



REPORT OF THE DUBLIN CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY

DECEMBER 2022



An Tionól
Saoránach



The Citizens'
Assembly

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Chairman's Foreword



Dublin, Baile Átha Cliath, is a uniquely special place. A county, and city, full of beauty and charm, character and characters, rich in culture and history, sport and music, a place for business and leisure, work and pleasure.

But above all, Dublin is its people, in all their diversity. Young and old, native and newly-arrived, north-sider and south-sider, farmer and financier, teacher and tech worker, rural and urban. Dublin is bustling and thriving, gritty and glamorous, historical and modern, a place that its diverse citizens and residents are proud to call home, and a source of endless enchantment for its many visitors.

But does it have world class local government structures that support its continuous transformation and ensure that, internationally, Dublin ranks in the premier league of capital cities and counties?

Does it have an elected leader of its own, someone to serve and stand tall for the city and county, to champion Dublin on the national and international stage? A person with the mandate, power and means to drive reform, coordinate strategy, implement policy, deliver services and ensure that Dublin's future is safeguarded. Someone who is accountable to all of its citizens, and who is in touch with the people and communities that are Dublin's heartbeat.

Like all cities and counties of its size, Dublin faces major challenges. These include housing, homelessness, transportation, infrastructure, sustainability and lots more besides - challenges that affect the daily lives of all who call themselves Dubliners.


When I was approached to become Chair of the Dublin Citizens' Assembly, I accepted without hesitation. I can declare, with absolute certainty, that I do have a vested interest. I am a proud and passionate Dubliner. I want Dublin to take its place amongst the great cities of the world - renowned for its quality of life, its sustainable

environment, its cultural diversity and economic vibrancy.

The Dublin Citizens' Assembly has been an extraordinary exercise in deliberative democracy. It has placed the people of Dublin at the heart of creating a vision for how the city and county should be managed and governed to make it an even better place to live, work, raise a family, visit and enjoy. As I began this journey with the other members of the Assembly, in the historic grandeur of Dublin Castle, I didn't fully appreciate just how momentous an initiative this would turn out to be. It has truly been a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

This was a Citizens' Assembly like no other. For the first time, people not on the electoral register were eligible to apply, meaning we had an impressive array of people of different nationalities sitting on the Assembly, each and every one of them proud to call themselves Dubliners. They brought an invaluable and refreshing perspective to the Assembly.

I am struck by the elegance and clarity with which the phrase "Citizens' Assembly" translates into the Irish language as "An Tionól Saoránach", the gathering of free people, evoking something special about the Ireland that we live in today.



As a society that enjoys a mature and stable democracy, we have learned that seemingly intractable divisions can be bridged through dialogue. We understand that to listen respectfully to ‘the other side’, hearing the alternative perspective, can lead us to unexpected insights, better understanding and more effective solutions. We understand also the profound importance of ‘meitheal’, or collective effort, where, by working with each other, for each other, we find better ways forward. As the members of the Dublin Gaelic football team know well, “together, we are more than the sum of our parts”.

The Dublin Citizens’ Assembly has been an historic exercise in deliberative democracy. It has been a unique and unforgettable journey for me, and 79 other residents of our great county and city. Eighty women and men from all walks of life, diverse nationalities, languages, personalities and perspectives that have proven to be the real strength of the Assembly.

Our guiding principles of openness, fairness, equality of voice, fairness, respect, efficiency, collegiality and psychological safety ensured that we worked effectively and efficiently. We do not pretend or claim to have found all the answers. But we have carefully considered the issues that affect the governance of our city and county today. We debated, long and hard, about the form of local government that Dublin needs in the coming years and decades.

The Dublin Citizens’ Assembly response to their mandate from the Houses of the Oireachtas is based on factual information and evidence from a wide range of experts, academics and practitioners, including local government specialists, political scientists, international mayors, serving and former politicians and the mayors and CEOs of the four Dublin local authorities.

The Assembly members pored over this evidence during many months of discussion, reflection and questioning and considered these complex issues from all perspectives. The final result of this deliberation is a strong recommendation to create a powerful new Mayor of Dublin as a substantial political figure with wide-ranging powers to lead,

deliver, represent and be accountable for our capital city.

The Assembly have also voted to create a new vision for local government structures in Dublin that befits a modern, dynamic, and diverse European and global capital. The members have spoken loudly and clearly about the need for reform and their recommendations on a series of new structures to support the new directly-elected mayor will represent a major change in how our city is run and will, I believe, transform the shape and direction of local government in the city and county for generations to come.

We have delivered our report to the Oireachtas on time, on schedule. However, this is not the end of the journey. What happens from here is in the hands of the Oireachtas and the Government. Our recommendations demand extensive legislative and administrative change, and political leadership. They require significant financial resourcing and an ambitious and focused approach to implementation.

There are numerous people I would like to thank for making the Dublin Citizens’ Assembly such a successful experience. In particular, the Expert Advisory Group: Dr. Aodh Quinlivan, Dr. Bríd Quinn, Prof. Deiric Ó Broin and Prof. Jane Suiter who gave selflessly and generously of their time and expertise for the duration of the process. Thank you also to all the speakers and presenters, musicians, poets and artists who contributed to our meetings. To the members of the public and stakeholders who took the time to make submissions to the Assembly. To the facilitators and notetakers, sign language translators, audio-visual crew, PR company and hotel staff, all of whom worked to ensure that each and every meeting was a smooth, professionally run and successful event.

To the Head of the Secretariat Art O’Leary, for his dedication, planning, attention to detail and expertise in guiding the Assembly, and the Chair, along the way: he is an exceptional public servant. To the Secretariat team, who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure a successful Citizens’ Assembly.

To the members of the Dublin Citizens' Assembly - thank you for your diligence, commitment and hard work over six months. It has been an honour to have worked alongside you on this journey. This exercise in deliberative democracy has been an empowering experience, and my respect and admiration for you all grew with each passing engagement and encounter. It has been one of the great privileges of my life to share time with you in the Assembly, to get to know you all and journey with you on this voyage of exploration.

As we conclude the work of the Dublin Citizens' Assembly, Ireland sits, disappointingly, at or near the bottom of the European Union Local Autonomy Index. We need to be ambitious about changing this situation. By the time the recommendations of the Dublin Citizens' Assembly are fully implemented, we should expect to see ourselves ranked significantly higher.

This is not going to happen easily. It is not going to happen without determination and commitment across the political system. I have seen what can be achieved in less than 6 months by a group of dedicated, committed members of the public who are willing to stick the course, debate, listen and tease out the issues, and come up with workable solutions.

The Houses of the Oireachtas have now a significant task ahead and will, as detailed in the Assembly mandate:

- Refer the report to a relevant Committee of both Houses for consideration;
- The Committee will, in turn, bring its conclusions to the Houses for debate;
- The Government will provide in the Houses of the Oireachtas a response to each recommendation of the Assembly and, if accepting some or all of the recommendations, will indicate the timeframe it envisages for implementing those recommendations.

We look forward to the response from the Oireachtas, and from the Government, to this report. Many members expressed concern that their recommendations might be “disregarded” or “left to gather dust on a

shelf” or that “the political will does not exist to make this happen”. I believe, however, that these recommendations carry the force of persuasion. They are submitted in response to a mandate from the Oireachtas, they are based on factual information, evidence and months of discussion between citizens who have shown dedication and commitment to their work.

In conclusion, one hundred years on from the creation of the State, the Dublin Citizens' Assembly were given the opportunity to make a contribution to the future of Dublin. It is clear that for Dublin to continue to grow and prosper, it needs, and deserves, the best leadership and governance it can have. I believe a directly-elected mayor, along the lines recommended by this Citizens' Assembly, will provide that leadership, enhancing political accountability and democratic engagement.

Finally, some closing words to the members of the Oireachtas, and Government. It is said that “a society grows great when old people plant trees in whose shade they shall never sit”. The Dublin Citizens' Assembly have given our elected representatives clear direction for the future. We look forward to brave political decisions that will devolve power, empower local government, embrace the principle of subsidiarity and provide for a directly-elected mayor for Dublin. In the words of the great Brian Mullins, “Stand your ground, don't give in and keep going”. The response to this report of the Dublin Citizens' Assembly will help determine the future of this wonderful and special place we call home: Baile Átha Cliath – Dublin. We wish you well in your deliberations. Beir bua!



Jim Gavin
Chairman, Dublin Citizens' Assembly
December 2022



Recommendations

Overview

The Dublin Citizens' Assembly was formally established by resolutions of Dáil and Seanad Éireann in February 2022. In line with the Programme for Government commitment, the Assembly was tasked with examining and bringing forward proposals regarding the type of directly-elected mayor and local government structures best suited for Dublin.

The Assembly had a total of 80 members, including an independent Chairperson, 67 randomly-selected members of the public living in Dublin City and County, and 12 Councillors selected from across the four local authorities.

The Assembly was launched in April 2022, and met on five occasions between April and October. At its final meeting on 1st October 2022, the Assembly voted on a series of propositions that were the culmination of careful deliberation and debate, informed by detailed input from experts, stakeholders and the general public.

This report provides an overview of the work programme and deliberations of the Dublin Citizens' Assembly, and presents its recommendations to the Oireachtas and Government.

Assembly Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Powers to be devolved to a directly-elected Mayor and local government structures for Dublin

The following powers should be devolved to a directly-elected Mayor and local government structures for Dublin immediately, meaning within a timeframe of zero to five years following the establishment of the office of the directly-elected Mayor:

- Housing
- Homelessness
- Economic Development
- Infrastructure / Roads / Footpaths
- Climate Change
- Environment/Biodiversity
- Planning / Land Use / Strategic Development
- Arts/Culture/Sport
- Night-time economy
- Tourism/Marketing
- Waste Management
- Healthcare – Community
- Emergency Services
- Childcare
- Support for the Traveller and Roma Communities
- Transport
- Water
- Healthcare – Primary
- Policing
- Education – Primary and secondary
- Gaeltacht / Irish Language



Powers for Further, Higher Education and Skills should be devolved to the directly-elected Mayor and local government between 5 and 10 years following the establishment of the Office of the Mayor. Policy development, standards and curriculum will continue to be set at a national level, but the Mayor and local government should have responsibility for local implementation. In all cases, powers should be devolved based on the principle of subsidiarity.

Recommendation 2: Power to raise revenues and borrow

A directly-elected mayor, in conjunction with democratically-elected local representatives, should be able to:

- change or introduce local taxes;
- retain funds from a portion of any taxes raised in Dublin;
- raise funds from markets, investment bonds, or loans.

Recommendation 3: Features of the Office of the Mayor

The Mayor will act in the interests of Dublin's population and be above party politics.

The Office of the Mayor should be adequately resourced, with the Mayor supported by a core staff headed by a senior public servant, and with access to expert advice as required.

The Mayor should have an explicit power to initiate, and to introduce new regulations in areas of policy where authority or responsibility has been devolved to them.

The Mayor should have and exercise the power to convene meetings with local and national agencies to progress goals.

The Mayor should have the right to be consulted, and should meet on a regular basis with relevant Government Ministers regarding issues of mutual interest or concern.

All decision-making groups associated with the Office of the Mayor should strive for gender balance and aim to reflect the diversity and distribution of Dublin's population.

Assembly members agreed that the current ceremonial functions and related civic infrastructure of the Mayors or Cathaoirleach of the four local authorities should be incorporated into the role and office of the directly-elected Mayor. Each local authority should continue to have a Cathaoirleach, who would serve as a chairperson of the subsidiary structures.



Recommendation 4: Term of Office

The term of office for a directly-elected Mayor of Dublin should be five years.

Recommendation 5: Term Limits

A term limit of a maximum of two terms in office should apply.

Recommendation 6: Removal from Office

It should be possible to remove a Mayor from office by means of either:

- a vote carried by a super-majority of councillors*, or
- a recall petition by the local electorate of Dublin.

**Members did not determine what constituted the voting threshold for a super-majority.*

Recommendation 7: Eligibility of Candidates

Eligibility criteria for candidates for the office of Mayor of Dublin should be aligned to those pertaining to local authority elections, namely candidates should ordinarily be resident in Ireland, aged at least 18 years old, and need not necessarily be an Irish citizen.

Recommendation 8: Nomination of Candidates

To be included on the ballot paper, a candidate must gather a *sufficient number of statutory declarations of support from the electorate of Dublin.

**Members agreed that the minimum threshold of statutory declarations required should be determined at a later date, following analysis.*

Recommendation 9: Electorate

The electorate for the directly-elected Mayor of Dublin should be confined to the electoral register for local elections in Dublin.



Recommendation 10: Retention of existing local authority structures

The existing four local authorities should be retained.

Recommendation 11: Dublin City and County Assembly

A new Dublin City and County Assembly should be established. The role of the Assembly shall be to make policy proposals to the Mayor, to approve the budget of the Mayor and to scrutinize the activities and performance of the Mayor.

In what proved to be by far the closest result of the entire balloting process, the Dublin Citizens' Assembly was almost evenly divided between three options for how the Members of a Dublin City and County Assembly should be elected. **Option A**, which was the working assumption of the Citizens' Assembly from an early stage, was that members of a Dublin City and County Assembly should be directly elected by the people of Dublin; **Option B** was that Assembly members should be elected by councillors, while **Option C** was that Assembly members would be elected by a 50/50 combination of the people of Dublin and councillors. A single vote separated the top two choices, namely Option C and Option B, with another single vote separating Option B from Option A.

Recommendation 12: Plenary Session

There should be a Plenary Session for local government in Dublin, which all elected members from the existing four local authorities shall be eligible to attend. The role of the Plenary shall be to augment the work of the Mayor by providing advice and suggestions.

Recommendation 13: The role and resourcing of Councillors

The role of councillors on the existing four Dublin local authorities, and on the Dublin City and County Assembly should be made full-time.

Councillors' salaries should be more reflective of a full-time commitment.

All councillors should be provided with secretarial support.



Recommendation 14: Deputy Mayor

There should be a Deputy Mayor of Dublin, to be elected on the ticket with the Mayor.

Recommendation 15: Cabinet

The Mayor should have a Cabinet, membership of which should be made up of a majority of elected councillors*. The appointment of the Cabinet should be a joint decision agreed between the Mayor and the councillors.

Each member of the Cabinet would have specific areas of policy responsibility delegated to them.

**For information: Members' discussions on the composition of a Cabinet had considered the possibility that a directly-elected Mayor could appoint a certain number of people with expertise, experience or a demonstrable track record of accomplishment to the Cabinet.*

Recommendation 16: Local Citizens' Assembly

The Mayor should establish a local Citizens' Assembly, which should be a permanent feature, with randomly-selected membership rotated every year.

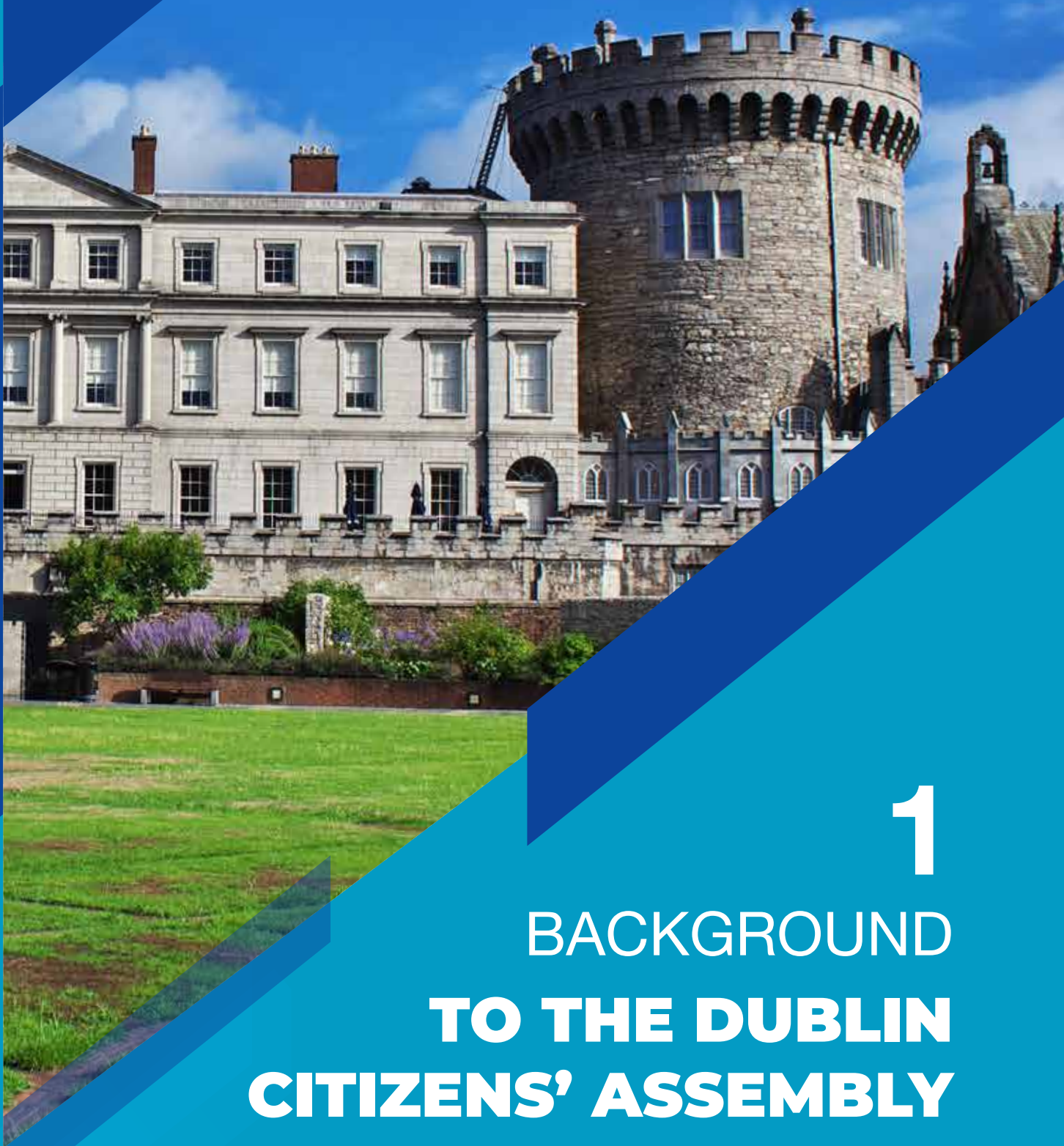
Recommendation 17: Implementation of the Citizens' Assembly Recommendations

The Government should respond in detail to the report of the Dublin Citizens' Assembly within six months of its publication.

The recommendations herein should be implemented within a two-year timeframe.

Recommendation 18: Decision about a directly-elected Mayor of Dublin

There should be a plebiscite of the local electorate of Dublin to determine whether or not Dublin should have a directly-elected Mayor. The question(s) to be voted on in this plebiscite should detail the proposed powers of a directly-elected Mayor and the structures required to support the role of directly-elected Mayor, as recommended by the Dublin Citizens' Assembly.



1

BACKGROUND
**TO THE DUBLIN
CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY**

1.1: Programme for Government commitment

The Dublin Citizens' Assembly was one of four Citizens' Assemblies committed to in the Programme for Government, Our Shared Future.¹

The section of the Programme for Government entitled "Reforming and Reimagining our Public Life" sets out the Government commitment to "establishing a Citizens' Assembly to consider the type of directly-elected mayor and local government structures best suited for Dublin."

In February 2022, Government decided to proceed with the establishment of the Dublin Citizens' Assembly, and brought forward a motion to the Oireachtas on the matter.

1.2: Oireachtas Resolutions

Both houses of the Oireachtas debated the establishment of the Dublin Citizens' Assembly, in conjunction with the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss.

On 22nd February 2022, following a debate in the House, Dáil Éireann passed a resolution establishing the Dublin Citizens' Assembly. On the following day a similar resolution was passed by Seanad Éireann, whereupon the Dublin Citizens' Assembly became formally established.

1.3: Terms of reference

The Terms of Reference of the Dublin Citizens' Assembly were established by resolutions of Dáil Éireann² and Seanad Éireann³ in February 2022. Its terms of reference were as follows:

A Citizens' Assembly, to be known as the Dublin Citizens' Assembly, shall be convened

to consider the type of directly-elected mayor and local government structures best suited for Dublin, and to bring forward proposals in that regard. The Assembly will have a total of 80 members, including an independent Chairperson, 67 randomly-selected members of the public living in Dublin City and County, and 12 councillors selected from across the four local authorities,

The Assembly shall consider, inter alia:

- the strengths and weaknesses of the current model of local government in Dublin;
- the potential benefits, risks, challenges and opportunities associated with a directly-elected mayor for Dublin;
- what functions could be transferred from central government to regional or local government in Dublin, and how this should be funded;
- the appropriate structure for local and regional government, councils and authorities, looking at models in other capital cities (e.g. a single elected Dublin authority with a mayor and no local councils, a two-tier structure like London or Paris with a mayor, regional assembly and local or borough councils, or a mayoral structure like Greater Manchester with a 'super' mayor sitting above the existing local authorities);
- the perspectives of the general public, representative groups, advocacy groups, the sitting councillors of the four local authorities, the Dublin Teachtaí Dála and Members of the European Parliament, local authority senior officials and staff, experts and policy makers;

The Assembly shall:

- commence and run in parallel with the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss;
- hold its inaugural meeting in April 2022;
- adopt a work programme designed to

¹ <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/7e05d-programme-for-government-our-shared-future/>

² <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2022-02-22/9/>

³ <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/2022-02-23/10/>



allow for the completion of consideration of the topics within an eight-month period;

- conclude its work and submit its report ideally no later than nine months from its date of commencement, and sooner if possible;
- have authority to determine a revised timeline for completion in the event of unexpected disruptions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic or other extraordinary circumstances;
- implement continuous improvement and adopt innovative working methods informed by learnings from previous Citizens' Assemblies and international best practice, including in relation to the methodology for member recruitment, to the running of Assemblies subject to public health measures, and to developing internal capacity to ensure the quality of the deliberative process;
- preclude from membership of the Assemblies any individual who is either:
 - (i) a politician currently serving in either House of the Oireachtas or the European Parliament;
 - (ii) a lobbyist as provided for under the Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015; or
 - (iii) a person unwilling to commit to adhering to public health measures as prescribed by Government and public health authorities from time to time;
- have a Chairperson appointed for a period of up to twelve months, with scope to extend the term should circumstances warrant, and that an honorarium should be paid to the Chairperson based on a per diem rate to be sanctioned by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform;
- make payment of a nominal honorarium to Assembly members to recognise their civic commitment;
- have staff assigned to provide a Secretariat to the Assembly and to support the Chairperson;
- agree its own rules of procedure and work programme to enable the effective conduct of its business in as economical and efficient a manner as possible;
- determine all issues by a majority of the votes of members present and voting, other than the Chairperson who will have a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes;
- operate in an open and transparent manner, including by live streaming public proceedings; and
- make a report and recommendation(s) to the Houses of the Oireachtas on the matters before it. On receipt, the Houses of the Oireachtas will refer the report of the Assembly for consideration to a relevant Committee of both Houses; the Committee will, in turn, bring its conclusions to the Houses for debate. Furthermore, the Government will provide in the Houses of the Oireachtas a response to each recommendation of the Assembly and, if accepting some or all of the recommendations, will indicate the timeframe it envisages for implementing those recommendations.

