

Transport Strategic Policy Committee

Tuesday 7th September @9.30am – 11.30am

Attendees on Videoconference:

Mayor Colette Connolly Councillor GCC	Cllr Mike Cubbard Councillor GCC	Cllr Alan Cheevers Councillor GCC	Cllr Noel Larkin Councillor GCC
Cllr Niall Murphy Councillor GCC	Mr Shane Foran Community Network	Mr Paul O'Donnell Community Network	Ms Elaine Brick Bus./Commercial Sector
Ms Susan Loughnane Senior Project Mgr. GCC	Ms Arlene Finn Admin. Officer GCC	Mr Michael Lally Executive Engineer GCC	Mr David Greally Executive Engineer GCC
Mr Kenny Deery CEO Galway Chamber	Mr Enda McGuane Galway Chamber	Mr Pat Hardiman ICTU	

Attendees Present in Council Chambers:

Cllr Frank Fahy Chairman TSPC	Cllr Clodagh Higgins Councillor GCC	Mr Uinsinn Finn A/Director of Services	Mr Jimmy Callan Senior Engineer GCC
Ms Anne Ruane Admin. Officer GCC	Ms Kasia Garvey Assistant Engineer GCC	Ms Aoife Keane Clerical Officer GCC	

Uinsinn Finn, A/Director of Services opened the meeting by advising members that Cllr. Fahy, would be delayed this morning and Cllr. Clodagh Higgins had agreed with Cllr. Fahy to Chair in his absence.

It was also agreed that the first item on to be taken this morning would be Item 3. Presentation by Kenny Deery, CEO of Galway Chamber.

Agenda Item 3: Kenny Deery, CEO of Galway Chamber on their "Get Galway Moving" campaign

Kenny Deery, CEO of Galway Chamber introduced his Galway Chamber colleague, Enda McGuane and thanked the Chair and members of the Transport SPC for allowing him the opportunity to address the members on their "Get Galway Moving" campaign and to detail engagement with the various stakeholders to date.

The presentation set out the context and role of the Galway Chamber who represent the Employees and Business sector of Galway City with a strong focus on engaging with various bodies and organisations. The Chamber's strong working relationship with Galway City Council and the NTA and the Chambers commitment to making Galway City a better City to live and work in was emphasised. The challenges were acknowledged but key for the Chamber to contribute in a positive way would be by understanding engagement and participating in dialogue between City Council Staff and the Chamber of Commerce going forward. It was also noted that the Chamber would be in a position to assist the GCC with resources, communication and political amplification. For example, by positively engaging with the GCC in supporting the recruitment of 18 new staff members.

Cllr Clodagh Higgins thanked Enda McGuane and Kenny Deery for their presentation and members raised the following queries.

- Paul O'Donnell, queried if the Galway Chamber had any recommendations to assist in developing policy that would guide Galway City Council and staff.
- Mayor Collette Connolly sought clarification on communications and queried how the GCC should apply for additional staffing. She noted that she has previously called for a regional NTA office but did not get support for that proposal. Cllr. Connolly expressed concern at the number of cars in the City and suggested, removal of on-street parking, developing Park & Ride, and removing the loading bays from Eglinton Street and Forster Street.
- Cllr Mike Cubbard suggested that the GCC may be spreading itself too thin and should instead focus on a few projects instead.
- Cllr Clodagh Higgins agreed that Kenny Deery made a valid point about the 18 GCC vacancies and said that the political will is there with Fine Gael and GCC and HR could push this recruitment.

In response Enda McGuane responded that it is important to work with the current road map and deliver on the policies that are already in place and understand where the road blocks are to progressing these policies. He said that as the bulk of NTA work is in Dublin, should we consider looking for an NTA office in the west. Or assist the growth in Electric Vehicles by putting recharging stations in housing estates.

Kenny Deery pointed that it is important to keep working on sustained projects such as achieving carbon targets and to look at models across Europe as ways of operating will have to change.

Uinsinn Finn thanked Kenny and Enda for their presentation. He stated that this all aligns with GCC thinking and positive amplification of GCC projects would be very helpful. Recent progress on smaller projects such as cycle parking areas, 18 new bus shelters with 8 more in progress and initiatives such as School Streets, were all supporting sustainable travel. The School Streets initiative was driven by the community and it is hoped that this initiative will assist in reversing the trend of bringing driving children to school.

