



---

## Report on Proposed Strategic Policy Committees 2019-2024

---

The statutory basis for Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs) is set out in Section 48 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended by Section 41 of the 2014 Act. The making of an SPC scheme is a reserved function.

SPCs are intended to be strategic in nature while the operational matters are mainly dealt with at Area Committees. The City Council is, and remains the decision making authority and the final decision on strategic issues rests with the full Council.

The Department's Guidelines state that SPCs should:

- assist the Council in the formulation, development and review of policy and strategy.
- reflect the major functions or services of a local authority within the broader context.
- take account of the Council's overall corporate policy and objectives, comply with statutory provision and link realistically to financial resources.
- be tailored to the size, membership and administrative resources of a local authority but generally be four in number.
- have one third of their membership drawn from sectors relevant to the Committees' work. At least one of those members on each committee should be drawn from the Public Participation Network Membership.
- Meet at least four times a year. SPCs in Dublin City Council have traditionally met four to six times a year.
- The Corporate Policy Group (CPG) should decide on the work programmes of the SPCs and recommend issues to be considered by SPCs. All subgroups of SPCs should be sanctioned by the CPG to ensure clarity on brief, reporting and to avoid overlap between Committees.

Dublin City Council's SPC Scheme 2014-2019 provided for 7 SPCs as follows:

1. Arts, Culture and Recreation SPC - 21 members, 14 Councillors, 7 Sectoral Members.
2. Economic Development and Enterprise SPC - 15 Members, 10 Councillors, 5 Sectoral Members.
3. Environment SPC - 15 Members, 10 Councillors, 5 Sectoral Members.
4. Finance SPC- 18 Members, 12 Councillors, 6 Sectoral Members.
5. Housing SPC - 24 Members, 16 Councillors, 8 Sectoral Members.
6. Planning SPC - 15 Members, 10 Councillors, 5 Sectoral Members.
7. Transportation SPC – 21 Members, 14 Councillors, 7 Sectoral Members.

The Departmental guidelines on the Corporate Policy Group (CPG) task that Group with budget preparation, value for money, service delivery plans and corporate planning. I propose that the CPG should take over the “budgetary” functions formerly operated by the Finance SPC.

I am therefore proposing that Dublin City Council should have 6 SPCs with revised memberships as follows:

1. **Climate Change, Environment and Energy** (12 Councillors, 6 Sectoral Members = Total 18)  
*Functions include waste management, litter, flood risk, climate change, energy strategy, control of animals, casual trading*
2. **Arts, Culture and Leisure**, (10 Councillors. 5 Sectoral Members = Total 15)  
*Functions include arts, libraries, Irish language, commemoration, parks, sports, Hugh Lane, leisure centres*
3. **Housing and Community** (12 Councillors, 6 Sectoral Members = Total 18)  
*Functions include housing delivery, allocations, homelessness, housing strategies, estate management, models of delivery*
4. **Traffic and Transport** (12 Councillors, 6 Sectoral Members = Total 18)  
*Functions include traffic planning, pedestrian and cycling policies and facilities, parking, roads and road safety etc.*
5. **Planning and Urban Form** (9 Councillors, 4 Sectoral Members = Total 13)  
*Functions include planning, development plan, urban design, conservation, heritage, planning enforcement*
6. **Finance, Economic Development and Enterprise** (8 Councillors, 4 Sectoral Members = Total 12)

*Functions including non-budgetary finance matters, tourism strategy, twinning, Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP), oversight of the Local Enterprise Office, Dublin.ie, Smart Cities*

Under this proposal each Councillor will be member of one SPC. The Guidelines advise that membership should be divided proportionately to the makeup of the Council. According to Standing Orders all Councillors are free to attend and participate in any SPC that interest them even if they are not a member however, only Members of the SPC can vote on issues raised. It should be noted that any increase in the number of Councillors on an SPC will necessitate an increase in the external membership as the ratio of one third external members to two thirds Councillor members must be maintained.

I recommend that the City Council approves the establishment of 6 SPCs as outlined above and now appoint 6 Chairpersons Designate to work with my Department over the coming weeks to formulate a more detailed draft Strategic Policy Committee Scheme 2019 – 2024 for presentation to Council at its July meeting. This will finalise, names, functions of each SPC and also specify the desired mix of sectoral representation required as per the guidelines

Circular LG 07/2014 also states as follows:

‘The role of the SPC Chairs is regarded as pivotal to the success of both the SPCs and the Corporate Policy Group (CPG). Accordingly, local authorities are asked to ensure that SPC Chairs are selected on the basis that:

- they have an interest in the work of the SPCs
- they are fully aware of the leadership role of SPC Chairs they appreciate the need to work with the relevant Director of Service to facilitate the smooth and effective operation of the SPCs and the CPG (which comprises the SPC Chairs along with the Mayor/Cathaoirleach supported by the Chief Executive).’

If the draft Scheme is approved in July, it is envisaged that a report and final draft SPC Scheme will be put out for consultation and sent to the PPN for comment. The final report will be presented to the September meeting of the City Council for adoption. At that stage Dublin City Council can invite interested parties to express an interest in participating. The PPN will be obliged to elect at least one member from their membership to each SPC. Sectoral members should be in place by October 2019.

**Owen P. Keegan**  
**Chief Executive,**  
**12<sup>th</sup> June 2019.**