



MINUTES OF THE PROTOCOL COMMITTEE MEETING

HELD ON THURSDAY 24 SEPTEMBER 2020

1 **Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd July 2020 and matters arising.**

Cllr. Feeney informed members that she was meeting with fellow Councillors in the coming days to identify an agreed response to the Moorhead Report. She also confirmed that she had requested a meeting with Minister Peter Burke to discuss the matter. Cllr. Feeney to update the Members at the next meeting.

Order: Minutes Agreed.

2 **Update on Women's Committee**

Order: Cllr. Lonergan updated the Members on the work of the Women's Committee. She confirmed that 90% of women on the Council had agreed to work with the Committee and there was a representative from every political party. The group had met on several occasions and had identified issues they wished to progress. It was agreed that the Committee would bring a report to the Protocol Committee in November at which point Members could determine how often the Committee should report back to Protocol on an ongoing basis.

The Manager reported that she had received correspondence from the Department regarding the role of women in Local Government. It was agreed to refer this to the Women's Committee and to circulate to all Councillors. Cllr. Heney requested the Cllr. Mary Freehill be consulted also as she had been engaged on this topic through the Arts SPC.

3 **Receptions of the Lord Mayor and Engagements of the Deputy Lord Mayor**

Order: Noted

4 **Information Technology Issues**

- The Manager confirmed that the Transformation Unit had identified a preferred bidder for the tender to develop a Customer Relationship Management system. It was hoped that contracts would be exchanged in the coming weeks. The development of the Councillors portal within the CRM system was regarded as a priority. The Manager would report back to Committee as the project progressed and would consult with Protocols IT sub-group. She also agreed to circulate to Members details of other Local Authorities who were using the same system.
- The development of an In-App voting system for Modern.Gov was being investigated but it was unlikely that this would be implemented in the short term.

- Oliver Douglas was investigating the use of an interface that would allow the webcasting of combined remote and physical meetings. The existing IT systems does have the capacity to facilitate hybrid meetings however there are a number of logistical challenges to overcome before it could be used at a City Council meeting. The tender for the new webcasting contract will be issued in late October and the webcasting of remote and hybrid meetings will be part of the requirements.
- The Members questioned the availability of other platforms for remote meetings and also the current legal status of such meetings. The Manager confirmed that the IS Department has recommended Microsoft Teams as the platform of choice as it was the most secure and the City Council had already invested significantly in licenses. However, she agreed to report back to the Protocol Committee regarding the viability of other platforms, in particular Zoom. She also confirmed that the Chief Executive had written to the Minister requesting an update on the implementation of regulations that would allow for remote statutory decision making. This correspondence would be circulated to the Members. To date the Chief Executive has not had a response.

5 **Strategic Housing Developments Procedures**

The Members welcomed the letter from the Chief Executive which clarified a number of the issues in relation to the SHD process that had been raised by Members. Cllr. O'Driscoll suggested that the provision of the planners report in advance of the SHD meeting would improve Councillors capacity to critically examine the proposals.

The Members reiterated their opposition to the SHD process which they believe acts as a barrier to good planning and undermines local democracy. They agreed that Protocol was no longer the forum to discuss these matters and that the issues should be progressed on a corporate level through the Planning & Urban Form SPC and the Corporate Policy Group.

Order: Letter noted. The Manager to refer the request for advance planning reports to the Planning Department.

6 **Newcomen Bank - City Hall Sub-Committee**

The Manager reported that the Sub-Group had met with the Project Manager and were provided with a tour of Newcomen Bank and City Hall. The sub-group were positive in their response to the proposals for the provision of additional Councillor facilities in the basement of City Hall. However, they requested that consideration be given regarding the future of the current exhibition and the items of civic importance that are housed there. These concerns have been discussed with the City Archivist, Dr. Mary Clarke and the Deputy City Librarian, Brendan Teeling who are following up on the matter.

In the subsequent discussion Members raised concerns about the future use of the Newcomen building which they believed should be open to the public and also have additional facilities for Councillors. There was also concern that the existing Party Rooms in City Hall would have to be vacated or neglected. The Members although cautiously supportive of the proposals for the new facilities believed that

a much more in-depth report which addressed issues such as the timeframe, detailed costings, the future of the existing exhibition and civic artefacts and the options for the use of the Newcomen Bank as a cultural and civic building.

The Manager confirmed that the existing facilities in City hall such as the party rooms and the tea/coffee area would be retained and upgraded. Also the electrical and mechanical engineering reports were due back shortly which would help inform the budget for the project.

Order: It was agreed that a comprehensive report would be brought to the November Protocol meeting which would address the issues and concerns raised by the Members.

7 **Managers Report**

a) **Council Motions & Adjourned Meetings**

The Manager informed Members that an adjourned City Council meeting will be held on 12th October to facilitate the discussion of Motions on Notice.

Order: Noted

b) **Development Plan Review training sessions**

The Manager informed Members that Deirdre Scully in the Planning Department will be providing training on the review of the Development Plan which will be held in the Round Room on 3rd November 2020 at 9am and 2nd December 2020 at 2pm. The training will also be made available in a webinar format.

Order: Noted and an outline of the training to be circulated to all Councillors.

8 **A.O.B.**

- Cllr. Cooney raised the issue of training for Councillors on the use of remote platforms such as Teams and Zoom.

Order: The manager to investigate and report back to the Committee.

- The Manager informed Members that City Hall will be illuminated in purple on 30th September to promote the charity Recovery Academy Ireland, which is a co-operative whose members promote and champion the concept of recovery.

Order: Noted.

- The Manager informed Members that in October and November the Director of Corporate Enforcement is running a series of online sessions in relation to the role and responsibilities of Directors.

Order: Noted

9 **Date of Next Meeting: 8am, 22nd October 2020, Richard O'Carroll Room, City Hall**

Order: Agreed

**Councillor Anne Feeney
Chairperson
Thursday 24 September 2020**

Attendance:

Members:

Anne Feeney (Chairperson)
Racheal Batten
Mannix Flynn
Darcy Lonergan
Naoise Ó'Muirí
Noeleen Reilly

Members:

Donna Cooney
Deirdre Heney
Micheal Mac Donncha
Cat O'Driscoll

Members:

Joe Costello
Dermot Lacey
Briega MacOscar
Michael Pidgeon

Officers

Ruth Dowling

Michael Gallagher

Apologies:

Daithí Doolan