

Report to Chair and Members of the Protocol Committee

3 June 2021

Responses to Issues Raised by Elected Members

My responses to the issues raised are set out below:

1. Eurocities Network and other Special Interest and European Networks

Future attendance and representation to include Elected Members as well as Council Officials.

This is agreed. The current position in relation to a number of major European networks is as follows:

Eurocities

Participation in Eurocities is currently through the use of digital tools, which are opening up new opportunities for all its members to engage more with the Eurocities Team in Brussels. These digital tools are now fully active and operational and there is no issue with accessing and using these tools as the way forward. Training can be arranged if necessary.

In April, all City Councillors were e-mailed with details of the Call for Candidates for the Eurocities Executive Committee including the application form for the elections. Elections which will take place at the General Assembly in November 2021. Having an Elected Member on the Executive Committee will give the city the opportunity to steer the work of the organisation, giving us a stronger voice in the network and a greater visibility in Europe.

The Lord Mayor has been invited to have a direct one-to-one conversation with Eurocities Secretary General, Anna Lisa Boni and members of the Team in the Brussels office on 9 June to discuss Eurocities work and priorities for the next months, and how we can make the most of all the networks it has to offer, especially now that the digital tools are opening up new opportunities for participation.

Cities Fortifying Democracy Project

Dublin City has been invited to participate in Cities Fortifying Democracy Project which will bring together a cohort of participants from 12 cities across the EU and U.S. to identify and explore some of the best local innovations that empower their cities to further and fortify democracy. Four “pillars” have been identified, that with action and intention by local communities can strengthen the institutions of democracy. These are: voting and elections, governing, public safety and justice, and local media. The Chairs of the SPC's are participating in this project which will be launched on 23 June and will run until March 2022. (The German Marshall Fund of

the United States (GMF) is a non-partisan policy organization committed to the idea that the United States and Europe are stronger together).

European Metropolitan Authorities (EMA)

Councillor Alison Gilliland, Chair of SPC for Housing/Member of the Committee of the Regions, CIVEX Commission, Brussels Member of the Eastern Midland Regional Assembly will participate in the EMA on-line political meeting on 14 June along with political representatives from 17 European city regions highlighting the role of metropolitan areas in the preparation of national programmes of the European Recovery and Resilience Facility and future Cohesion Policy Programmes 2021-2027. (Barcelona Metropolitan Area will facilitate the communications).

Calendar of events/meetings

Details of all the latest news, opinions, press releases, publications and events are on the Eurocities website: <https://eurocities.eu/> and on the Eurocities Collaboration Platform: <https://eurocities.sharepoint.com/sites/MyEurocities>

Nominated Council official to provide support, information and co-ordinate

A dedicated official will be nominated once the European Office is established (by end June 2021).

The relevant communication structure is through the International Relations Unit, CRES Department. A dedicated email account internationalreltions@dublincity.ie can be set up if necessary

Collaborative Approach by Councillors and Officials in representation

This collaborative approach takes place when strategies, policies, etc. are discussed, debated and agreed at Strategic Policy Committees meetings.

Updates from all relevant fora provided to members

A new heading 'Eurocities/International Networks' will be placed as a Standing Item on the Culture, Recreation & Economic Services Management Update to City Council monthly meetings, setting out details of Eurocities activities across all Departments, implementation of any strategies and policies, webinars, updates, events and other relevant information.

2. Meetings

Plan to return to in-person or hybrid Council meetings.

Provision has been made for a hybrid Annual Council Meeting in the Round Room on 28 June. The meeting will be subject to COVID restrictions (max 2 hour duration, physical distancing, limit of 50 persons etc.) The Round Room is booked for September to December. Unfortunately, it is not available in July. It is proposed that all other meetings will continue to be held remotely. The matter will be reviewed in September.

Times of meetings, particularly SPC and Special Meetings presenting a problem for members who also have another job.

Meeting times are generally agreed between the relevant Manager and the Committee Chair. While I am keen to facilitate the requirements of Elected Members there is a difficulty

requiring staff to conduct meetings after 17.30hrs. In any event, late afternoon/evening meeting do not generally suit Elected Members with family commitments.

Need for Reports/Replies to Motions and Queries submitted by members to Area Committee meetings and Council meetings to include an indicative date for delivery i.e. (Q1, Month or Year).

