



Comhairle Cathrach
& Contae **Luimnigh**

Limerick City
& County Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Limerick City and County Council's Travel and Transportation Strategic Policy Committee held on the 22nd February, 2022 at 3:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Dooradoyle and ONLINE by MS Teams Video Conference.

Members Present:

Cllrs. Leddin (Chair), Butler, Costelloe, Daly, Foley, Kilcoyne, Mitchell, Novak Uí Chonchúir, O'Hanlon, Secas, Sheahan (J), Sheahan (M), Teefy, Mr. T. O'Brien, B. Harper, F Heffernan.

Officials Present:

Mr. B. Kennedy, Mr. R. Gallagher, Mr. B. Kidney, Ms. Karen McDonnell, Mr. S. McGlynn, Ms. T. Flanagan, M. Corrigan, Mr. M. Laffan, Ms. C. Mulcahy, Ms. A. Leahy, Ms. M. Fitzgerald.

The Chair opened the Meeting and welcomed Mr. Diarmuid O'Shea, sectoral representative from the Business / Commercial Pillar replacing Dr. Catriona Cahill. He also confirmed the resignation of Ms. Ailish Drake from the Community /Voluntary PPN Pillar due to professional commitments, and acknowledged her contribution to the committee.

Item 1: Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Travel and Transportation Strategic Policy Committee held on the 14th December 2021 were proposed by Cllr. Kilcoyne, seconded by Cllr. Costelloe and adopted.

Item 2: To agree dates for Travel & Transportation SPC Meetings for 2022

Tuesday, 28th June 2022 @ 3:30 p.m.

Tuesday, 25th Oct 2022 @ 3:30 p.m.

Tuesday, 20th Dec 2022 @ 3:30 p.m.

Cllr. Teefy highlighted that the above dates clash with LCETB Meetings, which commence at 4 p.m. Cllr. Secas agreed with Cllr. Teefy regarding the times of SPC meeting dates. The Chair agreed to rearrange the times of SPC Meetings to suit all members.

Item 3: Update on Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (LSMATS) - Mr. Robert Gallagher

The Chair stated that while the final draft of the LSMATS is not yet completed, work is ongoing in the background and it is important to get the strategy right. He invited Mr. Gallagher to brief the members. Mr. Gallagher advised the Meeting that the NTA will be invited to a Travel and Transportation SPC Meeting to present the draft when the second public consultation is announced. He added that allocations for sustainable transport have not been adversely affected by the delay. However, it is important to finalise the strategy for the development of Limerick.

The Chair thanked Mr. Gallagher and reiterated the need to finalise the strategy to future proof funding.

Item 4: Presentation: 2022 Funding Allocation from the NTA, TII & DoT – Mr. Brendan Kidney

Mr. Brendan Kidney delivered a presentation on the 2022 funding allocations, showing an increase in funding in 2022 compared to 2021 as follows: -

DoT - increase of 18% to €35,845,150

NTA - increase of 40% to €24,390,568

TII - increase of 144% to €30,936,901

The Chair thanked Mr. Kidney for the presentation and welcomed the increase in funding, some of which is substantial, particularly the Dooradoyle to City Centre Project. Mr. Gallagher advised that the increase in funding is reflecting the increased cost of delivering the schemes. The funding is positive news and he anticipates increases in future funding.

Cllr. Secas thanked Mr. Kidney for the presentation and asked if there was a timeframe in which the funding needed to be spent.

Cllr. Mitchell welcomed the news of funding, in particular he noted the safe school program and Beary's Cross, and asked that Beary's Cross be brought to the fore. He agreed that the increase in funding reflected increased costs and inflation.

Cllr. Teefy thanked Mr. Kidney for the welcome news and asked if there would be a breakdown for the municipal districts.

Mr. Kennedy added that the allocations are based on what the directorate intends to spend this year. In response to Cllr. Teefy and Cllr. Mitchell, Mr. Kennedy advised that the Beary's Cross scheme will be going to tender shortly and anticipates that contractors will be on site in Q3/Q4 this year. He also confirmed that a schedule for District Works will be brought to all Municipal districts in April 2022.

