

Transport Strategic Policy Committee

Tuesday 8th February 2022 @9.30am – 11.30am

Minutes of blended meeting held on the Zoom platform and in the Council Chamber, City Hall, Galway

Present:

Cllr Frank Fahy Chairman TSPC	Cllr Alan Cheevers Councillor GCC	Mayor Colette Connolly Councillor GCC	Cllr Mike Cubbard Councillor GCC
Cllr Clodagh Higgins Councillor GCC	Cllr Noel Larkin Councillor GCC	Cllr Niall Murphy Councillor GCC	Mr Shane Foran Community Network
Mr Paul O'Donnell Community Network	Mr Pat Hardiman ICTU		

In Attendance:

Mr Patrick Greene Director of Services	Mr Uinsinn Finn Senior Engineer	Mr Brian Madden Staff Officer GCC	Mr Marcus Keane Senior Staff Officer GCC
Ms Arlene Finn Admin. Officer GCC	Ms Aoife Keane Clerical Officer GCC		

Apologies:

Mr Michael Lally Executive Engineer GCC	Ms Anne Ruane Admin. Officer GCC		
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Item

Chairman Cllr Frank Fahy welcomed the Transport SPC members and Council Officials to the meeting which was held in the City Council Chamber and on the Zoom platform.

1. Minutes of meeting 16th December 2021

Members asked that the following matters of accuracy with regards to the minutes of the 16th December 2021 be recorded. That the next meeting of the SPC will take place on Tuesday 10th May 2022 not Tuesday the 10th March 2022, as stated erroneously in the minutes. The minutes of the Transport SPC meeting dated the 16th December 2021 were proposed by Cllr Clodagh Higgins and seconded by Cllr Mike Cubbard subject to above amendment.

2. Matters arising

The following matters were raised by the SPC members:

- Cllr Mike Cubbard requested a more in depth debate and consideration be made before proposing to remove the Browne Roundabout and emphasised his concern regarding traffic flow and the danger to cyclists and pedestrians crossing at this roundabout. A solution for safer walkways and cycle ways needs to be looked at.

- Cllr Niall Murphy queried the next options for Browne Roundabout. He also queried Active Travel being removed from the agenda and asked when an update will be received on this.
- Shane Foran stated that the previous minutes should reflect that Kirwan Junction is not compliant with the guidelines and queried the motion taken at the last meeting.
- Cllr Frank Fahy re-iterated issues re safety for pedestrians and cyclists, regarding time it takes to cross and noted that this is not a safe junction or fit for purpose.
- Paul O'Donnell requested that documentation for the SPC be circulated two weeks in advance of meetings.
- Cllr Alan Cheevers requested the removal of one of the two sets of pedestrian lights from the Kirwan Junction to improve traffic flow and lessen the rat running through estates. He noted that there are 12 sets of traffic lights from Galway Clinic to Salthill which is having an impact on traffic flow.

Uinsinn Finn, Senior Engineer responded to the queries:

- The SPC standing orders state that motions are reflected in the minutes and raised at the Council Meeting by the Chair.
- The Browne roundabout is on a national primary road and is part of the National Network and is a GTS bus route. He acknowledges that the roundabout is lacking in pedestrian facilities, but noted that adding pedestrian crossings would have significant impact on traffic flow and impact public transport.
- Clarification on the planning approach to the Browne upgrade was given, six options are being developed, public consultation and a preferred option would go before Council for a vote in due course. It was noted that Fran McEvoy and the TII Road Safety Engineer visited the roundabout a few weeks ago and it was noted that a safety audit would be required for any new crossing. It is not expected that construction works on the Browne Roundabout upgrade project can be started in the next year, however, improved pedestrian routes through the roundabout are being considered in the meantime.
- The minutes of SPC minutes record decisions made and not all points made during the meeting will be reflected in the minutes.
- Responses to safety issue regarding the Kirwan Junction have been comprehensively covered at previous meetings.
- Issues in relation Corrib Park could be address outside the meeting.
- Active Travel was removed from the agenda as it became out of date but this item can be reinstated to the agenda or discuss under AOB, if requested.

