

**Minutes of Meeting of the Physical Development Strategic Policy Committee held on
Wednesday 8th March, 2023 at 3:30 pm in the Council Chamber,
Áras Contae an Chláir, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.**

Present:

SPC Members

Cllr. J. Crowe, Chair
Cllr. P. O’Gorman
Cllr. J. Cooney
Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy
Cllr. A. O’Callaghan
Cllr. L. Grant
Mr. L Hoyne
Mr. P Hayes
Mr. D. M. Wise Âû
Ms Theresa O Donoghue

Staff of Clare County Council

Ms. C Kirby, DOS, Physical Development
Mr. J. Leahy, SE, Transportation
Mr. S Lenihan, SE, PMO
Mr. B Flynn, SEE, Environment
Mr. M. Lahiffe, SE, Climate Action
Mr. C McDonagh, A/SEE, Transportation
Mr. L O’Connor, AO, Transportation
Mr. A Kelly, CFO, Fire
Ms. A O’Connor, ASO, Environment
Mr. T Burke, A/CFO, Fire

Apologies : Ms. L O’Neill & Ms A Wheeler

Item 1 – Confirmation of Minutes of the SPC Meeting of 15th November, 2022.

The Minutes were proposed by Cllr A O’Callaghan and seconded by Cllr J Cooney.

Item 2- Matters Arising - no matters arising

Item 3 – Update on the Draft Fire & Emergency Operations Plan by Adrian Kelly, Chief Fire Officer.

Adrian Kelly gave a presentation updating members on the Draft Fire & Emergency Operations Plan.

Cllr L Grant welcomed the fact that there may be changes for Fire Fighters in both remuneration and annual leave. He noted concern in relation to the current vacancies in Shannon Fire Station.

Cllr J Cooney thanked Adrian for his presentation and asked if it was full or part time fire fighters that were being recruited for Shannon and why is it so difficult to recruit?

A Kelly noted that the positions are retained part time posts. Clare County Council have communicated with many of the bigger companies in Shannon. They themselves are finding it difficult recruiting staff and are not in a position to allow existing staff to leave their place of work. He also noted that not everyone working in Shannon is living in Shannon. A person must live within

2.4 km (5 minutes) from a Fire Station. Adrian confirmed that 3 people had applied for the vacancies in Shannon. Two candidates have qualified and are going through the recruitment process.

Item 4 – Update on Bus Connects

John Leahy gave a brief introduction on Bus Connects.

John introduced Conor McDonagh, A/Senior Executive Engineer who gave a presentation and showed the members an interactive map, which can be viewed on www.busconnects.ie . This is a user friendly map and Conor encouraged the members to log on and view the proposed new routes.

Cllr J Cooney thanked Conor for his presentation and asked is the focus just on the suburbs of Limerick and are the services currently in place?

John Leahy responded by saying that Bus Connects is currently at consultation phase and will serve Limerick City and environs and into South East Clare. The next project, **Connecting Ireland**, commencing in Spring 2023 will focus on the rural parts of the County.

Cllr P O 'Gorman welcomed this new proposal and asked if there are any plans to connect Meelick to Limerick City? He asked if Clare County Council could make a submission on this. Cllr O'Gorman also noted concern that additional traffic from the Clare campus of UL could result in traffic problems as the Gillogue road is very narrow.

John Leahy responded by saying that Meelick has not been forgotten and will be included in the Connecting Ireland project.

In relation to Gillogue Road, John said it was acknowledged by the NTA that in time a bus service would be looked at however, significant investment would be required before buses could travel that road.

Cllr. Colleran Molloy asked if there would be an update on the Ennis Bus Service?

Theresa O 'Donoghue thanked Conor for his presentation and asked from a PPN perspective could a countywide audit be carried out on all public transport for County Clare for wheelchair users. She also asked that training for bus drivers would be provided in relation to wheelchair users.

Padraig Hayes told members that he uses the wheelchair facility on buses every morning and not all are the same size and this needs to be reviewed.

Carmel Kirby informed members that it is critically important that all our services are accessible.

In relation to Ennis Bus Service, Carmel agreed to ask the NTA to give a presentation at an SPC meeting.

