

Local Government (Mayor of Limerick) Bill 2023

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Abstract

The Bill proposes to create an office of the directly-elected mayor for local government in Limerick City and County area. If enacted, it will amount to a significant change in the roles and responsibilities of, and the accountability relationships between, local government actors in the Limerick City and County area and it will be the first time that Irish local government has a directly-elected mayor.

*Table B, Appendix 2 added on 28th September 2023



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Introduction

The *Local Government (Mayor of Limerick) Bill 2023* (this Bill) was published on 3rd August 2023. The Bill provides for a directly-elected mayor (DEM) with some executive functions, in particular strategic policy-making and leadership functions in local government in Limerick City and County. If enacted, the first directly-elected mayor of Limerick City and County will be elected in June 2024 (on the same day as local elections). Although the benefits of introducing a directly-elected mayor to Irish local government has been debated over many years (see below), if the Bill is enacted this will be the first time a mayor is directly-elected by the people in a local authority area in the history of the state.

The proposal to create the office of directly-elected mayor was approved by the local electorate of Limerick in a plebiscite in 2019. Under the [Local Government Act 2019 \(Part 6\)](#), plebiscites were held in the Limerick City and County, Waterford City and County and Cork City Council in May 2019 with only Limerick approving it. Under section 44 of the Act, within two years of its approval by plebiscite, the Minister was to prepare a report 'specifying proposals for the enactment of a law providing for a directly elected mayor of the administrative area' for submission to the Houses of the Oireachtas (by 24th May 2021). This was published in the form of a [General Scheme of the Bill](#) (April 2021) which was given to the Joint Committee for pre-legislative scrutiny. Following two pre-legislative scrutiny hearings on [17th May 2021](#) and [29th June 2021](#), the Joint Committee published a Report on [Pre-Legislative Scrutiny of the General Scheme](#) (November 2021). A Table with of the Joint Committee's 17 recommendations is in Appendix 2. We allude to the report of the Joint Committee at times during the Digest and have set out in [Appendix 2](#) the extent to which the Bill has taken on board the recommendations.

Prior to the publication of the General Scheme, the (then) Minister of State for Local Government and the (then) Mayor of Limerick City and County established an Implementation Advisory Group in December 2019. Its role was to advise the Minister on how best to establish and shape the office, building on the Government's Policy Document (which had been published just in advance of the plebiscite),¹ and to make recommendations **on the scope and range** of the office and the strategic role of a DEM and/or any additional or new powers and functions (including potentially from central government). The Implementation Advisory Group, which conducted a public consultation online during 2020,^[3] issued its Report in October 2020 to the Minister of State for Local Government Peter Burke TD.² A summary of its recommendations is in Appendix 3 below.

The purpose of the Bill

The Bill, which has seven parts (60 sections), and three schedules **has three core purposes**.

First, to provide new institutional arrangements for Limerick City and County Council. Its sets out how a directly-elected mayor, **who will be elected for a five-year term**, will fit in with the local government system, including:

¹¹ Government Policy Document (March 2019) - [Directly Elected Mayors with Executive Functions: Detailed Policy Proposals](#)

² [Report of the Implementation Advisory Group](#) (October 2020)

- the powers and functions assigned to the office (section 10, 23 and 26 and Schedule 1),
- funding (s16), staff (s18-19) and remuneration (s15),
- accountability relationships between the mayor and the elected council, the director general (replacing 'chief executive') and the elected council and the director general and the mayor.
- the replacement of the position of Cathaoirleach with a Príomh Chomhairleoir who will retain the functions of the former Cathaoirleach that enable leadership of the council in holding the mayor and the director general to account (depending on the function).

The relevant sections of the bill in respect of this purpose are Part 2 (Mayor of Limerick, Part 3 (other structural changes), Part 4 (additional functions of the mayor) and Part 7 (accountability of mayor) along with **Schedules 1 and 3. Schedule 1 sets out which functions are allocated to the mayor, the director general and the Príomh Chomhairleoir.** Schedule 3 provides the modifications to the 2001 Act necessary to reflect the newly-configured local government in Limerick. All of these provisions are further discussed in [principal theme 1](#) below.

Secondly, the Bill (Part 6; s42-50) provides a legal basis, and the procedure, for holding plebiscites on the adoption of a directly-elected mayor with executive functions in other local authority areas. This is further discussed in [principal theme 2 below](#).

Thirdly, the Bill provides the legal basis, and rules and procedures for the election of the mayor. The relevant sections are Part 5 (s36-41) and Schedule 2. Part 5 is a series of amendments to the Electoral Acts 1992-2022 which includes the insertion (section 37 of the Bill) of a new Part X to the 1997 Act which provides the rules on spending and donations for the Mayoral election. Schedule 2, which runs at 106 sections and fifteen chapters, sets out the rules and procedures for the entire electoral process including the procedure for nominating candidates, the appointment and duties of the returning officer and the conduct and management of the election. The electoral process is consistent with that for other elections provided for in the Electoral Acts and the voting system mirroring that used in the President (PR STV in a one-seat constituency). It is only briefly further discussed in principal theme 3 below.

While the immediate purpose of this Bill is to provide for a directly-elected mayor (DEM) in Limerick, **the broader policy context is local government reform which has been on the**

agenda of successive Irish governments.³ The addition of a directly-elected mayor (DEM) to local government institutions has been considered by many governments (Appendix 1) and has featured in the manifestos of most political parties at some point since 2008.⁴

The goal of the proposals has consistently been to enhance accountability at the local level and to strengthen local democracy.⁶ A Green Paper published by the 2007-2011 government (2008) proposed that DEMs would address the imbalance in power between the executive and the elected council in Irish local government (which is considered to weaken the democratic nature of local government). In advance of the plebiscites in 2019, the government stated that DEMs could

'enhance local authority accountability, visibility, democracy or responsiveness.' (2019, 4).

Bill (Part 6) aims to ensure

reform would be a possibility for other local authority areas as well as Limerick.

*A directly-elected mayor can "enhance local authority accountability, visibility, democracy or responsiveness, among other possible benefits" Government Policy Paper (2019, 4).*⁵

And the that this

A brief analysis of the potential for the bill to achieve these goals, along with challenges in this respect, is set out in [principal theme 4](#) of this Digest which is its conclusion.

The legislative context is next briefly explained and is followed by principal themes 1-4.

Policy and Legislative Context

While all local government systems have basic features in common - an elected political body, an identifiable political leader and an identifiable executive manager – **the institutional arrangements and the allocation of power and functions between these actors can differ considerably.** For example, in some systems (strong mayor systems) the mayor is elected (directly or indirectly) for the duration of the council term, has all executive powers and has the power to appoint a chief executive (without the consent of other politicians or political bodies). In others, executive powers are shared amongst elected councillors who form committees, while one elected councillor is the political leader, and the executive management works to the committees.

Ireland has a council-manager model of local government whereby the elected council sets the policy framework and the budget, and a professional manager is responsible for implementing it and for the day-to-day management of the local authority (see Table 1, Appendix 1 for different

³ The most recently comprehensive reform of local government was Putting People First (2012) which was implemented by the Local Government Reform Act 2014. It focused primarily on territorial reform (abolishing Town Councils and creating municipal districts) but it also made changes to executive-council relations and introduced some new instruments with which councillors can use to hold the executive to account, added some, and removed other, functions from local government as well as introducing a local property tax. This [L&RS Note Local Government Reform Act and the changing role of councillors \(2014\)](#) is a detailed overview of the Act's changes to council-executive relations.

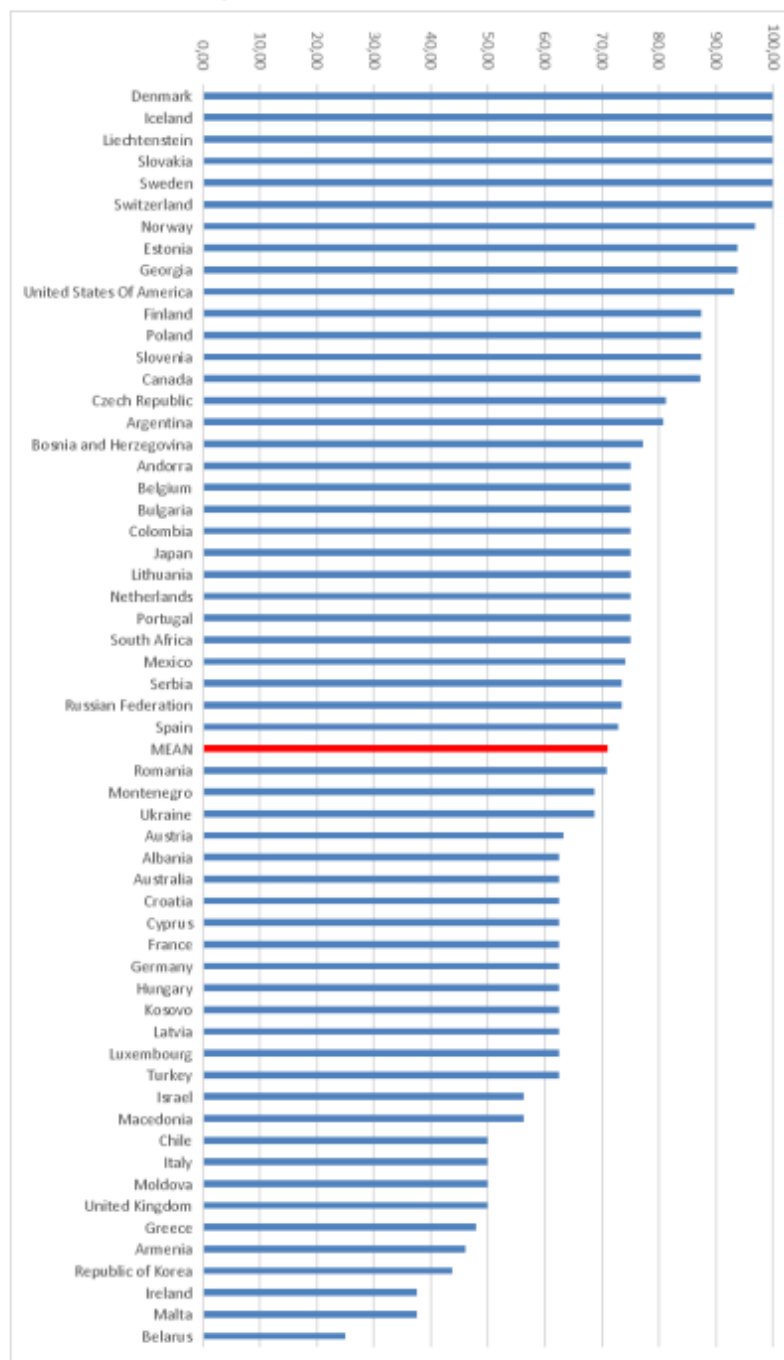
⁴ See L&RS Blog (2016): [Directly-elected Mayor for Dublin: PMBs in the Dáil](#) [accessible on oireachtas network]

