



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Climate Action, Environment and Emergency Services SPC

26th January 2021 (Zoom)

Attendees - Councillors: Cllr. Eugene Cassidy (Chair) : Cllr Tom Behan : Cllr. Mike Bray : Cllr. Francis Deane : Cll.r David Gilroy : Cllr. Suzanne Jamal : Cllr. Ronan Moore : Cllr. Gillian Toole ,

Apologies: :

Attendees - Sectoral Representatives: Mr. John Curran , Ms. Karen Mahon,
Apologies:

Officials: Larry Whelan, A/Director of Services, Des Foley, Director of Services , Jarlath Flanagan , Administrative Officer, Caroline Corrigan, Senior Executive Engineer, Majella Farrell , Administrative Officer, Michelle Whelan, Tourism Officer.

Item	Discussion / Action
1.	<p>To receive a report on the Navan Railway Assessment Study.</p> <p>Larry Whelan & Des Foley provided an overview noting the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That since the Railway Order was done in 2011 the line of the rail has been substantially reserved in successive County Development Plans • Meath County Council will be a party to the study but shadowing the Consultants and challenging any issues of concern. • While the business case will feature heavily on capital and operating costs there will be emphasis on other benefits – Consultants to examine costs issues. • Consultant engaged to examine the community benefits of the project including better quality of life , membership of clubs etc • The study will look at the benefits for Navan and beyond and with a 30 year vision that could see a third level education facility, the regional hospital, Parc Tailteann developed .



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While a recent proposal for a rail line between Athenry and Claremorris envisaged a 10k catchment area we would be contemplating a much wider catchment to take in North Meath and other parts of the County. The need to learn lessons from the recent rail study rejection for this line. • While project could be looked at in a wider context and the delivery of a rail line to Donegal/Derry and looking both east and west of Dunshaughlin -Irish Rail said West back in 2011– suggestion made that some development did take place on the old line. • While it is unclear yet if the NTA/ Consultants propose to undertake a customer survey as part of the study – MCC arranging for its own study and with consultation to include Young people and getting their views for 2050 <p>Caroline Corrigan provided a presentation noting the positive impact a railway line would have for Climate Change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air quality improvement along transport corridors and congested traffic areas. • Reduction in noise pollution from vehicles. • Potential decrease in road traffic accidents • Trains are more accessible for wheelchair users and people with mobility aids. <p>All the Members of the committee supported the study.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language should be strengthened in draft County Development Plan to prioritise the delivery of the rail line to Navan and benefiting Commuters from North Meath and beyond. • The current proposal is just to look at the viability of the Pace to Navan line • The impact of the M3 which is operating under capacity – accepted that this may create a disadvantage. • The need to examine the impact of the delivery of Rail Lines to Mullingar and Dundalk. • The costs to community for usage of the service and a fair charging mechanism will be a major factor.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Question as to whether Iarnród Éireann have any spare capacity on existing lines.• The need to quantify the costs of moving from road to rail on environmental terms and including the costs of fines for not meeting our Climate Change targets – accepted all carbon costs to be factored in and Sustainable Development Goals to be applied.• Example of Enfield where circa 40% of employees commute to Dublin but estimated that only 5% use the train – could same argument be used for Navan• Suggested that with Covid and reduced community now may not be the best time for a study and that we should rely on large amounts of data from Bus Éireann, Flexi Bus and other sources where information is already available. Confirmed that information from the review of the Economic Strategy will be used in this regard.• Following extensive investment the attraction of Parc Tailteann for sporting events.• Will the electrification of the line from the City to Pace be continued to Navan if the line is to be approved – envisaged that it will.• The need to counteract the argument that the population demand for public transport can be adequately met by buses – accepted but there is need to look at the various issues surrounding bus transport.• Disadvantages created by COVID and remote working and particularly a likely reduction in the numbers travelling to Dublin – accepted this needs to be examined.• The impact on farm holdings if a different route is approved – this will be examined if it materializes.• The potential of a spur line off to service Ratoath and Ashbourne.• The question of accessibility for Dunshaughlin.• The need to take into account the presence of the freight line from Navan to Drogheda and the impact of the -Dublin Belfast economic corridor.• Important to look at the benefits accruing from a reversal of the commuting patterns and particularly for tourism, business etc.• Suggestion that a Swiss model for rail services is one to be examined