

Transport Strategic Policy Committee

Tuesday, 12th September 2023 9.30am – 11.30 am.

Minutes of blended meeting held on the Zoom platform and in the Council Chamber,
City Hall, Galway.

Present:

Cllr. Frank Fahy Chairman SPC	Cllr. Alan Cheevers Councillor GCC	Cllr. Colette Connolly Councillor GCC	Cllr. Mike Cubbard Councillor GCC
Cllr. Peter Keane Councillor GCC	Cllr. Niall Murphy Councillor GCC	Cllr. Noel Larkin Councillor GCC	Cllr. Clodagh Higgins Councillor GCC
Mr. Shane Foran Community Network	Mr. Pat Hardiman ICTU	Mr. Paul O'Donnell Community Network	

In Attendance:

Mr. Patrick Greene Director of Services	Mr. Colm O'Riordan A/Senior Engineer	Mr. Fran McEvoy Senior Executive Engineer	Mr. Michael Lally A/Senior Executive Engineer
Mr. Cyril Mitchell Senior Executive Engineer	Mr. Martin Kenny Administrative Officer	Ms. Joan Higgins Administrative Officer	Ms. Carol Heneghan Assistant Staff Officer

Apologies:

Ms. Fiona Holland Senior Engineer			
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Item:

Chairman Cllr. Frank Fahy welcomed the Transport SPC members and Council Officials to the meeting, which was held in City Hall Council Chamber and on the Zoom platform.

1. Minutes of meeting 9th May 2023.

The minutes of the Transport SPC meeting held on the 9th May 2023 were proposed by Cllr. Murphy and seconded by Cllr. Fahy.

2. Matters arising

The following matters were raised by SPC Members:

- Query raised in relation to Radar Signs – e.g. sign at Taylors Hill. Queried if this is incorporated into lights contract.
- Update requested in relation to decarbonisation zone.
- Update requested in relation to Park and Ride.
- In response to query on speed limits. Cllr. Fahy stated that it will be dealt with under item no. 3 on the agenda.
- Update requested in relation to removal of South Park Gates.
- It was noted that Traffic calming is not on the agenda as requested.
- It was noted that residential parking in Woodquay and Bohermore is not on the agenda.
- Query raised in relation to status of bus licence and Turning Circle on Ballymoneen Road.
- What requirements need to be met when considering the provision of Pedestrian Crossings.
- Is there any indication of a time frame for the roll out of Park and Ride.
- Request for final figure for costs including overruns relating to the Martin Junction upgrade.

Responses:

- FMcEvoy - Maintenance Contract in place for approximately 60 driver feedback signs.
- South Park Gates – PG noted that work continues with a consultant for agreed design by year end.
- It was confirmed that there is no update on decarbonisation available for this meeting.
- Traffic Calming – PG noted that this is ongoing. Update at next meeting.
- Residential Parking - PG confirmed that he will follow up on this.
- Pedestrian Crossings – Examining all funding streams (NTA, TII and DoT)
M Lally - NTA seeks applications in November and projects announced in February. Proposed locations to align with GCC Budget. Cllr. Murphy noted that now is the time to make the applications. This was confirmed.
- Park & Ride – COR – Two possible sites identified (150/350 spaces) Update at next meeting.
- Cllr. Fahy sought update, referencing previous request, for Residents Parking at Bohermore at next meeting.

- Cllr. Cubbard asked for Parking at Bohermore and Woodquay to be placed on next Agenda along with Traffic Calming. Requested an update in relation to the crossing at Liosbaun.
- Martin Junction
M Lally – final costs not yet known. COR to revert with timeline on final returns.
Cllr. Cheevers - all Councillors and SPC members should be furnished with final costs.
Cllr. Fahy sought confirmation that there were no financial overruns on this project.
- P Greene – 5 routes have been prioritised not including the Ballymoneen Rd. Will approach NTA once routes are approved. Acknowledged need for turning circle. May involve CPO & design TBC.
- Cllr. Murphy – Queried whether we could go ahead with addition of turning circle before road improvements are made.

Cllr. Fahy noted issues around licence allocation & delays.
- P Greene - tenders received for pedestrian crossing at Liosbaun. Colm O’Riordan to revert.

3. Galway Special Speed Limits Bye – Laws No. 1-2023 and associated signage – Update given by Fran McEvoy, Senior Executive Engineer.

Galway City Council Special Speed Limit Bye-Laws No. 1, came into operation on Monday, 28th August ‘23. The changes to the speed limits were published on Galway City Council Social Media platforms in advance and a summary video was available to view.

The roads where a new 30 km/h speed limit applies were outlined and are detailed within the report (attached) as were the sections of National Roads where increases to speed limits have been applied.

