

**Minutes of the Roads and Transportation, Strategic Policy Committee
meeting held on 17th December 2018 at 9.30 a.m.
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
Cllr. Michael Maher
Comh Seosamh Ó Cualáin
Mr. Bryan Egan

Oifigí: Mr Damien Mitchell, Senior Engineer, Infrastructure and Operations Unit
Mr Derek Pender, Senior Engineer, N.R.P.O
Ms Eibhlin Curran, Administrative Officer, Infrastructure and Operations Unit

Apologies were noted, for their absence, from Mr. Tom Madden, Mr. Michael Healy, Mr. Mark Coffey

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 21st May 2018 were agreed and adopted.

Matters arising from the minutes.

Cllr Connolly referred to the first item of minutes of 21st May, regarding N63 in Moylough and stated that he has been informed that funding will be made available to address the issue raised at previous meeting. D. Pender, N.R.P.O confirmed to Cllr. Connolly said funding is being made available in the new year.

D. Mitchell stated in respect of item no. 5 from the minutes of 21st May, under AOB, it was agreed in the meeting to issue correspondence to TII requesting additional signage for the villages of Abbeyknockmoy, Mounbellew and Ballygar. A letter issued to TII on 5th June and the following response from TII was read out by D. Mitchell. Excerpt of response as follows:

All signage on all national roads, including the M17/M18, must accord with guidelines set out in the Traffic Signs Manual, published by Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport. These guidelines are designed to ensure that information is conveyed effectively to road users by providing clarity and consistency on all directional signage, thereby improving road safety. For these reasons, the Manual recommends that the number of destinations included on directional signage should be limited to avoid excessive effort on the part of drivers in absorbing the information contained on signs. This is particularly the case with overhead gantry signs. The directional signage strategy for the M17/M18 motorway scheme was developed in accordance with the Manual and was finalised following consultation with Galway County Council and the PPP Company, Direct Route (Tuam) Ltd.

While Abbeyknockmoy, Mountbellew and Ballygar are all on the N63 route, Roscommon, as the Intermediate Terminal Destination, is the signed destination in the eastbound direction, in accordance with the provisions of the Traffic Signs Manual.

Cllr. Roche stated his discontent with the response from TII, he stated that when approaching roundabouts these villages should be sign posted. He noted that there was a lack of signage for Clarinbridge and Oranmore and this has since been rectified. Contact should be made again with TII specifically with regard signage at roundabouts.

Cllr. Connolly stated that he recalls at a meeting with TII that the committee were asked to confine the no. to three villages which they did.

D. Pender stated that there is specific reasoning behind what towns/villages have signage on a motorway, which is connected to the census figures and that the signage is in accordance with Traffic Signs Manual and he would circulate extract with regard same to the members. However, he noted from the discussion of the members present that the request was in specific to signage at the roundabouts and stated that he will review same with TII and revert to the Committee.

Cllr. Cuddy stated that signage for Baile Chláir/Claregalway is proving to be a greater nuisance and many complaints from public has been received with regard same. The confusion imposed on drivers who don't recognise the signage 'Baile Chláir' as being Claregalway has caused great discontent amongst road users. It is appreciated that Claregalway is a Gaeltacht area and acknowledges that under the Official Languages Act that Irish language version of a place name must be used, however road users on this stretch of road are not all necessarily from the Gaeltacht and misinterpret the signage. It was agreed by the Committee to issue correspondence to Minister S. Kyne in relation to same requesting that bilingual sign be erected for Claregalway.

2. Road Reclassification

D. Mitchell stated that the Statutory Instrument - Roads Act 1993 Classification of National Roads (Amendment) Order 2018 has gone through the Oireachtas. Items included in the Order

are the same as what was previously presented and agreed with Elected Members. Once official notification is received, it will then be circulated.

Cllr. Cuddy questioned whether Galway County Council are to get increased funding allocation to accommodate extra roads that were previously maintained by TII.

D. Mitchell confirmed that funding allocations are based on road lengths, so increase in road lengths on regional/local roads should result in increased funding allocation. There is significant debate over funding allocations when preparing the annual roads programme and this will come up for discussion when preparing same for 2019.

Cllr. Roche stated that given that a section of the N63 has now been downgraded have the planning laws for these areas been changed to reflect same.

D. Mitchell stated that the S.I. only came into effect in October 2018. From a roads perspective, it is no longer a national route, however how it is dealt with in planning, is a question for planning. The regulations for same should come into effect in early 2019. Only when these are implemented that planning law should change accordingly.

3. NRPO projects update

D. Pender gave a brief overview of projects currently under active management of the National Roads Projects Office.

N6 GCRR – The closing date for submissions/objections is Friday 21st December. Approximately 1,300 landowner notices were issued. It is anticipated that the oral hearing will take place mid 2019 however this is dependent on An Bord Pleanála and whether they will request further information.

Moycullen Bypass (N59) – RPS consultants have been appointed to assist Galway County Council in the preparation of detailed design and contract documents. It is intended to have contract document for tendering purposes ready for publication in April 2019.

N67 Ballinderreen to Kinvara – Contract documents for construction are 95% complete and are currently undergoing a peer review. It is intended to advertise in Feb/Mar 2019.

N59 Maam Cross to Bunnakill - Ground investigation & archaeological construction method statements were agreed with the National Park & Wildlife Services in Q1 of 2018. All site investigative works were completed in Q2 & Q3 2018. The project is now at tendering stage with appointment of a contractor to commence construction in Q1 of 2019. D. Pender also confirmed that the pearl mussel is outside this 5km stretch of road.

