- M4 Leixlip Part 8 is a pilot programme. The pilot scheme for a hard shoulder bus corridor on the M4 from Maynooth towards South Dublin County Council boundary.
- M4 -Ongoing work. The team are following guidance from Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and is proceeding to Phase 2- Option selection.
- Royal Canal Greenway
- Maynooth Eastern Ring Road – Oral Hearing has taken place and awaiting decision from An Bord Pleanála.
- Athy Distributor Road – significant Progress and on schedule.
- Celbridge-Hazelhatch link Road
- Machinery Yard and Salt Barn – ongoing
- Maynooth Fire Station –Detailed Design completed and awaiting correspondences from the Department of Transport on the revised budget. The Maynooth Fire Station is identified as a gender-neutral space.
- Winter maintenance – now completed.
- Surface dressing- commencing shortly.
- Local Improvement Scheme-Agreement from the Department on funding has to be received and once approved the relevant Municipal District Offices will deliver on these schemes.

The A/Director advised the members that the active travel schemes are expensive to provide. Kildare County Council are faced with a challenge as the roads are generally not wide enough for in the county. She said that the Pathfinder scheme in Naas will see changes at Murtagh Corner and sustainable modules on the main street of Naas.

The members raised the following points:

- Cost of providing cycle lanes and providing services
- Park runs are successful – is there any support for signage.
- National Transport Authority (NTA) Draft Cycle Manual used.

Dónal Hodgins made the following points during the discussion with the members:

- The construction costs vary from scheme to scheme. Specific drainage is required, otherwise the cycle lanes would flood. The NTA review all costs.
- Greenways must be agreed by Waterways Ireland and the NTA. Kildare County Council just facilitates the design to Waterways Ireland standards.
- Active Travel is expensive to provide giving an example of Mill Street costing €3.8 million. This scheme is ready to go and two other schemes once funding becomes available.
- The cycle manual is still in draft format.

#### **Item 4 – Update from Jonathan Hennessy on the Draft Taking in Charge Policy and Specifications**

Mr Jonathan Hennessy, Senior Executive Engineer was welcomed to the meeting. He advised the Committee that he gave a presentation on the draft Policy at the November 2022 meeting and he thanked the members for their submissions. Cllr Neville and the committee members complimented all those concerned with the work achieved by the Building Control team to delivering this draft policy.

It was agreed to refer the Policy to Corporate Policy Group on the proposal of Councillor Angela Feeney and seconded by Councillor Joseph Neville.

The Senior Executive Engineer assured the members that the Building Control department is in a positive position to deliver this update at the full council as required by the CPG.

#### **Item 5 - Kildare Sustainable Transport Forum**

Mark McLoughlin, A/Senior Executive Officer updated the members on the work to date on the formation of Kildare Sustainable Transport Forum. He informed the composition of the Forum as follows:

- Chairperson of the forum shall be the Chairperson of the Transportation, Safety and Emergency Services SPC.
- Municipal District Representatives (5).
- Public Participation Network – Revisit in September 2023 for nominees.
- Other organisations- Local Link, Climate Action Officer and County Kildare Access Network.
- Awaiting nominees from Sláinte Care, Healthy Ireland and NTA.

He advised the Committee that a commitment was given to hold the first meeting of the Forum in June 2023.

Mr. Gerry Dornan requested clarification on why he could not seat on the Forum as well as the SPC.

Ms. Celina Barrett informed him that the terms of reference were agreed by the SPC members in 2021 stating that “With the exception of the Chair and the support from Council officials’ membership of the Sub-Committee will differ from the SPC to ensure a wide variety of thoughts and ideas are captured. She reiterated that one of the objectives is to seek broader linkages between actors in the transport sector and coordination between programmes, projects and services.

On the proposal of Councillor Joseph Neville and seconded by Councillor Anne Connolly to proceed with the forum.