1.4 Members of the Dublin Citizens' Assembly

1.4.1 Introduction

As set out in the Oireachtas resolution, the Dublin Citizens' Assembly was comprised of 80 members, including:

- 67 members of the general public, randomly selected from across Dublin county and city
- 12 members selected from the 183 elected councillors across the four local authorities, and
- an independent Chairperson.

1.4.2 Optimising the representativeness of the Assembly

Informed by learnings from previous Assemblies and international best practice, the Oireachtas mandated two important changes to how members of the general public were chosen. This was designed to improve the representativeness of the Assembly and help ensure that membership was as broadly representative of society as possible.

These changes were:

- i) broadening the eligibility criteria;
- ii) adopting a new recruitment method.

These latest innovations in recruitment methodology are informed by the experience of previous Citizens' Assemblies in Ireland, and by international best practice. In particular, the OECD Recommendation on Open Government⁴, the OECD Good Practice Principles for Deliberative Processes for Public Decision Making⁵ and other jurisdictions with extensive experience of Citizens' Assemblies, including Canada and Australia.

Broadening eligibility criteria

Previous Citizens' Assemblies had restricted membership to people who were enrolled on the electoral register, leading to the exclusion of certain cohorts of Irish society, including non-nationals, from the process.

In order to ensure that the Dublin Citizens' Assembly was optimally representative of wider society, eligibility was broadened to allow any adult resident in Dublin county or city to apply to become a member of the Assembly. This had the effect of including people who were not Irish citizens and others who for whatever reason were not enrolled on the electoral register.

Changes to recruitment methodology

Also for the first time, the recruitment process was based on written invitations to randomly-selected households. This differed from the methodology used by previous assemblies, which relied on polling companies conducting door-to-door interviews to select members. This new methodology was designed to improve the geographic spread of members and to increase the quality and inclusivity of the random selection process.

Invitations

A total of 14,000 households around Dublin city and county received a postal invitation, from Taoiseach Micheál Martin T.D., to nominate one adult from that household to apply to become a member. The sample of households that received invitations was randomly generated from the GeoDirectory database of households, which is the most comprehensive available database of households in the country.

⁴ OECD (2017) <https://www.oecd.org/gov/Recommendation-Open-Government-Approved-Council-141217.pdf>

⁵ Chwalisz, C. (2020), "Good practice principles for deliberative processes for public decision making", in Innovative Citizen Participation and New Democratic Institutions: Catching the Deliberative Wave, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/b40aab2a-en>.

Applications

Written invitations were addressed generically to “The Householder”, rather than to named individuals. Each household that received an invitation was entitled to nominate just one adult from that household to apply. It was up to household members themselves to decide who might apply. Invitations were non-transferable between households.

Applicants from eligible households were required to register their interest in becoming a member of the Assembly, either by post, by phone or online.

The Secretariat then used key demographic information gathered during the registration process to select members using a stratified random selection process, which ensured that the overall composition of the assembly broadly mirrored wider Dublin society in terms of gender, age, geography and socioeconomic status.

Screening and validation of applications

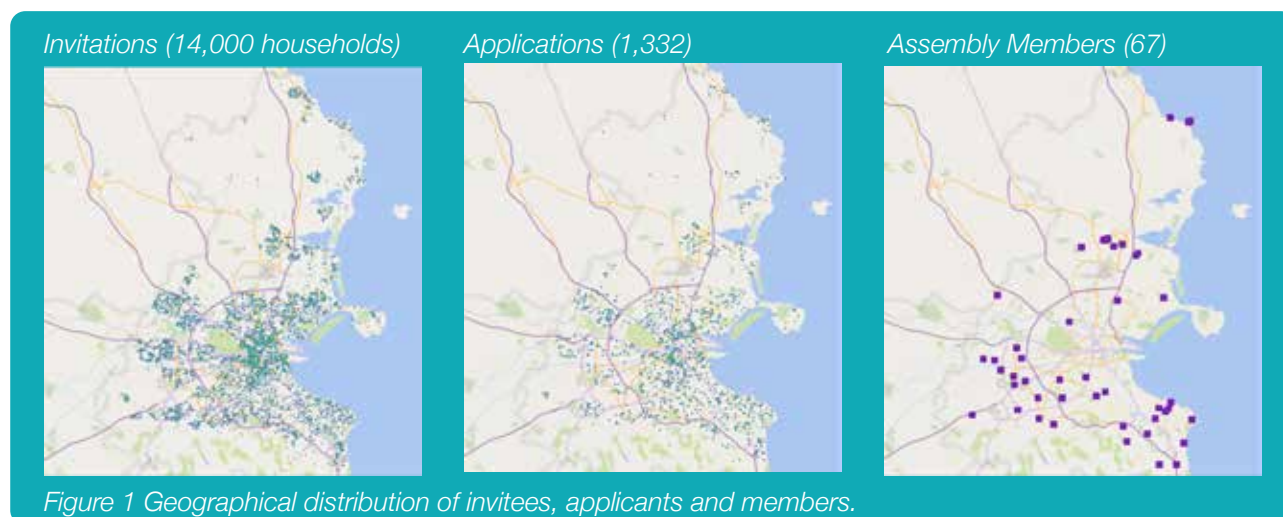
The Secretariat undertook an extensive screening and validation process to ensure that only those households that had been invited to apply were included in the sortition process. A total of 87 applications were excluded based on the screening and validation process.

Response rate

A total of 14,000 invitations were issued, with 1,412 responses received, of which 1,332 were valid applications. This response rate of 10% compares very favourably with the international experience for Citizens' Assemblies, where the response rate typically ranges between 3% and 5%.

1.4.3 Geographic distribution of invitees, applicants and members

Figure 1, below, shows the spread and concentration of invitations, applications and members across Dublin city and county.



1.4.4 Sortition criteria

The final selection of public members of the Assembly was based on a stratified random selection of 67 members of the public, using six demographic variables:

- Gender;
- Age Group;
- Location;
- Employment status (proxy indicator for socio-economic status and for boosting inclusivity);
- Occupation (proxy indicator for boosting inclusivity); and
- Language (proxy indicator for boosting inclusivity).

1.4.5 Demographic profile of members

Using a demographic profile for Dublin city and county based on CSO Census data and An Post household data, targets were set for selecting members by Gender, Age Group and Local Authority area.

Supplementary criteria of Employment status, language and occupation were used to optimise diversity and inclusivity of membership.

Tables 1 – 3 below show the targets, and results, of the stratified random selection, while Tables 4-6 indicate the diversity and inclusivity achieved among the group.

Table 1 Gender profile of Assembly members (excluding councillors)

Gender	Target	Outcome
Female	34	34
Male	33	33
Total	67	67

Table 2 Age profile of Assembly members (excluding councillors)

Age Groups	Target	Outcome
18-24	9	8
25-44	28	28
45-64	20	21
65 plus	10	10
Total	67	67

Table 3 Geographic profile of Assembly members (excluding councillors)

Local Authority Area	Target	Outcome
South Dublin	15	14
Fingal	15	16
Dublin City	22	22
Dún Laoghaire - Rathdown	15	15
Total	67	67

Table 4 First spoken language

Language	
English	57
Irish	2
Others (including Polish, Romanian, Portuguese, Ukrainian, Telugu, Chinese, Bengali and Lithuanian)	8
Total	67

Table 5 Socio-economic status

Student	4
Looking after home / family	5
In paid employment	38
Unemployed	3
Self-employed	5
Unable to work due to permanent sickness or disability	2
Retired	9
Total	66

1.4.6 Concluding Commentary

The near-perfect alignment of targets and results from the core selection criteria (gender, age group and location), supplemented by the additional diversity and inclusion criteria (language, socio-economic status and occupation) confirm just how effective the new recruitment methodology has proven to be.

The collection of key demographic information from applicants, coupled with stratified random selection processes, optimised the representativeness and inclusivity of the Dublin Citizens' Assembly.

1.4.7 Appointment of councillors

Membership of the Assembly included 12 councillors from across the four local authorities in Dublin.

The Chair of the Assembly wrote to all party leaders, and to each independent councillor,

setting out the basis of how seats would be allocated, and inviting nominations (in the case of political parties) and applications (in the case of independents).

The allocation of seats was proportionate to the relative strength of the parties or groups across the four Dublin local authorities. The allocation of seats on the Assembly was as follows:

Group / Party	Seats	Appointed as members	Council
Independent Councillors	2	Cllr. Deirdre Donnelly Cllr. Vincent P. Jackson	Cllr. Sophie Nicoullaud
Fianna Fáil	2	Cllr. Shane Moynihan Cllr. Racheal Batten	South Dublin Dublin City
Fine Gael	2	Cllr. Lorraine Hall Cllr. Barry Saul	Dún Laoghaire – Rathdown Dún Laoghaire – Rathdown
Green Party	1	Cllr. Michael Pidgeon	Dublin City
Labour Party	1	Cllr. John Walsh	Fingal
Sinn Féin	1	Cllr. Janice Boylan	Dublin City
Social Democrats	1	Cllr. Patricia Roe	Dublin City
Solidarity / People Before Profit Alliance	1	Cllr. Madeleine Johansson	South Dublin
Independents 4 Change	1	Cllr. Sophie Nicoullaud	Dublin City

In the case of political parties, it was the prerogative of the party to propose its nominee(s) to the Assembly. In the case of independent councillors, the Secretary to the Assembly received a total of 7 applications, from which two individuals, one female and one male councillor, were randomly selected.

1.5 Participation, attrition, replacement and retention

The Dublin Citizens' Assembly succeeded in maintaining a very high participation rate throughout the process. Of the 80 members chosen at the outset, three individuals withdrew at various points during the process. One of those individuals withdrew during the first meeting and was replaced with a like-for-like substitute member. As the other two individuals withdrew later in the process, it was not appropriate to replace them.

The fact that the Assembly finished with an effective attrition rate of just 2.5% (2 out of 80 members) is a remarkable testament to the success and support that the Citizens' Assembly achieved, and to the dedication and civic contribution of the members.

An aerial photograph of a stone ruin, likely a castle or fortress, situated in a lush green field. The ruin has several arched windows and a partially collapsed roof. A dirt path winds through the field, and a few people are visible walking along it. In the background, there is a dense forest of evergreen trees, some with autumn-colored foliage. Beyond the forest, rolling hills and a small town are visible under a cloudy sky. The image is framed by a blue geometric overlay on the left and bottom right.

2

MEETING 1: **DUBLIN AND ITS SYSTEM OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

2.1 Overview

The first weekend meeting of the Dublin Citizens' Assembly took place on Saturday 30th April and Sunday 1st May.

The theme of the meeting was **“Dublin and its system of local government”**. The programme was designed to set the scene and to assist Assembly members in learning more about the broad context within which a directly-elected mayor for Dublin, and changes to the local government structure, would need to be considered.

The meeting featured a series of speeches and presentations from policy experts and practitioners in the local government system, which provided members with both a broad overview and in-depth perspectives on the structures, powers, roles and functions, governance and funding of local government in Ireland.

Each session on the programme consisted of three distinct stages: inputs, interactions and deliberations. The input stage involved a series of speeches and presentations by experts and invited guests. The interactive stage involved both Plenary sessions and Questions and Answers sessions, moderated by the Chair. The deliberation stage involved roundtable discussions, during which members had the opportunity for in-depth private conversations in groups of six or seven. Each table was assisted by a professional facilitator and notetaker, while members of the Expert Advisory Group and guest speakers made themselves available to assist if called upon.

In approximate terms, the programme for weekend 1 allocated 40% of the available time to inputs (speeches and presentations); 20% to Questions and Answers, 30% to roundtable discussions, and the remaining 10% to Plenary sessions.



2.2 Programme

SATURDAY 30TH APRIL

Opening Session

09:00 - Members introduce themselves at their roundtables

09:25 - Introduction by the Chairman, Jim Gavin
(incl. introduction of the Expert Advisory Group)

Session 1: What is Dublin?

09:40 - Dublin: a Geography. Dr. Ruth McManus (DCU)

09:55 - Dublin is a Sound. Roddy Doyle (author)

10:15 - Questions & Answers

10:45 - Roundtable discussion

11:30 - Coffee break

Session 2: Local government in Dublin

11:50 - Broad introduction and overview of the current arrangements (How did we get here?). Dr. Aodh Quinlivan (UCC) and Prof. Deiric Ó Broin (DCU)

12:15 - Roundtable discussion

13:00 - Lunch

14:15 - Plenary feedback from the two morning sessions

Session 3: The Role of local government

14:45 - Main strands of local government activity. Dr. Bríd Quinn (UL, retired)

15:05 - Roundtable discussion

15:45 - Coffee break

Session 4: The Role of local government

16:00 - Who Governs, and how is power distributed? Dr. Bríd Quinn (UL, retired)

16:10 - Funding and Finance: Who Pays, and How? Prof. Deiric Ó Broin (DCU)

16:15 - Questions and Answers

16:30 - Roundtable discussion

17:15 - Concluding remarks. Chairperson

SUNDAY 1ST MAY 2022

Opening Session

09:30 - Short film – What do the Dublin Local Authorities do?

09:45 - Brief Summary of yesterday's proceedings.
Prof. Deiric Ó Broin, Dr. Bríd Quinn, Dr. Aodh Quinlivan.

10:00 - Feedback from yesterday's roundtable discussions

Session 1

10:30 - Panel discussion and Q&A with the Chief Executive Officers of the 4 Dublin Local Authorities

11:30 - Coffee break

11:45 - Completion of evaluation survey

Session 2

11:55 - Why a directly-elected mayor? General challenges, risks, benefits and opportunities. Dr. Aodh Quinlivan (UCC)

12:15 - Roundtable discussion

13:00 - Summary and concluding remarks by Chairperson

2.3 Presentations and Deliberations

2.3.1 Session 1: What is Dublin

The opening session, **'What is Dublin'**, offered diverse and rich perspectives on Dublin, past and present.

Dr. Ruth McManus, Associate Professor in Geography and Associate Dean for Teaching & Learning in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Dublin City University provided an historical perspective on the growth and evolution of Dublin, as a place, an economy and a society. Her presentation spanned Dublin's origins as a small medieval settlement through the different phases of its evolution to the diverse and expansive metropolis that it has now become.

Dubliner and author **Roddy Doyle** offered his reflections on what Dublin means to him, vividly describing the sometimes harmonious, sometimes rivalrous relationship between the different parts of the city and county, the diversity of its people, characters, sounds, colloquialisms, culture, economy, architecture and landscape.



2.3.2 Session 2: Local government in Dublin

The mid-morning session on Saturday featured presentations by Dr. Aodh Quinlivan and Prof. Deiric Ó Broin, both members of the Expert Advisory Group.

Dr. Aodh Quinlivan provided an overview of the local government system in Ireland, highlighting the challenges and opportunities for enhancing local government. He described the history and evolution of Ireland's local government system from the 19th Century through to today, in terms of its constitutional status, legal standing, powers, administrative characteristics, representativeness, funding levels, funding sources and autonomy.

Several reports and indicators suggest that, in a comparative international sense,



Ireland's local government system is relatively weak in terms of powers and responsibilities, underfunded and under-representative. For example, on average Ireland has one council per 160,000 citizens, contrasting starkly with France where the ratio is one council per 1,600 citizens, or Germany where there is one council for 5,000 citizens. Ireland is typically ranked at, or near the bottom of, the international Local Autonomy Index, which ranks local government systems in terms of their autonomy. Ireland spends significantly less of the total national budget through local government compared to the EU average. In contrast to stronger systems of local government across the EU, the role of mayor in Dublin is mainly ceremonial and limited to one year in office, while councillors work on a part-time basis.



Professor Deiric Ó Broin outlined Dublin's unique place in Ireland's civic, political and economic life, given its population size, economic strength, infrastructure and status as Ireland's capital city.

The presentation identified the diverse roles and responsibilities that Dublin's local authorities have had down the centuries, and continue to have today. It mapped the evolution of Dublin and its burgeoning suburbs, driven by rapid population growth, social change and economic development, and the implications this has in terms of ever more complex governance challenges. It reflected on previous efforts to reform the local government system in Dublin, ranging from the creation of administrative and electoral counties, through to previous unrealised proposals for a directly-elected mayor. The application of the current model in Dublin is nearly 30 years in operation and gives rise to important questions about whether things can be done differently, and better in the future.

2.3.3 Session 3: The Role of local government

The Saturday afternoon session featured a presentation by Dr. Bríd Quinn of the Expert Advisory Group.



Dr. Bríd Quinn's presentation explored the main strands of activity in Ireland's Local government system, including planning, enterprise and economic development, social and community development, climate action, housing, infrastructure, transport, libraries, recreation and culture. Dr. Quinn quantified the total number of services provided by local authorities in Ireland as in excess of 1,100, 'ranging from abandoned vehicle removal to Zoonose monitoring'. These services could be grouped under 10 broad headings – housing, roads, transport & safety, recreation and amenity, planning, library services, water, environment protection, economic development, fire services, registration of electors. The presentation described how the services are organised and delivered, sometimes on a stand-alone basis by individual local authorities, other times by a collective of local authorities; other times in partnership with State Agencies or community groups, and other times delivered by outsourcing to private contractors. The presentation also outlined the basic governance structure within Local Authorities, which comprises full council meetings (plenary level) and Municipal/Metropolitan/Borough District level/area committee level. She outlined the role and status of the Chief Executive and senior management team,

and the relationship between the CEO and council. The CEO is responsible for the dayto day management of the council, is an employee of the council, holds executive functions, has power to delegate executive functions and is required to carry into effect all lawful decisions of the elected council implement of policy advise and assist the elected council.

2.3.4 Views of the general public

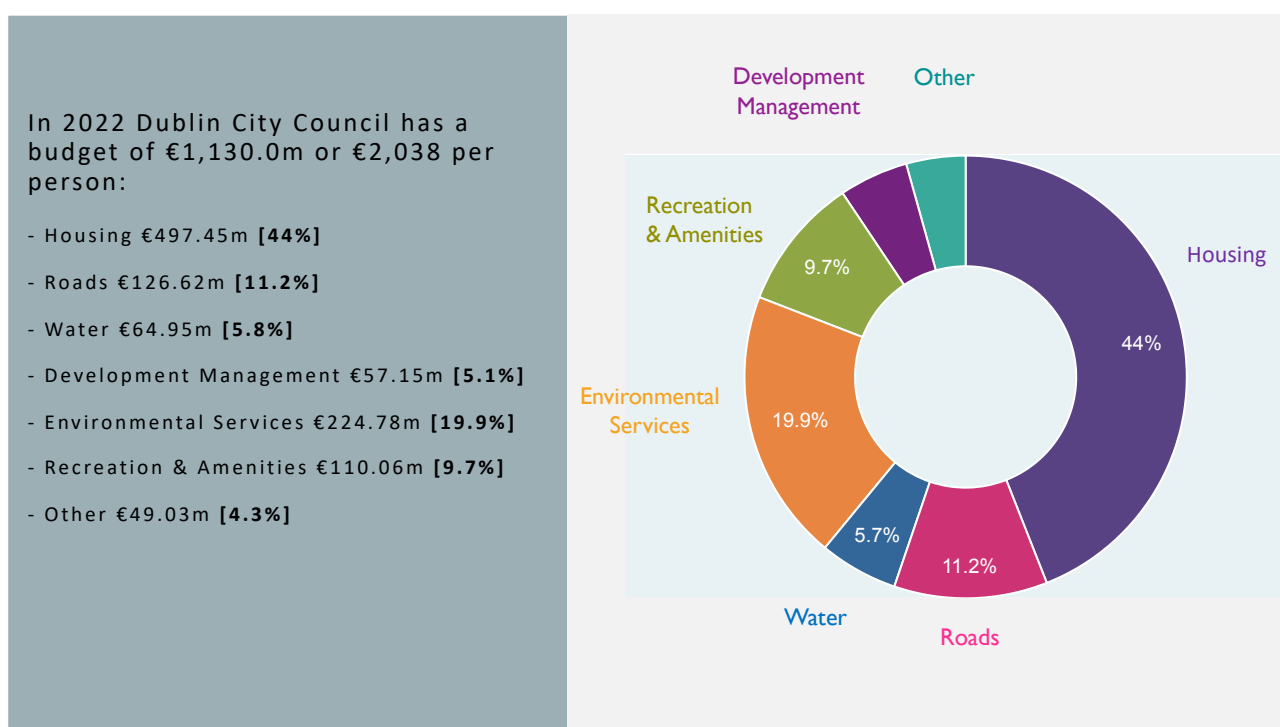
Assembly members viewed a video featuring a vox-pop of members of the public living in the four Dublin local authority areas, responding with a mix of insight and Dublin humour to the question: "What do the Dublin Local Authorities do?"



2.3.5 Session 4: Governance, Power and Funding of local government

A second afternoon session featured presentations by Prof. Ó Broin on funding and finance of local government, and Dr. Quinn on governance and power within local government.

Members heard **Prof. Ó Broin** explain how local government in Ireland is financed through various sources and mechanisms, including the Local Government Fund (which is funded through Motor tax revenues, Local Property Tax revenues and payments from the Exchequer), along with specific state grants, rates, and revenues raised through charges for goods and services. The presentation showed the main areas of expenditure for local authorities, including housing, environmental services, roads and water. The extent of funding that flows to local authorities from central government means that lines of accountability often run directly between local authorities and government departments, rather than to the locally elected council, arguably reducing the autonomy of Ireland's local government system. Members heard that the tax base of local government has been narrowing over the course of several decades.



The presentation by Dr. Bríd Quinn described the current power structures and decision-making processes within local government, the actors involved, and how structures and processes sit in relation to national and regional decision-making. The presentation outlined two main strands of decision-making within local government: the elected council (either in plenary format or in one of the Council sub-formations), and the Chief Executive and senior management team.