The following issues were discussed:

- Cllr. Murphy happy with the 30km road markings. Noted Government comments on speed limit changes.
- Cllr. Connolly requested this report be circulated to SPC members. Noted that she has long campaigned for 30km zone. Queried how quickly can we roll out 30 km zone at schools.
- Cllr. Fahy thanked the executive but said that more markings are needed. Asked if their locations could be listed in the report to SPC Members. Queried location of 30 km/h sign at entrance to water treatment plant on Dyke Road. Asked who informs Google maps of changes.
- Shane Foran welcomed changes to limits progress and stated that he been campaigning for a 20 m/h speed limits for a long time.
- Cllr. Cheevers queried whether data will be available to determine if changes to limits are working.

Responses:

- Fran McEvoy agreed that primary legislation is required to implement the Government Proposals. Prudent to await new guidance before doing next full City-wide speed limit review. Increases to the limits on national roads were included in the byelaws with approval from TII.
- In response to Cllr. Connolly regarding specific limits at schools, this can be considered in next review as can potential 40 km/h speed limits for some roads. Noted 14 schools currently that have 30 km/h.
- We currently have 18 x 30 km/h road markings and are open to suggestions for others.
- In response to Cllr. Fahy, the 30 km/h speed limit on the Dyke Road continues to the entrance of water treatment Plant as shown on map and listed in the fourth schedule of the bye laws.
- Discussion on road signs followed.
- Re Google Maps – M. Lally advised that updates to Google Maps are led by the Road Maintenance Office once new speed limits are adopted and submitted by the local authority. FMcE advised that this will be submitted to the RMO.
- FMcE advised that no permanent solution is in place at present for measuring speed within 30 km/h zones. Acknowledges that measured speed data is desirable.
- P Greene added that some of this data should come from the Gardaí, from enforcement.
- Cllr. Connolly requested confirmation of recommendation from TII re N59 limit changes.

Paul O'Donnell raised two questions:

- Have speed limit reductions at schools been recommended by the SRTS team?
- Do we have data regarding mobility trends in the city.

Responses:

- M Lally noted that the SRTS team can make requests for the reduction in speed limits. But none have been noted to date. In addition, the ability to reduce the speed limits must follow the statutory process and is a reserved function.
- FMcE - mobility trends. Dashboards. We do have consultants who conduct counts every year. They may be able to extrapolate data. Transport Operations do not have detailed data in relation to mobility trends in the city.

POD asked if there is a capacity to gather some of that information.

M Lally committed to making an application for surveys to NTA following proposal (by S Foran/second P O'Donnell). PG noted that the costs can be high and multiple surveys may not be possible. PG noted that we would await what the NTA say.

- Cllr. Larkin asked if there is any website that we can visit to see what speed limits are on what roads? Advised that The Bye Laws schedule and map are available on the GCC website.

- Cllr. Connolly noted effectiveness of signs versus fines. PG stated that we are not enforcement.

4. Galway Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (GMATS) – Presentation given by Colm O’Riordan, A/Senior Engineer.

The following points were raised following the update given by COR’s update.

- Queried if GMATS is a review of the Galway Transport Strategy. COR confirmed it is.
- Cllr. Murphy noted that this review involves a huge scope of works spanning 20 years. 3 months consultation for something that has taken less than 3 months to write. There is no mention of Greenways. Will we get a bus lane on Quincentennial bridge. Requested that this document should go to the Planning SPC also. Proposed. This was seconded by SF.

COR agreed that there is a large volume of work to be done and that Bus Connects and Cycle Connects are part of this. Also confirmed that this document will be sent to the Planning SPC.

- Cllr. Connolly queried the costs involved in terms of Consultancy, Planning etc. Asked if we can include pinch points. Suggested a pilot project for Free Schools Transport. COR will examine this.
- POD queried if there are other policy documents which will feed into the process. Are ‘Guidelines for Public Consultation’ to be included for consideration? COR to examine this.
- Cllr. Fahy queried who are the representatives on the Steering Group for GMATS.
- Queried who is the point of contact within the NTA for GMATS. COR to confirm point of contact.

5. Multi Modal Transport Corridor - Presentation given by Cyril Mitchell, Senior Executive Engineer.

GCC are undertaking a constraints and feasibility study in the transport section to consider the provision of MMTCC for specific roads that were identified in the Galway City Development plan.

GCC will appoint a consultant to carry out an assessment of the current arrangements at each location and propose alternative options for all transport modes, for each road considered. Report due by end Q1/24.

The seven roads to be considered are listed below.

