



MINUTES OF THE CITY HALL SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING

HELD ON MONDAY 30th JANUARY 2023

1.) Management of City Hall

Executive Manager Tony Flynn gave an overview of the proposed new Management Structure for City Hall which would see the Dublin Cultural Company taking over management of hospitality events in the Rotunda..

The staff effected by the change would be offered new roles in the Culture, Recreation and Emergency Services Department. He confirmed that management had met with the Trade Union representatives and a number of issues had been identified. An industrial relations process had been initiated and discussions would take place over the coming months.

The Councillors raised the following issues:

- The transference of roles and responsibilities to a private company. What are the benefits to Councillors, staff and the local authority?
- What role do Councillors have in approving the new management structure?
- Concerns over the commercialisation the building to the detriment of it as a public space.
- The importance of safeguarding staff and reaching agreement through the industrial relations process.

The Manager confirmed the management of the upper floors of City Hall including the Council Chamber, Richard O'Carroll Room and the Party Rooms would remain under the responsibility of the Chief Executive's Office so there would be no impact on the level of service provided to the Members.

Currently, facilitating events after hours and at weekends relies on the good will of staff to work overtime. This has consequences in terms of the overtime budget and the build-up of time in lieu.

A dedicated cultural company has the expertise and resources to provide an improved hospitality service and customer focused experience. The City Council does not have the internal resources to develop an excellent tourist experience. The new structure would ensure that a service level agreement was in place which would improve accountability.

The City Council would not be giving up control as the Board of the Cultural Company has both Councillors and Council Officials as members. The Members would also be able to exert influence through the budget process.

There is no intention to commercialise the building. Entry to City Hall will remain free of charge to the public. There are existing charges for the hire of the venue which will remain in place.

The Manager confirmed that although the decision to implement the new management structure is an Executive Function his wish is to work closely with the Members to ensure that their concerns are addressed.

2.) Newcomen Bank Update

Senior Executive Officer, Donncha Ó Dúlaing updated the Members with progress on the redevelopment of Newcomen Bank. Work is currently underway with a Part 8 planning application which would be finalised by the start of Quarter 2.

As part of the process there will be extensive consultation with the elected members through the Area Committee structure as well as a public consultation process. Consultation is also taking place with the OPW-Dublin Castle as they are an important stakeholder.

Currently conservation architects have been appointed and investigative works are being carried out which involves stripping out and archaeology digs.

It is anticipated that the building will become both a public and cultural venue. However, there is a requirement to treat it with an appropriate level of sensitivity. Issues such as structural integrity, fire safety and capacity will all have to be taken into account when determining the business case for the operation and use of the building.

The project team will continue to meet with the Steering Group and will consult with the Councillors and other stakeholders as it progresses.

The Councillors raised the following issues:

- They requested that the Part 8 be presented to the Protocol Committee for consideration.
- Exhibition Space
- That public access to the building is essential.
- That the building be stabilised and further deterioration prevented
- The source of funding for the project.
- Available for Corporate Events
- Management of the building

The Manager confirmed that he would be happy to bring the Part 8 to the Protocol Committee for consideration.

Chatham Row was being investigated as a permanent exhibition space. Although Newcomen Bank may provide temporary exhibition space for artists.

There will definitely be public access to the building. However, the extent of this will be determined by the structural capacity.

He confirmed that this was a conservation led project and the building was checked on a monthly basis and repairs carried out if and where necessary.

Funding has been established as an issue as it is estimated the project will cost between €10-12 million.

It is envisaged that the building will have both public and commercial cultural elements. Councillors will also be able to book meeting rooms but they will not have dedicated office space.

The Cultural Company is being considered to manage the building but no decision on this has been made.

3.) City Hall Councillor Facilities

Senior Executive Officer, Ruth Dowling confirmed that a report on the progress of the new Party Rooms, meeting room and hub spaces was circulated to the Members of the Protocol Committee.

It was envisaged that the Party Rooms would be finished and occupied by the 20th February 2023 and the meeting rooms and hubs would be available from the end of March.

Cllr. Dermot Lacey

Chairperson

30th January 2023

Attendance:

Cllr. Dermot Lacey

Cllr. Anne Feeney

Cllr. Micheal MacDonncha

Cllr. Mary Callaghan

Cllr. Deirdre Heney

Cllr. Donna Cooney

Tony Flynn

Ruth Dowling

Donncha Ó Dúlaing

Fanchea Gibson

Natalie Leonard

Michael Gallagher