

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: 30th September 2020 (via Zoom)

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

The Agenda for the meeting was as follows:

1. Minutes of 20th January 2020
2. Update of TII Projects
 - M11/N11 Junction 4 to 14
 - M11/N11 Interim Bus priority Scheme
 - N11 Parallel Road at Kilmacanogue
 - N81
3. Update of NTA Projects:
 - 2020 Schemes
 - Sustainable Transport –
 - Covid-19 Interim Mobility Measures
 - July 2020 Stimulus Package – Active Travel
 - Other GDA related Transport projects and possible consultation submission & policy inputs from this SPC
4. Fire Services Policy Updates
5. Update on National LED retrofit scheme
6. Update on Transportation, Water & Emergency Services items arising from Climate Action SPC
7. Any Other Business
8. Date of next meeting

1. Minutes of previous meeting

Cllr Derek Mitchell chaired the meeting. Cllr Joe Behan said he was not happy having a meeting via Zoom. The minutes of the previous meeting of 20th of January were agreed.

2. Update of TII Projects

M11/N11 Junction 4 to Jct 14: (The following 3 paragraphs were reported prior to the meeting.)
The Outcome of Phase 1 Concept and Feasibility (Scheme Feasibility Report dated 28th November 2019) was that a strong justification for advancement of the project to Phase 2 existed. A number of feasible transportation measures meriting more rigorous assessment were identified, including road improvement options, demand management solutions and public transport alternatives.

Currently Arup are working on Phase 2 Options Selection which when completed should identify the preferred option. The announcement of the Emerging Preferred Corridor is estimated during Q4 2020. This date has been delayed due to the restrictions of access to the study area during March/April and part of May 2020. It is envisaged that an online Public Consultation Process will be conducted for the announcement of the Emerging Preferred Corridor during Q4 2020 and into Q1 2021.

A number of contracts are ongoing including land valuation. Environmental Assessment and topographical survey work for Phase 3 is also being progressed in tandem with the above.

It was stated that the Emerging Preferred Corridor report was not available at the time of the SPC meeting but it is still expected during Q4 of 2020.

M11/N11 Interim Bus priority Scheme: (The following paragraph was reported prior to the meeting.)
Concurrently Arup are investigating the feasibility of providing an increased level of bus priority between Loughlinstown Roundabout and Kilmacanogue. This is being considered only as an interim scheme in advance of the full N11/M11 Junction 4 to Junction 14 Improvement Scheme, ongoing development of the design along the N11 is progressing in line with direct consultation with both the NTA and TII.

The report received from Arup (presumably from Phase 1) does not show any evidence of study of bus lanes to the south of Kilmacanogue. It seems feasible to have bus lanes to the north of Kilmacanogue and a new Park n Ride.

N11 Parallel Road at Kilmacanogue: (The following 2 paragraphs were reported prior to the meeting.)
Phase 1 work in the median is currently nearing completion. Phase 1 involves the widening of the N11 into the central median on the southbound carriageway to provide an additional running lane. Progress has been slowed while working in the vicinity of an existing high pressure gas transmission main and other services.

Phase 2 will see the works switching to the verge side of the southbound carriageway, with traffic moving on to the new road surface, along with the construction of the Traffic Islands for the delineation of the Service Road. The construction of the concrete bases for the Gantries along the service road will be undertaken also during this phase. Construction works will be complete by late 2020/early 2021.

It was added that progress on the N11 Parallel Road has been affected by Covid-19 restrictions.

N81: (The following paragraph was reported prior to the meeting.)
The N81 Knockroe Bend Realignment project is located on the N81 south of Hollywood Cross and consists of the realignment of the N81 over a distance of 0.85km. The construction work commenced in August 2019 and the new alignment was opened to two-way traffic on 24th July 2020. The overall construction work is expected to be completed during October 2020.

It seems from the meeting that it is taking too long to provide a footpath and bus stop to connect the realigned road to Hollywood. Cllr Blake also enquired about progress on the proposed Blessington Inner Relief Road which crosses the Wicklow County boundary into Kildare.

3. Update of NTA Projects

A list of 19 projects were submitted prior to the meeting together with stage of progress. These included Bray Dart Interchange, Bray Footbridges, Bray Strand Road Cycle Scheme, Swan River Greenway (Bray Permeability Scheme - Oldcourt area), Bridge from Port Access Road to Wicklow Station, Arklow to Shillelagh Recreational Trail Scheme, Arklow and Greystones Transport Studies, Bray Main Street Bus Priority & Decongestion Scheme and Killarney Road/Vevay Road Cycle Scheme.

