



Comhairle Cathrach  
& Contae **Luimnigh**

**Limerick City**  
& County Council

**Minutes of the Meeting of Limerick City & County Council's Travel and Transportation Strategic Policy Committee held on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2018 at 10:00am in the Council Chamber, Merchant's Quay, Limerick.**

**Members Present:**

Councillors Daly (Chairperson), Butler, Browne, Donegan, Hogan, Mitchell, Ó Ceallaigh, Pond, Secas, Mr. Michael Tiernan, Ms. Maureen Browne, Mr. Denis McAuliffe.

**Apologies:**

Mr. Michael Lenihan, Mr. Brian Leddin.

**Officials Present:**

Mr. Brian Kennedy, Director of Service, Mr. Dara McGuigan, A/Senior Executive Officer, Ms. Anne Goggin, Senior Executive Engineer, Ms Sadbh Hanley, Smarter Travel Co-ordinator, Mr Dan Slavin, Executive Engineer, Mr. Liam Kennedy, Assistant Engineer, Ms. May Fitzgerald, Assistant Staff Officer, Ms. Amy O'Halloran, Clerical Officer.

**Item 1: Adoption of Minutes**

On the proposal of Cllr. Mitchell, seconded by Cllr. Pond the minutes of the previous committee meeting held on the 8<sup>th</sup> October were unanimously adopted.

**Item 2: Presentation on the Bikelink Bike Sharing Scheme – Mr Jarlath Gantly – ECOTravel- Sustainable Travel Solutions.**

This item was deferred.

**Item 3: Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Pond**

"I will move at the next Meeting that on foot of the announcement by Edwards Lifesciences Corporation of six hundred (600) new jobs for the National Technology Park in Castletroy, Limerick City and County Council would, with Clare County Council, urgently progress the

**development of the Northern Distributor Road (NDR), a vital piece of infrastructure for the City and County”.**

In proposing the Motion, Cllr. Pond stated that increasing traffic levels at the National Technology Park need to be addressed. At rush hour, the road traffic in Plassey Park Road stretches as far back as the U.L. entrance. He continued to say that the NDR should be regarded as is a vital piece of infrastructure for the City and County.

Cllr. Donegan seconded the motion. He requested that an update on progress with the NDR be provided at the next SPC meeting.

Cllr. Butler supported the motion, stating that the journey from the City centre to U.L. can take up to 90 minutes for those travelling to work. He went on to state that a bus corridor is needed to U.L. and that 40% of traffic from U.L. crosses the river. The traffic congestion has repercussions for the whole city. He urged that this should be supported and kept on the Agenda, as companies are reluctant to grow and expand their businesses.

Cmhlr. Ó Ceallaigh welcomed the announcement of 600 jobs and referred to the potential expansion of Troy Studios and U.L., but commented that expansions have been hindered by the lack of the infrastructure. He called on Phase 2 of the project to commence soon.

Cllr. Mitchell supported the motion, stating that 13,000 jobs have been created in the last number of years, and it is vital that this development be progressed as quickly as possible. Councillors had approved the variation to the local area plan to facilitate the NDR scheme, he stated.

Cllr. Secas said she was misrepresented in the media at the time, stating that she did not vote for the variation, as she did not feel it was the best route, but that she was in favour of the road. She stated that Councillors are receiving queries about the Northern Distributor Road and that Members should be briefed on progress.

Mr. Tiernan stated that the business community fully supported the Motion.

Mr. Kennedy agreed that the NDR is a critical piece of infrastructure for Limerick and Clare, to ensure that the growth targets set out for the region under the National Planning Framework 2040 are achieved. He assured the Members that the Local Authority is in regular communication with Clare County Council and with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport on the matter.

He advised that the first meeting with the recently appointed consultants undertaking the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (L-SMATS) was scheduled for w/c 10th December. He acknowledged that the NDR was a major element for the facilitation of the outcomes of the L-SMATS.

Cllr. J Pond acknowledged the reply and stated that the Members of the SPC should receive a regular briefing on progress on the NDR.

**Item 4: Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Pond**

**“I will move at the next Meeting that, following ongoing complaints about traffic noise from the M7 motorway affecting the quality of life of residents living in Cherryfield, Thornfield, Oakfield, Monaleen park, Kylemore, Evanwood, and Cairnsfort in Castletroy, Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) be requested to erect a high quality effective Sound Barrier along the Motorway to the above Housing Estates to reduce the Motorway noise to an acceptable level within these residential developments.”**

In proposing the Motion, Cllr. Pond stated that noise in these Estates is at serious levels. People have reported to him that they cannot sleep at night. He noted that when building a single house you are now required to do a Noise Assessment. He called on Transport Infrastructure Ireland to erect noise abatement barriers on the M7 as soon as possible.

Cllr. Secas stated that she has been working with residents and the Council since 2015 on noise issues in these estates. She stated that residents felt progress had been slow. Cllr. Donegan in seconding the Motion asked for a timeframe for noise monitoring and modelling and Cmhlr Ó Cealligh called for regular monitoring along the M7. Cllr Butler raised the serious health consequences of noise, and acknowledged that the Council’s Noise Team was doing its utmost to progress the issues.

In responding, Ms. Anne Goggin, Senior Executive Engineer, advised that a new Noise Action Plan had recently been adopted. The Plan had identified the M7 as one of 14 noise hot-spots in Limerick. Ms Goggin outlined the process which would be undertaken. Firstly, the Noise Team had to validate the noise maps from the Plan, then monitor the noise and then propose modelling. She stated that low noise surfaces, while effective in the short term, were expensive and therefore not cost effective in the longer term. Ms. Goggin acknowledged that there is no legislation at present setting upper noise limits, and the World Health Organisation had only recently released its recommended upper limits.

Ms. Goggin said that noise barriers are only partly effective, and that they may not alleviate noise, for example, to upper storeys. She suggested that other solutions, such as noise-proofed windows might need to be considered. She confirmed that when all the noise modelling is done, the Council would be in a better place to propose solutions to Transport Infrastructure Ireland. She confirmed that the modelling will be carried out in-house, and will initially focus on Thornfield estate, scheduled for the first half of 2019.

Cllr. Pond and the Members thanked Ms. Goggin for her response.

The Meeting then concluded.

