



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 18th April 2023 at 3:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Dooradoyle and ONLINE by MS Teams Video Conference.

Members Present: Cllrs. Novak (Chair), Butler, Collopy, Daly, Foley, Kilcoyne, Leddin, McSweeney, O'Donovan, O'Hanlon, Secas, Sheahan (J), Sheahan (M), Teefy, Ms. M. Browne, Mr. D. O'Shea.

Officials Present: Mr. B. Kennedy, Ms. A. Leahy, Mr. J. Cregan, Ms. N. McGarry, Ms. M. Fitzgerald, Mr. R. Gallagher, Ms. O. Downes, Mr. S. McGlynn, Ms. S. Kennedy, Ms. Tara Flanagan.

Other Invitees:

NTA - Mr. H. Creegan, Deputy C.E.O., Mr. D. Clements, Transportation Planner, Mr. E. R. Thomas, Public Transport Network Manager

Jarrett Walker & Associates - Mr. Jarrett Walker.

Step Forward Disability Group - Ms. Martha Potter, Mr. Pat Carroll, Ms. Rosie O'Sullivan and Ms. Jess Tracy Bower.

Item 1: Minutes:

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Travel and Transportation Strategic Policy Committee held on the 21st February 2023 were proposed by Cllr. E. O'Donovan, seconded by Cllr. K. O'Hanlon and adopted.

Item 2: Presentation on Universal Access Awareness Project - Step Forward Disability Group

The Chair welcomed the Step Forward Disability Group - Mrs. Maureen Browne, Ms. Martha Potter, Mr. Pat Carroll, Ms. Rosie O'Sullivan and Ms. Jess Tracy Bower.

Mrs. Browne delivered a presentation on Universal Access Awareness Project outlining the results of an audit completed by the group showing the day-to-day barriers encountered by people with disabilities, older people and parents with buggies across many communities in Limerick.

The Chair thanked the Group and opened the floor to questions.

Cllr. Leddin stated that some people who are visually impaired do not leave their homes because of the obstacles they can encounter. Some drivers have the 5-minute mentality where they park on footpaths to run into a shop. UL use stickers on cars which are parked illegally, which seems to be effective. He suggested that LCCC needs to be more proactive and could introduce similar deterrents. He also suggested that LCCC could maybe examine the bye-laws with regard to parking in disabled spaces and also look at clamping such as exists at the Clayton Hotel.

Cllr. McSweeney stated that LCCC has not been proactive. Support and commitment is needed from the Executive and Active Travel to provide more dished footpaths at crossings.

Cllr. Secas stated that the project is very timely, and a holistic approach is required. She referenced issues in Castleconnell and added that 24/7 monitoring of illegal parking on double yellow lines is not possible. An effort is needed from the general public and the Gardaí. The Council needs to engage and work closely with local people with local knowledge to put right measures in the right places and the Council needs to run media campaigns.

Mrs. Browne stated that obstacles are being dealt with on a daily basis and cars are valued more than human life. It was suggested at the Cappamore Kilmallock District Meeting that the Council runs a media campaign. They are working closely with an Active Travel engineer in the Cappamore Kilmallock area. Mrs. Browne added that the group does not have the power to implement changes and the purpose of this presentation is to hand over the findings and recommendations to LCCC.

Mr. Kennedy stated that this was a very worthwhile discussion and thanked the group for the presentation. In response to Cllr. Leddin, Mr. Kennedy stated that the existing network does have issues however all projects comply with DMURS where the pedestrian is first on the hierarchy in order to make access easier. The Council has worked with Disability Groups for many years and the executive will ask an engineer equivalent in other areas to engage with the group. Limerick did run a campaign in the past and he will contact the Communications Department to examine running a campaign. Clamping has not been done in Limerick in the past. Consideration should be given to measures to promote compliant parking.

In regard to dishing of footpaths Mr. Kennedy confirmed that Mr. S. McGlynn is working closely with the districts and will continue to do so. He will also contact the NTA in relation to funding. In response to Cllr. Secas, Mr. Kennedy advised that the Council is keen to work closely with Disability Groups and will continue to do so going forward.

Cllr. Teefy added that an awareness campaign is very necessary. She added that Mr. McKechnie is working closely with the group and they will keep the campaign going. Cllr. O'Donovan stated that she has worked with the Group since 2014 on different campaigns. She complimented the group and added that she had received a number of concerns from the public with regard to junction of Bedford Row and Thomas Street. There were also concerns raised by Dóchas Autism

Support on Parnell Street with regard to noise and scooters on footpaths coming up behind pedestrians. She also added that the width of the gaps on drains is not suitable for people with walking canes. A media campaign is a good idea and she suggested that the Group should go out with the engineers.

Cllr. O'Hanlon welcomed the discussion adding that visual impaired people have the very same right as non-disabled people. The fundamental issue is cars parking on footpaths however he would be opposed to any form of clamping. He suggested some form of beepers on scooters and scramblers which could be part of the solution to alert pedestrians. He added that roads in housing estates are narrow and car owners park on footpaths in order to assist emergency vehicles gaining access. Increasing the fine for parking on disability spaces should be considered.

