

DUBLIN STRATEGY SETS OUT FURTHER PARTICIPATION IN EU PROGRAMMES

The summer launch of Dublin City Council’s new EU Programme Participation Strategy 2021-2027 was very timely, as it coincided with the visit of European Commission President, Ursula von der Leyen to Dublin to announce a post-Covid investment package, which showcased that the EU and Ireland are now moving towards recovery.

Taking place at a critical time in the history of Dublin, Ireland and the EU, the launch of the strategy on 20 July was hosted by the Lord Mayor of Dublin Alison Gilliland; chaired by Cllr Claire O’Connor, Chair of Dublin City Council Economic Development & Enterprise SPC and contextually set by Richard Shakespeare, Assistant Chief Executive, Dublin City Council.

The 150-plus attendees heard from Willem Noë, European Semester Officer, European Commission Representation in Ireland, and Jim Conway, Director of the Eastern Midlands Regional Assembly (EMRA) on the Recovery Plan for Europe, the Recovery & Resilience Facility and the opportunities during the seven-year programme period.

Minister of State for European Affairs, Thomas Byrne, noted the proactive approach of Dublin City Council for ensuring policies, procedures and structures are in place for Ireland’s capital city to play a leading part in EU Programmes during the new EU Budget cycle (2021-2027).

STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

A year-long process was undertaken for the development of this strategy, bringing together City, Regional, National and European voices to share their focus for the next seven-year programme period and discuss opportunities for Dublin City, to continue to build a better future for those who live, work and visit Ireland’s capital city.

Dublin City Council has had major input in to the process from elected council members; Strategic Policy Committee members; the European Commission Representation in Ireland, Eastern Midlands Regional Assembly; Irish Regions European Office; National Contact Points from Enterprise Ireland, Léargas,



The Lord Mayor of Dublin Alison Gilliland hosted the launch event on 20 July, which was contextually set by Richard Shakespeare, DCC’s Assistant Chief Executive, and chaired by Cllr Claire O’Connor, Chair of DCC’s Economic Development & Enterprise SPC.

The Wheel, the Arts Council; and colleagues from the Higher Education Institutes across Dublin (DCU, Trinity, TU Dublin and UCD); along with DCC’s colleagues in Codema, Smart Cities and across the council on shared learnings and opportunities.

This strategy builds on Dublin City Council’s track record of participation in a range of EU Programmes, some of which are mentioned below and the Council will further build capacity for future participation.

This thematic approach has focused on Regional & Urban Development; Horizon Europe; Social and Culture & Green and Smart.

Examining a multitude of European Programmes including Horizon Europe, Interreg, Urban Innovative Actions, URBACT, Erasmus+, Europe for Citizens, Creative Europe, the European Commission’s New Green Deal and with emphasis on greener, cleaner, digital and smarter in the new EU 2021-2027 budget, the



Pictured at the panel discussion during the launch on 20 July were (clockwise from top left) Wessel Badenhorst, Director of Urban Mode Ltd; Jim Conway, Director of the Eastern Midlands Regional Assembly; Willem Noë, European Semester Officer at the European Commission Representation in Ireland; Cllr Claire O'Connor, Chair of Dublin City Council's Economic Development & Enterprise SPC; and Mary MacSweeney, Dublin City Council's Deputy Head of Enterprise & Economic Development.

Council has developed a matrix for collaborations and policy alignment over the next seven-year programme period.

FOCUS FOR CURRENT PERIOD

Several Dublin City Council's current innovative units have originated through previous European projects and applications, including Smart Dublin & Smart Cities; the Dublin place branding team, Dublin.ie; Dublin City Council Culture Company and Codema, Dublin's Energy Agency.

Dublin City Council has now brought a focus over this year-long developmental process, to identify how best to understand and align European Programmes with the priority areas. The focus for the current period will be Smart & Digital, Green & Climate, Social & Economics and Urban & Regional Development.

The Lord Mayor of Dublin Alison Gilliland commented: "Dublin City Council is confident that this strategy will be a catalyst for the enhancement of the city's involvement at European level.

