

To the Members of the Protocol Committee



Quarterly Report on International Travel & Delegations – 1st June 2023

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It is proposed that International Relations Department will give a quarterly report to the Protocol Committee on international travel and delegations which will also cover official travel by the Lord Mayor of Dublin and / or Councillors representing the Lord Mayor or Dublin City Council. This is in addition to the Annual Report on Twinning and Informal Agreements to be brought to the Protocol Committee in June. This first report covers January – May 2023.

Twining relationships

San Jose, California

A delegation from Dublin City Council led by Lord Mayor Caroline Conroy visited San Jose in March 2023. Also in the delegation were Cllr Claire Byrne, Cllr Tom Brabazon, Cllr Alison Gilliland, Chief Executive Owen Keegan, Head of International Relations Fanchea Gibson and Gráinne Kelly, Office of the Lord Mayor. Planning is underway for a return visit by San Jose City Council which may be held in Autumn 2023 due to Local Elections in both cities in mid-2024.



Informal Agreements

City of Dublin, Ohio

A renewal of the MOU between Dublin Ireland and the City of Dublin Ohio was approved by the Protocol Committee on 27th October 2022 for a 4 year term.

A delegation from Dublin Ohio led by Mayor Jane Walsh visited Dublin from 15th – 17th March 2023. On 15th March Lord Mayor Caroline Conroy and Mayor Jane Fox signed the MOU at the Mansion House. An invitation has been received from Mayor Fox for a return visit to Dublin Ohio.



Seoul, Republic of Korea

The signing of a 4 year Friendship Agreement between the cities of Dublin and Seoul was approved by the Protocol Committee on 23rd February 2023 for a 4 year term.

A delegation from Seoul led by Mayor Oh Se-Hoon visited Dublin from 15th – 17th March 2023 as part of a four city European tour. The Ambassador of Republic of Korea to Ireland also accompanied the delegation. On 16th March Lord Mayor Carline Conroy and Mayor Oh Se-Hoon signed a 4 year Friendship Agreement. Ongoing work between the Transportation Departments of the two City Councils is underway under the European Union's International Urban and Regional Cooperation (IURC) Programme with a focus on shared challenges regarding mobility. An invitation was received and accepted for Dublin City Council to take part in the Seoul Smart City Prize competition, along with an invitation issued to the next Lord Mayor to attend the 2023 World Cities Summit Mayor's Forum in Seoul in September 2023.



Visiting Delegations

Cleveland Ohio

On 22nd May a delegation from Cleveland Ohio visited Dublin as part of their visit to Ireland on the inaugural Aer Lingus flight between the two cities. The delegation was led by Mayor of Cleveland Justin Bibb and Cuyahoga County Executive Chris Ronayne and organised by Mark Owens who works for Team NEO and is also Honorary Irish Consul General for Ohio since March 2023. The delegation included City of Cleveland and Cuyahoga staff and representatives from Greater Cleveland Partnership, Team NEO, Huntington Bank, JobsOhio and Eaton Corporation.

The delegation met with the Lord Mayor Caroline Conroy and Chief Executive Owen Keegan at the Mansion House and discussed the similarities and differences between the two cities, topics discussed included housing, youth engagement, employment and attracting overseas workers to Dublin, accommodating refugees, Climate & biodiversity initiatives and traffic free areas within the city. The group then walked to City Hall via the Powerscourt Townhouse Centre and George's Street Arcade to see how older buildings in Dublin have been used as city market and shopping arcades. In City Hall the delegation met with Councillors Donna Cooney, Alison Gilliland, Dermot Lacey, Cat O'Driscoll and Larry O'Toole and with Assistant Chief Executive C oil n O'Reilly and Dublin City Council Economist Juliet Passmore. Discussions were had on public consultation, and in particular the *Your Dublin Your Voice* public consultation tool, housing and retrofitting, the relationship between Local Government and National Government and funding. The afternoon ended with a visit and tour of Bridgefoot Street Park.



