

QUICK UPDATE FROM SPC ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE 1 JULY 2021

ROADS TO BE ADOPTED BY THE COUNCIL

There was a discussion on the need for criteria to define what roads should be taken over by the Council. There are huge costs to the council on taking over/adopting roads. Currently road maintenance means local roads are repaired on a 30-year cycle, i.e., 5-6% pa. Cllr Healy asked what % of development fees for new builds are allowed for roads as they are not provided with lights, pavements, or few other amenities etc. It was agreed that the criteria should be defined and possibly a working group from this SPC would provide some criteria to be brought to a future SPC meeting.

UPDATES ON INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

This was provided in a written brief, and all thanked for collating this. It was agreed there was no need for this to be read out at the meeting.

SUMMER READY

There was a discussion on the many activities provided to make the County Summer ready:

3 one-off grants have been received from Government to assist the county to be Summer ready due to the pressures of home vacations:

1, Anti-littering grants €50,000

TO be used to allow for additional servicing of existing public bins and additional purchase of bins. All new bins to have 3 separate receptacles for recycling (though it is acknowledged that there will be a % of contamination).

2. Dept Housing, Local Government & Heritage - €52,000

Also put to weekend staff to service public toilets daily, and at weekend cover for servicing public amenities.

3. National Transport Authority - €212,000

Funds for urban areas and summer villages eg. Removable bollards, benches, seating,

Beach Amenity Wardens – 6 POSTS Recruited Twice – ONLY 2 Positions Filled.

This was disappointing news – only 2 of the 6 proposed posts have been filled.

New Bye-laws for Rosses, Strandhill, to come into force one month after council meeting – 24 June. Surf schools at Strandhill working out of vans have been given licenses to work from the upper car park. There was a discussion on updates of other suggestions eg. Overnight camper van parking at airport for summer but this would require a change in planning permission. It was mentioned that there are many opportunities that could be put in place eg. Provision of Service areas for campers. Again, reiterated the need to welcome visitors and accommodate them appropriately.

Responsible Tourism Strategy to be developed as proposed by Cllr Clarke.

PROVIDE MORE OPPORTUNITY FOR STRATEGIC DISCUSSIONS AND INPUT:

SE raised the issue that while we appreciate the opportunity for PPN reps to input into the meetings. We would like the opportunity to have more strategic discussion on specific agenda items. This was agreed with Cllrs Healy & Clarke. E.g. discussion on recreation strategy for the county. Chair agreed to direct meetings to have more strategic discussions.

ACTIVE TRAVEL

Funding is now available for active travel projects but at the moment there is a shortage of personnel to implement the work. Sligo is entitled to 4 active travel staff and recruitment efforts are ongoing but have been delayed by Covid restrictions. A shortage of staff is also a contributory factor to why the 1.5 safe passing signs have not yet been erected throughout the county. JS pointed out that benches for people to rest are needed in the business part of Sligo and not just in recreational areas. There is also a shortage of bicycle parking in the business area.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS

170 schools country-wide were successful in their application to year 1 of this scheme which is managed by Green School Ireland with support from the NTA.. 4 Sligo Schools were successful and others who applied will be considered in future. Green Schools will work with Sligo County Council on the schemes.

31 ACTIVE Footpath SCHEMES IN PROGRESS

It was great to hear of 31 different active footpaths being provided across the county Eg Ballisodare to Collooney.

SPEED AWARENESS ON RURAL ROADS

This was highlighted as an issue. Members of the environmental college had asked JS to raise it. Speeding was a particular issue on the N15 at Rathcormac, Drumcliffe, Grange and Cliffoney and on the roads leading to the major road. Pedestrian crossings were needed in the villages along with speed awareness and enforcement.

REVIEW OF SPEED LIMITS

This was on the agenda, but it was highlighted that this is a standard 5-year review process and was only completed and signed off in Jan 2020 and hence not appropriate for a full review to take place. However it was suggested that particular roads could be brought to the attention of the Infrastructure staff and partial reviews could take place.

SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN *PEE PAPER POO IN OUR LOO*

SE congratulated the council on their participation in the fantastic new video featuring aquatic sports people across the county advocating only pee, paper and poo down our loos.