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**Breviate of Meeting of the Corporate Policy Group  
Held on the 26<sup>th</sup> January 2018**

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**1) Minutes of Meeting 5<sup>th</sup> January 2018**

Agreed.

**2) Matters Arising**

The Chief Executive referred to a report he had circulated earlier in response to a wish to provide a mechanism to keep Members updated on property acquisitions (see Report - Appendix A). It was suggested that sight of the Orders in relation to each acquisition might be sufficient. It was also suggested that a document outlining the policy governing acquisitions would be useful. It was agreed that a report on this would go to a future meeting of the Planning SPC. Discussion took place on the proposed 'super' depot. Cllr McGinley informed the meeting that a report on this would be before the March Finance SPC meeting. There was an inquiry about DCC depot sites usage. It was agreed that a report by the Transformation Unit would be brought to the next CPG meeting.

**3) Update from SPC Chairs**

**a Finance - Cllr Ruairí McGinley**

Cllr McGinley updated meeting on :-

- Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> January. Presentation by Fáilte Ireland re Tourism in Dublin City. Euro2020 will cost DCC significant amounts of money but other stakeholders are not specifying their exact contributions. The CEO of Euro2020 will attend the next meeting of the Finance SPC. Also discussions were being held with the FAI. It is vital that any bonus payments benefit legacy projects for the city. Euro2020 to be added to the CPG agenda every quarter.
- A Review Group is being set up in relation to the LPT. The Finance SPC is seeking a meeting with the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government and the Dept of Finance and will make a submission to the Review Group
- The SPC currently has a 5-Item programme for the year including homelessness, vacant properties and IT in DCC
- Ms Kathy Quinn, Head of Finance, informed the meeting that the current insertion of the Social Clause into contracts was not yielding hoped-for results and that other mechanisms to deliver more long-term and meaningful jobs are being explored.

**b Housing - Cllr Daithí Doolan**

Cllr Doolan gave update as follows :-

- An Bord Pleanála upheld the decision in relation to Usher's Island, approx 100 residences
- Presentation from the Ballyfermot Homeless Action Group to last meeting. Pilot survey to be undertaken by them in conjunction with the HSE, in relation to conditions including diet, etc
- Concern was expressed about the loss of 2 green spaces in Cherry Orchard which were proposed for 45 social houses. Residents were not in favour of these particular green areas being developed. Other local sites may be more suitable.
- Scheme of Lettings report completed
- Concern over some HAP clients becoming homeless twice in 6 months
- Asked for legal advice in relation to a city centre hotel refusing to accommodate homeless persons
- Motion from E Ryan referred from City Council being explored
- Suggested more and faster progress needed on Land Initiative
- Impact of Minister Murphy's mortgage announcement of this week – the impact of this on DCC's Housing position. Asked that the ACE of the Housing Dept give a report to the next SPC Meeting
- Discussion on affordable accommodation, especially for single people. The Chief Executive felt that the O'Deveney Gardens development will provide some of the necessary accommodation. Agreed that the ACE of the Housing Dept give a report to the Feb Council Meeting in conjunction with the Housing Supply Report

**c Planning and Property Development - Cllr Andrew Montague**

No meeting held in January

**d Transportation - Cllr Ciarán Cuffe**

Cllr Cuffe reported that no SPC meeting had taken place but a Walking/Cycling Sub Group had met on the 7<sup>th</sup> February. He also reported that the current foremost issue was the congestion around College Green due the Luas XCity. He welcomed the new bus route configuration and said other measures were also being investigated. One intrrim measure is a short cycle lane of about 50 metres from the Thomas Moore Statue to Trinity College.

Mr Dick Brady, Assistant Chief Executive, said that extensive consultation had taken place with the NTA, Dublin Bus and Taxi Groups. He said the current phase was a good compromise. The Chief Executive added that the partial restoration of pedestrian priority was also welcomed. Further discussion on issues for taxis was discussion and Mr Brady undertook to contact the NTA to suggest that a specific study of the role of the taxi in Dublin City be undertaken. The Lord Mayor reported that he and officials of the Environment & Transportation Department had met with representatives of the Taxi Group to be briefed to their concerns.

Cllr D Heney requested that increased investment be considered into the provision of traffic light 'countdown' timers at pedestrian crossings in the city to deter pedestrians from taking chances crossing streets without a green light.

**e Arts Culture and Recreation - Cllr Vincent Jackson**

Cllr Jackson sent his apologies – update will be given at the next meeting of the CPG

f **Economic Development and Enterprise - Cllr Deirdre Heney**

Cllr Heney reported that their meeting had not yet taken place but she asked for clarification of the roles of the SPC as there seemed to be some overlap with other SPCs, for example, markets and tourism. Cllr Montague informed the meeting that he is Chair of the Markets & Casual Trading Subgroup which reports to the Economic Development SPC Members then received an update on the current situation in relation to Iveagh Markets. . It was agreed that SPC chairs would invite other relevant SPC members to meetings where a presentation was being made by a group of mutual interest.

