



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 Friday 9th July, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. by MS Teams Video Conference.

Members Present:

Cllrs. Leddin (Chair), Butler, Costelloe, Kilcoyne, McSweeney, Novak Uí Chonchúir, O'Donovan, O'Hanlon, Secas, Sheahan (M), Teefy, Mr. B. Harper, Mr. F. Heffernan, Mr. Pat McCarthy.

Officials Present:

Ms. N. Gallagher, Mr. P. Williams, Mr. R. Gallagher, Mr. S. McGlynn, Ms. M. Corrigan, Mr. J. O'Leary, Ms. K. McDonnell, Ms. A. Leahy, Ms. M. Fitzgerald.

Apologies: Mrs. Maureen Browne; Mr. Brian Kennedy

The Chair commenced the proceedings by welcoming all attendees to the meeting.

Item 1: Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Travel and Transportation Strategic Policy Committee held on the 20th April 2021 were proposed by Cllr. O'Donovan, seconded by Cllr. Kilcoyne and adopted.

Item 2: Update on new Organisational Structure - Peter Williams, A/Administrative Officer:

Mr. Williams gave an update on the new organizational structure and introduced Ms. Nuala Gallagher, Director of Planning, Environment & Place-making. Ms. Gallagher advised the Meeting that she is currently going through a process of organising structures in her new Directorate and it is key that her Directorate and the Transportation and Mobility Directorate work closely together.

The Chair welcomed Ms. Gallagher and welcomed her attendance at future meetings.

Item 3: Update on the new Active Travel Department - Sean Mc Glynn, A/Senior Engineer:

Mr. Mc Glynn gave an update on the new Active Travel Department including outlining the funding received for Active Travel projects and the source of funding. He added that he hoped to have the full complement of 23 staff in place in the Active Travel team by the end of 2021.

Cllr Leddin thanked Mr. McGlynn for the presentation and opened the floor to Questions.

Cllr. Kilcoyne asked for a commencement date for the Patrickswell Renewal Scheme. Mr. McGlynn confirmed that the Tender to engage consultants was currently being published and that Mr. Liam Kennedy was the project manager.

Cllr. O Donovan asked if Karen Mc Donnell, who has done excellent work with the Safe Schools will be part of the Active Travel team and if the works proposed in Dooradoyle to Hyde Road come under LSMATS.

Mr. Mc Glynn replied that staffing is being reviewed and a planner and senior planner will be required as part of the structure but at the time Ms McDonnell was not an Active Travel staff member. He added that the Dooradoyle to Hyde Road works are an integral part of LSMATS, which is still under review.

Mr. Harper welcomed the new department and expressed his wish to see high quality segregated cycle facilities. He also said he would welcome the opportunity for Limerick Cycling Campaign to engage in the early stages and design of cycle facilities, before going to Part VIII planning preferably.

Cllr. Leddin agreed that consultation and engagement with relevant stakeholders is important as the Part VIII process can proceed without significant change or amendment.

Cllr. Teefy, while welcoming the update wanted to remind everyone to keep in mind that Limerick County must also be factored into the Active Travel planning. Mr. Mc Glynn confirmed that there are quite a few projects on going in the county and offered to have engineers give progress reports.

With reference to Cllr. Teefy's comment, Mr. Gallagher informed the meeting that there are ongoing discussions with the NTA, who have indicated that they are interested in projects outside the Metro area and hope to give updates in the months ahead.

Cllr. Butler urged caution on sharing design with any group ahead of the statutory process. He referenced a blog regarding Fr. Russell Road design which caused consternation at the time. There is a statutory process to be followed which goes through the public elected

representative and he encouraged that process to be followed. He adding that sharing design with one group over another can have an adverse impact.

The Chair wished to point out that there is a strong partnership with the Cycle Network Campaign.

