

To the Lord Mayor and
Members of Dublin City Council

Report No. 4/2017
Report of the Economic
Development & Enterprise
Strategic Policy Committee



Comhairle Cathrach
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City Council

**Economic Development and Enterprise Strategic Policy Committee
Meeting held on 22nd November 2016**

The Economic Development & Enterprise Strategic Policy Committee (SCP) has responsibility for formulating economic policy and making recommendations to Dublin City Council.

In 2015, the SPC established a Working Group to examine the Café and Restaurants sector of the city with a view to identifying policy measures which could help to improve the efficiency of the sector and where possible remove any unnecessarily negative regulatory barriers.

The Working Group consulted with a range of key stakeholders and it is intended that a number of these recommendations would be included in the 2017 Action Plan of the Dublin City Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP).

This attached report contains the recommendations identified by the working group and describes the strategy and methodology for implementing the report and is presented to the City Council for noting.

Cllr. Paul McAuliffe,
Chairperson

21st December 2016



Dublin City Council

Economic Development & Enterprise SPC

Café & Restaurants Sector Report

November 2016

Acknowledgements:

Dublin City Council Economic Development & Enterprise Team would like to extend their sincere thanks to Ms. Yvonne Scully of Yvonne Scully Associates for her efforts in researching and identifying issues for this report.

We would also like to thank the following stakeholders who participated in the report

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Richard Guiney, Dublin Town
Adrian Cummins, RAI
Martin Harte, Temple Bar Company
Helen McDaid, Fáilte Ireland

Cafes and Restaurants:

The Bakehouse
Queen of Tarts
Fumbally Café
Woodstock Café
Boxy House
Lovely Food Company

Dublin City Council:

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Executive Summary:

“The café/restaurant sector is thriving in the city; they are important sources of employment and critical in making the city attractive for workers, visitors and residents”

(Dublin City Council Development Plan 2016-2022)

Dublin City Council acknowledges the important contribution that the Café and Restaurant sector plays in creating an attractive and vibrant environment for citizens and workers of the city, a role which will take on greater significance as we seek to attract new business in the wake of the UK's BREXIT decision. The sector also plays a crucial role in the promotion of Dublin, as front of house staff are often the first point of contact that visitors and tourists experience. A third area of benefit is Urban Regeneration and the sector can play a significant role in encouraging new residents and enterprise into economically and socially deprived areas.

The Economic Development & Enterprise Strategic Policy Committee (SCP) has responsibility for formulating economic policy and making recommendations to Dublin City Council. In 2015 the SPC established a Working Group to examine the Café and Restaurants sector of the city with a view to identifying policy measures which could help to improve the efficiency of the sector and where possible remove any unnecessarily negative regulatory barriers. The Working Group consulted with a range of key stakeholders and it was intended that a number of these recommendations could be included in the 2017 Action Plan of the Dublin City Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP).

DCC has a vision for the City to accommodate the growing trend for more socialising by day and more shopping by night which entails the development of a Café Culture for Dublin City on par with other European Cities. Shopping is already seen as more of a leisure activity and unsurprisingly we are experiencing a greater tendency to both shop and socialise in one trip. As well as facilitating the growing number of tourists to Dublin City Centre, both international and domestic, the support and promotion of our Café and Restaurant sector is seen a means of encouraging the 235,000 people who work in Dublin to remain in the City Centre to shop, eat and socialise and to travel back into the City at weekends.

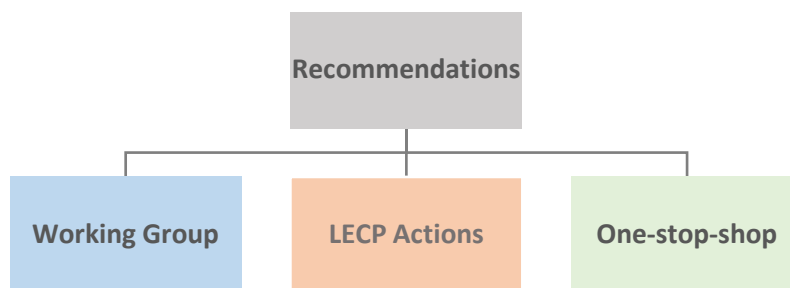
As shopping becomes increasingly associated with leisure activities, we are likely to see retailers relying on restaurants and cafés to attract people into the City and taking advantage of the footfall that this generates. Patterns of socialising are changing and this trend was identified by the *“Your City Your Voice”* research conducted by DCC in 2012, which showed that 66% more people visited restaurants than visited a pub and this trend continues to grow.

Research commissioned Dublin Town in autumn 2014 revealed that there is a vibrant hospitality offering in the city centre. Of those surveyed, 50% stated that they visited the City Centre to go to a restaurant while only 29% came to go to a pub (however, it should be noted that many of the Dublin pubs also serve food). Of those who said that they visited the City to shop, 73% stated that they shop in the City Centre because there are great amenities such as restaurants, coffee shops, pubs,

delis and entertainment etc. This figure rose to 86% among those who stated that they shopped more often in the city than in M50 shopping centres.