Cllr Heney also said that a meeting in relation to the LECP had taken place to identify actions for progression. She said that 33 in total had been identified and that the SPC would address approx half of these actions and the LCDC would take on the remainder. She said that practical recommendations would be ready by mid March.

One of the issues to be addressed by the Committee is the regulation of the airbnb industry and its impact on tourism. Cllr Heney also mentioned the forthcoming launch of the Economic Monitor on Thursday, 1<sup>st</sup> February.

g **Environment – Cllr Naoise Ó Muirí**

No meeting had taken place in January

4 **LCDC - Cllr Paul McAuliffe**

No meeting had taken place in January

5 **Any Other Business**  
**None**

6 **Date of Next Meeting**

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2018 at 2.30pm

**Ardmhéara Míchéal Mac Donncha**  
**Chairperson**

**26 January 2018**

**Attendance:**

**Members:**

Ardmhéara Micheal Mac Donncha  
Daithi Doolan

**Members:**

(Chairperson)  
Deirdre Heney

**Members:**

Andrew Montague  
Ciaran Cuffe

**Officers**

Owen P. Keegan  
Terence O'Keefe

Dick Brady  
Richard Shakespeare

Kathy Quinn  
Declan Wallace

**Apologies**

Naoise O'Muirí

Vincent Jackson

Paul McAuliffe



**Chief Executive's Office  
Floor 4 Block 4  
Civic Offices  
Wood Quay**

## **Report to an t-Ardmhéara and Members of the Corporate Policy Group**

26 January 2018

### ***Reporting on City Council Property Acquisitions***

At the January meeting of the Corporate Policy Group I undertook to respond to a request to introduce a system of regular reporting on property acquisitions by the City Council in order to provide a degree of political oversight of this important aspect of the Council's operations.

Unlike property disposals, property acquisitions by a local authority are an executive function. There are convincing reasons why this is the case. When suitable properties that meet certain criteria are identified for purchase by the Council their acquisition is pursued either by agreement or, as circumstances dictate, under statutory powers, subject to funding being available in every case. Commercial sensitivities arise and in almost all cases confidentiality regarding the Council's involvement and price outcomes is essential at least until title has fully transferred and beyond in certain instances, if the Council is to achieve the optimal outcome. All price negotiations are conducted by professional valuers and properties are only purchased on the recommendation of the Council's Chief Valuer.

Steps to acquire property by Compulsory Purchase Order generally, or by Vesting Order under the Derelict Sites Acts, are taken only as a last resort, when other avenues have failed. These procedures, when approved or confirmed, are by their nature more transparent. They are also underpinned by statutory timelines. However, the compulsory purchase process, from initiation to successful title transfer, can extend over a lengthy period.

Acquisitions by agreement constitute the majority of the City Council's property purchases. Examples would include house purchases, advance land purchase for housing developments, purchases to enhance existing City Council development opportunities or redevelopment schemes, interventions in relation to long-standing derelict buildings or vacant sites, acquisitions of buildings for homeless or community purposes etc. Frequently, executive decisions to acquire a property have to be taken at very short notice when appropriate opportunities arise.

The need to maintain confidentiality and for the Council to be able to respond quickly to purchase opportunities effectively rule out the scope for involvement by Elected Members in the property acquisition process. At the same time I am not unsympathetic to the request for greater oversight by the Elected Members. I am therefore proposing that the Chief Valuer will submit a biannual report to the Planning and Property Development SPC on acquisitions

successfully completed in the previous 6 months. While the Chief Valuer will endeavour to ensure that this report is as comprehensive as possible Elected Members must accept that in a limited number of cases the release of information in relation to certain property acquisitions may have to be delayed. These cases include the following:

1. Where the vendor requests a period of non-disclosure due to commercial sensitivities (e.g. to enable an alternative business property to be identified and purchased, or to deal with tenant issues). In some cases the Council may be required to sign a formal non-disclosure agreement, for example, by a Receiver.
2. Where the Council is engaged in advance land purchase or complex site assembly or a de-tenanting process, where release of price or compensation payment information may be prejudicial to the achievement of the Council's objectives and have an adverse impact on other Council property transactions.
3. Where a particular property is being purchased for a strategic purpose, without a specific end use function being known at the time. In these cases premature release of information may generate unnecessary speculation or raise unrealistic expectations as to the refurbishment or end use of the acquired property.
4. Where the confirmation of the purchase of a property for a particularly sensitive use may have to be deferred for operational purposes.

I trust the approach I am recommending is satisfactory.

Owen P Keegan  
**Chief Executive**