Item 4: Update on Safe Routes to School Programme (SRTS) - Karen McDonnell, Assistant Planner:

Ms. McDonnell gave an update on the Safe Routes to School Programme and confirmed that 8 out of 40 schools in Limerick were selected for the programme.

The Chair thanked Ms. McDonnell for her commitment and success and welcomed the alignment between LSMATS and 'Green schools'. He opened the floor to questions.

Cllr. Secas thanked Ms. McDonnell and asked if the final decision on the schools chosen was made by An Taisce. She was disappointed that there were no schools chosen from City East in Round 1 and asked if there were any applications from the area.

Cllr. Butler thanked Ms. McDonnell for her hugely positive work. He commented that it is very positive to have groupings of schools so that there can be secondary sharing of benefits, which will encourage others to engage.

Cllr. O'Donovan thanked Ms. McDonnell and was very happy to see bicycle parking included and reiterated the need for consultation with parents, children and residents. She hopes to see infrastructural changes outside of schools.

Ms. McDonnell, in response to Cllr. Secas confirmed that the final decision was entirely made by An Taisce. The Council did not have any input in selection, but did provide a list of ongoing projects in the area. She advised that any schools that applied will be brought through the project on a rolling basis, and agreed with Cllr. O'Donovan that consultation is key to keeping residents informed.

Cllr. Teefy thanked Ms. McDonnell and was happy to see the success in Limerick city. She asked if there were any applications from county schools.

Cllr. Novak also thanked Ms. McDonnell for the presentation and work to date. She agreed that clusters would be a good strategy for sharing benefits. She asked what measures are going to be implemented and what the timelines are and if it is the NTA or the Council will have the biggest input.

Mr. Heffernan congratulated Ms. McDonnell on all the good work to date. He remarked on the traffic congestion around schools and double parking, and welcomed any improvement.

Ms. McDonnell in reply to Cllr. Teefy confirmed that there was applications from a mix of rural and city schools. In reply to Cllr. Novak, she added that the type of project depends on the feedback from schools and children. She and an Engineer from the Council will collaborate with schools and green schools and identify school needs. There may be a variety of measures such as extra signage, additional pedestrian crossings and school zones. As regards a timeline, work will continue in the background throughout July and August and when school returns there will be more consultation.

Mr. Gallagher wished to emphasise that Limerick is fortunate to have had 8 schools selected and reassured the meeting that the Council will assist all other schools where feasible.

Item 5: Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor E. O'Donovan (referred from Metro Meeting)

"I will move at the next meeting that road markings are reviewed when designing and upgrading roads to ensure they are in line with the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets to facilitate the reallocation of space from private vehicles to pedestrians and cyclists."

In proposing the Motion, Cllr. O'Donovan stated that the Design Manual for Urban Roads (DMURS) is a mandatory document for Local Authorities to adhere to when designing and upgrading roads, to reallocate space to sustainable active travel. She added that the same original line markings are being re-established following the resurfacing of roads and that the same priority is given to cars as was originally – after the resurfacing. She is asking the Council to consider replacing the existing lines to install temporary cycle lanes and widen walkways.

Cllr. Secas seconded the Motion.

In a written response Mr. Gallagher stated that:

"Limerick City and County Council uses the relevant design standards, including Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) where appropriate, in designing and upgrading roads. Use of DMURS is obligatory in urban areas. Where feasible, facilities for pedestrians and cyclists are provided using kerb segregation. When resurfacing roads, segregation can be provided where feasible by bolt-down rubber kerbs, typically delineating former hard shoulders or extra wide roads for cyclists/pedestrians, ref: imminent works on Condell Road, Groody Link Road and Plassey Park Road. In some instances, bollards are used to achieve the same delineation, i.e., southern approach to Kilmurray Roundabout in Castletroy.

It should be noted that many of the roads serving the city are designated as Priority Bus Corridors in the draft LSMATS and a detailed design of these corridors forms part of the rollout of improved public transport, cycle and pedestrian facilities. These schemes will form part of Limerick BusConnects. The design and construction of these schemes will of course be in accordance with relevant standards, and forms a significant part of the short-term delivery of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (LSMATS)."

