



Comhairle Cathrach
& Contae **Luimnigh**

Limerick City
& County Council

Draft Minutes of the Meeting of Limerick City and County Council’s Travel and Transportation Strategic Policy Committee held on the 19th October, 2021 at 3:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Dooradoyle and online by MS Teams Video Conference.

Members Present:

Cllrs. Leddin (Chair), Butler, Kilcoyne, McSweeney, Novak Uí Chonchúir, O’Donovan, Secas, Teefy, Mr. T.O’Brien, Ms. M. Browne, Ms. A. Drake.

Officials Present:

Mr. B. Kennedy, Mr. R. Gallagher, Mr. P. Williams, Mr. A. Finn, Mr. T. Brennan, Ms. M. Corrigan, Mr. M. Laffan, Mr. H. McGrath, Mr. J. O’Leary, Mr. S. McGlynn, Ms. A. Leahy, Ms. M. Fitzgerald.

In Attendance:

Cllr. Sean Hartigan, NTA CEO Ms. Anne Graham, and Deputy CEO Mr. Hugh Creegan.

Apologies:

Cllr. K. O’Hanlon, Cllr. M. Ryan, Mr. F. Heffernan.

The Chair opened the Meeting and welcomed Ms. Anne Graham and Mr. Hugh Creegan from the NTA. He explained that other regional cities were progressing their Transport strategies and he invited the NTA to the meeting to address the status of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (LSMATS) and timeframe for publication. To facilitate the NTA attending online, he proposed moving Item 4 on the Agenda to Item 1.

Mr. Kennedy added that he was keen to push ahead with the second LSMATS Public Consultation as it will provide funding certainty and is fundamental to the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028.

Item 1: LSMATS Update

Ms. Graham invited Mr. Hugh Creegan to give an update on LSMATS. Mr. Creegan began by confirming that 112 submissions were received following the publication of the first draft of LSMATS and that these submissions provided valuable feedback. He added that the NTA is working through the issues raised in the submissions including issues relating to Limerick rail raised by the Minister of Transport. A number of elements also had to be added into the LSMATS including the alignment of the Climate Action Plan, which is due to be finalised in the next few weeks. The LSMATS will follow and will be fully aligned with all current policies. It is hoped that the next draft of LSMATS will be finalised in December with the second public consultation to begin in January 2022.

The Chair referred to the rail network in the strategy and asked if the network for the city is to include Shannon. Mr. Creegan confirmed that they are examining the possibility of a more comprehensive commuter rail network.

Cllr. O'Donovan thanked the NTA for the presentation and commented that funding received for sustainable Active Travel over the last few years has been very positive for the City and asked if funding is from the Council or the NTA and what authority will fund the planned expanded rail network for Limerick.

Ms. Drake stated that people are returning to work and there is more traffic congestion in the city. She asked if key projects will be prioritised on foot of LSMATS.

Cllr. Secas thanked Mr. Creegan for the update and referred to his comment that it would be better to go to public consultation after Christmas. She stressed that the strategy should be progressed without further delays and asked if there was a guarantee that the second consultation would happen in January 2022.

In response to Cllr. O'Donovan, Mr. Creegan advised that there is already a plan in place for funding by the NTA for Active Travel. In terms of funding for bigger projects, he confirmed that this is managed by Central Government, and agreed that funding will be difficult in the absence of a strategy. In relation to prioritising projects, he stated that the National Development Plan will determine key projects.

In reply to Cllr. Secas Mr. Creegan advised that a guarantee could not be given, however he could see no reason why a strategy would not be ready for a second public consultation by the end of January 2022.

Mr. Kennedy added the Council works very closely with the NTA regarding the Active Travel Schemes and has received substantial allocations this year. He stated that there is substantial momentum behind Active Travel and all schemes will be complementary to LSMATS. He gave examples of schemes such as the recently opened Castletroy Urban Greenway, and the fully segregated cycleways on Dooradoyle Road and at Groody Road. He added that Part VIII planning

has been secured for Mill Road, Corbally and Part VIII planning should be secured soon for the Quinn's Cross to Raheen scheme and LIT to City Centre scheme.

The Chair thanked Ms. Graham and Mr. Creegan for the update and addressing the concerns of the SPC Members and welcomes the second public consultation in January 2022.

