



Minutes

Transportation, Infrastructure Delivery & Emergency Services

Strategic Policy Committee Meeting

Monday 18th November, 2024 at 2.30pm, Würzburg Room, County Buildings

Present:

Cllr. Stephen Stokes, Cathaoirleach
Cllr. Pat Fitzgerald,
Cllr. Joe Behan
Cllr Shane Langrell
Cllr Orla Finn,
Cllr. Dany Alvey
Ian Mc Gahan, Trade Union
Mary Catherine Murphy, Agriculture/Farming
Eanna Gallagher, Environment/ Conservation
Matthew Hudson, Business and Commercial
Tomás Peare, Development Construction

Staff:

Joe Lane, DOS
Marc Devereux, DOS
Linda Healy, SEO
John Bowes, SE
Michael Flynn, SE
Mark O'Neill, AO
Vivienne Killeen, SO

Vacant:

Social Inclusion Representative.

Item 1. Welcome & Introductions of new Committee Members and Supporting Staff.

- Welcome and introduction by the Cathaoirleach, Committee members, Directors of Service Joe Lane and Marc Devereux and support staff.

Item 2: To note the minutes of 26th February, 2024

Proposed by Eanna Gallagher and seconded by Cllr. Pat Fitzgerald

Item 3: Overview Presentation of the Transportation, Infrastructure Delivery & Emergency Services SPC (Linda Healy, SEO)

- **Questions:** Eanna Gallagher asked if the SPC's will be linked to the Corporate Plan and Climate Adaption Policies. Linda Healy confirmed that they would.

Item 4. To consider the draft Key Strategic Goals for inclusion in Wicklow County Council's Corporate Plan (attached).

- The Corporate plan to be presented to the Elected Members at the ordinary meeting of Wicklow County Council on the 2nd December 2024.
- First 5 objectives are relevant to the Committee
- **Note:** Cllr Stephen Stokes asked for it to be noted - could a line be inserted at Point no.5 to read "*Careful Consideration of the Environment as part of plans*"
Linda Healy, SEO to follow up on this.

Item 5. To inform members of details regarding training for SPC members.

Linda Healy reminded the committee about the Hybrid SPC training Session for TIDES, which will be held in the Council Chamber on the 22nd November 2024.

Item 6. Presentation on potential and priority areas for policy formulation

- **John Bowes, Senior Engineer gave a presentation on Transportation Projects/National Road Projects/NTA Bus P&R/Greenways, of which Cllr Stephen Stokes thanked him for.**
- Questions: Cllr Joe Behan told the Committee that putting a bus Corridor on the N11, from a policy point of view that this was unsafe to progress, over €5M was already spent on the design of the Junction 4 to 14 scheme.
- Cllr Behan proposed to the committee that the policy of placing bus lanes on hard shoulders should not proceed, however there was no seconder for this proposal. He was also concerned about the closure of the Herbert Road and Dargle Lane.
- John Bowes responded that the M11/N11 Junction 4 to 14 scheme was the preferred scheme, but the Bus Scheme has evolved and is now a better scheme than was

presented at the public consultation in late 2023. Work has not completed yet and the final Options Selection report would be ready to publish by the end of Q1 2025. The closure of accesses from Junctions 6 to Junction 8 would maximise operational efficiency and would benefit the vast majority of road users. The project team was not ruling out the closure of any access and the final report identifying the preferred option would be published at the end of Q1 2025.

- Ian McGahon noted that the proposed M11 J16 Ashford Bus Park & Ride Scheme had a low number of parking spaces of 210 and asked could they be increased. John Bowes responded that the number of 210 was recommended by the NTA, but there would be 1000 parking spaces developed overall on the N11/M11 with other schemes.
- Eanna Gallagher asked if it was the number of Junctions on the N11/M11 that were causing traffic congestion. John Bowes responded that the closure of access points particularly between J6 and J8 along with the proposed improvement works at Junction 7 will make an improvement to traffic flow.
- Cllr Stephen Stokes referred to the minutes of the meeting held on the 26th February 2024 where there was a question asked looking for an update on the Bus Stop at Hollywood, John Bowes responded that the Part 8 was approved at the May meeting of the Baltinglass Municipal District and works would commence in 2025.
- Michael Flynn, Senior Engineer advised that €500,000 has been allocated to each County for bus stops and NTA teams are putting together a 3 year programme of works.
- Cllr Pat Fitzgerald discussed the bus service from Arklow to St. Vincent's Hospital.
- Michael Flynn, Senior Engineer gave a presentation on **Non-National Roads/Active Travel of which Cllr. Stephen Stokes thanked him for.**
- **Questions:** Cllr Pat Fitzgerald asked about issues with Public lighting and the length of time it was taking for repairs to be carried out. A lot of areas have been without lighting for weeks. Cllr Shane Langrell asked about members of the public who were sending emails to WCC but not getting a response. Cllr Danny Alvey asked if the new contractor could not fulfil the Public Lighting Contract could we tender for different contractors.
- Michael Flynn responded that there were only two responses to the tender and Killaree Lighting Ltd had won the contract, there are issues with ESB networks regarding Health & Safety, where the new contractor cannot work on poles on the ESB network. Michael was also going to look at a system being put in place to answer queries from the public on emails.

