



**Re-municipalisation of Waste Management Service in Dublin City Council –
Cross Party Working Group Report**

At the July 2019 meeting of Dublin City Council three motions were proposed on the remunicipalisation of household waste service. This proposers concerned agreed to replace their motions with an agreed composite motion which read as follows:

This Council agrees that waste management in Dublin City should be remunicipalised and that a working group comprising political Group Representatives and management meet in September and October to consider how this be advanced. This Working Group to report to the November City Council meeting.”

The Motion was put and carried. The Working Group was set up prior to the Strategic Policy Committee Scheme being adopted and members nominated. This report is the work of a range of Councillors and those they consulted during the process. As stated it is not a draft policy or strategy and is being brought back to Council for noting in compliance with the original motion.

Resolution:

“That Dublin City Council notes the contents of Report No. 357/2019”.

Deirdre Ní Raghallaigh
Senior Executive Officer
20th November 2019

Cross Party Working Group Report

Introduction

In July 2019, Dublin City Council passed a cross-party composite motion calling for the re-municipalisation of household waste services. It has become widely accepted that a profit led waste collection industry has served neither householder nor the environment.

Re-municipalising waste collection provides a unique opportunity to provide a 21st century waste management system – in a modern waste management system less waste is produced - waste is seen as a resource and the cyclical economy of waste is expanded - the impact on the environment is radically reduced – the ultimate aim being to greatly reduce the cost to the householder.

Since July 2019, a series of meetings have been held with political parties and trade unions on how best to progress same. The meetings were open to all political parties represented on Dublin City Council and trade unions were invited to participate from the outset due to their knowledge of the sector and their successful “More Power to You” campaign in advance of the local elections.

The "More Power To You Campaign" was launched by the trade unions SIPTU, Connect and Fórsa. Part of the campaign was a pledge to re-municipalise the Private Waste Collection service provided by Dublin City Council until 2012.

Developing a 21st Century Waste Management Model

Since 2012 unregulated side-by-side private waste collection has led to a chaotic market in waste, increasing costs and the problem of illegal dumping has increased. Dublin City Council and the trade unions believe that the restoration of a public waste collection service will provide a more efficient service to the citizens of Dublin than that which is currently provided and also acknowledge that a return to the service provided in 2012 is not desirable.

As such, the dual objectives of a modernised and re-municipalised system of waste management are proposed and to achieve these it will be necessary to:

- (1) Obtain a clear picture of the legislation will be required to facilitate re-municipalisation including the national and EU legislative context;
- (2) Demonstrate the substantial improvements that can be provided to the citizens of Dublin in the interim by the expansion and extension of existing services provided by the City Council. For example: Some local authorities in England provide a waste collection service by way of specialist trucks capable of accommodating recyclable, compostable and end use waste. The service operates on the basis of predetermined routes with times and dates known to the public. In other jurisdictions, community composting projects create the opportunity for households to easily dispose of food waste which in turn becomes a saleable product and income generator. Such services would not require legislative change.
- (3) Identify best practise in a number of European countries of modernised waste collection receptacles and collection systems. Typically these are no more than a couple of hundred metres from each householder. These facilities vary from communal bins/skips to discrete segregated bins similar to domestic bins but which provide underground storage. The assembled waste is then removed weekly or twice weekly. At present Dublin City Council has a range of bring centres throughout the city. The concept is to bring this type of service much closer to householders. As such it can be provided with no legislative change.

- (4) Obtain a clear picture of the Irish waste economy.
- (5) Obtain a clear picture of how other EU countries have re-municipalised their waste management system.

It should be noted that significant technological advances have occurred since Dublin City Council exited the service in 2012. Dublin City Council and the trade unions believe that a publicly run service can be operated on a cost efficient basis as it is clear that multiple private companies are capable of extracting profit from the existing dysfunctional system.

A commitment in principle to establish a publicly controlled waste collection service should commit to examining the establishment of a 21st century waste collection system in keeping with best practise in the many European cities that re-municipalised their waste collection services, As such the costings supplied by the management are not relevant in fact cost reductions could be achieved in the context of a reduction in Fly Tipping.

Recommendations

Following the meetings held by the working group for re-municipalisation of waste services we would make the following recommendations:

- (1) That Dublin City Council would provide funding to conduct research, in partnership with a third level institution that would develop a roadmap to a 21st Century, re-municipalised, waste management system for Dublin City.
- (2) That the working group would examine the labour, legal, legislative, practical, infrastructural, economic, and other challenges facing the project of re-municipalisation
- (3) That included in the working group are persons with such expertise as necessary to properly, and fully carry out its work and that advertisements are placed in a number of national/Dublin based media calling for volunteer expert advisors to provide that support to the Re-Municipalisation Working Group and that Dublin City Council provide administrative support to the working group.
- (4) That Dublin City Council would provide funding to implement a pilot shared urban composting scheme in each administrative area of the city.
- (5) That the working group make recommendations to the Dublin City Development Plan.
- (6) That the working group would make recommendations for pilot or other programmes during its lifetime that would advance the project of re-municipalisation.
- (7) That the working group will have completed a first report on its objective by September 2021.

Conclusion

The electoral mandate received by political parties supportive of the objectives of the More Power to You campaign, coupled with the passing of the motion on Dublin City Council indicates the wide ranging support that exists for the re-municipalisation of waste services in the city. However none of the stakeholder's party to discussion on the issue to date are under the illusion that the task of re-municipalising waste services in Dublin City Council will be straightforward. We also recognise that the challenges we have outlined will require support from outside Dublin City Council and look forward to engaging with opportunities for same. We are committed to working collaboratively with all relevant parties towards the achievement of our goals and believe we have outlined a set of recommendations that are practical, and achievable, in the life time of this council.