It highlighted key areas in which elected councillors have decision-making responsibility, including budgetary approval, local economic and community plans, housing policy decisions, commercial rates, property tax levels and city and county development plans. Other decisions made by councillors include civic honours, protected structures, local area plans, flood management risk plans and housing services plans.

The CEO is charged with the responsibility of day-to-day management of the Council. The CEO is an employee of the Council, holds executive functions, has power to delegate

executive functions and is required to carry into effect all lawful decisions of the elected Council. The CEO is responsible for implementation of policy, and advises and assists the elected Council, Corporate Policy Group (CPG), Special Purpose Committees (SPCs) and Local Committee Development Committees (LDCs). Members heard about the role of policy and other committees and mechanisms, including the Local Community Development Committee and Public Participation Networks in providing mechanisms for the general public and stakeholders to input into the decision-making processes at local government level.

Members also heard about the level of involvement that local authorities have with other authorities and actors in areas ranging from drugs prevention to sports promotion to education to river basin management. External bodies in which councillors participate include regional assemblies, HSE forums, third level governing bodies, educational and training boards, cross border bodies, sport partnerships, Drugs Task Forces, river basin management committees, Údarás na Gaeltachta and Forbartha Gaeilge.

Dr. Quinn concluded by saying local government provides a forum for local decision-making but cautioned that its actions are framed by obligations and constraints set at central level. Nonetheless, decision-making in local government has clear roles for elected members, public servants and citizens/community organisations and councillors play a key role in the activities of state agencies and other external bodies, local government leads and facilitates the co-ordination of services at local level.

Arising from the afternoon's proceedings, roundtable discussions among members resulted in over 100 questions being lodged with the Secretariat. A subset of questions were responded to in the Questions and Answers session by members of the Expert Advisory Group; a second sub-set were responded to at the following morning's plenary session; while any outstanding questions were responded to by the Expert Advisory Group in a follow-up session at the next meeting of the Assembly.

Proceedings resumed on Sunday morning with an opening plenary session, followed by a panel discussion where members heard from the Chief Executive Officers of the four Dublin local authorities; **Danny McLoughlin** (South Dublin County Council), **Owen Keegan** (Dublin City Council), **AnneMarie Farrelly** (Fingal County Council) and **Frank Curran** (Dún Laoghaire – Rathdown County Council). Following brief opening statements from each of the four CEOs, members engaged with the panel in a detailed questions and answers session.



2.3.6 Session 2 (Sunday): Why a directly-elected mayor?

The final public session of the weekend featured a presentation by Dr. Aodh Quinlivan on the general challenges, risks, benefits and opportunities of a directly-elected mayor.

Dr. Quinlivan outlined the Programme for Government provision for a directly-elected mayor for Dublin. He described how city mayors are a dominant and a growing international trend in governance and that a directly-elected mayor should enhance democratic legitimacy and political leadership. A directly-elected mayor would champion Dublin and help it compete with other similar sized cities across the world. By boosting electoral participation the mayor could potentially become a catalyst for wider local government reform.

A potential benefit of a directly-elected mayor is that it should lead to quicker and more decisive decision-making, which would be beneficial both to communities and to the business community in Dublin. There is also a risk that a directly-elected mayor could find

themselves at constant loggerheads with central government and its departments. Dr. Quinlivan concluded that so much depends on the quality of person who is directly-elected as mayor.

The weekend's proceedings concluded with a detailed roundtable discussion by members, which identified a range of questions and observations that were fed back to the Secretariat via the facilitation team.





2.4 Discussions

Note takers were positioned at each table and recorded the key points made during each facilitated table discussion. The following provides a brief and non-exhaustive extract of some of the key themes and issues emerging during the roundtable discussions during weekend



1. Session 1: What is Dublin?

The roundtable discussion that followed the presentations by Dr. Ruth McManus and Roddy Doyle gave members an opportunity to articulate their personal impressions of their city and county. It revealed both commonality and divergence of sentiment about Dublin – its people, its character, its history, and the myriad things that unite and divide the city and county. The following extract encapsulates some of that rich sense of diversity:

Dublin is...

Made by people
wit, slang and a few curse words
something that is experienced with all senses; the smell and the
temperatures
anything inside the M50
the buzz, nightlife, culture, double decker buses and the zoo
a feeling
dangerous and unsafe, not only for women but for men
a city of chancers, and optimists
a series of villages that together make the big city
unique, brilliant and wonderful
a destination, full of great museums
open, kind, chatty and welcoming
naturally stunning; beaches, mountains, parks, Georgian buildings
identifiable worldwide, its citizens are lucky
impossible to buy a house in
going back to flats and apartments, it hasn't enough resources
a sense of coming home
multicultural and always changing
dirty, a kip, well at least O'Connell St is
historical, changed a lot by the Celtic tiger and lead by finance
not what it used to be
not for the young: a springboard for you to grow up and then move out
dying, decaying, it needs a rescue
divided between north and south, rich and poor
a place that prioritises tourists over locals, but is expensive for everyone
not politically correct, but in a good way
an opportunity
a diamond in the rough
unappreciated
a bit of a contradiction
my city
my home

Session 2: Local government in Dublin

NB: *The following is a non-exhaustive list of themes that emerged from roundtable discussions. Items listed below represent the more frequently-identified themes. This list does not imply that these issues were unanimously agreed within or across all tables.*

- There's a clear need to devolve powers from central government down to local government, with adequate funding and effective functioning of local authorities.
- Councillors are not visible; their role and powers are unclear; levels of engagement with the public are poor. As part-time representatives, they all have other jobs to hold down as well, which may contribute to them being not accessible.
- Why is Ireland ranked so low on the local



government autonomy index? There seems to be a slow whittling down of local government since the original 'cradle to grave' approach. E.g. while abolishing Town Councils in 2014 saved money, it also took away local governance from those who needed it the most.

- There seems to be an issue in the balance of power between the Chief Executives and councillors. There's a gap between how things should work in theory and how they work in reality. The Chief Executive holds a lot of power, and there needs to be a healthy balance of powers in the future.

- There's a need to improve transparency and accountability. A DEM can improve this, but need to be subject to checks and balances.
- Participants were surprised by the number of services provided by local authorities.

Session 3: Main strands of Local Authority activity

NB: *The following is a non-exhaustive list of themes that emerged from roundtable discussions. Items listed below represent the more frequently-identified themes. This list does not imply that these issues were unanimously agreed within or across all tables.*

- There was considerable surprise at the extent of services provided by local government, including many things people were unfamiliar with. The public is more familiar with high visibility Council activities, e.g. street cleaning, road maintenance and "things that the council put their name on", parking spaces and parking tickets, parks and recreational spaces like leisure centres, pools, pest control, library and tree service. Tables suggested improving the promotion and branding of CC services. People often only aware of services when they don't work.



- The EU has pushed for more competition. The State should not provide services that can be done more economically by private entities, e.g. waste removal. The Council could be more efficient, but outsourcing is also challenging. Competition is not happening because different companies service different areas.
- Complex systems and bureaucracy mean the speed of decision making is a big issue.
- The media's coverage of local politics and services isn't great and is limited to local newspapers and does not get national coverage.
- The DEM has the potential to be more effective than the non-elected CEOs. The DEM role could improve accountability, reduce corruption, and increase voter engagement.
- Local governments should challenge central government more to achieve a transfer of power.
- The workload expected of councillors seems unmanageable for a part-time position and pay and/or hours should be increased.



Session 4: Who governs and how is power distributed?

NB: *The following is a non-exhaustive list of themes that emerged from roundtable discussions. Items listed below represent the more frequently-identified themes. This list does not imply that these issues were unanimously agreed within or across all tables.*

- The division of funding was well explained, clarified previous questions, and participants were gaining a 'good grasp on the proceedings'. Some data was outdated.
- The process of governance and power distribution is complex and confusing, with many interactions between multiple bodies and committees. 'There's about a million committees'. Councillors at two tables couldn't fully explain who makes the decisions and how it all works.
- Members feel like there is not enough accountability / transparency in the current system of local governance and central governance. The narrative of having tight budgets makes the whole matter over-simplified and not transparent.
- Some panellists were avoiding giving a straight answer. There is a lack of transparency and people need to be challenged.
- Many of the presentations gave theoretical accounts of councillor powers, whereas the reality of the day-to-day relationship between councillors, the public and the Chief Executive is different. It would be helpful to have staff in from different LA departments explain their role. The credibility of the council is eroded when the results of public consultations are ignored.
- There should be better performance indicators and oversight for councils in order to maximise potential. The new indicators should strike a balance between efficiency and practicality.
- The Local Government Fund can't be easily understood. Lack of transparency makes it easy for people to think they are being cheated.

Session 2 (Sunday):

Why a directly-elected mayor? Challenges, Risks, Benefits and Opportunities

NB: *The following is a non-exhaustive list of themes that emerged from roundtable discussions. Items listed below represent the more frequently-identified themes. This list does not imply that these issues were unanimously agreed within or across all tables.*

Risks and Challenges

- DEM within an unreformed, centralized system will not change things for the better. Needs root & branch reform to existing power structures to enable DEM to be effective.
- Risk that role could become a popularity contest for celebrities rather than candidates of substance. Members concerned about ensuring candidates with right experience, qualifications, motives.
- Powerful DEM role could give rise to risk of corruption or abuse of power. Need checks and balances, transparency, accountability.
- DEM role could be vulnerable if not constitutionally protected (vis Margaret Thatcher's abolition of Greater London Council in 1986)
- The lack of communication / engagement between local authorities and the public could be addressed by a DEM.
- Risk that political parties will use DEM to further own agendas and policies raising fears that a DEM could continue to push central government policy over those of the people.
- Needs to be a way of removing the DEM if warranted. Suggestions included a petition-based mechanism (such as in San Francisco). Dangers in setting threshold for removal either too high or low.
- Low voter turnout could be detrimental to the process.

Benefits and opportunities

- DEM would have more legitimacy than the (unelected) Executive. People would feel more connected with politics.
- When would elections be held? Suggestions included running elections separately to general and local elections, thereby generating greater public engagement. DEM election could revive an interest in local governmental affairs. "Butterfly effect".
- One person in DEM role for five years provides continuity, stability and legitimacy.
- A DEM could bring people together, create consensus, provide a vision, fresh eyes, and remove barriers. Could be a catalyst for change, rectify the power imbalance, stand up for Dublin, and hold civil servants, local authorities or councillors to account.





3

MEETING 2:
**INTERNATIONAL
EXPERIENCE AND
LOCAL PERSPECTIVES**

3.1 Overview

The second weekend meeting of the Dublin Citizens' Assembly was designed to delve more deeply into the question of the type of mayor and local government structures best suited to Dublin.

It involved experts with detailed knowledge of the current mayoral and local government system within Dublin, who detailed the existing and future challenges facing the city and county. The mayors of the four local authorities in Dublin joined the meeting as guest speakers and panellists, as did speakers with experience of the mayoral and local government systems in Boston, Paris and Manchester.

In approximate terms, the programme for weekend 2 allocated 25% of the available time to speeches and presentations, 30% to Questions and Answers, 35% to roundtable discussions, and 10% to Plenary sessions.



3.2 Programme

SATURDAY 21ST MAY 2022

Opening Session

09:00 - Members introduce themselves at their roundtables

09:15 - Introduction by Chairman, Jim Gavin

Session 1: The Dublin Experience

09:30 - Dublin-specific challenges. Dr. Philip Byrne, Director of the Local Government Division, Institute of Public Administration

09:45 - Current role of the Council mayors. Laura Shannon, Institute of Public Administration and Editor, Local Authority Times

10:00 - Roundtable discussion

10:45 - Questions & Answers

11:00 - Coffee break

Session 2: Mayors of the four Dublin Local Authorities

11:15 - Presentations by Cllr. Seána Ó Rodaigh (Mayor of Fingal), Cllr. Alison Gilliland (Lord Mayor of Dublin), Cllr. Lettie McCarthy (Cathaoirleach of Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown County Council) and Cllr. Peter Kavanagh (Mayor of South Dublin).

11:35 - Roundtable discussion

12:05 - Q&A with the Mayors of the four Dublin Local Authorities

12:45 - Lunch

Session 3: The International Experience

13:45 - How do other city regions do it? Broad comparative overview. Dr. Diarmuid Scully, Academic Adviser to the Limerick Implementation Advisory Group and former Mayor of Limerick

14:00 - Models of Mayor:

- Manchester (Super-region and local authority as the primary unit);
- Paris (Region and arrondissement as primary unit, permanent Citizens' Assembly);
- Boston (Mayor as City Chief Executive and City Council as the city's legislative body);
- Helsinki (Intermediate government system with a divided administrative management).

Dr. Seán Ó'Riordáin, Public Management Consultant

14:20 - Roundtable discussion

14:50 - Questions & Answers

15:15 - Coffee break

15:30 - Presentations from:

Mayor of Greater Manchester, Mr. Andy Burnham;
Vice-Mayor of Paris, Ms. Anouch Toranian;
Former member of Boston City Council, Mr. Larry DiCara

16:00 - Panel discussion, Q&A with international guest presenters

16:45 - Roundtable discussion

17:15 - Concluding remarks by Chairperson

3.2 Programme Continued

SUNDAY 22ND MAY 2022

Session 1

- 09:30 - Expert Advisory Group response to questions outstanding from Weekend 1.
- 10:00 - Plenary feedback session from yesterday's roundtable discussions
- 11:00 - Coffee Break

Session 2: High-level options

- 11:15 - High-level options for the type of directly-elected mayor and local government structures best suited for Dublin
Dr. Seán Ó'Riordáin, Public Management Consultant
- 11:35 - Questions & Answers
- 12:00 - Roundtable discussions
- 12:40 - Completion of evaluation surveys
- 12:50 - Summary and concluding remarks by Chairperson

3.3 Presentations and Discussions

3.3.1 Opening Session

Following welcome remarks by the Chair, Dubliner **John Cummins** recited his poem 'Native' for the members of the Assembly.



3.3.2 Session 1: The Dublin Experience



The first session opened with a presentation by **Dr. Philip Byrne**, who outlined Dublin-specific challenges for local government. The presentation highlighted the range of services provided by local government, and the rate of change that local government has undergone in recent times. At present there are just 31 local authorities, down from 114 in 2014. The number of elected councillors per head of population has fallen from 1:1,600 in 2014 to 1:4,830 today. In 2008 there were 38,000 local authority staff in Ireland, while today there are just 28,000, 5,000 of which are in Dublin City.

The presentation detailed the pressures that Dublin local authorities are under, particularly in respect of policies for transport, housing and homelessness. Targets under the National Planning Framework to 2040 includes a metro linking Sandyford and Swords via Dublin airport, the Dart expansion and the Bus Connect programme, each of which will have significant implications for Dublin. The Housing for All strategy commits to the production of 47,000 social units, 30% of which are required in the four Dublin local authority areas. There are over 4,000 homeless people in the Greater Dublin Metropolitan Area, while priority groups for social housing include the elderly, disabled people, and members of the Travelling and Roma communities. Local authorities administer the Housing Rents Arrears Scheme, have active debt management units and mortgage arrears resolution plans. The local authorities work closely with An Garda

Síochana via the Joint Policing Committees to tackle issues including anti-social behaviour.

Laura Shannon made a presentation on the current role of mayors in Dublin, highlighting the role of mayor as chairperson of the local council and a ceremonial representative of the local authority. The role is largely limited to presiding over council meetings and representing the council at external and public events, as distinct from being an office that holds executive functions. The main role of the mayor is to chair the plenary meetings of the council, as well as the corporate policy group.



The mayor, or Cathaoirleach, currently has very limited specific powers and functions. On an annual basis, councillors elect one of the serving councillors to chair the council and represent them. While three of the four current mayors in Dublin are women, there is still a long way to go in terms of gender balance of elected council members, less than 30 percent of whom are women. The role of mayor is a full-time role, which comes with additional resources and allowances. While all elected members receive a representational payment of approximately €26,000 per year, mayors receive an additional allowance recently reported at around €30,000.

The presentations by Dr. Byrne and Ms. Shannon were followed by a roundtable discussion and open Q&A session.

3.3.3 Session 2: Mayors of the four Dublin Local Authorities



The second session featured presentations by Cllr. **Seána Ó Rodaigh** (Mayor of Fingal), Cllr. **Alison Gilliland** (Lord Mayor of Dublin), Cllr. **Lettie McCarthy** (Cathaoirleach of Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown County Council) and Cllr. **Peter Kavanagh** (Mayor of South Dublin).

Cllr. Ó Rodaigh described the role of Mayor of Fingal, highlighting the largely ceremonial nature of the role, the exercise of reserved functions such as disposal of land, preparing the County Development Plan, and deciding on budgetary matters including variations on Local Property Tax. The mayor's primary responsibility is to chair meetings including plenary meetings of the Council, Corporate Policy Group meetings, County Development Plan meetings and other ad-hoc meetings, the example cited being the Ukrainian Community Forum response. While the role of mayor is very busy in its own right, the mayor also still has to fulfil their role as councillor. Cllr. Ó Rodaigh urged the Assembly to devolve some powers from central government to strengthen local democracy, otherwise the DEM "could be a futile exercise." She described the routine informal networking between the four mayors in Dublin, which helps in terms of strategic and operational coordination, and suggested that the new office of the DEM should more formally coordinate the four Dublin authorities, with each retaining their individual constituency. She also suggested that functions to be delegated from central government should include climate, energy, transport and housing.



Cllr. Gilliland spoke to the Assembly about her experience as the 353rd Lord Mayor of Dublin. The role is both ceremonial and representative, multi-faceted and interactive with the public and stakeholders. The Dublin Citizens' Assembly provides an opportunity for citizens to choose a vision for their city and to augment the international status of Dublin, which can in turn bring significant socio-economic and cultural benefits for the city. Questions to be considered include the powers, autonomy, funding and fundraising capacity to be assigned to the DEM; the mode of interaction between the new office of DEM and the corporate bodies of the four local authorities; the mode of interaction between the DEM, the four councils and elected members; the mode of interaction between the DEM and national policy, and legislation and central government. The powers and responsibilities of the mayor are currently very constrained by national policy legislation and government schemes, as well as funding. The presentation highlighted some examples pertaining to planning and housing, where central government has significant ownership over policy, and local authorities are dependent on centralised funding. Central government funding is typically allocated for specific reasons, such as housing, roads, green infrastructure, and can only be spent in those areas. There is some discretion in the spending of monies raised through commercial rates, local property tax, parking fees, fines and local authority contributions. Local authorities have no particular powers to introduce their own levies, e.g. a bed tax on Dublin hotels, or



an upper vacant unit charge that's different from a vacant site levy. Those are the kind of levies that could support urban regeneration and increase residential living in the city, but the mayors at present do not have adequate scope for autonomous, proactive, pro-social decision-making.

Cllr. McCarthy, Cathaoirleach of Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown reiterated that she and her fellow mayors meet informally and work well together on issues like transportation, climate and rivers, issues that are not bound by geographical boundaries. She described the demands of the recently-completed process of preparing a new Development Plan, which took about 39 meetings. When the duties of Cathaoirleach are finished, there are still all the councillor duties. She made a submission on local government reform a few years ago which proposed having fewer councillors on a full-time basis, with greater powers and responsibilities. She concluded by remarking that “if you want to go quickly, go alone, but if you want to go far, go together.”

Cllr. Peter Kavanagh, Mayor of South County Dublin, explained that the mayor has a number of roles, ranging from the symbolic to the administrative, but they do not extend to the executive in any meaningful way. He argued that the Assembly needs to imagine an entirely new role with some new powers along with existing powers, so that “efficiency is achieved and the best synergies are realized.” In Manchester, they had effectively pooled resources for centrally managed waste collection, centrally managed transport and policing. It made sense for there to be

an executive mayor for Dublin, working with a new assembly.

He cited existing examples of collaboration in Dublin, including in relation to the fire brigade, and the Dublin urban river life project which is looking at sustainable drainage systems and integrated wetlands. He asked what role the local authorities would play under a centralized mayoral system, positing that in a best-case scenario all four local authorities would be well represented by the mayor, but that in a worst case scenario one or more local authorities could be “completely ignored.” Funding allocation in the context of centralised services presents an enormous challenge. Budgets can be assigned proportionately from existing local authorities but not at the expense of retained services. He argued that an executive mayor requires not only the powers that are currently in the bailiwick of national government but also the funding to go with that. He proposed that the Citizens' Assembly consider the devolution of a limited number of new executive functions, and commensurate funding, in areas such as safety and security, housing, waste management, transport and the night-time economy. He concluded by posing a number of questions for further consideration, in relation to potential structural changes to local government for Dublin, and the potential for a Cabinet and other supports to ensure the DEM is effective.

Following the presentations by mayors, members held a roundtable discussion followed by a Questions and Answers session with the guest speakers.

3.3.4 Session 3: The International Experience

Dr. Dermot Scully, a former mayor of Limerick and academic advisor to Limerick Implementation Group, gave the Assembly a broad comparative view of Ireland's system of local government, which he characterised as an outlier from the international norm, the weakest, most underfunded system of local government with the least powers and authority of any country in Europe.



A Council of Europe analysis reveals how the lack of powers and functions for local government in Ireland encompasses education, healthcare, public transport and policing. He referenced issues like the weak financial supports for councillors, and the impossibility of removing the County or City manager. In most other countries the Council can hire the Chief Executive. Ireland has the fewest councillors per head of population in Europe. While a lot of money is spent in local areas in Ireland, it's channelled by central government, with only 1.2% actual direct spend at the local level.

More broadly, Dr. Scully set out the experience of rebuilding local democracy in post-war Germany, whereby almost every city in Germany switched to directly-elected mayors with executive powers. Today, 76% of people in Germany live in cities or rural regions that are governed by directly-elected mayors, who have the status of Chief Executive and principal decision-maker. Dublin now effectively has “a blank slate” on which to move forward. New York, London

and Auckland offered interesting examples. The role of DEM in Dublin will be an incredibly important role. He urged members to recommend maximalist options, that allow the people of Dublin to “elect the person who makes the decisions.”

Dr. Sean O’Riordáin presented to the Assembly on what he described as relevant, alternative models of mayor. Examples included Manchester (a Super-region and local authority as the primary unit); Paris (city region with arrondissement as the primary unit, with a permanent Citizens’ Assembly); Boston (with the mayor as City Chief Executive and the City Council as the legislative body); and Helsinki (an intermediate government system with a divided administrative management). Dr. O’Riordáin opened by remarking that every major city region is confronted with huge challenges and that the norm across the OECD is for directly-elected mayors or executive leaders to take control and drive change in service design and delivery. Ireland is an outlier in this regard.



