

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT SPECIAL MEETING OF THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT OF LIMERICK HELD ON THURSDAY, 10TH NOVEMBER, 2022 AT 12 NOON IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DOORADOYLE AND ONLINE

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR: Councillor Olivia O’Sullivan, Cathaoirleach

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillors Benson, Butler, Collins, Collopy, Hartigan, Kiely, Leddin, McSweeney, Novak Uí Chonchúir, O’Donovan, O’Hanlon, Pond, Secas, Sheehan (C), Slattery and Talukder.

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Director, National and Regional Shared Services Centre (Mr. K. Lehane), Director, Planning, Environment and Place-Making (Ms. N. Gallagher), Director, Regeneration (Mr. J. Delaney), Meetings Administrator (Ms. A. Foley), A/Senior Architect, Place-Making and Public Realm (Mr. S. Hanrahan), Administrative Officer, Place-Making and Public Realm (Ms. P. Fogarty), Senior Executive Engineers, Place-Making and Public Realm (Ms. O. Downes and Mr. K. O’Gorman), Head of Property and Community Facilities (Ms. J. Leahy), Administrative Officer, Property and Community Facilities (Ms. T. Knox), Senior Executive Engineer, Active Travel (Mr. A. Finn), Assistant Staff Officer, Corporate Services and Governance (Ms. S. Carroll).

The Cathaoirleach welcomed the Elected Members, Officials, Media and Members of the Public to the Special Meeting. She confirmed that the Special Meeting was being held to discuss the following:

- Update on World Class Waterfront URDF;
- Wayfinding and Signage Strategy for Limerick;
- Laneways and Streets Upgrades;
- King’s Island Walled Town – Nicholas Street Rejuvenation Works;
- High Street and Milk Market Area;

Update on World Class Waterfront URDF;

The Senior Executive Engineer, Place-Making and Public Realm gave a PowerPoint presentation on the World Class Waterfront referring to the three Strands of the Project, Cleaves Riverside Quarter, UL City Campus and Pedestrian Bridges and Infrastructure Works. She outlined the provisional funding allocations and timelines for each of the Strands and she outlined the possible options which were under consideration for the area.

Members welcomed the proposed developments, highlighting their importance for the city centre. Members also expressed some concerns in relation to the timeline of the projects and the importance of advancing this project. In the course of the discussions, some Members requested that consideration is given to; Building of an ASD Unit at Salesians Primary School to be included in the Cleaves Project; Provide a facility to store boats and equipment in the Cleaves Site for Statutory and Voluntary Groups, such as Limerick Civil Defence, Search and Rescue and others; Demolition of Sarsfield House to be included in plans. Other Members looked for details on the location of the proposed pedestrian bridges and queried if the Condell Road area was included in the Cleaves project.

The Director, Planning, Environment and Place-Making and Senior Executive Engineer, Place-Making and Public Realm noted the views expressed by the Members and agreed to continue to work closely with them throughout the project. They welcomed the feedback and outlined that the whole area will be looked when planning the proposed development. They confirmed that they are looking to bring this plan forward as quickly as possible having regard to the statutory procedures and processes that had to be followed.

Wayfinding and Signage Strategy for Limerick

The Senior Executive Engineer, Place-Making and Public Realm gave a PowerPoint Presentation on the Wayfinding and Signage Strategy for Limerick, stating the aim of the Strategy was to standardise the signage in the city. She confirmed that funding was provided by Fáilte Ireland and that Members had approved the Development Fund contribution of €100,000 for decluttering of existing signage. She set out details of the signage which would be based on the Limerick Branding, the proposed locations of signage and the timeline for the programme. A map would also be developed outlining key attractions.

Members welcomed the proposals and highlighted its significance for visitors to the city. They stressed the importance of adhering to the timelines and asked that quarterly updates are given to them, on the progress of the project.

Members queried if the signage being removed would be repurposed to avoid landfill, where possible. The Senior Executive Engineer, Place-Making and Public Realm confirmed that a survey would be carried out on decluttering, and confirmed they will look at the repurposing of the old signage.

Members also referred to the need to provide signage in different languages for tourists visiting our city. The Senior Executive Engineer, Place-Making and Public Realm stated that this could be looked at in conjunction with Fáilte Ireland.

