

Minutes of the Roads and Transportation, Strategic Policy Committee meeting held on
21st May 2018 at 9.30 a.m. in Room GO1, Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill, Galway.

I Láthair:

Baill: Cllr Michael Finnerty
Cllr Martina Kinane
Cllr Peter Roche
Cllr Michael Connolly
Cllr Jim Cuddy
Cllr Des Joyce
Comh Seosamh Ó Cualáin
Mr Mark Coffey

Oifigí: Mr Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Infrastructure and Operations Unit
Mr Damien Mitchell, Senior Engineer, Infrastructure and Operations Unit
Ms Máire Ní Chionna, Senior Engineer, Infrastructure and Operations Unit
Mr Ciaran Wynne, Executive Engineer, Infrastructure and Operations Unit
Ms Nuala Heffernan, Administrative Officer, Infrastructure and Operations Unit

Apologies were noted, for their absence, from Cllr Michael Maher and Mr Bryan Egan.

1. Minutes of meeting of Roads SPC held on 19th February 2018

On the proposal of Cllr Cuddy, seconded by Cllr Connolly, the minutes of the meeting of the Roads, Transportation and Marine Strategic Policy Committee held on 19th February 2018 were agreed and adopted.

Matters arising from the minutes.

Cllr Connolly referred to the footpath on the N63 in Moylough. He asked for repairs to be carried out as a matter of urgency on the footpath which he said is in a dangerous condition.

Mr Wynne referred to comments at the previous meeting regarding the ladders being installed at piers. He confirmed that all the ladders installed were in accordance with the required specification, which he had available at the meeting for any member who was interested in checking same.

2. Progress on Speed Limit Review

Ms Ní Chionna advised the members that the proposed changes to the Speed Limit Bye-Laws had been forwarded to The Chief Superintendent of An Garda Síochana for his information and feedback. She said that the public consultation period would commence a month from the date of circulation of these proposals to the Chief Superintendent, which will be during the month of June. She confirmed, that following this period of public consultation, the draft bye-laws would be circulated to each Municipal District for discussion at the MD meetings. She indicated that it is intended to have the draft bye-laws on the agenda of the September meetings of the Municipal Districts. She said that the final draft of the bye-laws will be on the agenda of the plenary Council meeting, in October, following on from a full discussion on them at the MD meetings and confirmed that the bye-laws must be adopted by the plenary Council.

The members expressed thanks to Ms Ní Chionna for progressing the draft speed limit bye-laws and said that it was satisfactory that there was now a clear time-frame within which they would be dealt with.

3. Update on Inis Oírr Harbour Development

Mr Wynne made a presentation in relation to the proposed development of Inis Oírr Harbour. He circulated maps of the proposed changes to the current status of the harbour. He advised that the last development in the area was the extension of the pier in 1996. He said that there is an issue with overtopping of the pier, in certain weather conditions, as there is no protection outside of the pier to deal with wave energy. He noted that it had been the intention to proceed with the development in 2007, prior to the financial crisis. Consultants had been appointed at that time and planning permission received from An Bord Pleanála for the development of a 90m extension and a breakwater, which could be used as extra berthage in calmer weather in the summer. He confirmed that the planning permission remained valid. He advised that Punch & Partners had recently been appointed as consultants for the project, following from a competitive tendering process. He said that it would be necessary to carry out up to date environmental surveys and to advance the acquisition of the foreshore licence with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. He advised that there were 2 options in relation to the foreshore licence – 1) annual levy or 2) outright purchase which would be the preferred, but more costly, option. Mr Wynne also referred to the need to identify a space on the island for use as a compound. He said that there were not many options available but that one had been identified on commonage which would have to be acquired by Compulsory Purchase Order. He also suggested that the strip of roadway near the compound be acquired to facilitate widening of the road down to the pier. He said that a ground investigation was done in 1992, but an additional one would be done this year to account for current situation. He stated that a bathymetric survey was presently being carried out. He confirmed that an Roinn Cultúir, Oidhreachta agus Gaeltachta were funding the development of this strategic pier.

He advised that the management of activity on the pier was a matter for Galway County Council as the registered owner of the infrastructure. He confirmed that it is a very busy pier with an ever-increasing volume of people and activity on it. He noted that there is no harbourmaster currently employed on the island, and that there would be a cost involved in the Council employing one. He said that, a Department of Marine report, subsequent to an accident in the harbour, while people were disembarking from a boat, stated that the captain of the boat could not ensure the gangway was properly tied, due to the volume of people on the pier. He said that it would be necessary to develop bye-laws for the safe operation of the pier in tandem with the development of the infrastructure.

Cllr Finnerty welcomed the report and thanked Mr Wynne for his ongoing work on its development. In response to a query from him, Mr Wynne said that there would be a charge for ferry operators to use the pier. Comh Ó Cualáin referred to a study on tourism potential in Conamara, and he said that the report identified Inis Mór and Inis Oírr as two locations where there was too much tourism activity. He said that the ferry operators are offering short 2 hour trips on the islands which does not benefit the local economy. Mr Cullen emphasised the importance of the development and introduction of the bye-laws in advance of the completion of the pier. He said that the formulation of the bye-laws would involve public consultation and would come before the Conamara Municipal District for their consideration, input and for their recommendation to the plenary Council for final adoption. Cllr Cuddy enquired about the insurance situation with the commonage if it was acquired by CPO by the Council. Mr Cullen advised that when the land was acquired by Galway County Council, it would be registered to the Council and would be covered by the Council's public liability insurance. Cllr Kinane asked if the members of the Strategic Policy Committee would have any input into the production of the bye-laws. Mr Cullen advised that whilst the draft bye-laws would be brought before the SPC for their consideration and comments, the adoption of the final bye-laws is a function of the plenary Council. Cllr Kinane enquired about the authority of the Council to enforce the issuing of a cheaper ferry ticket to those remaining on the island for a period in excess of 3 hours. Cllr Connolly said that that was a commercial decision, which was at the discretion of the ferry operator. Ms Ní Chionna stated that Clare County Council employ 2 harbour masters in Doolin Harbour, with longer working hours during the summer season.