The presentation argued that the most effective delivery platforms for public services are person-centred – with councils wrapped around a democratically-accountable, elected Chief Executive. Ireland at national level is actually very driven by local issues and that that poses a real challenge to local government. Each arrondissement of Paris has a mayor who is representative of that area within the Paris city region. There are increasing efforts to try and directly engage

with the citizens of the city of Paris through a newly-established standing Citizens' Assembly.

Local government in Boston is essentially an agglomeration of 100 city authorities. The Mayor of Boston is currently exploring the idea of the regional assembly taking on the role of setting broad strategic intent for regional economic and spatial development but with the immediacy of service delivery occurring through the individual local authorities.

The Mayor of Manchester, Andy Burnham, is directly-elected by the people of greater Manchester, in itself an authority which grew out of an organic growth of strategic relationships between mayors until it became a political necessity to create a political structure. However, the actual money that has been spent or planned to be spent in Ireland is far greater than the "levelling" up funds made available in England.

Helsinki, a city comparable to Dublin in size, also has town or commune authorities. Helsinki is led by a group of elected representatives supported by a Chief Executive and a professional staff team. Social or person-related services are the responsibility of the local authority. The difference is the scale of local authority responsibilities – again, with a focus on person-centred services.

Many other models abroad depend on a powerful "pulpit role", whereby the mayor and local authority advocate, negotiate with and indeed push regional or national authorities to devolve powers downwards. The really strong recommendations from the implementation committee in Limerick are the norm that can be found across all successful broadly accepted models.

Following the presentations by Drs. Scully and O'Riordáin, members went into private session for roundtable discussions, followed by a Questions and Answers session.

3.3.5 Session 3 (continued): The International Experience

The afternoon session continued with presentations from the Mayor of Greater Manchester, Mr. Andy Burnham, the Vice-Mayor of Paris, Ms. Anouch Toranian, and a former member of Boston City Council, Mr. Larry DiCara.

Mr. Burnham described his political career leading up to becoming mayor and how he was motivated by the mishandling of the Hillsborough football stadium disaster - "a prime example of how an over-centralized political system completely ignores the voice of a city crying for justice." He remarked that, as mayor of a large city, "it's a place first approach, not a party-first approach..." He described the model for Manchester as a model for English devolution outside of London that is working well. He described it as a form of devolution that "allows all of our system to move as one together, with real alignment all the way through from the bottom right up to the top and back down again". Manchester has made significant progress on some social issues like homelessness, partly because "the city does not have the sort of fragmentation that you get in other places". He described the mayor's leadership role in building partnerships and engaging the public in tackling problems. Recalling the bombing at the Manchester arena five years ago he reflected that "we live in cities that need leadership in those moments."

Mr. DiCara gave an account of his own background in local politics in Massachusetts and Boston and gave an outline of local government within the US generally, and in Boston and Massachusetts in particular. He described the various options for municipal government that have been used over the years, saying "the pendulum also swings back and forth as to whether one wants a smaller city government, a larger city government and how do we involve the average citizen." He said this year Boston is beginning a more democratic budget

process such as appears to be the case in Paris and Manchester. Boston with its strong “hybrid” mayoral system, has long been a prosperous city with a strong tax base that supports programs to deal with homelessness and other issues. Mr. DiCara encouraged the Dublin Citizens’ Assembly not to devise a complicated system, arguing that democracy can work quite well without being complicated.

Ms. Toranian described her role as deputy Mayor of Paris and set out the institutional organization of the City of Paris. The Council of Paris has 163 councillors, elected for a six-year term. The mayor is elected by the councillors for a six-year term and thereby becomes head of the Parisian Executive. The mayor delegates some powers to deputies, who are likewise elected by the Council. In addition, Paris has 17 boroughs, each with its own Borough mayor, each elected for a six-year term. This is a complex institutional environment and can lead to inequalities and inconsistencies.

The City of Paris is part of the Métropole du Grand Paris which includes 131 cities, towns and villages surrounding Paris, with a total population in excess of 7 million. The Métropole du Grand Paris has competence in areas such as environment, spatial planning, housing and economic development. The Paris mayor is not fully in charge of certain policy areas, including, for example, some competences that fall within the remit of the Prefect of Police.

As a city of over 2.5 million inhabitants, Paris is seeking out new ways of creating public policy through citizen participation. The aim is to encourage civic engagement and to empower Parisians to become directly involved in public decision-making. Paris has the largest participatory budget in the world - between 2014 and 2020 some €552 million has been invested in Paris based on decisions by the Parisians themselves; more than 17,000 ideas were proposed and more than 3,000 projects and work sites were

carried out. More recently, the City of Paris has established a Citizens’ Assembly, with 100 Parisians chosen at random, with the aim of being representative of the diversity of Paris. Citizens are compensated up to 44 euros per half day. Their mission is to ensure citizen involvement in examining and evaluating projects and policies, and to propose and influence public decisions through citizen motions and deliberations.

Deliberative Process

Following the presentations by Mr. Burnham, Ms. Toranian and Mr. DiCara, Assembly members had a Questions and Answers session with the panel, following which they went into private session for roundtable discussions.

3.3.6 Session 2 (Sunday): High-level options for the type of directly-elected mayor and local government structures best suited for Dublin

The Assembly heard from Dr. Sean O’Riordáin on some high-level options for Dublin. Dr. O’Riordáin emphasised that there are many potential models internationally that can be instructive. It is quite normal to expect tensions between national and local government, and indeed between local and regional assemblies and a directly-elected mayor. What is critical is that the means exist by which such conflicts and arguments can be worked through. Citizen engagement is absolutely critical.

The same controls on borrowing apply to local government in Ireland and the Nordic countries. However, Nordic countries have greater capacity to borrow money given their more expansive range of responsibilities. In more recent times, we are seeing examples in Ireland, e.g. Limerick City and County Council is in receipt of loans from the European Investment Bank and Council of Europe Bank to support urban regeneration. Helsinki has both executive councillors and a far larger group of “leisure time” councillors. Successful models have very strong public

participation structures in place. Equally important is a strong relationship between the locally-elected body and the mayor.

Most mayoral systems will have their own staff supporting them as well as having the wider administration and professional bodies of staff. The mayor needs to have access to levels of expertise and of knowledge.

Dr. O’Riordáin said that the terms of reference that have been given to the Assembly are exceptionally open for the people of Dublin to take a view on the range and extent and scope of an incoming mayor structure and the supporting regimes behind that.

One broad option is a democratically elected mayor for the Dublin region, supported by an assembly whilst retaining the existing four local authorities, partially reflecting what happens in London and Paris. If retaining the four existing Dublin local authorities, might they each have their own democratically elected mayor, under the umbrella of a Dublin-wide democratically elected mayor?

Alternatively there could be the option of abolishing the present structure and replacing it with a Dublin-wide regional assembly underpinned by local metropolitan structures.

Dr. O’Riordáin cautioned that Auckland went through a process of moving towards a major regional structure, which didn’t work because of the gap between the wider regional role of the mayor and the assembly. They ended up having to create boards across the city region to allow the local democratic voice come into play. He cautioned against abolishing the lower tier structures of the four Dublin authorities and not replacing them with other local structures. Following the presentation, members engaged in a detailed Questions and Answers session with Dr. O’Riordáin, followed by a session of private roundtable discussions.

3.4 Discussions

3.4.1 Session 1: The Dublin Experience

NB: *The following is a non-exhaustive list of themes that emerged from roundtable discussions. Items listed below represent the more frequently-identified themes. This list does not imply that these issues were unanimously agreed within or across all tables.*

What mayoral roles or duties would you keep?

- Keep ceremonial roles currently associated with present positions due to their cultural and historical significance.
- 4 elected roles (Mayors/Deputy Mayors) to remain as chairs of their own councils to represent their regional identities, with one overall lord mayor.
- Gender balance in local authority. 3 out of Dublin’s 4 mayors are women which is a positive step forward that should continue.
- Keep all current roles but reform some of their functions to improve efficiency.
- Keep the administrative functions of the Chief Executive and Council since they facilitate checks and balances, with elected representatives instructing civil servants to execute their policies.
- Keep services traditionally provided by local authorities, and the powers that the current mayors have.
- Local councils should continue to work together in areas related to urban development.
- Casting votes in council meetings.



What mayoral roles or duties would you add?

- Decentralise and devolve power so DEM has authority to address Dublin's largest issues like transportation and housing.
- Decentralise and devolve financial power. Examples of this include giving the DEM veto powers and executive decision-making power over where to allocate resources.
- Give DEM staff adequate resources to be effective.
- Mechanisms for the councillors to hold the DEM accountable via recall mechanism and/or opportunities for constituent feedback.
- Full-time status for the new DEM/s.
- DEM needs a longer term than 1-year.
- DEM needs an agenda of policies they plan to accomplish while in office.
- DEM needs more decision-making power than Chief Executives, but the Chief Executives could still work beside the DEM as civil servants.
- Give councillors full-time status since they're directly-elected but currently have limited resources available to challenge higher levels.
- DEM needs to be visible within communities and on the streets.
- Need a designated person to meet with important visitors and attract investment to the area.
- Bring back town councils
- Give the 4 current Lord Mayor/Lord Deputy Mayors more planning power.
- One DEM to oversee four local authorities.

What else needs to be in place for the mayor to be effective in their role?

- Widescale decentralisation so DEM and local authorities have more executive power.
- Mechanisms to ensure accountability like recall provisions, budget regulations, and annual reports for the community.
- DEM needs a well-resourced, full-time cabinet and/or staff to advise the DEM, run work programme.
- Longer term length for elected officials.
- Chief Executive and DEM must share knowledge and responsibilities as the CEO has additional knowledge of specific departments.
- Higher media profile so DEM can represent one, unified voice of the city.
- DEM must be independent from their political party or apolitical altogether.
- DEM needs full-time status.
- DEM, Chief Executive, Council, and Lord Mayor roles and duties must be clearly defined to ensure accountability among them.
- Any meaningful change will require widescale reform of local government and constitutional change.
- Increase Mayor's 12-month term to sync with councillors' 5-year term.
- Merge the 4 local authorities into 1.
- DEM must possess proficient knowledge on local government and its processes.





3.4.2 Session 2: The International Experience

NB: The following is a non-exhaustive list of themes that emerged from roundtable discussions. Items listed below represent the more frequently-identified themes. This list does not imply that these issues were unanimously agreed within or across all tables.

Manchester - Pros:

- 3-tier system where one DEM oversees and delegates work to ten cabinet members via portfolio on a specific issue like transportation or housing.
- Manchester is the most comparable example to Dublin and could easily be implemented into Dublin's existing structure. Specifically, how the 10 sub-positions remained and formed a Cabinet under the new DEM. The 10 cabinet members represent the greater Manchester area and have parity among each other, but also recognize the pre-eminence of the city.
- Citizens hold the DEM accountable via direct election.
- DEM is "answerable to the people, not the party".
- DEM represents a strong voice of the city and is visible to constituents.
- Embryonic approach allows for continual improvement.
- System is simple and easy to understand, largely because roles and responsibilities are clearly defined.
- Tangible results quickly.
- DEM oversees key issues like transportation and housing.
- System has few layers.
- Locally-elected officials make decisions on infrastructure.
- DEM can coordinate a broad provision of services for citizens and can effectively address crises such as homelessness.

Manchester - Cons:

- No recall mechanism.
- System requires agreement from the councils, and it may be difficult to get Dublin's multiple local authorities to work well together.
- DEM will require proper power but must have checks and balances to ensure accountability and transparency.
- Crucial difference is that Manchester is in a London-centric country where they must pull power from London, whereas Dublin is pulling power from central government.
- Manchester's cabinet structure would be impossible without full-time councillors and adequate staffing for the DEM.

Paris - Pros:

- Citizens highly involved in local policymaking.
- Permanent citizens' assembly.
- Longer mayoral term.
- Police force includes residents and is terrific for community policing.
- Mayor can delegate powers to other members of government.
- System is structured so that the Council must collaborate with the arrondissements.
- Mayor is separate from the Cabinet but must remain accountable to it.
- Very good at responding quickly.
- Multiple layers of governance.
- Like Dublin, Paris has many boroughs which make it a suitable model to learn from.

Paris - Cons:

- Overcomplicated.
- Too many layers.
- Too bureaucratic.
- Mayor is appointed by the Council, not elected by the people.
- Very influenced by political parties.
- Too costly for Dublin.

Boston – Pros:

- Recall provision to hold mayor accountable.
- Non-partisan nature.
- Strong mayor model limits bureaucracy and increases efficiency.
- Strong tax base.
- System is simple.
- Strong local government allows quick responses to specific crises like homelessness and crime. Dublin could use this approach on issues like flash flooding.

Boston - Cons:

- Ratio of councillors to citizens is too low for adequate democratic representation.
- Strong mayor model wields more power than people might be comfortable with.
- Unclear about how the system operates.
- Non-partisan nature reduces outside voices being heard.

3.4.3 Session 2 (Sunday):

High-level options for the type of DEM and local government structures

NB: The following is a non-exhaustive list of themes that emerged from roundtable discussions. Items listed below represent the more frequently-identified themes. This list does not imply that these issues were unanimously agreed within or across all tables.

What powers do we want DEM to have?

- Gradually devolve powers in phases ordered by level of importance.
- Partially devolve healthcare to DEM to improve regionally-specific community health services.
- DEM needs checks and balances. Mechanisms must be available to enforce democratic accountability and transparency, like local quality assurance and regulations on executive powers involving budget.
- Decentralise and devolve powers, funding, and resources to the greatest extent possible.
- Devolve/decentralise the following to DEM and related local structures:
 - * Dublin-specific transportation.
 - * Dublin-specific policing/security measures.
 - * Partially devolve education, specifically matters related to primary/secondary schooling and infrastructure.
 - * Housing.
 - * Climate change.
 - * Economic development.
 - * Planning powers.
 - * Night-time economy.
 - * Childcare.
 - * Utilities to DEM.
 - * Addiction services.
- DEM should control the local aspects of certain executive functions beneath broader national plans. Climate change and transportation frequently cited examples.
- Give DEM executive power to monitor and control budget, e.g. veto powers and power to add taxes and/or provisions.
- Powers should only be devolved after the established structure is proven to be effective.

What structure do we want the DEM to have?

- Keep existing structure and add DEM to oversee it.
- Need a layer between the DEM and 31 municipal areas besides the 4 Chief Executives. Ideally, a non-partisan cabinet will be created under the DEM.
- DEM serves 5-year term.
- DEM needs more power than the Chief Executive. Redefine the Chief Executive role to work under the DEM as a senior-level civil servant appointed for their expertise rather than selected by the central government for their party affiliation. Possibly rename this role but keep the 4 spots for each local authority.
- Like Manchester's mayor, the DEM should delegate tasks to members of the cabinet via portfolio. The DEM should oversee these tasks but assign executive functions to cabinet members so they can each work on a specific issue like transportation.
- Citizens' participation in local policymaking is crucial to democratic accountability. Many people liked the rolling Citizens' Assemblies in Paris but want to explore additional initiatives since Citizens' Assemblies aren't accessible to everyone.
- Need provisions to ensure checks and balances such as an advisory board, recall mechanism, impeachment process, or committee with which the DEM has shared powers.
- Full-time DEM needs full-time support staff.
- Local authorities and councils need experienced managerial staff.
- Full-time status for councillors.
- Each local authority should retain their own mayor, so in total 4 deputy mayors that serve 5-year terms in the cabinet created under the new DEM.
- Need more direct representation so that the public elects people at every level of government. The Deputy Mayors and Chief Executives should also be directly-elected by their respective constituencies by direct election or participatory assembly.
- Provide DEM with expert advisors/advisory boards to help them make informed decisions.
- Non-partisan mayoral candidates.
- Create a regional assembly to promote collaboration between the 4 local authorities. The 4 authorities could each hold Citizens' Assemblies and have councillors report constituents' feedback at the regional assembly.
- Full-time status for current 4 mayors.
- Don't want structure to disproportionately prioritize Dublin city.
- Keep ceremonial roles for cultural/historical significance but don't give them executive powers



4

MEETING 3: **DEVOLUTION OF POWERS AND FINANCES**

4.1 Overview

The third weekend meeting took place on 25th and 26th June. The programme was designed to allow members hear from experts and practitioners on the challenges and opportunities of a directly-elected mayor, in terms of devolution of powers and finances. It also provided an opportunity to hear from representatives of the business community in Dublin about their views on a directly-elected mayor and other local government reforms. The second day of the meeting set aside extensive time for members to take stock of their deliberations to date, ahead of the summer break.

In approximate terms, the programme for weekend 3 allocated 50% of the available time to roundtable discussions, 25% to speeches and presentations, 20% to Questions and Answers, and 5% to Plenary sessions.

4.2 Programme

SATURDAY 25TH JUNE 2022

Opening Session

09:00 - Members introduce themselves at their roundtables

09:15 - Introduction by Chairman, Jim Gavin

Session 1: Devolution I

09:30 - Devolution and New Powers at Local Level: Debates, Proposals and Experience'.
Dr. Mark Callanan, author: Local Government in Ireland (2018)

09:50 - Roundtable discussion

10:45 - 'The reality of devolution'. Bertie Ahern

11:00 - Questions & Answers

11:30 - Coffee break

11:45 - A perspective on the DEM and its benefits and challenges from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. Graham Doyle, Secretary General

12:00 - Roundtable discussion

12:30 - Questions & Answers

12:45 - Lunch

Session 2: The Limerick Experience

13:45 - Lessons from Limerick – Tim O'Connor, Chairman IAG

14:00 - Roundtable discussion

14:30 - Questions & Answers

Session 3: Devolution II - Powers that might be devolved

14:50 - Transport. Dr Brian Caulfield

15:05 - Education and Skills. Prof. Joe O'Hara

15:20 - Childcare. Ms. Assumpta O'Neill

15:35 - Coffee break

16:00 - Roundtable discussion

16:15 - Questions & Answers

Session 4: Finance, funding and taxation

16:30 - Local government finance in comparative perspective. Dr. Theresa Reidy

16:50 - Roundtable discussion

17:20 - Concluding remarks by Chairperson

4.2 Programme Continued

SUNDAY 22ND MAY 2022

Opening Session

09:15 - Plenary session, with feedback from yesterday's roundtable discussions

Session 1: Views from the business community on a directly-elected mayor

09:45 - Dublin Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Aebhric McGibney

10:00 - Chambers Ireland. Mr. Shane Conneely

10:15 - Roundtable discussions

10:45 - Questions and Answers

11:00 - Coffee break

Session 2: What have we learned so far?

11:15 - Roundtable discussion

12:55 - Concluding remarks by Chairperson

4.3 Presentations and Speeches

Figure 2 Niamh Keane plays the 'Marino Waltz' at the opening session of Weekend 3



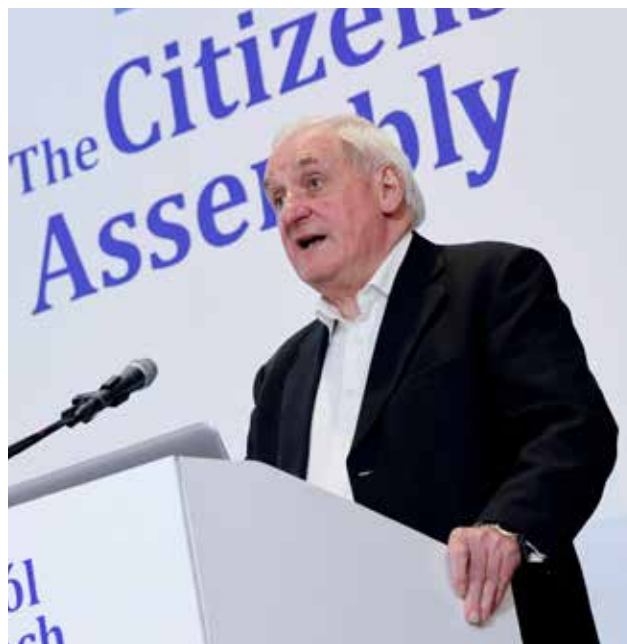
4.3.1 Session 1: Devolution I

The opening presentation from **Dr. Mark Callanan** explored devolution and decentralisation in an Irish context. Dr. Callanan observed that while people in Ireland have a fairly acute sense of attachment to place and locality, that attachment is not carried through in public debate about devolution. The future will be characterized by increased diversity. For example, the impact of climate change in Ireland is likely to be quite localized, meaning drier summers for some parts of the country and wetter, stormier winters for others. Establishing a closer link between what citizens get in terms of service levels and what they pay in charges and local taxes can have positive financial effects: consolidating more things within the local government system - ultimately accountable to elected office holders - can reduce the need for multiple channels of delivery. In considering what services a reformed local government system might deliver, Dr. Callanan urged Assembly members not to overlook the “often undervalued things”, such as education, child care, primary or community health care services in a non-hospital environment and social services like elderly care.



Across the OECD, a lot of the heavy lifting in terms of service provision actually takes place at that more devolved level. For example, regulating public transport, road maintenance and traffic management, and public transport. Some countries have municipal or local police forces under mayors.

Proposals around devolution ultimately come down to value judgments about whether it's best to have a uniform approach across the country - more appropriate for national provision - or, on the other hand, a tailored approach to service design and delivery, which would be better suited for devolution of powers to a directly-elected mayor for Dublin.



Former Taoiseach **Bertie Ahern** shared his perspective on devolution and a directly-elected mayor. He described how, back in 2000, the Government was initially enthusiastic about having a directly-elected mayor, but that there were also concerns, such as the prospect that the role of mayor would attract celebrities who wouldn't be concerned about Dublin. Mr. Ahern's view was that local government systems elsewhere are very different from the current system in Ireland, and that the creation of a powerful office of mayor could lead to multiple points of institutional friction, between Government departments, agencies, the Taoiseach's Office, the City Council and the mayor. He described an example of this institutional friction in the context of his experience of the Port Tunnel project. He suggested that the mayor should have a leadership role in pushing and driving the system to deliver ambitious projects and initiatives, but felt that the appetite to devolve powers is very limited.



However, if local councils were strengthened with additional powers and resources, there is an appetite within the four Dublin Councils for a federal system to evolve over time. He suggested developing a federal system for Dublin, with a far stronger Council and more technical and scientific officials. Mr. Ahern reminded members that local authorities get most of their money from national government - in Dublin's case, 40%. Devolving that level of funding to local authorities won't be done overnight. Area Committees are a good idea and a lot can be done at the local level by assisting the councillors.