⁵ Government of Ireland (2019) '[Directly elected mayors with executive functions: Detailed policy proposals.](#)

⁶ See [here](#) for a link to the debate on the 2000 Bill (2001 Act) which created the legislative basis for a directly-elected chair in all councils.

models of local government). However, Irish local government deviates from this model in that the chief executive is not appointed by the council and may not be dismissed by the council. Changes introduced by the *Local Government Reform Act 2014* brought it closer to the model by giving the council a role in appointing the chief executive (council must approve the candidate selected by the Public Appointment Service) and enhancing the council's role in commencing a process to remove the chief executive under specific circumstances (and only with the consent of the Minister). In spite of these changes, and for a variety of reasons, Irish local government is consistently found to be weak on organisational autonomy which is determined by the allocation of power and functions between different actors in local government (as well as the relationship with central government). A recent study placed Irish local government third last out of all EU, Council of Europe and OECD states on this variable (see Figure 1 below which dates from 2021).

Figure 5.8: Organisational autonomy, country ranking, (mean 2015-2020, incl. mean N=57, standardised)



Source: European Commission (2021) Local Autonomy Index. ⁷

⁷ Ladner, A., Keuffer, N. and Bastianen, A. (2021). [Local Autonomy Index in the EU, Council of Europe and OECD countries](#) (1990-2020). Release 2.0. Brussels: European Commission for most recent analysis and here for chapter on Ireland.

To understand the effect of the Bill's proposals to add a directly-elected mayor into the Irish local government system, it is important to set out how functions are currently allocated to the executive and the council.

Under the *Local Government Act 2001* a local authority's functions are either 'reserved' or 'executive.' **Reserved functions** belong to the elected council and concern the power to set the policy parameters or the agenda for the council such as approving the annual budget, the development plan, economic and social development plan (since 2014), library development programme and bye laws. Reserved functions also include the right of the elected council to possess tools to hold the Chief Executive to account in his or her implementation of council policy and of other duties such as management of services and implementation of central government policies. These tools include the right to request information, to require the attendance of Chief Executive at a council meeting and the right to request that a Chief Executive undertake a particular action or to desist from undertaking a particular action, (action on foot of a NOAC (National Oversight and Audit Commission report)). Reserved functions were modestly expanded by the *Local Government Reform Act 2014* with a view to enhancing the line of accountability between the executive and the elected council. For an analysis of the role of the elected council and the chief executive following the 2014 Act see [L&RS Note here](#).

In practice, the council operates its policy-setting powers (a reserved power) by debating and approving budgets and policy programmes which are presented to it by the Chief Executive under s103 of the Act. **Currently, the Chief Executive has a legal obligation to implement the policy as set out by the council.**

Executive functions are assigned to the chief executive who is appointed for a seven-year term by the government's Public Appointments Survey (maximum term is ten years). All local authority functions which are not reserved functions are executive functions. Executive functions are extensive, are set out in legislation and in central government's policy. Executive functions under the Local Government Act fall into two broad categories:

- (i) all matters relating to the management and organisation of local authority staff and their delivery of services,
- (ii) the implementation of council policy – this is the legal responsibility of the chief executive.

Principal themes

1. Proposed institutions and accountability arrangements in Limerick City and Council

Functions of the mayor

Reserved and executive functions are assigned to the mayor. **Concerning reserved functions**, section 10(1) assigns all functions previously vested in the Cathaoirleach as functions of the mayor with the exception of a list of functions set out in Schedule 1(1) which are assigned to the newly-established position of Príomh Chomhairleoir (s23). **Regarding executive functions**, section 10(2) assigns all functions vested in the chief executive to the mayor, except for functions set out in Schedule 1(2) which are assigned to the renamed position of director general (s26).

As the provisional name for the Bill was *Local Government (Directly-elected mayor with executive functions) for Limerick City and County 2021* (title of General Scheme), we look first at what executive functions are assigned to the mayor.

Executive functions – mayor and director general

The Bill does not explicitly set out the executive functions of the mayor; **rather under section 10 (2) the mayor is assigned all executive functions previously the preserve of the chief executive except for the list of functions set out in Schedule 1(2)**. Schedule 1(2) is an extensive list of the sections of the *Local Government Act 2001* and of twelve other Acts (all relating to housing or planning and development) which will remain the responsibility of the chief executive (director general). The difficulty with identifying the remaining executive functions - i.e., the executive functions that will belong to the mayor – is that existing executive functions are not neatly listed anywhere. Rather, under the *Local Government Act 2001* ‘any function of a local authority that is not designated as a reserved function is deemed to be an executive function.’ (See Callahan, 2018, 104).⁸

The General Scheme proposed that functions of the 2001 Act remaining with the director general would primarily fall into three categories - staffing and human resources, service-level agreements and functions arising out of his or her role as accounting officer (General Scheme, schedules 2, 3 and 4). And the press release which announced cabinet sign-off on the Bill in July 2023 appeared to confirm this; it states that the director general’s functions will include managing and accounting for the council’s finances, HR and local authority staffing matters, administration of individual schemes and allocation of individual grants and legal proceedings and enforcement matters relating to individual schemes or grants.⁹ **However, the Bill includes many more sections of the 2001 Act in the list of specified functions than the General Scheme did; Table 2 below lists the functions. Those that are highlighted were included in the General Scheme.**

The inclusion of sections 132, 138, 140 and 149 as functions of the director general are notable; s132 places a duty on the director general (currently chief executive) to carry into effect lawful directions of the elected council in relation to the exercise and performance of the reserved functions of the authority or a joint body. It also places on the director general a duty to advise and assist the Council, the corporate policy group, strategic policy committee (SPCs) and the local community development committee in the exercise of their reserved functions (see Appendix 4 for an overview of the local authority’s institutions).

s149 makes the director general responsible for “the efficient and effective operation of the local authority and ensuring the implementation without undue delay of the decisions of the elected council.” **The General Scheme had proposed that these functions would be transferred to the mayor (Head 27)**. The General Scheme had proposed that the mayor would be legally responsible for implementing council policy, and the director general would advise and assist the mayor in this

⁸ Callahan Mark (2018) *Local Government in the Republic of Ireland* Dublin:IPA.

⁹ <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/dbb24-cabinet-approves-legislation-for-a-directly-elected-mayor-for-limerick/#>

respect (like the relationship between a Director General the Minister in a department). Schedule 1(2) lists s53 (legal proceedings) as a director general function; under s53 the direct general must “act on behalf of the local authority in both civil and criminal proceedings which are taken by or instituted against the local authority and may do all acts as he or she considers necessary to prepare for or prosecute legal proceedings on behalf of the local authority.”¹⁰

The most significant executive function transferred to the mayor is the duty to prepare and present the budget as set out in sections 102, 103 and 103A of the Local Government Act 2001. Other important and related executive functions of the mayor are the appointment of the Corporate Policy Group and the preparation and presentation of the Corporate Plan (s133), prepare Service Delivery Plans and preparing a report on the capital programme (s135). In the press release (July 2023) the Minister emphasised the strategic in focus of the mayor’s executive functions and highlighted his or her role in proposing the development plan for the City and County, developing and overseeing the delivery of the housing strategy, of road transport and safety and environmental services.¹¹ Under s27, the mayor may delegate any of his or her functions to the director general who would be accountable to the mayor for the performance of these functions; however, the mayor may not delegate reserved functions (s27(1)).¹²

Table 2: List of executive functions that will remain with the director general; all are listed in the Bill and the *highlighted sections were also listed in the General Scheme.*

Section of 2001 Act	Description of provision extracted from 2001 Act
11(8)	Establishment, titles and administrative areas of local authorities and consequential provisions – Seal.
28	Temporary arrangements with respect to certain polling districts and register of electors.
46	Meetings administrator.
52(5) (d) and (9)	Joint committees of local authorities – seal and executive functions
81	Assistance towards non-public roads
97	Local Fund
98	Banking arrangements
99	Authorisation of payments
104	Limitation on additional expenditure
107	Keeping of accounts
108	Consideration of annual financial statement

¹⁰ Browne, The Law of Local Government 2nd Ed. 2020 Chapter 3 - Local Government Management System Section K. - Legal Proceedings

¹¹ <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/dbb24-cabinet-approves-legislation-for-a-directly-elected-mayor-for-limerick/#>

¹² It is unlawful for a chief executive to perform a reserved function. This is illustrated by *The State (Harrington) v District Justice Wallace*.

