

**Minutes of Meeting of the Physical Development Strategic Policy Committee held on
Wednesday 24th February at 3:30 pm in the Boardroom and via Teams,
Áras Contae an Chláir, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.**

Present:

SPC Members

Cllr. J. Crowe, Chair
Cllr. P. O’Gorman
Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy
Cllr. J. Cooney
Cllr. A. O’Callaghan
Mr. D. M. Wise
Ms. A. Wheeler
Mr. J. Giller
Ms. P Beatty
Mr. D Clements, NTA
Mr. H Creegan, NTA
Mr. M McAree, NTA

Staff of Clare County Council

Ms. C. Kirby, Director of Physical Development
Ms. L. O’Neill, SEO Ennis MD
Mr. S. Lenihan, SE, Project Management Office
Mr. J. Leahy, SE, Roads
Mr. A. Kelly, Chief Fire Officer
Mr. L. O’Connor, AO, Roads
Mr. J Gannon, SEE, Roads
Ms. Congella McGuire, Heritage Officer
Mr. Jason Murphy, SEO, Shannon MD
Mr. Tom Mellett, SEE, Shannon MD
Ms. Angela O’Connor, ASO

Apologies : Mr P. Hayes

Item 1 – Confirmation of Minutes of the SPC Meeting of 21st October, 2020

The Minutes were proposed by Cllr. Joe Cooney and seconded by Cllr. Claire Colleran Molloy

There were no matters arising

Item 2- Presentation on Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (LSMATS) by the National Transport Authority (NTA)

Hugh Creegan and David Clements gave a brief review on the consultation process on LSMATS and issues that arose during the process. While Covid affected the consultation process, there was significant engagement with the public and 112 submissions were received on the draft strategy which indicated satisfactory public engagement with the process. The submissions were primarily in relation to rail and cycling. No issues were raised in relation to bus corridors or road schemes. LSMATS did not take account of the pandemic as it was finalised in March 2020 therefore some sections of the strategy need to be amended to take Covid 19 into consideration. D Clements gave an overview of the strategy and submissions received in respect of; Consultation, Targets, Delivery, Modelling Process, Vision & Ambition, Rail, Climate Change, Accessibility, Regeneration and City Centre consolidation.

H Creegan confirmed that a second round of consultation will be carried out in April/May and the expected completion date for the strategy is September/October 2021.

The SPC members thanked David Clements and Hugh Creegan for the detailed presentation and raised a number of queries;

D. M. Wise spoke about the importance of the rail link to Shannon Airport especially in reducing congestion. He added that there is a huge need for accessible services for people with disabilities. He spoke about the need for a seamless connection to the UL Campus for people with disabilities.

Cllr Clare Colleran Molloy asked if there was any clarification in relation to the rail link to Shannon Airport.

Cllr Pat O’Gorman raised concerns in relation to opening of the entrance to UL on the Clare side. P O’Gorman also wanted to know if there was any clarification on the rail line to Shannon.

James Giller asked if the NTA could expand more about Climate Change and has it been brought more to the fore in the Strategy. He asked if Climate Change was considered in any cost benefit analysis of the strategy and queried the level of ambition around Climate Change. He also enquired how has the mindset changed with regard to Covid 19 in respect of the strategy.

Cllr Alan O’Callaghan confirmed that the Southern Regional Assembly are very supportive of a rail link to Shannon. He said the need is there and it's something that should be brought to the fore.

Carmel Kirby confirmed that the exit on to the Gillogue Road was opened by UL as a trial and was a temporary measure.

Cllr Joe Cooney said that LNDR was a vital piece of infrastructure. He also said a rail link to Shannon would promote Shannon for the future and he looked forward to the final report.

In reply to the issues raised by the SPC members **Hugh Creegan** noted the importance of disability access and outlined that work was ongoing in relation to accessible bus stops. He added that connections to UL need to be dealt with at a local level, not at a transport strategy level.

