

Response received from Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council regarding the STC Community Group alternative proposal for Strand Rd. Specifically, three points raised by the community group in a section entitled 'Lessons Learned' referenced the Coastal Mobility Route in the Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council (DLRCC). These are outlined below:

Lessons Learned

- 1. With the benefit of time, we can all see the impact of the recent DLRCC Covid coastal cycleway changes. While there is delight that a route along the coast is now partially available, the chaos and disruption to locals and those trying to access facilities is palpable.*
- 2. The RNLI have even voiced their concern that volunteers can no longer reach their HQ within a reasonable length of time.*
- 3. The congestion in Monkstown village has taken the "village" feel out of it and Dun Laoghaire was gridlocked over the weekends when it should have been enjoying the festival feel of weekend markets.*

We have not commented on any other element of this submission as this is a matter for Dublin City Council. This should in no way be considered an endorsement of the contents of the STC Community Group submission or the merits or otherwise of the alternative proposal.

It is not clear why this section is entitled 'Lessons Learned' when the points raised appear to be presented as negatives outcomes of a scheme in the Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council area. They are suggested as reasons Dublin City Council should revise its current proposals. We would note that the points raised have no supporting evidence or data and appear to be anecdotal observations or opinion. DLRCC have not been contacted by this group in relation to obtaining relevant data that could inform the group's proposal and assertions. On this basis, the claims in the first 3 points of the Lessons Learned should be treated as anecdote or opinion and not evidence. It is also disappointing that the group would make claims about activity in another Local Authority that makes it difficult for Dublin City Council to investigate directly.

In response to the points raised:

1. The Coastal Mobility Route, from Blackrock to Sandycove, spans 4.5 km and it is unclear what 'locals' or 'facilities' are suggested to be in a state of disruption and chaos. Given that there has been no detail provided and the comment appears to be intended to paint a negative picture of facilities in another Local Authority area without any factual support, we suggest it this be treated as anecdote or opinion and not evidence.
2. DLR continuously engages with the RNLI as a key stakeholder in our area. It is not clear why they would voice concerns to the STC Community Group and no evidence of these discussions have been provided in support of this comment. We note that the RNLI station has been made more accessible from the west by the removal of barriers adjacent to the RNLI base. This enables the bypassing of a number of junctions which would help with improving response times. It should be also noted that the Coastal Mobility Route is fully accessible to 'blue light' emergency services – including the Gardaí, the Ambulance Service and the Fire Brigade – and in the time of operation of the DLRCC Coastal Mobility Route since around mid-July 2020 emergency services have been observed to be using this route if they need to in the case of an emergency.
3. The submission does not provide any evidence to support the suggestion of 'congestion' in Monkstown Village. DLRCC has carried out traffic surveys in Monkstown Village and over a 1-week period (at end of August 2020) the average east to west (the opposite direction to the west to east Seapoint Avenue one-way for vehicles) the average vehicle journey time

through the village is 28 seconds. Again, no evidence has been provided to support the suggestion that Dún Laoghaire is 'gridlocked' over the weekends. It should be noted that weekend trips tend to relate more to leisure activities and if large volumes of traffic are attempting to enter Dún Laoghaire for leisure and shopping purposes, this would be a positive outcome. The provision of the coastal route has facilitated a safe and attractive active travel route to Dún Laoghaire, which is critical and aligns with Government Covid-19 public health advice to walk and cycle where possible. There are more than 20,000 cyclists per week on the new route, an over four-fold increase from the approximately 4,000 cyclists who accessed the route before the changes were implemented. It is worth noting that the presence of the Coastal Mobility Route also creates a safe and welcoming environment for pedestrians, with over 25,000 pedestrians using the footpaths adjacent to the Coastal Mobility Route. This data is based on cycle and pedestrian counters that have been installed on the route and measures actual use. It is also interesting to observe the wide range of users of the route, including young, old, families and those with mobility challenges. Over a weekend, thousands of cyclists travel to Blackrock, Monkstown, Dún Laoghaire, Glasthule, Sandycove and Dalkey. Those who cycle do not need car parking spaces and are more likely to stay and shop over drivers who are simply passing through. Based on the evidence to date, DLRCC is seeing average journey times at peak travel times reduce by the order of 30% for vehicles travelling to and from Dún Laoghaire and this points to indications of modal shift whereby more people are choosing to walk or cycle than drive, given that safe and effective active travel alternatives have now been provided by DLRCC.

In summary, the 'Lessons Learned' put forward by the STC Community Group should be considered as anecdote or opinion and do not represent the actual experience and evidence from the operation of the Coastal Mobility Route, to date, as set out in this response. The points raised by the STC Community Group in relation to the Coastal Mobility Route in the DLRCC are presented without any supporting evidence or data whatsoever and, should DCC request further information or evidence from DLRCC that might assist in assessing the alternative proposal from the STC Community Group, we would be happy to provide it.