Savannah Georgia, USA

A delegation from Savannah Georgia, USA led by Mayor of Savannah Van R. Johnson paid a courtesy visit to the Lord Mayor of Dublin Caroline Conroy in the Mansion House on the afternoon of Wednesday 24th May. The delegation was in Ireland for a signing ceremony to formally begin work to convert the former Adoration Convent in Wexford Town into a Georgia Southern student residential complex. During their visit the delegates also engaged in conversations across the topics of diaspora, economics and educational matters.



Official International travel by Lord Mayor of Dublin

Velo-City 2023: Leipzig 11th – 12th May 2023

Lord Mayor Caroline Conroy travelled to Leipzig for Velo-City 2023, where she had been invited by the Mayor of Leipzig Burkhard Jung and President of the European Cyclists' Federation Mr Henk Swarttouw, to participate as a Plenary Speaker at this event.

Lord Mayor Conroy participated in a plenary session titled *Strong Leadership for Action*. Other panellists were:

- Burkhard Jung, Mayor, Leipzig, Germany
- Filip Watteuw, Deputy Mayor, Ghent, Belgium
- Goura Nataraj, Member of the State Legislative Assembly, Paraná, Brazil
- Katja Diehl, Owner of She Drives Mobility, Germany
- Gerdien Rots, Alderman, City of Zwolle, The Netherlands

The panel discussion focused on how strong leadership can empower people to act for change, and how to unite courageous leaders who are pushing for change and who are not afraid to listen, take action and change minds. Panellists shared their views on what can be achieved through political leadership, what thought leadership can deliver; discussions also considered what was needed to steer the direction of development and what it takes to be on the front line of progress. Also, how can the plenary panellists as leaders get stakeholders on board the mobility transition towards more cycling and active mobility, and how they can convince political decision makers, and how much can be achieved in one election cycle?

Lord Mayor Conroy while in Leipzig, signed a declaration urging public authorities worldwide to 'Make Cycling a fully-fledged mode of transport accessible to all'. Signatories of the statement will endeavour to use the resources, capabilities and networks at their disposal to promote and grow cycling in their constituencies and to engage in collective initiatives that further prioritise cycling for everyone.

Gráinne Kelly, Administrative Officer, Office of the Lord Mayor accompanied the Lord Mayor.



Eurocities Economic Development Forum 22nd – 24th March 2023

Councillor Tom Brabazon and Juliet Passmore of Dublin City Council's Economic Development Department attended the Eurocities Economic Development Forum 2023, which was held in Helsinki from 22nd – 24th March 2023. The Forum 2023 explored cities' role in tackling pressing global challenges and enabling a fair digital and green transition.

On Day 1 the discussions centred on innovation, entrepreneurship, financing (EIB), co-operation with businesses and tackling the climate emergency. Focus was on city testbeds, innovation ecosystems and incubating SMEs. There were parallel site visits to a start-up centre, an education technology hub and the Urban Environment House including a tour of the centre for the environment in Helsinki which is a nearly zero-energy construction building.

Day 2 was dedicated to strategies for future proofing the workforce to mark 2023 European Year of Skills. There were presentations on the EU skills and attraction policies highlighting the twin transition to Green and Digital jobs that to date is policy rather than market driven. The aging demographic of the EU was emphasised and the active migration policies of Riga (online platform to attract skilled labour) and Stockholm (language skills for migrants) were highlighted. Quality of life was seen as important to skilled migrants and integration was seen as key by cities.

The Forum's political track (Day 2) discussed the impact of proposed European initiatives, such as the review of the EU economic governance framework, on channelling more funding into the local infrastructure including green loaning at cheaper lending rates. Some examples included funding for renewables, flood taxes and biodiversity restoration.

There was input from officials and politicians from a variety of cities including Helsinki, Amsterdam, Milan, Eindhoven, Tallinn, Lille, Genoa, Riga, Stockholm as well as from private organisations, the European Commission and the EIB.

Key takeaways included Helsinki's ambition to be carbon neutral by 2030, sustainable tourism strategies which included ongoing design of a Carbon Footprint Measurement.

For further information and a link please see <https://linktr.ee/eurocities>

Fanchea Gibson
Administrative Officer
26th May 2023