Item 5: Presentation: Mobility Management Measures for Business - Ms. Karen McDonnell

Ms. Karen McDonnell delivered a presentation on the Mobility Management measures for businesses in Limerick outlining the background and the national targets for the Transport Sector under the Climate Action Plan 2021. She explained the Mobility Management Plans (MMPs) and plans for Limerick, and outlined the project aims of the proposed pilot plan.

Cllr. Sheahan (J) thanked Ms. McDonnell for the information and stated that when the infrastructure is put in place, the presentation will make sense. He asked if the Council could lead by example and be involved in the pilot. Mr. Heffernan gave some examples of poor cyclist behavior that he recently observed and felt a cycling training program is necessary.

Cllr. Secas thanked Ms. McDonnell for the presentation and asked if the company for the proposed pilot has been identified, as she had some suggestions. Mr. Harper also thanked Ms. McDonnell but observed it is familiar, and asked how it was different from the Smarter Travel program.

Cllr. Mitchell noted that the plans in the presentation are ambitious and asked about other sectors being tackled e.g. air travel and remote working. He questioned whether sustainable modes of transport and mobility management would reduce and dictate planning.

The Chair thanked Ms. McDonnell for the presentation and enquired about looking in-house for the pilot.

With reference to Mr. Harper's comment, Mr. Gallagher agreed that this may not be new news but it is up to us now as a committee to get involved and put a plan together. In response to Cllr. Secas, Mr. Gallagher confirmed that the Council is having initial discussions with a company identified for the pilot; however, it is open to recommendations.

In reply to Cllr. Sheahan (J), Mr. Gallagher stated that his ideas are good and sometimes implementation is dependent on a change of attitude not infrastructure. He added that it is the intention of the Council to encourage staff to investigate shared schemes and promote active travel modes.

In reply to Cllr. Mitchell, Mr. Gallagher advised that airplanes are outside the remit of the Council, however, remote working is being discussed. All zoning and planning will be determined by the Development Plan, and businesses within the areas will then be required to submit their mobility plan. Mr. Gallagher also acknowledged Mr. Heffernan's comments.

Cllr. Mitchell stated this new mobility management policy will definitely affect the planning process. In reply, Mr. Gallagher advised that the Development Plan is a mobility lead plan with more intensive centre-out development proposed and emphasis on the 10 to 15-minute active travel zone. Ms. McDonnell agreed with Mr. Gallagher regarding implementing measures in the Local Authority and the other areas he addressed.

Item 6: Presentation: Regulating shared car service for Limerick City - Mr. John O'Leary

Mr. Brendan Kidney delivered the above presentation. He explained the workings of a shared car scheme and explained the existing Pilot Car Share Scheme in Limerick between Limerick City and County Council and GoCar. He outlined the benefits of the scheme and explained the next steps in preparing draft Bye-laws.

The Chair thanked Mr. Kidney for the presentation, adding that the numbers in the pilot were impressive, especially considering Covid. He added that the service is justified and offers several advantages. He asked if there is a facility also for a GoVan.

Cllr. Teefy welcomed the initiative and asked how widely known is the project. Mr. Harper thanked Mr. Kidney and asked if there will be a single operator licence or multiple. Cllr. Costelloe asked how insurance will work for the service.

In response to questions, Mr. Kidney confirmed that the operator will be going out to competition and it will be a sole licence holder. Regarding insurance, a user needs to sign up to the club at which insurance details will be captured; Rental is per hour.

He added that car share is operating in other cities and LCCC is currently promoting the initiative. The aim is to promote the service publicly and go to tender to appoint a licenced operator.

Cllr. Mitchell welcomed the positive presentation. It will involve less cost to the user and will align with the climate action plan however, it may be more suitable to high density areas as public transport is still required.

Mr. Gallagher added that this is a private enterprise and market forces will dictate what is on offer. When the benefits of this are shown, it is hoped it will be a success.

Cllr. Novak asked how prescriptive are the bye-laws on the power of the car, and as this is a business venture, can LCCC charge the company for space.

