

CEANTAR BARDASACH CHATHAIR CHILL CHAINNIGH MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF KILKENNY CITY

MIONTUAIRISCÍ AR IMEACHTAÍ CRUINNITHE SPEISIALTA TIONÓLTA
AR 24 MEITHEAMH 2022 AG 2.30 I.N.

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF SPECIAL MEETING HELD ON 24th JUNE, 2022 AT 2.30 P.M.

Mayor, Councillor David Fitzgerald, Presiding.

Present/ I Láthair:-

Councillors/Comhairleoirí: Martin Brett, John Coonan, Maria Dollard, Joe Malone,
Andrew McGuinness & Eugene McGuinness.

Also Present: Mr. Tim Butler, Director of Services,
Ms. Anne Maria Walsh, Senior Executive Officer,
Mr. Ian Gardner, Senior Engineer.

MAYOR'S SUMMONS OF MEETING:

Notice dated 16th June, 2022, convening a Special Meeting for this date was read.

1. City Mobility/Temporary One Way System

Mayor Cllr. David Fitzgerald opened the meeting by welcoming all to the City Chamber for this very significant meeting where Elected Members have to make an important decision for the City. He advised that this is a Statutory Meeting and Standing Orders applies to Members and the Public.

Cllr. David Fitzgerald outlined that the One-Way System was introduced as a public health measure for Covid and was put in place to facilitate social distancing. It was not envisaged that this would be a permanent system. We are all committed to implementing Government Policy in relation to Climate Action, Active Travel, Town Centre First etc. for all of the people.

He stated that the Members are not adopting a Mobility Management Plan today. This is a work in progress and will involve a broad range of public consultations with all Stakeholders. The decision required today is to retain the current One-Way System or revert back to two way traffic.

Mayor invited Mr. Ian Gardner and Tim Butler to make Presentations

Mr. Ian Gardner presented a PowerPoint Presentation on the Temporary One-Way System.

He gave an overview on the following:

- Purpose and Design Rationale.
- Social Distancing Measures – designated streets.
- Issues considered in designing the system.
- Overview on Traffic movement at all junctions and the number of manoeuvres reduced.
- Traffic Analysis – traffic movement figures given for the four major junctions.
- Junction Count Summary Data.

- Comparison of Temporary One Way System with two-way system for pedestrians, cyclists, public transport and motor vehicles.
- Results of survey undertaken in September 2021 – City Traders and general public.
- Improvements carried out to One Way System in November 2021.
- Advice received from Interreg European Peers.
- Outlined further amendments to improve the temporary One-Way System.
- Policy & Design Guidelines – Design Manual – for Urban and Streets, Transport Mode Hierarchy, Town Centre First Policy.

Mr. Tim Butler advised that temporary road closures to facilitate the One Way System was advertised and public submissions were received in June 2022. A total of nine submissions were received. A document summarising the nine submissions were circulated for Members information. Mr. Butler gave an overview on the summary of issues received in the submissions.

He further stated that a sustainable Urban Mobility Plan is required for Kilkenny City for our future generations. We are now operating in a very different environment with Climate Action, Town Centre First, Ten Minute City Concept, Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, Transport Plans etc.

Large scale public consultation will be undertaken over the next two years with a broad range of Stakeholders, State Agencies and many others to advance a Mobility Management Plan for the City. A focus group will be established to assist in the development of this Plan over the next two years.

Mayor David Fitzgerald thanked both for their Presentations. He stated that nine written submissions were received throughout the statutory process. Many other representations have been made to individual Councillors over the last few weeks. As Elected Members we are here to make decisions and have made decisions over the years in changing other streets to One Way such as Kieran Street and James Street.

Cllr. Andrew McGuinness stated that it is the collective desire of the Elected Members to do what is right for the City. He acknowledged that there is divided opinions on the One-Way System. However, we have listened to and considered the presentations, written submissions and all representations. Our proposal is inclusive for all – business, elderly, disabilities, cyclists etc. to ensure that our City Centre thrives for all.

Cllr. Andrew McGuinness proposed subject to detailed analysis by the Technical Staff:

“That we retain the temporary One Way System in advance of Urban Mobility Plan and reconfigure the traffic to change the traffic flow to allow vehicles to travel from Parliament Street to The Parade via High Street and Patrick Street to John Street via Rose Inn Street.