- Cllr Shane Langrell asked about hedge cutting in rural areas and farmers were not cutting their hedges. Michael Flynn responded that Hedge cutting came under Section 75 of the Roads Act 1993, which is the legislation under of which notices could be served to land owners, and he would bring this to the attention of the District Engineers.
- Cllr Danny Alvey asked about Low cost Safety Schemes and how the funding is allocated. Michael Flynn responded that the Department of Transport decide where funding is allocated to and the Municipal Districts propose areas in their remit, and accident data cannot be accessed.
- Cllr Orla Finn asked about the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) in Greystones where safety railings had been removed. Michael Flynn to check with Greystones MD and NTA team.
- Cllr Orla Finn also informed the meeting that she had rang ESB networks, to see if there was a designated person to talk to regarding public lighting, Michael Flynn to check on this.
- Cllr Joe Behan proposed that a policy for Wicklow County Council to take over the maintenance of Public lighting and line marking, instead of relying on outside agencies be considered.
 Proposed by: Cllr Joe Behan
 Seconded by: Cllr Shane Langrell
- Joe Lane, DOS, agreed to have a research report on public lighting and line marking for the next SPC meeting.
- Cllr. Stephen Stokes asked what is a realistic timeframe for public lighting repairs to be carried out, what is the number of lights backlogged. Michael Flynn informed the meeting that the number of lights that may be out due to various factors would normally be less than 2%, but at present it was around 3% to 4%, and Killaree lighting services were looking to get extra staff to address the faults.
- **Marc Devereux gave a presentation on Emergency Services of which Cllr. Stephen Stokes thanked him for.**
- Marc Devereux informed the meeting that the Part 8 for the Proposed Development of Baltinglass and Dunlavin Fire Stations had been passed.
- No questions followed the presentation.

Item 7. Correspondence.

- Linda Healy, SEO read out correspondence dated 25th April 2025 from Arklow Municipal District elected members to the SPC which outlined their concerns about the proposed changes to the rail network.
- Cllr Pat Fitzgerald asked if correspondence could be sent to Irish Rail.
- Joe Lane suggested inviting Representatives from Irish Rail to a meeting of which Cllr. Stephen Stokes agreed.

- Linda Healy informed the committee that she had received a response from the office of Mr, Darragh O'Brien, TD and Minister of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, in relation to Uisce Éireann and she will circulate letter to the Committee.

Item 8. To consider suggested Schedule of Meetings 2025

- Proposed by Cllr. Joe Behan
- Seconded by Cllr. Pat Fitzgerald

Item 9. Any Other Business

- Ian Gahan asked if the Minutes of all the SPC's could be posted on the WCC website in pdf format, so as they could be accessed by members of the public who are visually impaired. Linda Healy to check on statutory procedures.

- Cllr. Stephen Stokes asked if representatives from both the NTA and Irish Rail could be invited to a meeting, and suggested to the Committee to prepare questions.

Record of Proposals

Cllr Behan proposed to the committee that the policy of placing bus lanes on hard shoulders should not proceed.

Proposer: Cllr Joe Behan

Seconder: There was no seconder for this proposal.

- **Cllr Joe Behan proposed that a policy for Wicklow County Council to take over the maintenance of Public lighting and line marking, instead of relying on outside agencies be considered.**

Proposed by: Cllr Joe Behan

Seconded by: Cllr Shane Langrell

Signed: _____

**Cllr Stephen Stokes,
Cathaoirleach.**

Date: _____