He pointed out that the GCC Transport Strategy focus is on major projects which includes:

- The Cross-City Link
- Pedestrian Footbridge at the Salmon Weir
- The N6 GC Ring Road
- Dublin Road Bus Corridor
- Cycling Network
- Martin roundabout
- Park and Ride

It was noted that Galway City Council has secured eight electric vehicles for their fleet, which will be soon launched by Mayor Connolly. In relation to staff it was pointed that the Galway Transport Strategy was adopted in 2016 and the total staff dedicated to the Unit would be 18 in total. Recruitment for some priority projects have been completed to date.

Shane Foran suggested having a GCC policy on charging points due to the potential for obstruction of footpaths with vehicle charging points.

Agenda Item 1: Minutes of the Meeting of the 25th May 2021

Cllr. Frank Fahy took over Chair and thanked Cllr Clodagh Higgins for Chairing the meeting in his absence and he also thanked Kenny Deery and Enda McGuane for their presentation.

The minutes of the Transport SPC meeting dated the 25th May 2021 were proposed by Cllr Clodagh Higgins and seconded Cllr Mike Cubbard.

Agenda Item 2: Matters arising

- Update on when new signage re speed limits would be rolled out.
- Concern was raised in relation to the extension of outdoor dining with access issues for wheelchair and buggy accessibility.
- Request for update on trial of residential only parking in Woodquay.
- Update on Brown Roundabout and speed trap on Laurel Park.
- Request for a representative from GCC to look at Merlin Lane with Cllr. Cheever's to review the speed limits as there is a serious issue with high speeds in that area. He suggested engaging with the management of Merlin Park Hospital and the Residents.

The Director confirmed that at audit of Speed Limits would be carried out this year and any ambiguity between the legal limits applied to the public roads and the signage will be rectified. It was noted that poles for have been erected at identified locations already and signage has been ordered. It was expected that this work would be complete by the end of year.

It was pointed out that the issue of safety of pedestrians and access for disability is an operational issue and will be followed up and put in the work programme for the 2022 financial budget. There is currently no dedicated Engineer to carry out such works, however, it was agreed that this could be progressed with a meeting with Mayor Connolly, Ruairí Lehmann and Jimmy Callan to discuss this further. Cllr Mike Cubbard asked if a site visit with himself and GCC staff could be arranged to review the Browne Roundabout as there are safety issues at this junction.

Cllr Frank Fahy said that there was a plan for the Browne roundabout to be changed to a junction and bus lane through the hospital and asked for an update on this plan.

The Director gave an update to the members on the current and proposed projects and in particular the N6 Multi Model Corridor. He advised that the plan was to replace all the roundabouts in Galway with signalised junctions. Currently there are no immediate plans to replace Browne roundabout and while it is an active project it is not top priority at present. He said that there are differing priorities at Browne Roundabout as there is a significant amount of public transport through Browne and the conflicting priorities need to be developed. The plan is to separate out the national route and the Shantalla / UHG route by taking public transport off that junction and bringing through Shantalla and UHG. This option has been agreed in principal with the HSE after the new ED building has been built. He agreed that it is an important project and is happy to discuss further with Cllr Mike Cubbard after the meeting.

Cllr Frank Fahy re-iterated that the Brown roundabout is not a safe junction for cyclists or pedestrians and queried the HSE role in holding up work on Browne. It was pointed out was that there is a conflict between the needs of the GTS (Galway Transport Strategy) and the National Priority route as there is a lot of public transport routes running through Browne Roundabout.

Cllr Noel Larkin asked if an underpass could be considered for Browne similar to what exists in other major cities in Europe. The Director confirmed that this was considered but that there would be a high environmental impact with that option. He suggested that a presentation of the preferred options for the Browne Roundabout could be circulated and presented at the next SPC meeting.

Agenda Item 4: Work Programme for agreement with the following suggestions:

- School Streets, School zones (presentation can be made)
- Active Travel Schemes (presentation can be made)
- Parklets – Support Outdoor Summer Recreational Activities
- Toilet / welfare facilities for bus drivers (correspondence received)
- Fleet electrification & E-Charge Strategy
- Public Lighting Retrofit to low energy LED and asset upgrade
- Special Speed Limits & Traffic Calming
- Updates on GTS Projects

- **School Streets, School zones**

Arlene Finn, Administrative Officer, gave a presentation to the members on School Streets (Sraideanna Scoile) and advised that the presentation given is a summary of the draft final report which is currently under review by project and funders (Scoil Iognáid, National Transport Authority).

Cllr Frank Fahy thanked Arlene Finn for the presentation. He said he was on the board of Scoil Iognáid, and they used to have a lot of issues with parking so thanked GCC for a job well done on this scheme.

Cllr Clodagh Higgins said residents associations have contacted her regarding this scheme wanting to implement in their schools / areas and issues which have arisen.