Well managed on-street dining helps to create a vibrant atmosphere and is very attractive to residents, workers and visitors to the City and the new Dublin Champions programme launched recently by Fáilte Ireland recently is to be welcomed. Dublin is currently in competition with Paris, Frankfurt and Amsterdam in providing an alternative location for international workers and returning Irish émigrés.

Implementation Strategy



This report has identified 10 key recommendations which can be implemented in a three-pronged approach, consisting of establishing a new Café and Restaurants working group, LECP Actions from the Economic Development & Enterprise Team and the creation of a One-Stop-Shop for Business.

The first response is the establishing of a new Café and Restaurants working group with a clear mandate and an established time frame for completion. The working group will consist of senior officials of DCC departments including but not limited Planning, Street Furniture, Waste Management, Public Realm and Economic Development. The remit of the working group will be to assess the feasibility of the recommendations contained in this report and to report back to the SPC in mid 2017.

The second response is where recommendations are sufficiently developed for inclusion in the LECP Action Plan for 2017. These actions will be managed by the Economic Development and Enterprise team.

The third response is for the establishment of a One-Stop-Shop specifically for the business community in Dublin City. This service is envisaged to be an extension of the existing award winning Customer Services Centre (CSC) of DCC and to provide business with a dedicated communications channel to find information, access services and to report issues under existing service level agreements (SLA).

Context:

Nationally, the Café and Restaurant sectors contribute almost €2 billion to the economy annually and the Café and Restaurants sector makes up a significant portion of the employment generated by the hospitality sector. There are approximately 2,500 cafes and restaurants in Dublin City, all contributing to the local economy in terms of job creation, provision of amenities to the communities and contributions to Local Government Rates.

A large number of independent cafes and restaurants sets Dublin apart from other European Cities and these numbers are growing annually. However, in recent years there has also been a large influx of international chains of Cafes and Restaurants, notably Starbucks, Costa Coffee and Nando's. Ireland also has several indigenous coffee chains e.g. Insomnia and Coffee Angel.

The CSO reported in Q1 2016 that *Accommodation and Foodservice Activities* accounted for 136,000 employees nationally, while employment in *food and beverage service activities* had increased from 82,000 in 2010 to 92,000 in Q1 2016. In 2015 there were 502 coffee shop outlets across the country, with sales growth of 14 percent, and total turnover of €284 million. Allegra Foodservice estimates that the total number of coffee shops nationwide will exceed 750 and turnover will reach €610m by 2020. The coffee shop sector is set to grow and has not yet reached its full potential.

The Dublin Economic Monitor Q3 2016 report published in October shows the unemployment rate for the City increased slightly for the first time in 15 quarters, rising 7.9% and there are 612,000 people currently employed in the City's Economy.

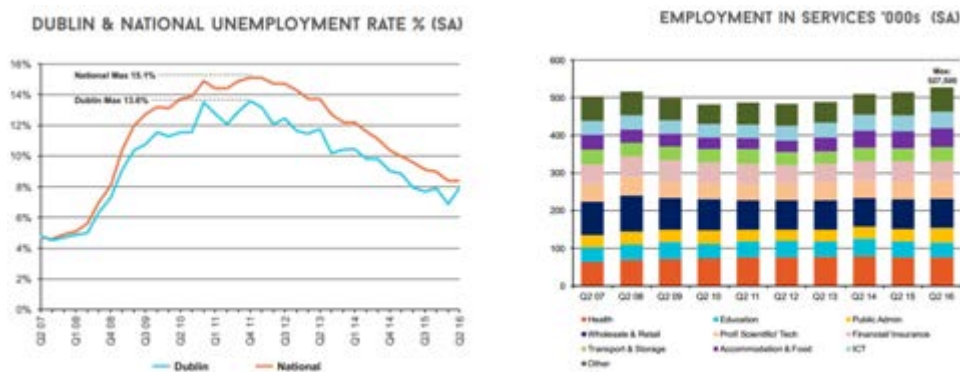


Figure 1: Dublin Economic Monitor Q3 2016, Unemployment & Employment

Preliminary results from the April 2016 census show that between 2011 and 2016 the population in Dublin grew by 5.7% and the Mid-East region which incorporates most of Dublin's commuter belt grew by 5.3%. The population of the Dublin Region is now 1.35 million people or 28.3% of the national population. The Dublin City Council (DCC) area has the largest population of the four Local Authority areas at over 550,000 people.

Dublin's Consumer Sentiment Index continued to weaken in Q3 2016. The decline can in part be attributed to the unexpected Brexit referendum result, a more negative assessment of future employment prospects and the general economic outlook. There was a general weakening in how households view their current and future financial situation in Q3; but households do consider themselves to be in a better financial situation than this time last year.



Figure 2: Dublin Economic Monitor Q3 2016, Consumer Sentiment and Airport Arrivals

Monthly passenger arrivals at Dublin Airport remained above the 1 million mark (seasonally adjusted) in June 2016 to cap another strong quarter for the airport. Arrivals of 1.12 million passengers in the month represented YoY growth of 8.6% or over 89,000 passengers. The airport posted its strongest month on record in May 2016 with 1.14m passenger arrivals. This sustained growth has been cited as a main driver of the airport’s recently announced plan to deliver a new runway by 2020.

