

Transport Strategic Policy Committee

Tuesday 13th September 2022 @9.30am - 11.30am

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

| Present: | | | |
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| Cllr Frank Fahy Chairman TSPC | 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 | Mr Paul O'Donnell Community Network | Mr Pat Hardiman ICTU |
| Mr Shane Foran Community Network | | | |
| In Attendance: | | | |
| Mr Patrick Greene Director of Services | Mr Uinsinn Finn Senior Engineer | Colm O'Riordan Senior Executive Engineer | Mr Michael Lally A/ Senior Executive Engineer |
| James Farrell Executive Engineer | Elaine Mahon A/Admin. Officer | Ms Carol Heneghan Assistant Staff Officer | Emma Curran Clerical Officer |
| Apologies: | | | |
| Cllr Clodagh Higgins Mayor of the City of Galway | Cllr Noel Larkin Councillor GCC | | |
| Item: | | | |
| <p>Chairman Cllr Frank Fahy welcomed the Transport SPC members and Council Officials to the meeting which was held in the City Council Chamber and on the Zoom platform. Apologies were noted. Mayor Clodagh Higgins was unable to attend due to official business in Dublin.</p> <p>The Chair raised the issue of public attendance at SPC Meetings and stated that the procedure should be in line with that of Council Meetings. Public must give notice and sign in at reception. This is a Health & Safety Issue.</p> | | | |
| 1. Minutes of meeting 10th May 2022 | | | |
| The minutes of the Transport SPC meeting dated the 10 th May 2022 were proposed by Cllr Alan Cheevers and seconded by Cllr Peter Keane. | | | |
| 2. Matters arising | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Cllr Niall Murphy raised an issue in Item 5 (Galway City Speed Limits Bye Laws) of the Minutes of the 10th May 2022 as a matter of accuracy and it was agreed to amend the minutes to record that <i>"A separate bye-law in accordance with the Motion in relation to the proposed 30km/h speed limits for the city centre should be brought forward for the consideration of the members."</i> | | | |

- An update was requested on traffic calming measures on the Siobhan McKenna Road.
- The issue of Public Lighting at Liam Mellows was raised. Cllr Alan Cheevers raised the matter in regard to the outstanding issues between Galway City Council and Liam Mellows in relation to the transfer of lands.
- A report on the Browne Roundabout pedestrian crossing was requested and if a report has been compiled with regard to the enforcement of illegal parking at areas such as Shop Street, Eglinton Street & Salthill. Cllr Frank Fahy responded that he will endeavour to put this issue on the Agenda for the next JPC meeting.
- Discussion took place in relation to buses parking on Bóthar Bhreandain Uí Eithir and at the end of Forster Street. It was mentioned that traffic is being blocked and is dangerous at these locations and it was queried if there is enforcement at the bus lanes after 6 pm by the Gardai. Cllr Frank Fahy requested the Director to write to the Gardai in relation to parking enforcement at these locations.
- It was suggested to circulate Transport SPC documentation in one email where possible.
- An update about the LED Upgraded Programme and its Budget was requested.

In response to the queries raised, Patrick Greene, Director of Services advised that:

- Liam Mellows is not yet taken in charge by Galway City Council. The Parks Department is currently dealing with the Snag List and will revert on the timeline with regard to the Taking in Charge.
- The issue with regard to the buses parking at Bóthar Bhreandain Uí Eithir and Forster Street will be followed up with the Community Wardens in relation to Enforcement. It was agreed to issue a letter to the Gardai in relation to the monitoring and enforcement of parking, particularly at these locations after 6pm outside of Community Warden's rostered working hours.
- There is a 50% uplift in 2023 Energy Costs Budget.

Uinsinn Finn, Senior Engineer responded to the queries raised and advised that:

- Consultants have been engaged with regard to the Browne Roundabout Project. There are also Consultants working on the Pedestrian Crossings at the Tuam Road and at Blackrock in Salthill. The Council is also proceeding with another Pedestrian Crossing at Terryland Forest Park, Liosbaun.
- There is no update on Siobhan McKenna Road in relation to traffic calming.
- In the current year, there were approximately 448 Enforcement Notices issued by Community Wardens at Eglinton Street in relation to illegal parking. There were approximately 50 tickets issued in Salthill in relation to illegal parking on loading bays. It was stated that unpaid parking tickets are followed up through the courts. The overall payment rate is quite high. Cllr Colette Connolly requested if Transport can revert with figures of paid and unpaid parking tickets.
- The LED Retrofit was carried out on the basis that the Council anticipated large increases in energy costs. The Plan was that this was going to pay for itself in 9 years.

