



## 1 Establishment of the Working Group

At the November 2019 Economic Development & Enterprise SPC meeting, it was agreed that two working groups would be established. One group would address Tourism, City Markets & Night Time Economy; and the other group would address a work programme relating to International Relations & European Affairs. Membership of both working group was agreed at the February 2020 meeting of the Economic Development and Enterprise SPC. The International Relations and European Affairs working group held their initial scoping meeting to discuss proposed work programme on 3rd March. A discussion took place at this meeting around the draft Terms of Reference document, including the requirement for all proposed working group to be reviewed and approved by the Corporate Policy Group (CPG). A meeting of the CPG took place on 26th June where the Terms of Reference and Membership was agreed. Richard Shakespeare initially chaired the group, with Anthony Flynn leading the administrative team supporting the work of the group. Cllr Mary Freehill was agreed as the Chair of the Group at the June meeting of the working group; with Anthony Flynn as the lead official for the working group.

## 2 Duration & Reporting

The initial timeframe of the working group was agreed at 6 months, with the timeframe commencing on 26th June following the CPG approval. It was also agreed that regular reports would be provided to the SPC to ensure focus and to update on progress on the proposed work programme.

## 3 Work Programme

Having considered a number of areas where the work of the group might focus, the group agreed that they would like to focus on 2 potential areas for consideration that would not overlap with the work of other SPC's or Working Groups:

- Financial & Funding Opportunities for Dublin– EU Funding Programme 2021 to 2027
- EuroCities & Other Relevant Networking Opportunities - Learning from other cities

A review progress meeting was scheduled for 7th April but was postponed due to COVID19 restrictions and was rescheduled to 18th June. This meeting reviewed the proposed work programme in response to the significant impact of COVID19 on International Relations & European affairs. The proposed working group was reviewed, approved and established by the Corporate Policy Group on 26th June 2020.

## 4 Terms of Reference

The terms of reference were agreed with the working group members and outlined the objectives, membership, proposed work programme, timeframe and secretariat support of the working group. The initial timeframe of the working group was agreed at 6 months, which would then be examined on an as needs basis. The 6 month timeframe commenced following the CPG approval which would be to year end. It was agreed regular reporting to SPC would be provided to ensure focus and progression on the proposed work programme. This is the final progress report to the SPC.

## 5 Membership of the Working Group

The membership of the International Relations & European Affairs SPC Working Group is outlined below:

### Working Group Members:

SPC Representative Member:	Cllr. Mary Freehill, Dublin City Council (Chair);
SPC Representative Member:	Cllr. Nial Ring, Dublin City Council;
SPC Sectoral Member:	Aiden Sweeney, IBEC; (Business Rep)
SPC Sectoral Member:	Odran Reid, Northside Homecare Service; (PPN Rep)
Dublin City Council:	Richard Shakespeare, Assistant Chief Executive Officer

### Supported by Officials:

Anthony Flynn, Executive Manager CRES;  
Greg Swift, Head of Enterprise & Economic Development, Dublin City Council;  
Mary MacSweeney, Deputy Head of Enterprise & Economic Development, Dublin City Council;  
Ciara O hAodha, Senior Economic Development Officer;  
Grainne Kelly, International Relations Officer.

## 6 Meetings held:

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Meeting Type:</b>	<b>Overview::</b>
3rd March 2020	Initial Scoping Meeting	Minutes Attached
18th June	Progress Scoping Meeting	Minutes Attached
29th July	Info Sharing Meeting – EMRA & EIB	Agenda Attached
4th September	Progress Meeting	Minutes Attached
28th September	Progress Meeting – EU Strategy Proposed Approach	Minutes Attached
12th October	Progress Meeting	Minutes Attached
25th November	Full Council Briefing – EU Programmes Overview	Agenda Attached
18th December	Review Meeting	Minutes Attached

## 7 Work Programme Completion

### *March – June 2020:*

A scoping paper was prepared by EDO, revised in response to COVID19 and presented to the working group at their progress scoping meeting held on 18th June. A discussion was held on how best to progress the work programme which would focus on two key areas.

- Financial & Funding Opportunities for Dublin– EU Funding Programme 2021 to 2027
- EuroCities & Other Relevant Networking Opportunities - Learning from other cities

### *July 2020:*

In order to examine both elements in greater detail the Eastern Midland Regional Assembly (EMRA), the Irish Regions European Office (IREO) and the European Investment Bank were invited to present to the working group on 29th July. The meeting was held on the 29th July 2020 held via MS Teams.