109 (5) and (6)	Community Fund
110 (6), (9) and (10)	Community Initiative scheme
112	Obligations in case of proposal involving illegal payment, deficiency or loss.
120	Audit opinion and report.
121	Consideration of annual financial statement and auditor's report
122	Audit committee.
128A, 128D, 128E(2),	Local Community Development Committees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing of Local Community Development Committee • Regulations and general policy guidelines
129I(5), 129M, 129N, 129O, 129T	Business Improvement Districts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BID company requirement • Annual BID multiplier • Annual BID contribution levy. • Recalculation of levy in event of total destruction or demolition of property • Final accounting of BID fund on termination of BID scheme
132	Reserved functions: Duty of Chief Executive
138	Prior information to elected council.
140	Requirement that a particular thing be done.
144 (3)(a), 144(8)	Position of chief executive
145	Appointment of chief executive.
146	Suspension and removal of chief executive
147	Tenure of chief executive
148	Deputy chief executive
149	Executive functions
151	Manager acting by signed order
152	Attendance of manager (DG) at local authority meetings.
153	Legal proceedings
158	Provisions relating to the employment of persons by local authorities.
160(3) and (4)	Qualifications for employment
166	Ethical Framework for the Local Government Service – Interpretation
167(1) (c)	Ethical Framework for the Local Government Service – Application
173(1)	Ethics registrar
174(7) and (8)	Duty of ethics registrar, etc.

179	Disclosure by employee, etc. of local authority of pecuniary or other beneficial interests.
180(4)(b) and (c)	Application of Ethics in Public Office Act, 1995, etc.
211B, 211C, 211D, 211E and 211F,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entry year property levy • Recalculation of levy in event of total destruction or demolition of property. • Recalculation of entry year levy if rateable valuation amended. • Post-entry year property levy in specified circumstances. • Recalculation of post-entry year levy if rateable valuation amended.
214(3), (4) and (5)	Power to direct payment of certain costs in relation to a public local inquiry, etc.
229	Power of local authorities to enter into contracts, etc.
Paragraphs 13(6) and 15(4) of Schedule 10	Meetings & proceedings of local authorities - Disorderly conduct & Record of attendance at meetings and address for correspondence

Source: Local Government Act 2001 (as amended) text (Law Reform Commission amended up to 2023).

The executive functions assigned to the mayor, and the **additional functions which are provided for in Part 4**, suggest that the office may have the potential to strengthen the policy and budget-making functions, as well as the strategic direction and leadership, of the elected council (of which the mayor is a member).

Additional functions

Part 4 (section 31) provides that within four months of taking office the mayor must prepare and publish a **Mayoral Programme** which sets out the key objectives and priorities (which is cognisant of statutory obligations and relevant central government policies). The mayor must present a draft for consideration by the elected council at least seven days before a meeting at which it is discussed and must *consider* comments or observations made by members of the council in the final Mayoral Programme. In preparing the Mayoral Programme, the mayor will seek the assistance of the **Limerick Mayoral Advisory and Implementation Committee** which will be established under s32 of the Bill two months after the mayor takes office (Box 2).

Part 4 also creates a role for the mayor in the delivery of Project Ireland 2040 via a **Limerick Project Ireland 2040 Delivery Board (s33)** and a specific delivery board for Transport under the 2040 Framework (s34). The chief executive of Clare County Council and the director of the Southern Regional Assembly are proposed to be members of the Board (along

Box 2: Advisory and Implementation Committee (s32)

Membership – Mayor, councillors appointed by the mayor, others who are nominated by a body whose functions or activities affect or may affect Limerick and confirmed by the mayor.

It has many advisory functions including to assist with preparing and supporting the mayor in advancing the Mayoral Programme, to promote, foster and support activities in Limerick especially in rural areas, the coordination of initiatives between, services and funding giving effect to government policy in rural areas and concerning the regeneration of towns.

It may appoint sub-committees which may be dissolved at any time by the mayor.

with the mayor and director general) and proposed role is to support the implementation of the objectives of the National Planning Framework, the Limerick City and County development Plan and the Limerick-Shannon metropolitan strategic plan and to collaborate with public bodies as part of this role. Under s33 the Board may prepare reports for the Minister for Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform and have no less than one annual meeting with the Minister.

The Implementation Advisory Group established by the Minister and the Mayor of Limerick in December 2019 argued that the success of the policy depended on the mayor having access to and influence over decision makers in central government where matters concerning Limerick are concerned. **Sections 30 and 35 provide for the relationship between the mayoral office and central government** which are necessary given the extent to which national legislation and policies determine local government in Ireland.

Under s30, a standing forum – the **Limerick Mayoral and Government Consultative Forum** – is created (comprising the Minister, all other government Ministers and the Mayor). Its purpose is to advise the Minister in relation to matters affecting or likely to affect Limerick or the performance of the functions of the mayor and it may, according to the Bill, advise and make recommendations on issues such as the conferral of additional functions on the mayor, on any Bill or government policy likely to affect Limerick or the Council's performance of its functions. The Bill states that the Forum must meet twice a year no more than 7 and no less than 5 months apart. The mayor is not empowered to convene the Forum as was recommended by the Joint Committee Report and by the Implementation Advisory Group Report. However, **section 53 provides the mayor with a power to request and receive information, and a power to request to be, and to be consulted**, by central government (or by a public body) on issues likely to have an impact on Limerick or Limerick City and County Council (section 35). It does not, as suggested by the Implementation Advisory Group, include a deadline for receipt of information and consultation be included.

Reserved functions, the Mayor and the Príomh Comhairleoir

The reserved functions of the Council set out in the Local Government Act are not changed by the Bill. However, most of the Cathaoirleach's functions are transferred to the mayor. The Bill does not explicitly set out the mayor's functions in this respect; rather s10 and s23 and Schedule 1(1) set out the functions that remain with the Príomh Comhairleoir. The Príomh Comhairleoir will retain the chamber-related duties of the Cathaoirleach – he or she will continue to chair meetings, receives items and places them on the agenda. The mayor will undertake the representational functions that were vested in the Cathaoirleach and will chair the Corporate Policy Group. As the speaker of the council, the Príomh Comhairleoir plays a leading role in holding the mayor to account.

The Bill assigns the Príomh Comhairleoir the directly-elected mayor's functions in the event of a vacancy or a temporary absence (Part 1). The Príomh Comhairleoir and Deputy Príomh Comhairleoir are elected by the council.

Accountability relations between the three actors

The mayor is accountable to the Council for the exercise of the executive functions set out above. The director general is accountable to the council for the exercise of executive functions which remain assigned to him/her (specified functions). The Council has oversight instruments at its disposal (e.g., sections 138, 139 and 140 of the Act) which it can apply to either actor depending on the function in question. The General Scheme (Head 25) proposed that the council would have new ways to hold the mayor to account for the performance of his or her duties; the Minister's press release (July 2023) states that a regular question time will take place between the directly-elected mayor and the councillors.

Regarding the right to remove the mayor, **Part 7** proposes that the DEM may be removed by the Council under specified circumstances (Box 3) and on the initiation of a removal resolution with the support of at least 2/3 of the Council (s52(1)). If the council approves a removal order, the process for removal of a DEM is as follows:

1. Statement of response by mayor (s53)
2. Special meeting to consider proposal (s54)
3. Appointment of an independent panel by the Minister (s55).
4. Mayoral attendance before the panel and recommendations of the panel (s57, 58)
5. Removal order is made by the Minister (s59).

Box 3. Removal of DEM

A removal resolution may be for:

- stated mis-behaviour,
- failure to a material extent, without reasonable cause, to perform functions and
- that failure is likely to materially impede the effective performance of its functions by the Council (s52 (2)).

There is no power for the Council to remove a chief executive (or director general). However, under the *Local Government Act 2001* the Council may commence a process for his or her suspension if:

- a) 1/3 of the total Council propose it by motion specifying reasons and a time period and a date for a meeting,
- b) A meeting is held at which chief executive may prepare a statement, and
- c) Council subsequently approve suspension by $\frac{3}{4}$ of total council (S146 2001 Act).

A suspended chief executive may only be removed from office with the sanction of the Minister and, in deciding this, a Minister would appoint a 3- person panel to make a recommendation. The same will apply to the director general.

Remuneration of the mayor and limit on other occupations

Section 15 of the Bill provides for Limerick City and County Council to pay the mayor's salary and an allowance in respect of expenses, as determined by the Council with the consent of the Minister and the Minister for Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform. The Bill further states that the remuneration may be calculated by means of a formula to be specified in the determination. The General Scheme indicated that the salary would be at the level of a Minister for

State. This is currently €150,398 with an increase under the Review of Building Momentum Agreement anticipated in October 2023.¹³

The Bill makes no reference to the timing or publication of the details of the remuneration package for the mayor. Under Section 142 of the *Local Government Act 2001* (as amended), the remuneration of local authority members is set out in regulations made by the Minister with the consent of the Minister for Finance. Section 142 of the *Local Government Act 2001* does not apply to the Mayor of Limerick City and County.

