Minutes of Strategic Policy Committee 2 – Transportation Policy / Mobility Management and Infrastructure held on Friday 6th March 2026

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

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

Chairperson Cllr. Deirdre Cullen opened the meeting by welcoming all.

The minutes of the SPC2 meeting held on Friday, 5th December 2025 were adopted, proposed by Cllr. Michael Delaney and seconded by Ms Mary Brennan.

2. Work Programme for SPC2

Mary Mulholland spoke on the SPC2 Work Programme and noted that the topics to be included are speed limit review process, climate action measures, rural water programme, county lanes and road safety. Mary proposed that the SPC look at Climate Action at the next meeting, discussing sustainable modes of transport and nature-based solutions to support lower carbon emissions. Mary suggested we ask the Climate Action team to attend the next meeting to present on these topics.

Mary proposed the following meeting should be an update on where we currently are with the Speed Limits. A session on Road Safety, involving the community safety inter agency group, and our role in road safety as an SPC was discussed. Another topic for discussion will be the Severe Weather Plan and how severe weather impacts transport. Also, public transport objectives and the role local authorities have in achieving these. Mary also suggested an update on the capital schemes for meeting four.

Chairperson Cllr. Deirdre Cullen said she was pleased to see road safety on the list and also noted that there is a broad range of topics, which she is happy to see. Micheal Duggan asked what policies were discussed previously at the SPC. Mary Mulholland

listed some of the previous topics covered and suggested this year we focus on policy as an SPC, as last year was primarily updates. Mary Mulholland spoke about the Climate Action Plan and advised we look at what actions are to come out of that plan, with Chairperson Cllr Deirdre Cullen suggesting we look at what we achieved and what are our objectives.

Mary Brennan asked if staffing is adequate in relation to the rural water programme. Mary Mulholland advised that the rural water team is now in place following the transition over from Uisce Eireann. Cllr. Michael Delaney said he was happy to propose the Work Programme which was seconded by Cllr. Joe Sheridan.

3. OPW Flood Relief Scheme Update

Philippe Beubry gave a detailed presentation on the Flood Relief Scheme covering the recent flooding events, Graiguenamanagh Flood Relief Scheme, Ballyhale Flood Relief Scheme and the Minor Works currently in Kilkenny. Philippe opened the floor to questions. Cllr. Pat Dunphy mentioned the idea of the ten-year flood program and suggested that the OPW are slow to release funding. Cllr. Dunphy asked if it would be plausible for the OPW to come discuss with the SPC. Michael Duggan agreed and suggested the OPW come in and explain what the current road blocks are for projects. Phillipe said that 6 localities in County Kilkenny were identified in the 2018 CFRAM report and Kilkenny County Council is currently working on the delivery of two schemes (Graiguenamangh-Tinnahinch & Ballyhale). However, we are waiting for the OPW to tell us when to proceed with the remaining four schemes in tranche two.

Cllr. Pat Dunphy queried if there was anything else in the background slowing down the progression of the schemes. Eileen Ryan added that there is no controlling the elements but we are heading in the right direction. Mary Brennan asked if there were clear maps in the County Development Plan that shows where flooding is predicted to occur and suggested there should be zones where planning perhaps should not be granted. Philippe Beubry clarified that flood maps are available on the OPW website floodinfo.ie. Brendan Hickey asked if forecasting is accurate enough, also mentioning the issue of timber floating in our rivers.

Chairperson Cllr. Deirdre Cullen asked Philippe if expertise was a big issue and if we got the go ahead in terms of funding in the morning would we be in a position to move the projects ahead. The Chair also asked if nature-based solutions would be a potential alternative in the meantime. Philippe answered resources were short and that there is a very small number of consultants specialising in flood relief and also a shortage of resources in hydraulic modelling, ecology, etc. Philippe said if the schemes were all released at once it would be a struggle to move them all forward at the same time due to this.

Mary Mulholland mentioned that she spoke with the minister and asked about funding for Thomastown and Inistioge. Mary also asked about environmental regulations and whether this affects out ability to provide the likes of aqua damns or

embankments. It was discussed that an environmental assessment takes time, at least 12 months, as a group our plan to approach this should be proposed to council. Mary Mulholland proposed we write to the minister and ask about the progression of Thomastown and Inistioge. There is an increase in flooding volume and frequency which will impact our roads. Valuable drone footage was captured in the recent floods which is good information to have.

Michael Duggan asked if there was too much regulation. Mary Mulholland said that we have the same EU regulations in Irish Law and that heritage towns are a slower process as there are archaeological digs to be completed which cannot be avoided. Cllr. Pat Delaney said that the speed is not good enough, and if the OPW are not getting enough funding they should be highlighting this. Chairperson Cllr Deirdre Cullen proposed we write to the OPW as an SPC. Mary Brennan discussed the topics of sediment and erosion, which it was decided we would come back to discuss with the Climate Action team.

4. Roads Update

Seamus Kavanagh gave a presentation on the Roads Allocations for 2026 as well as Kilkenny city strategic projects. Seamus gave a breakdown of the funding we are due to receive from TII and the Department of Transport as well as giving updates on what stages we are currently at for strategic projects such as the N24 Waterford to Cahir and the N25. Seamus noted that there was an open day in Mayfair library on the 3rd March 2026 for the North City Transport Project and an open night for the IDA road on the 19th of March in the Hoban Hotel.

Seamus opened the floor up to questions after his presentation. Cllr. Joe Sheridan asked Seamus to clarify where the link road to the CBC school will be, which Seamus outlined on the presentation. Cllr. Pat Dunphy enquired if the N24/N25 projects will stick to the anticipated timelines. Seamus advised that the next stage of the project could potentially take up to three years. Seamus mentioned that there will be a public contact liaison for each project.

Cllr Pat Dunphy queried rural roads, specifically mentioning tar and chip roads and that this type of road is damaging easily. Seamus talked the group through the difference in restoration improvement works (complete restructure) and restoration maintenance (seal and hold for a few more years).

Chairperson Cllr. Deirdre Cullen said we are looking for increased funding across the board, including more funding for public lanes. Chairperson Cllr. Cullen asked if we could offset the amount being spent on pothole fixing on these lanes versus how much it would cost to repair them and send these details on to the minister. Mary Mulholland noted that we made a proposal in 2025 and 2026 for an increase in funding, and we will do so again next year.

Chairperson Cllr. Cullen noted that there are no submissions for AOB and thanked all in attendance. Mary Mulholland advised that a work programme will be put together and issued to the SPC and give the members a week to give comment on what is being proposed.

This concluded the meeting.