

Minutes of the Roads and Transportation Strategic Policy Committee meeting
held on 19th February 2018 at 9.30 a.m.

Minutes of the Roads and Transportation, Strategic Policy Committee meeting held on
19th February 2018 at 9.30 a.m. in Room GO1, Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill, Galway.

I Láthair:

Baill: Cllr Michael Finnerty
Cllr Martina Kinane
Cllr Michael Maher
Cllr Peter Roche
Cllr Michael Connolly
Cllr Jim Cuddy
Cllr Des Joyce
Comh Ó Cualáin
Mr Mark Coffey
Mr Bryan Egan

Oifigi: Mr Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Infrastructure and Operations Unit
Mr Damien Mitchell, Senior Engineer, Infrastructure and Operations Unit
Ms Máire Ní Chionna, Senior Engineer, Infrastructure and Operations Unit
Mr Enda Gallagher, A/Senior Executive Engineer, Infrastructure and Operations Unit
Ms Nuala Heffernan, Administrative Officer, Infrastructure and Operations Unit

Cllr Finnerty welcomed Mr Cullen to his first Strategic Policy Committee meeting as Director of the Infrastructure and Operations Unit. He thanked Mr Timmins, as outgoing Acting Director, for his input to the committee.

1. Minutes of meeting of Roads SPC held on 06th November 2017

On the proposal of Cllr Maher, seconded by Cllr Kinane, the minutes of the meeting of the Roads, Transportation and Marine Strategic Policy Committee held on 06th November 2017 were agreed and adopted.

Matters arising from the minutes.

Cllr Maher enquired if there was any update from Transport Infrastructure Ireland in relation to the upgrading of Kilmeen Cross. He advised that the local action group are demanding that lighting be provided at the junction. Mr Cullen advised that Transport Infrastructure Ireland had responded to the Councillors request for a meeting. He said that it is proposed to have a meeting in the TII offices in Dublin, with a delegation comprised of a maximum of 12 members of the Council and 2 members of the executive. In relation to the Kilmeen Junction, he said

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that he did not think that funding would be provided for the lighting. He noted that the proposal from the TII for the upgrading of the junction would improve it for all road users.

Cllr Kinane said that she wants to be a member of the delegation attending the TII meeting. She referred to the lack of directional signage on the new M17/M18 Motorway for the villages of Clarinbridge and Kilcolgan. Cllr Cuddy also stated he had issues with the and referred to the signage for Baile Chláir which is in Irish only. Cllr Roche said that there was no signage for Abbeyknockmoy on the Motorway. It was agreed that a deputation of Councillors would attend a meeting with TII staff on 27th February 2018 at 2.00p.m. Following discussion, it was agreed each Municipal District would nominate 2 representatives, with the members of the Roads and Transportation Strategic Policy Committee recommended as the most suitable representatives. Mr Cullen advised that all the issues highlighted by the members of the SPC for discussion at the meeting had been sent to TII for their prior consideration.

Cllr Kinane made reference was made to a footpath in Oranmore where a lady fell due to a protruding manhole cover. Mr Mitchell said that there was no indication of any funding being made available from Irish Public Bodies towards the repair of footpaths. Cllr Maher advised that he had addressed the provision of the funding with IPB and requested that it be progressed as soon as possible. Mr Mitchell noted that the majority of claims for trips, slips and falls on footpaths were for accidents in the town of Ballinasloe. Cllr Connolly said that the footpath on the N63 to the graveyard in Moylough is in dire condition. He noted that the local community had written to TII requesting that they provide funding for it to be upgraded. Cllr Kinane requested that a survey be done on all footpaths and funding sought for any required repairs, as noted in the survey. Cllr Kinane asked if checks could be done on footpaths in villages, where there are a lot of footpaths present. Mr Mitchell said inspections would be carried out in locations where there are records of accidents. He said that there is difficulty in allocating sufficient funding to maintain our current footpaths, and there are many applications for additional footpaths.

Cllr Maher enquired about the provision of traffic calming in Craughwell. Mr Mitchell said that no funding had been provided for the scheme by TII. Cllr Cuddy enquired about the progress of the traffic calming scheme in Claregalway. Mr Mitchell advised that the design was currently being completed and on completion, would be submitted to TII for consideration for funding. Mr Cullen noted that funding would be provided for it as it is considered part of the residual works following on from the completion of the Motorway.

In response to a query from Cllr Connolly, Ms Heffernan advised that no correspondence regarding the level of funding for Local Improvement Schemes had been received yet from the Department of Rural and Community Development. She said that indications were that it would be at the same level as that allocated in 2017 - €942,000.

