

## **Introductory Statement from Anne Graham, Chief Executive Officer, National Transport Authority**

Chairperson and members of the committee, thank you for the invitation to attend. I understand that the Committee wishes to focus upon **the current situation pertaining to BusConnects and Vehicle Clamping regulation**. To assist me in dealing with your subsequent questions I am joined by Hugh Creegan, Deputy CEO with the Authority and Tim Gaston, Director of Public Transport Services.

### **BusConnects**

The BusConnects programme of works consists of many strands, all combining to provide a more efficient and more attractive bus service in our cities and towns. Last year we started the work on BusConnects Dublin and carried out a major public consultation on a revised network for Dublin's bus services. We also carried out a public consultation on the BusConnects Core Bus Corridor project providing 230kms of dedicated bus lanes and 200km of cycle lanes on sixteen of the busiest bus corridors in and out of the city centre which ended with a submission date for Phase 3 on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2019.

Community fora have been set up for each of the corridors and there continues to be extensive consultation ongoing with those fora and with residents associations and other key stakeholders to examine any possible mitigation measures to reduce the impacts on trees and gardens, together with any village improvement schemes that could be considered as part of the project. The NTA and the design teams appointed for the BusConnects Corridor projects, are also examining the 10,000 submissions received and are finalising amended proposals that will be the subject of a further public consultation commencing in Q1 2020.

### **BusConnects Dublin Network Redesign**

In July 2018 the NTA published the initial proposals for the redesign of the Dublin Area bus network. By the end of the consultation period, approximately 50,000 people had provided their feedback on the proposed network changes.

The NTA has used the time since then to conduct a detailed review of the submissions received and prepare revised proposals which take account of that feedback.

On 22 October last the NTA published revised proposals for the redesign of the Dublin Area bus network, which will be the subject of a public consultation process until 3 December 2019.

To facilitate consideration of the revised proposals, a local area booklet is being delivered to every home and commercial business in the Greater Dublin Area, detailing the network redesign proposals in their local area and explaining the ways in which people can provide feedback.

In addition extensive supporting material has been made available online at [www.busconnects.ie](http://www.busconnects.ie). The website incorporates a Route Mapper tool to assist people in understanding how they will be able to get to the places they need to go under the revised network.

Local information sessions will also be held during November. The dates and locations of these local information sessions are now available on our website [www.busconnects.ie](http://www.busconnects.ie) and will be advertised locally.

The redesign of the bus network is a key measure of the Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2016 - 2035. It is among the measures in Project Ireland 2040 and is included as one of the actions set out in the Climate Action Plan, published earlier this year.

### **Main features of revised network compared to existing network**

The level of bus services in the Dublin network will increase by approximately 22%.

The redesigned bus network will provide a more coherently planned, higher capacity, more understandable network, delivering a better overall bus system for the Dublin region.

Under the plan, the network will now be arranged on the basis of eight spines radiating from the city centre. An additional spine has been included in this plan to serve Howth and parts of the north-east city. Spines are very frequent routes made up of individual bus services timetabled to work together along a corridor. At the end of the spine, the individual services branch off to serve different areas.

The plan also includes 10 orbital routes which will reduce significantly the need for passengers to travel into the city centre. Orbital services operate around the city, providing connections between suburbs and town centres, along with connections to rail, Luas and other bus routes. The inner orbital, the O for example, will operate two-way on the North and South Circular Roads at a frequency of every 8 minutes all day.

Northern orbitals (N2, N4, N8) – serving key locations such as Beaumont Hospital, DCU, Charlestown and Blanchardstown while Southern orbitals (S2, S4, S6, S8) – will serve Ballsbridge, Rathmines, Heuston, UCD, Crumlin Hospital, Liffey Valley, Dundrum and Tallaght. Orbitals (W2, W4, W8) – serving key locations like Liffey Valley, Clondalkin Village and Tallaght to the west.

In addition, a number of city-bound services operating into Dublin City Centre are included in the plan. These are services that are not part of any spine and operate on their own timetable as part of the network.

There will also be significant additions to evening and weekend services with most frequent routes operating every 15 minutes or better between 6am and 11pm on weekdays. Saturdays and Sundays will also have higher levels of service and longer operating hours than under the current network. There is also provision for local services providing important connections within local areas, linking to local retail centres and to onward transport connections.

Additional peak-time services are included in the plan, operating during the busiest time of the day, generally weekday mornings and evenings.

A key challenge in many areas was to increase the level of direct service without undermining the integrity of the new network. In many cases this was achieved by reconfiguring the branches at the end of the Spines to provide more direct routes to the city centre.

Concerns relating to particular linkages to schools, hospitals or shops have been addressed through various route adjustments and additional radial routes have been added to address particular issues.

Detailed supporting information is available on the BusConnects website [www.busconnects.ie](http://www.busconnects.ie). That information includes the report on the outcome of the initial public consultation.

## **Vehicle Clamping Regulation**

The functions of the National Transport Authority were extended in 2015 to include the regulation of the Vehicle Clamping industry in accordance with the Vehicle Clamping Act 2015. Section 12 of the Vehicle Clamping Act 2015 states that the NTA is empowered to establish a Code of Practice to:

- Provide practical guidance to parking controllers and clamping operators regarding compliance with the Act and regulations made under it; and
- Establish standards in relation to the general behaviour, performance of duties and conduct of:
  - Parking controllers in supervising the operations of clamping operators, and
  - Clamping operators in carrying out clamping activities.

A draft Code of Practice has now been prepared. This Code of Practice is intended to supplement the Vehicle Clamping Act 2015 and the Vehicle Clamping and Signage Regulations 2017 and provide additional guidance in specific areas.

A public consultation is underway on the draft Code and submissions can be made to the Authority up to 5pm on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2019.

That concludes my statement and I will be happy to respond with my colleagues to any questions the committee may have.