The mayor from is restricted under section 9 of the Bill from holding additional jobs, whether paid or unpaid, where there is potential for a conflict of interest:

“The Mayor shall not, while holding office as mayor, engage in any trade, profession, vocation or other occupation, whether remunerated or otherwise, which might reasonably be seen to be capable of interfering or to be incompatible with the performance of his or her functions as Mayor.”

Resources at the mayor's disposal

As noted above, the balance of power between the elected council and the appointed executive is towards the latter in Irish local government and, as also noted above, this explains why local government is comparatively weak in operational autonomy (Figure 1). Callahan observes that an important factor in understanding this balance of power debate is the relative resources available to the different actors; currently in local government, the chief executive has professional knowledge and experience, full-time status, and an ability to marshal the considerable resources of the local government workforce.¹⁴ While councillors have democratic legitimacy and considerable policy making and budgetary powers (which lie collectively with the council under the law). Councillors are part-time, and while they have access to party networks, they have few other resources. **What resources will be available to the mayor?**

On the strengths side, the mayor will have democratic legitimacy by virtue of the direct election, will have considerable policy-making power and functions, the power to draft and present the budget to the council and additional powers set out in Part 4.

Under the Bill, staffing and management functions lie with the director general (as gleaned from schedule 1(2)). Under the Bill (s19), the mayor may appoint a special advisor who will be accountable to the mayor and up to four staff (or five if there is no special advisor) from the local authority may be assigned to assist the mayor in the performance of his or her functions; these staff are assigned by the director general. The Joint Committee recommended that the mayor play a role in assigning these staff.

Section 16 provides that each financial year the Minister provide funding to support the mayor's performance of his or her functions. This will be part of the voted expenditure for the Department of

¹³ [gov.ie](http://www.gov.ie) - Pay of Oireachtas Members and Office Holders (www.gov.ie)

¹⁴ Callahan, 2018, 106 cited above

Planning. The Implementation Advisory Group recommended a new approach to funding for Limerick involving multiannual block grants, under the main capital programmes, to facilitate the DEM in planning and implementing strategic capital investments, additional directly-elected mayor grants linked to revenue raised locally through commercial rates or LPT, a Sub-Fund of the Irish Strategic Investment Fund set aside for Limerick or revising the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund and Rural Regeneration Development Fund to make an allocation over a 10-15 year horizon (see Appendix 3). The Joint Committee also recommended that the office of the DEM be provided with funding and revenue-raising powers as outlined in the IAG report, including an annual block grant and access to and management of a special sub-fund to be created through the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund (Recommendation 3)

2. Plebiscites in other local authority areas

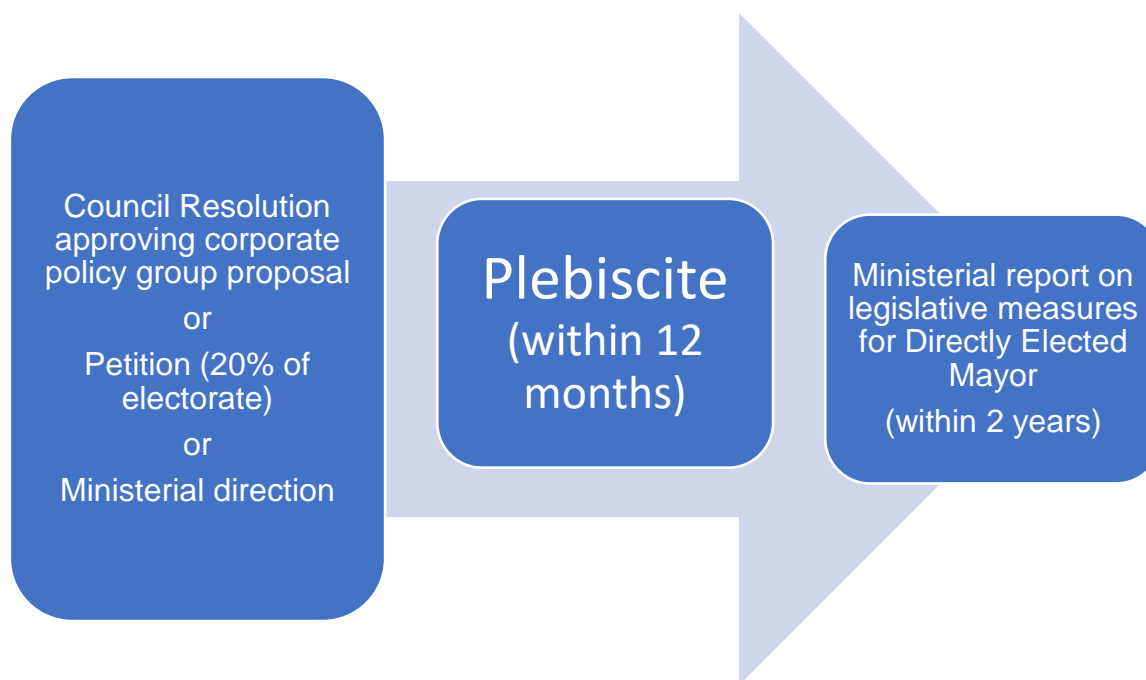
Part 6 of the Bill provides for the holding of plebiscites on proposals for directly elected mayors in local authorities other than Limerick. See Figure 2. It repeals Part 6, Section 50 of the *Local Government Act 2019* which provided for the plebiscites in the city and county of Limerick, the city and county of Waterford and the city of Cork.

Initiating a plebiscite

The Bill sets out three ways in which a plebiscite may be initiated, either by the elected council, the electorate for the local authority or by the Minister:

1. The elected council approves, by resolution, a proposal for a plebiscite put forward in a report of the corporate policy group (Section 43 (1) (a) (i))
2. The Minister receives from the chief executive a petition requesting a plebiscite signed by more than 20% of the electors and certified as valid by the chief executive (Section 43 (1) (a) (ii))
3. Ministerial direction (Section 43 (1) (a) (iii))

In all cases the plebiscite is to be held within 12 months of its initiation, on a day appointed by the Minister with the costs incurred to be paid by the authority.

Figure 2. Process for introducing DEMs in other local authorities.

Source: Oireachtas Library & Research Service

A number of issues are worth highlighting in respect of Part 6.

Firstly, during PLS the Joint Committee recommended that the Department consider lowering the percentage of registered voters required to petition for a mayoral plebiscite (Recommendation 14) because the electoral register includes the names of a significant number of people who are dead or have moved away. The percentage was not changed in the Bill. During the deliberations, the Minister said that the electoral register should be cleaned up as provided for by the Electoral Reform Act which was at that point progressing through the houses (PLS p20). We have no evidence for the current state of the electoral register.

Secondly, during PLS the Joint Committee stated that the General Scheme ‘was not fit for purpose for the Dublin area’ and that a ‘different model and legislation’ was required. Since then, the Dublin Citizen’s Assembly has reported on its recommendation to create a mayor of Dublin and the [report](#)¹⁵ has been referred to the Joint Committee on Housing, Local Government and Heritage (20 June 2023). The Committee is to consider the recommendations and advise on the requirement for a plebiscite to determine if Dublin should have a directly-elected Mayor and local government structures, and, if so, to propose a draft wording for such a plebiscite. The Committee is to report to Dáil Éireann by 31 December 2023.¹⁶

Thirdly, the Bill provides for a plebiscite on whether to create the position of a directly-elected mayor with executive functions which, it is presumed, would mirror the proposals set out for

¹⁵ [TAOdoclaid070723_121442.pdf \(oireachtas.ie\)](#)

¹⁶ [Report of the Dublin Citizens Assembly: Referral to Joint Committee – Dáil Éireann \(33rd Dáil\) – Tuesday, 20 Jun 2023 – Houses of the Oireachtas](#)

Limerick in this Bill. **The plebiscite could not concern any other type of directly-elected mayor e.g., a directly-elected mayor who would serve a five-year term and assume leadership of the Council (without executive functions) [e.g., as envisaged by the 2001 Act].** This type of directly-elected mayor has existed in New Zealand Councils for many years with some success.¹⁷

What happens after a plebiscite?

Section 48 of the Bill sets out that where the proposal to introduce a directly elected mayor in a local authority is approved by plebiscite, the Minister is required to submit a report to the Houses of the Oireachtas specifying the **proposals for legislative measures** to provide for a directly elected mayor. The 2019 Act, dealing with plebiscites in Cork, Waterford and Limerick, required the Minister to specify **proposals for the enactment of a law** providing for a directly elected mayor.

Public information campaigns for plebiscites

The Bill (s43) provides for the Electoral Commission, established in 2023, to publish and distribute information about the plebiscite (Section 43 (6)). Given that the Bill itself does not explicitly state the functions and powers of the mayor (see principal theme 1 above), this is an important provision. The Bill sets out that the information to be provided must contain a summary of the following (Section 43 (7)):

- (a) the functions and office that are proposed in respect of the directly elected mayor for the administrative area concerned,
- (b) the likely effect that the establishment of such office would have on the performance by the local authority concerned of its functions and the likely nature of the relationship between the holder of that office and that local authority,
- (c) the likely nature of the relationship between the holder of such office and any other body established by or under statute charged with performing functions in relation to the administrative area concerned,
- (d) the likely cost and other resource implications should the proposal be implemented,
- (e) the likely effects (if any) that the proposal would have in relation to the functions and organisational structure of any other body established by or under statute, and
- (f) such further information as An Coimisiún Toghcháin considers appropriate.