Agreed in principle. I have asked each Department Head to consider this and report back to me. I will report to the next Protocol committee meeting on the matter.

Trend developing where Council officials don't attend meetings as they did heretofore.

I have asked Area Executive Managers to report to me when relevant officials do not attend Area Committee meetings. I will follow up with the relevant ACEs.

3. Support for Councillors

Administrative support in line with that provided by other Councils.

There are difficulties with this, given the political role of Elected Members. I am happy to consider examples of other Councils, if details are provided. I checked with other Dublin local authorities and was advised that no administrative support was provided. Elected Members can claim vouched expenses of up to €5,000 per annum in respect of administrative support.

Traffic Department - need for better engagement and communications; clarity in relation to who is responsible for different aspects; consistent, timely and meaningful responses; regular updates.

I have raised this matter with John Flanagan, Assistant Chief Executive. He will report to the next Protocol Committee meeting on how he plans to address the issue.

Access to City Hall and Civic Offices

City Hall is open to Councillors subject to them ringing ahead to gain access. The Civic Offices are open to Elected Members by prior appointment.

4. Issues with the 30kph non-statutory consultation and the related report to the Strategic Policy Committee.

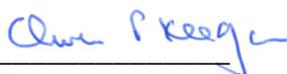
The report to the SPC contained a detailed response to the key concerns raised by the particular Councillor – essentially accepting that the concerns he raised were valid and committing to take these concerns into account if there is a statutory public consultation process. (Copy attached). I was disappointed to hear that the verbal presentation made at the SPC meeting made no reference to this statement and did not address any counter arguments to the proposed default 30kph speed limit. I am meeting John Flanagan, ACE to pursue the matter.

5. Press Statements

Regularly we get details of the various press statements we release as a Council, many of which showcase DCC work. It would be worthwhile including in these e-mails a link to

the press statement on the website and that when the press statement goes on the website that it would be made more visually attractive with relevant photos or maps. We do this well for social media but not ordinary press statement. If there was such a link Cllrs would easily promote activities on their social media. See for example the Capel St consultation feedback - a map of the area would greatly enhance this statement.
<https://www.dublincity.ie/news/85-public-favour-plans-capel-st>

More images and embedded videos can be added to the website. However, the site was developed so people could access services as quickly as possible via predominately mobile devices and not as a news website, so we are limited in terms of functionality. The website is never going to be very visual or interactive like a news website such as rte.ie for example. The objective is to get people to the services they require as quickly and as hassle free as possible. If we were to attach images to every press statement we are quickly going to impact on the speed of the website and over time it will become less responsive when people need to search the website for information on our services. We could look at something in terms of social media playing a role or maybe reducing the length of time a press statement stays on the website.



Owen P Keegan
Chief Executive

Concerns re Media Campaign and Information Presented as part of the Public Consultation Process

Concerns were raised by some Elected Members in relation to the public consultation process in particular that the information presented was pro 30 km/h and did not provide members of the public with the full picture and also that the running of a 'Love 30' media campaign during the public consultation process introduced a degree of bias. The issues are considered below:

'Love 30' Campaign

The decision to run a 'Love 30' media campaign at the same time as the public consultation process was unusual, and does not accord with normal Council practice. The Council was open to the charge that it was seeking to unduly influence the outcome of the public consultation process.

On balance it is considered that in any future 30 kph speed limit public consultation the 'Love 30' media campaign should not be run.

Information Presented/Messaging

We have examined the information presented as part of the speed limit public consultation process. It is evidence based and derived from the sources listed below.

- Hard and Fast Fact pedestrian hit by a car from the Road Safety Authority
- Survivability at 30km/h v 40km/h from the European Commission Mobility and Transport Road Safety, 2021.
- The Department of Transport "Guidelines for setting and managing Speed Limits in Ireland" (March 2015)
- The stopping distance in an emergency braking from the Source of World Health Organization Speed management a Road safety manual for decision maker and practitioners.

The information was posted as part of the process to make members of the public aware both of the consultation and to explain the rationale for the speed limit review was being undertaken and the benefits of the 30kph speed limit. However, it is accepted that the case against the adoption of a 30kph default speed limit was not set out in the information presented.

On balance it is considered that in any future 30 kph default speed limit campaign the Council should set out the arguments both for and against the adoption of a default 30kph speed limit to allow participants in the public consultation process make a more informed decision on the matter.