Mayor Colette Connolly wanted clarification on the legal status of this type of school zone. She queried if a safety assessment has been carried out around the slippage issue in the road markings. She asked about the long term implications on Parking permits as parents get used to parking for free near the school and the scheme ends. Mayor Colette Connolly asked about carrying out an assessment of cycling parking areas as teams are targeting these areas to steal bikes. She said that locked bike parking areas with roofs will provide security and protection from the rain.

Paul O'Donnell said that the project is a good model for future community engagement and shows that proactive approach works. He would like to see the scheme rolled out to second and third level institutions.

Shane Foran said that children do not understand statutory road signs and asked if there were any plans to change the signage in place on the school streets.

Cllr Alan Cheevers suggested rolling out the scheme to other areas; he said there is enthusiasm in Merlin College to implement it and asked when funding could be extended to other schools.

Arlene Finn responded that additional schools have been selected and there is a programme of work planned for the next year. She said that the purpose of this report is to aid schools by sharing information on the scheme and to allow interested schools to plan and prepare. NTA funding is covering the scheme. The following was pointed out.

- Signs for School Streets are legal statutory signs.
- Slippage has been tested and guidance on the finishes will be issued.
- NTA framework states that covered bike shelters can block the line of sight to the road which has an impact on safety but covered bike parking can easily be put on the school grounds.
- Improvements are being recommended and reviewed such as the hours the streets are blocked off.
- Other schools can roll out this scheme if interested; they need to ensure buy-in from school and community and need available car parking nearby. The suitability of the school depends on the catchment area; how far away parents are coming from and if the school is the right location and has resources. Third level institutions can implement this scheme themselves as they have their own grounds and will not need to close off a road.
- Regarding the drivers & children not understanding the statutory road signs indicating a one way street and cycling off in either direction will be considered to see if improvements can be made.
- The impact on air quality around the school was being tested but it has proved difficult to assess as the tubes placed around the school to measure the air quality were not collected due to Covid restrictions. The scheme is assumed to have had an impact on the numbers walking, cycling and scooting to school but it is difficult to measure due to the change in traffic patterns due to the Covid pandemic.

The Director pointed out that the scheme helped alleviate congestion in front of the school front door and dispersed the cars around a broader area which would have had a positive impact on traffic. He thanked staff and parents etc. for their assistance in this scheme. He said that this pilot will assist other schools nationally in implementing their own schemes. It will not work in every school but this report will assist schools in considering if they are suitable for the scheme.

Jimmy Callan said that Gardaí support for the scheme was key as they were there on opening day to encourage drivers to comply. The signs are statutory sign but GCC does not have an enforcement role.

Cllr Frank Fahy suggested skipping the rest of the work programme and moving to considering the agenda for the next SPC meeting.

- **Parklets – Support Outdoor Summer Recreational Activities**

A link to the new presentation on Parklets from the architect will be circulated after meeting. Responses to this presentation should not be sent to the architect but to roads@galwaycity.ie

Agenda Item 5: SPC Agenda for next meeting

Uinsinn Finn asked the members to consider what they would like to have on the agenda for the November, 2021 SPC Meeting. He suggested circulating the presentations prior to the meeting, taking as read and going straight to queries.

It was agreed to discuss the below items at the next SPC meeting:

- Active travel
- Speed Limits
- Update on Browne Roundabout
- N6 Multi Module Corridor
- Post work presentation on Kirwan Junction

The Director suggested leaving the work programme on the agenda for every meeting and members can add / remove items as they see fit.

Paul O'Donnell queried the terminology as he said it is not an actual annual work programme. In response the Director advised that he chose that term as it reflects its status as a living document and can be updated regularly.

Mayor Colette Connolly pointed out that only policy matters should be discussed at the SPC and specific programmes should not be on the agenda.

Details were given of the roads@galwaycity.ie email where that specific operational queries / requests can be) and not put on the agenda.

Agenda Item 6: AOB

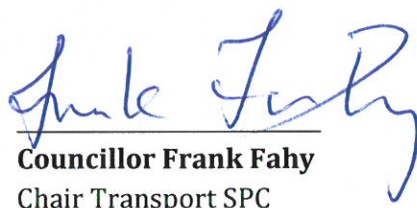
Cllr Frank Fahy asked for a change of time for the next SPC meeting to 11.30 am and all SPC members agreed to this change of time.

Cllr Frank Fahy queried if Kirwan roundabout is connected to traffic management control room in City Hall. He suggested putting advanced signage up due to confusion of drivers using the junction and they are finding it difficult to navigate.

Next meeting: Tuesday 9th November @11.30am – 1.00pm*

****Please note change of time***

Signed:


Councillor Frank Fahy
Chair Transport SPC