4. CFRAMS Advancement

Cllr Finnerty expressed his thanks and acknowledged the input from Mr Adrian Headd, who had recently left the employment of Galway County Council, for his input into the production of the CFRAMS report. This was reiterated by Cllr Connolly who also acknowledged all his efforts in the Ballinasloe Municipal District, particularly, in dealing with flooding situations. Ms Ní Chionna also acknowledged the input and dedication of Mr Headd to the CFRAMS process. She said that there were now Flood Risk Management Plans, signed by the Minister of Public Expenditure and Reform, for the period 2018 – 2021. She advised that the CFRAMS assessed 300 communities deemed to be at a higher than usual risk of flooding and carried out a cost/benefit analysis of doing remedial works to ensure flood prevention. She said that Ballinasloe, Portumna and Clifden came through the process as locations where flood

prevention works should be carried out. She noted that there is also a commitment to look at the flood risk in Ahascragh. She said that in other areas, such as those near the Clare River, flood risk schemes had already been realised. She advised that the report also noted that the responsibility of maintaining drainage districts lies with the Local Authorities and that landowners had responsibility to ensure drains on their lands remained clear. She said that a summary of the content of the documents, relevant to County Galway, would be assembled and circulated to all the members of the plenary Council. She confirmed that it had to be considered by the Council within 3 months of its receipt and would come before the June/July meeting of the plenary Council.

Cllr Finnerty referred to the flood action committee in Ballinasloe, and stated that they had put a lot of work into their submission and that the information that they had provided in their submission is included in the final report. Ms Ní Chionna said that the prevention of flooding in the Ballinasloe area was a national priority. Mr Cullen advised that it was a function of the plenary Council to adopt the document but that the Council could not amend it as it has been signed by the Minister of Public Expenditure and Reform and the Minister of Finance. He said that it would be brought to the attention of the members of each MD, if possible, within the timeframe allowed, with the intention of bringing it to the plenary Council meeting in July. On the proposal of Cllr Finnerty, seconded by Cllr Connolly, it was agreed by the SPC to recommend adoption of the Flood Risk Management Plans.

Ms Ní Chionna said that a lot of flood mitigation measures had been put in place through Minor Works Schemes, with the co-operation and funding of the Office of Public Works. Comh Ó Cualáin enquired about minor works schemes for coastal flooding, and in particular, in relation to a list of locations for consideration, sent by him previously, to the Council. Ms Ní Chionna agreed to check the matter out with Mr Fergal Fahey who collates and makes the submissions to the OPW on behalf of Galway County Council.

5. Any Other Business

Mr Mitchell circulated a guidance and procedural document on voluntary and community activities. He said that this had been collated to bring clarity to the requirements, to ensure the safety of all concerned, whilst carrying out work on the side of the road. He advised that any group or person carrying out construction works, such as constructing stone walls, will be treated as a contractor and will require all the relevant documentation. He said that non-construction work would be treated differently, such as litter picking. In response to a query from Cllr Kinane, Mr Mitchell said that one application annually would suffice from community groups provided it detailed all the works to be done in the following year. He also confirmed that the public liability insurance of €6.5million is the standard cover required by the Council's insurer, IPB, for all activities. Mr Cullen said that no activity is risk free and that there is a level of responsibility for all volunteers. Cllr Cuddy thanked Mr Mitchell for producing this document, which he said will be of great assistance to community groups. Cllr Joyce agreed that it gives clarity to the issue.

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Comh Ó Cualáin referred to the completion of works on piers, e.g. the provision of rings for the tying of boats at Bealacarra Pier, Leitir Ard, Cashel. He was advised that it would be referred to Mr Alan Raleigh, Senior Executive Engineer, for any outstanding issues to be resolved.

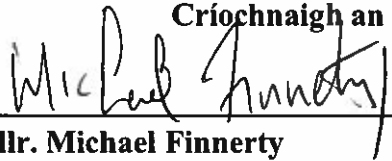
Comh Ó Cualáin enquired about works on the road to Ros a Mhíl due to the development of windmills in the area, and stated that the works should not commence until after the tourist season in October. Mr Mitchell said that no application had yet been received from the windmill developers.

Cllr Kinane thanked the members of the SPC for their support for the provision of additional signage on the M17/M18 Motorway. She said that additional signage had been installed in the previous week, with directional signage for villages such as Clarinbridge. Cllr Cuddy said that the signage which referred to Baile Chláir should also reference the english translation of Claregalway. It was noted that this signage is in accordance with the requirement of the Languages Act. It was agreed to send a request to the TII to install additional signage for the villages of Abbeyknockmoy, Mountbellew and Ballygar.

It was agreed to hold the next meeting of the Roads and Transportation Strategic Policy Committee on Monday 24th September 2018 at 9.30 a.m.

Criochnaigh an cruinniú ansin.

Approved by



Cllr. Michael Finnerty

Cathaoirleach

Roads & Transportation Strategic Policy Committee

Date:



