

Minutes of the Roads and Transportation Strategic Policy Committee meeting
held on 18th September 2017 at 9.30 a.m.

Minutes of the Roads and Transportation, Strategic Policy Committee meeting held on 18th September 2017 at 9.30 a.m. in Room GO1, Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill, Galway.

I Láthair:

Baill: Cllr Michael Finnerty
Cllr Jim Cuddy
Cllr Martina Kinane
Comh Seosamh Ó Cualáin
Cllr Peter Roche
Cllr Michael Connolly
Mr Bryan Egan
Mr Tom Madden

Oifigí: Mr Michael Timmins, Acting Director of Services, Roads, Transportation, Marine and General Services Unit
Mr Damien Mitchell, Senior Engineer, Roads, Transportation, Marine and General Services Unit
Ms Máire Ní Chionna, Senior Engineer, Roads, Transportation, Marine and General Services Unit
Ms Nuala Heffernan, Administrative Officer, Roads, Transportation, Marine and General Services Unit

Apologies were noted from Cllr Maher and Mr Coffey.

1. Minutes of meeting of Roads SPC held on 19th June 2017

On the proposal of Cllr Kinane, seconded by Mr Egan, the minutes of the meeting of the Roads Strategic Policy held on 19th June 2017 were agreed and adopted.

Matters arising from the minutes.

Cllr Cuddy referred to the Local Improvement Scheme and the short time frame allowed for submissions and requested that it be extended. He said that the description of Local Improvement Scheme led some people to believe that the scheme was for public roads and that the process for taking in charge of roads should be explained to the public. Mr Mulryan said that the criteria for taking in charge of roads stated that the road must service more than one dwelling and farmholdings. In response to a query, Ms Heffernan advised that 120 applications were received, with 115 deemed valid and on time and submitted to the Department for their consideration. She noted that the timescale provided by the Department for submissions was very short. Cllr Kinane referred to an application that she had submitted which was not included due to confusion over whether the road was a public or private road.

2. Footpaths in Rural Areas

Mr Timmins advised that it is the policy of the Council to provide footpaths in towns and villages, within speed limits areas, and where there is public lighting installed. Footpaths are provided, in such instances, on National Roads. He commented that there are footpaths in some rural locations outside the speed limits on Regional and Local Roads, which are often constructed by local community schemes. He asked the Councillors for their opinions on the provision of footpaths. Cllr Connolly said that some footpaths were provided historically, in areas where there is high footfall, eg. leading to Moylough graveyard. He noted that this particular footpath is in need of maintenance. Cllr Roche said that it would be wrong to think that the absence of public lighting should prohibit the provision of a footpath. He said that they are used by walking groups in many areas. Comh Ó Cualáin suggested that footpaths should only be provided in areas where they connect public facilities such as schools and community centres. Cllr Kinane reiterated the point that she would not like to see a requirement to provide public lighting where footpaths are being provided. She said that the provision of footpaths should be prioritised to areas within villages and leading to schools. She advised that a Community Involvement Scheme has constructed a footpath over the last 3 years in Clarinbridge which provides a safe walking route to school for the children of 40 families. Cllr Connolly stated that the maintenance and upgrade of current footpaths should have priority over the provision of new footpaths. In response to a query from Cllr Roche, Mr Timmins said that there was ongoing consultation with local Council offices regarding the condition of footpaths. Mr Mulryan confirmed that it is a priority for the Council to upgrade the existing footpaths, which would involve considerable funding, rather than provide footpaths in new locations. He advised that the Roads Maintenance Office would be introducing a scoring mechanism in relation to the status of footpaths, similar to the system in place for roads. Cllr Connolly, supported by Cllr Kinane and Cllr Cuddy agreed that it should be a condition of planning to provide a footpath when a house is being built on the edge of a village. Cllr Finnerty summarised the opinions and comments of the members as follows:

- 1) Priority should be given to the maintenance of existing footpaths
- 2) There should be not requirement to provide public lighting when providing a footpath
- 3) The provision of footpaths should be included in planning permissions
- 4) The footpaths should connect infrastructure, such as towns to community facilities

Cllr Roche said that he has great difficulty in accepting Transport Infrastructure Ireland's reluctance to work with Galway County Council in providing footpaths. He said that when the Council submit a request for a footpath to be provided on the grounds of safety, TII defy community needs for a footpath. Mr Timmins said that funding is provided for Low Cost Safety Schemes by TII but that requests have to be prioritised due to the funding available. Cllr Kinane proposed that the Planning SPC should consider requiring developers to provide infill footpaths. This was seconded by Cllr Roche.