Cllr Mike Cubbard thanked the Transport Department for the response in relation to the Browne Roundabout and requested if someone could meet him at Siobhan McKenna Road to examine some level of traffic calming to be installed there again. In response, it was advised that arrangements can be made for an Engineer to meet with Cllr Mike Cubbard in relation to his request.

In response to Shane Foran's enquiry about Pedestrian Crossings, the meeting was informed that a presentation was given to the Transport SPC about a year ago in relation to Pedestrian Crossings. There were 31 Pedestrian Crossings installed around the City. A further three are being installed at Tuam

Road/Joyce Road, at Blackrock in Salthill and at Terryland Forest Park, Liosbaun. The Council is also advancing the Pedestrian Crossing at the Browne Roundabout.

The question was raised in relation to parking enforcement for drivers in buses and cars, clarification to be checked with the Wardens regarding the procedure if the vehicle is parked or stopped.

Cllr Frank Fahy informed the meeting that he receives several calls in relation to the Kirwan Junction and advised that the junction can take pedestrians/cyclists 10 minutes to cross. He mentioned that he has noticed an increase in rat running in the area and has concerns about the design of it.

Cllr Peter Keane asked if there is a reluctance on Galway City Council to consider overpasses as an option for ensuring pedestrian safety at junctions across the City. Improvements in design and provision of overpasses can benefit everyone, referencing Kirwan Junction, Seamus Quirke Rd and the pedestrian crossing at Spanish Parade near Jurys. He further mentioned that there is a need to improve traffic flow while keeping pedestrians safe and getting people over roads instead of stopping traffic.

Pat Hardiman agreed with Cllr Peter Keane's comments and enquired about Cross Street opening during the day when outdoor dining is over.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Peter Keane and seconded by Cllr Frank Fahy that the Executive bring a report to the Transport SPC in relation to the provision of pedestrian overpasses particularly at Kirwan Junction, Seamus Quirke Road and at Spanish Parade near Jurys with a view of improving movement for traffic, pedestrians & cyclists in a safe manner and to examine short term fixes that can provide short term solutions.

It was agreed that this item be put on the Agenda for the next SPC meeting. Uinsinn Finn, Senior Engineer advised that a report can be compiled and highlighted that he is conscious of resources. He advised that he will bring a high level report to stimulate thoughts for this SPC in the first instance and not engage Consultants.

It was proposed by Paul O'Donnell and seconded by Cllr Colette Connolly that the report be circulated two weeks in advance of the next SPC so that Community Groups can be consulted.

3. National Cycling Network Plan

An update was given by Michael Lally, A/Senior Executive Engineer on National Cycling Network Plan and mentioned the following:

- Public Consultation was held in June 2022 on the TII National Cycling Network Plan which details inter urban cycling routes on the national road network. TII website noted that a report is due back in August 2022. The National Cycling Network Plans are shown on the TII Website.
- NTA have also been tasked with developing a 2nd National Cycling Network Plan which relates to the cities, towns and villages. This is scheduled to go to a national public consultation in September 2022.

In response to the presentation, Shane Foran advised of the importance of linking destinations together in respect to the cycling network e.g. housing estates, soccer pitches etc.

Michael Lally, Senior Executive Engineer noted Shane Foran's comments and advised that the plans are being run by TII and the Council has been advised that Local Authorities will be given an opportunity to prepare a submission as part of the public consultation. The Transport Department will work with the Councillors and the Transport SPC members in developing a submission. It was also advised that people can make their own submissions to the consultation once open.

4. Galway BusConnects – Cross City Links – Newcastle Road to Dublin Road

A Presentation was given by Colm O'Riordan, Senior Executive Engineer and circulated at the meeting on the Galway BusConnects – Cross City Links – University Road to Dublin Road. The following points were outlined:

- **Galway Transport Strategy (GTS) -**

There are three elements in relation to BusConnects with respect to the GTS which includes:

- City Centre Access Network
- Inner City Access Route
- Bus Priority/Bus Only Route

It was advised that the scheme is being submitted to An Bord Pleanála and will be advertised in the paper this week on 16th September 2022.