Following the presentations by Dr. Callanan and Mr. Ahern, Assembly members moved into private session for a roundtable discussion, followed by a Questions and Answers session.

The next speaker, **Graham Doyle** outlined his role as Secretary General in the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. He recounted the history of local government in Ireland and endeavours

at reform in recent decades. He noted that there's no settled or ideal model in terms of how to do devolution and "there isn't a one-size-fits-all." He referred to the experience of Andy Burnham, the mayor of Greater Manchester, and to the Metropolitan area of Barcelona which has a representative council from the constituent municipalities led by a president appointed by the Assembly. He suggested that any new model of local government in Dublin must cater for the particular needs, opportunities, risks and features of Dublin, and reflected that there will be advantages and disadvantages no matter what system is chosen. He then briefed members on the status of proposals for a directly-elected mayor for Limerick, noting that reforms there are more about the transfer of executive functions from an appointed official to a directly-elected office holder. He expressed the view that the Limerick model wouldn't necessarily lend itself well to Dublin.

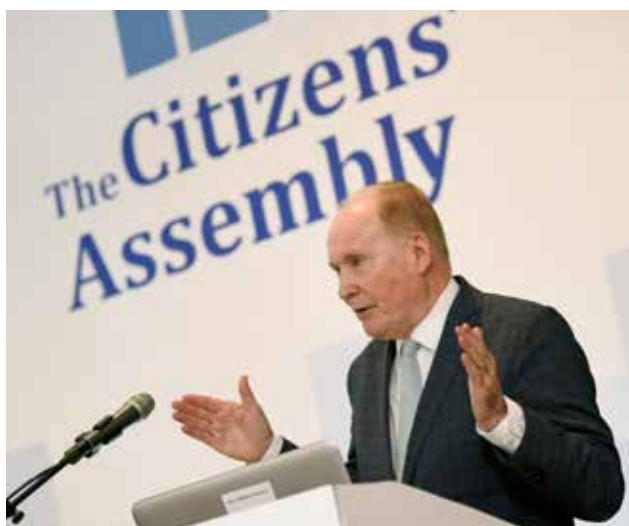
Following the presentation by Mr. Doyle, Assembly members went into private session for roundtable discussions, and then had a Questions and Answers session with Mr. Doyle and his colleague Ms. Áinle Ni Bhriain.



4.3.2 Session 2: The Limerick Experience

Tim O'Connor addressed the Assembly in his capacity as Chair of the Limerick Mayor Implementation Advisory Group. He described his appreciation of local government, “the immediacy of it, it’s on the ground, connected directly into people’s lives. Local government is the arm of the State closest to the kitchens of Ireland.” He remarked that central government is beginning to use local government a lot more, referencing the involvement of local authorities in initiatives such as The Gathering (2013) and the Centenary of the 1916 Rising.

He argued that the directly-elected mayor needs to be at the heart of everything that affects the well-being of Limerick, becoming the focal point, advocate, champion and single voice. He highlighted that one of the soft powers proposed for the Mayor of Limerick is the “power to convene”. He referred to the DEM as “the golden thread that connects the vibrant communities on the ground through local government to the central state.” He pointed out that in the post-Brexit relationship between Ireland and the UK, one of the great new arenas will be the engagement between directly-elected mayors.



4.3.3 Session 3: Devolution II - Powers that might be devolved

Prof. Brian Caulfield (TCD) provided a detailed briefing about Dublin transportation issues, describing how people move around the city, how transport is regulated and the powers that a directly-elected mayor could assume.

Transportation policy is primarily determined by Government. Under that, there are various powers vested in the four local authorities, with the National Transport Authority (NTA) in charge of regulation, planning and design of public transport networks, and Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) in charge of road and rail construction. Dublin is very much interconnected with the rest of the region, so any policy development role that the mayor assumes would have to include the other counties of the Greater Dublin Area. The Mayor of Dublin could gain a bigger role in transport policy development by joining the Board of the NTA or having better alignment with the Department of Transport.

Dublin local authorities already have power over street-based allocation and the management of traffic flows. Prof. Caulfield expressed concern that the proposed mayor's office might lead to duplication of activities, in particular with the Department of Transport. He emphasised that a Dublin mayor could have substantial impact on the public realm, by creating low emission zones and prioritising low carbon transport.

Professor Joe O'Hara (DCU) described how Ireland's education system is one of the most centralized in the world.

Internationally, the role of mayors and local government in education systems varies widely. In Finland, education is organized, coordinated and run at a local municipal level. Virtually everything is managed locally, including distributing funding, curriculum controls, recruitment, quality assurance, meals, healthcare. The USA has a long tradition of local ownership over a wide range of social policies and a highly politicized and engaged directly-elected public official responsible for education.

Prof. O'Hara proposed a number of options that could conceivably deliver a whole-of-Dublin, locally-governed education system. One consideration would be to merge the various Dublin-based Vocational Education

pandemic. He suggested that members could look at a mayoral structure for Dublin that builds on the competences that already exist within the region.

Assumpta O'Neill, Wicklow County Childcare Manager, described the current role of local authorities in relation to childcare, principally through their involvement in City and County Child Care Committees (CCCs), which there are currently 30 of nationwide. These committees advise parents on childcare services, work with child minders, children and young people and with start-up child care providers. The Assembly heard that there is considerable overlap and duplication particularly with current guidelines, which has spurred the establishment of a new agency Childcare Ireland, which will amalgamate the 30 CCCs, but continue to provide for local offices within each of local authority. A directly-elected



and Training Boards into a single entity for the Greater Dublin region. Another might be to add additional members to the Boards of Management of primary schools, whose function would be to coordinate with the directly-elected mayor. A mayor could also influence infrastructural development and service planning for transport and other services – so that the education space becomes more of a community hub, or a form of “nine to nine” campus. Italy offered an example of how mayors were able to lead and interface with local education networks to support a prevention-focused public health response during the height of the Covid-19



mayor for Dublin could conceivably bring together the four local authority areas to examine what is actually needed for Dublin and to bring about flexibility and synergies in service provision. Ms. O'Neill favoured a mayor putting a childcare levy on housing developments rather than simply requiring developers to provide a childcare facility for every 75 houses. The prospect of enhanced collaboration between childcare committees, the new agency and local authorities creates an opportunity to re-examine existing stock and to allow for future-proofing to provide for family hubs, community spaces and multi-purpose buildings.

Following the presentations by Dr. Caulfield, Professor O'Hara and Ms. O'Neill, Assembly members moved into private session for roundtable discussions, followed by a Questions and Answers session with the panellists.



4.3.4 Session 4: Finance, funding and taxation

Dr. Theresa Reidy (UCC) provided a detailed and wide-ranging briefing on finance and funding of local government from a comparative international perspective.



The financial aspect of Ireland's local government system mirrors the broader structural and political nature of the system, whereby Ireland is one of the most centralized systems in Europe. Other countries spend a lot more money at local level than Ireland, but also raise a lot more through local government mechanisms. The European local autonomy index shows Ireland has the lowest level of autonomy of the 39 countries surveyed.

The Assembly heard that Ireland experienced significant "territorial upscaling" during

the fiscal crisis years, resulting in a large reduction and contraction of local authority structures and numbers employed. As a result, Ireland now has very high representation ratios and very large workloads for local elected representatives, with 5,196 people per councillor, contrasting starkly with Belgium (800 citizens per councillor), Spain (620 citizens per councillor) and Finland (410 citizens per councillor).

An analysis of tax revenue by level of government shows that, on average across Europe, approximately 15% of overall tax revenues are raised at local government level. In Ireland, the equivalent is just 3%. Finance follows function, so given that Ireland's local government system has fewer powers and responsibilities than most other EU countries, it follows that it has fewer powers to raise revenues.

There is also a lot of variation within Irish local government in terms of expenditure by local authorities. While the average county council spends 23% of their budget on housing and building, the figure for city councils is over 40%. The needs of communities vary considerably and the best place to deliver those needs is at the level closest to the citizen. In Ireland, the amount of money that any local authority has for discretionary spending is miniscule.

Local authorities get about 40% of their funding from government grants and subsidies. Revenues from the General Purpose Grant funding line have been replaced by Local Property Tax (LPT) revenues. When first introduced, the implication was that LPT revenues would be in addition to existing funding. However, the reality has been that LPT has substituted for previous revenue sources, meaning that the extra funding needed to expand the scope and potential of local expenditure has been taken away.

Property taxes in Ireland raise just 7% of revenues for local government, whereas elsewhere in the EU property taxes can raise anything up to 25% of local government revenues. In Ireland, a larger share of local government revenue comes from goods and services than is the case in other EU countries, where services such as transport, libraries etc. are much more heavily subsidized. Ireland also has a very large business tax at local level – namely commercial rates.

Dublin local authorities are much more fiscally sustainable and independent than authorities in other parts of the country, and Dublin local authorities tend to prefer to keep their local property taxes low due to the influence of the fiscal equalization measure, whereby a proportion of LPT revenues are redistributed to even out the distribution of local government incomes across the country. At present, 20% of revenue raised goes into the equalization fund.

Because Ireland has a highly centralized system, local authorities have quite restricted capacity to raise revenue and even when allowed, the revenue is sometimes taken away “by the back door”. Dr. Reidy concluded her presentation by advising members that it’s very important when understanding local government in Ireland to “follow the money” and that meaningful power requires budgetary power, so a directly-elected mayor would need to sit at the top of the financial structure.



Following Dr. Reidy's presentation, members went into private session for roundtable discussions.



4.3.5 Session 1 (Sunday):

Views from the business community

Opening the session **Aebhric McGibney** of Dublin Chamber of Commerce offered the Citizens' Assembly a perspective from the business community in Dublin.



He spoke of the Dublin Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan and the importance of recognising that the functional area of Dublin includes the city's edge. The key policy concerns for the business community are about integrated transport and land use - cities are about where people live, where they go for recreation, go to school and where they go to work. There are lessons to be taken from the directly-elected mayor for Limerick, where proposed powers are very light and "all about moral persuasion." There is an increasing trend towards upwards aggregation of powers from local to regional or national level. For instance, there was nearly a Dublin Transport Authority to deal with all the transport issues for Dublin, but at the last minute this became a National Transport Authority with a specific remit for Dublin. Other examples of aggregation over the last decade include water, planning regulation and the vacant site levy. The business community tends to dislike aggregation and support devolution. They don't have expertise or a firm view on the best structure for local government in Dublin. Commercial rates alone raise half of local government revenues, but the business community doesn't have clarity on how those revenues are spent. Businesses fear new taxes like hotel taxes that will be seen as just another tax on business. The basic problem is that "no one is in charge of, or responsible for Dublin at the moment" and there is no

one person whose job it is to make sure that deficits are addressed across a range of issues, from the airport, to housing, to transport. Transport and land use need to be dealt with at a regional level. Concluding, he advocated the devolution of powers on transport and land use to the mayor, but if not, then urged something equivalent situated at national level, and floated the idea of a Minister for Urban Affairs, akin to the Minister for Rural Affairs.

A further perspective from the business community was offered by **Shane Conneely** of Chambers Ireland. Half of all local government spending happens in Dublin each year, €2.3 billion, of which €720 million is funded by businesses. The LPT raised only €47 million in 2020, so businesses are filling the revenue gap through commercial rates. There had been very little political support across the country for the mayoral plebiscites to pass, with local authorities themselves pushing back and with many councils set against it. There is still a sense that directly-elected mayors are probably a good thing in principle, but there is strong institutional resistance

Limerick Chamber supports decentralization in principle, alongside the principle of subsidiarity. The Chamber is very interested in the directly-elected mayor for Limerick having responsibility for transport and infrastructure, but beyond that there is little consensus about what powers should be devolved. In general, Chambers Ireland think that decision-making should happen at the lowest level and at the most effective level possible.



If the directly-elected mayor turns out to be a largely ceremonial position, then the Assembly process will have failed. A directly-elected mayor for Dublin should have authority and autonomy, with powers set out explicitly in legislation - otherwise the role could be starved of resources in the event of political tension between a government and the mayor of the day. The DEM creates an opportunity for real reform of local and metropolitan government. The mayor can play a vital ambassadorial role to help channel investment and jobs into local areas.

Mr. Conneely posed a series of questions to the Assembly: Does the focus on a DEM help avoid introducing real reforms across all levels of government? What would subsidiarity look like within a metropolitan area with multiple local governments? How do we finance the mayoral role without it being dependent on the mayor's relationship with government? Lastly, he urged the Assembly not to compromise, and to "go big".

4.3.6 Subsidiarity

During the course of successive meetings of the Dublin Citizens' Assembly, a number of speakers and members of the Assembly referenced the "Principle of Subsidiarity" as being an important consideration in relation to the devolution of powers to a directly-elected mayor.

The discussion came to the fore during the third weekend meeting of the Assembly, with the Chair inviting Dr. Bríd Quinn and Professor Deiric O'Broin of the Expert Advisory Group to comment on the principle. The consensus that emerged regarding the principle of subsidiarity is that it is about making decisions at the most appropriate level. In systems of local government characterised by heavily-centralised decision-making structures, discussions on subsidiarity tend to focus on the scope and potential for devolving powers to a more local, or lower, level. Importantly, however, the principle of subsidiarity does not always entail the downward devolution of decision-making power. Rather, it is about actors at both the national and local level recognising the most appropriate level for decisions to be taken at, and referring decisions to that appropriate level. For example, in Scandinavian countries, which typically exercise a significant amount of decision-making power at local level, applying the principle of subsidiarity sometimes decisions being 'passed up' to a higher level, where for example greater economies of scale or strategic synergies might be realised, or where greater resources or expertise can be brought to bear on the decision.



4.4 Discussions

4.4.1 Session 1: Devolution I

NB: *The following is a non-exhaustive list of themes that emerged from roundtable discussions. Items listed below represent the more frequently-identified themes. This list does not imply that these issues were unanimously agreed within or across all tables.*

- Transport: important to devolve because it is such a local issue. The size and magnitude of Dublin projects (especially transport) requires national funding.
- Housing: Local governments know their areas better than central government. Local infrastructural planning could be improved.
- Balance between local and centralised is specific to each particular service. Standards and policy decided centrally, managed locally.
- Education: some aspects can be better managed at local level.
- Health care: devolution could make things worse in some cases.
- Night-time economy: handled at local level could be beneficial. Also comes with municipal policing.
- Childcare: a priority but challenging
- Privatisation can be problematic e.g. waste management.
- Devolution leads to more accountability. The more the better as long as central and local government cooperate on large projects. Devolution means discussing issues at lower levels unless and until it makes sense to escalate, and ensuring a local say.
- Policing: Dublin as a city has different challenges and policing should be bespoke for specific areas.
- Powers being devolved need 'quick wins' to generate confidence.
- Local governments must be given adequate resources to provide newly-devolved services effectively.
- Transport and infrastructure are crucial and go hand in hand with climate change. Climate change needs to be shared between central and local govts.
- Citizens' empowerment is key. Could increase voter participation.
- Ireland is far more centralised in terms of governance than many other countries, including much of Europe. Cities with more autonomy and devolution are more pleasant to spend time in (Amsterdam, Helsinki, etc.)



4.4.2 Session 2: The Limerick Experience

NB: *The following is a non-exhaustive list of themes that emerged from roundtable discussions. Items listed below represent the more frequently-identified themes. This list does not imply that these issues were unanimously agreed within or across all tables.*

- Need more clarity and specifics on what has happened since 2019 in Limerick. Is legislation for Limerick broad or specific? Would like to know how detailed it is with respect to devolution of functions, resources, timetable etc.
- Power-sharing could be an aspiration for Dublin. For this the DEM will need power to convene, Mandate for decision making, power sharing between local and central government. Unclear on how this works in practice.
- Local government offers an avenue for a quick response to events as they occur, may give business and local issues the focus that is needed.
- People with experience and expertise, and Local Authority reps must be on committees/cabinet and boards relevant to local planning.
- Must ensure equitable representation between the four regions so Dublin city is not over-represented due to population advantage. Need to ensure checks and balances through the CCs.
- Balancing act between addressing Dublin's needs without conferring too much centralized power to DEM. DEM should not become as powerful/more powerful than Taoiseach. Need a system to remove DEM if required.

4.4.3 Session 3: Devolution II - Powers that might be devolved

NB: *The following is a non-exhaustive list of themes that emerged from roundtable discussions. Items listed below represent the more frequently-identified themes. This list does not imply that these issues were unanimously agreed within or across all tables.*

- Childcare should be devolved. People would benefit greatly from it and should be easier to devolve than other areas.
- Partial devolvement of services can benefit constituents while maintaining a national standard. Full devolution is not necessarily always the solution because some areas are already handled well now. Quality devolution over quantity, it should be phased.
- Transport: Devolution for roads and things that go on roads. No devolution of airplanes and train routes, which connect the rest of the country to Dublin. Congestion. Keep NTA in place.
- Education: A mandate for DEM would be best within education rather than transferring major powers. Join the various training boards into one bigger Dublin entity.
- Too much expectation for one person. Maybe DEM for each area, '30 years cannot build metro and then expect DEM to solve problem'.
- Primary and secondary education a priority, and could include buildings and sports grounds.
- Local powers will provide more insight into the needs of communities for future planning.
- Housing needs more local planning influence, major may be challenged by NIMBY issues.

4.4.4 Session 4: Finance, funding and taxation

NB: The following is a non-exhaustive list of themes that emerged from roundtable discussions. Items listed below represent the more frequently-identified themes. This list does not imply that these issues were unanimously agreed within or across all tables.

- Funding collected locally needs to be transparently re-routed from central government to local authorities. Will result in more accountability, and more control for local government / councillors.
- A DEM should have the ability to introduce local tax and rates and regulation. Need to be cognisant of public's reaction to new tax measures.
- New resourcing and taxation is not needed (bed, congestion and vacant property tax), simply reallocated resourcing of funds, which are already being raised through current taxes.
- DEM should have a large stake in the budgetary process. This should be accompanied by accountability mechanisms.
- People don't mind paying increased taxes if services are efficient. A system needs solid plans and should include discussion with local councillors.
- Main issue is that Ireland has less taxation than other European systems, leading to poorer services. Can't achieve more without more tax.
- A percentage of funds should be redistributed so that inequalities do not become prevalent between local authorities (i.e. Tallaght will not get much by way of tourist tax, but has housing needs).
- There should be a progression of devolution so some items devolved first.

4.4.5 Session 1 (Sunday): Views from the business community

NB: The following is a non-exhaustive list of themes that emerged from roundtable discussions. Items listed below represent the more frequently-identified themes. This list does not imply that these issues were unanimously agreed within or across all tables.

- Dublin is not a big city. Four LAs makes it messier with different payrolls for each.
- Importance of devolving night-time economy and economic development.
- Fiscal autonomy will be the defining feature of a powerful DEM, otherwise the role would be largely ceremonial.
- Transparency and accountability is key for taxation and funding and public buy-in.
- DEM should be able to be removed if they are corrupt or detrimental.
- Improving services would benefit both the public and businesses - they need to work together.
- A singular DEM figure could push key projects to the forefront such as infrastructure/housing.
- Government does not pay LPT on public buildings, would make them more efficient if they were required to do so.



4.4.6 Session 2 (Sunday): The discussion so far. Strengths and weaknesses of the existing system

Strengths

- Regional representation & benefits: transport improved in recent years; protection of character of non-city areas by four local councils.
- Commitment to public service/competent professionals and good services: public service ethos; commitment of councillors, often there are good services.
- Good CEOs.
- Discretionary budgeting means that specific community needs can be met.
- Governance structure and accountability and representation: good audit oversight of governance and spending; Citizens' Assembly; communication between councillors and citizens effective/access to decision makers.
- Low cost, uniformity and low duplication in the local economies due to centralisation.

Weaknesses

- Lack of accountability and awareness: opaque decision-making with unelected CEOs; lack of understanding of roles and responsibilities of actors in local government; lack of public and media interest in local government, notion of ineffectiveness.
- Regional co-ordination challenges and a lack of vision: decision-making inefficient; limited control of functions which have large impacts on Dublin; differences in service provision in different areas; four councils duplicate similar services; no one person standing for Dublin, limited vision for Dublin.
- Local representation lacks power and finance: the mayoral role is ceremonial; power is too centralised and far away from citizens; power unbalanced between central and local government; councillors with too few resources and underpaid; lack of funding and resources for local government, CEO too much power.
- Lack of time and proper pay for councillors.
- Various service and strategic issues: underfunding, lack of local knowledge on housing/transport; lack of strategic focus on Dublin-wide issues; disintegration of Dublin as a cultural experience; patchwork of private operations in services e.g. waste; housing guidelines do not meet need for development.
- Privatisation an issue.
- 1-year mayoral term does not allow for long-term planning.
- Too much power given to Chief Executives compared to councillors.

4.4.7 Opportunities, challenges, risks and of new DEM

Benefits

- Bringing vision and voice: clear voice for Dublin, leadership and vision.
- Accountability and autonomy: one person to improve the city with a democratic mandate; clear accountability for the area; good to challenge power of CEOs; more responsive to citizens' needs.
- Power, co-ordination, efficiency: soft power to convene and coordinate, strong personality may speed up talk and push through important decisions, like on transport, potential to get things done, efficiency, quick.
- Ambassador to attract investment and provide long-term planning, progress large projects.
- A DEM could promote collaboration between central and local government and between 4 LAs.
- Enhance local engagement in local politics.

Risks

- Loss of confidence/lack of interest/no change: loss of public confidence if change is not structural and focuses only on elections; or change only results in additional bureaucracy. Also risk that people do not engage with process in voting.
- Lack of power/ceremonial role: conflicts of interest either with the state or stakeholders; lack of powers for mayor to achieve vision, central government or civil servants preventing DEM powers and devolution / budget.
- Poor quality/celebrity/populist candidates: protest votes may result in populist candidates intended to 'give government a kick'; weak candidates may have no vision; candidate's short-term goals may be linked to their term length.
- Inept DEM with too much power, corrupt, populist or ineffective.
- The wider areas of the Greater Dublin Area outside of the Dublin borders may be excluded from decisions which affect them, or the rest of the country may be disadvantaged.
- Additional bureaucratic layer, duplication.
- Too much responsibility to achieve effective results, change is too fast.