Perceptions of current finances remained relatively flat compared to Q2 2016, however, consumers appear to have a more positive view of the current buying climate with respect to large household purchases. This was the main driver of the increase in the index of current conditions this quarter. The fall in consumer expectations in recent quarters has largely been a result of worsening perceptions in the outlook for the economy as well as future employment prospects with Brexit likely playing a major role. Notwithstanding the decline, the majority of consumers continue to remain positive in their view of the economy over the next year. Approximately 53 per cent are positive in relation to the economic outlook compared to 18 per cent who envisage deterioration.

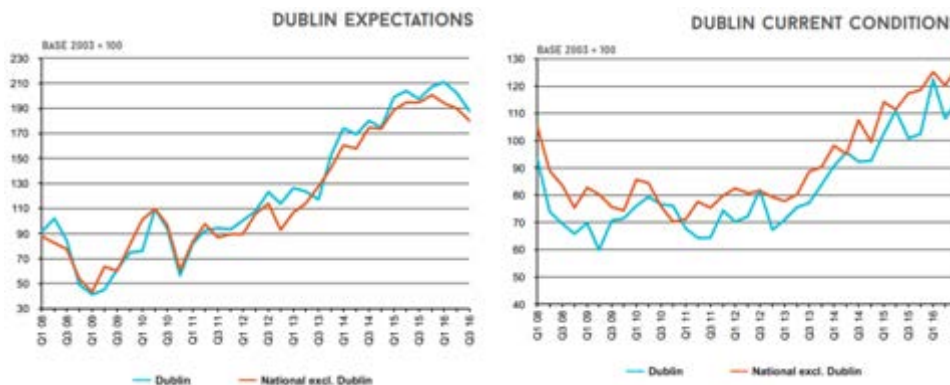


Figure 3: Dublin Economic Monitor Q3 2016, Expectation of decline vs. optimism

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Location
- Footfall
- Tourism
- Common language
- Clean Water supply
- Large number of trained and experienced staff
- Growing trend of Café Society in Dublin
- Proliferation of quality food producers in Dublin and surrounding counties
- Support of Irish Media (large number of food bloggers, food writers etc.)
- Increased consumer sentiment
- Public transport
- Cycling networks and the Dublin City Bikes scheme

Weaknesses

- Rents
- Licence costs for Outdoor Street Furniture
- Regulations and compliance
- “Regulatory Burden”
- City Centre Traffic
- Costs of City Centre car parks
- Ongoing roadworks and LUAS works
- Low barriers to entry
- Antisocial behaviour

Opportunities

- More outdoor dining
- Longer opening hours
- Linking in with City wide events and festivals
- More premises in North Dublin
- Raise the standard of eateries (e.g. O’ Connell Street and Temple Bar)
- Support local food producers through sourcing
- Highlight Food provenance on menus

Threats

- Weather
- Currency Exchange (e.g. €/£ and €//\$)
- Increase in number of takeaways and delivery services
- BREXIT
- Increases in regulation
- Increases in rents / cost of accommodation for staff
- Shortage of Hotel Accommodation

Recommendations: Café and Restaurants Sector Report

Working Group:

1. Remove the requirement for tables & chairs planning notices in newspapers

Currently, the Planning and Development Act of 2000 requires notice of planning applications to be published in a range of national or local newspapers to inform the public of the proposal. This requirement applies to any proposed development that requires permission from the planning authority. Dublinked, the Open Portal for the Dublin Region, has in the past posted information on the Data for Furniture Licence Applications. Below is the information published currently, although it is only available up to 2015:

“...licence applications granted for tables and chairs on the public footpath. Businesses wishing to place table and chairs on the public pavement outside their premises need to apply for Outdoor Street Furniture licences from the local authority. Details in this dataset include application number, application received, premises name, address, grant of licence, area licensed, number of tables licensed, length and width of area licences, total area in square metres and whether there is a private landing... Private landings in this context indicate that part of the pavement is not in the ownership of the local authority.”

This portal and the Outdoor Street Furniture Unit section of the DCC website should be used to show current applications, licence fees paid by different businesses and the Income and Expenditure from Licence Application Fees.

This recommendation is designed to streamline the application process and remove administrative barriers to the goal of increasing the café and restaurant culture in Dublin City.

It is proposed that the working group examines the feasibility of this proposal and if it decides that a change is desirable, it will prepare a submission to the Department of Housing Planning Community and Local Government to amend the Planning and Development Acts to allow a digital registry of application for table and chair licences on the Local Authority Website and remove the need to publish newspaper advertisements.

2. Ensure that there is clearly marked street signage on all streets and roads in Dublin City, either at the starting point of each street or clearly visible on corner buildings and that there is clear and visible signage at each main entry point to Dublin City Villages

The demarcation of Dublin City Villages (also referred to as Key District Centres in the Dublin City Development Plan’s Retail Strategy) and Suburbs (neighbourhood centres) and improvements in street signage are important factors in drawing visitors and tourists to different parts of Dublin and not just Dublin City Centre. To facilitate the location of cafes and restaurants for Dublin residents

and visitors alike, attention needs to be drawn to introducing street signage on all roads in Dublin City.