In relation to Gillogue Rd and the LNDR, Carmel explained how the Minister excluded it from the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategy, however, the route remains on the County Development Plan and the Regional Spatial Strategy and still remains as an objective of the Council

Carmel said that when sustainable transport measures are introduced under the LSMATS, the LNDR will have to be looked at again, otherwise, it will result in congestion and that there will be a requirement for an orbital route around the city.

Carmel thanked John, Conor and team for their hard work and told the members that Clare County Council will keep advocating for the LNDR.

C McDonagh told the members that the NTA are currently deciding on routes and that accessibility will be taken into account at a later stage of the project. All bus fleets will be standardised and electrified.

C Kirby agreed to make a submission on the points raised at this SPC.

Cllr John Crowe thanked Conor and team for their hard work.

Item 5 – Presentation of Draft Litter Management Plan 2023 – 2025 by Brendan Flynn, Senior Executive Engineer.

Brendan Flynn gave a presentation updating members on the Draft Litter Management Plan.

Cllr A O'Callaghan mentioned the great work that voluntary groups carry out. He said you have 2 types of littering, fly tipping and dumping bags of rubbish on our roads. He hoped that point no 4 in Brendan's presentation ie enforcement would include on the spot fines, and that the culprits would be named and shamed.

Cllr J Cooney thanked and complimented Brendan on his presentation. He said 80 bags of rubbish collected in one small village, means people still are not getting the message and agreed that they should be named and shamed. He agreed that enforcement is the key and noted that the Environment Section are making progress but there is a need for more.

Cllr P O Gorman asked if locations in the Shannon MD could get the same dog litter bins that are on the prom in Lahinch.

Cllr C Colleran Molloy thanked Brendan and told members about the great work that Clare County Council and local community volunteers carried out at the River Fergus Walkway recently after it

was the subject of vandalism, graffiti, damaged bollards etc. She especially wanted to thank Donal Healy for his help.

Clare mentioned that Clareabbey is a black spot and the use of CCTV will help going forward. Clare also mentioned dog fouling on Cahercalla Road and the need for zero tolerance and asked how is it decided where the “Bag it, Bin it, €250 Fine” stencils should go?

Brendan Flynn responded to Clare by saying that there will be a huge focus on dog fouling by the Environment Section in 2023. He confirmed that the location of dog stencils is generated from complaints received.

In relation to CCTV, Brendan told members that the LGMA are preparing a code of practice for the operation of CCTV. Once available the Council will review the use of relevant technologies.

In answer to Cllr O Gorman’s request for additional bins, Brendan agreed to contact the Shannon MD on the issue but stated that the Council are trying to promote positive messages, bins are not always the answer. Clare County Council will be contacting schools to bring this message home. Brendan said raising awareness of litter is key and the focus is to encourage people to refrain from littering rather than fining them.

Damien M. Wise mentioned the Rights of Nature document that was presented at a recent Rural Development SPC meeting.

Item 6 – AOB

T O’Donoghue wanted to inform the members that the PPN are running a webinar on Refugees and will send on the information. She also confirmed that the annex to the Climate Action Plan came out today. She said the role of the Local Authority is pretty significant and asked if an update can be given at each SPC on where Clare are in relation to the Climate Action Plan? Theresa also asked if Climate Training could be opened up to SPC members?

C Kirby responded by saying that all directorates need to embrace Climate Change and each SPC have Climate on their agendas. She said we will work out a process for communicating back to the SPC.

M Lahiffe confirmed he had presented to the Social Directorate SPC. Morgan said that up to this point, the main aim was to let Councillors, staff and SPC members know about the need for a plan. We now have until February 2024 to prepare our plan. The focus next month is a summary report, thereafter, the engagement phase with Councillors, staff, SPC members, PPN etc can start.

Item 7 – Provisional dates for Physical Development SPC meetings for 2023

- **Tuesday May 30th, 2023**
- **Tuesday September 19th, 2023**
- **Tuesday November 7th, 2023**

Item 8 - Date of next meeting : Tuesday 30th May, 2023

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____

Cllr. John Crowe

Chairperson

Signed: _____

Liam O'Connor

Administrative Officer

Date: _____