

**Minutes of Meeting of Planning, Economic Development and Infrastructure Strategic  
Policy Committee held in MS Teams on Tuesday, 19 September 2023.**

**Members Present:**

Councillor Sean McDermott (Cathaoirleach)  
Gerry Creamer  
Councillor Brendan Barry  
Councillor Enda McGloin  
Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire  
Councillor Justin Warnock  
Stephen Clancy  
Colm McGrath  
Seán Ó Conláin

**Officials Present:**

Emer Connolly  
Lorraine McMorrow  
Justin Fannon, Senior Executive Officer Housing Capital

**Apologies:**

Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn  
Michelle Reynolds, Staff Officer

**1 Adoption of Minutes**

**1a** Minutes of Meeting 30th May 2023

**Proposed:** Councillor Enda McGloin

**Seconded:** Councillor Brendan Barry

**1b** Minutes of Meeting 27th July 2023

**Proposed:** Councillor Finola Armstrong Maguire

**Seconded:** Gerry Creamer

**2 Matters Arising from the Minutes**

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

**3 Update on the LECP**

David McGlinchey from KPMG provided an update of the progress of the new Leitrim LECP.

In his presentation he outlined the new LECP has completed stage 4 of the LECP preparation process, this involved the development and finalisation of the draft plan.

Mr McGlinchey informed the members of the updated Goals, Objectives and Outcomes.

The LECP is will now go to the full council for approval and will be submitted to the Minister, followed by publishing and implementation.

Discussion followed on the contents of the new LECP.

Cllr Justin Warnock raised the following issues:

- The issue of safeguards in relation to population numbers in Leitrim and how the LECP will prepare for future population increases.
- Biodiversity Loss as a result of Sitka spruce, he questioned whether the LECP will have actions to address this.

Seán Ó Conláin questioned how the LECP will integrate with the plans for Tourism, Heritage, Climate Action etc.

Cllr Sean McDermott highlighted that the Blueways play a big part in the tourism and economic development. A lot of community plans have been developed with a focus on job creation and encouraging younger people to live and work in Leitrim.

Mr McGlinchey confirmed that the LECP includes all the latest census information and will be updated continually as the information is made available. During the two-year implementation plan, the plan will change to react to new data and incorporate new strategies as they are being developed.

Cllr Justin Warnock stated that the Dept will override decisions in relation to forestry and planting of Leitrim. He questioned whether the Biodiversity Officer as any standing on forestry planning decisions.

#### **4 Update on National Roads**

Mr Terry McGovern, Senior Engineer provided an update on National Roads in Leitrim. The total budget for National Roads in 2023 is €7.1 million and this funding is used to complete a wide variety of road projects including Major Projects, Minor Realignments, Pavement Schemes and Safety Schemes. There is currently one Major Road Scheme in development in Leitrim - The Carrick to Dromod Project which is currently in the design stage. Mr McGovern also provided an overview of four Active Travel Schemes being delivered across the county.

Discussion by the elected members followed.

Cllr Justin Warnock queried the progress of works on the N15 in Tullaghan.

Cllr Enda McGloin sought an update on the active travel works on the Drumshanbo – Corryard Wood.

Seán Ó Conláin questioned whether the road system will be integrated into the SLNCR?

Cllr Sean McDermott highlighted his concerns over the lack of hard shoulders on the National Primary Routes.

Mr Terry McGovern responded to the queries and highlighted that the preliminary design for the N15 has been completed and will go out for public consultation by the end of the year. The full scope of the active travel works in Drumshanbo will be done in the coming years, there is a difficulty in getting contractors to complete the current works.

Mr McGovern confirmed that the proposed SLNCR route options will be published shortly and the designs will always try to incorporate linkage to existing roads.

On the subject of hard shoulders on National Roads, Mr McGovern confirmed that the traffic volume will dictate the design of the roadway. Currently the level of traffic on the N16 does not justify any hard shoulders and it would be difficult to receive funding for hard shoulders on the N16, as the road must follow the road design standards.

Cllr Sean McDermott highlighted that once the realignment works are complete, the level of traffic could significantly increase in the future on the N16, therefore the need for a hard shoulder would be evident.

## **5 Update on the Leitrim Tourism Strategy**

Ms Sinead McDermott, Tourism Officer delivered a presentation on the progress of the development of the new Tourism Strategy for Co. Leitrim. She provided an overview of the 5 key areas for creation of a Strategic Tourism Framework for County Leitrim and future trends that will be incorporated into the new strategy including Green Tourism and Digitalisation. A Tourism Workshop and Conference is scheduled to take place on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

Cllr Sean McDermott thanked Sinead for her presentation. He highlighted the need for the upgrade of the sewerage systems. There are sewerage issues affecting rural accommodation providers. He also highlighted that there is no hotel in the Manohamilton MD area.

Cllr Finola Armstrong Maguire queried whether feedback has been received from visitors regarding shop opening times and availability.

Cllr Enda McGloin stated that the biggest challenge affecting Leitrim tourism is the lack of

bed nights available. The Shed Distillery gathers a lot of business but is only day visitors only. Cllr Sean McDermott highlighted the lack of buses available in Glenfarne for visitors to the Rainbow Ballroom and also the difficulty in obtaining accommodation in Leitrim.

Sinead responded to the queries by acknowledging that the lack of tourist footfall is a national problem. There is a lack of accommodation available across the country and this is negatively affecting tourism numbers. She explained that there is no real answer to the problem yet.

Cllr Finola Armstrong Maguire outlined that a lot of mainland Europeans want live music from 6pm to 9pm. She requested that the new strategy focus on workshops on the nighttime economy to fill the gap in the market.

Cllr Sean McDermott raised concerns about Tourist Operators having to source alternative locations due to lack of accommodation availability. With soaring hotel prices, profit margins are being severely affected.

Sinead highlighted that the number of coach tours are down as private chauffeurs, self-organised travel and self-guided travel have become more popular. She explained how the new Tourism Strategy will focus on strengthening this market.

## **6 Any Other Business**

A request to include the Planning Policy for graveyard headstones in the agenda for the next SPC meeting was noted.

The next Planning, Economic Development and Infrastructure Strategic Policy Committee meeting will take place on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> November at 10.30am on MS Teams.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

**SIGNED:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Councillor Sean McDermott**  
**Chairperson**

**SIGNED:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Lorraine McMorrow**  
**Economic Development**  
**Planning, Economic**  
**Development and**  
**Infrastructure Strategic Policy**  
**Committee**

**DATE: Tuesday, 21 November 2023**