Milltown to Gortnagunnad – Public consultation evening is scheduled for 18th December 2018. Having appraised each of the route options for Environmental, Engineering, Safety and Economy, a preference weighting of high, medium or low for each heading was allocated to

each route option. Route Option 2 has emerged as being the most favourable from the Project Appraisal Matrix.

Abbeyknockmoy to Annagh Hill – this project is substantially complete. Construction works commenced in April 2017, mainline works were completed in September 2018. Accommodation works and landscaping will be completed by December 2018.

Cllr. Roche acknowledged the immense work that was done on this project and thanked D. Pender for all his assistance throughout the project.

N83 (formally N17) – Claregalway Traffic Calming – the scheme consists of providing traffic calming for a length of 960 metres approx. on the N17 (N83) and 75 metres approx. on the N18 (R381). Works include provision of footpaths, cycle paths, drainage works, pavement works and four pedestrian crossings. D. Pender stated its intended to go before the Elected Members for Part 8 planning in Jan/Feb 2019.

Cllr. Connolly stated that the pedestrian crossings will undoubtedly lead to delays in traffic in Claregalway and suggested that an overbridge should be built to accommodate pedestrians.

Cllr. Joyce requested if someone could inspect the current road markings in Claregalway. They are very faded and require being remarked in the interest of public safety.

N59 West of Letterfrack – Main works contract is planned to commence in August 2019 to avoid the busy tourist season. Works are anticipated to conclude in Q4 2019.

N63 Liss to Abbey Realignment – the proposed scheme will comprise of widening and realignment to Type 2 Single Carriageway, with a 2m cycle track/footway being incorporated into the scheme. It will also include a new bridge over the Abbert River which is part of the Lough Corrib SAC. TII have issued approval to proceed to Phases 1-3. Tender documents for the procurement of consultancy services have been drafted with appointed of consultants expected by end of Q1 2019.

Cllr. Maher questioned the status of the N65 – Loughrea and the public lighting. D. Pender confirmed that this was a pavement overlay, that phase 1 was complete and that phase 2 will be done in Q1 of 2019. TII made it clear their issue with the lighting.

Mr. Egan questioned the current position with regard the Bearna/Ros an Mhíl route. D. Mitchell stated that Galway County Council have applied for funding for same. It will be known in Jan/Feb if this will be approved, from there it can nominate the preferred route from the proposed five routes. This will be brought before the Elected Members in due course.

Cllr. Maher stated that Galway County Council should seek additional funding for the maintenance of roads that are been taking over from TII. Also, county wide traffic management plans require review and funding should be sought to undertake same.

4. Any Other Business

Cllr. Roche raised the issue that the SPC should be meeting 4 times per annum and that the committee are neglecting some of the major schemes coming under its remit, for example LIS and speed limit review etc.

Cllr. Connolly stated that the SPC is an oversee committee in terms of policy and not operational issues. Roads programmes are dealt with a municipal district level and the SPC should be focusing on policy only.

D. Mitchell stated that very short notice is received from the Department with regard various schemes and there would insufficient time to turnover operational issues if they were required to be brought before SPC each time. He also stated that the members of the committee can certainly put forward suggestions for consideration.

It was confirmed amongst the members that the SPC meeting scheduled for September was cancelled due to inability to make a quorum. Cllr. Maher stated that dates for 2019 should be agreed in advance. The members agreed the dates for the first two meeting in 2019 as 14th February and 18th April at 10a.m.

Comh. Ó Cualáin stated that there was funding received in for two piers and to date works have not been completed, specifically at Droim, Leitir Mór. The seaweed industry is growing and there is missed economic opportunity to gain from this due to poor infrastructure.

Cllr. Connolly stated that he is very disappointed with the proposed Greenway Strategy submission and felt that it did not reflect what was agreed by the Elected Members, it wasn't in line with the National Transport Strategy or the Development Plan. He intends at raising this issue again with the Executive.

Cllr. Kinane raised concern with regard road users not reducing speed when entering villages. It was agreed to seek funding from TII for electronic speed limit signage as a County wide initiative on the proposal of Cllr. M. Kinane, seconded by Cllr. Maher.

Cllr. Kinane requested that Material Damage Claims process be included as an Agenda item for the next meeting.

Cllr. Cuddy raised the issue of traffic management in Oranmore, specifically vehicle parking causing obstruction, parking on double yellow lines and if enforcement of illegal parking could be increased. D. Mitchell stated that there is a community warden for Oranmore, but the same warden is also responsible for the whole of Athenry/Oranmore Municipal District. It is not intended to put a full-time warden specifically for Oranmore.

Cllr. Joyce questioned if there was a long-term vision for Galway City and that a 40 year plan should be put in place to address transport issues in Galway. D. Pender stated that the N6

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GCCR is one project of a possible ten future projects. It is an enabler project that if it proceeds, will give scope for more projects to come on stream.

Cllr. Finnerty, Cathaoirleach, requested a letter to issue to express thanks to Mr. Fran McEvoy, A/Senior Executive Engineer, who has recently resigned from Galway County Council to take up a promotion in Galway City Council.

5. Date for next meeting

It was agreed to hold the next meeting of the Roads and Transportation Strategic Policy Committee on Thursday 14th February at 10a.m.

Críochnaigh an cruinniú ansin.

Approved by Michael Finnerty
Cllr. Michael Finnerty
Cathaoirleach
Roads & Transportation Strategic Policy Committee

Date: 14th February 2018