Under the 2019 Act which provided for the plebiscite in Limerick, Cork and Waterford, the local authority concerned was required to provide this information for the campaign. There is one significant difference in the information that must be provided - the **Electoral Commission is not required to set out the advantages and disadvantages that would result from the introduction of a directly elected mayor** whereas the local authorities in Cork, Waterford and Limerick were required to provide this information under the 2019 Act.

¹⁷ See Cheyne Christine (2017) 'Directly elected mayors in New Zealand: the impact of intervening variables on enhanced governing capacity' in Sweeting (edr) cited above.

The duties placed on the Electoral Commission help to address one of the issues raised with this policy and legislative process by the Joint Committee during PLS. It noted that the Limerick plebiscite received little attention and that there was a narrow margin in favour of a directly elected mayor (and a low turnout). It recommended that the Department undertake a “detailed analysis on the 2019 Limerick plebiscite with the aim of improving future public information campaigns prior to plebiscites and to improve the operation of plebiscites more generally” (Recommendation 13).

Advance voting during a pandemic or Covid-19

The Bill provides for the Minister, with the consent of the Electoral Commission, to make an order for advance voting on the day before the appointed polling day if there is “a serious risk posed to human life and public health by a pandemic or by Covid-19” (Section 44) Advance voting is in effect a second polling day.

The *Electoral Reform Act 2022* (Part 6) [Electoral Reform Act 2022, Section 173 \(irishstatutebook.ie\)](#) provides similar arrangements for advance voting at Dáil, European Parliament, Presidential and local elections as well as referendums.

Regulations

The Bill allows the Minister to propose regulations for the holding of a plebiscite. Both Houses of the Oireachtas must approve draft regulations.

Plebiscites -electoral offences

Section 46 of the Bill sets out the electoral offences from the [Local Elections Regulations 1995](#) that apply at future plebiscites on the direct election of mayors.

Section and description of offence from Local Elections Regulations, 1995	
67	Arrest of person committing personation
95	Personation
96	Bribery
97	Undue influence
98	Breach of secrecy
99	Offences relating to ballot boxes, ballot papers, nomination papers, certificates of political affiliation, official marks etc.
100	Disorderly conduct at election meeting.
101	Omission of name and address of printer and publisher from election documents.
105	Officer acting as agent of candidate or furthering a candidature.
106	Obstruction of nomination or poll
107	Interference with or destruction of postal ballot papers.
108	Obstruction of or interference with electors.

109	Personation agent leaving polling station without permission.
110	Prohibition on voting by person registered as elector when not entitled to be so registered
111	Unlawful marking of ballot papers by person acting as companion
113	Misleading statement as to process of voting
114**	<i>Handling of ballot papers by candidate or agent.</i>
115	Unauthorised inspection of documents.
116	Limitation of time for prosecution of offence.
117	Penalties.
118	Compensation where certain charge is unjustly made or not prosecuted
119	Certificate of returning officer to be <i>prima facie</i> evidence.

** There are no candidates or agents of candidates at a plebiscite where the question is Yes or No.

3. Electoral process and political finance

Part 5 and Schedule 2, which runs at 106 sections, provides for the conduct of the election and of the election campaign.

It sets out that the mayoral election **will ordinarily be held on the same day as local elections**; the Minister is required to make the order for the mayoral election after he or she has set the polling day for the local elections except for two situations where the Minister can make an order setting the polling day without reference to the local elections. First, the Minister may set the day for the first mayoral election after the passing of the legislation without reference to the local elections. Second, where violence obstructs the nomination process for the mayoral election causing the returning officer to postpone the nomination proceedings, the Minister may set an alternative date for the election.

The Bill sets out that the DEM is elected using the same preferential system as used to elect the President of Ireland and, in fact, the bill mirrors the *Presidential Elections Act 1993* [sections 48-52 of the 1993 Act with respect to the election of the President are more or less replicated for sections 49-53 of this Bill -[Presidential Elections Act, 1993, Section 49 \(irishstatutebook.ie\)](https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1993/act/11/section/49)]. The electorate is the same as for local council elections; voters will receive two ballot papers.

As most of this part of the Bill re-states the Electoral Acts, we look at two aspects of the mayoral election: Nomination process and political finance.

Nomination process

Candidates must be 18 years of age, citizens of Ireland and ordinarily resident in the state (Schedule 2, Part 2, Chapter 1). The nomination process (Schedule 2, Part 2, Chapter 4) and the returning officer, appointed by the director general, is responsible for determining the validity of all nominations

A person may nominate himself or herself as a candidate or they can be nominated by another person who is on the Register for Electors in the Limerick City and County electoral area.

Nominations for **political party candidates** must be accompanied by a certificate of political affiliation to a political party registered to contest mayoral elections. The nomination of **independent candidates** must be accompanied by either the statutory declarations of 60 assenters or €1,000 deposit.

Political finance

Section 37 of the Bill inserts a new section X into the *Electoral Act 1997* to provide for election spending and donation requirements at a Limerick Mayoral election. We set out the details for the spending limits, election period, donation restrictions and the requirement for donation accounts and donation statements, and the rules for reimbursement of election expenses and compare the spending limits and reimbursement amounts with other Irish elections.

Spending limit for each candidate is set at €72,100.

Table 3 compares the spending limits at other Irish elections.

Election	Spending limits
Local elections	€9,750-€13,000 depending on the population for the electoral area
Dáil election	€30,150 - €45,200 depending on the number of seats in the constituency
European election	€230,000
Presidential election	€750,000

Source: Citizens Information [Election expenses \(citizensinformation.ie\)](https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/elections/election_expenses/election_expenses.html)

Expenses are reckoned during the **election period** which is to be specified by the Minister at between 50 and 60 days before polling day.

Donation restrictions:

- Donations to candidates are limited to €1,000.
- Anonymous donations above €100 are prohibited.
- Individual cash donations are limited to €200.
- All donations in cryptocurrency are prohibited.¹⁸
- All foreign donations are prohibited.

Candidates, or their agents, are required to open and maintain a political donation account once they have received a donation above €100. All donations are to be lodged to that account.

Donation statements: within 56 days of the polling day, the mayoral election agent of each candidate must provide the Standards Commission a 'Limerick mayoral election donation

¹⁸ The *Electoral Reform Act 2022* banned donations in the form of cryptocurrency at other elections.

Statement' setting out the details and value of each donation above €600. The statement must be accompanied by a statutory declaration about the accuracy of the statement made by the election agent, and another made by the candidate.

Reimbursement of expenses

The candidate elected and any candidate that received at least 25% of the quota can be reimbursed a maximum of €18,500. The Table 4 below compares the reimbursement rules at other Irish elections.

Election	Reimbursement rules for candidates
Local elections	No reimbursement
Dáil election	€8,700 if the candidate got at least 25% of the quota
European election	€38,092.14 if the candidate got at least 25% of the quota
Presidential election	€200,000 if the candidate got at least 25% of the quota

Source: Citizens Information

4. Analysis of potential to enhance accountability and local democracy

There have been several initiatives to introduce a DEM to Irish local government since 2001 (Appendix 1) and in each case the policy goals have been similar; to enhance accountability at the local level, to strengthen democratic legitimacy and strengthen and provide more visible leadership at a local level. Whether the creation of a DEM can achieve these goals and achieve them while avoiding un-intended consequences such as gridlock in decision-making (e.g., if the mayor is from a different political grouping than the majority on the Council), depends not only on the institutional design or governance structures which are put in place (which the Bill provides for) but on other factors. These include the strength of the local government system, in particular the scope of its devolved powers and its financial autonomy (i.e., the wider institutional context in which local government is located).

The broader context to Irish local government will help to determine the implications of this Bill.

First of all, **the position of DEM is being introduced to a system of local government which remains comparatively speaking weak:** Diarmaid Scully (University of Limerick, 2020) cautions that expectations for what can be achieved by the institution of a DEM must be tempered with the reality that Irish local government is weak and that the office is being created within the context of a highly-centralised state.¹⁹ Concluding an edited volume examining the creation of a DEM for Dublin, O'Malley (Dublin City University) points out that a 'DEM does not derive power from the electorate but from what central government chooses to give it. There is little evidence that central

¹⁹ Presentation to the Implementation Advisory Group (2020).

government wants to cede powers even to a popularly-elected leader.²⁰ These same issues were also highlighted by witnesses during the Joint Committee debates on pre-legislative scrutiny ([Joint Committee Debate, 29 June 2021](#)). Comparative research highlights problems when a mayor with a popular mandate has a mayor with a popular mandate but little power can be frustrating and confusing for people.²¹

Relatively weak local government and democracy

Local government in Ireland is comparatively weak on all measures used to assess strength;

- Representation – it has fewer elected representatives per population than most other European states
- Scope of its functions – the range of functions which are devolved to it is narrower than comparator states
- Institutional design - sees elected representatives dominated by the executive of the Council who is appointed by central government. Ireland is the only country except for Scotland and Northern Ireland that uses the council-manager model
- Central government dominates local government both in terms of legal (local government is directly responsible to central government for the delivery of many services) and finances (extent to which it is financially autonomous).