This is a problem in the Liberties area of Dublin, where several streets are unmarked. The introduction of a “Coffee App” for Dublin City centre is to be welcomed, and although it could be argued that most of the population can locate addresses with the use of their mobile phones, international visitors may not be equipped with the necessary data roaming facilities. To bring identity and demarcation of Dublin City Villages, giving them an identity and as an aid to visitors to Dublin to let them know which Village area of Dublin they are now entering, signage welcoming visitors to each Dublin City Village should be very visible and attractive.

The Working group will prepare a submission to the Transportation SPC, advocating the alignment of the Key District Centre outlined in the Retail Strategy (shown below) and implement a coherent and city wide wayfinding system which will clearly identify all streets in the Central Business District and the Dublin City Village strategy.

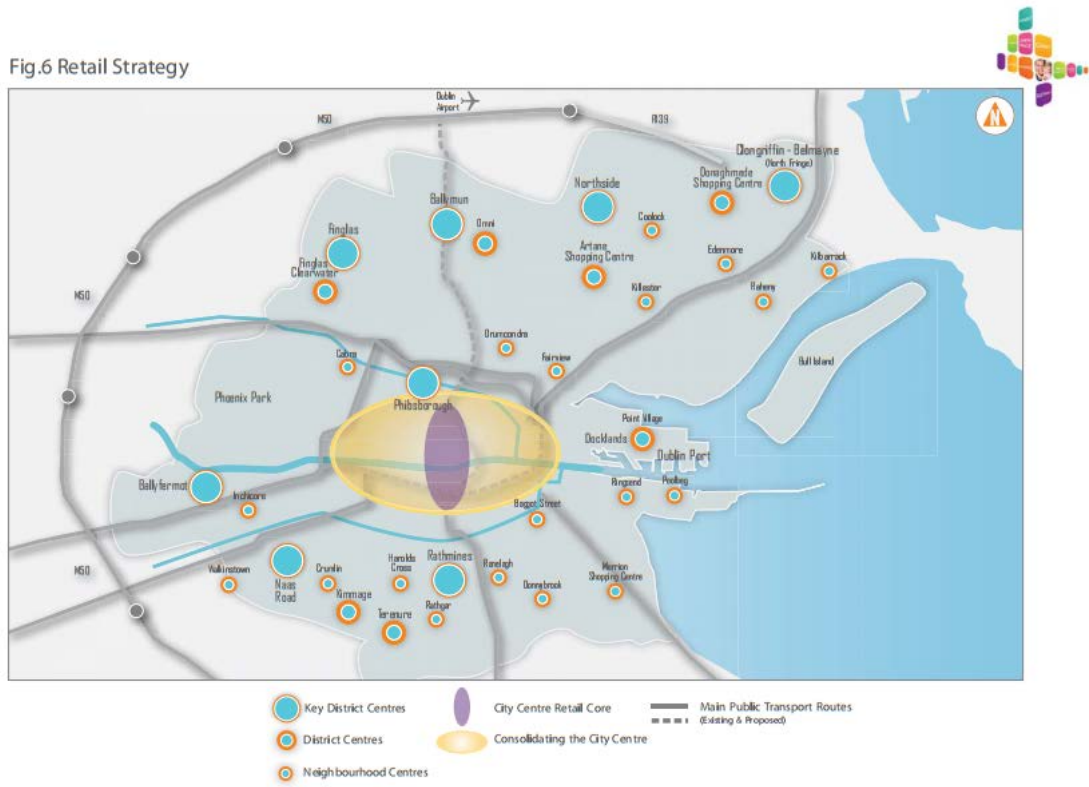


Figure 4: Dublin Retail Strategy Map, Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022

3. Examine the feasibility of reducing the current licence fees and the current Tariff Zones.

The current tariff structure of the fees applied to the tables and chairs licence is a combination of two elements, statutory fees outlined in the Planning and Development Acts 2000 and those that are variable by the Local Authority. A fixed table charge of €125 is currently legislated for in the act while an administration fee of €100 is applied by DCC. A variable charge is then applied to the area based on the proximity to the pedestrian central business district and per m² (tariffs applied are outlined in the diagram below). The application of these fees is considered expensive by participants in the scheme; however, it is difficult to run an international comparison, given the extreme difference in funding of Local Government across regions.

The Working Group will investigate the feasibility of reducing the fees applied by DCC and will also examine possible alterations to the zone system in the interest of increasing targeted participation in the scheme.