Mr. Mark McLoughlin confirmed that he would contact Cathaoirleach Paul Ward to confirm a date for the Kildare Sustainable Transport Forum meeting.

#### **Item 6 - Briefing from Stephen Deegan, Senior Engineer on Climate Action in the context of Transportation:**

Mr. Stephen Deegan, Senior Engineer was welcomed to the meeting. He highlighted that Transport is a key area of the Climate Action Plan 2023 (CAP23) and it sets out a roadmap for taking decisive action to halve our emission by 2030 and reach net zero no later than 2050. It is a statutory footing.

He outlined key areas on transforming how we travel (50% reduction in emissions by 2030)

- Change the way we use our road space.
- Reduce the total distance driven across all car journeys by 20%.
- Increase walking and cycling network.
- 70% of people in rural Ireland will have buses that provide at least 3 trips to the local towns daily by 2023.

He advised that the climate governance action is to establish a taskforce in Q2 2023 which will be led by the Department of Transport and relevant departments.

He advised that the following would be Local Authority driven:

- Local Authorities need to identify roads and streets suitable for road space reallocation.
- Advance roll-out of walking/cycling infrastructure.
- Advance Dart + Programme to name but a few.

He reiterated that the Irish Transport system is unfit to enable the country to meet its greenhouse gas reduction goals. Policies with high transformative potential road space allocation, the mainstream of demand shared services and communication efforts to address car mindsets. "Transformational Policies are required".

He informed the members that CAP23 is about Transport to avoid, shift and improve. Committee members were informed that road space reallocation will use a balance between Section 38 and Part 8 to deliver the above as well as delivering on Sustainable Mobility Policy Pathfinder Programme.

The members welcome the approach for the provision of CAP23. Councillor Joseph Neville complimented Mr Stephen Deegan on the work being done.

The members raised the following points:

- National Target/ County Target.
- Lack of funds to roll out cycle routes.
- Resources to carry out the content of CAP23.
- Advertising campaigns.

Mr. Stephen Deegan confirmed the following points:

- No shortage of getting information
- Climate Action Plan has a strong level of education.
- Behaviour change is required to hit the targets.

Mr Stephen Deegan concluded his briefing that the Transport Department must re-focus bearing in mind that CAP23 is very ambitious that will need state investment. Communication will be critical with government policy change. A body of work is required on adoption and mitigation.

Ms. Celina Barrett complimented Stephen Deegan on the excellent presentation and advised the members of the committee that the task ahead will place a challenge in front of us and to bear this in mind on policy development when reviewing the work programme 2023/2024. She informed the members of the committee that the Minister of Transport is planning a National Campaign for the need to take CAP23 on board.

**Item 7 - Update from Dónal Hodgins, Senior Engineer on behalf of  
Declan Keogh, Road Safety, Cycling and Sustainable Transport Officer**

Dónal Hodgins, Senior Engineer updated the members on the work of the Road Safety, Cycling and Sustainable Transport Officer:

- Kildare County Council (KCC) supported “National Slow Down Day” led by An Garda Síochána and the Road Safety Authority (RSA) on 21/22 April 2023.
- KCC is currently in the process of a draft Road Safety Plan covering areas including education and enforcement.
- Education through School visits: The Road Safety Officer visits school’s youth reach and other community group to deliver and promote all aspects of road safety, cycling and sustainable transport including active travel and walking.
- Cycle Cafés- The Council is looking at establishing a maintenance programme for the cycle cafés around the county.
- Bike Week- National Bike Week takes place between 13/21 May 2023. KCC in collaboration with the NTA have organised a variety of events to be held throughout the county.
- Further details of events will be highlighted on KCC social media. The members will be given updated information on events at the scheduled SPC meetings.

The members raised the following points:

- Bike week reports 2021/2022
- Cycle Cafes

Mr Dónal Hodgins, Senior Engineer confirmed the following points:

- He assured Gerry Dornan that the Kildare Bike week reporting 2021/2022 would be circulated after the meeting.
- The concept of cycle café or bike rental as a pilot scheme is fine but the broader picture needs to be looked at with the view of maintains and budget available.