Item 2: Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Travel and Transportation Strategic Policy Committee held on the 9th July 2021 were proposed by Cllr. O'Donovan, seconded by Cllr. Secas and adopted

Item 3: Dockless Bike Hire – Peter Williams

Mr. Williams delivered a presentation on a potential Dockless Bike Hire Scheme for Limerick City and Environs and outlined the current schemes operating in Ireland. He also outlined the benefits and challenges of dockless bike hire schemes generally and added that a dockless bike hire scheme would be complimentary to the existing NTA Coke-Zero docked bike share scheme in Limerick. Mr. Williams advised that the next stage in the process is to draft Bye-laws for the control of dockless bike hire schemes and commence a public consultation on the bye-laws.

The Chair thanked Mr. Williams for the presentation. His first impression was that the dockless bike scheme should be embraced, and the data captured would be very valuable. He opened the floor to comments and questions.

Cllr. O'Donovan welcomed the development of the Bike Scheme and referred to Dublin where there is both a docked and dockless bike hire option and both schemes complement one another. She added that the docked bike Scheme has no GPS and this technology is critical.

Cllr. Secas welcomed the development of a pilot scheme in Limerick and asked if there was an evaluation of the existing schemes in Dublin and Sligo on how challenges were addressed. She added that competition would be good between a docked and dockless bike hire scheme to improve service. She would also like to see the dockless bike scheme developed in conjunction with Park and Ride.

Ms. Drake advised that the +CityxChange Project are currently doing research on where docked stations should be placed and asked what the timeframe is for the project.

Cllr. Novak advised that there are parks and visitor attractions which do not have bike stands/parking and asked if bike stands can be increased in parks first. She referred to private landowners such as the Crescent Shopping Centre and asked if the Council could promote or engage with private landowners. She also asked if users with reduced mobility can be catered for and if e-bikes would be included in the scheme. She agrees that competition is good and needs to be done in conjunction with the Council's Park and Ride.

Cllr. Butler added that there is a great need to have bike access for the UL campus to city centre route. He referred to the approval today of a new Road Traffic Bill by Cabinet and asked if e-scooters would be part of the plan.

Regarding Park & Ride, Mr. Gallagher wished to acknowledge the importance of Park and Ride and advised that there is a commitment in the draft LSMATS to examine Park & Ride to reduce the unnecessary traffic into the city. He added that a Park & Ride system is only effective if facilities are in place and will need to be addressed first.

In response to Cllr Secas, Mr. Williams advised that he is in contact with Dublin City Council to get advice and the 'lessons learned' from the roll out of their dockless bike schemes. He also added that the size of the city and population dictates the number of operators required and based on the city's population it is proposed to initially licence one operator only.

In response to Cllr. Novak's queries, Mr. Williams stated that Operators will have to have to produce a letter of comfort from private landowners in order to place bike stands on private land when applying to be the operator of a scheme. Mr. Gallagher added that owners of private lands such as the Crescent Shopping Centre should be favourably disposed to the scheme as it will result in increased footfall. Mr. Williams added that Tribikes and Cargo Bikes will be considered but are dependent on the licensee having a fleet of these bikes. It is intended that there will be no stipulation as to the type of shared bike that the operator can offer i.e. manual pedal bikes or electric bikes or a combination of the two;

In relation to Cllr. Butler's question, Mr. Williams replied that legislation is currently being drafted regarding e-scooters and are not part of the dockless bike hire scheme being planned.

Cllr. Hartigan asked what the cost would be to the Council and the user. Mr. Williams outlined that the operator would cover the costs of running their bike hire business/scheme and the cost to end user would be up to the operator. Mr. Gallagher added that the cost of installing additional bike stand infrastructure would be discussed with the NTA.

In response to Ms. Drake's query regarding the timeframe for the rollout of the dockless bike scheme, Mr. Williams advised that the first stage was to introduce the scheme at the SPC then draft bye-laws for the operation of a dockless bike hire scheme and conduct a Public Consultation. The Bye-laws would then need to be adopted by the Metropolitan Council - hopefully by March or April 2022 with a competition for the award of an operator's licence to happen in tandem.

