



Oifig an Aire
Office of the Minister

23 November 2018

Ms. Deirdre Ní Raghallaigh,
Dublin City Council,
Civic Offices,
Wood Quay,
Dublin 8.

RE: MO2018-00893

Dear Ms. Ní Raghallaigh,

I would like, on behalf of Mr. Eoghan Murphy T.D., Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government, to thank you for your letter of 19th October, 2018 regarding the support of the Protocol Committee of Dublin City Council for a motion passed by Wexford County Council calling for the establishment of an Independent Convention to consider the future of Local Government.

As you may be aware, the Programme for a Partnership Government (PPG) sets out a number of objectives to boost local government leadership and accountability, and to ensure that local government funding, structures and responsibilities strengthen local democracy. It is anticipated that policy proposals arising from this work will form the next wave of local government reform.

In this regard, the Department has to date submitted to Government three policy papers in response to the PPG commitments, dealing with (i) Municipal Governance, (ii) Local Authority Boundaries and (iii) Local Authority Leadership, Governance and Administration. These papers have been forwarded following Government approval to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Housing, Planning and Local Government for its consideration.

The Municipal Governance paper sets out a range of proposals to strengthen the municipal district system and to address identified shortcomings. The Local Authority Boundaries paper addresses the issue of urban development crossing county boundaries by proposing new statutory joint structures, rather than the alteration of county boundaries or reliance on



voluntary co-operation. The primary focus of the Leadership, Governance and Administration paper is on directly elected mayors for cities, the consideration of which is also an important PPG commitment. Further policy papers on Metropolitan Governance and Devolution are at varying stages of development.

Separately, the Local Electoral Area Boundary Committees reported to the Minister earlier this year. In addition, the Local Government Bill 2018 will now proceed to Committee Stage in the Dáil. The Bill provides for the boundary alteration arrangements between Cork City and Cork County Councils. It also provides for a single Chief Executive with dual responsibility for Galway City Council and Galway County Council, which will facilitate administrative integration of the two local authorities in advance of the merger recommended by the Expert Advisory Group.

You will agree that a good deal of work is therefore already ongoing which has significant potential to shape the future of local government in this country. This work is now advancing in the appropriate democratic fora, in particular, the Joint Oireachtas Committee for Housing, Planning and Local Government.

The contribution of Dublin City Council to this wider discussion is welcome, timely and appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Niamh Redmond
Private Secretary