

Minutes of the Transport, Infrastructure & Emergency Services Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) held on Thursday 30th October 2025 at 3.00p.m. in the Council Chamber, Courthouse, Cavan.

SPC Members Present:

Cllr Trevor Smith (Chair), Cllr. Clifford Kelly Cllr TP O'Reilly, Cllr Patricia Walsh, Cllr Philip Brady, Cllr Damien Brady.

In Attendance:

Paddy Connaughton, Director of Service
John McKernan, Senior Engineer
John McGahern, Senior Executive Engineer, Ballyjamesduff Municipal District
John Smith Senior Executive Engineer, Road Design
Sinead Sweeney (Chief Fire Officer)
Peter Fitzpatrick, Fitzpatrick Construction
Ann Flynn, Assistant Staff Officer

Apologies:

Cllr TP O'Reilly, Cllr Patricia Walsh, Cllr Philip Brady, Cllr Damien Brady, Niamh Creamer Administrative Officer, Margaret McNally Head of Finance, Colm O'Callaghan Senior Engineer, Susan Doherty Administrative Officer, Marty Lynch Staff Officer

Cllr Trevor Smith chaired. He welcomed all to the meeting and acknowledged apologies.

1. Confirmation of minutes of previous meeting

- Held on 30th May 2025, Cavan Crystal Hotel.

The minutes were read and adopted. The minutes were proposed by Cllr. Trevor Smith and seconded by Peter Fitzpatrick.

2. Hedge Cutting Guidelines Presentation

John McGahern, Senior Executive Engineer, gave a presentation on Hedge cutting. The legal position – The Roads Act 1993 – Section 70 – Dangerous structures / Trees – owner of the property is responsible for maintenance. It is difficult to establish who the owner of the land is, land registry can be out of date, the owner of the land may be deceased, the Department of Agriculture will not release BPS data due to GDPR. Roadside must be inspected physically not on google maps. The MD issue first notice to remove dangerous structure, will give reasonable notice to act unless it is urgent. MD will give final notice by registered post, and this will include the Council's costs to

cut the hedge. If final notice is ignored under the current Roads Act provisions are difficult to enforce. John stated that an amendment to the Roads Act is required to allow Local Authorities to issue direct fines and make hedgerow maintenance a compliance issue with regard to Department of Agriculture basic payments.

Cllr. Trevor Smith thanked John and asked if there were any questions.

Sinead Sweeney asked if there is no owner registered, can we take it over, John said there is usually an owner. Cllr. Trevor Smith said there is always problems with landowners not cutting hedges, Cllr. Clifford Kelly agreed, John McGahern said it is very difficult to take someone to court, the Wildlife Act can oppose a fine of €5,000 we cannot do this.

John McKernan said the Act is there but hard to use it.

Cllr. Clifford Kelly suggested the Council should put the cost against the property and that the law should be changed.

3: John Smith – Senior Executive Engineer gave a presentation on the Cavan North – West Greenway Project

Cavan County Council in conjunction with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) Greenway Programme are currently progressing the Cavan Northwest Greenway project in Cavan.

The main goal of this project is to connect the Cavan Town Greenway, Ulster Canal Greenway and the Cavan Leitrim Greenway (At Aughawillan) via Belturbet and Ballyconnell.

This project will contribute to a Greenway Network of 200 KM approx. in length between Cavan Town, Middletown, Co. Armagh and Drumod Co. Leitrim.

The aim of this Greenway is to support active travel, tourism and rural regeneration in Co. Cavan.

The objectives are:-

- To develop a regionally significant greenway.
- To provide a safe recreational outdoor activity for end users.
- To increase access to points of interest within the locality.

- To support the use of a more sustainable mode of transport.
- To regenerate and rejuvenate towns and villages.