Cllr. S. Novak thanked Cllr. O'Donovan for bringing an important issue forward. She stated that there is a huge uptake in walking and cycling in the last year and the infrastructure is not inviting with narrow footpaths and a lack of cycle lanes. She added that lines could be redrawn on especially wide roads around the city to address speed and to encourage walking and cycling.

Mr. Bruce Harper supported the Motion and agreed with Cllr. Novak's points. He referenced the NTA's guidelines that the golden rule states before you replace or resurface a road, special consideration needs to be given to traffic lane widths. He added that no road should be resurfaced without reconsidering what the appropriate lines are.

Cllr. Secas wished to add her support and understands why allocation to cyclists/pedestrians cannot be done on narrow roads. She referred to recent resurfacing on wide roads on which the same lines were drawn. She asked if space can be allocated to cyclists / pedestrians on wide roads.

Mr. Gallagher added that he fully accepts the idea of DMURS regarding the allocation of road space for active modes, but only when it is safe to do so. It would be premature to allocate to active mode on some roads, where there are long-term proposals for an area. He added that it is very difficult to put in dedicated on street cycle-ways in some areas and at the same time provide a level of safety that cyclists should have. He appreciates what is being said in the Motion and the Council is working in a safe mode towards doing so.

Item 6: Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor S. Novak Uí Chonchúir (referred from Metro Meeting)

"I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that road space on the Dock Road be reallocated more appropriately towards cycling, walking and an improved public realm."

In proposing the motion Cllr. Novak stated that she would like to see the Dock Road reimaged and transformed and in particular had four concerns she wished the Council to consider:

- The financial loss to the Dock Road following the diversion of traffic through the Limerick Tunnel since its opening;
- The commitment that the road would be improved following construction of the Tunnel;
- The physical protection of 40 An Post Workers as they exit/enter the post centre on the Dock Road;
- Children using the Dock Road to cycle/walk to school.

Cllr. Leddin seconded the Motion. He added that the Dock Road is a primary artery road going into the city and asked if an assessment and redesign of the Dock Road has been completed by Arup Consultants.

Mr. Gallagher stated that when cycle lanes are established, the Council needs to ensure that continuity and safety of the cycleway and added that the Dock Road has the highest HGV usage in Limerick. With reference to Cllr. Leddin's question, Mr. Gallagher confirmed that the previous design of the Dock Road has been superseded by LSMATS, which has redesignated the Dock Road as a priority bus corridor and cycleway in the future. He also pointed out that the potential of a cycleway along the banks of the Shannon is currently being examined, but that the cycleway may not include the entire length of the Dock Road.

Mr. Gallagher added that the Council fully appreciates the need to cater for cyclists and pedestrians and needs to give them a sense of security and safety when markings are put on a road. The current nature of the Dock Road does not allow for that. Once LSMATS is agreed it is hoped to introduce a restriction on HGV's using the city.

In a written response Mr. Gallagher stated that:

"The Dock Road forms a major road entry point into Limerick City and carries a significant proportion of Heavy Commercial Vehicles. Currently it is not a comfortable road for cyclists to share, especially at peak traffic times. The Dock Road is designated as a Priority Bus Corridor in the draft LSMATS and design on this corridor will begin shortly as part of the Limerick BusConnects rollout. LSMATS allows for the provision of segregated cycle facilities potentially along the river bank as part of an improved public realm in the realm.

It is not proposed to mark out temporary cycle lane markings in advance of the fully designed BusConnects scheme because of the need to have a safe and fully delineated cycle facility in this area."