In response, Mr. Kidney confirmed that the bye-laws cover spaces in public areas owned by the Council. Mr. Gallagher added that the strategy is ongoing regarding electric charging and there will be a gradual transition to EV's as time goes on. One car share eliminates fifteen cars, as indicated by GoCar's own study. Cllr. Mitchell stated that the ESB is the dominant player in the EV charging market and competition is required to keep the cost down.

The Chair proposed to get the byelaws published first and then the market will decide. Mr. Kidney confirmed that the Council will be running a new competition once bye-laws are in place. GoCar was a pilot but a full tender process will be put in place.

Item 7: Notice of Motion submitted by Mr. Bruce Harper

That the Council will, in accordance with commitments made as signatory to the Local Authority Climate Charter (2019), commit to not taking forward decisions, approvals or investments relating to major transport programmes and projects (including investments in transport infrastructure), until a process for carbon proofing the major decisions, programmes and projects on a systematic basis has been completed and has demonstrated that the plan, programme or investment is aligned with a low carbon pathway reducing emissions by 50% by 2030 and net zero by 2050.

Mr. Harper read his Notice of Motion quoting the LA Climate Charter 2019 3 (f). He asked if we are adhering to the climate Charter 2019 or is it business as usual and if so, we have to cancel the commitment made as signatory to the local Authority Climate Charter 2019 if we are honest.

He stated that there are three choices to be made as follows: -

1. Climate Action to the fore
2. Business as usual
3. Be honest

The Chair advised that carbon budgeting is a collective and national issue. Mr. Harper disagreed with this statement.

Cllr. O'Hanlon expressed his concern that projects could be delayed and if the Council goes ahead with this process, a pothole will not be filled. With regard to funding, projects will be delayed and funding will have to be returned. As Councilors, he added there is a need to progress and for this reason he will not support the Motion.

Mr. Gallagher acknowledged Cllr. O'Hanlon's valid point and disagreed with Mr. Harper's Motion. He added that the discussions and presentations delivered today were all around various ways of lowering carbon footprint. He advised that road projects and programmes must be looked at in a national context and that the Council is fully transparent and honest. Doing business as usual means that climate action will be to the fore. Transportation has changed considerably and much of the Council's concentration will be on sustainable transport schemes. Mr. McGlynn advised that €24m has been allocated for sustainable projects in 2022. Mr. Gallagher stated that there will be a high emphasis on achieving modal shift from cars to active modes and increased public transport. LSMATS will include for modelling on emissions and will indicate how these emissions can be reduced. LCCC will look for significant modal change from cars to public transport, walking, cycling and shared cars. He added that the car will always be with us and is still very important for people, especially in rural areas however, in future it will likely be an EV or other emerging clean technology car.

Referring to Cllr. O'Hanlon's point, Mr. Gallagher added that the NDP identifies critical road projects in which considerable evaluation processes, in the form of technical, economic and environmental needs, will be assessed, and this forms the basis of the evaluation process.

Cllr. Kilcoyne agreed with Cllr. O'Hanlon, as the Motion would put a lot of pressure on the progression of projects.

Cllr. Mitchell asked if existing roads should be upgraded, with England out of the EU. He suggested looking at infrastructure to ports to bring goods in cheaply, and this would also help to promote jobs.

Cllr. Teefy supported Cllr. O'Hanlon and added that she welcomes the funding received and welcomes the Active Travel Unit. She added that Mr. Gallagher explained the position very well and we have to progress, provide the infrastructure and spend the funding received.

Cllr. Sheahan (M) stated he would not be in favour of anything that hinders the progression of projects and programmes. He added that major infrastructure development is needed, while we investigate the carbon footprint in city and county. He is very satisfied with Mr. Gallagher's response and commended the team.

Mayor Butler stated that it is very important to note that we need certain infrastructure to move freight. There has to be a move towards public transport and we as a Council are moving towards that. LCCC is cognisant of Climate Action and has an Active Travel team built around sustainable transport. We are active in bio diversity, tree planting, and the green agenda is the dominant conversation. He also added that we need economic growth in a sustainable way and not hinder any potential growth.