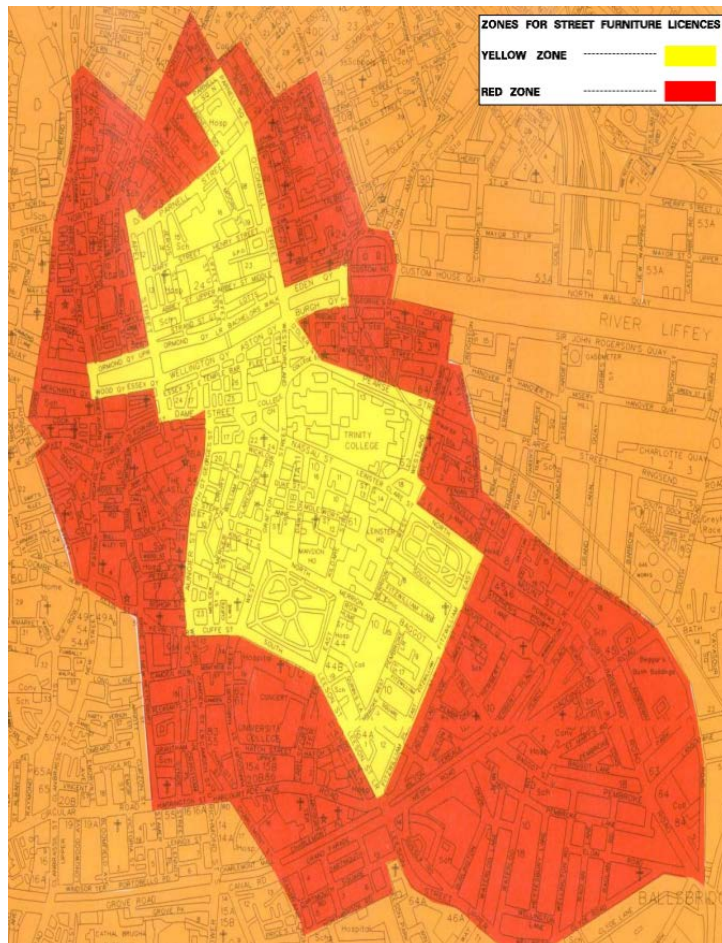


Figure 5: Dublin City Zones for Street Furniture Licences

4. To raise the standards of Barriers and Canopies, DCC should allow some level of Sponsorship without changing the material use in Certain Zones of the City.

While licences for sandwich boards can be applied for under national legislation, DCC do not accept applications (on the grounds of public safety) and sandwich boards are therefore illegal. However their role in attracting passing customers into premises is noted and several suggestions were made as to what to replace them with. Overall, it was felt that a wall-mounted version, similar to these found on the Continent could produce the same impact (bearing in mind that there is a minimum height of 2.2 metres) but that this could be done in such a way as to attract the attention of passers-by e.g. by having the menu information on notices which stuck out from the wall by a few centimetres at the required height. However, depending on dimensions, material, illumination and the protected status of buildings, the alternative to sandwich boards may require planning permission. The ongoing removal of sandwich boards is costly and time consuming for DCC as under the relevant sections of the Roads and Traffic Act, DCC must store sandwich boards and unlicensed street furniture for one month from the date on which a notice is served on the owner, after which the Council can dispose of the sandwich boards. Consideration should instead be given to on-the-spot fines as a less costly way of enforcing compliance with this law. The removal of outdoor advertising also comes under the powers of the Planning and Development Act 2000.

Outdoor seating is a central part of the attractiveness of a Café Culture and well-designed high quality canopies are an intrinsic part of this contribution. These are seen as an important means of protecting customers from inclement weather as well as the unwanted attention of beggars, petty thieves etc. However, several respondents complained about the restrictions that DCC place on awnings and barriers. Awnings are always subject to Planning Permission and under current regulations, DCC permits outdoor barriers/windbreakers which are of plain, coloured or neutral canvas type, not more than 1 metre high, spanning between or framed by simple metal posts. It also states specifically that Dublin City Council does not licence “solid screens”. The reality is that many restaurants do have solid barriers which protect diners from variable Irish weather conditions. In many other jurisdictions, similar screens are fixed in position by use of a bolt which screws into a neat receiver fixed into the pavement flush with the surface. Or in some cases weights are used to try and prevent movement of the screens outside of premises. These are then subject to applications for Planning Permission as the outdoor furniture is then subject to a “Material Change of Use”.

Planters are considered an attractive, non-obtrusive boundary around Street Furniture, adding a splash of green to the surroundings. In Liverpool, the use of planters is recommended to mark out the boundaries of Street Furniture and Low-level planters may also be used to define the boundary, but should be maintained and taken inside the premises outside hours of operation.

The current DCC Outdoor Advertising Strategy, part of the City Development Plan, states that:

“Significant, underutilised, value exists in the public domain which, if carefully harnessed, can provide the means by which the city of Dublin can generate public realm improvements without compromise to the character of the city. These improvements could improve street architecture, surface improvements, enhanced access to public services and a more

attractive city. Such improvements can be facilitated through a managed programme of on-street outdoor advertising”.

The document goes on to give certain zones of the City within which advertising can or cannot be permitted. Zones 2, 3, 5 and 6 may be open for consideration and these zones should be considered applicable for advertising on awnings, canopies and barriers.

The Working Group will investigate the feasibility of allowing advertising on canopies and awnings, including “in footpath fixings”, in line with the best practice guidelines of the Outdoor Advertising Strategy and in the interest of funding the public realm for the benefit of the citizens of Dublin City.

5. Exempt benches from outdoor furniture licence and planning application regulations

Outdoor furniture can be as simple as benches flush to the premises so as not to take up too much space. These do not interfere with pedestrians and passers-by if they are adjacent to the wall of premises. See example from Fumbally Café in the Liberties on the right.

The Working Group will investigate the feasibility of exempting benches from street furniture licence and planning application and seek legislative changes if required.