See Scully (cited above), [L&RS Spotlight 2012](#) and L&RS Note (2014) See Ladner, A., Keuffer, N. and Bastianen, A. (2021). [Local Autonomy Index in the EU, Council of Europe and OECD countries](#) (1990-2020). Release 2.0. Brussels: European Commission for most recent analysis and here for chapter on Ireland.

Secondly, and also highlighted by witnesses during hearings on the General Scheme, to make a difference *and* to enhance accountability and democratic legitimacy the mayor must be sufficiently resourced and empowered to bring about policies he or she promotes in an election campaign (see Joint Committee Report, 2022 link provided above). There is some concern that the envisaged strategic policy role for the mayor will be difficult to realise without greater access to finance and devolved powers. The resources allocated to the mayor by the Bill are set out above.

Thirdly, comparative research finds that directly-elected mayors can, but do not always, enhance democratic legitimacy and local leadership; it would also appear that the type of local government system onto which it is grafted is not the only determinant of the outcome.²² In other words, a directly-elected mayor can enhance democratic legitimacy and leadership in a council-manager system. A study by Moritzen and Svava (2006) which examined the exercise of political leadership in local government across 14 countries, concluded that “it is evident that the mayor and the CEO are not engaged in a zero-sum struggle for influence.” In fact, they found that “higher influence by the mayor is associated with greater involvement by the CEO in policy innovation and more

²⁰ O'Malley and O'Broin (2020) *Mayoral governance in Dublin: challenges for citizens* Dublin, Glasnevin Press. P.155

²¹ See Sweeting David (edr) *Directly elected mayors in urban governance* Policy Press, University of Bristol.

²² See Sweeting David (edr) cited above. Introduction.

extensive networking by the CEO.” They found “a very strong positive relationship between the influence levels of the two officials in economic development decisions” leading them to conclude that “rather than a contest for control, there is interdependency and reciprocal influence between the mayor and CEO.”

Fourthly, a suggested cause of the imbalance in power between the elected council and the executive in Irish local government has been that the mayor is elected for one year only and plays a largely ceremonial role. The addition of a directly-elected mayor for a five-year term will certainly address this cause regardless of some of the challenges associated with weak local government.

What about the relationship between the directly-elected mayor and the elected council?

There is a question about whether there is a danger of gridlock in policy-making when the mayor is separately elected and is not elected by, and dismissible by, the council. Two factors may help to avoid this:

- Many of the executive powers are the right to prepare and propose policies and Council approval is required to confirm them which means that the mayor needs to work with the council
- The Bill provides that the mayoral election coincides with local government elections which makes it less likely (though not impossible) that the mayor will have a very different political support base to the majority of the council(i.e., the election will take place at the same time). The only time that a mayoral election would not coincide with local election is if it is to fill a vacancy in which case it is via a by-election (see section 13).

Finally, the Bill includes a review clause (section 7). Under this, the Minister is obliged to conduct a “review of the operation and effectiveness of the Act” within three years after establishment day (which must be published within three years and 3 months of establishment day). The General Scheme proposed a ‘systemic review of the powers assigned to the mayor’ whereas the review clause in the bill is broader and may, but is not specifically required to, include a systematic review of powers. The Minister must consult with the Mayor, the Council and the consultative forum (set up under Part 4) for the purposes of the review (s7(2)), but does not have to consult the mayor on how to conduct, or how to shape the focus of, the review. This Review will be very important, not only for the Limerick City and County Area, but for the advancement of policy proposals for other local authority areas.

Appendix 1

Box 1: Proposals to introduce directly-elected mayor to Irish local government

- *Local Government Act, 2001* provided that all councils would elect mayors for a 5-year term at the 2004 local elections, the (then) Minister Noel Dempsey proposing that the enhanced mandate would make the position stronger. **In this instance it was not proposed to assign executive functions to the mayor; rather to directly elect mayors as leaders of the elected council.** This section of the 2001 Act was repealed by the *Local Government (Amendment) Act 2003* before the first elections would have been held in 2004.²³
- By 2009, all political parties were in favour of introducing directly-elected mayor to at least some areas in local government. While the idea of directly elected mayors in each city and county council was still favoured by the (then) government, its focus was initially placed on Dublin. The Government published a Green Paper on local government reform outlining options for a directly elected mayor for Dublin and in 2010 the *Local Government (Mayor and Regional Authority for Dublin) Bill* was published. The Bill lapsed on the dissolution of the Dáil in 2011 and it was not restored to the Order Paper by the new government (2011-2016) which had different proposals around directly-elected mayors.
- The *Local Government Reform Act 2014* abolished town councils and created municipal districts whose councillors also sit on the county council, abolished regional councils and created three new ones and included some limited measures aiming to address the imbalance between the executive and the elected councils and some limited devolution of powers to local government most noticeably in the economic development area. **It did not provide for elected mayors in cities but for a plebiscite on a directly-elected mayor for the Dublin metropolitan area (s67) provided all four councils agreed to hold it (s66).** As required in *Putting People First 2012* and under the 2014 Act (s65), proposals were prepared by a forum of councillors comprising members from each of the four Dublin authorities in late 2013. The forum suggested a mayor with executive responsibilities in housing, planning, waste management, transport, community and traffic policing, fire services, economic development and tourism, and suggested that personnel and financial resources would have to be transferred for the mayoral office to function (Callahan, 2018, 93). Three out of the four councils approved a motion to hold a plebiscite based on the forum's proposals while Fingal Council opposed it and therefore ended the initiative.
- Given the difficulty in reaching agreement about proposed arrangements for Dublin, the (then) government proposed holding plebiscites in Limerick City and County Council,

²³ Callahan explains that

Cork City Council and Waterford City and County Councils in *the Local Government Act 2019*. The primary purpose of the legislation was re-setting local boundaries.

- Dublin Citizens' Assembly (2022) considered the type of DEM and local government structures best suited for Dublin. As per section 2 of this Digest, its proposals have been referred to the Joint Committee which will report by the end of 2023.

Table 1. How political power is constituted (regardless of how mayor is elected e.g., directly, or indirectly or even appointed)

Strong mayor form	Countries that broadly fit
Elected mayor controls the majority on the council and is legally as well as de-facto in charge of all executive functions. CEO services at the mayors' sill and can be hired and fired without the consent of any other politicians or political bodies. Mayor can hire political appointees to help with any function.	Spain, France, Portugal, Italy, US (Mayor-Council-CAO governments)
Council-manager form	
All executive functions are in the hands of a professional administrator, the city manager, the city council is relatively small body, headed by a mayor who formally has ceremonial functions only	Ireland, Finland, Norway, Australia, US: Council manager governments
Committee-leader form	
One person is clearly the political leader of the municipality even though executive powers are shared. The political leaders may have responsibility for some executive functions, but others will rest with collegiate bodies i.e., standing committees composed of elected politicians	Denmark Sweden UK (some councils)
Collective form	
Decision centre is one collegiate body, the executive committee, which is responsible for all executive functions. The executive committee consists of locally elected politicians and the mayor who is appointed by central government.	Belgium Netherlands

Source: Mouritzen and Svava (2006)²⁴ and also set out in Sweeting (2017).

²⁴ Mouritzen and Svava (2006) 'Institutions, leadership and influence: a comparative study of the influence of mayors and appointed CEOs under different forms of government' Working Paper 71 Universidad Autonoma de Madrid [Both are co-authors of seminal work on local government in 2002].

Appendix 2

Pre-legislative scrutiny of the General Scheme of the Local Government (Directly elected mayor with executive functions for Limerick city and council) Bill 2021.

The Joint Committee made 17 recommendations on the General Scheme.

Table A below is an analysis by L&RS of how or if the recommendations have been taken on board in the Bill. Table B is the Department's response to the recommendations which was received by L&RS on 20th September and added to a revised version of the Digest.

Table A

Recommendation	L&RS analysis of whether this has been addressed (fully or partly)
<p>1. The Committee recommends that the proposed Bill be amended to ensure that any of the specified functions as outlined under Schedules 1 to 4 could become a function of the Mayor; to further consider the issue of Mayors powers before the Bill is enacted using section 3.3 of the paper on "Directly Elected Mayors with Executive Functions: Detailed Policy Proposals" as approved by the Government in March 2019 as a guide; and for the Bill to contain provisions for a review of these powers after one year.</p>	<p>There is no provision for a review of the powers after one year.</p> <p>It is not clear whether the department examined the specified functions in Schedules 1 to 4 as proposed. However, the list of specified functions is more extensive in the bill than in the General Scheme (as explained in this Digest).</p>
<p>2. The Committee believes that the powers and functions of the Directly Elected Mayor should be in line with successful models in other countries. The Committee therefore recommends that the proposed Bill be amended to provide significant additional powers and functions to the directly elected Mayor including, but not limited to, transport, planning, health, climate adaptation and mitigation measures, and the oversight of housing and regeneration strategies.</p>	<p>Functions in implementing National Planning Strategy (Project Ireland) and specifically on transport is in the Bill</p>
<p>3. The Committee recommends that the proposed Bill provide the office of the DEM with funding and revenue-raising powers as outlined in the IAG report, including an annual block grant and access to and management of a special sub-fund to be created through the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund.</p>	<p>The office is not provided with revenue-raising powers; rather the Council maintains its right to raise revenue through rates and by amending the local property tax rate. The Bill (s16) provides for funding in each financial year for expenditure by the mayor on the performance of functions which would be part of the Department's Vote.</p>