### **Eastern Midlands Regional Assembly (EMRA) presentation:**

Mr. Jim Conway, Director of EMRA, Ms. Teresa Lennon, Head of Irish Regions European Office and Ms Laure Antoniotti, Administrative Officer, EU and Corporate Affairs with EMRA presented to the group on their work in supporting spatial and economic planning on a regional basis. The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy developed by EMRA in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders and the more recently developed

Metropolitan Spatial and Economic Plan for the Dublin region was discussed. The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the work of the Committee of the Regions and the work of the Irish Regions European Office (IREO) headed up by Teresa Lennon who is based in Brussels was also discussed as were the opportunities for Dublin as an international city to have EU Funded projects or European Investment Projects identified, supported and funded to support future growth and address existing inequities in our communities and economy. Teresa Lennon, Head of Irish Regions European Office outlined the strategy for her office which is to provide advice and guidance to support the Committee of the Regions where 9 members of the group forms the Irish delegation where they have developed a strong profile. The policy objectives includes raising awareness of opportunities, building capacity and partnerships with other regions, signposting to national contact points across the three regional assemblies and raising the profile of the strengths of local and national government. In October the European Week of Regions and Cities will take place and Dublin will be represented by Smart Dublin who are working on a Green Cities by co-design project.

***European Investment Bank Presentation:***

Mr Cormac Murphy, Head of EIB Group Office for Ireland, Dublin and Mr Kevin McGillicuddy, Urban Sector Specialist for Ireland presented on The EU Bank Supporting Urban Investment. The EU bank established in 1958 provided around 90% of lending within the EU. As the world's largest financial institution it is a leading provider of climate finance, has over 50 local offices and 3,400 staff. EIB can provide favourable borrowings to clients and the four key lending priority areas in 2019 have been Environment (€16.5B) – Infrastructure (€15.7B), Innovation (€14.4B) and SMEs (€25.5B). In June 2020 EIB published the EIB Climate Bank Roadmap (2021 to 2025) where all projected funded past 2020 are consistent with the Paris Agreement. The share of EIB finance dedicated to climate action and environmental sustainability will rise to 50% by 2025. The Energy lending policy from 2021 onwards will fund the renovation of buildings that achieve at least two levels of energy performance. The urban agenda for the EU does not create additional EU funding, but draws on lessons learned in order to make it easier for city governments to apply for funding from all EU programmes, including those falling under cohesion policy. EIB is keen to help cities to create tailor made solutions and finance smart investments that stimulates development through sustainable, integrated, inclusive and innovative developments. Smart Specialisation strategies will enhance R&I capacities, promote digitisation for citizens, governments and companies, develop skills for industrial transition and entrepreneurship and support growth and competitiveness of SMEs, Start-Ups and Scale Ups. Examples of regeneration projects were also covered in the presentation.

***August:***

At the July meeting the Working Group members decided that they would support the submission on the national and regional dissemination of the European Structural Investment Fund (ESIF) for European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF) for the next programme period (2021 – 2027). This submission has been drafted for discussion at the Working Group meeting of the 4th September. The deadline for receipt of this submission is close of business on the 4th September.

The Working Group members also decided that they would like a briefing arranged for all Councillors on European Funding opportunities. This will be considered by the CPG at their meeting at the end of September to agree the best way to provide this briefing. The CPG will discuss the briefing for all Councillors on European Funding Opportunities at its next meeting at the end of September and arrangement will be put in place for this briefing to take place.

## September

In late September 2020, the Economic Development & Enterprise Strategic Policy Committee Working Group on International Relations & European Affairs, sought to ascertain details on existing and past EU projects and EU funded national projects that Dublin City Council has participated in or applied to. This was in order to prepare for future EU funding and project opportunities and to gain an understanding of the level and scope of EU funded projects under the 2014 to 2020 EU budget cycle and to assist in raising awareness of funding opportunities in the new EU budget cycle (2021-2027).

### **Development Process:**

An external co-ordinator, Urban Mode Ltd, has been appointed to progress European project proposal potential. A project proposal has been developed to examine the Council's capability and capacity for developing European funding opportunities for the upcoming 2021 – 2027 European Funding programme. The Corporate Policy Group, which met on 25th September, has been informed of this approach.