On the question of Climate Change and the reduction of emissions, everything that is done in the strategy will be geared towards Climate Change. The modelling processes used in the compilation of the strategy picks up on cost benefit analysis in relation to climate change.

With regard to Covid 19, further modelling needs to be done to identify the number of people working from home, volume of business travel etc in order to make the necessary adjustments to the Transport Strategy.

James Giller replied that he understands the strategy is about transport but says it's a question of ambition and focus how Climate Change can be brought more to the fore in the strategy.

David Clement replied that there is a clear and obvious intent to reduce emissions and the new draft will show this. A core function of the strategy will be to reduce emissions.

Carmel Kirby thanked the NTA for their presentation and also for meeting the other stakeholders. She noted that a 2nd round of consultation will be beneficial and will add value and that the draft strategy would feed into the review of the National Development Plan.

John Leahy thanked the NTA for their presentation. He confirmed that a lot of work was going on in the background including universal accessibility work, active travel, Larkins Cross upgrade and the development of new bus stops which compliment the objectives in the strategy

John Crowe thanked David Clements and Hugh Creegan for their presentation.

Item 3- Biodiversity.

Congella McGuire gave a presentation on the Clare Biodiversity Programme. The finalisation of the first phase of the Clare Biodiversity Manual has been completed and staff training on how to use the Manual has taken place. The presentation covered a number of topics including an update on biodiversity projects in 2020, the Clare biodiversity management system, demonstration sites for biodiversity management, biodiversity webinars, Clare keep well campaign, swift nest boxes and caller system, wildlife in buildings, planned biodiversity initiatives, funding and biodiversity plans and policies.

A O'Callaghan thanked Congella and complimented her and CCC staff on the help they provide to Tidy Town Committees around the county. A O'Callaghan highlighted the issue of illegal dumping and wondered if a task/action group could be set up to tackle this issue as it impacts the work of the Tidy Town Committees.

James Giller also thanked Congella for her presentation and would support a task force proposed to tackle illegal dumping. James asked if there was any update on fresh water quality.

Cllr Pat O'Gorman complimented Congella on her presentation. He said Biodiversity is for all and especially now in lock down as it encourages people to get out and about.

Cllr Clare Collieran Molly also thanked Congella for her presentation and supported the call for a task/action group to be set up to tackle illegal dumping as it affects our enjoyment of nature.

Cllr Joe Cooney thanked Congella for her presentation and also supported the call for a task/action group to be set up to tackle illegal dumping. He acknowledged that the fact that the Local Authority have a lot of time, effort and funding put into tackling this issue but the need is there to look at it again. He said the Apple Tree Project was a fantastic project and maybe in

2022, trees could be provided to each of the 4 Municipal Districts for distribution to give community groups the opportunity to benefit also.

Congella McGuire thanked everyone for their comments and noted that the number of applications for the apple trees far exceeded expectations and supply.

Carmel Kirby thanked Congella for her presentation. She said Covid has brought people outdoors and this has resulted in an increased appreciation of our environment. In relation to illegal dumping, C Kirby said the public are best placed to help in tackling this issue by not using unauthorised refuse collectors. She said unfortunately CCTV can not be used at illegal dumping sites due to GDPR and that a lot of behavioural changes are needed. A public campaign on the issue was required. Carmel noted that the Local Authority have issued fines and are bringing court proceedings however these are not always successful.

C Kirby said that in relation to water quality it is a very worrying issue from a Local Authority perspective. Policies are being prepared at National level to address the root causes.

Item 4- Any Other Business.

James Giller asked on behalf of the Public Participation Network if there had been public consultation on the Shannon URDF and if not are there plans to do this and what is the progress currently.

C Kirby agreed to ask Jason Murphy, Senior Executive Officer, Shannon MD to write to the PPN with an update.

Date of next meeting : 25th May, 2021

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____

Cllr. John Crowe

Chairperson

Signed: _____

Liam O'Connor

Administrative Officer

Date: _____