On 31st March 2025 Cavan County Council received approval from TII for the following:

- To proceed to Phase 1 of the TII Project Management Guidelines.
- To procure technical advisors using a TII framework on E-tenders.
- Cavan County Council are currently waiting on TII approval to appoint RPS Consulting Engineers LTD

Cavan County Council received a total allocation of €270,000 from TII for 2025.

Cllr. Trevor Smith thanked John for this presentation and asked if there were any questions.

John McKernan said we may follow the old railway lines where possible. There is protected status on these railway lines. Cllr. Trevor Smith said there will be problems if we do not use the old railway lines. John McKernan said all options will be shown to An Board Pleanála for preferred routes.

John Smith said there will be public consultations for each phase of this Greenway and this project will take time.

Paddy Connaughton said this is risk free for us as we will get 100% funding from TII, it may take longer. He said this is the most cost-effective way to do this.

John Smith said hopefully they will know the budget from TII by the end of the year or early next year so we can plan. John said this this project may take up to 4 years before it goes to planning.

3. Active Travel presentation by John McKernan, Senior Engineer

John McKernan gave a presentation on Active Travel

Active Travel aims are as follows: -

- Improves Public Health – encourages physical activity walking / cycling.
- Environmentally friendly – reduces carbon emissions and traffic congestion

- Enhances connectivity – links communities, schools, workplaces and amenities.
- Supports safe routes to school – promotes independence and safety for children.

From 2021 – 2025 Active Travel spent €12,367.10 approx. in County Cavan on new footpaths, new cycle lanes, junction upgrades, pedestrian crossings and public lighting.

Large scale Active Travel projects are as follows: -

R190 / R192 Station Road, Cootehill -2.5KM cycle lane and footpaths, and enhanced pedestrian crossings at the school.

- Safer routes for school children
- Encourages walking and cycling.
- Supports NTA and CCC Active Travel objectives.

R212 Cathedral Road, Cavan town

- To provide safe active travel corridor from John Sullivan Nursing Home to the Cullies roundabout.
- Involved the delivery of new footpaths, cycle lanes, and enhanced pedestrian infrastructure improving connectivity and safety for all users.
- Final section will involve extension of scheme from Cullies roundabout to Loreto junction.

John showed photos of the new footpaths at Farnham N.S. Cavan and St. Michael's N.S. Cootehill.

Kingscourt Urban Greenway

- The primary objective of this scheme is to establish a safe and accessible route for pedestrians and cyclists between Kingscourt Town and the Greenway.
- The Consultants on the project are preparing the preliminary design at present.
- Landowner consultation is also underway.

Rampart River Footbridge – Virginia

Objectives

- To provide a high-quality pedestrian and cycle link from the residential area east of the River Rampart to the town core in Virginia.
- To promote cycling and walking instead of bringing your car into the town centre.
- To open potential future walks and active travel along the river.

John McKernan stated that the Council and TII are involved in looking at cycle lanes and footpaths along the N3 Dublin Road to Cavan town.

Cllr. Trevor Smith asked if we would get further funding for more footpaths in the County.

John said that the NTA no longer do footpaths alone their approach has changed, Farnham N.S. and St. Michaels N.S. were exceptions due to safety reasons. It is very difficult to justify 100% funding for footpaths. Cavan has 13km of footpaths, they are expensive.

John Smith said that the NTA are looking for good value for money e.g. numerous housing estates, schools and colleges in an area.

John McKernan said that we have improved pedestrian crossings on the road at Cavan Institute that would be a good example of good value for money.

Cllr. Trevor Smith said there's footpaths in Mountnugent and Ballyjamesduff these are a great benefit to those areas.

John McKernan said NTA have very specific requirements.

Peter Fitzpatrick asked if it is hard to get a cycle land and footpaths in an area.

John Smith said we have to comply with to the National Cycle Network, which can be difficult to do.

4. AOB

No further items raised.

5. Scheduling of next meeting

The chair would liaise to set the date for the next meeting.

Cllr. Trevor Smith brought the meeting to a close.