

County Wicklow Public Participation Network

Representative Report

Please complete and return to countywicklowppn@gmail.com within one week after each meeting.

Name of Committee: Transportation, Water & Emergency Services SPC

Name of Representative: Tim Morgan

Date of Meeting Attended: 20th January 2020

Most important actions or issues to emerge from a County Wicklow PPN perspective:

The Agenda for the meeting was as follows:

1. Minutes of meeting held on 29th of Oct 2019
2. Update presentation on N11/M11 J4 to J14 project – TII & KNRO
3. Updates on Suggested Policy Areas for review and SPC contribution
 - Pay Parking Bye-Law review
 - Public Transport impact of Climate Change from Climate & Biodiversity Action SPC
 - Full time fire service in North Wicklow – bring original review to SPC
4. Any other business
5. Date of next meeting

1. Minutes of previous meeting

Clr Derek Mitchell chaired the meeting. The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

2. Update presentation on N11/M11 J4 to J14 project – TII & KNRO

Virginia Kangley of the Kildare National Roads Office gave a PowerPoint presentation on the N11/M11 road project. She is the Council's contact within KNRO for this project. She said some misinformation about the project is being circulated on social media.

The scheme has to comply with the rules of sustainable development for capital investment projects and with the Public Spending Code, Common Appraisal Framework, and TII Project Management Guidelines & Project Appraisal Guidelines.

Phase 1 of the project dealt with the concept and feasibility studies as well as constraints mapping. Phase 2 is concerned with stakeholder engagement, which includes meetings with NTA and Irish Rail, and liaison with environmental bodies such as OPW & NPWS.

Based on the feedback received the options will be refined leading to an emerging preferred option (EPO).

Other interventions include Bus Connects, DART, Rail and Luas extension.

Public transport – options/proposals:

- Bus lanes and Park & Ride = Public transport 1
- Rail improvements = Public transport 2
- Additional lane + Junction upgrades = road improvement
- Road improvement + bus lanes + Park & Ride = Public transport & road

All options will be tested along the entire corridor of the project. The project consists of one corridor and 6 deviations (routes) along it. All options will be considered simultaneously.

The public consultation has resulted in 1,020 submissions being received and 125 meetings have taken place since the November consultation. Consultations with 127 other stakeholders have taken place including

Government departments, Environmental and Heritage groups, Community groups, transport providers and utility providers.

Most of the feedback received has been on the Pink route (one of the two routes to the east of the Glen of the Downs which runs closer to Delgany) and the least feedback has been on the Green route (a short section that links to the Bray Southern Cross Road).

Most submissions concerned Kilmacanogue. The main subject was impact on land & property and impact on communities. Key themes:

- Most opposition to the off-line routes was from land owners and communities.
- There was strong support for public transport improvement especially rail.
- Land-use planning criticised for promoting development in study area without public transport access.
- The perception is that the motorway is the predetermined solution.
- There is agreement that the current situation cannot prevail.

Submissions on the project may be made up until the oral hearing stage. The preferred option is due to be announced by mid-summer 2020.

Cllr Behan said it is still possible that public transport can be a significant part of the solution.

Cllr Mitchell felt there is too much focus on the road and no proposal for rail improvement. He also said that Wicklow is poorly served by trains and that the rail line is underused. He thought that buses may not be able to run freely under the current proposals. He feels the ultimate solution should involve road, bus and rail and that the rail line must not be excluded.

3. Updates on Suggested Policy Areas for review and SPC contribution

- Pay Parking Bye-Law review

A summary sheet on the managed parking system drafted by Bray District Administrator David Forde was circulated. Following a tender process the contract to provide Managed Car Parking Services for Arklow, Bray, Greystones and Wicklow was awarded to APCOA Parking Ireland Ltd for a period of 2 years starting from 4th June 2019.

A review of the parking system is due as it is now over 6 months since the contract was signed. The bye-laws, which consist of a main part with an appendix for each Municipal District, are not going to change more often than every 2 years. Changes to charges are at the discretion of each MD.

The update also gave the income from parking charges in each of the 4 main towns. It ranged from €240k for Arklow to €1.137m for Bray with fines totalling almost €278k for all districts.

- Public Transport impact of Climate Change from Climate & Biodiversity Action SPC

The Climate & Biodiversity Action SPC have met only once so far. We will receive areas of work that the Climate SPC would like us to look at, e.g. the impact of public transport on climate change.

- Full time fire service in North Wicklow

The report on the provision of a Full-time Fire Service in Bray and North Wicklow was circulated at the meeting. The 25-page report dated 1st Dec 2014 was prepared by the Chief Fire Officer, Aidan Dempsey.

Bray is one of a number of large towns in Ireland without a full time fire service and its population of around 30,000 means it falls within a group of towns with retained fire services.

The number of incidents attended by Bray fire service has decreased by around 25% over the period from 2008 to 2013 in line with national trends. Louth County Fire Service full time staffing is used for comparison purposes in the report.

A full time fire service for Bray would cost more than the current service. It is estimated that the additional annual cost of replacing the 2 retained crews with 2 full time crews could be in the order of €3-4m.

The report concludes that a full time fire service in Bray would improve the response times by 5 minutes per crew. Research indicates that roughly half of those who die in fires are dead before the fire service has been called and that best practice recommends a greater focus on fire prevention.

A representative of the County fire service said that response (turnout) time has reduced over the years and is down to around 6 minutes. He also said the fire service is called out for instances of flooding and gorse fires, and can look at other aspects of fire safety.

Cllr Behan thought that the report should be updated in terms of population increase since 2014. Cllr Blake was concerned that existing part time stations in the county could be closed if a full time station was to be located between Bray and Greystones.

4. AOB

Cllr Blake requested that the ring road around Blessington should be progressed. The new road has been taken off the program. TII may be able to help. A report is to be sent to the next MD meeting.

Tomas Peare (CIF rep) complained about the Irish Water regulation that requires a new connection to the main if a house is more than 15m away from the main. He felt that this was not practical for small residential developments of 2 or 3 houses where a new main would have to be installed from the road with the associated cost.

Cllr Mitchell felt that the SPC needs to become more expert on public transport and that the council should make an input on the subject.

The rep thought that some consideration should be given to the construction of a new rail line in view of the existing line being only single track, that it is restricted around Bray Head and that it is vulnerable to coastal erosion in places. Cllr Behan felt that a new rail line should be given some consideration.

A member mentioned that an App has been developed to help with car-pooling and parking to enable people to come together to travel in 1 car.

It was felt that 2027 is too long to wait for a solution to congestion. Greystones Park n Ride is already full.

M Flynn engineer said that the only model that can be used to test various travel/road scenarios lies with the NTA and there is a delay in getting any proposed solution run on the model.

County Wicklow is bound by the Greater Dublin Area (GDA) Transport Strategy 2016-2035. Cllr Mitchell said there is not much in it regarding rail transport.

M Flynn felt that instead of inviting Arup to give us a presentation on public transport that we should tell Arup what we want in terms of public transport!

5. Next Meeting

The next SPC meeting will be on 20th April 2020 at 2.30pm.