



dublinchamber
of commerce

Policy Tracker

April 12th 2006

Dublin Chamber of Commerce - Policy Tracker

About the Policy Tracker

This policy issue tracker provides a comprehensive and up-to-date review of policy developments of interest to Dublin Chamber of Commerce members every month. Each issue is explained, with an indication of the current position and the Chamber's policy response.

For ease of reading, not every section is included in each month's ezine. Major amendments to each new monthly addition are highlighted in the section below and with an asterix (*) under the "issue" column.

For more information on any issue, please contact Aebhric@dublinchamber.ie, cian@dublinchamber.ie

Recent Highlights

The Chamber has engaged with Dublin City Council and city councillors to ask that 5-axle HGVs be allowed use routes on East Wall Road and Sandymount until phase one of the M50 upgrade is complete in 2008.

The Chamber has responded to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Transport's call for submissions on the proposed sale of Aer Lingus, stating the Chamber's full support for the privatisation process.

The Chamber received a progress update from Assistant City Manager with responsibility for waste and water, Matt Twomey, on the new regional waste plan and the development of Dublin's waste infrastructure.

The first meeting of the Chamber's Infrastructure Committee took place. A presentation was made by A&L Goodbody Consulting on the new National Development Plan, 2007-2013. The Chamber is preparing a submission to the Department of Finance on the NDP. Members are invited to submit their views to cian@dublinchamber.ie

The Dublin Chamber made a presentation to an international conference on Urban Regeneration in Thessaloniki, Greece.

The Dublin Chamber has held meetings with a number of key stakeholders in the transport sector, in order to monitor the progress of Transport 21. A meeting with Minister Cullen has been rescheduled for April 26th. Members are invited to submit their views on the progress of Transport 21 to Aebhric@dublinchamber.ie.

The Dublin Chamber has provided an estimate of costs to the Garda investigation into the riots in the city centre on the 25th February. We believe that the loss of business on the day amounts to €10m.

The Minister for the Environment has published an independent report on Local Government Financing by Indecon Economic Consultants. Members are invited to submit their views on the Indecon report to Aebhric@dublinchamber.ie.

The Dublin Chamber attended a Dublin Regional Authority meeting on the next National Development Plan and the future of the Bay Area.

The Dublin Chamber spoke at the Transport Expo in the RDS, in a debate chaired by John Bowman.

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Issue	Background	Current Status	Dublin Chamber Policy/Action
VISION			
Dublin Vision 2020	The Chamber vision document was launched in 2004 and sees Dublin as a competitive city, a great European city, a knowledge city, a city that works and one that is well governed. Policies are examined under these headings below.	<i>Imagine Dublin 2020</i> is the cornerstone upon which all policy is built. Members have reasserted the vision during quantitative and qualitative research.	The Chamber's vision for Dublin is set out at public meetings and continues to be distributed at international meetings.
Dublin Chamber Strategic Plan	A strategic plan out to 2008 has been prepared with the assistance of BDO Simpson Xavier.	An implementation plan has been presented to Council and will be reviewed on a regular basis.	The strategic plan is being implemented.
COMPETITIVE CITY			
Local Authority Charges	The Minister for the Environment has published an independent report on Local Government Financing by Indecon Economic Consultants. The report is available at http://www.environ.ie/DOEI/DOEIPol.nsf/wvNavView/Overview?OpenDocument&Lang=#61	The report's main recommendations include more locally based sources of funding; economic charging for local authority services generally; a contribution from commercial properties not currently covered by commercial rates; and extension of water charges and the introduction of a new tax on non-principal private residences.	The Dublin Chamber prioritises value for money in local authority spending and the broadening of the local tax base. Members are invited to submit their views on the Indecon report to Aebhric@dublinchamber.ie .
Retail	The City is preparing a retail core strategy that envisages a retail district running from Smithfield to O'Connell St to Grafton St. There is presently 200,000m ² of retail space in the retail core and the city has identified another 250,000m ² of potential additional space currently under alternative usage. The plan seeks to improve the retail experience by enhancing the civic space, pedestrianisation and signage improvements. It seeks to provide a better links between shops on the North and South side.	Dublin City Council is proposing to designate Grafton Street as an Architectural Conservation Area. This will allow the planning authority to exert greater control in the management of future development in the street, and to devise a series of policies to specifically address issues which are "detracting from its character."	The Dublin Chamber reaction to riots in the city centre on 25 Feb was well received. We believe that the loss of business on the day amounts to €10m. Please contact Aebhric@dublinchamber.ie .

