

TRANSPORTATION, WATER & EMERGENCY SERVICES SPC

21 February 2022 in the Council Chamber & via Zoom

Present: In Chamber – Cllr. Joe Behan, Helena Dennehy, Aiden Dempsey plus others.
On Zoom – Deirdre Forde, Allyson Minion, Julia Glass, Conor Page

1. To note minutes of 23 September 2021

Approval of minutes.

2. NTA Schemes Update – Active Travel Investment Grants 2022 (Conor Page)

Aim is to promote awareness and uptake of travelling with purpose using your own energy, that is walking or cycling, and improving options for those choosing alternatives to cars. For 2021, 61 projects were undertaken, with 21 projects completed, including Rathnew to Ashford, Greystones Road – Windgates, Bray Seafront Plaza, Rathdrum Train Station and Blessington Improvement Works. The funding application for 79 projects sought €11,692,000, of this 63 projects were awarded an allocation of €9,007,500.

3. TII Funded Projects

M11/N11 Junction 4 to 14 Improvement Scheme

Option Selection Report published on www.n11m11.ie on 14.12.21, which marked completion of Phase 2. Phase 2 preferred option included blend of road-based and public transport components. Road-based measures seek to address capacity/congestion by removing 'local trips particularly from Bray and Kilmacanoge' and closing several primary junctions. Active travel measures are to include pedestrian and cycling facilities along new parallel service road. Phase 3 Design and Environmental Evaluation due to commence Q1 2022. Funding for N11/M11 has been suspended by TII for 2022 and progress has been suspended as of Jan 2022. Some of the work completed to date may now be obsolete and need revisiting. Environmental Surveys underway will be concluded.

Funding:	Phase 1 Feasibility	01.11.2018 – 31.10.2019	cost €1,074,539
	Phase 2 Preferred Option	01.11.2019 to date	cost €1,918,459
	Total so far		€2,992,998
	Phase 3 Funding sought for 2022 is €3,523,000 to cover detailed design, environmental evaluation, site investigation, ground investigation & archaeology.		

Note: Given overall funding constraints by Government, TII is unable to provide funding for the M11/N11 Junction 4 to 14 scheme. TII fully supports the scheme and once funding is available from Government, TII intends to re-commence the planning and design of this scheme.

M11/N11 Bus Priority Interim Scheme

Arups are progressing development of preferred option as Phase 2. This runs from Loughlinstown Roundabout to Junction 6 (Bray/Fassaroe) in both the north and south

bound directions, and from Junction 9 (Glenview) to Junction 8 (Kilmacanoge) in north bound only. Elements of Phase 3 (Design & Environmental Evaluation) are also progressing.

N11 Parallel Service Road at Kilmacanoge

Works were completed in 2021. It is intended to amend the speed limit from 60 to 100km/h as intended by Part 8 for the scheme. This will be considered as part of the county wide speed limit review in coming months.

N81 Irishtown West, Whitestown Lower, Hangman's Bend & Tuckmill Lower 'N81 Four Studies'

Following completion of Phase 1 Feasibility Study for this project, WCC requested approval from TII to progress to Phase 2, Route Selection. Funding has been allocated by TII to progress this project in 2022.

N81 TII Vehicle Restraint Systems (VRS) Programme 2021

This involves 9 complete barrier replacements and 6 barrier repairs. Contract awarded to CHM, works commenced on site November 2021 and are continuing.

Blessington Inner Relief Road

Prelim ecological and arborist surveys for preferred route have been identified and designed, and landowners contacted. Ground investigation to start January 2022. Ecological surveys to be completed by end of Q1 2022. Planning submission to An Bord Pleanála mid 2022.

TII Allocation for 2022

TII have allocated €2.66m to Wicklow for 2022 for improvement works to National Roads. This is a reduction compared to €6.85m allocated in 2021. Note that of the €2.66m allocated for 2022, €1.036m is allocated specifically for improvement works on the N81.

Arklow Shillelagh Greenway

Route identified, ecological surveys completed, landowners informed of decision to acquire land by Compulsory Purchase Order. NIS and planning docs being prepared.

Wicklow Greystones Greenway (TII Funded)

Feasibility report complete and preferred route identified. Additional funding of €350,000 secured to undertake ecological surveys and prepare planning docs.

Blessington Greenway (TII Funded)

Route has been identified and letters of consent received from landowners. Planning docs under Section 177AE of Planning & Development Act lodged with An Bord Pleanála for approval on 14.01.2022.

