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**Sligo PPN : Community Representatives Feedback**

**Strategic Policy Committee 2 : Environment and Infrastructure**

July 28 2020

**SPC** – Strategic Policy Committee

**SCC** - Sligo County Council

**PPN**- Public Participation Network

SPC Representatives on SPC 2 : Sharon Eastwood (Community) and Joan Swift (Environment)

NB : These are **NOT** the official minutes of this SPC meeting.

This is a synopsis based on the feedback and perspective of Sligo PPN representatives on SPC2. They are intended only to generate discussion and potential follow up activity for PPN representatives and interested PPN member groups.

**Overall points;**

Detailed meeting with positive actions and proposals put forward by SCC.

**Mobility & Cycling**

Joan Swift led a few discussions on these areas and identified that Sligo was doing better than many places in that it had applied for mobility funding to enable social distancing, but it felt there was still room for improvement. Joan cited Clare Co Co initiatives in Ennis as an example to possibly emulate as they incorporate cycling opportunities into improvements to the public realm. DOS Tom Kilfeather responded that he agreed with many of Joan's points and he said that there were major public realm improvements in the pipeline for Sligo.

General acknowledgement that it was positive to see so many cycling and there is a desire to build on this with education, infrastructure and also incorporating school transport through a large integrated programme.

All new roads now include walking and cycling and biodiversity planting.  New cycling initiatives, including a bike rental scheme similar to the previous Bleeper Bike scheme, to re-start shortly.

SCC have received a lot of complaints regarding Strandhill, but the one-way pavement system was seen as positive by PPN reps and there was acknowledgement that SCC have put in place some great measures to support social distancing on pavements.

It was mentioned in general that the SCC do get a lot complaints, but it is rare to hear back if they have done something well, which is the nature of current social media.

Joan suggested that it was important to find the "yes" voices as opposition was always going to be loud.  She proposed that the council engage more to explain its plans and reasoning and give more ownership to the community sector.

**Road Developments**

SCC identified that O’Connell Street works are now complete and there was generally positive feedback. 4 crossing points provided.  It is to **re-open Thursday 30 July**to help with traffic flow through the town.

The Western Distributor Road is to open in September which will alleviate a lot more traffic jams. It was requested that it would be great to have this finished by school opening but unlikely until mid September at the earliest.

Amazingly the N4 Rosses Point Junction is the 2nd busiest in Connacht.  The one-way system here will cease at the end of August and the roadworks are due to be complete in the first quarter of 2021.  Lots of public complaints received about this work but the process is very complicated and technical.

Overall, it was felt that many projects nationally will be stalled as a result of Covid-19 so it is great that so many project are at an advanced stage across the County.

**Speed limits** –

Identification that ‘Speed limits on rural and urban roads ‘ formed part of the PPN Secretariat  "Shared Spaces and Safer Streets" submission to the Covid mobility Response Team

Speed limits have now been changed in 27 locations and all residential estates now have 30 kph limits.

Acknowledgement that limits take a very long time to amend  - great to have most of these in place – and people need to allow time for the *changes to bed in*.

Again some complaints received and there has been no positive reinforcement of the changes so it would be good to encourage positive submissions where possible as those who shout the loudest will be heard and will have to be listened to in any future changes down the line (though this will not be for some time)

Few notable points;

* Councillor Clarke acknowledged that the new 80 km/h speed limit on sections of the N17 was necessary as there was limited visibility on sections of this road
* Two communities have had speed limits increased on approach roads - Ballisodare N59 road and Grange.  The limits are following the new guidelines. There was a long discussion on this and the situation will be monitored, especially as the limit goes up again at the Church in Ballisodare.
* SCC will look into reducing speeds in City Centre to 30 kph also.
* Positive response by PPN rep on behalf of Skreen Dromard Community Council to the speed reductions there*.*

**Cycling & Walking Infrastructure:**

Condition of pavements from Meadowvale  and Tonaphubble residents Associations were mentioned.  SCC Area Engineer will look into this.

Cllr O’Grady highlighted that Councillors usually get an allocation to address also.  It was mentioned that a lot of funding had been secured to enhance the wider area around the Cemetery area.

**Illegal Dumping –**Great presentation on all actions to date and planned activities.

IMPORTANT DATES –**FREE BULK WASTE DISPOSAL (EG SOFAS) 8 AUGUST AT YOUNGS QUARRY BALLISODARE AND BARNA TUBBERCURRY**

**FREE MATTRESS DISPOSAL 15 AUGUST YOUNGS QUARRY. BALLISODARE.**

400 OLD BIKES TO BE RECONDITIONED AND SENT TO GAMBIA.

**The 3rd Graveyard was mentioned and a receptacle is to be provided here also**

**Litter** – Great Community Response to the rescheduled Spring Clean in July with 50 groups taking part now across the county – and many new picks.  A thank you offered to the many who have been litter picking especially as littering has increased on beaches- suggest nominate key volunteers for Cathaoirleach Awards.

NB.  The Council only has 1 litter warden now and waste enforcement numbers also down - recruitment delayed due to Covid-19. Aptitude test and interviews set for September.

**Beach Bye Laws**

SCC to commence discussions on same in September.

Concerns raised by Birdwatch Ireland re dogs disturbing breeding birds at Mullaghmore SPA.   Suggestion from Cllr Donal Gilroy is to have a piece to video on the area explaining why dogs can create such havoc, maybe include dog warden.  Try and avoid more signage on it as too many signs can detract from local areas.

Vendors at Enniscrone was also discussed and the associate litter issue. Acknowledgement that there are problems there with illegal traders and a few warnings and fines have been issued here.