

## **MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF MEETING OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENTERPRISE AND PLANNING STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE HELD REMOTELY ON MONDAY 26<sup>th</sup> April, 2021 AT 2PM**

**PRESENT IN THE CHAIR:** Councillor Eddie Ryan

### **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Councillors: Daniel Butler, Bridie Collins, James Collins, Liam Galvin, Stephen Keary, Michael Murphy, Sasa Novak Uí Chonchúir, Emmett O'Brien, Jerry O'Dea, Olivia O'Sullivan, Martin Ryan, Jerome Scanlan, Catherine Slattery.

**SECTORAL INTERESTS/ PPN NOMINEES:** Dr. C. Cahill and Eoin Ryan (Business/Commercial), Declan Hehir (PPN), Madeleine Lyes (PPN), Keith Enright (PPN)

### **OFFICIALS PRESENT:**

Vincent Murray, Economic Development, Pat Fitzgerald, Trade & Investment; Mike Cantwell, Ciara Farrell, LEO/Innovate, Rosie Webb, Lynn McMahan, Urban Innovation; Paraic Rattigan, MW Regional Enterprise; Brid Burke, Economic Development.

**Apologies:** Cllr. John O'Donoghue, Brian Thompson (PPN), Maria Woods and Karen Burke, Forward Planning.

### **Item 1**

#### **Adoption of Minutes from Economic Development, Enterprise & Planning SPC Meetings of 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> February and 29<sup>th</sup> March, 2021**

The draft minutes were adopted on the proposal of Cllr. B. Collins, seconded by Cllr. Galvin and unanimously agreed.

### **Item 2**

#### **Revised Standing Orders**

P. Fitzgerald informed members that the revised Standing Orders for the conduct of SPC Meetings were approved by the full Council at its March meeting. The Standing Orders were revised and updated to ensure that there was consistency across all SPC's to address procedural issues that will improve the management of SPC meetings. The main changes to the Standing Orders were:

- Arrangements for Meetings – 5 Ordinary Meetings per annum
- Meetings to be held at least 2 weeks in advance of full Council
- 10 days' notice to members for Ordinary Meetings
- 3 days' notice to members for Special Meetings
- Quorum – ¼ of membership + 1
- Submission of Items for Agenda – each member may submit 1 item for agenda (at least 12 days in advance of date of the meeting)
- Make provision for holding of Remote / Virtual Meetings.

While members thanked P. Fitzgerald for the presentation, they expressed concern that it was very difficult to get work carried out as Council Meetings were held bi-monthly and notice of motions referred from SPC meetings could take up to 6 weeks to be considered at Full Council meeting and they also requested more prompt action from outcomes from Council meetings.

M Lyes welcomed the 10 days' notice for ordinary meetings, which allows sectoral representatives the opportunity to consult with their relevant sectors. She stated that it was fundamental to the working of the PPN in relation to SPC's.

### **Item 3**

#### **URDF Funding Briefing**

V. Murray gave a presentation on the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF), which aims to support more compact and sustainable development, as set out in Project Ireland 2040, through the regeneration and rejuvenation of Ireland's five cities and other large towns, in line with the objectives of the National Planning Framework (NPF) and National Development Plan (NDP). It will enable a greater proportion of residential and mixed-use development to be delivered within the existing built-up footprints of cities and towns and ensure that urban areas can become attractive and vibrant places in which people choose to live and work, as well as to invest and to visit. It is one of four funds set up under the National Development Plan 2018-2027 and has an allocation of €2 billion under the NDP up to 2027.

The following table outlines the 4 applications made by Limerick City and County Council and funding granted:

<b>URDF 2020 SUMMARY</b>	<b>Funding Granted</b>
<b>The World Class Waterfront</b>	<b>€ 73,400,000</b>
<b>Liveable Limerick City Centre</b>	<b>€ 42,610,000</b>
<b>Multi-Use Events Centre</b>	<b>€0 – pending</b>
<b>Colbert Bus &amp; Rail Station</b>	<b>€0 – pending</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>€116,010,000</b>

The World Class Waterfront Project consists of the following projects: Cleeves Riverside, UL City Campus and Bridges and Waterfront Public Realm.

The Living Limerick City Centre Project includes the Living Georgian City Program, Digital Innovation, Future Proofing Place Program and the Citizen Collaboration Centre.

Members thanked Vincent for the presentation and stated that €116m was a serious investment to Limerick City on top of projects currently underway i.e. O'Connell Street Revitalisation and the proposed Opera Centre. Members particularly complemented the staff who prepared the detailed applications, which resulted in full funding received in a number of the projects.

Detailed discussion took place on the various projects and members queried the timeline for spending the money granted and queried if any assessment had been carried out on the proposed number of job creations as a result of the proposed developments.

V. Murray confirmed that the monies had to be expended by end of 2026 and that a number of the projects outlined, required planning permission before construction works could commence. He also confirmed that under the NPF that it is proposed that the population of Limerick will increase by 50,000 over next 20 years and that 12,000 jobs will need to be created in Limerick to accommodate this proposed increase of population.

He also informed members that master planning was nearing completion on the Cleeves Site and that it was proposed that it would be for a mixed use development and that once plans were in place, further information would be made available to members.

Replying to members, he also confirmed that the Community Department were currently awaiting the outcome of funding for a number of projects in towns and villages in Limerick under the Rural Development Fund. It was agreed that a presentation on the Rural Development Fund applications/allocations would be given to members at an upcoming meeting.