Challenges

- Resistance from central government and civil servants: carving out funding autonomy and devolution of decision-making from current revenue sources.
- Resistance from public: getting buy-in from the public given anti-politician sentiment; updating perceptions, communicating with citizens, ensuring sufficient turnout to election.
- Developing a well-supported plan that is politically acceptable, agreed by most actors, managing the transition is challenging, the scope could also present problems.
- Costs and challenges of structural change: costs of extra mayoral staff; challenge of reconfiguring the four councils; changing of mayors as interrupting work in community; adding another government layer that potentially slows decision-making/bureaucracy.
- Finding the right candidates, needs to be clear criteria that is open to all citizens.
- Political bi-partisanship.
- Term length will affect the power of projects prosed by a DEM, could make it hard to get big things done.

Opportunities

- A more livable city, with better services, underpinned by a strong vision and voice: support sustained communities; making Dublin desirable; maintaining the character of the city.
- Improved, tailored, transparent and democratic planning on key issues: cohesive plan for land-use, for key functions; adapting services with local knowledge; creating new sources of revenue; efficiency, streamlining and operationalization planning for the future. More collaboration across the 4 local authorities.
- Better international collaboration: gain international learning from other mayors; show that democratic and decentralised local government can be effective, dispelling myth of Ireland as a tax haven, increase investment.
- Enhance interest and citizen engagement in local government, reinvigorate local governance and lead to more reforms.
- Significant action taken on climate change at local level, including land preservation.
- Dublin will have a stronger voice at a national level/positively influence national policies.

What functions should be transferred?

- Housing
- Transport
- Economic development
- Night-time economy
- City climate change
- Childcare
- Policing
- Education
- Healthcare
- Land use
- Culture / leisure
- Social welfare
- Tourism and sport
- Homelessness

How should devolution be funded?

- Funding would be largely from central government, with budgets following work portfolios.
- Money raised through local taxes should be spent at the discretion of local authorities.
- DEM to be able to introduce local taxes, i.e. Tourism tax.
- DEM should be able to raise new funding through loans, bonds and other fundraising methods.

Term

- Five-year term for the directly-elected mayor.
- DEM should be able to have no more than two terms/or a limit on the number of terms.
- There should be a vote for the Deputy DEM on the same ballot (i.e. they run as a team).

Cabinet/Regional Assembly

- Support for Cabinet/Regional Assembly
- Cabinet would contain representation from the 4 local authorities.
- The cabinet to be partially appointed by the DEM.
- Some cabinet members to have specific briefs.
- An elected assembly sits parallel to the mayor's group in order to hold it to account. Responsibilities also include auditing budgets and putting questions to the mayor.
- DEM and cabinet needs a staff team and access to specialist advisors and working groups.
- Recall function by people/elected officials.
- The chair of the cabinet should be elected by the councillors and have the same term as the mayor.

Ministerial forum

- Have a committee between ministers and any DEMs.

CEOs/LAs/CCs

- In addition to the DEM, there will be four democratically-elected roles, one in each local authority.
- A senior civil servant will remain in each local authority, possibly COO.
- Councillors to be made full-time.
- CEOs to be selected by the DEM.

Other

- Support for some form of Citizens' Assembly.
- To guarantee the structure's accountability, a city manager will be in place not a Chief Executive.
- Independent elections with no party affiliation for DEM.
- Long-term goal is: "maximum devolution of powers in relation to issues that impact the wellbeing and lives of Dubliners".
- Support for referendum.
- The ballot for DEM & deputy DEM's (x4) on the same election day for the public to vote on.
- Audit committee, or some form of collective check and balance to be established.

An aerial photograph of a city and its surrounding landscape, including green fields, a river, and distant hills. The image is framed by large, diagonal blue geometric shapes that create a modern, architectural feel. The text is positioned in the bottom right corner, overlaid on a solid blue background.

5

MEETING 4: **TOWARDS A FRAMEWORK**

5.1 Overview

The penultimate meeting of the Assembly took place on Saturday 10th September. The programme was designed to help members regroup and recap after the summer break, to plan ahead for the final meeting scheduled for 1st October, and to design a framework for the directly-elected mayor.

The format was distinctly different to preceding meetings, with limited time devoted to presentations, and an emphasis instead on generating detailed discussion among tables, and giving each table an opportunity to present their thoughts and suggestions to the full Assembly.

The meeting began with presentations by Dr. Bríd Qunin, Dr. Aodh Quinlivan and Prof. Deiric Ó Broin of the Expert Advisory Group, each of whom recapped and summarised the content of what the Assembly had previously heard in the earlier meeting.

Roundtable discussions were informed by a series of discussion papers and schematic models that had been prepared by the Secretariat in conjunction with the EAG, and circulated to members in advance of the meeting. These papers drew on the themes that had emerged from roundtable discussions at the meeting in June.

Throughout the day, the issues and models that had been set out in the discussion papers were iteratively refined through discussion at tables, interspersed with plenary discussions and Question and Answer sessions.

An important feature of the meeting was the presence throughout the day of the Expert Advisory Group, together with other experts who had addressed previous meetings of the Assembly, including Dr. Sean O’Riordan, Dr. Brian Caulfield and Prof. Joe O’Hara. All made themselves available throughout the day to answer members’ questions during roundtable discussions.



5.2 Programme

SATURDAY 10TH SEPTEMBER 2022

Opening Session

09:00 - Members introduce themselves at their roundtables

09:15 - Introduction by Chairman, Jim Gavin

Session 1: Feedback from previous meeting

09:30 - Summary of the 2-hour roundtable discussion in June

- Dr. Bríd Quinn – Powers
- Dr. Aodh Quinlivan Funding and Other Matters
- Prof. Deiric Ó Broin – Structures

10:20 - Roundtable discussion

11:30 - Coffee break

Session 2: Voices of the Members

11:45 - Thoughts from the tables

12:45 - Lunch

14:00 - Summary of the morning session

Session 3: Ballot papers

15:00 - Chair's proposal for the structure of the ballot papers

15:20 - Roundtable discussion

16:00 - Coffee break

16:15 - Feedback from the tables

16:55 - Concluding remarks by Chairperson

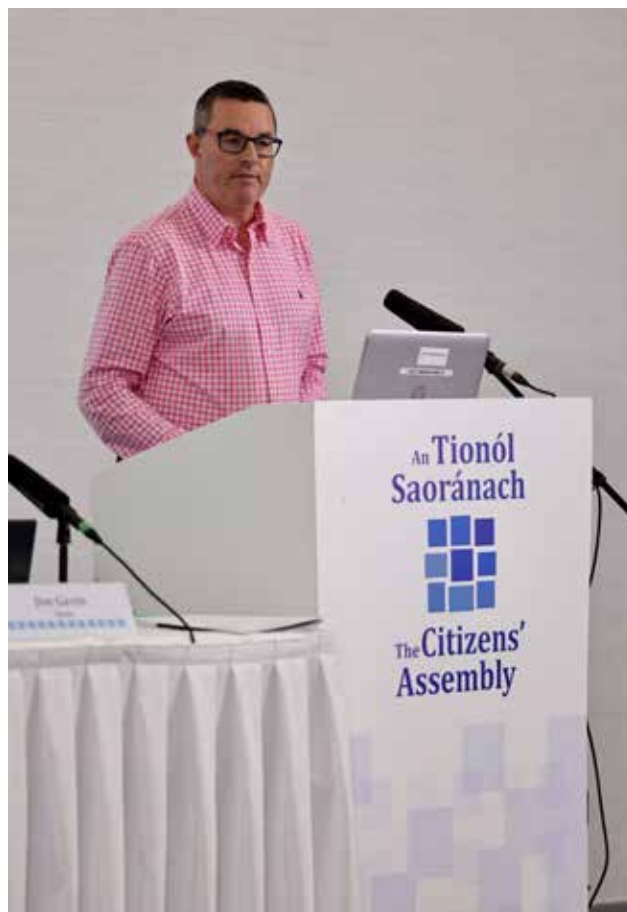
5.3 Session 1: Feedback from previous meeting

Session 1 featured presentations by three members of the Expert Advisory Group.

The session commenced with a presentation by **Dr. Bríd Quinn**, who recapped on the question of what powers and functions might be devolved to a directly-elected mayor, and the implications, opportunities, challenges and other considerations that could arise with that devolution. Dr. Quinn recapped and summarised the key themes and issues that had arisen at roundtable discussions during the previous meeting in June.



Dr. Aodh Quinlivan continued the session with a presentation on a range of miscellaneous matters that had been identified by members during their discussion at the June meeting. This included the question of whether or not there should be a plebiscite of the people of Dublin before the role of a directly-elected mayor is established. While acknowledging the possible merits of a local referendum in terms of democratic process, Dr. Quinlivan reminded members that the Assembly was not being asked to decide whether or not there should be a directly-elected mayor, as this issue was already decided by Government. Other matters covered included the term of office, term limits, recall mechanisms, nomination procedures, eligibility criteria, budgets and funding, implications for councillors' role and part-time status, the number of councillors, the question of a Cabinet, and the question of how to protect the new reforms, including the possibility of safeguarding them through the Constitution.



The session concluded with **Professor Deiric Ó Broin** describing four illustrative models that set out some options for a system of local government with a directly-elected mayor. These models were informed primarily by the outcome of roundtable discussions at the June meeting.

Before describing the models, Prof. Ó Broin made the observation that, entirely separate from the question of what new powers or competences could be devolved, the introduction of a DEM and possibly a city and county-wide tier of local government would directly impact on many of the existing operations of the four local authorities, and consideration would have to be given to how best to integrate or aggregate these services.

Prof. Ó Broin drew attention to two important shared components across the four models: the role of a Director General / senior public official reporting to the mayor; and secondly a proposed city and county-wide Citizens' Assembly, following the example of Paris and several Belgian and Dutch municipalities.



The first model featured a DEM with a Cabinet of five to ten councillors. Questions arising include how that Cabinet might be elected or selected and whether the mayor can hand pick councillors from the existing four local authorities to support her or him in carrying out their work program.

The second model envisaged retaining the four local authorities, along with the introduction of a city and county-wide structure elected to hold the mayor to account. For greater independence, Prof. Ó Broin suggested that members consider a smaller number of democratically representative constituencies. In that model, a Cabinet would work with the mayor, as a subset of the “assembly” or “authority” and would be full-time politicians.

The third model built on the key innovations of the second, retaining the city and county-wide directly-elected structure and Cabinet but with two new components: the first being the (re) introduction of a much smaller unit of local government closer to the citizen, along the lines of town, municipal, district or area councils. Each would have a population of approximately 80,000 citizens; the second new component would be a plenary mechanism whereby councillors from the 18 to 20 local councils would meet collectively to advise and suggest courses of action to the mayor and city and county-wide structure.

The fourth model is broadly similar to the third one and features a city and county-wide elected structure, a Cabinet, a plenary mechanism to bring together councillors from the existing four local authorities.

Following the presentations, members went into private session for a detailed roundtable discussion, with members of the EAG in attendance.



5.3.1 Session 2: Voices of the Members

The afternoon session provided members an opportunity to respond to the presentations from the morning session and to set out their points of view on the preliminary models and related questions. A representative from each table presented to the full Assembly.





The précis below gives a sense of the themes that emerged in the presentations. Rather than offering an exhaustive account of the presentations by members, it is intended to illustrate some of the common themes that emerged. Presentations were organised under the four headings of Structures, Powers, Features of the DEM system and Financial model.

Structures

Members had been asked to consider what structures would work best, which elements of the four models should be included and what linkages are necessary. The opening Table preferred a structural model that would appear more solution-driven and give more power to the people – with the inclusion of district or town councils seen as providing participatory democracy forums that get people involved in local politics: although several did question the practicality of it. A further concern was to ensure accountability for the DEM. Another Table put forward that there should be an assembly elected with accurate representation of each area. That Table concurred that the CEO should be appointed by and accountable to the DEM. There, support was for the concept of a Plenary council to insert a further level of accountability. A Table emphasised the preference for a model that clearly showed a bottom-up, grassroots flow of power. A Table emphasised the importance of the structure being simple and giving local people more direct access to the DEM. That Table was concerned that a new Dublin City and County assembly may not be sufficient to enable adequate and equal representation of each (modelled) Town/District Council. That Table was anxious to ensure that areas wouldn't face disparities in representation due to population size. The consensus there was that the DEM should have authority over the CEO because the DEM is elected by the people. A Table put forward that the assembly was an unnecessary layer in DEM local government structure - favouring instead a model that could itself decide whether or not to create a plenary of councillors. Another Table also wanted a model to make decision-making as local as possible. They agreed that the assembly should be elected by voters. Another Table however sought a model that would be both deliverable and which could deliver change without major, turbulent structural change. In its favoured model, that Table did want an assembly body. It also wanted the Cabinet to be selected by the DEM from existing councillors - based on geographical and political balance. They agreed that the role

of the CEO should be abolished and replaced by that of a Director General. This Table also liked the concept of more granular input from the ground up that included town councils, and, in parallel, wanted an Oversight Committee to hold to account and monitor those in office - the simpler the structure the better, as great change would result in a lot of resistance. A view put forward from within one Table was that existing councillors should be able to reach the Cabinet through the deputy mayors. There, having several town and district councils would be more beneficial, as it would mean that the system is more responsive to local needs. The last presenting Table put a view that any model with a citizens' assembly should be comparative in status and power to that of the Cabinet.

Preliminary summary findings from the day, and from facilitators notes, indicated that eight of the eleven tables showed a leaning towards structural models that provided for more effective and accurate representation pitched at a district council level, with inclusion of an assembly and/or a Cabinet and, in parallel, a strong wish for a range of safeguards so as to assure accountability while affirming the leadership role of the DEM.

Powers to be devolved

Members were asked to consider what powers should be devolved to the DEM. The list offered for initial discussion included:

- Housing/homelessness/land use
- Transport (Dublin and co-ordinated regionally)
- Economic development
- Tourism, sport and culture
- Night time economy
- Policing
- Childcare
- Primary and secondary education
- Tertiary and adult education
- Climate change

The opening contribution argued that neither healthcare nor water should be devolved

because they were too complex for local government to lead on. The following contribution disagreed, arguing that healthcare is a high priority and suggesting partial devolution: keeping national standards but having a local focus.

One table argued that the best way to move forward is to devolve every power downwards to the greatest extent possible, suggesting that the DEM should have significant power in all sectors. Another table countered that it is important to achieve a balance between devolving power to a DEM and local government structures, and achieving simplified structures where accountability is easily located.

A range of suggestions were made in terms of powers to be devolved, including Community healthcare, Mental health, Care, Primary healthcare, Water, Waste management and Emergency services. There was some opposition to an inclusion of policing, with some support for the separation of homelessness services from general housing. Six of the eleven tables supported adding healthcare to the list of powers to be devolved, while four supported the inclusion of waste management.

Features of the DEM Structure

Members were invited to consider features of the DEM structure, and the presentations revealed a considerable degree of consistency across tables, with considerable support for the following propositions:

- DEM should act in the interests of Dublin's population and be above party politics;
- DEM can introduce new regulation in areas devolved to them;
- DEM has a staff team and access to expert advice;
- A long-term goal should be that all services affecting the lives of Dublin people are under control of the DEM;
- Standards are agreed nationally, and DEM has control over local implementation (i.e., school curriculum is national, but DEM decides where



- schools go, and funding is local);
- Regular meetings should happen between Ministers and DEM;
- Democratic and clear mechanisms to be in place to remove DEM if unethical or ineffective;
- All decision-making groups to aim for gender balance;
- DEM can create working groups;
- There is a senior public servant that will work closely with the DEM.

Designing a framework for implementation

Members were asked their views on a range of questions pertaining to options for local authority structures that would underpin a directly-elected mayor, including a Dublin City and County assembly, a mayoral Cabinet, and the retention of the existing four local authorities or their replacement with more local-level councils; whether councillors would be elected or appointed to an assembly; whether a Cabinet, if agreed, would be selected by the DEM or by voters; whether councillors should be made full-time; what the criteria for being a DEM candidate should be.

The following gives a flavour of the breadth of viewpoints offered, with some consensus, but still considerable divergence evident.

- Nine tables were of the view that DEM's eligibility criteria should be aligned to that of county councillors, namely over 18-years old and not necessarily an Irish citizen.
- Nine tables were of the view that there needs to be democratic and clear accountability mechanisms to remove DEM if unethical or ineffective.

- Eight tables were of the view that the DEM should be accountable to an oversight and monitoring committee with clear and specific guidelines.
- Eight tables concurred that a mayoral Cabinet should be selected by the DEM.
- Five tables agreed that councillors on a Dublin City and County assembly should be elected from many, smaller constituencies.
- There was considerable debate over whether councillors should be elected to the new Dublin City and County assembly by the people or nominated by directly-elected councillors.
- Six tables were of the view that all councillors (both local councillors and those elected to the a Dublin City and County assembly) should be made full-time and given a full-time salary.

Financial model for DEM

Members were invited to consider options for a financial model to underpin the role of the DEM, including whether the DEM should be able to raise revenues through local taxes, retain funds from LPT and motor tax, borrow or generate investment.

- Nine tables concluded that the DEM should be able to change or introduce local taxes (i.e., bed tax, vacant property tax).
- Eight tables concluded that where powers are devolved from Central Government, budgets move to DEM.
- Six tables concluded that DEM should be able to raise funds from markets, loans or through investment.
- Five tables concluded that, where powers are devolved up from Local Authority, budgets move to DEM.

5.3.2 Session 3: Sample ballot papers

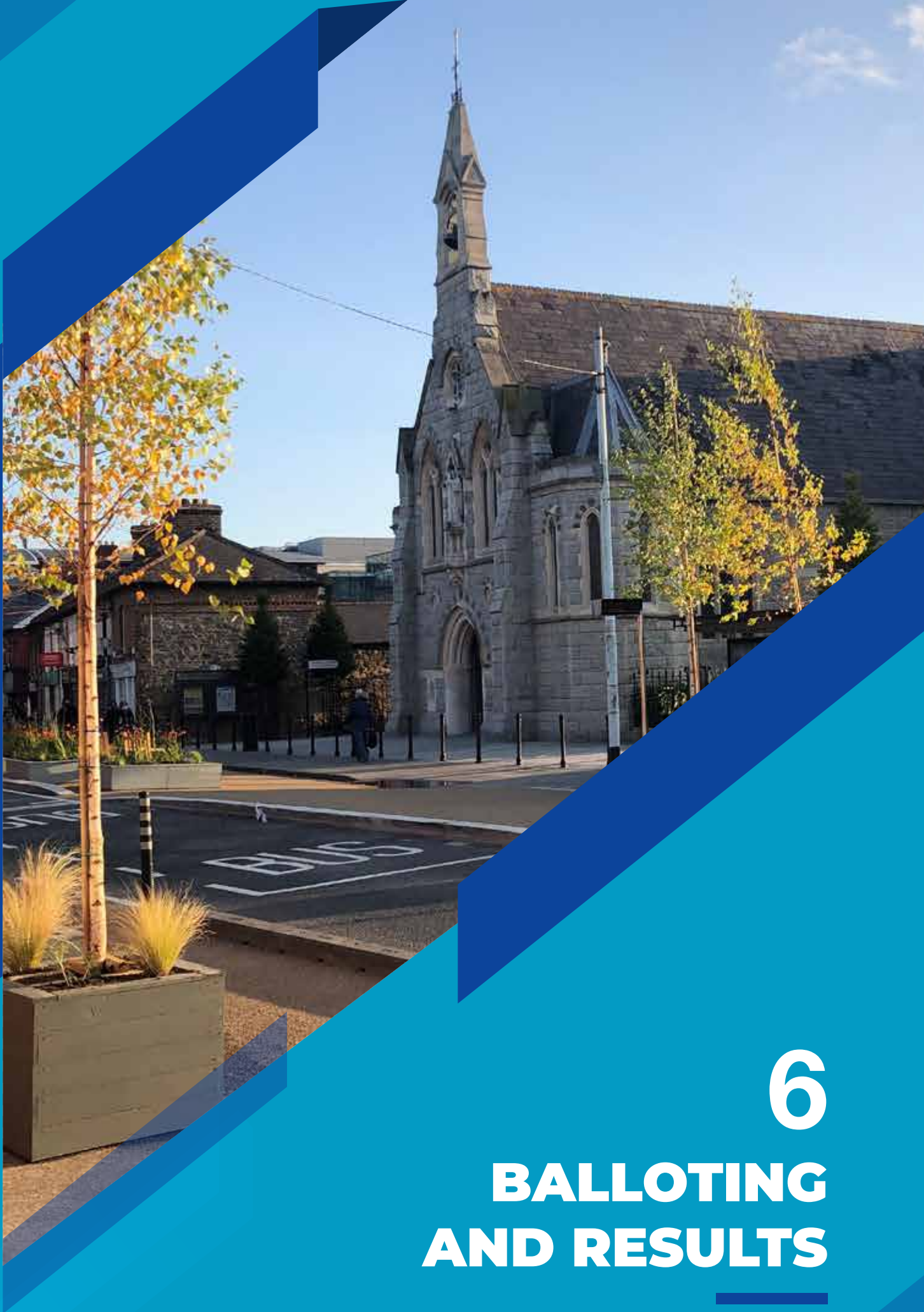
The final session focussed on members' responses to a first draft of the ballot papers. The objective of this session was to enable members to refine the draft ballot papers, so that they would be in a position at the meeting on 1st October to agree the final ballot papers and proceed to vote.

The Chair presented three sample ballot papers to trigger discussions, reminding members that the ballot papers were still a blank canvas, but that members would need to be ready to finalise them on the morning of 1st October. The sample ballot paper presented included:

- a sample ballot on the possible functions/responsibilities to be devolved to the mayor, and the timing of that devolution.
- a sample paper on the local government structure best suited to Dublin.
- a sample ballot dealing with questions such as whether there should be a plebiscite of the people of Dublin before the role is formally established; issues of funding, the term of the office, term limits etc.

Following roundtable discussions on the content and composition of the ballot papers, a detailed Question and Answer session took place, allowing members to refine their approach to ballot paper design, and to gain a better understanding of how the final meeting on 1st October would be run.





6

BALLOTING AND RESULTS

6.1 Overview

The final meeting of the Dublin Citizens' Assembly took place on Saturday 1st October 2022. The venue for the meeting was St. Patrick's Hall in Dublin Castle.

The meeting marked the culmination of the work of the Assembly. The programme was designed to allow members consider and finalise the design of the ballot papers, and to cast their votes.

A total of five ballot papers were agreed and voted on. The first three ballot papers were covered in the morning session, with the final two ballot papers dealt with in the afternoon session.



6.2 Programme

SATURDAY 1ST OCTOBER 2022

Opening Session

09:00 - Members introduce themselves at their roundtables

09:15 - Introduction by Chairman, Jim Gavin

Session 1: List of Assumptions and Ballot papers 1-3

(Powers of the mayor, the election, role of councillors etc.)