Figure 6: On Street Bench at Fumbally Cafe

6. Investigate the development of an online tool to assist in the compliance officer’s co-operation and reporting role to DCC

DCC should consider the development or use of an existing online system for managing interactions with business and for the management of workflow for staff. One system currently used by DCC staff as an online system for reporting, compliance and monitoring of DCC services is the Transportation Asset Management System (TAMS).

The TAMS system used by Roads Maintenance Services provides a single record of:

- Transportation assets including condition
- Enquires
- Inspections and Works carried out
- Spend on assets
- CRM
- Better evaluation and management of risks
- Better information and more consistent approach to evaluate risk
- Better record of assets, their condition and work to help with 3rd party claim defence.

Another example of a system currently being used is the **Fix My Street** application, which allows users to report issues with the city such as litter, broken footpaths, dangerous roads and public lighting faults. Reports are then queued into the DCC workflow for repair. While it is likely that neither of these systems is ideal for the purpose, a similar system may be suitable.

The Working Group will identify the feasibility of developing a new system or adopting an existing platform for logging and managing the various functions of DCC while interacting with the business community in Dublin City.

Economic Development & Enterprise Office: LECP Actions 2017

7. DCC to engage with the Garda Commissioner to increase the number of Gardaí on the streets in Dublin City Centre:

The issues of security arose in relation to outdoor seating and the potential exposure of customers to begging and petty crime. Millward Brown research found that anti-social behaviour and safety is the main reason for not recommending the city centre for socialising. RED-C research found that amongst the dislikes for the North Dublin City Centre, 17% felt unsafe /safety issues compared with 4% in the South Dublin City Centre.

There is a Gardaí tourist office, the Irish Tourist Assistance Service (ITAS) which offers immediate support and assistance to visitors to the country who become victims of crime. ITAS opened a satellite office in Pearse Street Garda Station on the 16th June 2016. ITAS, which has assisted over 14,000 tourist crime victims since its inception, will operate from the station 7 days a week. The service offered is free and confidential and will include emotional support and practical assistance including help with obtaining Emergency Travel Documents from embassies, rescheduling travel plans with airlines, accessing funds, accommodation, meals and transport in emergency situations.

A scheme has been set up called “Temple Bar Assist” which is a licensed security company with licensed security guards who can call the Gardaí if needed. However, the security guards are powerless to deal with the influx of anti-social behaviour. All stakeholders in this report recognise that an increased Garda presence acts as a deterrent to anti-social behaviour, petty crime and aggressive and organised begging, all which act as a disincentive to:

- *Dublin workers socialising and shopping in Dublin City after work, many of whom frequent Dublin Cafes and Restaurants*
- *Greater Dublin and surrounding county residents coming into the City in the evenings and at weekends*
- *Tourists not recommending Dublin as a preferred destination to others, via social media and word of mouth etc.*

The Economic Development & Enterprise Team will advocate for greater Garda presence on the street and resources to be assigned to the administrative area. As part of this recommendation, the Working Group will write a submission to the Joint Policing Committee (JPC) advocating the increased participation in security matters.

8. Implement the relevant recommendations of the report currently being carried out on begging and raise awareness of the legislation and advocate for the increased presence of Gardaí on the streets

A study on begging in Dublin City is currently being carried out on behalf of the Dublin City Business Forum on behalf of DCC, as begging is seen as a major threat to the comfort and safety of customers using outdoor seating. There are varying opinions in relation to the legality or otherwise of begging in Ireland and this needs to be clarified with the Café and restaurant sector and perhaps the wider community.

Current Legislation: Begging legislation in Ireland is governed by the Criminal Justice (Public Order) Act 2011. Under this Act only certain types of begging are illegal:

An offence is committed by a person who, while begging in any place harasses, intimidates, assaults or threatens any other person or persons, or obstructs the passage of persons or vehicles, and they are liable, on summary conviction, to a class E fine or imprisonment for a term not exceeding one month or both.

A member of the Garda Síochána may direct a person who is begging in any place and whom the member believes, upon reasonable grounds, to be acting or to have acted in a manner that;

- *Gives rise to a reasonable apprehension for the safety of persons or property or for the maintenance of the public peace,*
- *To desist from acting in such manner and to leave the vicinity of that place in a peaceable and orderly manner.*

A member of the Garda Síochána may direct a person who is begging at or near the entrance to a dwelling, an automated teller machine, a vending machine, or a night safe, to desist from begging and to leave the vicinity of that place in a peaceable and orderly manner.

Importantly for the café and restaurant sector, a member of the Garda Síochána may direct a person who is begging at or near the entrance to a business premises, at any time when that premises is open for the transaction of business with members of the public, to desist from begging and to leave the vicinity of that place in a peaceable and orderly manner, if the member has reasonable grounds for believing that, by reason of the person's behaviour or the number of persons begging at or near the premises, members of the public are being, or are likely to be, deterred from entering the premises. This act also gives rights to the owner or occupier of a private place to require a person who is begging at that place to desist from begging or leave that place.

