



Dublin City Council

Comhairle Cathrach Bhaile Átha Cliath

City Manager's Department,
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2nd July, 2008.

Mr. Chris Gavigan &
Mr. Matt Merrigan,
Joint Chairs,
LANPAG,
Local Government House,
35-39 Ushers Quay,
Dublin 8.



**Re: Towards 2016 – Action Plan/Progress Report
1st March, 2008 – 31st August, 2008**

Dear Joint Chairs,

I am enclosing Dublin City Council's Progress Report for the period 1st March, 2008 to 31st August, 2008, the fourth such report required under "Towards 2016" the "Ten Year Framework Social Partnership Agreement 2005 – 2015". Again I am conscious of the need under the Agreement, for Dublin City Council to be in a position to adapt to the changing external environment, in which it operates, and to respond to the needs of the city, its citizens and other stakeholders in a modern, professional, transparent and ethical manner.

In the previous update I outlined the great strides that Dublin has made in the past decade. Dublin city as the economic engine of the region and the country is continuing to enhance its attractiveness as a place to invest, to work, to live in and to visit. The challenge for Dublin is to ensure that it can sustain and improve its position relative to other European capital cities. The vision for the city is based on having a creative and sustainable city with a vibe that is still distinctly Dublin, incorporating an integrated approach across six different strategic themes.

- Economic
- Social
- Urban Form
- Movement
- Environment
- Culture

In response to those challenges and taking into account the six pronged thematic approach, the City Council believes that focussing operations and policy towards sustainability is a strategically smart and competitive move for the city and has embraced the concept of TNS (The Natural Steps) which is a collaborative process aimed at moving the city to being a great place to live and work and that it continues to attract the creative talent which will allow it to sustain that success.

At the level of strategic city challenges, the City Council is conscious of the need to draw in the energy of the city through a series of collaborative relationships. The development of the creative/knowledge economy represents the future in terms of moving towards higher-level services, research and creating a solid platform for innovation. The area of soft infrastructure, particularly city identity and the range of facilities that support quality of life is becoming critical in attracting investment and holding on to a creative workforce. The City Council is currently developing an Economic Strategy to respond to these challenges and the international competitive city environment within which Dublin has to operate. In this regard also the City Council has set up the Creative Dublin Alliance an initiative with the Dublin Universities, business and private sectors, in order to create a bridge between the dynamic third level sector and the private sector specialisms that are now a feature of the creative/knowledge economy landscape.

The co-ordination of development by the City Council through the provision of over 20 significant framework plans, e.g. Heuston, North Fringe, Pelletstown, has ensured that sound urban principles underpin and inform the making of new quality urban places. An emphasis on integrated planning combined with a requirement for planning gain is focussing on social and community infrastructure as a major priority. In a sense these spatially based plans represent a tangible local area response to the city challenge.

The City Council continues to manage a huge capital programme, that provides for major investment in the areas of housing, roads, water, drainage, waste and community/recreation facilities, supports the National Development Plan and assists in maintaining the attractiveness and competitiveness of Dublin city and region, as the economic hub of the state. The City Council also provides and manages many of the day to day services required by citizens and businesses such as water, waste collection, planning, housing, fire, ambulance and other emergency rescue services.

The whole process of adaptability in a modern economy and society, involves continuous assessment by us as an organisation, leading to new and improved ways of delivering outcomes, which are underpinned by ongoing organisational learning and development.

The Progress Report, which is attached, outlines the very significant and comprehensive progress that has been made. This modernisation programme is in a constant process of iteration, and involves finding better and more efficient ways of providing services, and of communicating and engaging with the citizens and other stakeholders. I would like to highlight and comment here, on a few of what I consider, to be the most beneficial and far reaching developments in this modernisation process.