Queries raised following the presentation on TII funded projects:

1. *Council seek deputation to meet Minister of Transport over non-funding of M11/N11 main scheme and postponement/cancellation of the bus scheme. The main scheme and bus scheme need to be looked at together in a holistic approach.*

2. *Promises had been received to increase trains from Arklow. Arklow has now become a carpark and train carriages are full from Wicklow on commute to Dublin every day.*
3. *An estimate of the public money expenditure that has gone into the scheme studies was requested. 12 years of study have been undertaken since 2010.*
4. *Over €1m of funding has been allocated to the N11 this year.*
5. *Progress of a bus stop at Hollywood was also mentioned.*

4. Other Road Projects & Operations Update

Funding of €13.6m has been allocated to non-national roads. A meeting with district engineers this week will clarify breakdown of this funding.

LED ongoing until Q1 2023.

Dart Rail – network crossing at Bray and Greystones needs addressing.

Park&Ride (NTA) at Ashford, Greystones and Fassaroe.

Issue of traffic noise at N11 off ramp has had a major effect on local residents. There is no funding for noise mitigation measures. The proposal to increase the speed limit will also increase noise. Another deputation needed.

There is no pedestrian footpath linking Kilmacanoge and Bray. Suggestion for route was tabled.

Cycle network also needs consideration to enhance safety for cyclists and drivers.

5. Fire Services Policy Update (Aidan Dempsey) 2021 Review

Key points as follows:

In 2021 incidents rose to 1287 with 1493 mobilisations. 30% of incidents were potentially serious, 35% were malicious or careless urban and rural fires (mainly Wicklow – Boghall Rd, Fassaroe/Ravenswell, Charlestown & Sea View), and 16% were false alarms. Bonfires and malicious urban fires peak around Halloween and have increased by 75% in the last 2 years, with an increase of 100 incidents per year. Ambulance assists increased by 50% to 110.

Climate change incidents increased by 50% with 20 flooding incidents (including 11 incidents on 25 Dec in Shillelagh, Enniskerry, Dunlavin, Baltinglass, Rathdrum, Ashford & Kilmacanoge), 17 trees down from Storm Barra on 7 Dec.

Defibrillator programme in appliances has been rolled out using public donated funds. 15 new defibrillators have been provided.

Training has been ongoing through pandemic.

In the World Rescue Challenge, a team from Wicklow County Fire Service won 2 gold medals for the Incident Command Challenge and the Trauma Challenge.

The confined space rescue training has been developed into a national training programme.

Training has also been developed and undertaken to tackle fires in electric cars.

Training centre at Bray Station has undergone extensive upgrade and refurbishment.

Baltinglass and Dunlavin Fire Stations both receiving €1m for new fire stations; €450,000 for new fire engine for Bray; €300,000 for water tankers for Greystones and Rathdrum;

€210,000 upgrade of Bray training centre; €125,000 for 2 jeeps, 2 community fire safety vans & 1 second hand engine for training centre; €100,000 for equipment upgrades.

Summary spend €39.55 per capita, County Wicklow has 10 Fire Stations for a population of 142,425.

A national review of the Retained Fire Service has started which includes opinions from all retained firefighters.

Comments raised following presentation:

1. *Thanks for hard work over Halloween due to anti-social behaviour. Suggest early removal of material before fires are built up.*
2. *Training centre is going from strength to strength. A full-time service is needed for Bray. There has been a massive increase in population in Cherrywood, Bray and Greystones. Government has undertaken survey of retained firefighters. Term and conditions for retained firefighters is not keeping pace with cost of living. Preference for full time service for quicker response times and lives saved. Retained firefighters coming through Bray traffic to the station for calls causes major delays.*
3. *Bray Fire Station are about to recruit. At the moment only 1 pump can be manned. Recruitment will take place from south side of Bray if possible, to alleviate need for retained firefighters to get through Bray traffic.*
4. *A full-time station at Bray would need additional funding then this wouldn't affect the other 9 stations.*

6. Water Services Policy Update (Helena Dennehy)

Serious issue with Irish Water not answering any questions that are raised by SPC. Questions are to be chased up and re-submitted. Appalling how councillors are treated and the level of ignorance by IW. Service Level Agreements are to be pushed out to 2026. At least former WCC staff will still be involved with IW and it is important to keep local expertise. Once the agreement is over there will be no local expertise.

A nursing home at Arklow has been quoted for a connection by IW which is 3x the cost quoted by a contractor. Meanwhile the beds are lying empty. The rights of IW were questioned. Suggested that IW were building up their own finances for various projects. €2.8m allocated for IW works in small towns and villages. Works in Aughrim are now finished and spare funds will be used in IW works in Tinahely.

7. AOB

None

8. Next Meeting

Date to be confirmed in May 2022