- (i) Bóthar an Chóiste:
- (ii) School Road, Castlegar
- (iii) Circular Road:
- (iii) Letteragh Road / Leitriff Road
- (iv) Ballagh Road:
- (v) Ballymoneen Road

(vi) Cappagh Road

- Cllr. Fahy asked that an update on the proposal be presented at the transport SPC before full Council?
- SF welcomed this but queried usage of School Rd to get to Castlegar.
- Cllr. Murphy asked what is the scope of MMTC? Queried if this work overlaps with other work in Clybaun and at Ballymoneen – existing proposal for a new entrances to a housing estate.
- POD queried if this assessment will integrate other areas including Planning & development, Housing etc.
- Cllr. Fahy noted that in relation to SF issue raised regarding usage of School Rd he suggested alternative route from Terryland Forrest Park be examined re feasibility for off road cycle lane being provided.

Responses:

- M Lally referred to NTA's Cycle Connects and TII National Cycle Network proposals. These are not contained in the current GTS. Cyril is looking at specific roads requested by the elected members during the City Development Plan process.
- P Greene said that roads must meet design standards prior to engaging with forward planning. Study to be funded from development fees/levies as we may not get funding via NTA.
- In response to Cllr. Murphys question the scope will consider different modes of transport, walking, cycling, public transport and car. It is a desktop study and will incorporate topographical data, pedestrian & traffic counts etc . The assessment will also examine constraints in other areas such as archaeology.
- In response to POD – As this stems from the City Development Plan, all relevant areas will be integrated.
- SF noted that we have boreens adjacent and parallel to Cappagh Road etc. Terms of reference should be looking at preserving those and using them as Multimodal infrastructure. P Greene acknowledged this.

6. School Wardens - Update given by Patrick Greene, Director of Services.

Patrick Greene advised that a recruitment competition ran recently for new wardens did not meet the needs which exist. Another campaign led by HR was underway with interviews to follow. P Greene asked members to promote this job in the community when vacancies arise again.

The following points were noted by members:

- Requested further information in relation to the post. (Cllr. Fahy)

- Requested confirmation in relation to the existing number of school wardens, locations of school wardens, to be circulated. Are executive looking at the safety and working conditions of school wardens.
- Asked if it is part of the HR process to conduct exit interviews with Wardens who have left their posts. (POD)
- There was a suggestion to link in with active retired groups in this regard. (Cllr. Higgins)
- SF and POD confirmed that they will share this request/information with their groups.
- PG confirmed that GCC undertook a full review of School Wardens.
- It was queried if the timing of the lights at the Hospice could be adjusted to allow the warden enough time to cross the road? FMcE confirmed that he would investigate this.

7. Agenda for the next Meeting & Work Programme Update

The following items were proposals for inclusion on the Agenda:

- Can GCC revert with a plan to improve safe access at Dock Road. M Lally noted that this is not related to policy and therefore not for this SPC.
- Cllr. Fahy suggested looking at putting a bus lane in this location noting that illegal parking occurs on Spanish Parade/Dock Road.

Fran McEvoy stated that Dock Road is not a public road. The yellow box has to be maintained at the new Dock Road junction.

- M Lally noted that Dock Road is contained within the GTS, which proposes to narrow the carriageway. There are coordination elements to be considered in progressing this project, due to the interaction with the Museum extension.

Work Programme Update:

The following issues were raised in relation to the Work Programme:

- Cllr. Connolly asked if School Wardens should be included on the work programme. Provision of Public Toilet facilities should remain on the programme. E-Scooters strategy.

P Greene advised that legislation on e-scooters has yet to be passed.

GCC Strategy on Electric Vehicle Charging infrastructure is ongoing.

Shane Foran queried if the budget can be used for repair of footpaths e.g., Claremont.

M Lally stated that footpath funding is related to existing public roads (Maintenance). However, if it is the creation of a new footpath, we can look for funding under active travel. This would be under the same process as the pedestrian crossings. Fran McEvoy added that we have limited funding. We do what we can. Some are maintained through Rec and Amenity.

- Cllr. Fahy raised the issue of Toilets outside the Cathedral. COR said that these will be reinstated as close as possible to original location in the coming weeks.
- Cllr. Murphy raised the issue of clearing glass from cycle lanes. P Greene advised we are looking at machinery for this purpose.
- POD queried if there is a Bike Parking Strategy. M Lally advised we previously put in bike parking wherever we could get agreement. Agreements should go via email to Active Travel
- There was a request to circulate the letter received from the NTA. Cllr. Fahy asked would new welfare facilities be open to all bus drivers if the NTA were funding it.
- Illegal Parking - GCC have 12 Community Wardens in place working in enforcement.
- Cllr Connolly noted that ticketing is only one aspect of the policy. How do we address this?

8. AOB

Next meeting: Tuesday, 7th November 2023.

Signed:

Councillor Frank Fahy
Chair Transport SPC