The Chair summarised the comments discussed as follows:

1. Media campaign
2. Enforcement
3. Design

Cllr. Secas reinforced that a campaign is needed and suggested stickers/billboards around the city. Photographs from real life has a much bigger impact.

Mrs. Browne added that it is important to keep the line of communication open. She is working on this Group since 2004 and the group is free to meet with anybody from LCCC. Ms. Potter stated that if the public continue parking on footpaths, we shouldn't call them footpaths, when you are not offering an alternative.

Mr. Kennedy thanked the Group for the presentation. He stated that there has been regular liaison with the City and County Council to try to improve the situation and a lot has been done. He will engage with the Communications Officer in Merchants Quay to push on and suggested maybe a repeat campaign over a length of time.

It was agreed by the Chair to move Item 4 forward to accommodate the NTA.

Item 4: BusConnects Programme Update – National Transport Authority

The Chair welcomed the representatives from the NTA, Mr. Hugh Creegan , Deputy C.E.O., Mr. D. Clements, Transportation Planner, Mr. E. R. Thomas, Public Transport Network Manager and Mr. Jarrett Walker from Jarrett Walker & Association.

Mr. Kennedy welcomed the NTA and Jarrett Walker & Associates who worked together on BusConnects and added that Public Consultation finished on the 7th April last. Mr. Walker delivered the presentation on BusConnects.

The chair thanked Mr. Walker and the NTA for the presentation and opened the floor to questions.

Cllr. O'Hanlon welcomed the exciting project. He would like a meeting arranged with the NTA to discuss the poor bus service in Rhebogues and Mill Road, each of which has a population of over 2,000 approx. He is aware that double decker buses cannot get access in the areas and asked if the NTA would consider an Area Based Meeting on the matter.

Cllr. Secas stated that minibuses are used where normal standard buses cannot access in places like Moldova and maybe these could be considered in this case. She added that the proposal is very positive. She made her submission on behalf of the local community based on extending the route from Monaleen Road/Annacotty Business Park to the Mackey Roundabout and asked to also give proper consideration to those areas.

Cllr. Leddin stated that it was good to get clarity and the presentation was very welcome. He raised the following queries:

- Has the NTA begun to assess the submissions and when will a synopsis of the submissions be completed to inform the Members. Only 4% are using Public Transport
- When will Park and Ride be up and running - there are elements like CPO mechanisms where the Council does not own the sites.
- He made a submission on the 304 Route (Raheen to UL) – There are 35/36 stops which is a 70/80 minute trip and the 304A which goes by the city centre. He suggested a possible more direct route via Childers Road, maybe a 304B with less stops.

The Chair would like to see more focused local area discussion. She queried how the travel time figures are calculated and the timeline for the consultation.

In response to Cllr. O'Hanlon regarding an area-based meeting, Mr. Creegan advised that he will take this up with the D.O.S. Regarding the suggestion of minibuses, Mr. Creegan will discuss with Mr. Walker. It is not cost effective; minibuses can do long distances but are expensive to operate. The main operating costs are the cost of driver's time.

In relation to extending Annacotty Business Park to Mackey Roundabout, Mr. Creegan advised that locations will be discussed at a focus meeting. He added that this has been raised several times and will be examined.

In response to Cllr Leddin, Mr. Creegan advised that approx. 600 submissions were received. They are still being assembled and they will work through them. There was nothing unexpected to report. If there is a reason to put in a change, they will put it in and identify if any changes to network is required. Final network for consultation will be available in the coming months. The NTA's Park & Ride team is examining Park & Ride in Ballysimon, Raheen and Junction 28. The Travel time calculations are based on existing times and are founded on walk/wait/time.

The Chair thanked the NTA and Jarrett Walker & Associates for the Presentation and stated that there was a lot of useful information discussed. She wished the best of luck with the submissions.

Item 3: Presentation on World Class Waterfront URDF scheme – Strand 3 – Pedestrian Bridges & Waterfront Infrastructure Works - Place-Making & Public Realm Team

Ms. Olive Downes delivered a Presentation on the URDF World Class Waterfront Project, with a focus on the Strand 3 Scheme Pedestrian Bridges & Infrastructure Works.

Cllr. O'Donovan stated she was pleased that Honan's Quay will be closed again for the summer for public realm like last summer.

In response to questions, Ms. Downes also added that the Strategic Assessment Stage of the scheme has been approved for each strand. All strands will go through a preliminary business case step first on a phased basis. With regard to the timeline for Strand 3, it is expected that the final draft Preliminary Business will be completed by September 2023 and LCCC approval and submission to the DHLGH completed by November 2023.

The members thanked Mr. Robert Gallagher for all his service, professionalism and assistance over the years and wished him well in his retirement.

The Chair thanked the presenters and members for their contribution. The meeting then concluded.