



Planning Department, Leitrim County Council
Áras an Chontae
St. George's Terrace
Carrick on Shannon
Co. Leitrim
N41 PF67
19th April 2022

Re: Draft Leitrim County Development Plan 2023 – 2029

The Department of Transport welcomes the comprehensive Draft Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029. The Department will publish a new National Sustainable Mobility Policy in early April. This will set out a policy framework to 2030 for active travel and public transport to support Ireland's overall requirement to achieve a 51% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. The targets of the policy are aligned with the transport target metrics in the Climate Action Plan 2021 of 500,000 additional daily active travel and public transport journeys and a 10% reduction in kilometres driven by fossil fuelled cars by 2030.

Many of the key policy objectives on transport in Chapter 8 of the draft county development plan align with the key areas of the new sustainable mobility policy such as the importance of integrating land use and transport policies and the delivery of high quality, permeable pedestrian and cycling networks as part of the transition to a climate resilient society.

The draft development plan refers to the current sectoral policy documents - *Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future 2009-2020* (Sections 4.11.1, 8.3, 8.4, 8.7, 8.11.5 TRAN OBJ 14, 12.6.8 EE POL 4, 12.7.2) and the *National Cycle Policy Framework* (Sections 8.3, 13.16.7). It should be noted that the new national sustainable mobility policy will build upon and replace these policy documents. The Council may wish to change the wording of the draft written statement to reflect this.

The policy context on pages 8, 150 & 275 should be updated to reflect the increased ambition in the *Climate Action Plan 2021* published on 4 November 2021 (gov.ie - [Climate Action Plan 2021 \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie))



Since the previous development plan was published there have been important policy developments which are relevant to accessible, integrated and sustainable public transport. The Department of Transport (DoT) considers these should be reflected in the proposed Plan. These include:

- 1) the publication of the “whole of Government” National Disability Inclusion Strategy (NDIS) 2017-2022, which includes specific actions assigned to Local Authorities. For example, action 108 relates to the ‘dishing’ of footpaths and action 109 relates to accessible infrastructure, including bus stops, ‘Dishing’ is where the footpath is sloped for wheelchair access and lack of the same, is often cited as a major concern for wheelchair users.
- 2) the ratification by Ireland in 2018 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). The UNCRPD puts obligations on State Parties to ensure access for persons with disabilities to, inter alia, the physical environment and transportation in both urban and rural areas.
- 3) the DMURS Interim Advice Note – Covid-19 Pandemic Response which was published on the DMURS website in 2020. It includes guidance that designers should ensure that measures align with the principles of universal design, consider Government policy on accessibility for people with disabilities and consult people with disabilities to further appraise measures. References in the draft Plan to the 2019 version of DMURS should be replaced with references to the 2020 DMURS Interim Advice Note – Covid-19 Pandemic Response. DoT requests material on DMURS (page 150, Volume 1, Written Statement) to be updated.
- 4) To make public transport fully accessible to people with disabilities requires a ‘whole journey approach’ which refers to all elements that constitute a journey from the starting point to destination. Local Authorities are a key stakeholder in this regard in the context of ensuring a universal design approach to the built environment, including footpaths, tactile paving, cycle paths, roads, pedestrian crossing points, town greenways and bus stops/shelters.
- 5) The introduction of the Pilot Integrated TFI Local Link Public Transport Project for Co. Leitrim.
The integrated pilot project for Leitrim consisted of the National Transport Authority (NTA) and the Donegal Sligo Leitrim Transport Coordination Unit (TCU) working closely with the HSE to plan and develop a revised network of TFI Local Link services for Co. Leitrim. The services are designed to meet the needs of mainstream public transport users as well as the transport needs of passengers accessing (non-emergency) health care services. The first phase was implemented on 28th June 2021, with all services now introduced.



Key Features:

Benefits and Improvements to Customers

The redesign of the TFI Local Link network brings with it a range of benefits as follows:

- **Additional Services** - Provision of an enhanced number of services over an expanded schedule with an increase in Regular Rural Services (RRS) routes. Increase in annual kms of over 450,000.
- **Accessibility** – Improved accessibility for people with disabilities, all vehicles are accessible and a significant portion are low floor fleet to meet the needs of service users.
- **Sustainability** - Newer more efficient fleet, modal shift from cars to public transport with an expanded network.
- **Fleet** – Larger and newer vehicles operate these routes – vehicles are more environmentally friendly and reliable.
- **Customer** - The revised network for Leitrim incorporates the needs of the service users of the HSE along with all users of mainstream public transport.
- **Free Travel Pass Holders** – Free Travel Pass Holders are currently required to pay a charge on the HSE ‘closed’ routes. As TFI Local Link services operate as mainstream public transport passengers are now able to use their Free Travel Pass.
- **Integrated and Open Transport** – aligned with Open Routes¹ Study and Government policy on mainstreaming of public services for people with disabilities.
- **Improved Connectivity** – This proposal is aligned with the *Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan*, resulting in increased connectivity for locations and improved access to bus/train connections, employment hubs, health and social services.
- **Improved Access to Education and Training Centres** – Sligo IT, Cavan IT, the Leitrim Development Company, Youth Reach and Emigrant and Asylum Seekers training.
- **Enhanced Commuter Services** - Provides much improved services for daily commuters with higher frequencies.

- **Social Inclusion** – contributes to independent living, freedom of choice, integration, equal access, affordability, user friendly, door to door.
- **Local Authority Support** - Already supported by the local authority to promote Leitrim as an accessible friendly county.



Reform, Central Policy and Communications Division

An Roinn Iompair

Department of Transport

Lána Líosain, Baile Átha Cliath, D02 TR60

Leeson Lane, Dublin, D02 TR60

www.gov.ie/transport