4. The Committee recommends that the proposed Bill be amended to provide the mayor with the power to convene meetings of the Directly Elected Implementation Forum and that the forum be statutorily obliged to meet quarterly.	The Forum is not obliged to meet quarterly, rather bi-annually.
5. The Committee recommends that the proposed Bill contain provisions that allow the elected council to assess and make recommendations on the Mayor's Programme for Office.	Section 31 sets out that the mayor must present the Mayoral Programme in advance, and take into consideration views of councillors
6. The Committee recommends that the requirement for the first Mayor's Programme to have regard to the existing corporate plan be removed.	The election will coincide with local elections and a new corporate plan so this would not be relevant.
7. Regarding the review of functions, the first review should be commenced earlier than 2024 and it should be open to the newly elected Mayor to commence this process on assuming office.	The GS proposed that a systematic review of functions be commenced three years into the mayor's term. This has been broadened to be a general review of the effectiveness and efficiency of the Act and it is not open to the mayor to commence it.
8. The Committee recommends that the proposed Bill provide the mayor with the power to select and appoint all staff members (referred to under Head 22 of the General Scheme) of their choosing to their office.	Not in the Bill except for in the case of a Special Advisor. Director general has this role in respect of other staff
9. The Committee recommends that the proposed Bill provide for a procedure where the Director General can be sanctioned or removed in the event they are underperforming or inhibiting delivery of the mayor's mandate.	No. The existing provisions for removal of a Director General remain (set out in Principal Theme 1 in the Digest)
10. The Committee recommends that consideration be given to appointing the mayor the power to reassign the responsibilities of the Directors of Service within the Local Authority.	Not in the bill
11. The Committee recommends that the term "Príomh Comhairleoir" be replaced with the term Deputy Mayor/Leas-Mhéara.	No. However, the bill does provide that the Príomh Comhairleoir acts as a deputy mayor in certain circumstances – temporary or actual vacancies which could last for many months.
12. The Committee recommends the creation of a position that would deputise for the Leas-Mhéara/Príomh Comhairleoir which would be elected	Yes.

<p>from within the local authority membership to ensure continuity of meetings and other functions in the event of the Príomh Comhairleoir/Leas Mhéara being unavailable.</p>	
<p>13.The Committee recommends that the Department undertake a detailed analysis on the 2019 Limerick plebiscite with the aim of improving future public information campaigns prior to plebiscites and to improve the operation of plebiscites more generally.</p>	<p>No but the Electoral Commission has been assigned a role in preparing information for the mayoral election in 2024 (set out in principal theme 2 in this Digest).</p>
<p>14.The Committee recommends that the Department consider lowering the percentage of registered eligible voters required to petition for a mayoral plebiscite.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>15.The Committee believes that the current Bill as proposed is not fit for purpose for the Dublin area and would require a different model and legislation. In this regard the Committee recommends that Local Authorities in Dublin retain the right to call such a plebiscite and that Government bring forward proposals specific to the Dublin area.</p>	<p>Part 6 does not provide for different arrangements for Dublin. Note that the Joint Committee is examining proposals from the Citizens' Assembly in 2023.</p>
<p>16.The Committee recommends that the proposed Bill provide for the Directly Elected Mayor to be allocated a seat on the Southern Regional Assembly and that this provision be included in any future legislation governing mayoral plebiscites.</p>	<p>No this is not in the Bill.* [see Table B, Recommendation 16]. Southern Regional Assembly is a member of the Project Ireland Delivery Board and Delivery Board for Transport (sections 33 and 34)</p>
<p>17.The Committee recommends that the removal procedure under Head 53 be amended to require the motion to remove a mayor be signed by two-thirds of the council as opposed to half, and that there be no role for the Minister or the Oireachtas in the removal of a mayor, effectively removing Head 54 of the General Scheme</p>	<p>The bill sets out (Part 7) that 2/3 (rather than ½) of the council is required to commence procedures for the removal of the mayor (for reasons stated in the Bill). The role for the Minister in this process remains in the Bill.</p>

Table B: Department's response

Recommendation	Whether addressed (fully or partly) in the Bill or otherwise [Department's response]
<p>1. The Committee recommends that the proposed Bill be amended to ensure that any of the specified functions as outlined under Schedules 1 to 4 could become a function of the Mayor; to further consider the issue of Mayors powers before the Bill is enacted using section 3.3 of the paper on "Directly Elected Mayors with Executive Functions: Detailed Policy Proposals" as approved by the Government in March 2019 as a guide; and for the Bill to contain provisions for a review of these powers after one year.</p>	<p>The Bill provides that all executive functions currently resting with the Chief Executive will, unless excluded, become functions of the Mayor once the legislation is enacted. Those functions that will remain with the Director General will be listed in Schedule 1 of the Bill. The main purpose for this is to ensure that matters relating to individual cases remain with the Director General, which is appropriate. Functions that will not transfer to the Mayor fall into the following broad categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The administration of schemes, grants and loans ○ Functions arising from the operation of key schemes and service level agreements ○ Compliance, enforcement and the taking of legal proceedings ○ Staffing matters, including the appointment of staff and the preparation of HR strategies ○ Functions arising from the Accounting Officer role ○ Functions relating to the holding of polls and the management of elections <p>Part 4 of the Bill contains provisions for new structures at central level and in Limerick city and county to support the development of the role of the directly elected mayor. It sets out the additional roles and functions of the Mayor, separate to those executive functions transferring from the Chief Executive.</p> <p>Section 7 of the Bill provides for a review of the Act's operation and effectiveness within 3 years of the establishment of the office. It is considered appropriate for the Mayor to be in office for a period of time prior to commencing a review of the legislation. In addition, section 30 of the Bill provides that the Limerick Mayoral and Government Consultative Forum may make recommendations to the Minister on the conferral of such additional functions on the Mayor as the consultative forum considers necessary for the effective operation of the office of Mayor.</p>
<p>2. The Committee believes that the powers and functions of the</p>	<p>As outlined above, Part 4 of the Bill contains provisions for new structures at central level and in Limerick city and</p>

<p>Directly Elected Mayor should be in line with successful models in other countries. The Committee therefore recommends that the proposed Bill be amended to provide significant additional powers and functions to the directly elected Mayor including, but not limited to, transport, planning, health, climate adaptation and mitigation measures, and the oversight of housing and regeneration strategies.</p>	<p>county to support the development of the role of the directly elected mayor. It sets out the additional roles and functions of the Mayor, separate to those executive functions transferring from the Chief Executive.</p> <p>In addition to a review mechanism, section 30 of the Bill provides that the Limerick Mayoral and Government Consultative Forum may make recommendations to the Minister on the conferral of such additional functions on the Mayor as the consultative forum considers necessary for the effective operation of the office of Mayor.</p>
<p>3. The Committee recommends that the proposed Bill provide the office of the DEM with funding and revenue-raising powers as outlined in the IAG report, including an annual block grant and access to and management of a special sub-fund to be created through the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund.</p>	<p>The Programme for Government – Our Shared Future commits to supporting the first directly elected Mayor with a financial package to deliver upon their mandate. Therefore, section 16 of the Bill provides for funding by the Oireachtas for expenditure by the Mayor in performing functions under the Act.</p>
<p>4. The Committee recommends that the proposed Bill be amended to provide the Mayor with the power to convene meetings of the Directly Elected Implementation Forum and that the forum be statutorily obliged to meet quarterly.</p>	<p>Section 30 of the Bill provides for the establishment of a Limerick Mayoral and Government Consultative Forum consisting of the Minister, Mayor and other Government Ministers to advise the Minister on matters affecting Limerick or the performance of the mayoral function. It will be chaired by the Minister, who will convene the first meeting. The forum must meet twice yearly and it may meet at such other times as may be necessary for the due performance of its functions as agreed between the members, including the Mayor.</p>
<p>5. The Committee recommends that the proposed Bill contain provisions that allow the elected council to assess and</p>	<p>Section 31 of the Bill provides that within 4 months of taking up office, the Mayor must prepare and publish a Mayoral programme setting out the key priorities and objectives for his/her term of office. In preparing the programme, the Mayor must take into account statutory</p>

<p>make recommendations on the Mayor's Programme for Office.</p>	<p>obligations of Limerick City and County Council as well as government and ministerial policies and objectives. The Mayor must present the draft programme to the elected members and consider any comments or observations made by the members prior to finalising it. The final programme must be provided to the elected members, director general and the Minister, be published on Limerick City and County Council's website and be generally available to the public.</p>
<p>6. The Committee recommends that the requirement for the first Mayor's Programme to have regard to the existing corporate plan be removed.</p>	<p>This requirement set out in the General Scheme has been removed from the Bill. As above, section 31 of the Bill now only requires that the Mayoral programme take account of the statutory obligations of Limerick City and County Council and any relevant policies or objectives for the time being of the Government or of any Minister of the Government.</p>
<p>7. Regarding the review of functions, the first review should be commenced earlier than 2024 and it should be open to the newly elected Mayor to commence this process on assuming office.</p>	<p>As mentioned, section 30 of the Bill provides that the Limerick Mayoral and Government Consultative Forum, which includes the Mayor, may make recommendations to the Minister on the conferral of such additional functions on the Mayor as the consultative forum considers necessary for the effective operation of the office of Mayor.</p> <p>In addition, section 7 of the Bill provides for a review of the Act's operation and effectiveness within 3 years of the establishment of the office. It is considered appropriate for the Mayor to be in office for a period of time prior to commencing a review of the legislation.</p>
<p>8. The Committee recommends that the proposed Bill provide the Mayor with the power to select and appoint all staff members (referred to under Head 22 of the General Scheme) of their choosing to their office.</p>	<p>Section 19 of the Bill enables the Mayor to select and appoint a special advisor with relevant experience and expertise. Section 18 also provides for the assignment of supporting staff to the Mayoral Office, to a maximum of 5 staff, including the special advisor. The assignment of staff to that Office will be a function of the Director General, in consultation with the Mayor. This is appropriate given that the Director General will retain functions that relate staffing matters, including the assignment of staff, in the Council.</p>
<p>9. The Committee recommends that the proposed Bill provide for a procedure where the</p>	<p>Section 146 of the Local Government Act 2001 outlines a process for the suspension or removal of a chief executive for "stated misbehaviour" or if the suspension or removal</p>