### **The preparation process involves a 3 stage approach being carried out:**

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Process</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
<b>Stage 1</b>	<i>Complete Internal Organisation Survey</i>	<i>October 2020</i>
<b>Stage 2</b>	<i>Develop &amp; Deliver Staff Information Sessions</i>	<i>November 2020</i>
<b>Stage 3</b>	<i>Develop European Programme Strategy Document</i>	<i>December 2020</i>

### **October 2020 Stage 1: Internal organisation survey:**

In the first week in October 2020, a survey questionnaire was issued to all departments and sections across the organisation. Submissions were received from 8 Departments and 14 sections. All data was collated, reviewed and presented to the SPC working group on 12th October 2020.

### **November 2020 Stage 2: Information Sharing Events:**

European Programme Information sharing meetings were developed and scheduled to be held in collaboration with National Contact Points for various programmes. It is noted there has already been a seminar with Eastern Midlands Regional Assembly and the European Investment Bank on 29th July with the SPC Working Group. Four information sessions focusing on Urban & Regional Regeneration, Horizon Europe, Smart & Green; and Social & Cultural; have been delivered for internal Dublin City Council staff in November (10th, 12th, 17th and 19th) and a full overview information session with the full council on 25th November 2020.

<b>Info Session</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
<b>Session 1</b>	Urban & Regional Regeneration	10th November 2020
<b>Session 2</b>	Horizon Europe	12th November 2020
<b>Session 3</b>	Smart & Green	17th November 2020
<b>Session 4</b>	Social & Cultural	19th November 2020
<b>Session 5</b>	Full Council Briefing	25th November 2020

### **December 2020 Stage 3: European Funding Strategy for Dublin City Council:**

Following the data gathering and information sharing process stages, development of a strategy document for Future Funding for Dublin City Council has been completed. The EU Programme Participation Strategy 2021 – 2027 was presented to Senior Management on 14th December and the SPC Working Group on 18th December. This strategy is also on the Agenda for the January meeting of the SPC.

## 8 SPC Working Group Outputs:

### i) **ESIF Submissions to the Eastern Midlands Regional Assembly – Sept 2020:**

One of the outputs of the working group to date has been the awareness raising of the funding opportunities at EU level and the engagement with key organisations and individual within EMRA, IREO and the European Investment Bank. The key output to date has been the decision by Working Group members to have a submission prepared on the European Structural & Investment Funds (ESIF). Each member state is required to prepare a Partnership Agreement outlining the strategic funding priorities for the period of the operational programmes – 2021 to 2027 – detailing how they will implement the funds. The collation of this submission was carried out by staff of the economic development office on behalf of the members of the working group. A draft of the submission was shared with members of the Working Group and was discussed in detail at the meeting held on the 4th September in advance of the submission deadline. The submission was updated following the meeting. The submission highlights the impact of COVID19 and Brexit on the Dublin City Economy, and the need for continued enhanced funding for Dublin city for the next 7 year period – 2021 – 2027.

### ii) **Internal Organisation Survey: October 2020**

A survey questionnaire was issued to all departments and sections across the organisation. Submissions were received from 8 Departments and 14 sections. All data was collated, reviewed and presented to the SPC working group on 12th October 2020. Survey report contained in EU Programme Participation Strategy 2021 – 2027.

### iii) **Information Sharing Sessions: November 2020**

Four information sessions with EMRA, HEIs and National Contact Points for multiple programmes, focusing on Urban & Regional Regeneration, Horizon Europe, Smart & Green; and Social & Cultural; have been delivered for internal Dublin City Council staff in November (10th, 12th, 17th and 19th) and a full overview information session with the full council on 25th November 2020. Agendas attached in Appendices

### iv) **Full Council Briefing – November 2020:**

A full Council briefing was held on 25th November with EMRA, IREO and summations from the National Contact Points from multiple programmes, including Horizon Europe, URBACT, Creative Europe, Erasmus+, InterReg and HEIs, DCU, TCD, TU Dublin and UCD. Agenda attached in Appendices

### v) **EU Programme Participation Strategy 2021 – 2027:**

EU Programme Participation Strategy 2021 – 2027 was completed in December, which culminates the work of the SPC Working Group on EU Affairs & International Relations. This strategy document contains baseline data on expertise & knowledge across the organisation, programme details and processes collated from 5 Information sharing meetings and seminars & consultations taken place with elected members & senior management. This strategy will be presented to the Economic Development & Enterprise SPC on 12th January 2021.