- **Cross City Link Scheme -**

A map showed the proposed scheme boundary from the junction of Newcastle Road and University Road to the Dublin Road. The meeting was informed that the scheme also involves an application for the compulsory purchase of land.

- **Photomontages -**

Images were shown of the proposed scheme at locations such as views from University Road West, Eglinton Street, Eyre Square, Old Dublin Road etc. There will be a reduction in carparking and increase in Public Realm.

- **Indicative Programme –**

The meeting was informed that EIAR, Planning Documentation and Compulsory Purchase Order Schedule is to be completed and submitted to An Bord Pleanála for consent on the 16th September 2022. Submissions can be made to An Bord Pleanála from Wednesday 21st September 2022 to Friday 18th November 2022. The cost of a general submission to An Bord Pleanála is €50.

Members thanked Colm O'Riordan for the presentation and raised the following questions:

- How to access City Hall if College Road is closed from 7am to 7pm?
- Will loading bays remain in Eglinton Street and Forster Street?
- Will parking at Millennium Children's Park and on Forster Street at Hynes shop be removed?
- The length and cost of the CPO Process was queried?
- Who has right of way on Raised Crossings – Car or Pedestrian?
- How many bus routes are there going to be?
- If the route is intended to come through the Hospital?
- How will the scheme accommodate access to Churches for masses, funerals etc.?
- How will access be maintained into the B&B's on College Road?
- What areas are the CPOs and has any consultations taken place with the people affected?
- Will the speed limit be reduced when narrowing the road on University Road?

In response to the queries raised, the following was advised:

- A map was displayed on screen to show the route access to City Hall from 7am to 7pm.
- There will be no loading bays along Eglinton Street with the footpath widened. Forster Street will become a two way for buses. Car parking to be removed outside Hynes shop and a loading bay will be installed there.
- Some car parking spaces across from Millennium Park are being retained and some will be removed.
- Raised junctions were discussed and it was mentioned that they are an uncontrolled crossing that provides additional safety in slowing down traffic.
- It is proposed to have five bus routes with drop off and pick up locations at Eyre Square.
- The route through the hospital remains an objective of the GTS and is a separate project.
- Contact was made with the B&B's on College Road and there will be unimpeded access for the B&B's.
- The scheme will be used as a shared space for buses and cyclists.
- The CPO process will include 30 parcels of land. There will be some impact at Moneenageisha & College Road. There will be two properties also affected at St. Brendan's Avenue. The Council has met with most of the affected landowners.
- The pinch points will be narrowed down to a 3m lane. The Project route is designed at a speed limit of 50kph.

It was mentioned that a workshop was held on 12th September 2022 in City Hall with drawings on display in relation to the Project. It was suggested that if any member wishes to come in and discuss any issues with the team, to make an appointment through Activetravel@galwaycity.ie

5. Update on recent Department Circulars & Programme

- Not dealt with at SPC

6. Toilet facilities for bus drivers (discussion)

Discussion took place in relation to toilet facilities for bus drivers. Pat Hardiman noted that City Direct sent in a submission in relation to this issue. The question as to whether Galway City Council or the NTA would fund such a facility was discussed. It was stated that this facility is not part of the BusConnects Scheme.

It was agreed that the Transport Department write to the NTA to enquire if facilities for Bus Drivers have been provided by the NTA in any other Local Authority. If they have any plans to provide such a facility and if there will there be funding for it.

7. Work Programme 2022

Members requested the following as part of the Work Programme 2022:

- Improvement of Footpaths & Pedestrian Crossings in the City.
- Refreshing of road marking at schools such as at Menlo School under the Active Travel – School Streets.

8. Agenda for the next meeting & Work Programme update

The SPC members suggested the following items be added to the agenda:

- Report from Transport on the provision of a pedestrian overpass at three locations – Kirwan Junction, Seamus Quirke Road and Spanish Parade.
- Department Circulars.

9. AOB

Members raised the following issues:

- Parking situation at Shantalla Road, buses from St. Mary's Road and if enforcement is being carried out at these locations.
- If the lights at the pedestrian crossing at Riverside, Tuam Road could be examined as it was advised that they are not operating properly.
- It was requested that Department Circulars be circulated to members.
- It was advised that the GTS Review is being led by the NTA. The NTA intends to have Public Consultation on the Review by Quarter 1 next year.

Next meeting: 8th November 2022

Signed:

Councillor Frank Fahy
Chair Transport SPC