**Press Release – 3rd September 2014.**

**Kilkenny County Council conducts review of Kilkenny Central Access Scheme and notes additional costs of €419,000 due to obstructive protests.**

Members of Kilkenny County Council reviewed the Kilkenny Central Access Scheme at a special meeting on 1st September.

The review process was carried out with the assistance of a report prepared by Dr. Sean Brady, Independent Chairman of the Internal Audit Committee of Kilkenny County Council. In his report, Dr. Brady, provided commentary set out in a number of modules including policy development, project implementation, scheme finance, public consultation and emerging EU and national policies. He concluded that due process was fully adhered to by Kilkenny County Council at every stage in the development of the Central Access Scheme and that it represents *“excellent value for money with significant potential for investment returns”.*

The elected members, in reviewing the scheme approved the report and accepted four recommendations made by Dr. Brady as follows:

1. *Proceed to finish KCAS Phase 1 as soon as possible to harvest the benefits of the project for the City and County and Kilkenny and minimise time of disruption to the local community.*
2. *Improve pedestrian facilities on Dean Street to facilitate residents and visitors to the area to visit St. Canice’s Cathedral.*
3. *Complete the Outer Ring Road, particularly from the Castlecomer Road to Freshford Road, as soon as financial resources permit.*
4. *Restore Green’s Bridge.*

The meeting recorded that five members of the twenty three present did not support recommendation number one.

Members were also advised of details of the costs associated with obstructive protest at Green’s bridge. Mr. Simon Walton, A/Director of Services for Transportation, Corporate Affairs and Emergency Services, provided an account of an escalation in costs of €419,000 from the commencement of works in late June until mid August. He noted with “*extreme concern*” that should the current level of obstructive protest continue the additional costs to be borne by the people of Kilkenny would amount to €1.9 million over the planned construction period.

Cathaoirleach of Kilkenny County Council, Councillor Pat Millea, expressed his satisfaction with the manner in which the review was carried out and stated “*the new urban road and bridge would act as a strategic enabler of growth in Kilkenny City and County creating the environment to provide sustainable jobs for the people of Kilkenny.”*

*ENDS.*