2. Update on progress of South Galway/Gort Lowlands Flood Relief Scheme

Mr Gallagher made a presentation on the progress of the South Galway/Gort Lowlands Flood Relief Scheme. He advised that he had been appointed to the role of Acting Senior Executive Engineer in December 2016 to progress the flood relief scheme in South Galway. He said that in 2017, contract documents for engineering and environmental consultants had been completed and had been advanced to tender stage. He said that Ryan Hanley Limited had been appointed as the engineering consultant in recent weeks and that an environmental consultant would be appointed in the next fortnight. He stated that over the next twelve months all structures on the route, their monetary value and the cost of protecting them would be identified. He said that the cost of the provision of a suitable scheme would be submitted to the Department of Expenditure and Reform to seek funding, current estimated cost is between €7 million and €10 million. He noted that the development of the scheme would involve significant public consultation and interaction with many interest groups such the Irish Farmers Association, oyster farmers, shellfish farmers and Councillors from South Galway. He said that the first meeting with the IFA is scheduled to take place on the 27th February 2018. He advised that it is hoped to have a contract in place for construction in 2020.

Cllr Finnerty thanked Mr Gallagher for his ongoing work and commitment to delivering the scheme. Cllr Kinane expressed an interest in the work, particularly as to how it would affect the oyster farmers in Clarinbridge. Mr Gallagher said that it is the Dunkellin Scheme that could have an effect on them, rather than the South Galway scheme, as the discharge area for South Galway Flood Relief Scheme is in Kinvara.

3. 2018 National and Non-National Roads allocations

Mr Cullen advised that the Draft Roads Programme would be circulated to all Municipal Districts this afternoon. He noted that €1.2million is being transferred from the restoration improvement grant to local road maintenance due to the decision at budget time to reduce the Council's local road maintenance allocation. He stated that the Department of Transport has advised that the facility to make this transfer between grant allocations would not be available in future years. He said that, on a positive note, there is an increase in funding, which had been sought by Council staff and that there is a reasonable expectation that additional funding will be made available later in the year. Mr Mitchell said that a submission had been made to the Department requesting additional funding for improvement works, following from the damage to roads subsequent to the recent flooding event.

Cllr Roche enquired about funding for speed limits. Ms Ní Chionna said that funding has been provided by the Department of Transport for the provision of further speed limit signage in housing estates. She stated that the draft speed limits for County Galway would go to public consultation in May, and would come before the plenary Council for their consideration in July or September. Cllr Roche enquired about the provision of a periodic speed limit at Milltown School and Ms Ní Chionna said that she had responded to the query regarding it via e-mail

which she would forward to Cllr Roche. Cllr Cuddy said that the review of speed limits commenced ten years ago and was still ongoing. He said that no funding was provided for the implementation following on from the review in 2018. Cllr Connolly requested that submissions received over a year ago in relation to the speed limit review should be given priority. Ms Ni Chionna said that all submissions received would be considered as part of the statutory process. Cllr Connolly said that the public perception on the review of speed limits is that progress is poor. Ms Ní Chionna said that there had been a staff resource issue which has now been addressed. Cllr Finnerty said that in his opinion the installation of speed limits is a waste of time, unless they are being policed effectively.

4. Any Other Business

Cllr Kinane enquired how the Council is informed of the progression of pedestrian crossings, with particular reference to crossings at Clarinbridge, the medical centre in Athenry and in Oranmore village. Mr Mitchell said that there are different systems in place for progressing such projects, depending on whether they are proposed for National or Non-National roads. He noted that two pedestrian crossings are to be provided in 2018 under the Low Cost Safety Schemes on Non-National roads – in Barna and Gort.

Comh Ó Cualáin enquired about the availability of funding and staff resources to progress the repair and minor works scheme on piers in 2018. He made reference to the new type of ladders specified for use at piers which he said were not safe for use. Cllr Connolly said that specifications and standards are in place for such items. He said that work should be done in accordance with standards set out.

Cllr Roche and Cllr Connolly said that the standard of road surfacing done in some areas in 2017 was shocking and had to be redone at some locations. Mr Egan referred to the surfacing work on the N59 between Oughterard and Maam, which was done in two halves and not lapped in accordance with best practice. He said that work done by contractors should be supervised by Council staff. Mr Mitchell said Council staff oversee work done by contractors on Non-National Roads only and that the TII has resident engineers in place to oversee works done on National Roads. He said that there are no records of any complaints received. Comh Ó Cualáin said that there is certainly an issue with the quality of roadworks done in some locations. Cllr Cuddy said that works done on National Roads had caused difficulty at the entrance to some residents houses with water ponding in the area. Mr Mitchell said that there was a requirement as part of planning permission for householders to provide for the disposal of water surface drainage when building their property. Cllr Roche enquired about the Council's policy on flooding at the edge of a road and the provision of a set back area outside properties. Mr Mitchell said that there is no fixed policy in place but that it would be looked at on a case by case basis whereby planning permissions and conditions prior to construction would be taken into consideration. Cllr Connolly said it is an ongoing issue throughout the County and that many people are in breach of their planning permissions, in that they haven't provided a soakpit during construction.

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It was agreed to hold the next meeting of the Roads and Transportation Strategic Policy Committee on Monday 21st May 2018 at 9.30 a.m.

Críochnagh an cruinniú ansin.

Approved by _____

Cllr. Michael Finnerty

Cathaoirleach

Roads & Transportation Strategic Policy Committee

Date: _____