The above legislation is only relevant if it is enforced and it requires the presence of Gardaí, however the notable absence of Gardaí on the streets of Dublin City means that aggressive begging and begging in the vicinity of business premises during business hours is going unchecked. This report has found begging to be a significant problem for the café and restaurant sectors and the persistence of beggars on Dublin streets poses a risk to the comfort and security of customers seated outside premises.

As part of this recommendation, the Economic Development & Enterprise Team will make a submission to the Dublin City Business Forum supporting implementation of the report on begging to increase security for the sector.

9. Further Areas Designated for the Purple Flag Scheme:

The Purple Flag scheme is a good example of DCC developing clusters of cafes/restaurants in a safe and secure environment. This has been awarded to the Creative Quarter (centred on South William Street, Drury Street and South Great George's Street) has seen double digit footfall growth over the last two years. The area has seen a large increase in restaurants and cafes over this time (an extra 1,500 seats over the last two years).

DCC in partnership with DublinTown, the Gardaí, Fáilte Ireland and other parties, have been awarded the prestigious Purple Flag award, which acknowledges an area for excellence in the management of the evening and night time economy. An important category in the judging of this award is the vibrancy of an area and the quality and variety of restaurants and cafes that are available. This area is the first of what will be several Purple Flag locations within Dublin City.



Figure 7: Fade Street Purple Flag Area

The Economic Development & Enterprise Team will add an Action to the 2017 LECP Action Plan with the goal of identifying additional areas for inclusion in the Purple Flag Scheme and will take ownership of facilitating applications on behalf of stakeholders for two additional areas during 2017.

10. Increase the level of coordination with all the business representative bodies in Dublin about forthcoming events:

Overall it was felt that there are adequate festivals and events in Dublin City Centre but that Dublin City businesses were either not geared up to meet the needs of the additional visitors and tourists to Dublin that these events draw, or that they were not made aware of them of given sufficient notice.

Having a more “joined-up” thinking approach to welcoming visitors and tourists to Dublin was seen by many as being important and something which Dublin lacks in comparison to other international cities. There should be greater integration of the city’s Café and Restaurant offering with incoming cruise ships and the conference centre.

This would represent an opportunity to increase the reach of the Dublin.ie platform to integrate other agencies such as Fáilte Ireland and Dublin Town and develop a single carousel of events which could then become a new promotional channel for the entire City. The Café and Restaurants sector would then be able to consult the event pages and evaluate the benefit of their participation.

The Economic Development & Enterprise Team will add an Action to the 2017 LECP Action Plan with the goal of developing a coordinated events carousel through the Dublin.ie platform which includes all major Dublin City events being organised by relevant stakeholders.

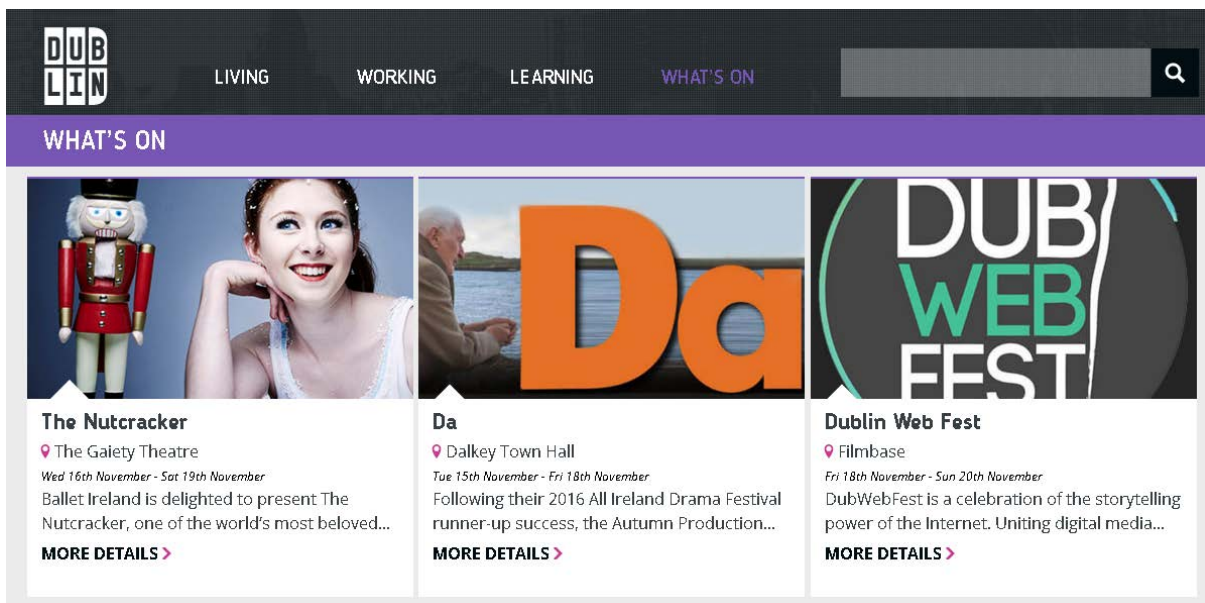


Figure 8: The Dublin.ie Events Carousel

Establishment of a Dublin Business One-Stop-Shop:

One of the themes repeated during the research and preparation of this report was to do with communication. The café and restaurant sector were frustrated in finding accurate information about applying for licences, finding information on planning issues and on reporting issues relating to the public realm. It is proposed to leverage existing resources and create a One-Stop-Shop for business to provide a single point of contact to resolve the majority of issues raised.