Laneways and Streets Upgrades

The Senior Executive Engineer, Place-Making and Public Realm gave a PowerPoint Presentation on the Laneways and Streets Upgrade Strategy. He stated that the URDF Provisional Funding Allocation of €13m had been approved and matching funding would be sought from other sources. He stated that Workshops with Members would be held in January, 2023 and regular updates would be provided to keep Members appraised of progress.

Members highlighted the importance of the proposals in order to revitalise the city centre, and pointed out that this project should be looked at as a city-wide upgrade of laneways. They queried if one laneway could be developed as a trial project. It was suggested by Members that Augustinian Laneway would be considered as a possible pilot laneway for these upgrades. The Senior Executive Engineer, Place-Making and Public Realm welcomed the feedback and agreed they would consider this proposal.

Members complimented the business owners in Foxes Bow on the work carried out in the area, and acknowledged the assistance given to them by the Council.

King's Island Walled Town – Nicholas Street Rejuvenation Works

The A/Senior Architect, Place-Making and Public Realm gave a PowerPoint Presentation on the King's Island Walled Town – Nicholas Street Rejuvenation Works which covered the following:

- Previous Dereliction
- Status of King John's Castle
- Recently Completed Projects
- Short Term Projects
- Medium Term Projects
- Long Term Projects.

He stated that Nicholas Street was anchored between St Mary's Cathedral and King Johns Castle, a very important historical area of Limerick. He noted that in 2012 that Nicholas Street had a lot of dereliction, and was deteriorating quickly. The Local Authority, through Regeneration Projects, had intervened and acquired a number of buildings in the area, which were refurbished successfully. He referred to King John's Castle, now under the ownership of Limerick City and County Council, as key to the Street and was now one of the top visitor attractions in Ireland. He stated that a budget was available for small interventions, a number of which were completed, including the site clearance to the Fireplace Site. He outlined details of medium and long-term projects for the area, and noted the positive effect of the Meanwhile Use of sites around Nicholas Street.

Members thanked the A/Senior Architect for the Presentation and highlighted the historical importance of Nicholas Street to the city and the need to develop it.

Members referred to the poor surface of the road on Nicholas Street. Members also referred to the cost of road closures for businesses and requested that consideration is given to reducing these costs in order to support businesses trying to improve the footfall in this area. They stated that improvements to lighting on the street should also be considered to attract more people to the Street.

Members referred to the visitor numbers at King John's Castle and suggested that it could also be used for other events, such as civic receptions and Council meetings, now that it is under the ownership of the Council. Members welcomed the improvements to the Bridge Street Infill Site and noted its potential as a green site.

The Director, Planning, Environment and Place-Making confirmed that work has been undertaken, in conjunction with other directorates, to support businesses in Nicholas Street, and welcomed the comments and suggestions made by Councillors in relation to increasing visitors to the area. She noted the need for supporting new businesses to the area. The A/Senior Architect, Place-Making and Public Realm, thanked the Members for their input and noted their comments. He pointed out that funding was there for small to medium projects to improve the area and agreed to work in together with Members and other Departments to achieve this.

High Street and Milk Market Area

The Director, Planning, Environment and Place-Making gave a PowerPoint Presentation on the High Street and Milk Market area. She outlined details of the provisional funding allocation of €6.325m

from the URDF, and pointed out work that had been carried out to date, including engagement with the Milk Market and High Street Traders Group, traffic counts and the setting up of a Working Group. She stated a further update would be provided to Members in early 2023.

Members highlighted the success of the Milk Market and in particular for tourism in the city. They pointed out that the Market is the next biggest tourism attraction in Limerick, after King Johns Castle, and noted the need to use the Market more. Members referred to a number of issues that needed to be addressed such as cleaning in the area, lighting, road surfaces and the provision of planters.

The Director, Planning, Environment and Place-Making, welcomed the comments made by Members and agreed to hold workshops with Members to work together on the High Street and Milk Market area. She confirmed the operational issues discussed would be relayed back to relevant directorates and the group setup to work jointly on improving the Market area.

This concluded the Meeting.

Signed:

CATHAOIRLEACH

Dated:
