

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

Monday 22nd February 2022

- Present: Cllr. Pat Fitzgerald, Cathaoirleach
Cllr. Derek Mitchell
Cllr. Joe Behan
Cllr. Vincent Blake
- Zoom Donal Murray Development Construction
Julia Glass Environment/Conservation
- Staff: Helena Dennehy, DOS
Michael Flynn, SE
John Bowes, SE
Deirdre Forde, Liaison Officer, N11/M11
Conor Page, A/SEE, Active Travel
Rob Mulhall, A/SEE
Aidan Dempsey, CFO
Allyson Minion, AO
- Apologies: Thomas Peare
- Non Attendance: Cllr Irene Winters
Pat Dunne, Agriculture Farming
Margaret Coughlan, Trade Union

Item 1: To note the minutes of 23rd September, 2021

Proposed Cllr J Behan, Seconded Cllr. Derek Mitchell

Councillor Pat Fitzgerald paid tribute to Councillor Derek Mitchell who had chaired the SPC for the last two and a half years, and looked forward to working with the committee for the next two and a half years.

He also paid tribute to Tim Morgan, Environment/Conservation who stood down and thanked him for his contribution to the SPC – he welcomed Julia Glass as the new representative of the Environment/conservation platform to the SPC.

Item 2: Update NTA projects

Conor Page, A/SEE, gave a presentation on Active Travel Investment Projects and outlined the schemes that received funding for design and implementation in 2022 – 79 projects had been applied for with a request for €11,692,000 and the NTA awarded 63 projects with an allocation of €9,007,500.

The following comments were made by Committee:

Wicklow Projects – could two different systems be put in place for rural and urban, smaller town and village

Could footpaths in bad repair be included as new projects.

€1 million recently announced for rural projects by Chief Executive - Advised that we will look at list of projects submitted for funding in rural areas, the funding was to come from Class 1 Development levies but that it was for the county and the funding is over two years.

Greenways – credit to NTA section for pre consultation work especially on recent project for Swan River Greenway & Oldcourt Connectivity Scheme. Members of the public are not happy with schemes currently recommended, but asked if scheme could be withdrawn and money spent elsewhere.

Kilmacanogue to Bray Greenway – exercise caution – lot of consultation prior to any work progressing - lot of advantages in pre discussion – explain, listen and mitigate for residents beside the scheme.

Blessington Greenway – surprise at scheme being lodged with An Bord Pleanala prior to discussion with local councillors - Advised that Blessington Greenway is managed by CCSD with engineering and technical support of TWES staff

Development levies – Availability of Class 1 contributions discussed - There are specific categories, but it also covers miscellaneous projects – does not necessarily mean expenditure in a particular area.

Cathaoirleach complemented the amount of money achieved based on application through NTA.

Item 3: Update TII Funded Projects

Deirdre Forde, Liaison Officer, N11/M11 project gave an update on the N11/M11 Junction 4 to 14 scheme and the N11/M11 Bus Priority Interim Scheme.

John Bowes, SE, gave an update in relation to works on the N81 and recent TII funding for projects.

The following comments were made by the committee:-

Devastating news about funding stopped – the amount of money that has been spent on this scheme plus previous reports. A lot of work could be redundant. Request to full Council meeting to send a deputation to Minister for Transport and his two cabinet

colleagues to protest vehemently about waste of money and have allocation re-examined – traffic will become worse.

Bus Priority Scheme – any indication of when this will be on public display – are park and ride being incorporated.

What improvement in journey time if all implemented, previous scheme had closing of junctions which has now disappeared.

N81 when are going to see improvements on the N81?

Parallel service road at Kilmacanogue – noise levels - speed limit

Public transport project included bus schemes – significant increase in rail service south of Greystones required – better service from Carlow or Dublin to Belfast than in Wicklow.

County Development Plan – CE chart which has active travel modal split in 10 places in Co Wicklow. Identify how this scheme will increase improvement – Newtownmountkennedy, Kilcoole, Fassaroe – huge changes for rush hour traffic. Commuter county - v- local job ratio. Peoples land are frozen as a result of this scheme not progressing.

Recommended to full Council to see a deputation with Minister – second and agreed.

Arklow is like a car park from 6.00 am. Train is full when you get to Wicklow so no encouragement for commuters to travel via rail.

How much money has been spent on all projects on the N11M11

Response

John Bowes, SE advised he would get full figures prior to appointment of Arup on current scheme.

