

## Minutes of Transportation, Water & Emergency Services Strategic Policy Committee Meeting

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2022

Present: Cllr. Pat Fitzgerald, Cathaoirleach  
Cllr. Derek Mitchell  
Cllr. Joe Behan  
Cllr. Irene Winters  
Thomas Peare, Development Construction

Staff: Leonora Earls, DOS  
Helena Dennehy, SEO  
Michael Flynn, SE  
John Bowes, SE  
Deirdre Forde, Liaison Officer, N11/M11  
Aidan Dempsey, CFO  
Allyson Minion, AO  
Vicky O Neill SO

Apologies: Cllr. Vincent Blake  
Margaret Coughlan, Trade Union

Non Attendance: Pat Dunne, Agriculture Farming  
Julia Glass, Environmental/Conservation

### **Item 1: To note the minutes of 21<sup>st</sup> January, 2022**

Proposed by Pat Fitzgerald and seconded by Derek Mitchell.

### **Item 2: NTA Schemes Update**

Michael Flynn, SE gave a presentation updating the members on Non Nation Roads Schemes, NTA funded schemes and other projects waiting funding.

- i. Members queried why the LED rollout in Wicklow had been pushed back to 2024. MF advised that every broken bulb was being replaced with a LED version at the minute (over 7,000 have been replaced to date) and that the order in which the rollout was being conducted is being led by Kildare County Council and we continue as a region to discuss the roll out order.

Members stated that having to wait until 2024 for the LED rollout was not acceptable.

- ii. In relation to the NTA Swan River Greenway project, Cllr. Behan wanted it noted in the minutes that 7 out of 8 Bray MD Councillors voted against this project. He stated that senior officials of WCC has issued a letter stating that the vote was not valid and he felt that was an attempt to undermine a democratic vote and he is not happy about this.

MF advised that everyone needed to sit down and discuss the matter further. The decision would be a matter for the full Council. The NTA team were meeting with the consultants in the first week in June to discuss the issues.

- iii. In relation to the Bray Public Transport Bridge Cllr Behan wanted it noted that the public do not want this bridge and no more public money should be spent on it. MF advised that the main issues with the project (taken from the content of the submissions received) was concern for the swans and the diversion via Seapoint Road.
- iv. Cllr, Behan stated that the proposal of Irish Rail of redirecting traffic down Seapoint Road was ridiculous and requested a timeframe for making a decision as to whether the project would proceed. MF advised that there was no timescale at present that the next meeting with the consultants for the project was the 8<sup>th</sup> June, 2022 and they would be looking at the issues and possible remedies.

SPC committee requested that the results of that meeting be relayed to the Bray Cllrs.

MF agreed that answers would be given after the consultation.

- v. Cllr. Mitchell also asked whether a pathway over the bridge for the proposed Delgany/Blacklion/Redford project being discussed. He advised that he did not believe anyone would cycle to Bray Head via this route he wondered why we are spending money on a cycle lane that no-one would use. MF advised that in order to secure funding the hierarchy of transport was 1<sup>st</sup> – Cyclists, 2<sup>nd</sup> Bus and 3<sup>rd</sup> Car.

### **Item 3 TII Funded Projects**

Deirdre Forde, Senior Executive Engineer gave a presentation on TII funded projects which has been previously distributed.

John Bowes, Senior Engineer advised that they were currently teasing out practicalities in relation to Bus Connect. Cllr. Behan stated that he was dissatisfied that the Bus Connects team were only talking to Council officials and were not involving Cllrs.

Cllr. Mitchell advised that the postponement of the N11 junction 4-14 project should not just be an update, it is a huge public transport issue and that the matter needed to be

brought to the Minister for Transport and the Council should be putting more pressure on the Minister.

Leonora Earls, Director of Services advised that she had secured a meeting with the Minister in June.

Cllr. Mitchell stated that we needed to stress the volume of traffic increase.

Cllr. Behan advised that a waste of 3-5million on this project is intolerable. He also requested an update on noise mitigation proposals and John Bowes advised that the noise report does state that if the speed limit is increased to 100mph, some properties will be above the acceptable noise threshold and will require noise mitigation measures.

#### **4. Other Road Projects & Operations Update**

Cllr. Winters asked who will fund the 30% of elevated costs of current projects and will Wicklow County Council be cancelling other projects to cover the costs? MF advised that 70% of costs will be funded by the Department and the remaining 30% will have to be absorbed by the contractors. WCC have received no guidance as of yet with regard to this matter.

#### **5. Fire Services Policy Update**

Aidan Dempsey, CFO presented a Fire Services Update.

Cllr. Behan asked what the manning level in Bray was currently and although he was aware that there was a nation survey on retained firefighters being conducted, he wanted to know whether we could conduct our own survey on retained fire fighters to identify the challenges facing firefighters within County Wicklow.

Cllr. Fitzgerald requested an update on the Arklow service, specifically how many retained fire fighters had left and what stage was the recruitment process at.

Aidan Dempsey, Chief Fire Officer advised that crew members for all areas were adequate. They currently have 13 new recruits across Co. Wicklow who are in training .

#### **6. Water Services Policy Update**

Helena Dennehy, Senior Executive Officer advised 92% of targets of the Service Level Agreement had been met. The SLA is suggested to end in 2025.

Cllr. Fitzgerald voiced concerns with how the IW clinics were working and that they were not fit for purpose. HD advised that she had raised the matter previously with IW.

Thomas Peare, Development Construction Representative stated that there was a major hold up with construction work due to the delay in IW reverting with regard to water

connections and wanted a point of contact in WCC in order to speed up the matter. Helena advised that all calls must be logged with IW for Service Level Agreements.

Cllr. Behan advised that he had noticed a difference on the last clinic in that IW appeared more prepared and were more engaged.

## **7. Any other business**

Cllr Mitchell asked what the height of a standard rail bridge should be and was advised that it was 4.89m.

HD reminded members that the purpose of the SPC committee was to form new policies and for the committee have a think about what input they might look at with regard to specific policies going forward.

Next meeting was set for the 26<sup>th</sup> September, 2022 at 2.30pm.

Minutes agreed at SPC meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2022.