Cllr. Secas thanked Mr. Harper for the Motion and proposed an amended Motion as follows:

"That the Council will, in accordance with commitments made as signatory to the Local Authority Climate Charter (2019), employ a process for carbon proofing in any future major transport decisions, programmes and projects to ensure that the plan, programme or investment is aligned with the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021."

Cllr. Novak stated she would be happy to support the original Motion and added that we have signed up to the Charter, the time is now for action and if projects have a positive assessment, there should be no problem. Local authorities have a big responsibility to deliver on Climate Action in the transport area.

Cllr. Sheahan (M) stated that it is a catch 22 situation and he is happy to refer to Mr. Gallagher's response. Mayor Butler also referred to Mr. Gallagher's response, adding that LCCC is already carbon proofing.

Mr. Harper stated that in relation to honesty, LCCC has not put processes in place and should withdraw the signatory to the Local Authority Climate Charter (2019) for not adhering to the obligations.

Mr Gallagher added that a roads project has to be looked at a local and national level, and not in isolation in terms of carbon proofing. There is a process in place for climate proofing and we meet with all the requirements of the National Funding and Authorities.

Cllr. Novak seconded Mr. Harper's original Notice of Motion.

The Chair acknowledged the debate and stated he would be against withdrawing from the Charter, and was happy with Mr. Gallaher's assurances and the various initiatives and projects underway. To withdraw from the charter would cause a whole myriad of issues and secondly would tie the Council's hands and lose funding. There was a consensus not to withdraw from the charter and not to lose funding.

Mr. Harper requested a vote on the matter. In line with Standing Orders the vote was taken on the amended Notice of Motion as follows: -

"That the Council will, in accordance with commitments made as signatory to the Local Authority Climate Charter (2019), employ a process for carbon proofing in any future major transport decisions, programmes and projects to ensure that the plan, programme or investment is aligned with the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021."

For the Proposal

Councillors Butler, Costelloe, Foley, Kilcoyne, Mitchell, Ryan, Secas, Sheahan (M), Teefy, Mr. T. O'Brien, Mr. F. Heffernan (11)

Against the Proposal

Mr. B. Harper, Councillor Sasa Novak Uí Chonchúir (2)

The Chair declared the proposal to amend the wording of the Notice of Motion carried by a vote of 11 for and 2 against.

Item 8: Question submitted by Mr. Bruce Harper

Limerick Travel and Transport Linkage Group would like to know the following;

- When did LCCC last review its policy on disabled parking in the city? Some allocated spaces have been replaced and others are difficult to access.
- What ratios in relation to the allocation of disabled parking spaces are being applied?
- Is there monitoring of the current allocation and if so, what has LCCC learned from its monitoring?
- How has LCCC liaised with disability groups in relation to its policy on parking place allocation for disabled drivers?
- When will the next review take place?

This item was moved to the next SPC Meeting to be held on the 19th April 2022.

Item 9: Question submitted by Ms. Ailish Drake

The pedestrianisation of Foxes Bow laneway is regulated by Section 45 of the Road Traffic Act, and signposted to that effect. But cars are driven and parked on this street every day, leading to dangerous conditions for pedestrians using the laneway. Ostensibly pedestrian-only after 11am with automated bollards at one end, motorists regularly drive the wrong way from Thomas St onto this pedestrianised lane, sometimes parking in the adjoining laneways or using Foxes Bow illegally for access to food businesses. In the context of protecting the pedestrianised spaces of Limerick city and enforcing the established regulations governing such spaces, can the Council

1. Confirm all extant regulations in relation to the pedestrianised status of Foxes Bow and adjoining laneways
2. Provide a solution to the dangerous environment being created for pedestrians on one of the few pedestrianised streets in the city, up to and including bollards at the Thomas St. entrance.

A written response to Question was circulated to all members.

The Chair thanked all members for attending and confirmed that the next SPC Meeting will be held on Tuesday, the 19th April 2022.

The Meeting then concluded.