Patrick Greene, Director of Services gave the following responses:

- There is a currently a public consultation process in place reviewing the roads from Dublin Road to Moneenageisha. The process has gone to tender and should address Cllr Alan Cheevers query when complete.
- He noted that the Kirwan Junction is still being monitored and tweaked. The key issue is the high volume of traffic and he hopes that the Ring Road will alleviate this.

3. Work Programme 2022

Uinsinn Finn advised that the work programme can be used to select agenda items, he reminded all that it is a live document which can be edited by the Councillors throughout the year.

The Councillors suggested that the following items be added to the work programme:

- City Development Plan
- E-scooter & E-bike Policies
- Toilets for bus drivers

It was also suggested that Parklets be removed from the work programme and the Electrification and e-charging items be consolidated into one item.

Uinsinn Finn noted that a policy on e-scooters is being drafted nationally and Local Authorities will be guided by this legislation in drafting byelaws.

Patrick Greene noted that the City Development plan is in the public consultation phase and needs to progress through the agreed process. Gaps in the Development Plan can be discussed at the SPC but they will not be giving presentations on it.

Uinsinn Finn advised that the City Development Plan sets the standard and regulates in particular non-Local Authorities projects. The Development Plan is not a work programme.

Paul O'Donnell discussed his proposed structure for the work programme. He would like process to agree the work programme be guided by the previously agreed mediation process where GCC staff, community representatives and the Chair have a meeting to discuss items to be included.

Uinsinn Finn said that the Work Programme would be redrafted and circulated before the next meeting. If councillors have comments on the redrafted Work Programme, they should email them in to roads@galwaycity.ie.

4. Update on Legislation

Arlene Finn gave an update on the Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2021. This legislation contains a variety of measures linked to today's discussion regarding e-scooters as well as off-road scramblers, insured drivers and the rapid implementation of Bus Connect. Arlene Finn will circulate the synopsis to the SPC members.

Councillors raised the following queries:

- The impact of lithium batteries on the environment
- E-scooter parking on the footpath

Cllr Frank Fahy noted that there is currently a lacuna in the law regarding e-scooters and the Government will be implementing legislation on this.

Uinsinn Finn noted that GCC has no role in the legislation of e-scooters, we have no power to stop anyone on the road and use of the road is governed by the Gardaí. Legislation should provide clarity on this. He noted that GCC may have involvement with shared use schemes.

Uinsinn Finn noted that lithium batteries are also used in electric cars. Patrick Greene advised that this issue should be discussed at the Environment SPC. He noted that a change in the segregation of waste is being progressed there.

5. Agenda for next meeting

Councillor suggesting putting the following items on the agenda for the May 2022 SPC:

- Policy on Speed Ramps
- Public access to SPC / online availability

It was noted that public access and making the SPC available online is being discussed at the Corporate Policy Group.

The priority of items on the work programme / agenda was discussed. Uinsinn Finn clarified that items on the work programme are listed as they are raised and the work programme is on the agenda at every SPC. It is up to members to prioritise and address individual items.

Cllr Niall Murphy asked if his written submissions on Parklets were passed onto the design company. Mayor Colette Connolly suggested putting in a Parklet on Bowling Green outside Nora Barnacle's house.

The issue of scooters being left on roundabouts and at the side of the road was discussed. It was suggested that byelaws could be introduced to combat this practice.

Patrick Greene advised waiting until legislation has passed before introducing byelaws on e-scooters.

6. AOB

The issue of buses parking on the bus lane all night outside the Coach Station and at Prospect Hill, and causing obstruction was raised. The Director Patrick Greene advised that this matter is before the High Court and so cannot be discussed, but advised to report to the Gardaí.

Shane Foran raised the issue of the Salthill Cycleway and the importance of stakeholder analysis. The Senior Engineer noted that the plans for the Salthill Cycleway were brought to cycling groups for input but the procedure was different due to its temporary nature. Most projects may provide up to 6 options to be narrowed down.

The issue of illegal parking and delivery vehicles exceeding loading/unloading times at Forster Street and Eglinton Street was raised.

It was noted that the Community Wardens continued to enforce and issue Fixed Penalty Notices for such offences, and if not paid then proceed to Court. He noted that there are plans in the city centre transport plan to remove the right turn at Newtownsmith and change to a one way street.

Next meeting: Tuesday 10th May 2022 @9.30am

Signed:


Councillor Frank Fahy
Chair Transport SPC

