



Comhairle Cathrach  
& Contae **Luimnigh**

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**Limerick City**  
& County Council

**Minutes of the Meeting of Limerick City and County Council's Travel and Transportation Strategic Policy Committee held on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2024 at 3:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Merchant's Quay and ONLINE by MS Teams Video Conference.**

**Members Present:** Cllrs. Novak (Chair), Butler, Daly, Foley, Kilcoyne, Leddin, McSweeney, O'Donovan, O'Hanlon, Ryan, Secas, Teefy, Mrs. M. Browne, Mr. Seán Golden, Mr. Tim O' Brien, Mr. Bruce Harper.

**Other invitees:**

Cllrs. J. Scanlon, L. Galvin.

Mr. Andreas Saul-Rotne, Architect, Senior Project Manager, NTA.

**Officials Present:** Mr. B. Kennedy, Ms. A. Leahy, Ms. C. Power, Mr. D. Slavin, Mr. J. Cregan, Mr. H. McGrath, Ms. M. Hennessy, Ms. M. Corrigan, Ms. N. McGarry, Ms. M. Fitzgerald, Mr. S. McGlynn, Ms. S. Kennedy, Ms. T. Flanagan, Mr. Tom Hayes, Ms. K. McDonnell.

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed the members and presenters. As this SPC was the final meeting of this term, she thanked her predecessor, Cllr. Leddin, Mr. Brian Kennedy, Director and other members of the Transportation and Mobility Team. She thanked elected members of the SPC, the PPN and Sectoral representatives for all their hard work and engagement over the last five years and acknowledged the many policies and projects undertaken.

Mr. Kennedy expressed his thanks to Cllr. Novak and Cllr. Leddin and the SPC members for their dedicated hard work over the last five years.

**Item 1: Minutes:**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Travel and Transportation Strategic Policy Committee held on the 13th of February 2024 were proposed by Cllr. J Leddin, seconded by Cllr. E. O'Donovan and adopted.

## **Item 2: NTA Presentation: TFI Bike Scheme in Limerick – Andreas Saul-Rotne**

Mr. Andreas Saul-Rotne delivered an overview on the TFI Bike scheme outlining the stations in Limerick City and usage.

The Chair thanked Mr. Saul-Rotne and opened the floor to Questions.

Cllr. Leddin queried the following: -

1. Possibility of expansion plans to areas with large demographic.
2. Possibility of benchmarking with other cities.
3. The prospect of providing shelter over the docking stations.
4. Likelihood to Industry link / combine with leap card/general travel pass

In reply, Mr. Saul-Rotne confirmed that the Operators Contract is coming to an end so scheme will be reviewed in preparation for new tender towards end of the year. An expansion to the scheme is part of the review as well as usage, potential areas etc. He added that installing a cover over a docking station would take up a lot of space and was not included in discussion. Industry links was not discussed in detail but will be taken into account. It is intended to increase the numbers using the scheme and have a new and improved system.

Cllr. O Donovan expressed her dissatisfaction of the scheme over the last 10 years and believes the service is poorly delivered at a very high cost. Membership has declined consistently from 2080 users in 2016 to 678 users in 2023. In the same period the cost to taxpayers was as follows:

- €1.4 million in 2016 and
- €2.3 million in 2023

She added that the only positive of the scheme is that the distribution vehicles are now electric (which took years to be implemented) and the new stations in Colbert Station, TUS and King's Island are welcome. As a user, she has left her membership lapse twice and has never had contact from TII looking for feedback. Some Docking stations are unreliable i.e. inactive stations show as active and in many instances after docking a bike, one can receive a text that bike is still active. In addition, the absence of GPS tracking is a disadvantage. She added that maintenance did improve over the years but believes the system is not reliable and should be scrapped and contract not renewed.

Mr. Harper would welcome an expansion of the scheme and a re-evaluation of the management of the contract.

Cllr. O' Hanlon believes that it is dangerous to have bikes and pedestrians using the same walkway and gave an example of the city centre to UL walkway. A safe cycle way in Rhebogue, Parkway and along the canal would be easy to put in place and makes logical sense.

The Chair queried the criteria used to expand the scheme, she believes the existing docking stations are too close together and could serve more people in education and employment centres. She also suggested that the scheme needs to move to an App which would be more reliable and user friendly.

In response, Mr. Saul-Rotne stated that that the NTA is currently working on the App with electric bikes and should be going for testing shortly. In 2011, the criteria was based on fixed docking and the stations were required to be close to the city. Over time, the lesson learnt has been that the stations need to be further apart and need to be close to employment centres to maximise usage.

### **Item 3: Presentation: Parking Permits for Voluntary Organisations – Karen McDonnell, Executive Planner**

Mr. Kennedy introduced this item by explaining how it arose from a Notice of Motion at an SPC meeting and then a plenary meeting in March 2024.

Ms. K. McDonnell delivered a presentation and outlined the requirements for the introduction of a permit scheme for voluntary organisations.

The Chair thanked Ms. McDonnell and opened the floor to questions:

Cllr. Leddin, while understanding the sentiment asked where does one start and finish with charitable organisations. His constituents regularly contact him regarding the decline in business and footfall in the city and the considerable reduction in on-street parking in recent times. He stated that serious consideration needs to be given to Park & Ride and Rail before further parking spaces are reduced.