09:30 - Explanation of the ballot papers

09:45 - Roundtable discussion

10:30 - Questions and Answers

11:30 - Coffee break

11:45 - Voting

12:15 - Lunch

Session 2: Ballot Papers 4 and 5 (Structures, funding, miscellaneous issues)

13:30 - Announcement of first result and explanation of the second ballot paper

13:45 - Roundtable discussion

14:30 - Questions and Answers

15:15 - Voting

15:30 - Coffee break

Session 3: Closing session

15:45 - Cultural interlude

16:55 - Announcement of results

6.3 List of Assumptions

The following is a list of issues on which there was very strong support among the Citizens’ Assembly members prior to ballot day. Members agreed that these issues did not need to be placed on the ballot papers and would form part of the Assembly recommendations without a formal vote.

DEM will act in the interests of Dublin’s population and be above party politics
DEM can introduce new regulation in areas devolved to them
DEM convenes meetings with local and national agencies to progress goals – “The Power to Convene”
There is a senior public servant that will work closely with the DEM, who will have a staff team and access to expert advice
Standards are agreed nationally, and DEM has control over local implementation (i.e., school curriculum is national, but DEM decides where schools go, and funding is local)
Regular meetings should happen between Government Ministers and DEM on issues of mutual interest or concern – “The Right to be Consulted”
All decision-making groups to aim for gender balance and aim to reflect the diversity and distribution of Dublin’s population.
DEM can create working groups



6.4 Results

6.4.1 Ballot Paper 1 - Powers of the mayor and local government

	Function/responsibility	Now 0-5 years	In the future 5-10 years	Never	Don't know
1.	Arts, Culture, Sport	70%	19%	4%	6%
2.	Childcare	57	24	9	10
3.	Climate Change, Environment, Biodiversity	73	13	10	4
4.	Economic Development	84	12	0	4
5.	Education – Primary and secondary	37	36	21	7
6.	Emergency Services	63	18	12	7
7.	Further, Higher Education and Skills	36	40	20	4
8.	Gaeltacht and the Irish Language	34	31	21	13
9.	Healthcare – Primary	42	18	24	9
10.	Healthcare – Community	66	18	12	4
11.	Housing	91	9	0	0
12.	Homelessness	90	10	0	0
13.	Infrastructure, Roads and Footpaths	76	10	6	7
14.	Night-time economy	69	24	4	3
15.	Planning, Land Use and Strategic Development	72	18	6	3
16.	Policing	40	22	25	12
17.	Support for the Traveller and Roma Communities	50	27	12	9
18.	Tourism and Marketing	68	25	0	7
19.	Transport	50	13	4	2
20.	Waste Management.	66	25	6	3
21.	Water	43	22	19	15



6.4.2 Ballot Paper 2: A directly-elected mayor for Dublin Plebiscite

Question	Yes	No	Don't know
Should there be a plebiscite of the local electorate of Dublin as to whether or not Dublin should have a DEM?	59%	39%	2%

Question	Yes	No	Don't know
If there is to be a plebiscite, should the proposal to be put to the people include the powers of the mayor and the structures required to support the role?	63%	34%	3%

The Role of mayor (Select 1 option for each question)

Terms of Office	3 years	5 years	Other	Don't know
How long should the term of Office be?	9%	87%	4%	0%
Term limits	1 term only	2 terms only	No limits	Don't know
How long can the mayor serve?	1%	84%	15%	0%

Question	Yes	No
Should there be a mechanism to remove the DEM from office?	59%	39%

Question	Removal by super-majority of councillors	Recall petition (by the public)	Either option
If the mayor were to be removed from Office, how should it be done?	20%	22%	58%

Independent Financing and fundraising/budgeting powers (tick all options you agree with)	Yes	No
The DEM* should be able to raise funds from markets, investment bonds, or loans	70%	30%
The DEM* should retain funds from a portion of any taxes raised in Dublin	92%	8%
The DEM* should be able to change or introduce local taxes	88%	12%

* In conjunction with local democratically-elected representatives

6.4.3 Ballot paper 3a - Election of mayor

The Election

What should the criteria for DEM candidates be?	Select 1 option
Aligned to councillors' election criteria (i.e., over 18 years old and not necessarily an Irish citizen)	59%
Aligned to Dáil Éireann election criteria (i.e., Irish citizen and over 21 years old)	18%
Not necessarily an Irish citizen and over 21 years old	19%
No restrictions	12%

To be included on the ballot paper, a candidate must:	Select all options which should apply
Be nominated by a political party	18%
Gather an appropriate number of statutory declarations of support from the electorate of Dublin	59%
Provide an appropriate deposit	42%
No restrictions	8%

Should the electorate for the DEM be confined to:	Select all options which should apply
People on the electoral register for Dáil elections in Dublin	24%
People on the electoral register for local elections in Dublin	76%

6.4.4 Ballot paper 3b – the Role of councillors

Councillor hours

Question	Yes	No
Should councillors be made full-time?	90%	10%

If YES is selected by members, which councillors should be made full-time	Select 1 option
Only councillors who are on the new Dublin City and County Assembly (if applicable)	33%
All councillors	66%

Remuneration

Question	Yes	No
Should councillors' salaries be more reflective of a full- time commitment?	94%	6%

Question	Yes	No
Should councillors be provided with secretarial support?	87%	13%

If YES is selected by members, which councillors should be provided with secretarial support?	Select 1 option
Only councillors who are on the new Dublin City and County Assembly (if applicable)	33%
All councillors	66%

6.4.5 Ballot paper 4

Question	Yes	No
Should there be a Deputy Mayor?	73%	27%

Question	Yes	No
Should there be a mayoral cabinet?	90%	10%

Question	Yes	No
Should there be a Dublin City and County Assembly?	74%	26%

Question	Yes	No
Should there be a local Citizens' Assembly?	78%	22%

Question	Yes	No
Should there be a Plenary?	63%	37%

Which is your preferred local government structure?	
Retention of the existing four local authority Councils and Cathaoirligh	57%
Introduction of Town / District Councils as an alternative to the four local authorities	33%
Merging the existing four local authorities into a Dublin City and County Council	10%

6.4.6 Ballot paper 5: Structure (part II)

Question	Yes	No
Should there be a referendum of the Irish people to enshrine the concept of a DEM in the Constitution?	42%	58%

If Citizens' Assembly votes YES on Q1/Ballot paper 4 (for a Deputy Mayor):

Question	The people of Dublin	Councillors	The mayor	Elected on DEM ticket
Should the Deputy Mayor be chosen by...	20%	18%	18%	44%

If the Citizens' Assembly votes YES on Q2/Ballot paper 4 (for a mayoral Cabinet)

Question	Councillors	The mayor	50/50 combo
Should the Cabinet be chosen by...	7%	37%	55%

Question	Yes	No
Should membership of the Cabinet be made up of a majority of elected councillors?	88%	12%

If the Citizens' Assembly votes YES on Q3. Re. the Assembly

Question	The people of Dublin	Councillors	50/50 combo
Should the Assembly be chosen by...	30%	33%	37%

If the Citizens' Assembly votes YES on Q4/Ballot paper 4 (the Council's Citizens' Assembly)

Question	A permanent feature with randomly-selected membership rotated every year	Established as required
Should the Council's Citizens' Assembly be...	55%	45%

Citizens' Assembly Report

Question	3 years	5 years	Other	Don't know
How long should the Government take to respond in detail to the CA report?	10%	49%	26%	15%

Question	1 year	2 years	3 years
How long should the Government take to implement the recommendations?	10%	63%	26%

6.5 Photos of Ballot Day













An aerial photograph of a dense urban residential area, likely in the UK, showing rows of terraced houses with grey roofs and red brick walls. A winding road with parked cars runs through the center. The image is framed by blue geometric shapes on the left and bottom right.

7

**PUBLIC AND
STAKEHOLDER
ENGAGEMENT**

7.1 Public consultation

The general public, stakeholders and interest groups were invited to make submissions to the Dublin Citizens' Assembly.

56 valid submissions were received, including:

- 42 from members of the public
- 7 from councillors
- 1 from members of the Oireachtas
- 3 from interest groups and representative organisations

Support for a directly-elected mayor of Dublin

Most submissions clearly stated they are in favour of a directly-elected mayor (DEM) (33 for/11 against/12 didn't clearly state)

Ceremonial vs Substantive

Most believe the powers of the mayor should move away from being a ceremonial role, with just five submissions indicating they would prefer this to remain.

Term of office

Only a small number of submissions expressed a preference in relation to the term (duration) of office. The consensus seemed to be in favour of a term longer than one year (as it stands currently), but there was no clear consensus as to how long that term should be.

Key powers to devolve to a directly-elected mayor

A clear message coming from the submissions is that Central Government plays too much of a role in local government, and that a number of powers should be devolved to a DEM.

14 submissions indicated that a DEM should have "a lot" more powers, while 19 suggest the DEM should have "some" additional powers. A number of submissions also highlighted the need for checks and balances, such as deputy mayor/s and/or councillors having more powers.

Issues identified as powers to be devolved to a DEM include, in descending order of frequency:

1. Transport
2. Policing/Crime
3. Housing
4. Health
5. Climate Action

Extract of key points made in submissions

The following extracts illustrate some of the key points made in submissions and give a general sense of the range of ideas and opinions expressed in submissions. The list is not exhaustive, and readers are referred to the submissions on the Citizens' Assembly website to get a more complete picture of submissions made.

“ Supportive of DEM

“ DEM should be responsible for tackling crime, should take charge of the housing situation and should have full responsibility for the transport system.

“ DEM with full local government term. Substantial reform of the structure of the four local authorities. New Dublin Regional Assembly.

“ Lack of positive male role models for young people & link to anti-social behaviour. Expand/ adapt the Defence Forces Employment Scheme & make applicable to 14-16 year olds.

“ Coherence between council majorities and local executive positions. Against DEM - can lead to the so-called 'cohabitation' phenomenon.

“ Promote a change in the Local Government Acts to allow councillors to nominate the Lord mayor by co-option.

“ The time has come for executive mayors in Dublin & beyond. In favour of the proposal for a DEM in Dublin & beyond with the necessary checks and balances to be put in place to make it work effectively and efficiently.

“ We need to make O'Connell St. and our city centre a place people would want to walk around and feel safe in (need higher police presence). Daughter (teacher) will never be able to buy a house in Dublin. This is not good enough. Most cities built up. Why not Dublin? We can't keep spreading our city.

“ Perception that Dublin is scruffy, neglected, dangerous and not a city that displays the best of Irishness. We are a multicultural society and our capital should reflect that. The lack of homes and multi-layered/high-rise buildings scream lack of inclusivity. Anti-social behaviour making the city unsafe.

“ Since COVID, the problems we have had before are multiplied. We have a considerable downturn in footfall and this, in my view, is directly related to a significant feeling of an unsafe city.

“ SDCC's neglect of Clondalkin. The new mayor should have broad powers across housing and transport. The position should also come with powers across health and especially local health services in areas in Dublin as well as having the power to appoint the Garda lead for Dublin (the assistant commissioner). We need a metro link to the airport and a DART Underground now & more affordable and social housing (these two objectives can be achieved by a DEM with very defined & broad sweeping powers. Powers around the environment and climate action should also be devolved to the new mayor and the power to make legislation for the Dublin area should be devolved to the new position.

- “ Oppose DEM. May cause confusion with the established separately-elected councils, and may cause a focus on Dublin city while ignoring the greater Dublin area.
- “ DEM is badly needed to champion infrastructure & social issues such as the accommodation crisis in the city. Manchester model.
- “ In support of DEM - Manchester model. Greater Dublin Council to discuss and implement mutually beneficial cross council initiatives and to coordinate efforts to get best outcomes. Possibly comprised of 5 nominees from each council.
- “ One overarching, elected city/county council (appropriate numbers to be defined), with one mayor to act as ‘Chair’ for the views of the citizenry.
- “ Super mayor only solution but what’s the point of councillors then. Funds from Dublin property tax could fund mayor and give them full decision-making powers to address decline of Dublin.
- “ Please have only one mayor for all of Dublin, and do not keep ceremonial mayors. Ceremonial mayors in Dublin would cause widespread confusion and would soon be seen as pointless and probably inane. Elected mayor or super mayor plus city council please.
- “ Mayor should be elected by the people for a term of 4 years and no pension till retirement age. Council should take back control of all services. DEM to have veto on some matters.
- “ A mayor must only act on the feedback from the community they serve. Each community must be allowed a voice as to their pressing needs, which could be communicated even via e-mail, allowing suggestions and ideas to be directed to the mayoral office, as so much information is filtered and watered down before it gets near the mayor.
- “ I would hope an elected mayor would focus on issues associated with crime in Dublin, particularly in the city.
- “ Mayor should have veto and agenda setting powers. London model. An executive committee of representatives should funnel concerns and ideas on behalf of wider councillors. Active for 10 years with ring-fenced funding to implement initiatives. Checks and balances should be in place by reputable private third party.
- “ Regional authorities are overdue, particularly in regions such as the Midlands and Northwest. Dublin is central to the State’s economic activities, and therefore a mayor may not be able to impact core issues. A singular body of oversight could improve finer details and make Dublin a more welcoming city for residents. A singular authority for Dublin would be positive, but would be wary as to the impact they could make on broader issues.
- “ DEM important but only if they replace the City Manager. DEM needs to have all the executive powers the manager now possesses. Elected mayor for between four and seven years who has the power to run the city. Super mayor sitting above the Council.
- “ Get rid of all overpaid civil servants.

“ Either reduce CEO of DCC powers and pay and share cost of DEM - will it be more bureaucracy? Share resources & less senior management and focus on key issues like homelessness, housing and cost of living.

“ Need a London-style mayor (two tier). Issues like transport in the Greater Dublin Area need coordination and local knowledge. There needs to be strategic planning of the whole city.

“ Given the sheer size of the Dublin region as a % of the total population of the country, there are arguments for perhaps letting each of the four Dublin counties directly elect a mayor. In order to get the benefit of region-wide decisions in areas like region-wide transport, waste management, planning etc, there should be a provision for a Greater Dublin Council (GDC) made up of the four elected mayors, with a substantial part of their budget and EU structural funding being determined by that council with the consent of 3/4 mayors.

“ The four councils are a strength. A continuous multi-year term of office and all appropriate powers that are currently dispersed across national agencies and Government Departments in the absence of such a leader. The Greater Manchester model may be the most attractive because it could easily plug into the existing local government structures in Dublin. There is potential for confusion if there are multiple mayors in Dublin, who would more appropriately be known as chairpersons of their respective councils.

“ London model. Maintain four Councils with their own Cathaoirleach positions. New chamber of approx. 24 councillors, acting as delegates from the four councils (6 delegates per council) could be established. Greater emphasis should be on the transfer of central powers applicable to Dublin currently owned by Government and authorities.

“ In favour of a DEM of each of the Dublin Local Authorities & for all Local Authorities in Ireland. Against DEM for all of Dublin. Against amalgamation of the four LAs.

“ The position of Lord Mayor should be one of coordination of the four Dublin Authorities, with each retaining their individual constituency and competencies. There should be no alteration to boundaries or interference in revenue matters. The Lord Mayor may function as an effective voice for Dublin by drawing representatives of the elected and executive from the established Local Authorities to form a Dublin Corporate Policy Group.

“ We would have serious questions as to how a DEM would impact the lives of Fingal residents and if this would potentially make things better or worse. Against merging of 4 local authorities. DEM should sit above the four Chief Executives and the existing Council structures should be retained as is in place underneath this. Each local authority should retain their Ceremonial Mayor/Cathaoirleach. There is also the concern that the DEM election could become a popularity contest with someone being elected that does not have the experience required for such an important role.

“ We should have a mayor for Dublin elected by all Dubliners within Co. Dublin. We need to dismantle the four Local Authorities. Instead we need to divide local areas and have elected mayors representing them. For example, Dublin South Central Area Committee would have its own elected mayor. This Citizens’ Assembly should not be dismantled at the end of the 8 months. It should remain and follow the progress in order to review the situation when the process has started.

“ In favour of DEM. Role of DEM must be considered first - form follows function. County/city development plans too short-term.

“ Against DEM. A full-time paid mayor and political advisors in Dublin will not yield benefits to the city and county. It will be good money down the drain. It would make more sense to reduce our representation to normal European levels. Most of our local authorities pay out over a million euro per year in salaries to councillors who in reality have little or no powers.

“ Few locally-elected representatives per head of population, compared to other EU countries. We don’t have the layers of representation other countries have. If there are to be town councils they should be for Dublin towns also. Whatever is proposed does not take from powers councillors currently have.

“ Present system OK. North Inner City lacking police presence. O’Connell St area looks like Skid Row.

“ In favour of DEM. DEM should have a defined role and responsibilities, and not be a figurehead in name only. DEM could coordinate a food security strategy for the Greater Dublin Area to encourage a % of all Dublin food to come from local areas.

“ Locally-elected representatives are best placed to understand both the conditions and needs of local communities. DEM will give a chance for Dubliners and those with an interest in Dublin to have a say in the kind of mayor they would like to have in our city of Dublin.

“ Local administration could do with more structured evaluation of its performance against reasonable benchmarks. Few councillors have the time or capacity to exercise their nominal powers effectively.

“ In areas like housing, where the local government has nominal authority, councils can only act within quite tight constraints operated by the parent department. Huge areas of public services are not being subjected to any local scrutiny in Dublin (e.g. Transport, Health, Higher Education, Community Development), even though they have a huge bearing on the local quality of life. It is not necessary to devolve delivery of these services to a local authority in order to make them more accountable. This is a weakness which could be remedied even within the existing structures. Land use is one of the few strategic areas which is devolved to local authorities, but the fact that it is divided between four different local authorities hampers its effectiveness and coherence, as well as its political accountability. Vital areas for the future like Waste Management and Climate Planning also fall into a sort of limbo between national, regional and local. A directly-elected mayor could create a more integrated vision for the city. It would tilt the balance away from permanent executives and towards one politically-elected leader. This would be a very powerful figure and with a direct mandate from one third of the country, he/she would rival even the Taoiseach in the strength of his/her mandate. It is worth considering whether those gains could be achieved in other ways.

“ Outlines the role of the EMRA and how it is well placed to engage with the DCA.

“ The City manager has too much power. Managers of councils should be accountable to the councillors. Please no more layers, make what we have is more effective. We have elected councillors, reorganise them, they are elected and insist that they get more powers over civil servants.

“ In favour of DEM - super mayor like Manchester. We need a Gaeltacht quarter in Dublin. Saving the Irish language is important.

“ Too little power rests with elected council members. Benefit is that it puts more power in hands of an elected individual away from city engineer.

“ Risk is putting too much power in one individual: need counter-balances/veto rights for council. My view is that we have too many councillors at present. I can't see any benefit to having a mayor. It will only add another layer to an already complicated decision-making process plus all the additional costs associated with it.

“ Dublin Chamber argues for a DEM with real powers. There is no central accountable figure to drive the implementation of the Dublin Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan and who has oversight of key infrastructure and planning development in the region. Strongly opposes the creation of directly-elected mayors at each Local Authority level in Dublin. This runs contrary to the notion of one singular office that could drive policy across the whole Dublin region.

“ Preference for London/Paris model with a central authority headed by DEM as well as truly local borough/district councils. DEM to head up Cabinet of councillors. OR Manchester model. The role of the Greater Dublin Authority should be complimentary to that of national agencies like the IDA.

“ Dublin City Council has the largest population, if a mayor from that council was to be elected, how is it fair that this mayor gets to dictate how Fingal and the other councils operate? A mayor from Dublin City Council will not have the local knowledge or experience to deal with issues in the other 3 local authorities. As a resident of Fingal I do not want a mayor from Dublin City Council, South Dublin Council or DLR Council. I will only support a directly-elected mayor for the Dublin city council region where Dublin city council residents vote.

“ While not having the lead, the mayor would have an overview role in the Development Planning and Action Planning activities of the 4 local authorities. The mayoral budget should be totally funded from local taxation, in particular from the Local Property Tax (LPT).

“ Not alone could a proportion of the LPT be used to fund the mayor's administrative expenses– especially if the 100% of the revenue raised (€168m in 2022) was retained - but it could also fund Local Area Plans for the many villages and other urban areas which are looking for this type of funding in the draft Dublin City Development Plan 2022 – 2028. A mayoral system would also enhance the establishment of significant national and international urban links. The OECD in particular is pioneering inter-city links through its Champion mayors for Inclusive Growth programme – through which the Dublin mayor could draw on the experience of a wide range of city regions. Local government weak.

“ Local planning issue. Fear that outlying areas wouldn't have a say re DEM.

“ A Regional Authority of Dublin should be established in tandem with a directly-elected mayor as set out under the Green Party Local Government (Mayor and Regional Authority of Dublin) Bill 2016.

“ A directly-elected mayor would not be good for Dublin due to the structure of local government in Ireland. The creation of a DEM for Dublin would create more bureaucracy that would potentially hinder City and County councillors from being able to address the needs of their constituents. Given the current model of local government in Ireland, it would make more sense to empower City and County councillors. Creating a DEM would likely be an added expense that would be likely to result in more inefficiencies.



7.2 Survey of Councillors

Introduction

All serving councillors from the four local authorities were invited, in June 2022, to complete a survey for the Dublin Citizens' Assembly. Councillors were asked for their views on the main benefits and challenges of a directly-elected mayor (DEM), powers to be devolved, or transferred, to a DEM and the most suitable model for local government structure. The summary of the responses is outlined below.