The Customer Services Centre (CSC) is an in-house, award winning, customer contact centre established by DCC over a decade ago. The centre already handles a significant volume of calls from the business community relating to the reporting of issues like illegal dumping, road & footpath maintenance, street sweeping & cleaning, gully maintenance and graffiti removal. The CSC is also responsible for the provision of a range of services such as issuing Residential Parking Permits and Casual Trading licences as well as logging customer requests.

It is proposed to establish a team within the CSC that will be dedicated to meeting the needs of business. Training will be provided, at first instance, on the requirements, regulations and processes associated with applications for tables and chairs licences for the Café & Restaurants sector. The team will also have access representatives of the Street Furniture Team and the Planning Department where further information may be accessed as required.

A campaign will be undertaken to inform businesses that this new service exists and a dedicated phone number, email and social media contact will be provided. Businesses will be encouraged to register their contact details with the team by completing an online form, which will increase efficiency speed of service delivery. The feasibility of providing an online platform or application for reporting matters, but dedicated to the business community, will also be investigated. Over time it is likely that these services could be expanded to provide information on the entire range of services provided by DCC to the business community.

Creating this team would require significant buy in from several internal stakeholders, such as Corporate Services, the Planning Department, Roads & Traffic, Street Furniture and the CSC itself. However, given the likely improvement in communication and delivery of services to the business community, any perceived barriers could likely be overcome. The Economic Development & Enterprise Team, through the LEO, would be willing to provide support in the form of training, access to staff and information to achieve this goal. It is also proposed that the establishment of this Business One-Stop-Shop be included in the LECP Action Plan for 2017.



Figure 9: EIQA Awards received by CSC

List of Recommendations:

1. Remove the requirement for tables & chairs planning notices in newspapers.

It is proposed that the working group examines the feasibility of this proposal and if it decides that a change is desirable, it will prepare a submission to the Department of Housing Planning Community and Local Government to amend the Planning and Development Acts to allow a digital registry of applications for table and chair licences on the Local Authority Website and remove the need to publish newspaper advertisements.

2. Ensure that there is clearly marked street signage on all streets and roads in Dublin City, either at the starting point of each street or clearly visible on corner buildings and that there is clear and visible signage at each main entry point to Dublin City Villages

The Working group will prepare a submission to the Transportation SPC, advocating the alignment of the Key District Centre outlined in the Retail Strategy (shown below) and implement a coherent and city wide way finding system which will clearly identify all streets in the Central Business District and the Dublin City Village strategy.

3. Examine the feasibility of reducing the current licence fees and the current Tariff Zones.

The Working Group will investigate the feasibility of reducing the fees applied by DCC and will also examine possible alterations to the zone system in the interest of increasing targeted participation in the scheme.

4. To raise the standards of Barriers and Canopies, DCC should allow some level of sponsorship without changing the material use in certain Zones of the City.

The Working Group will investigate the feasibility of allowing advertising on canopies and awnings, including "in footpath fixings", in line with the best practice guidelines of the Outdoor Advertising Strategy and in the interest of funding the public realm for the benefit of the citizens of Dublin City.

5. Exempt benches from outdoor furniture licence and planning application regulations

The Working Group will investigate the feasibility of exempting benches from street furniture licence and planning application regulations and seek legislative changes if required

6. Investigate the development of an online tool to assist in the compliance officer's co-operation and reporting role to DCC

The Working Group will identify the feasibility of developing a new system or adopting an existing platform for logging and managing the various functions of DCC that interact with the business community in Dublin City.

7. DCC to engage with the Garda Commissioner to increase the number of Gardaí on the streets in Dublin City Centre:

The Economic Development & Enterprise Team will advocate for greater Garda presence on the streets and resources to be assigned to the administrative area. As part of this recommendation the Working Group will write a submission to the Joint Policing Committee (JPC) advocating the increased participation in security matters.

1. Implement the relevant recommendations of the report currently being carried out on begging and raise awareness of the legislation and advocate for the increased presence of Gardaí on the streets

As part of this recommendation, the Economic Development & Enterprise Team will write a submission to the Dublin City Business Forum, supporting implementation of the report on begging to increase security for the sector.

8. Further Areas Designated for the Purple Flag Scheme:

The Economic Development & Enterprise Team will add an Action to the 2017 LECP Action Plan with the goal of identifying additional areas for inclusion in the Purple Flag Scheme and will take ownership of facilitating applications on behalf of stakeholders for two additional areas during 2017.

9. Increase the level of coordination with all the business representative bodies in Dublin about forthcoming events:

The Economic Development & Enterprise Team will add an Action to the 2017 LECP Action Plan with the goal of developing a coordinated events carousel through the Dublin.ie platform, which includes all major Dublin City events being organised by relevant stakeholders.

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Notes:

Following submission of this report to the Economic Development & Enterprise SPC on 22nd November 2016 a number of minor corrections were made including the updating of a number of DCC staff titles, correction of grammatical and spelling errors and the rewording of a number of sections to improve clarity. No material changes were made to any of the recommendations.