3. Public Lighting Policy Update

Mr Timmins said that the Public Lighting Policy agreed and proposed by the Roads and Transportation Strategic Policy Committee was widened and amended by the plenary Council and adopted with these amendments. The adopted policy was circulated to the members of the SPC and noted.

A technical specification document in relation to the standardisation of public lighting was circulated for the consideration of the members. Mr Mulryan said that this document would inform developers on the type and standard of public lighting to be used in all future developments. He said that there are ongoing efforts to introduce LED lighting in all developments, which would save 40% to 60% on energy costs. He said that the capital costs involved with replacing current lighting with LED lighting was not significantly higher than replacing like with like lighting. Mr Mulryan read the executive summary of the document for the members information.

In response to a query from Mr Madden, Mr Mulryan said that it is the Council's responsibility to pay for the running costs of public lighting in housing estates which have been taken in charge of the Council. Mr Roche said the previous public lighting policy stated that no further lights would be added to the Council's stock of public lighting until the current stock was brought up to standard. Mr Mulryan said that there is no capital provision for new public lighting, other than the once off provision for new lighting on the Motorway.

Mr Egan asked if, as part of the maintenance of public lighting, could current individual lights be replaced by LED lighting. Mr Mulryan said that the replacement of lighting with LEDs would be a scheme of retrofitting rather individual lights.

Cllr Finnerty stated that he was impressed with the knowledge of Mr Mulryan and that he was happy to let him proceed with his proposals. On the proposal of Cllr Connolly, seconded by Cllr Cuddy it was agreed to adopt the technical document on public lighting in County Galway as presented.

4. Any Other Business

Cllr Cuddy asked if there was a standard in place for the provision of pedestrian crossings, particularly in relation to the local need for a pedestrian crossing at the Maldron Hotel, Oranmore. Mr Mitchell said that there are various considerations to take into account such as location, footfall and traffic. It was agreed that any requests for pedestrian crossings would be sent to Mr Mitchell for consideration for an application for funding. Mr Timmins said that he would bring the request for a pedestrian crossing at the Maldron Hotel to the attention of TII, requesting that a survey is done to establish the most appropriate intervention to facilitate pedestrian usage. He confirmed to Cllr Kinane that Council Roads staff meet with TII staff on a monthly basis to discuss roads matters.

Minutes of the Roads and Transportation Strategic Policy Committee meeting
held on 18th September 2017 at 9.30 a.m.

Comh Ó Cualáin asked if there was funding available for the provision of crash barriers, at locations where there had been fatalities. Mr Timmins advised that TII has done a relevant analysis on National Roads and that a stream of funding would be made available for such work. He also advised that the Council had requested a contractor to look at some locations on Non-National Roads.

Cllr Roche expressed some concern with how the road realignment works at the N63 were being managed and asked when the replacement bridge would be installed. Mr Timmins said that the traffic would continue to be controlled by temporary traffic lights until the works have been completed. He said that the realignment works would be completed before the replacement bridge was installed, as the procedure for getting permission for a railway bridge is a complicated process. Cllr Connolly contended that TII made a submission regarding the bridge after the time frame for submissions on the planning permission and that this is an illegal action. Cllr Finnerty said that the matter could be put on the agenda of the next SPC meeting for further discussion. In response to Cllr Kinane, it was decided to issue correspondence to TII requesting that they attend a Roads and Transportation Strategic Policy Committee meeting, to discuss various issues such as the railway bridge, the provision of a pedestrian crossing at the Maldron Hotel and the Athenry junction in Clarinbridge.

It was agreed to hold the next meeting of the Roads and Transportation Strategic Policy Committee on 06th November 2017 at 9.30 a.m.

Críochnagh an cruinniú ansin.

Approved by _____

Cllr. Michael Finnerty

Cathaoirleach

Roads & Transportation Strategic Policy Committee

Date: _____