

Minutes of the Transport, Infrastructure & Emergency Services Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) held on Monday 24th April 2023 at 3.00p.m. in Council Chamber.

Present:

Cllr Aiden Fitzpatrick, CCC (Chairperson)	Cllr Peter McVitty, CCC
Cllr Sarah O'Reilly, CCC	Cllr Trevor Smith, CCC (online)
Cllr Brendan Fay, CCC	Mr Eamon Mulcahy
Cllr TP O'Reilly, CCC	Mr Padraig Young

In Attendance:

Paddy Connaughton, DOS - CCC
John McKernan, SE - CCC
Cormac Fitzpatrick, SO - CCC

Apologies:

Margaret McNally, HoF - CCC
Noel O'Reilly, Chief Fire Officer - CCC

Councillor Aiden Fitzpatrick welcomed all to the meeting.

A minute's silence was observed in memory of former Transport, Infrastructure & Emergency Services SPC Chairperson Cllr Sean Smith.

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting of 20th December 2021

Proposed by Cllr. Sarah O'Reilly and seconded by Cllr TP O'Reilly.

2. 2023 Road Works Programme

John McKernan presented the draft 2023 road works programme to the Committee.

Cllr Brendan Fay asked if there was an update with regards the Drumsillagh safety scheme works. John McKernan advised that we are currently awaiting approval from Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) to award tender.

Cllr Brendan Fay asked if there was anything being done to resolve the subsidence issue on the Belturbet Greenway near Kilcorby. John McKernan advised that this was the responsibility of Waterways Ireland as it was riverbank subsidence and that the latest feedback was that they were in discussion with an adjoining landowner.

Cllr Brendan Fay asked if there would be capacity for the parking warden to service Belturbet more frequently. Paddy Connaughton advised that Parking Services has moved to the Environment Department and that a request can be submitted therein.

Cllr Peter McVitty requested an update on the Cavan Greenway project. John McKernan advised that our consultants are working on it and that the preferred options should be issued later this year. Cllr Peter McVitty asked was there a good level of public of public consultation and engagement to which John McKernan confirmed there was and that there would be further public consultation once the preferred option is issued.

Padraig Young asked if the greenway was expected to route from the Mart up to the hospital and was it expected to go through Butlersbridge. John McKernan confirmed the specific route was still being assessed by the consultants working on the scheme and that all options are still under consideration.

Cllr TP O'Reilly asked was there any plans for safety improvement works at the Glanbia plant outside Virginia. John McKernan advised that a scheme was in development along the N3 at this location but may require an AIE which could delay the project.

Cllr Sarah O'Reilly asked if there were any plans to resolve traffic congestion on the way into Cavan from Ballinagh road (Tractamotors junction) and also the top of the Kingscourt road entering Bailieborough. John McKernan advised the traffic management of Cavan town was currently being reviewed under the Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) project and that we are looking to secure funding for the reducing congestion at these areas.

Cllr Sarah O'Reilly asked for an update on the Kingscourt and Cootehill greenways. John McKernan advised that the Kingscourt greenway is being managed by Meath CoCo and that the Cootehill greenway is being managed by the Community & Enterprise Department of Cavan CoCo.

Cllr Sarah O'Reilly asked if there were any plans for a greenway in Bailieborough. Paddy Connaughton advised all potential options were considered prior to the selection of the Cavan greenway.

Cllr Sarah O'Reilly asked if the roads that have dropped off the 2023 Roads Programme due to funding have been totally removed or are they still open to consideration if additional funding is secured. Paddy Connaughton confirmed they will be considered if additional funding is received.

Cllr Aiden Fitzpatrick asked if anything can be done to alleviate the traffic issue at 'Connolly's Corner' in Cootehill. John McKernan advised we can review.

Cllr TP O'Reilly asked what the process is regarding parking byelaws and introducing new parking byelaws. Paddy Connaughton advised that this would need to be discussed with the Environment Department given the recent move of this function.

Cllr Peter McVitty raised the issue of water running on the public road from private property. John McKernan indicated that the Roads section were recruiting additional technicians to assist the MDs in dealing with these issues.

Cllr Aiden Fitzpatrick raised concern that the 2023 Roads Programme primarily catered for the upkeep of 48km out of a total of almost 3,000km and asked if this has been escalated to the relevant national bodies. John McKernan confirmed that it has been escalated that the level of funding is inadequate to effectively maintain our road network given existing challenges such as material costs etc.

Paddy Connaughton requested approval to present the 2023 Road Works Programme to the plenary council which was agreed by all.

3. Climate Change

Paddy Connaughton informed the meeting that in accordance with the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 Cavan CoCo need to prepare and implement a Climate Action Plan. This will be a statutory document and a reserve function of the Council to approve.

From a Roads/Transport/Infrastructure perspective our target is a 50% reduction in emissions by 2030 with the primary focus to:

- Reduce the total distance driven across all car journeys by 20%
- Have walking, cycling and public transport to account for 50% of our journeys
- Facilitate e-vehicles with the expectation of nearly 1 in 3 private cars being an Electric Vehicle
- Enable 70% of people in rural Ireland having buses that provide at least 3 trips to the nearby town daily by 2030

We will drive policies to reduce transport emissions by improving our town/rural planning and by adopting the Avoid-Shift-Improve approach i.e.

- reducing or avoiding the need for travel,
- shifting to public transport, walking and cycling and
- improving the energy efficiency of vehicles

Cllr Brendan Fay asked what plans were there for improving public transport in the rural areas of the county. Paddy Connaughton advised improvements have been made and will continue to be assessed as part of this action plan.

Cllr Peter McVitty asked if expediting the Virginia by-pass would aid this process in reducing the time cars are static due to traffic congestion in the town. Cllr TP O'Reilly asked what are the implications of this project and whether our success/failure would impact the prospect of the Virginia N3 bypass.

In response to both questions Paddy Connaughton advised the by-pass project will follow due process and that the idea of the Climate Action Plan is to promote behavioural change in reducing emissions.

Cllr TP O'Reilly asked about our decarbonisation zone and how it ties to the Climate Action Plan. Paddy Connaughton advised that our decarbonisation zone will be our exemplar area whereas the Climate Action Plan will be a County wide approach.

Cllr TP O'Reilly asked if there has been much demand for e-vehicle charge points in Virginia. Paddy Connaughton advised that to date there hasn't been a big demand.

Cllr Sarah O'Reilly highlighted the efforts of local company Mannok and their significant investment in a new sustainability strategy and plans to reduce carbon emissions which was also commended by Cllr Aiden Fitzpatrick.

4. Scheduling of next meeting

Next meeting scheduled for Monday 26th June at 4pm in the Council Chamber.

5. AoB

No further items raised.

Cllr Aiden Fitzpatrick brought meeting to a close at 5:15pm.