Mr. Harper commented that reducing car parking spaces is part of the LSMATS and asked about the timeline for the Limerick City Transport plan.

Mr. Kennedy replied that he is very cognisant of the need for trade to operate efficiently. Four Park and Ride sites have been identified in Raheen, Ballysimon and Coonagh and one has been acquired on the Dublin Road near Junction 28. The Draft Transport Plan is a priority measure and should be available in Q3 or Q4 and it will then go to consultation.

Mr. Golden asked if the Arthur's Quay project will interact with the Transport Plan. Mr. Kennedy replied that both will work in tandem and the plan is cognisant of all plans for the city.

Cllr. O' Hanlon referred to the recent announcement regarding cameras at traffic lights which will detect vehicles breaking lights, resulting in auto fines. He welcomed the announcement and highlighted drivers breaking lights in the Park Road area and driving on the pedestrian crossing. He added that motorists continue to ignore the yellow boxes for cyclists at traffic lights and there is no enforcement.

Mr. Harper stated that Minister Eamonn Ryan advised that Red light cameras on traffic lights would be installed early next year. Mr. McGrath clarified that one or two of the traffic light cameras will be piloted in Dublin first and added that the NTA is examining traffic enforcement.

#### **Item 4: Traffic Calming Policy – Hugh McGrath, S.E.**

Mr. McGrath delivered the Traffic Calming Policy outlining the changes proposed following a workshop held on the 12 April 2024.

The Chair thanked Mr. McGrath for the update and opened the floor to questions/comments.

Cllr. Secas expressed her thanks to Mr. McGrath and Mr. Kennedy for their help and assistance in making Limerick a better place since 2019. She thanked the chair and her predecessor for their work as Chairs over the last 5 years and hopes to see more projects on the ground.

She believes petitions need to be considered individually and should not be required where houses are isolated from a road. She gave an example of Newport Road in which two crashes occurred since February. It is a dangerous road in need of traffic calming measures to highlight road safety.

Cllr. O' Hanlon stated that the Council should not have to take all the responsibility for traffic calming, the Garda Síochána has to play their part and enforcement is lacking at present. He gave examples of 7 City North Councillors contacting the local engineer to install chicanes and doing a flyer in the local area. He expressed concern going with petitions in advance of works as you may only get a small percentage response from residents.

Mr. McGrath agreed that knowing the outcome before commencing in a residential area is important. The policy is moving away from speed ramps and more into narrowing roads. In non-residential areas 100 meters from infrastructure is the criteria.

Cllr. Daly agreed with Cllr O'Hanlon and supports a policy that liaises with those in close proximity to the affected area.

Cllr. Ryan advocated for average speed cameras, rolling out these cameras would lead to acceptance of speed limits and asked what changes would need to be made to the bye laws. He asked if average speed cameras could help in those high-speed areas. The Chair supported Cllr Ryan's comments.

Cllr. Kilcoyne agreed with the previous speakers, but he was concerned about the lack of visible signs for the city's new 30kph limit. Mr. McGrath accepted that signs are not high enough and there will be an increase in road markings and signs for the new 30km/h limit. The Department of Transport has recognised the importance of enforcement and is looking into this matter.

In response to Cllr. Ryan, Mr. McGrath advised that the average speed cameras in Birdhill were a pilot scheme. The intention is to roll out on the non-motorway network and the DoT has acknowledged how successful they are.

Mr. Kennedy advised that average speed cameras require legislation as opposed to bye-laws on non-motorways. He confirmed that he did write to the DoT on the matter and will continue to support and liaise with the DoT.

The Chair agreed that Items 5 and 6 would be discussed together.

**Item 5: Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor L. Galvin (referred from Newcastle West Municipal Meeting)**

I will move at the next meeting that the byelaws be reviewed with regard to residential parking in the NCW Municipal District.

**Item 6. Notice of Motion submitted by submitted by Councillor J. Scanlon (Referred from Newcastle West Municipal Meeting)**

I will move at the next meeting that the charge for resident parking permits in Newcastle West be brought in line with the rate which applies to residents of Limerick City

Cllr. Galvin believes that there needs to be 2 residential parking permits per household and is disappointed the cost of a permit in the city is €6.35 and €25.00 in the county, the rate should be equitable.

In proposing the Motion, Cllr. Scanlon advised of a business at which a resident is living over the business and only one permit is allowed for the premises. He suggested there should be one permit for the business and one for the resident. The business owner has received numerous fines and is not prepared to pay. He also agreed that the difference in the fee between the city and county is not equitable.

Cllr. Galvin stated the €25 is not much however there should not be two different rates and a two - permit rule should apply.

Ms. Power read the response to both Motions as follows:

**Limerick City and County Council has commenced preparation of the Limerick Transport Plan. On completion of The Plan the parking byelaws for all districts will be reviewed and updated as necessary. Any changes made to byelaws in the interim would be premature.**

Cllr. Scanlon stated that the reply was not satisfactory, and two permits are required for the premises currently, one for the business owner and one for the resident. He cannot be waiting for reports to conclude and these people are rate payers.

Mr. Kennedy advised that there is a process and bye laws in place which make it very difficult not to comply with, but there is an appeals process in place and it is open to everybody. He offered to speak separately to Cllr. Scanlon on both Motions to which Cllr. Galvin agreed.

The Chair thanked all for their attendance and contribution. This concluded the business of the meeting.