"It will place emphasis on Dublin's potential within the networks of European cities, such as those formed in EU Programmes and the Committee of the Regions and Eurocities. It will also support the alignment of our Dublin City Council priorities with the goals and policy objectives of the European Union."

EU PROGRAMMES SUPPORT OFFICE

A key pillar of this strategy is the establishment of Dublin City Council's EU Programmes Support Office (EPSO) to provide efficient support services for staff participating or intending to participate in the EU projects.

"The City Council aspires for Dublin to be a proactive and innovative European city. Accessing EU programmes is important in achieving this outcome. The programme office is being established to assist in this regard," according to Owen Keegan, Chief Executive of Dublin City Council.

This office will also act as a contact point for educational and research institutions as well as other organisations wishing to engage with DCC as a potential project partner. It will also



Dublin City Council's Economic Development Office and International Relations Office co-hosted the launch of the EU Programme Participation Strategy 2021-2027 on 20 July.

KEY PRIORITIES OF THE STRATEGY

The key priorities, aims and objectives for Dublin City Council for the next seven-year period is to develop:

- **Policy Alignment:** To ensure that any participation in an EU partnership project by Dublin City Council staff contributes to the goals and policy objectives of the European Union and Dublin City Council.
- **Capacity Building:** To promote participation in EU partnership projects which will measurably contribute to the capacity of DCC to meet its mission and public obligations.
- **Regional Cooperation:** To co-operate with relevant bodies such as national contact points of EU Programmes, the Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly (EMRA) and the Irish Regions European Office (IREO) that will assist with the participation of Dublin City Council staff in EU partnership projects.
- **Public Consultation:** To engage with local communities and targeted beneficiaries matching intended impacts with local needs where possible.
- **Networking Opportunities:** To build the international reputation of Dublin City Council and the city of Dublin through participation in EU partnership projects.
- **Innovative Approach:** To use participation in EU partnership projects to promote innovation in the operations of Dublin City Council that is Green and Smart and that enables openness, diversity and social inclusion.
- **Additionality:** To ensure that participation in EU partnership projects brings additionally to the services of Dublin City Council.



have a key co-ordination, liaison and communications role both internally among Dublin City Council staff, other local, regional and European authorities and representatives as well as members of the public.

MARKING A SUCCESSFUL YEAR TO DATE

- **Smart Cities** – Dublin is currently ranked as the 26th Smart City in the world, up 15 places on the previous year.
- **Economic Development** – Dublin was chosen as 1 of 8 global cities to partake in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Social Economy peer to peer learning project 2021.
- **Codema** – €1.2 million in EU funding secured to lead project to test and develop a project implementation unit for energy efficient and renewable projects in Dublin including €20 million worth of upgrades to council buildings and sites within the region.
- **Dublin's 14 Henrietta Street** – This street was recently awarded the European Museum of the Year Silletto Prize 2020 for local community engagement.

BACKGROUND TO THE STRATEGY

Dublin City Council started the development of a European Programme Participation Strategy for the current EU Programme period 2021-2027 in September 2020.

DCC's Economic Development & Enterprise Strategic Policy Committee – Working Group on International Relations & European Affairs – sought to ascertain details on existing and past EU projects/EU funded national projects that the Council has either participated in or applied to. This was to prepare for future EU funding and project opportunities.

DCC has collaborated with key stakeholders across Dublin's city, region and on a national basis. Throughout the developmental process baseline data was gathered to reflect on the participation of Dublin City Council departments and sections in EU Programmes during the previous EU budget cycle (2014-2020).

Five information sharing sessions were held to examine the opportunities for participation in the new EU budget cycle (2021-2027). Proceedings from the sessions informed the strategy for DCC's participation in future EU Programmes.

This strategy will support the identification of opportunities within the EU Partnership Programmes and Projects and EU funding streams to realise Dublin City Council priorities. It will also contribute to the target areas identified by the European Commission and set out in the six EU pillars and the seven EC Flagships areas.

It will also allow Dublin City Council to further develop policy alignment; capacity building; regional co-operation; public consultation; networking opportunities and reputation enhancement through innovative approaches and additionally through EU partnership projects.

For details on the Dublin City Council European Programme Support Office (EPSO) visit www.dublincity.ie/ga/node/9212