- In the last report to the PVG and at our site visit on 1st April, 2008 I highlighted the development of the seven day street cleaning service which has been in place now for the past year. Great improvements in the cleanliness of the city streets are very evident and this was confirmed by the recent Irish Business Against Litter Annual Survey which reported that Dublin city had made spectacular advances in cleaning its streets, is ranked in 16th place overall of the 55 areas surveyed nationwide and is now in the "Clean to European Norm" category. The staff providing this service from 6 a.m. to 10.30 p.m. on a seven day basis have contributed enormously in tackling the litter problem in a methodical and structured way. Also in the waste management area agreement has been reached with staff in relation to the introduction of a brown bin service and this is already being rolled out with some 65,000 householders in receipt of the service at this stage. A full information pack on the service is being sent out and a helpline established with further information available on-line at www.dublinwaste.ie.
- A redesigned website for the City Council was launched in February of this year and has been very well received by all stakeholders. A number of self-service options are now available including a facility to lodge planning applications with associated documentation and fees for "domestic type" planning applications, which is complemented by the use of improved workflows within the Planning Department to handle these applications. The site also contains a consultative capacity enabling citizens to interact on-line with the City Council and with other members of the public across the city about access issues in the city. While this is just one of the many advancements in technology, it is a very important part of our engagement with the community and I am very pleased that we are reaching out in a very tangible way to citizens through new avenues of communication. In addition, over 200,000 homes and businesses in the city have received the first instalment of a quarterly newspaper entitled Dublin City News. It is an up-to-date informative broadsheet, which covers a wide range of community information in each of the 5 city council areas.

The City Council is also exploring a range of initiatives geared to give ordinary citizens a chance to engage with key city issues and participate in constructive debate. The "MY CITY" Exhibition will open in 2009 and will address the future planning of the city through six key urban themes. This is being paralleled by the development of a 3D model of the city and by exploring how web2 technology and curated blogs might facilitate citizen response to specific issues.

- The City Council is committed to the concept of shared services through provision of motor vehicle taxation and driving licences for city and county, water production, fire brigade and emergency ambulance service, central laboratory services and various agreements in relation to the collection, segregation and disposal of waste.

- The citizen and customer focus are very much to the core with continued customer focus through extended options for customer payments including electronic payment for housing rents and loans, bin charges, litter fines, HGV charges and charges to lodge planning objections. A facility to refund on-line payments made on-line will be live by August 2008. In addition 66% of calls, (over 70,000 calls) to our Call Centre were resolved at first contact point and over 14,000 services requests raised at our One Stop Shop service in the first period March to May 2008.

- There has been ongoing development of the Risk Management Strategy with the development of the Corporate Risk Register and completion of specific Risk Registers in 5 different departments.

- The area offices and the area delivery of services continue to enhance local democracy through the utilization of quick and efficient remedies to local issues. The Council members have also warmly welcomed the introduction of utility crews to these areas as a significant additional resource in the areas.

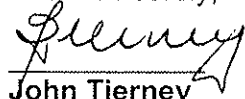
There are a huge range of other projects and services, which are constantly adapting to meet the changing needs and circumstances of our stakeholders. New and additional services are provided as required and there are numerous other examples of modernisation and adaptability which are contained in the attached report but which I don't propose to comment on separately. However, I think it is important to state that the whole management process, which allows innovation to flourish, is underpinned by the evolution and continued development of the PMDS.

Team working and cross-functional delivery of services is now an integral part of the delivery of both major capital projects and day to day service for the city. The very comprehensive staff training programme that we have in place along with the developmental and learning ethos which has been fostered by good management practices has, as its aim, the harnessing of the full energy, contribution and performance of every staff member in the Council. The building of a capable organisation through good channels of communication, carefully developed processes and relationships is key to ultimate success.

All of the advances and initiatives, which are being reported on, have been made possible in a spirit of co-operation between management, staff and unions. The Workplace Partnership process enhances the productive and co-operative relationship, which is necessary to deliver now and into the future.

While we have made a great deal of progress, as outlined in the attached report, our ambition is to achieve further improvements in efficiency, quality and innovation during the lifetime of the Agreement. Our goal of making Dublin a creative and sustainable, world class city can only be achieved by the combined effort and commitment of staff and management and I am satisfied that the structures and systems are being put in place to enable us to advance this goal.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Tierney', written over a horizontal line.

John Tierney
City Manager