Minutes of Strategic Policy Committee 2 – Transportation Policy / Mobility Management and Infrastructure held on Friday 5th September 2025

Present:	**Cllr. Deirdre Cullen** (Chairperson). **Cllr. Pat Dunphy, Cllr. Michael Delaney, Cllr. Joe Sheridan, Cllr. Maurice Shortall, Mr. Michael Duggan, Ms. Eileen Ryan, Ms. Mary Brennan**
In Attendance:	**Mr Seamus Kavanagh – Senior Engineer Roads, Mr Philippe Beubry – Senior Executive Engineer, Joe Scully – Executive Engineer, Ms Claire Buckley – Administrative Officer Roads & Ms Elise O'Hara – Staff Officer Roads.**
Apologies:	**Ms. Mary Mulholland – Director of Services, Mr. Brendan Hickey**

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

Chairperson Cllr. Deirdre Cullen opened the meeting by welcoming all and noted the apologies.

The minutes of the SPC2 meeting held on Friday, 6th June 2025 were adopted, proposed by Cllr. Michael Delaney and seconded by Cllr. Maurice Shortall.

2. Work Programme for SPC2

Seamus Kavanagh spoke briefly on the SPC2 Work Programme and noted that the topics to be included are open for discussion. The suggested topics are speed limit review process, climate action measures, rural water programme, county lanes and road safety. Mary Brennan expressed the need for further information on the topics. Chairperson Cllr. Deirdre Cullen suggested a one-page memo on each topic outlining the essential objectives is distributed to the SPC.

Seamus Kavanagh touched on the topic of local lanes and discussed different strategies to optimise how many lanes are completed. Mary Brennan queried if the county was divided into sections and allocated proportionately, to which Seamus Kavanagh confirmed is the case.

Michael Duggan asked if it was in the remit of the SPC to push the roads strategy in light of the challenges of city traffic. Seamus Kavanagh noted that the strategy is set out in the development plan and national policy.

Cllr. Michael Delaney had a question regarding the new materials for hot and cold tar and if it is as durable as hot tar. Seamus Kavanagh said that the tar is still hot, however, at a lower temperature it uses less emissions to produce cold tar and tests found the product have the same longevity.

3. OPW Flood Relief Scheme Update

Philippe Beubry presented an update on the OPW Flood Relief Scheme. The topics discussed included Trance 2 Pilot Schemes (Freshford/Piltown), Graignamanagh FRS Update, Ballyhale FRS Update and Minor Schemes. Philippe Beubry discussed the different stages each project was at and opened the floor up to questions.

Mary Brennan mentioned that houses have been built on flood plains in the past and asked if houses would get planning permission to build currently. Philippe Beubry suggested that if houses such as the Ardaloo example from the presentation applied for planning now they may not qualify. Philippe Beubry suggested that a conversation may need to be had with the OPW in relation to revising their criteria and looking at the cost benefit. Seamus Kavanagh noted that some of the properties may be there for a long period of time and perhaps were not always on a flood plain.

Philippe Beubry discussed the Scheme Climate Change Adaption Plan (SCCAP) which is a review of flood relief measures delivered previously to consider the effect of climate change. Cllr. Pat Dunphy noted that the progress is slow and questioned the status of the schemes in Piltown and Thomastown. Philippe Beubry informed all that we are awaiting approval by the OPW to progress and that there is currently a shortage of consultants in flood relief. Chairperson Cllr. Deirdre Cullen questioned the logic of reviewing previous schemes if there is a shortage of consultants.

Seamus Kavanagh and Joe Scully discussed CFRAMS and the work that was done in Graignamanagh, initially priced at €9 million but is now estimated to cost €22 million. Seamus Kavanagh mentioned that Thomastown is the next project due to commence. Joe Scully went through the process of getting a project off the ground, mentioning the difference stages such as hydraulic modelling, archaeology and ecology. He also discussed that there is a lack of consultants available with the specific expertise to get projects over the line. Chairperson Cllr. Deirdre Cullen asked if the delays in the schemes should be highlighted to the ministers. Cllr. Pat Dunphy suggested that the issue is put on the council agenda. Cllr. Cullen noted the importance of having a solid policy statement. Joe Scully said that no step can be bypassed and mentioned the delay in Graignamanagh that added an additional year to the project. Chairperson Cllr. Cullen noted that the turnaround time for An Bord Pleanala has improved in recent times.

Rivers in the county were next to be discussed. Cllr. Joe Sheridan asked if the state of the rivers could be contributing to flooding and should we place more focus on cleaning and de-silting. Chairperson Cllr. Cullen said that Kings River was desilted last year and has returned to the same state again. Seamus Kavanagh said that only emergency works are carried out nowadays, and National Parks and Wildlife and Inland Fisheries must be consulted first. Mary Brennan mentioned that banks are being eroded upstream due to farming practices.

4. Mid-Year Roads Update

Seamus Kavanagh gave an update on the TII and Department of Transport Grants and the spend year to date. An update was also given on Kilkenny City's capital projects and the status of each at present. Cllr. Pat Dunphy asked about the funding for the Waterford to Cahir project, suggesting we push for more money from the state. Cllr. Dunphy also highlighted the number of accidents on this road and queried whether this information is relayed to TII. Seamus Kavanagh informed all that the consultants are on board for the project if the additional funding is granted.

Mary Brennan spoke about various safety improvements for cyclists that are needed in Kilkenny city and highlighted some dangers within the town. Chairperson Cllr. Cullen asked that this information is put into one submission and sent to Elise. Eileen Ryan spoke about vegetation on roundabouts and how they obstruct view for drivers and cyclists. Mary Brennan also mentioned the verges on the Sion Road and the difficulty when stepping in off the road from traffic due to the vegetation. Seamus Kavanagh noted that we have 3300 KM of roads in the county and that we would not have the resources to manage all the vegetation in the county.

Chairperson Cllr. Cullen noted that there are no submissions for AOB and thanked all in attendance.

This concluded the meeting.