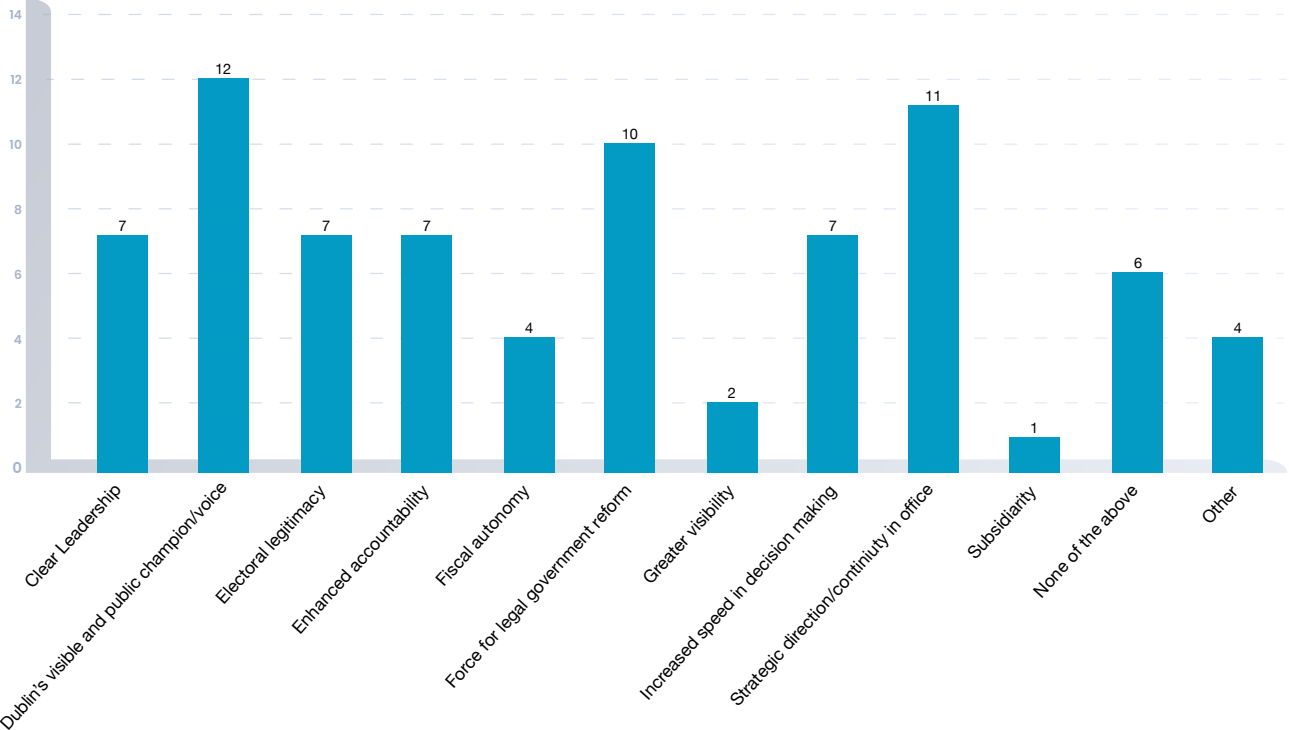
Overview:

- There are 183 councillors across the 4 Dublin local authorities. 33 survey responses were received to this survey, including:
- 7 from Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown
- 12 from Dublin City Council
- 10 from Dublin Fingal
- 5 from South Dublin

Benefits of a directly-elected mayor for Dublin

According to those councillors who responded, the main benefits of a DEM, in order of popularity, are i) Dublin’s visible and public champion/voice; ii) Strategic direction/continuity in office; iii) Force for local government reform. Full results are illustrated in Figure 3.

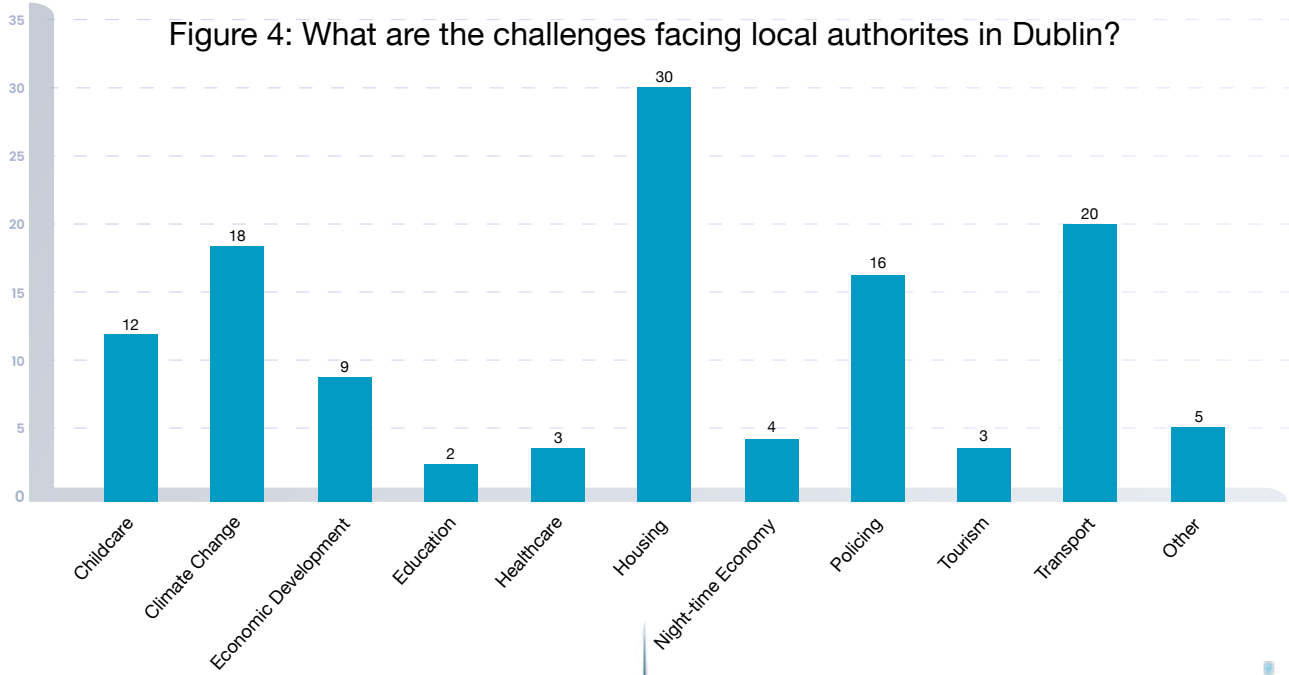
Figure 3: What do you see as the main benefits of a directly-elected mayor for Dublin?



Challenges facing local authorities in Dublin

In order of popularity, the greatest challenges facing local authorities in Dublin are a) Housing; b) Transport; c) Climate Change; d) Policing. Full results are illustrated in Figure 4.

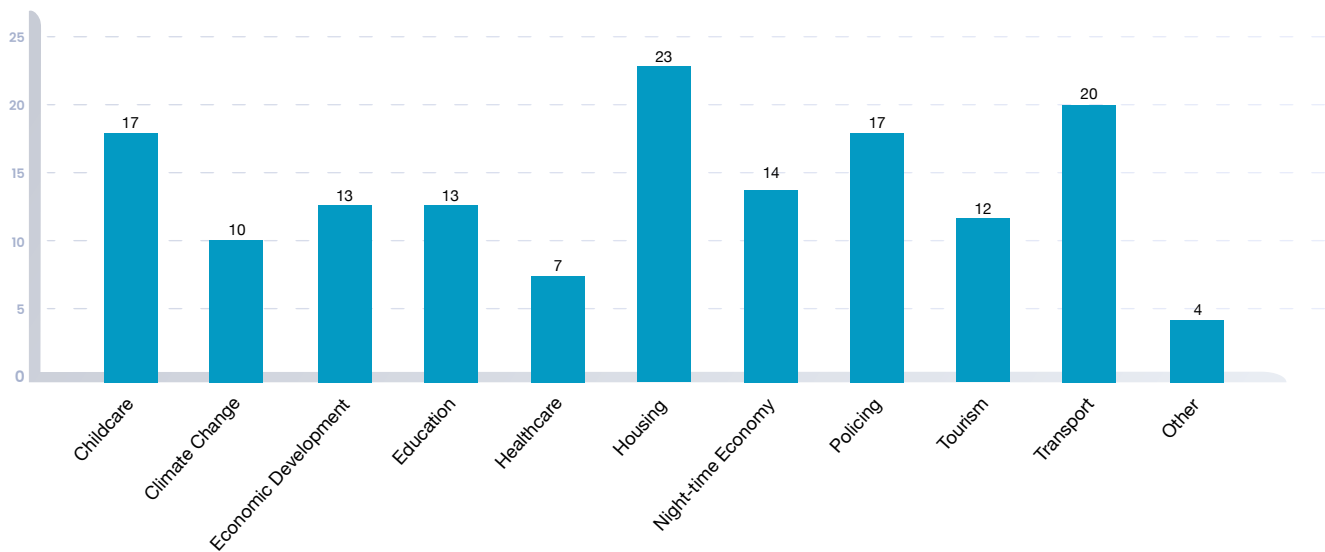
Figure 4: What are the challenges facing local authorities in Dublin?



Challenges facing local authorities in Dublin

In order of popularity, the powers that should be devolved to local authorities are: a) Housing; b) Transport; c) Policing; d) Childcare. Full results are illustrated in Figure 5.

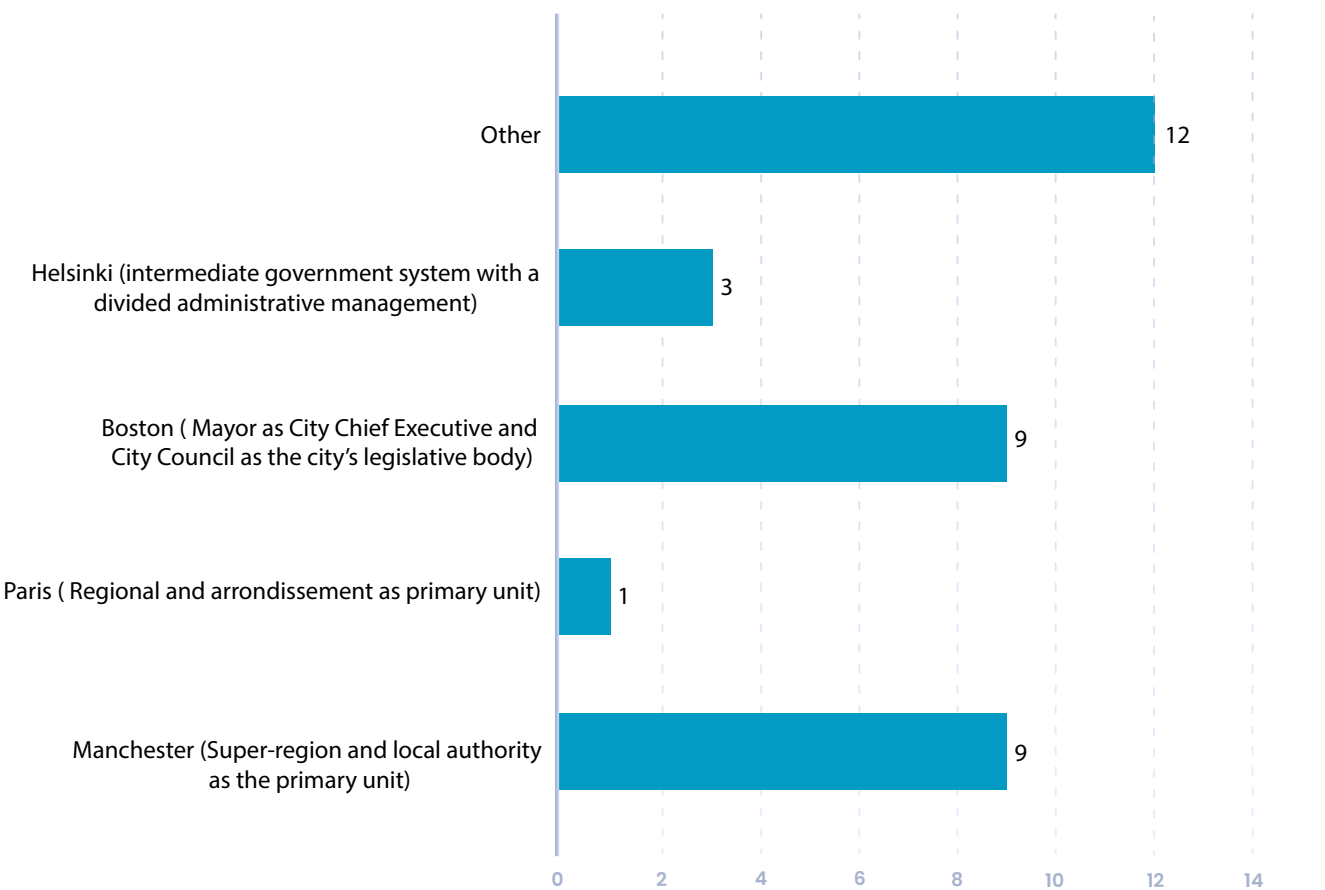
Figure 4: What are the challenges facing local authorities in Dublin?



Preferred model for a directly-elected mayor

There was no clear preferred model for local government structure. However, the Boston and Manchester models emerged as the most popular from those provided. Results are illustrated in Figure 6.

Figure 6: What is the local government structure most suitable for Dublin?



Councillors' comments on the local government structure most suitable for Dublin

“ I think we have to look at other models but develop our own. Very important to have layers of local representation and what reforms take place do not take from councillors.

“ I am not familiar with any of these [models]. Again, I find it concerning that the question implies a directly-elected mayor.

“ A directly-elected mayor for each of the existing 4 Dublin Councils. Why a Greater Dublin mayor which will include Swords, Balbriggan, Howth, Dún Laoghaire etc but not include Leixlip, Maynooth, Bray, Ashbourne, Drogheda etc.?

“ DEM sitting above the 4 existing retained Council structures.

“ Don't know enough on each structure to comment at the moment.

“ Don't know.

“ Paris but less complicated. I believe the local authorities need to go because it doesn't concentrate enough on the existing Local Areas. The geographical area covered by the 4 LAs with super mayor and then bring it down to smaller units than LAs. Each LA is not representative of the geographical area of Dublin. The division as we have doesn't make any sense on a geographical point of view, e.g., the coast is divided between 3 LAs! At the same time not enough focus is given to the more micro territories, neighbourhood areas.

“ Leave it as is and devolve actual competencies to the four local authorities in policy areas as listed above. There is zero positive reasons for Fingal to conglomerate with the other three Dublin LA's.

“ No change.

“ Mix of London model with a stronger Regional Council.

“ An amalgam of the London system though with stronger Regional Council.

“ London.



8

APPENDICES

8.1 Rules and procedures

Timing and Frequency of Meetings

Meetings of the Assembly will generally take place in designated venues in the Dublin area during 2022. Full details of the proposed dates for these meetings will be supplied to members and will be available on www.citizensassembly.ie.

Attendance of Meetings

It is very important that members are available to attend all weekends to ensure all citizens have the same information and can participate in the discussions which will influence the final conclusions of the Assembly. Because of this, a member who misses more than one weekend meeting will have to leave the process, unless there are extenuating circumstances.

Use of mobile devices

While the Assembly is in session, members agree not to use mobile devices.

Transparency of Meetings

Members of the public will not have access to the meeting venue, but will be able to view the plenary sessions streamed live at www.citizensassembly.ie. Table discussions will not be live-streamed.

Press and Communications & members interaction with the Media

Accredited members of the media shall be permitted to attend plenary sessions of the Assembly, subject to such terms and conditions as may be laid down by the Assembly. Members of the media will not have access to private sessions of the Assembly.

As a general principle, the Chairperson shall act as spokesperson in relation to administrative or procedural matters.

Unless requested by or agreed with the Chairperson, members shall refrain from media interviews or public commentary while the Assembly is actively considering a topic. This shall also apply in respect of social media sites.

Role and duties of the Chairperson

The Chairperson shall be the sole judge of order and shall be responsible for the smooth running of the Assembly, in accordance with these rules and the terms of the Resolution of the Houses of the Oireachtas. He shall engage such support services as are necessary for the effective administration of the Assembly and, from time to time, make such recommendations to the Assembly on the management of business as he sees fit.

Work Programme

The work programme shall be agreed by the Assembly on foot of a proposal by the Chairperson. The Work Programme will be based on the topics specified in the Oireachtas resolution establishing the Assembly.

The programme shall be reviewed regularly but any subsequent changes shall only take effect with the agreement of the Assembly

Steering Group

A Steering Group shall be established to support the Assembly in the efficient and effective discharge of its role and functions. In practice, the Group shall assist with planning and operational issues associated with the work programme. The Steering Group shall consist of the Chairperson, the Secretariat and some members of the Assembly.

Protection of Members' Privacy

To ensure the privacy of members, personal details including names will be treated in strictest confidence. Any individual or organisation which attempts to contact a member to try to influence their views on a particular topic will be automatically excluded from taking part in the Assembly.

Debates/speaking arrangements

The format and structure of speaking arrangements shall be agreed in advance and as a general principle, all contributions by members should be brief, respectful and non-repetitive. Any member wishing to speak should indicate this to their facilitator who will inform the Chairperson. In an effort to make most efficient use of time in plenary session, members are encouraged to use the opportunity of roundtable discussions to express their views, ask for factual information if required and deliberate with one another.

Tabling and Circulation of Papers

All documents for Assembly meetings shall be made available to all members of the Assembly on a dedicated members-only area of the Citizens' Assembly website. Alternative arrangements will be made for those members who are not in a position to access this area.

Voting

Votes, if required, shall be by secret ballot of the members present. Votes shall be overseen by the Chairperson with the support of at least two members of the Assembly. The Chairperson will only vote in the event of a tied vote.

Expert Advisory Group

As provided for in the Oireachtas Resolution, the Chair has established an Expert Advisory Group from relevant disciplines and fields to assist with its work in terms of preparing information and advice. The composition and focus of the Expert Advisory Group may change during the lifetime of the Assembly.

Accessibility of Services and Information for Persons with Disabilities

In line with the provisions in the Disability Act 2005 and the Code of Practice on Accessibility of Public Services and Information Provided by Public Bodies, the Assembly will ensure that services and information will be accessible to all members including those with a disability insofar as is practicable and appropriate.

It is noted that all Assembly members have been selected at random to represent the views of the people of Ireland and are broadly representative of society as reflected in the Census. Irish sign language translation will be provided for all plenary sessions of each meeting.

Observers

It is recognised that certain organisations/individuals such as advocacy groups, NGOS, academics, political parties and social partners may have a legitimate interest in being present at the meetings to observe proceedings first hand. However, there is limited space for observers. Attendance will be for plenary sessions only and will be subject to an application process governed by the Secretariat.

Review of Procedures

The Chairperson shall consult with members of the Assembly and other interested parties and conduct such reviews of the procedures and administration of the Assembly as he sees fit.

Early warning

Members are encourage to signal any concerns or difficulties to the Secretariat as early as possible so they can be resolved quickly.

8.2 Key Principles

At the opening session of the Dublin Citizens' Assembly, the Chairperson proposed and the Assembly members unanimously adopted a set of seven 'key principles' by which it would operate. The key principles adopted are as follows:

Openness: This Citizens' Assembly will operate with complete transparency, with all plenary meetings being live-streamed at www.citizensassembly.ie and all documentation, including submissions, freely available on the website. The Assembly is open to hearing from all sections of society on any issue associated with our remit, including our diaspora and young people under 18 years of age, who are not directly represented in the Assembly membership.

Fairness: It is important that:

- we allow the full spectrum of views to be heard on every issue;
- our briefing material for Assembly members is of the highest quality;
- presentations by selected speakers are factual, informative, impartial and accessible.

Equality of voice amongst all Assembly members: Each member will have the opportunity to voice their opinions and allow other members to voice theirs, with no-one dominating the discussion.

Respect: Members will respect each other's opinions by ensuring that everyone can make contributions and express their views freely without fear of personal attacks or criticism.

Efficiency: The Assembly will make best use of our limited time together and ensure that members are supported to the greatest extent possible, including in their preparation for meetings; and all meetings will start and end on time.

Collegiality: Recognising that we are a diverse group, we will work in a spirit of friendship together as we embark on this important task.

Psychological Safety: This is a basic human need and a shared belief that the Citizens' Assembly is a safe space which welcomes diversity and allows Assembly members to flourish regardless of their gender, colour, race, background, or political preferences.

8.3 Expert Advisory Group

The Expert Advisory Group consisted of:

- Dr. Aodh Quinlivan lectures in the Department of Government and Politics at University College Cork, specialising in local government and public sector management. Aodh is also the founder and director of UCC's Centre for Local and Regional Governance (CLRG). He has made presentations about local government reform to Joint Oireachtas Committees and to committees in the House of Commons. In 2012, the Government appointed him to a national committee examining human resource issues and senior staffing levels in Irish local government. Aodh was previously a visiting lecturer in Albany, New York and is currently an external examiner in the University of Limerick. Aodh worked in Cork County Council from 1994 to 2000;

- Dr. Bríd Quinn lectures in the Department of Politics and Public Administration at University of Limerick, specialising in public administration. Her current research focuses on the EU, particularly cohesion policy; local governance in Europe and partnership as a governance tool. She is co-author of *Europeanisation and new patterns of Governance in Ireland* (MUP) and has published journal articles and book chapters on EU cohesion policy. In addition to her academic work, she carries out consultancy work in Ireland and abroad for development organisations, state bodies, community groups and international bodies such as the Council of Europe and EAPAA;
- Prof. Deiric Ó Broin is Professor of Public Policy Practice in the School of Law and Government in DCU where he lectures in Irish politics and public policy. His research is mainly on Irish politics and public policy particularly the area of local and urban governance. He also works in the areas of public participation and deliberation, civil society involvement in public policy formulation, with a particular focus on the social economy. Previously, he taught in TU Dublin, Maynooth University and UCD. His most recent book (edited with Eoin O'Malley), *mayoral Governance in Dublin* was published in April 2019; and
- Prof. Jane Suiter lectures in the School of Communications, Dublin City University. Her research focus is on the information environment in the public sphere and, in particular, on scaling up deliberation and tackling disinformation. Jane is director of DCU's Institute for Future Media, Democracy and Society, Principal Investigator on a major interdisciplinary project to combat disinformation, Principal Investigator on JOLT, a Marie Curie ITN on harnessing digital technologies in communication, and is leading a new project on countering COVID-19 disinformation and the potential role of deliberation. She was senior Research Fellow on the Irish Citizens' Assembly on Gender Equality, co-Principal Investigator on the Irish Citizen's Assembly (2016-2018) and the Irish Constitutional Convention (2012-2014), and a founder member of We the Citizens (2011), Ireland's first deliberative experiment. Jane was awarded the prestigious title of the Irish Research Council's Researcher of the Year in 2020.

8.4 Steering Group

As with previous assemblies, a Steering Group was set up to permit the members to feed into the planning and procedural/operational elements of the Assembly's work. Four Assembly members, Valerie Johnson Coyne, Natasha Kelleher, Barry Saul and Malcolm Stuart, volunteered to take part in the Group which included the Chairman, Jim Gavin, and members of the Secretariat. The Group contributed to arrangements for each meeting with the 4 members also feeding back any issues or suggestions raised by the broader membership.

THE DUBLIN

CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY





ISBN 978-1-4468-8093-7



Published by the Citizens' Assembly
www.citizensassembly.ie