

## Finance Strategic Policy Committee

### Draft Minutes of Meeting Held 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022

1. **Draft Minutes of the Finance SPC meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2021**  
The draft minutes were proposed by Cllr Dermot Lacy and seconded by Cllr Daryl Barron. The minutes were adopted.
2. **Matters Arising.**
  - a) Civic Crowdfunding Update  
Kathy updated the members that meetings had been held with interested parties in late 2021 as part of the competitive dialogue process. Also responses to clarifications had been received.
  - b) Local Government Funding Review Update  
Kathy reported that the first draft was received yesterday and that the review will be ready to present to the SPC at the next meeting in March.
3. **Correspondence.**
  - a) Letter to N. Moloney, Commission on Taxation and Welfare from S.McGrattan re Role of Local Authorities and Community Wealth Building on 22nd November 2021.  
**Correspondence noted.**
  - b) Letter from Colm O'Reardon, Secretary to the Commission on Taxation and Welfare on 30th November  
**Correspondence noted.**
  - c) Letter to Minister O'Brien re Commercial Rates Waiver Q4 from S.McGrattan on 22nd November 2021  
**Correspondence noted.**
  - d) Letter to Mary Hurley, DHLGH, re Commercial Rates Waiver Q4 from S.McGrattan on 9th December 2021.  
**Correspondence noted.**
  - e) Letter from Minister Burke to S. McGrattan re Rates Waiver Q4 - 14th December 2021.  
**Correspondence noted.**
  - f) Letter to Minister McGrath re National Development Plan from S. McGrattan - 6th December 2021.  
**Correspondence noted.**
  - g) Email from Minister McGrath to Cllr McGrattan Re National Development Plan 11th January 2022.  
**Correspondence noted.**
  - h) Email to DOT on foot of no response to letter of 25th May Re Grant Allocation - 6th December 2021.  
**Correspondence noted.**

i) Email from DOT with letter agreeing to arrangement of meeting to discuss Grant Allocation - 15th December.

**Correspondence noted.**

**4. Housing Rent Arrears Update – Tara Robertson, Administrative Officer and Frank D’Arcy, Executive Manager, Housing and Community Services Department**

Tara gave a PowerPoint presentation on Housing Rents reporting rent arrears at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021 being €37,895,467.

A Discussion was held around:

- Rent arrears having doubled since 2009
- Interest in the ‘Nudge’ theory (positive behavioural reinforcement) being applied to Dublin City Council tenants as per studies in the UK.
- Difficulties with adult children not contributing to rent payment and how this may contribute to rent arrears.
- Poor condition of certain flat complexes
- Issues around tenants not declaring increase in income contributing to retrospective debits
- Encourage and persuade the Minister to commence Section 53 of the Housing Act 2014. If direct debits were taken from Social Welfare it would significantly alleviate this problem
- Discussion around a standard rent and onus on tenants to claim the relief rather than onus on DCC to establish increased income.
- Fixed penalties for defaulting on payments

**Agreed.** It was agreed to:

- Forward research on ‘Nudge’ theory to Committee members
- Write to Minister in relation to commencing Section 53 of the Housing (Misc. Provisions) Act 2014
- Forward members a copy of the PowerPoint presentation
- Report requested for a future meeting on
  - the geographic spread of housing arrears in the city and a breakdown of same
  - consequences of not paying rent
  - when do the consequences start for non-payment of rent and comparisons within the private rental sector
  - what are other LA doing differently
  - what the new Housing IT System can deliver regarding tenants balances

**5. Funding for Roads Infrastructure**

Kathy commented on letter sent to Department of Transport in May 2021 regarding the funding of maintenance for DCC roads network pointing out that while DCC may be funded for the construction of roads and cycle ways there is no funding available to maintain them to proper standards.

- 10% of the network is in need of structural repair

- The DoT assume that DCC has the financial capacity to fund maintenance notwithstanding that the LPT is assigned mostly to housing projects and so DCC have little funds at its discretion
- Cycle ways need to be maintained to a higher standard than a road surface
- Dublin roads get more intense use and need more funds to maintain

Response from Department of Transport in December 2021 requesting DCC to use its own resources to maintain roads but with no direction as to where the monies should come from. Department has offered to meet DCC to discuss. DCC will seek for Government to use LPT receipts to fund road maintenance. Discussion with DOHLGH and DOT around this is planned.

Members commented on the confusion around local government funding and the need for a proper system with clarity and that decisions made by government should be funded by them. A Congestion Charge coming on stream was discussed and it was suggested that the NTA and TII should make contributions to road maintenance. Kathy pointed out that the current funding envelope, from all Departments and agencies, is not sufficient to reasonably maintenance road surfaces, cycle ways and footpaths.

**Agreed.** It was agreed to:

- Consider a Congestion Charge at a future meeting of the SPC
- A detailed presentation on revenue streams for City Council and where that income is spent was requested.

**6. Report on Dublin and the National Development Plan – Kathy Quinn**

Kathy spoke about the financial impact of the National Development Plan on Dublin City. The report presented to the Committee detailed the level of monies available for various projects around the city.

**Noted.** It was agreed to:

- Provide report on how the European Funding is progressing for next meeting

**7. Minutes of the Audit Committee Meeting of 11<sup>th</sup> March 2021.**

**Noted.**

**8. Minutes of the Audit Committee Meeting of 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2021.**

**Noted.**

**9. A.O.B.**

Members requested an update on the preparations around the St. Patrick's Day Festival. Kathy to enquire with Chief Executive and report back. Chair to discuss at upcoming CPG Meeting.

Next meeting 24<sup>th</sup> March, 2022 at 2.30pm.

**Signed:**        **Councillor Séamas McGrattan**  
                         **Chairperson**

**Date:** **20<sup>th</sup> January 2022**

**Members Present**

Lord Mayor Alison Gilliland  
Cllr. Anthony Connaghton  
Cllr Daithi De Roiste  
Cllr Darcy Lonergan  
Cllr Daryl Barron  
Cllr Dermot Lacey  
Cllr Mary Callaghan  
Cllr Nial Ring  
Cllr Noeleen Reilly  
Cllr Paddy McCartan  
Cllr James Geoghegan  
Cllr; Seamas McGrattan (Chair)  
Aidan Sweeney, IBEC  
Ellen McGrath, Dublin Chamber of Commerce  
Alan Robinson, Dublin Docklands Business Forum  
Philip O'Callaghan, PPN

**Officials**

Kathy Quinn, Head of Finance  
Mary Curran, A/Senior Staff Officer  
Sophie Kelly, A/PA to Head of Finance, Finance Secretariat  
Frank D'Arcy, Executive Manager, Housing and Community Services  
Tara Robertson, Administrative Officer, Housing and Community Services  
Shane Satell, Executive Engineer, Roads and Traffic

**Apologies**

Prof. Caroline McMullan, DCU  
Eric Fleming, ICTU