

**Minutes of Meeting of Infrastructure Strategic Policy Committee
held on 30th May 2022 via Zoom**

PRESENT: Cllr. Jim Ryan (Chair)
Cllr. Michael O'Meara
Cllr. Michael Fitzgerald
Cllr. David Dunne
Cllr. Declan Burgess
Cllr. Kevin O'Meara
Cllr. Mark Fitzgerald
Mr. Marcus O'Connor, Director of Services, Roads, Transportation and Infrastructure
Mr. Denis Holland, Senior Engineer, Water Services
Ms. Michèle Maher, Administrative Officer, Roads
Mr. John Nolan, Senior Engineer, Roads Capital
Mr. Kieran Malone, A/Senior Engineer, Roads Operational
Mr. James Hayes, Senior Staff Officer, Roads (Minutes)
Mr. Michael Tierney, Executive Engineer, Roads

APOLOGIES: Mr. Liam Brett, Senior Engineer, Roads Operational
Mr. Gerard Shanahan, PPN (Social Inclusion)
Mr. Brian Pope, PPN (Environment)

1. Minutes of Meeting held on 28 February 2022 and Matters Arising

Cllr. Jim Ryan welcomed everybody to the meeting. The Minutes of the meeting of 28 February 2022 were proposed by Cllr. Michael Fitzgerald and seconded by Cllr. Michael O'Meara. There were no matters arising.

2. Update on Water Services in County Tipperary

Mr. Denis Holland gave a presentation updating the meeting on Water Services in County Tipperary. Topics included the Transformation of Water Services to Irish Water and Water Services Developments in County Tipperary.

a) Transformation of Water Services to Irish Water: The presentation covered background, past and recent developments and the current position in respect of the transformation programme.

b) Water Services Developments in County Tipperary: The presentation covered updates on Town and Rural Water Supply Schemes, Watermain rehabilitation, National Disinfection Programmes, First Fix Programme, Source Rationalisation Programme, Wastewater Treatment Plants, Sewerage Schemes, Networks Portfolio Delivery, Irish Water Small Towns and Villages Programme, National Recovery and

Resilience Plan 2021, National Water Resources Plan and Non-Domestic Water Charges.

Cllr. Jim Ryan thanked Mr. Holland for his detailed presentation. Cllr. Ryan raised the issue of raw sewerage going into the River Suir in Thurles during periods of heavy rain. Mr. Holland noted that this issue had been raised at the last Plenary Council meeting, and commented that there is a combined waste water/sewerage pipe at issue. He will discuss the upgrade of Thurles Treatment Plant with Irish Water as the situation is not acceptable, separate pipes are required, and Irish Water are aware of the matter.

Cllr. Michael Fitzgerald thanked Mr. Holland for his comprehensive report. Cllr. Fitzgerald noted that when Irish Water came into being in 2014 it changed how we do business. Cllr. Fitzgerald expressed concern regarding future changes, particularly the ability to contact local personnel directly, after raising an issue with Irish Water. Cllr. Fitzgerald asked if the local contact options will change.

Mr. Holland responded that the relationship with the Members and Local Authority will change once the Transformation Programme is completed, it is a question of when and how. The proposal is that Water Services functions will be carried out directly by the utility Irish Water. Contacting local personnel directly will no longer be an option.

Cllr. Michael O'Meara welcomed the presentation. He expressed his disappointment that Cloughjordan was not included for investment for additional wastewater treatment capacity. Cllr. O'Meara requested an update on the proposed pipeline from Parteen to Dublin as there seems to be a lot of activity. Cllr. O'Meara raised an issue regarding NWRS supply and historical problems with pressure/reservoir pump, and requested an update on the matter.

Mr. Holland responded that Cloughjordan is on the list but not prioritised and shared Cllr. O'Meara's concerns. Water Services are engaged with Irish Water, but all proposals are dependent on the availability of funding. Regarding the Dublin pipeline, a workshop was held on the 6th December 2021. Site investigations are continuing which will inform the design. Water abstraction legislation is an issue. Legislation is due to be published in the next week or two and enacted before the end of the summer. With regard to the pump issue Mr. Holland undertook to engage with Irish Water.

Cllr. Mark Fitzgerald thanked Denis Holland for his report and looked for an update after the meeting on issues in Ballinure/Dualla, where there is an issue with switch tripping affecting pipeline/reservoir. Cllr. David Dunne raised the issue of a boil water notice in Carrickbeg, Carrick on Suir and concerns around the lack of communication and information from Irish Water. Cllr. Dunne noted and welcomed Grangemockler being one of 12 wastewater treatment plants to be upgraded under the National Recovery and Resilience Plan 2021.

Mr. Holland took on board the comments and advised that engagement with Irish Water is ongoing and he will pass on the issues of concern.

3. Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project

Mr. Michael Tierney gave a presentation to the meeting titled 'How we light Ireland is changing for the better'. The presentation included details on:

- the overall aim of the Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project;
- the project nationally;
- how the project relates to Tipperary including 11,600 lights to be upgraded to LED;
- reduction in energy use by approximately 55%
- cutting our carbon emissions significantly
- and reducing energy and maintenance costs.

Mr. Michael Tierney noted that Tipperary County Council is investing €7m in the retrofit project (loan finance) and savings on energy and maintenance costs will fund the loan repayments over a 10-year period.

Cllr. Jim Ryan thanked Mr. Tierney for his presentation. Cllr. David Dunne commented that this was a good news story and he was in favour of the project and the loan finance. Cllr. Dunne commented that once the loan was paid off there would still be savings to use elsewhere. Cllr. Dunne expressed concern regarding energy supply and public lack of awareness of how the public lighting system worked.

Mr. Michael Tierney responded that energy figures are locked in for two years and will then have to be reviewed. Mr. Marcus O'Connor commented that electricity costs will have an effect on the Council but not on the viability of this project. The Council may have to put more money into electricity costs going forward.

Cllr. Ryan commented on the current street light policy and only providing lighting within the 50km zone. Cllr. Ryan gave a few examples where lack of lighting was an issue including examples of areas which are dark when children are walking home. Mr. O'Connor indicated that the answer is not to install public lighting in all areas, climate change is a huge issue affecting us nationally, as a county and as a society and is the driving force behind our public lighting policy. He noted that 50% of the Council's energy bill is on lighting and a reduction in energy consumption is necessary. Installing additional lights outside speed limit areas is not policy, and compact and proper development is required.

Cllr. Jim Ryan mentioned examples of footpaths outside 50km zones but not public lighting. Cllr. Michael Fitzgerald supported the comments of the Chairperson. He spoke of starting a discussion and having a workshop with a view to looking at the current policy and changing it if necessary. He stated that where there is a lot of

footfall we should look to facilitate lighting. Cllr. Mark Fitzgerald agreed with the Members comments, and noted that it was not proposed to erect public lighting in a random manner. However it is the function of the Committee to review and amend policy and he supported a future discussion at the policy committee.

Cllr. Ryan stated that the committee is requesting a review of the policy on public lighting, as it is felt that a change is needed. Mr. O'Connor stated he had no problem with a policy discussion and agreed that it can be placed on the agenda.

4. N24 Cahir to Limerick Junction – Preferred Transport Solution

Mr. John Nolan, Senior Engineer, provided an update to the meeting on the N24 Cahir to Limerick Junction project. Mr. Nolan gave an overview of the different elements of the overall transport policy for the project including: Active Travel, Public Transport, Rail, Demand Management Measures and Road Component.

Mr. Nolan proceeded to give a detailed update on the route starting at Pallasgreen, Co. Limerick to Cloughabreedy Junction on the M8 near Cahir. Discussion particularly focussed on the Tipperary Town bypass element of the project.

Cllr. Michael Fitzgerald thanked John Nolan for his presentation. Cllr. Fitzgerald stated it was being referred to locally as a red-letter day when the proposed route corridor was announced. Cllr. Fitzgerald thanked Mr. O'Connor and his officials for the good public consultation and private consultation arrangements in relation to the project, noting that Arup Consultants did an excellent job. He noted that the main objective locally is to bypass Tipperary Town. Regarding some local concerns, he had met with the Ballykisteen Golf Club and Hotel to discuss the project. All in all, he noted that the route is a good one and the priority is to see it progressed.

Mr. John Nolan echoed the views on Arup Consultants. They brought a very experienced team to the Public Consultation days at Ballykisteen Hotel and understood the value of consultation. Some people are disaffected, and the project managers will deal with them respectfully and help them through the process. Mr. O'Connor commented on the very good level of engagement. While there will be mixed views it is a very good transport plan. Mr. O'Connor indicated he had met with the Tipperary Racecourse, it was a good meeting and he was happy with the outcome. He would encourage anybody with concerns to make an appointment to meet with the consultants during the public consultation phase now in progress. Mr. O'Connor noted that the Council's next priority will be around funding to progress and implement the project.

5. Any Other Business

Cllr. Mark Fitzgerald raised the issue of Contractors leaving the R692 in a poor state and wished to commend Willie Corby, District Engineer for dealing with the issue over the weekend, coming out on site on Sunday to meet the Contractors.

6. To note date of next meeting

Monday, 5 September 2022, at 10.00am.

The members agreed to proceed with meetings via Zoom and will review later in the year.

Signed: _____

**Cllr. Jim Ryan
Cathaoirleach**