



Breviate of the Protocol Committee meeting held on 3rd June 2021

In accordance with Standing Orders of the City Council, the Breviate of the Meeting of the Protocol Committee held 3rd June 2021 is submitted herewith.

1 Minutes of the meeting held on 29th April 2021 and matters arising.

Order: Minutes Agreed.

2 Discussion with Chief Executive, Owen. P. Keegan

The Chairperson, Cllr. Anne Feeney welcomed the Chief Executive and thanked him for taking up their invitation to attend the meeting. The Chair outlined the following issues that the Members wished the Chief Executive to address:

- 1.) Eurocities Network and other special interest and European networks
- 2.) Council Meetings; hybrid/in-person meetings.
- 3.) Provision of administrative Support for Councillors and Access to City Hall and Civic Offices
- 4.) Improved communication with works Departments; the need for better engagement and clarity in relation to who is responsible for different aspects; consistent, timely and meaningful responses and regular updates; more meaningful responses to questions and motions.
- 5.) Issues with the 30kph non-statutory consultation and the related report to the Strategic Policy Committee.
- 6.) Greater use of Press Statements and the website to inform the public

The Chief Executive thanked the Members for the invitation to address the Protocol Committee and for bringing to his attention those issues over which they had concerns. He informed the Councillors that he would respond to these concerns during the meeting but that he would also circulate a more detailed report following the conclusion of meeting which he hoped would clarify his position and identify possible actions to address the concerns of Members.

- 1.) The establishment of the new European Office would help co-ordinate and promote the involvement of both Councillors and Officials in the Eurocities and International Networks. A dedicated official will be appointed to provide support and information to Members on these matters. The Chief Executive confirmed that he was committed to supporting Councillor involvement in European and International linkages both digitally and in-person when the public health situation allowed.

- 2.) The Annual City Council Meeting which will be held in the Round Room on 28th June will be a hybrid meeting subject to COVID restrictions (max 2 hour duration, physical distancing, limit of 50 persons etc.). Unfortunately, the Round Room is not available in July but the Chief Executive will investigate the availability of other locations. The Round Room is booked for September to December so facilitating hybrid meetings will not be an issue. It is proposed that all other meetings will continue to be held remotely including the Development Plan meetings in June. The matter will be reviewed in September in light of the public health advice.
- 3.) The capacity for the City Council to provide administrative support to Members is restricted due to the political nature of the role. However, under the vouched scheme of expenses Councillors can recoup up to €5,000 per annum for administrative support. 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.) The Chief Executive agreed in principle that responses to questions and motions should be more meaningful and include indicative times for delivery. He has requested each Head of Department to consider how this could be implemented and he will bring a report back to the next meeting of Protocol on this matter.

The Chief Executive reported that while the Traffic Department had delivered significant improvements to the City through the Covid Mobility schemes he acknowledged that communication and engagement between Councillors and the Traffic Department was not what it should be. He had asked John Flanagan to review this matter and to bring a report to the next Protocol Committee meeting on how he plans to address the issue.

- 5.) The Chief Executive accepted that the concerns of members regarding the impartiality of the non-statutory public consultation on the 30kph Bye-Laws were legitimate. He confirmed that the report on the matter to the Traffic and Transport SPC acknowledged the failings in this regard and committed the Council to a fully impartial process if statutory consultation was required. He was disappointed that the verbal report given to the SPC meeting did not reference these facts and asked John Flanagan to pursue the matter further.
- 6.) The Chief Executive reported that the Council website was designed to improve accessibility to services for the public and not as a general interactive news site. More complex and interactive press statements would in time impact negatively on the sites functionality. However, social media could be used to disseminate information more quickly and provide Councillors with a means to promote activities in their areas.

3

Motion in the name of Cllr. Dermot Lacey:

"This Committee requests a report using some case studies on the implications for Councillors of the new Remuneration rates and expense allowances for Councillors."

Ruth Dowling informed the Members that the impact of the new remuneration rates and expense allowances for Councillors could only be fully understood once the administration had received the relevant circulars from the Department. Following consultation with the Department it would most likely be July before such circulars were issued. The Chief Executive's Office would carry out an assessment of the changes and inform Members on how it would impact them.

Order: Motion agreed.

4 **Managers' Report**

a) **Councillor Support Services**

Order: The report outlining the process on how Members can access the support services was noted and agreed. The report would be circulated to all Members.

b) **Upgrade of Wi-Fi Broadband in the Mansion House**

The Manager reported that works to upgrade the Wi-Fi connection in the Mansion House would be undertaken at the beginning of July 2021. This would entail some disruption for the new Lord Mayor.

5 **A.O.B.**

Cllr. Nial Ring asked that an official policy be established regarding the attendance of the Lord Mayor or their Deputy at the funeral of someone closely connected with Dublin City Council. He referenced the sad passing of Donal Barron who was a long serving employee of the City Council, like his father before him, as well as being the father of a current Councillor. Having representation from the Lord Mayor's Office would have been appropriate on such an occasion.

Order: Agreed.

6 **Proposed date of next meeting: 24th June 2021 or 29th July 2021**

Order: It was agreed that the next meeting would take place on 29th July 2021.

Councillor Anne Feeney

Chairperson

Thursday 3rd June 2021

Attendance:

Members:

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

Members:

Anthony Connaghan
Deirdre Heney
Micheál MacDonncha
Cat O'Driscoll

Members:

Joe Costello
Dermot Lacey
Briege MacOscar
Michael Pidgeon

Officers

Ruth Dowling

Michael Gallagher

Owen P. Keegan

Apologies:

Lord Mayor Hazel Chu