2020 Schemes, Sustainable Transport (Covid-19 Interim Mobility Measures, July 2020 Stimulus Package – Active Travel).

Under Covid-19 Interim Mobility Measures the following was reported prior to the meeting:

- *Works to facilitate changes to current street layouts to address social distancing and revised travel patterns*
- *30 Schemes approved for County Wicklow - €950,000 allocated*
- *Further funding application submitted for €755,200*
- *Progress to Date:*
 - *9 Schemes Complete*

- 3 Schemes under construction
- 2 Schemes at procurement stage
- 16 Schemes at design/planning stage

Under July 2020 Stimulus Package - Active Travel Measures the following was reported prior to the meeting:

- Funding of €52m for LAs in GDA, Cork, Limerick and Waterford
- Projects to support Pedestrian and Cyclist movement and to enhance accessibility
- Wicklow Co. Co. received funding allocation of €3.34m for 25 projects
- Wicklow Projects include:
 - Construction of cycle ways
 - Construction of footpaths
 - Installation of Pedestrian crossings
 - Road resurfacing
- Works must be completed by 30 November 2020

Cllr Behan stated that not all the proposed projects were universally accepted (for example by shopkeepers). He said the NTA did not consult very widely and Councillors should know about the projects earlier.

Cllr Fitzgerald said there had been consultation on the proposed one-way traffic system for Arklow. Some of the projects are still at an early stage. A Council official said there has been no consultation yet on the Swan River Greenway. The Arklow–Shillelagh Greenway is to go to An Bord Pleanála soon.

Other GDA related Transport projects and possible consultation submission & policy inputs from this SPC. This item relates to the proposed DART+ project for the Maynooth rail line. Cllr Mitchell updated his 2018 report 'Rail & Commuter Transport Plan for East Wicklow' in order to use it as a submission on the DART+ Maynooth Line project.

Cllr Mitchell maintains that the impact of the DART+ project to Maynooth will be to cancel direct trains into Dublin from Wicklow/Wexford in order to allow western trains onto the north-south line. At peak times the passengers would have to transfer from a diesel train (shuttle) to a DART at Greystones. The effect of this change would be to bring commuters onto the already congested N11.

Colm Lavery, Director of Services, raised the Council's concerns about the DART+ to Maynooth with the NTA and they said there would be no impact on the SE rail line. They also said the proposal should not impact on any mainline services. However Cllr Mitchell said the 240-page DART+ Plan shows no diesel trains north of Greystones at peak hour.

Cllr Mitchell decided to make a submission on his own behalf to the public consultation process and he hoped to raise the item again at the full Council meeting on 5th October 2020.

The closing date for submissions to the Dart+ Maynooth Line Public Consultation is 7th October 2020.

Cllr Mitchell's concerns about the potential impact of DART+ plan were included in articles in the Wicklow Times of the 29th of September and the Wicklow People of the 30th of September.

4. Fire Services Policy Updates

Aidan Dempsey, CFO, prepared a brief report for the SPC meeting. In it he says tenders have been received for a new kit for firefighters. Also applications have been received for vacancies in the fire service. A course will be run in November for selected applicants. It is hoped that candidates who successfully complete training will take up duties in 2021.

The 2014 report on a full time fire service in Bray and N Wicklow has been updated. At the request of senior management the report content is to be independently assessed and verified. This to be done by Dr Brian Sweeney who is the former Chief Fire Officer of Strathclyde Fire and Rescue Service in Scotland.

Cllr Behan questioned the proposal to only take on 4 additional firefighters in Bray. He said the review should not be the end of the process and that a full time fire service for N Wicklow should be established.

It was stated that Bray is operating as a 1 pump/1 crew for the time being due to safety concerns and is backed up by Greystones. It will be back to 2 pumps when recruitment process is completed. Cllr Behan suggested that Bray is operating at 50% capacity and is creating a gap at Greystones.

5. Update on National LED retrofit scheme

The Director of Services said the project has been delayed due to Covid-19. A meeting had been held with the team in Kilkenny County Council. The SW is ahead. It is hoped to have a contractor in the E region by February 2021, a consultant by October 2021 and issue tender by February 2022.

Cllr Blake found this to be a disappointing timeline. Cllr Mitchell said it seems to be the case that lights are replaced by LEDs as repairs come up. Colm Lavery said it was preferable to contact the Council about faulty lights than SSE Airtricity.

6. Update on Transportation, Water & Emergency Services items arising from Climate Action SPC

(The following paragraphs were reported at the meeting.)

The Climate Action Team must report on progress of the actions in the Climate Adaptation Strategy to the Climate Action Regional Office (CARO) by 16th October 2020. Returns will be collated for a national report.

The Climate Action Officer has met with a number of Directorates, including Transport Water & Emergency Services (TWES), to discuss actions in the Climate Action Charter and Climate Adaptation Strategy. The discussion was predominantly around the actions which will be delivered by the relevant directorate. In the coming weeks the Climate Action Officer will agree which actions will be delivered by each directorate and these actions must be incorporated into the Annual Service Delivery Plans for 2021.

The majority of the actions for delivery by TWES relate to weather events, business continuity and reporting during and after weather events. This work is presently being carried out but not being recorded in a standard manner. A protocol relating to weather events, taking the procedures from the MEP into account, is required.

7. AOB

Cllr Blake asked if there was any update on the review of speed limits. The answer was that there was no progress due to Covid-19.

It was felt that the safety of cyclists may have to be taken into account. There is a 5-year cycling plan for the county and it was said the guidelines may change.

8. Next Meeting

The next SPC meeting will be on 25th of November 2020 at 9.30am (via Zoom).