BPIS – looking at preferred option – Loughlinstown to Junction 6 north and south would be within DLR Co Co – preferred route north of Glenview to Kilmacanogue – asked to revisit. Hope to have BPIS ready to go to ABP early next year – new website is running www.n11m11bpis.ie with updates as they occur. Journey time is improved between 5 and 6 minutes in DLRCoCo area and 2 minutes in County Wicklow. BPIs does not address other issues on N11.

N81 funding has been provided in the sum of over €1,000,000 for pavement improvement works and bend realignment schemes at Hangmans Bend, Tuckmill, Irishtown and Whitestown. Phase 1 is complete, Phase 2 will establish improvement options at these locations with TII funding

Hollywood Bus Stop – more investment

Wording for Council meeting that the Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council request a delegation to discuss the non funding of the N11/M11 main scheme .

BPIS focused on bus priority not service to motorists focused on person throughput rather than vehicle transport.

No funding available for to dissipate noise levels at Kilmacanogue – in dialogue with TII

Item 4 Other road projects and operations update

The following comments were made by the committee:-

Land available for footpath from Kilmacanogue (Glencormac Business Park) to Woodlands Academy, have a pedestrian footbridge across to Brennanstown to meet up with footpaths at Hollybrook, Kilcrouney instead of Greenway.

Cyclists from Newtown to Barry's Bridge, cyclists can go as far as Willow Grove, can one way system to Barry's Bridge allow for contra flow for cyclists only which will alleviate five dangerous junctions – safety enhancement

Response

Michael Flynn, SE – GDA Transport Strategy is nearing completion – get the views of members taken on board before publishing which is imminent.

Significant increase in DTTAS funding covering rural areas. Allocation from DTTAs will be issued when it is broken down into district spending.

Speed limit review has gone out to consultation with Gardai, TII, neighbouring authorities.

Public lighting – contractor on Board – Wicklow is scheduled for Quarter 3 2023

Rail dart plans consultation ongoing – closure of level crossing Bray – engagement ongoing

Suggestions re cycle improvements at Newtown will be examined.

Item 5 – Fire Service Update

Presentation given by Aidan Dempsey, CFO/

The following comments were made by the committee:-

Tribute paid to fire brigade staff on work achieved, and on defibrillator provision, funding has been provided by Bray MD and plans to have smoke alarms and carbon monoxide monitors in houses – proactive.

Work ongoing on bonfires at Halloween – burden for fire service – working with Gardai and Council staff to removed materials

Training Courses are going from strength to strength – accommodation that was planned as accommodation / dormitory has been removed – determined to have a full time fire service in Bray

Massive increase in population around Fassaroe, Charnwood and Old Golf Club – level of staff in Bray – fire service can only have retained fire fighters from south side of Bray due to time taken to reach fire station

Sympathy to Billy Kinsella’s family whose brother works in Tinahely district, the fire station in Tinahely were the first to attend.

If full time fire service in Bray would the ten stations in the county be reduced. Wexford has five fire stations.

Response

Survey being carried out with retained fire fighters throughout the country to see if terms and conditions are in keeping with cost of living.

Current national standard achieved by ten fire stations. Bray Fire Station designated as one pump station well covered – if we can guarantee two pumps the eastern regional control centre would be advised. Focus on recruitment south side due to difficulty in getting from north side of Bray.

Terms and conditions within survey will look at national review which will highlight whether additional resources should be allocated.

Remote communities can be 20 minutes from nearest fire station – hence initiatives to provide alarms.

Item 6 – Water Services update

Items raised by Committee

Lack of response from IW clinic – not satisfactory – local expertise will be lost if WCC staff transfer to IW.

Issue re nursing home in Arklow with 19 beds lying idle when waiting for connection to IS – cost of connection.

Response

End of Water Service Legal Agreement operating within 31 local authorities and Irish Water have been indicated as concluding by the Department in 2026. Due back in WRC in the next month to see if existing staff transfer to IW.

HD has attended meetings since IW was instituted and has continued to represent WCC at all meetings. Any issues not resolved to be referred directly to HD.

Connection policy – charging – agreed at CRU for water services and can be appealed. New regulations being designed.

7. AOB

None

8 Date of next meeting

Monday 30th May 2022 – Rescheduled to 23rd May

Monday 26th September

4th date to be confirmed.