In addition to that we propose the following:

1. *Facilitate short-term/drop off parking bays for elderly or disabled on High Street and John Street.*
2. *Reduce the clutter on our footpaths by removing bollards and obstacles.*
3. *Begin negotiations with private bus operators to establish routes and possibly a central bus hub to reduce the impact on City Centre.*
4. *Provide a two way cycle lane and enough space to facilitate emergency services.*
5. *Begin consultation with business owners in the Market Yard with a view to providing easier and quicker access to their premises and improved commercial loading.*
6. *Provide elderly friendly parking bays at the Market Yard and re-align the section opposite the Tea House to improve the increased parking.*
7. *Provide funding for a shop local campaign to coincide with the introduction of the changes to traffic flow.*
8. *Provide electric car charging points in the Market Yard*

He asked that consultation be undertaken on the Draft Mobility Management Plan.

Cllr. Martin Brett seconded the proposal.

He stated that we need to protect the core of the City. The last three years with Covid have changed peoples thinking and attitudes to everything. The car is the most popular mode of transport; however, this is changing with more pedestrians and cyclists and the City Bus Services. Government Policy is changing with less dependency on cars. Members are conscious that we need to get people into the City and be able to move around freely and comfortably. The proposed Mobility Management Plan will accommodate all. He requested that any proposed amendments/changes to the One-Way System be advertised widely and signage erected. All must be consulted widely to get everyone's views on this new Mobility Management Plan. We are elected to make decisions and to make a difference for all.

Cllr. Eugene McGuinness stated that the original proposal to introduce the One-Way System was a temporary measure and was to revert to two way when Covid restrictions were removed. Proposed changes to the One Way System has been untested and not tried and not based on any data. Changes to traffic in the City will be part of the Mobility Management Plan and will be based on facts/figures and submissions from all interested in the City development. He stated that he will not be supporting the proposal as it is reneging on the earlier decision of the Members in 2020 when the One-Way System was introduced. The current proposal is trying to keep everyone happy.

Cllr. Maria Dollard voiced her concerns that she has not given enough time to consider the proposal made. She stated that she is concerned that the proposed change in the flow of traffic will not improve the situation. The current proposal is completely car focused. We are legally obliged to reduce car omissions. She queried whether the Engineering Staff have considered the proposal now on the table. There is a need to provide control flow for cyclists, remove clutter and bollards on the streets to improve accessibility around the City. More accessible parking spaces is also required. Cllr. Dollard said that there is a huge appetite for climate action and a need to reduce traffic.

Cllr Andrew McGuinness disputed that Members were going back on their decisions. He clarified that the decision made was to revert back post Covid however peoples' attitudes have changed during the last two years and the Elected Members are here to represent everyone. Majority of people want to keep the One Way System with changes/improvements made to it.

Cllr. David Fitzgerald clarified that the proposed changes outlined in the proposal is subject to an analysis by the Engineering Staff to ensure that it works. The timeline for implementation on the proposed changes in the proposal would be early Autumn. He clarified that the main change in the proposal is a change the flow of traffic from clockwise to anti-clockwise. Traffic on the High Street and Rose Inn Street will remain One Way.

Cllr. Maria Dollard and Eugene McGuinness raised queries if the analysis by the technical staff is unfavourable- what happens? Cllr. David Fitzgerald advised that further decisions will be required when the advice is received from Engineering Staff. Cllr. David Fitzgerald advised at this stage that there is a proposal on the table and it has been seconded and he intends to take a vote by a show of hands. The vote on the entire proposal is required.

Cllr. David Fitzgerald called for a show of hands.

Those in Favour: Cllrs. David Fitzgerald, Joe Malone, Andrew McGuinness, Martin Brett & John Coonan [5]

Those Against: Cllr. Eugene McGuinness [1]

Those Abstaining: Cllr. Maria Dollard [1]

Mayor Cllr. David Fitzgerald advised that the proposal has been carried with 5 votes in favour to 1 against with 1 abstention.

Mayor thanked all for their input and consideration of the Temporary One-Way System and the proposed City Mobility Management Plan.

That concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____
MAYOR

Date: _____