

## Finance Strategic Policy Committee

### Minutes of Meeting Held 18<sup>th</sup> November 2021

#### 1. Draft Minutes of the Finance SPC meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2021

The draft minutes were proposed by Cllr. D. Lacey and seconded by Cllr Paddy McCartan. The minutes were adopted.

#### 2. Matters arising

- The Chair welcomed new members Ellen McGrath, Dublin Chamber of Commerce and Alan Robinson, Dublin Docklands Business Forum to the Finance SPC
- Members were advised that no further update was received from the Minister relating to Dublin City Council's 2022 LPT allocation.
- The work of the Commission of Taxation and Welfare (COTW) is relevant to the issue of Local Government funding.
- Dublin City Council has commissioned a review of local government funding which will be brought to the January meeting.

**Agreed:** The Chair will write to the COTW asking that it consider local government funding and its importance to local services, in its work.

#### 3. Correspondence

- a) **Letter to Dublin Docklands Business Forum re sectorial nomination replacement 01/10/2021**  
Correspondence noted
- b) **Letter to Dublin Chamber of Commerce re sectorial nomination replacement 01/10/2021**  
Correspondence noted
- c) **Email from Fergus Sharpe, Dublin Docklands Business Forum 27/10/2021**  
Correspondence noted
- d) **Email from Alan Robinson, Dublin Docklands Business Forum 03/11/2021**  
Correspondence noted

#### 4. Rates Waiver Q4 2021 – report presented by Anthony O'Donoghue.

A Q4 specific rates waiver scheme issued on 21<sup>st</sup> October by the Department. Previous 2021 schemes applied to the first three quarters, ending 30<sup>th</sup> September. Certain categories included in the 2021 Q1-3 schemes (i.e. rates waived) are not included in the 2021 Q4 targeted scheme. In these cases, the final quarter rating liability remains with the business to be discharged and will be pursued by Dublin City Council. Differences between the Q1-3 and Q4 schemes are –

- Rates waived 2021 Q1-3 - €28.95m per quarter (total €86.9m), 2021 Q4 - €12.57m
- Services not waived in Q4: essential and non-essential retail, health, miscellaneous car parks, crèches and service stations
- No provision for appeal if severely impacted by the pandemic

It was noted that the majority of the rate accounts excluded in Q4 were in the retail sector, that only 12.8% of rate account holders were eligible for a rates waiver in Q4 and that rates are now due for over 6,000 rates account holders not eligible for a rates waiver. Due to the recent introductions on restrictions (mid-November 2021) it was noted that the hospitality sector would be hugely affected. For context it was shared that one hospitality provider had lost in excess of €250k in business through cancellations in one day. There was an agreed urgency to raising the possibility of getting the rates waiver extended into early 2022.

Members were informed that €104m of Government support was received over 2021 the bulk of it in Rates Waivers which is hugely supportive and gives certainty to providing services.

**Agreed.** It was agreed to write to the Minister to request that the Rates Waiver Scheme be extended into 2022

5. **Community Wealth Building (CWB) Update** – report presented by Kathy Quinn.

Kathy presented an update on the Community Wealth Building initiative detailing the proposed approach after agreement at the Senior Management Team. The next steps are to:

- establish a cross departmental CWB Working Group chaired by Kathy to
- develop a programme of CWB supporting actions for Dublin City Council to effect over a period of eighteen months starting straight away
- seek specialist support for the development of the Implementation Plan
- then reach out to ‘anchor’ institutions to get involved
- establish a CWB culture in Dublin City Council

Members asked if the CWB process could be effected over an earlier period than 18 months and noted that it would be very good for Dublin.

**Agreed.** It was agreed to give regular updates to the Members over the coming 18 months on the progress of the CWB Working Group.

6. **Housing for All Strategy – Consideration of financial impacts for Dublin City Council** presentation given by Kathy Quinn

The members considered a PowerPoint presentation on the new Government housing strategy identifying four principal pathways and the key issues relating to same along with a link to the document: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/ef5ec-housing-for-all-a-new-housing-plan-for-ireland/>

Pathways identified:

- Supporting homeownership and increasing affordability
- Eradicating homelessness, increasing social housing delivery and supporting social inclusion
- Increasing new housing supply
- Addressing vacancies and efficient use of existing stock

Kathy commented on the key financial issues being

1. the expansion of the loan scheme,
2. the proposal for the introduction of planned maintenance of local authority social housing units,
3. changes to the differential rents scheme,
4. the costs associated with the strengthening of capacity within local authorities to meet the strategy demands and most important
5. The need to move from the current arrangement of funding/recoupment. The status quo is that Dublin City Council expends funds and then seeks payment from the Department retrospectively. In light of the expanded quantum of activity envisaged within the Strategy, Dublin City Council will either require working capital, an accelerated recoupment process or a process of most funds paid in advance with less funds subject to retrospective claims

The discussion held included that

- That the Strategy is very ambitious
- A strategic group to recreating Dublin was suggested to be set up – Action Group or Task Force.
- Concerns about LA purchasing and selling via CPO was mentioned.
- Vacant Summit to be hosted on how units might be brought into productive use and get residential development upstairs.
- Concerns about changes to the judicial review process
- Resources available within the construction sector being the main concern and capacity of construction industry to meet this demand

**Noted**

7. **Audit Committee Minutes** – minutes of the meeting of 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2021

**Noted.**

8. **A.O.B.**  
**None**

9. Next meeting **Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2022.**

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

**Date:** **18<sup>th</sup> November 2021**

**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; Seamas McGrattan (Chair)  
Aidan Sweeney, IBEC  
Ellen McGrath, Dublin Chamber of Commerce  
Alan Robinson, Dublin Docklands Business Forum  
Philip O'Callaghan, PPN  
Eric Fleming, ICTU

**Non Committee Members**

Cllr Deirdre Heney

**Officials**

Kathy Quinn, Head of Finance  
Mary Curran, A/Senior Staff Officer  
Brendan Dorney, IS Department  
Ger Larkin, IS Department  
Sophie Kelly, A/PA to Head of Finance, Finance Secretariat  
Fintan Moran, Executive Manager  
Anthony O'Donoghue, A/Senior Executive Officer

**Apologies**

Prof. Caroline McMullan, DCU  
Cllr James Geoghegan