Cllr. O'Donovan supported the Motion and commented that the Dock Road is not an attractive entry route into the city. She added that it is a very hostile road used by HGV's going through

highly populated areas, particularly from the Atlas Avenue junction to Shannon Bridge. She added that the pedestrian crossing between Steam Boat Quay and the Skate Park is one of the most used pedestrian crossings in Limerick. She asked if cycle lanes were included in the recent Part VIII passed for Atlas Ave.

Cllr. Butler stated the Dock Road is one of the key entry/exit roads into the city and does not create a good first impression of Limerick. Some properties have fallen into dereliction and he has requested that property owners be contacted and that boundaries be improved. He added that the road is incredibly complex with multiple junctions and will have further exits with the upcoming Greenpark development. He suggested that cycle lanes are not realistic at present from Atlas Avenue to the Skate Park.

Mr. Harper stated that BusConnects is only commencing and will not happen on the ground for at least 5 years. He asked what progress will be made to reduce carbon emissions before 2030, as transport accounts for 20% of the emissions.

Mr. Gallagher, in response to Cllr. O'Donovan agreed that the pedestrian crossing and Roundabout at Steamboat Quay is one of the busiest in the city and under the full Part VIII design is likely to be a traffic light junction. As regards Atlas Avenue cycle lanes are included in that scheme and a cycle lane is being considered along the banks of the Shannon as far as Mungret, and will allow a crossing up Ashbourne Avenue to link onto South Circular Road.

In reply to Cllr. Butler, Mr. Gallagher agreed that Dock Road is complex, there is a substantial planning application lodged but access via the South Circular Road is currently being considered for Active Travel. If improvement work goes ahead at Atlas Avenue, it will facilitate the relocation of HGVs into the port and that work on the Dock Road is due to commence through the Active Travel team later this year.

In reply to Mr. Harper regarding BusConnects, Mr. Gallagher stated that BusConnects has major planning and environmental impacts, however parts of a scheme can be advanced without having the full design in place. Regarding Carbon emissions he said that the Council was looking to advance the delivery of a cleaner public transport fleet which will reduce carbon footprint.

Cllr. Novak thanked Mr. Gallagher for his response and agreed there is a lot of good work being done on medium to long term plans but would like to see some short term wins even of a temporary measure.

Mr. Gallagher appreciated Cllr. Novak's comments but reiterated that any works undertaken will have to be safe and continuous and not give a false sense of security to users. Works will only be undertaken when health and safety issues are addressed.

Item 7: Question submitted by Mr. Bruce Harper

"What is the status of the Limerick Metropolitan Cycle Network Study, and does the Council still aim to meet the Quality-of-Service levels set out in the study (i.e., A and no less than B for primary routes, B and no less than C for secondary routes etc.)?"

A response to Question was circulated to all Members prior to Meeting as follows:

"The Limerick Metropolitan Cycle Network Study was developed by Limerick Smarter Travel in conjunction with the National Transport Authority, the funding agency for sustainable transport measures in Limerick. The study identified a contiguous series of cycle routes across the metropolitan area which would provide a network of connected primary, secondary and feeder routes. The study has informed and been incorporated into the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (LSMATS), with the latter now being the primary strategy document for implementation on the ground.

Limerick City and County Council aims to deliver as high a Level of Service as is practicable for each element of the network, with segregated cycle ways a priority where feasible. Ideally the routes that carry the highest volumes of cyclist should have the highest Level of Service. However, due to various constraints, in particular along primary corridors on city streets, it is not always possible to provide a Level A Quality of Service on these routes, primarily due to density of junctions and competing demands for road space. However, LSMATS will endeavour to provide comparable Levels of Service as identified in the Limerick Metropolitan Cycle Network Study."

Mr. Williams reminded Members that any SPC Member wishing to attend the online Velo City Cycling conference scheduled for the 6th - 9th September can email him with expression of interest and the Council will facilitate the purchasing of a limited number of tickets for SPC members to attend the conference.

The Chair confirmed that the next SPC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, the 19th October 2021. This concluded the meeting.