

The neighbourhood of Shanganagh Vale is facing a full frontal assault from the South Eastern Motorway scheme on the doorstep to their estate. Noise protection provisions in the current motorway plan are not adequate to protect the neighbourhood of Shanganagh Vale according to the residents. At Monday's council meeting a Fine Gael motion was adopted by the full council which will give the long suffering residents the opportunity to put their concerns to those who ultimately decide their fate. A Fianna Fail Section 4 motion to the manager was not adopted by the councillors at the meeting.

Cllr Eoin Costello of Fine Gael proposed the motion which was adopted. According to Councillor Costello the matter has been allowed to drag on for a number of years. What is at issue is that the Shanganagh Vale residents are not being afforded adequate protection in the South Eastern Motorway scheme as it is currently proposed. The scheme provides for a low wall and railings along the front of Shanganagh Vale. At the public hearing held in conjunction with the EIS for the scheme the residents made the case for improved noise protection however Minister Noel Dempsey T.D. approved the current scheme a short time later. It is generally believed that the enlarged N11 will generate noise levels which exceed the maximum allowed under current guidelines.

Cllr. Costello stated at the Council meeting that it was important to establish where real responsibility for decisions on the South Eastern Motorway and noise protection measures lie. According to Cllr Costello this responsibility lies with the National Roads Authority and ultimately the Minister.

Part of the problem has been that the residents were informed that they should focus their attention on the County Manager. Cllr. Costello stated that he would be the first person to criticise the County Manager if that criticism was warranted however in this case it was not. The County Manager has stated on a number of occasions that the Council act as agent for the National Roads Authority in all matters relating to the South Eastern Motorway Scheme and does not have the authority to amend the scheme once the Minister has approved it.

According to a letter from the chairman of the residents association to the councillors the residents had been given verbal assurances by a local councillor that he had persuaded a council official of the merits of amending the scheme to the satisfaction of the residents. When the scheme was not amended the residents believed that the Council were ignoring this verbal agreement. At Monday's Council meeting Cllr. Costello stated that the councillor in question had not tabled a motion to give effect to what he had communicated to the residents and without the necessary procedures being followed(i.e.

contact with and the approval of the Inspector at the NRA) no amendment to the scheme with NRA funding was possible regardless of what the residents had been informed.

This was further borne out by a communication received by Cllr Costello from the National Road Authority

“Any requests concerning modifications to boundary treatments along the South Eastern Motorway must be referred to the National Road Authority in the first instance. Getting action on changes comes down to funding and the NRA are the only body responsible for making decisions concerning this matter.”

Cllr Costello’s motion, which received cross party support, will ensure that the matter of Shanganagh Vale is brought back to the full council next month and that the Engineering Inspector from the NRA will be invited to hear the concerns of the residents at first hand. Furthermore Cllr Costello’s motion agreed that councillors would seek an immediate meeting with the Minister, who ultimately is the person who is best in a position to ensure that the justifiable concerns of the residents are fully addressed.

Cllr Costello has been informed that Minister Brennan has already facilitated residents groups from his electoral area in this respect.

Cllr Costello said that the letter would be going to the Minister shortly requesting an urgent meeting with the residents to ensure that their genuine concerns are addressed and he stated that he looks forward to a positive reply.

For further information please contact Eoin Costello at 282 5496 or info@eoincostello.ie

The full text of Councillor Costello’s motion is as follows;

“That a report on the South Eastern Motorway scheme and its effects on Shanganagh Vale be made a headed item for the next meeting of the County Council and that this council ensure that the National Roads Authority Engineering Inspector with responsibility for the South Eastern Motorway scheme be requested to attend this meeting with a view to amending the scheme to the satisfaction of the residents of Shanganagh Vale.

Furthermore the councillors of this council resolve to arrange an immediate meeting between the residents of Shanganagh Vale and the Minister responsible for the South Eastern Motorway scheme to ensure that the residents concerns are effectively addressed. Proposed Cllr. Eoin Costello Agreed by full council