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Waste to Energy Plant*	Thermal treatment is a major element of the integrated waste management mix (recycling, landfill & thermal treatment) for the Dublin region.	The statutory planning stages are expected to start in June. The Strategic Infrastructure Bill will not apply to the project.	Dublin Chamber supports incineration. For further information, contact cian@dublinchamber.ie .
EUROPEAN CITY			
National Conference Centre	The Spencer Dock Consortium has been appointed by Cabinet as the developers subject to due diligence.	The centre should be operational in 2009.	Dublin needs a Conference Centre and certainty as to the date it will open.
Croke Park/Lansdowne Road	Soccer or rugby internationals are each worth about €15 million to the city.	Construction work on Lansdowne is due to start in Q1 2007, following planning permission. Dates have been announced for soccer and rugby internationals in Croke Park in 2007.	The larger capacity of Croke Park means that the potential economic benefit of international games is that much greater, amounting to an average of €30m per game.
Tourism	Tourism numbers and revenue was at an all-time high in Dublin in 2005 with 3.85m overseas visitors injecting almost €1.3 billion into the city's economy.	Dublin Chamber has prepared a paper on tourism, covering business tourism, cultural tourism and the tourism environment.	We will be forwarding our paper to the Dept. of Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht, Justice, Taoiseach (OPW) and Dublin City Council.
WELL-GOVERNED			
Greater Dublin Area Authority/Elected Lord Mayor	Dublin businesses continue to wait for the land use and transport body for the GDA that is promised in the current Programme for Government	The jury is still out on effectiveness of the Regional Planning Guidelines for the GDA.	The Dublin Chamber is keeping the issue under review.
Dublin Transport Authority	An interim DTA board has been established, headed by Professor Margaret O'Mahony of TCD. The structure, membership and remit of the DTA are expected to be announced in the first half of the year.	The Dublin Chamber has made a submission on the structure of the DTA.	
Decentralisation	The decentralisation programme is already 1-2 years behind schedule.		The Dublin Chamber is opposed to decentralisation and has called for a cost-benefit analysis to be carried out.

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CITY THAT WORKS			
Integrated transport system – Transport 21.	Government have launched a policy document outlining the capital plan for road and most public transport developments for the next ten years, called <i>Transport 21</i> . <i>Transport 21</i> contains an integrated plan for Dublin.	The Chamber has held a number of individual meetings with agencies and groups involved in the delivery of <i>Transport 21</i> .	In response to a request from the Minister for Transport, the Chamber has submitted its response to Transport 21, including recommendations on the DTA.
Metro rail system	A Metro for Dublin was first proposed in the Dublin Transport Office’s (DTO) report of 2000, <i>Platform for Change</i> . The metro from the airport to the city centre (Metro North) was first supposed to be operational by 2007. A second metro, Metro West, is also proposed in Transport 21 linking the Tallaght Luas line and Metro North and running through Clondalkin, Liffey Valley and Blanchardstown.	Public consultation on Metro North started on 28 February. The RPA recently presented their detailed plans for the Metro to a Business Briefing held by the Dublin Chamber. The presentation is available on our website at http://www.dublinchamber.ie/current_issue.asp?article=651	We have long supported the proposal to provide a Metro Phase 1 link from the city centre to Dublin Airport and Swords. We will keep pressure on the RPA to issue tenders ASAP. Chamber is holding a Metro briefing in May.
Suburban Rail Interconnector and rail network	The Interconnector will link the Kildare and Maynooth rail lines to the DART lines, permitting a major expansion of the suburban rail service. It is scheduled to be built by 2015. Passenger travel per km grew by 12.7% in 2005, compared to an EU average of 2.4%. Freight per km fell by 23.7%, compared to an EU average of –1.0%.	Irish Rail recently presented their detailed plans for LUAS to a Business Briefing held by the Dublin Chamber. The presentation is available on our website at http://www.dublinchamber.ie/current_issue.asp?article=651	Dublin Chamber supports these proposals. The finances are there. It is time to press on with delivery.
Luas	The RPA recently presented their detailed plans to the Dublin Chamber. The presentation is available at http://www.dublinchamber.ie/current_issue.asp?article=651	Private developers will fund about half of the Cherrywood and Citywest extensions. Construction at Cherrywood could begin as early as Q4 2006.	We support the increase in Luas services. The finances are there. It is time to press on with delivery.