### **Item 8 - Referrals from Municipal District Meetings**

The members considered the following motion in the name of Councillor Durkan from the Clane Maynooth Municipal District meeting held in April 2022.

“That the council, in conjunction with Waterways Ireland, install public bike repair stations on the Royal Canal Greenway to aid cyclists on their journeys”.

Councillor Tim Durkan advised that these bike repair stations would be aimed more so at the occasional cyclist as they were more likely to be caught out than experienced cyclists. If the funding was received, they could be installed along the Greenway at the Harbour Field, North Kildare Club and Jackson Bridge.

Mr. Gerry Dornan gave reference to the bike repair station in the Maynooth University grounds that are in a bad state of repair. Mr Durkan advised Mr Dornan that the bike repair station in Maynooth is there for 12 years at least.

Mr. Dónal Hodgins advised the committee members that this would promote active travel. It is an item that the Sustainable Transport Forum could look at a policy around the area.

Councillor Tim Durkan concluded by saying that if KCC has the ability to provide them along the greenways with an option for a service cost to implement them.

The members considered the following motion in the name of Councillor Clear from the Naas Municipal District meeting dated January 2023

“That the council commence gritting of main footpaths in towns in this municipal district given the reported increase in slips resulting in hospital treatment and the priority being given to pedestrians in the active travel hierarchy”.

Mr Cyril Buggie, Clane Maynooth Municipal District Engineer advised Cllr Clear that Kildare County Council currently operate 10 routes within its Winter Maintenance Programme, treating approximately 680km of roads in the county.

This requires a significant input of resources, including 25 drivers, vehicles, equipment, technical and administrative staff and operates at a considerable cost. Due to limited resources, it is not possible to facilitate this request.

The members raised the following points:

- Pilot Costing scheme
- Cycle ways to be gritted.
- Salt bins outside schools

Mr Buggie advised the committee that the pilot scheme would have to be approved bearing in mind that there are 15 towns in the county. Costing per each Municipal District can be done provided the location is agreed. Salt bins create a claims culture, so these are not supported.

Ms Celina Barrett reiterated that no grant funding is available for this work, and it comes from the revenue budget each year. This will be a significant job and alternative ways would have been examined like shop owners previously had their own boxes/reserves of grit. She requested that it is taken back to the MDs to define the location and come back with a costing to the members which will be a challenge.

Councillor Neville thanked Mr Cyril Buggie on his update and he hoped that individual locations can be agreed.

#### **Item 9 - Work Programme 2023/2024**

Ms Celina Barrett, The A/Director of Services highlighted the importance of the SPC Work Programme for 2023. She advised that there is an issue for duplication on the current work programme which needs to be rectified.



She raised the following points that may be considered for the work programme. A lengthy discussion did take place.

- Policy on cycling supporting infrastructure.
- Policy on education and routes to schools.
- Policy on EV charging.
- Policy on e-mobility hubs for e-bikes and e-scooters.
- Policy on shared spaces or 'quiet roads' in rural areas.
- Policy on Park and Stride
- Network and Congestion.

In relation to network and congestion, Ms Celina Barrett asked the committee members on what type of a policy would they like to develop. She advised the members that she will check the County Development Plan and possible this item could be removed from the work programme. She will revert back to the committee members at the September SPC meeting.

Ms Celina Barrett assured the committee members that DMURS is used to give the correct guidance to developer's conditions to develop active mode. She advised the members that an overarching policy to incorporate accessibility, infrastructure, cycle routes, kissing gates is another option for consideration. It was agreed that she would consult with Chairperson, the Councillor Paul Ward prior to submitting the Work Programme for full council to approve.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, 7 September 2023.

The meeting concluded.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joseph Neville', written over a horizontal line.

E--mail received from Cllr Joseph Neville on 25/09/2023 with his signature.