Item 4: Greenway Update / Approving Authority – Brian Kennedy

Mr. Kennedy gave an update on the approving authority of Greenways and confirmed that the Transportation and Mobility Directorate has 3 main funding sources which are the Department of Transport, the NTA and TII. He advised that TII are taking over the role as approving authority for the development of Greenway schemes from the DoT and will be managed through the Mid-West National Road Design Office (NWMRDO) and there will be a requirement to comply with TII

guidelines and spending codes. Some of the Greenway schemes include the Rathkeale to City Centre scheme, City to Coonagh scheme and the UL to Montpellier scheme. He added that the management of the Limerick Greenway between Rathkeale and Abbeyfeale will continue to come under the remit of the Community, Tourism and Culture Directorate.

The Chair welcomed the news of the Rathkeale to City Centre Greenway.

Cllr. Secas queried if there is a Feasibility Study available for the Greenway from UL to Montpellier and complimented the Directorate on the opening of the Castletroy Urban Greenway.

Cllr. Novak asked if the rules of road will be imposed, now that Greenways are under the remit of MWNRDO. She added that a lot of Greenways are mentioned in Roads Projects and asked how they will be developed in the future and if there is a connection between Active Travel and MWNRDO; and if the TII is the overarching authority, will the MWNRDO be leading.

Cllr. Hartigan asked if the UL to Montpellier Greenway Feasibility study is completed as he would like to see the end report. He also asked how much has been spent on the report to date.

Ms. Drake stated that the Limerick to Nenagh road was downgraded a number of years ago and asked if there was any merit in segregating the old Limerick to Nenagh road for cyclists.

In response to Ms. Drake, Mr. Kennedy advised that several routes will be considered for segregated cycleways and that Greenways will have a similar approval process to existing TII Roads Projects.

With regard to the Feasibility Report for the UL to Montpellier Greenway, Mr. Kennedy advised Cllr. Secas and Cllr. Hartigan that there was a very preliminary report completed a number of years ago and this was done prior to the new public spending code guidelines.

Cllr. Secas asked for clarification on UL to Annacotty scheme and asked for the environmental study on scheme.

In reply to Cllr. Novak, Mr. Kennedy advised that the Community Tourism & Culture Directorate will continue to manage the Limerick Greenway, but TII will be the authority responsible for Greenways going forward. He added that the Rathkeale to Limerick City Greenway is still at a preliminary stage and that it is intended to be linked to the Active Travel network in due course; and that some of the Greenway routes will be incorporated into the CFRAMS projects.

Cllr. Butler expressed his thanks for the update and looks forward to the Rathkeale to Limerick City Greenway, and asked about the timeline for this scheme. Mr. Kennedy advised that such projects will be subject to a process involving an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and An Bord Pleanála approval and all schemes have the potential to be referred for judicial review.

Item 5: Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. S. Hartigan (referred from Metro Meeting)

"I will move at the next meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that driver feedback signs are adapted to log the speeds detected in order to identify how serious the problem of speeding is in particular areas and ascertain areas where speed reduction measures need to be introduced."

In proposing the Motion Cllr. Hartigan stated that collecting speed data can be useful to find ways to solve speeding issues. He added that data is collected 24 hours a day and felt that there is merit in having a log of speed data.

In a written response Mr. Kennedy stated that:

"Driver Feedback signs are used as a traffic calming device in Limerick City and County Council and are currently not used to log traffic and speed data. We will review our current infrastructure in this regard to determine the feasibility of the proposed adaptations. Limerick City and County Council Adopted a Traffic Calming Policy in March 2018. This Policy requires that a speed survey is undertaken in the area of interest for a period of 24 hours or more. The 85th percentile of the observed speed is then compared to the posted speed limit in the area and a determination is made on whether traffic calming measures are warranted. These speed surveys are carried out using mobile equipment that is set up for a number of days in the area of interest, primarily residential areas. Limerick Metropolitan District is currently in the process of training additional staff members in the use of this mobile equipment and intends to purchase another unit in the near future. This methodology is considered the most appropriate means of identifying areas where speed reduction measures are required".

Cllr. Hartigan asked if a pilot speed survey could be undertaken and identified the Cappamore Road for the pilot. Mr. McGrath agreed to explore the possibility of undertaking this pilot.

Cllr. Secas seconded the motion and added that data collected would inform traffic calming measures.

Cllr. Novak also supported the Motion and added that Driver Feedback signs are there as a reaction to speed and referenced traffic surveys completed in Mayorstone which brought down the average speed.

The Chair added that there is value in the Notice of Motion and thanked all for attending. He confirmed that the next Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 14th December, 2021.

The Meeting then concluded.