#### **Item 4**

##### **Georgian District Update**

R. Webb gave a presentation on Limerick's Living Georgian City Programme, which is a historic city centre revitalisation process that is being piloted in Limerick's Georgian Neighbourhood. The objectives of the programme are:

- Encourage and increase residential occupancy, reduce dereliction and vacancy
- Diversify the community particularly in terms of provision of affordable homes suitable for a diverse community
- Upgrade the historic building stock to best conservation and energy efficiency standards

The programme is supported by funding from URDF and Horizon 2020.

Key activities to date include the Housing Demonstration Projects at 58, O'Connell Street and 33/34, Thomas Street (design proposals being finalised) and the Laneways Demonstration Project.

L. McMahon followed up with a detailed presentation on the Laneways Project.

She stated that a Design Team, led by Tobin Consulting Engineers were appointed to prepare a strategy document for the development of 25 Laneways in the city centre. Public engagement was held and workshops took place with elected members, council staff and staff/students from St. Michael's School. It is hoped the strategy will be finalised by Summer 2021.

The objective of the project is to improve pedestrianisation in the city centre, to provide community centred social spaces for both business and residents, provide opportunities for play, sport and art events and improve access for the servicing of laneways. There is a broad diversity in the laneways included and they have been categorised into 3 categories: living lanes, activity lanes and community lanes, depending on location, footfall and surrounding businesses.

Members welcomed the laneways project and were delighted that Augustinian Lane was included as there was an ongoing issue regarding waste bins in the laneway.

They also queried if there was any collaboration between the laneways project and the outdoor dining scheme for Summer 2021 and was informed that it was hoped that proposals for events / outdoor dining in the laneways would be submitted by business owners for the Summer period.

#### **Item 5**

##### **Summer in Limerick 2021 Initiatives**

P. Fitzgerald informed members of the following Schemes available to businesses in Limerick City and County in the tourism, hospitality and retails sectors: The Outdoor Seating and Accessories for Tourism and Hospitality Business Scheme, Tables and Chairs License and Footpath Buildouts; Street Events Licensing and the Urban Animation Investment Scheme

The main points of the various schemes are:

- Up to €4,000 available to businesses to purchase additional outdoor seating/equipment

- Up to 19 Buildouts (widening of footpaths – 10 in Limerick Metropolitan District and 3 in each Municipal District) to facilitate outdoor dining, where heretofore it was not possible due to width of footpath
- Requirement to have a Tables and Chairs Licence
- Waiving of Council fees in relation to Licences.

The Outdoor Dining Scheme, which is funded by Failte Ireland, commenced on 12<sup>th</sup> April and will run until 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021. Forty applications have been received to date and there is no cap on number of applications that can be granted funding.

He also highlighted the following initiatives:

- Weather Proofing and Outdoor Dining Scheme - An Urban Design Team has been commissioned to prepare plans for Bedford Row and Lr. Thomas St./ Augustinian Lane areas.
- Outdoor Public Space Scheme – Three Architectural Firms have been commissioned to draw up proposals
- Shop Limerick which was launched last year to promote businesses in Limerick has currently 300 businesses registered and is continuing to grow.
- Marketing Limerick will launch an extensive Summer Campaign in attracting tourism / staycations in Limerick, as soon as public health guidelines allow.

Following discussion regarding planning requirements for canopies and awnings attached to structures, P. Fitzgerald pointed out that they were awaiting confirmation from the Minister's Office of the intention to waive planning fees for canopies and awnings for this year.

He stated that he would liaise with Planning Department staff re adopting a more flexible approach regarding licence requirements and address the issue of time lags regarding applications for licences.

Members expressed concern that there was an unwillingness to get involved due to future increased fees and P. Fitzgerald confirmed that future fees would be discussed at budget preparation time, which will be adopted by the Council.

On the proposal of Cllr. J. Collins, seconded by Cllr. B. Collins, it was unanimously agreed to consider the matter at a future SPC meeting and to make a recommendation on proposed licence fees to Head of Finance, prior to preparation of Budget 2022.

P. Fitzgerald informed members that seating at the rear of premises did not require S254 Licence and that a separate application was not required for a footpath buildout.

While members welcomed the Outdoor Public Space Scheme, which will be a great support for many artists, they suggested liaising with representatives from King John's Castle, Dolan's and the Milk Market, when considering plans for this scheme.

Members expressed concern on the issue of overcrowding on the footpaths at the three bridges walk and was informed by V. Murray that the Physical Directorate would be implementing a number of initiatives in the area for the Summer period and he would discuss proposals with B. Kennedy, Director of Service and report back to members.

V. Murray assured members that he would discuss the matter of setting up of a Taskforce for the roll-out of the various schemes with the Chief Executive.

On the proposal of Cllr. J. Collins, seconded by Cllr. B. Collins, it was unanimously agreed to suspend Standing Orders in order to allow completion of the meeting.

### **Item 6**

#### **Limerick Development Plan Update**

V. Murray updated members with the following data

- Southern Environs Area Plan was adopted at the Metropolitan Meeting on 19/04/21 and the Plan will come into effect on 31/5/21.
- Workshops on the proposed Development Plan to be arranged with Members.
- Special Council Meeting arranged for 14/06/21 to consider the Draft Development Plan, It will be placed on public display for a period of 10 weeks (26/6/21 – 6/9/21).

### **Item 7**

#### **Any Other Business**

1. The Chairman informed members that Councillors B. Collins, S. Kiely and F. Kilcoyne had been elected to the Local SME Committee at a special meeting of Full Council on 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 2021.  
Further representatives from the business and educational sectors will be elected by the Innovate Sub-Committee and nominations for the business sector can be forwarded to Innovate.
2. Next Meeting – 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2021.

That concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

**Councillor Eddie Ryan,  
Chairperson**