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Port Tunnel and IFSC area*	<p>The tunnel is expected to open by late summer, although this has been privately queried.</p> <p>The construction contract for the Macken St Bridge is about to be awarded. The bridge is estimated to cost €47m and will take 12 months to build.</p>	<p>Tunnel due to open in Q3.</p> <p>HGV strategy approved by city council which will allow 5+ axle HGVs use East Wall Rd and Sandymount until 1st January 2007.</p>	<p>The Chamber will be meeting with the NRA and Dept of Transport on docklands transport issues.</p> <p>Please contact cian@dublinchamber.ie.</p>
M50	<p>The NRA recently presented their detailed plans for road infrastructure to a Business Briefing held by the Dublin Chamber. The presentation is available on our website at http://www.dublinchamber.ie/current_issue.asp?article=651. Government has announced the contract for the first phase of the M50 upgrade to be completed by 2008. The upgrade will see the 5km section from the N7 to the N4 increase from four to six lanes with new free-flowing interchanges at the Red Cow roundabout, Liffey Valley and Ballymount roundabouts. Work will also commence to remove the traffic lights at Newlands Cross.</p>	<p>Following contract changes, the tendering process for the second part of the M50 upgrade will be re-run. The NRA say the resulting delays will total two months.</p> <p>Electronic tolling contract to be awarded in end-2006.</p>	<p>Members' views are sought as to how to improve traffic flow around the M50 once traffic is diverted through the Port Tunnel.</p> <p>Please contact cian@dublinchamber.ie.</p>
Bus Market Reform	<p>No new capacity has been added to the Dublin Bus market since 2000. The priority is to add additional buses, providing increased public transport capacity in the short term. The Dublin Bus presentation to members is available on our website at http://www.dublinchamber.ie/current_issue.asp?article=651</p>	<p><i>Transport 21</i> sees the role of bus transport moving towards feeding the rail network. Investment in buses is a priority for the first half of the life of the programme - Focus on the development of orbital, feeder and local services.</p>	<p>Whether via Government funding of Dublin Bus fleet additions, or by the involvement of private operators, the provision of sufficient buses for the city's new QBCs is paramount.</p> <p>Contact cian@dublinchamber.ie</p>
Quality Bus Corridors	<p>Dublin City plans an expenditure of €33m on bus priority measures in 2006 and 2007. "Super" QBCs are being developed – these will have high quality (LUAS like) infrastructure.</p>	<p><i>Transport 21</i> states the Quality Bus Network will be at least doubled over the period of the plan to improve the quality, reliability and efficiency of the bus service.</p>	<p>We support the expansion of the number of QBCs operating in the city, so long as additional capacity is brought to bear.</p>

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Dublin Airport*	The Dublin Airport Authority (DAA) has a €1.2bn, ten-year, development programme. Laing O' Rourke has been appointed by the DAA to build Pier D, the €100m facility which will provide 14 new boarding gates for narrow and wide-bodied aircraft, by September 2007.	The second passenger terminal will incorporate the existing Pier C and will be designed to handle up to 15 million passengers. A second new satellite pier, Pier E, will provide additional new wide-bodied and narrow-bodied aircraft contact stands. Both are scheduled for completion in late 2009.	There is a pressing need to develop a second and third terminal, build Pier D, build a second runway and link the airport with the city centre and other rail transport modes by the Metro.
Critical Infrastructure Bill	First proposed in 2003, the bill has been held up at cabinet level. Progress on the bill is vital if transport and waste projects to be developed.	Bill published. Provisions to speed up statutory planning stages welcome. There is still a need to properly resource judicial system.	The delays have meant the Poolbeg Thermal Treatment project will not be able to avail of this legislation.
Macken St Bridge	The preferred bidder is Grahem Hollandia J.V.	Contract signing imminent, with works commencing April 2008 with a 30 month timeframe. Therefore bridge should be commissioned and ready for operation end of 2008 start of 2009.	This bridge is urgently needed to provide traffic relief in the docklands. Contact cian@dublinchamber.ie
DCC Waste Management Plan	DCC are preparing a new waste plan out to 2010. The goal is self-sufficiency. This will require the doubling of recycling infrastructure, biological treatment facilities as well as a Waste to Energy facility and new landfill.	Dublin Chamber made a full submission to the drafting of the new Waste Management Plan for the Dublin Region. Current landfill charges for business in South Co Dublin are over twice the EU average.	Chamber wants to see the full cost of household waste management services borne by household charges. Contact cian@dublinchamber.ie
KNOWLEDGE CITY			
Broadband	The Chamber made a submission to Forfas.	The submission deals with the questions of increasing broadband availability, increasing competition in the marketplace and creating awareness to increase demand.	Contact Aebhric@dublinchamber.ie .
Dublin Wireless Cluster	The Chamber has worked with the ISA and IWLF to apply for funding from Enterprise Ireland to fund the sector's development.	An application for funding to the value of €200K has been submitted to Enterprise Ireland.	A decision from Enterprise Ireland is due on April 21 st .