<p>Director General can be sanctioned or removed in the event they are underperforming or inhibiting delivery of the Mayor's mandate.</p>	<p>appears "necessary for the effective performance by the local authority of its functions". A resolution of the elected council to that effect is required. Under the Bill, these provisions will apply to the Director General and if the elected council is of the opinion that a Director General is "underperforming or inhibiting delivery", they may utilise these existing provisions.</p>
<p>10. The Committee recommends that consideration be given to appointing the Mayor the power to reassign the responsibilities of the Directors of Service within the Local Authority.</p>	<p>As set out above, under the Bill, the Director General will retain functions that relate staffing matters in the Council, including the assignment and appointment of staff, so as to support the Mayor in carrying out their functions.</p>
<p>11. The Committee recommends that the term "Príomh Comhairleoir" be replaced with the term Deputy Mayor/Leas-Mhéara.</p>	<p><i>The Report of the Implementation Advisory Group established to consider a Directly Elected Mayor with Executive Functions for Limerick City and County</i> recommended this term after much discussion.</p> <p>It recommended that the Directly Elected Mayor with executive functions for Limerick City and County have the title of Mayor, in Irish, Méara and that the councillor elected to chair the plenary meetings will be known as Príomh Comhairleoir. The Bill also provides for the position of Leas-Phríomh Comhairleoir. The terms are now in use and generally understood. They reflect the difference in the roles of these new positions.</p>
<p>12. The Committee recommends the creation of a position that would deputise for the Leas-Mhéara/Príomh Comhairleoir which would be elected from within the local authority membership to ensure continuity of meetings and other functions in the event of the Príomh Comhairleoir/Leas-Mhéara being unavailable.</p>	<p>Section 21 of the Bill abolishes the offices of Cathaoirleach and Leas-Chathaoirleach of Limerick City and County Council on the vesting day, while sections 22 and 24 provide for a Príomh Chomhairleoir and Leas-Chathaoirleach of Limerick City and County Council, respectively, who will be elected and hold office in accordance with Part 5 of the Local Government Act 2001. In essence, the new role of Príomh Comhairleoir replaces that of Cathaoirleach who will chair the elected Council and act as its speaker, with support from the Leas-Phríomh Chomhairleoir.</p>
<p>13. The Committee recommends that the Department undertake a detailed analysis on the 2019 Limerick plebiscite with the aim</p>	<p>Part 6 of the Bill deals with the holding of plebiscites to consider proposals by other local authorities to provide for a directly elected mayor of their administrative area and it sets out the process for initiating a proposal to hold such a</p>

<p>of improving future public information campaigns prior to plebiscites and to improve the operation of plebiscites more generally.</p>	<p>plebiscite. It also provides that, prior to the holding of a plebiscite, the recently established, An Coimisiún Toghcháin (the Electoral Commission) shall arrange to publish and distribute information in relation to the plebiscite proposal to the attention of the electorate. It is agreed that an analysis of the previous campaigns, to see what lessons can be learned, and to improve future public information campaigns prior to the holding of plebiscites, would be important.</p>
<p>14. The Committee recommends that the Department consider lowering the percentage of registered eligible voters required to petition for a mayoral plebiscite.</p>	<p>As mentioned, Part 6 deals with the holding of plebiscites to consider proposals by other local authorities to provide for a directly elected mayor of their administrative area. It sets out the process for initiating a proposal to hold a plebiscite. A plebiscite of the electors of an administrative area may be proposed in the circumstances where a) a local authority Corporate Policy Group recommends it and the elected council approves it; b) a petition is signed by more than 20% of the electorate and the Chief Executive certifies it; or c) the Minister directs it.</p> <p>The Committee argue that the electoral register contains a significant number of people who are deceased, have relocated or have emigrated, etc and therefore to get 20% eligible voters would in fact be closer to 25% or 30% of those listed on the register. They recommend that the threshold of 20% be lowered. However, this same argument could be used to increase the threshold. In the time since the report was published, implementation of the Electoral Reform Act 2022 has considerably improved the integrity of the electoral register.</p>
<p>15. The Committee believes that the current Bill as proposed is not fit for purpose for the Dublin area and would require a different model and legislation. In this regard the Committee recommends that Local Authorities in Dublin retain the right to call such a plebiscite and that Government bring forward proposals specific to the Dublin area.</p>	<p>Part 6 of the Bill provides for the holding of plebiscites to consider proposals by other local authorities to provide for a directly elected mayor of their administrative area.</p> <p>In relation to Dublin, in February 2022, a Citizens' Assembly was established to consider the type of directly elected mayor and local government structures best suited for Dublin. The Assembly has completed its work and the Report of the Dublin Local Government Citizens' Assembly was laid before the Oireachtas in December 2022.</p> <p>The Report has been referred to the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Housing, Local Government and Heritage for consideration. The Committee has been requested to</p>

	<p>advise on whether there should be a plebiscite on a directly-elected Dublin Mayor and, if so, what question should be put in a plebiscite, and that the Committee issue a detailed response to the report and recommendations by the end of 2023.</p> <p>The report is also under consideration by the Department with a view to preparing a comprehensive response for Government's consideration in due course. The outcome of these processes is awaited.</p>
<p>16.The Committee recommends that the proposed Bill provide for the Directly Elected Mayor to be allocated a seat on the Southern Regional Assembly and that this provision be included in any future legislation governing mayoral plebiscites.</p>	<p>It is intended that the Mayor will be an ex officio member of the Southern Regional Assembly. This is not provided for in the Bill as it will be provided for by way of an amendment to the relevant legislation, the Local Government Act 1991 (Regional Assemblies) (Establishment) Order 2014, in due course.</p>
<p>17.The Committee recommends that the removal procedure under Head 53 be amended to require the motion to remove a Mayor be signed by two-thirds of the council as opposed to half, and that there be no role for the Minister or the Oireachtas in the removal of a Mayor, effectively removing Head 54 of the General Scheme</p>	<p>Part 7 of the Bill contains the provisions for a legal mechanism to remove a directly elected Mayor with executive functions, through a robust, fair, three-tier process. The removal of a democratically elected individual is a serious consideration and therefore, there are several conditions to be met in both initiating the action and achieving an outcome of removing the Mayor.</p> <p>The Bill now requires that a notice of a removal proposal must be signed by at least two-thirds of the total members of the Council and requires at least three-quarters of councillors support a motion in order for a resolution on the removal notice to be passed.</p>

Appendix 3 –Recommendations of the Implementation Advisory Group on a directly-elected mayor for Limerick

Extract from Executive Summary (pp.17-21 of Report)

The core element of this report sets out the new or additional powers, functions or roles that should be assigned to Limerick city & county council on the election of a DEM. These are based on the premise that: -

- a) specific new functions would be devolved in law, or that

b) in policy areas that affect life for the people of Limerick, the DEM would have a right in law to be consulted by central government on the development and impact of those policies.

The IAG proposes the new devolved functions would be based on the essential place-making planning and infrastructure provision for Limerick city and county council. In this regard, the DEM would have responsibility for functions, including:

- chairing an entirely new Limerick PI 2040 Project Delivery Board to coordinate and manage the delivery of the PI 2040 investment programme in Limerick;
- membership on the Southern Regional Assembly;
- managing the transition to a new Limerick regeneration investment plan;
- negotiating urban and rural development funding envelopes and leading the development plan implementation in line with NPF objectives;
- implementing a Town Centre First3 approach;
- Developing a programme of housing provision; 3 A Programme for Government initiative Annex A Report of the IAG on a Directly Elected Mayor Page 18 of 156
- leading the development of a Transport Strategy for Limerick, with NTA;
- responsibility for a county wide public bus transport system, both urban and rural, in line with national policy, including franchising bus services throughout the county;
- developing a sustainable rural mobility plan and leading the implementation of the plan; • greater autonomy in the provision of business supports in Limerick, to be delivered through LEOs, including supporting companies transitioning from LEO to EI backed companies;
- a new Limerick-based fund to support high potential start-ups;
- responsibility for developing a Just Transition Limerick Plan, with the approval of the elected council;
- chairing the Public Services Working Group, which would be put on a statutory footing;
- representing Limerick on any new national community safety commission as recommended in the report on the Future of Policing in Ireland;
- chairing the Joint Policing Committee in whatever format it may take following on from the recommendations of the report into the Future of Policing in Ireland;
- planning for school provision and student accommodation with relevant agencies and Departments;
- engaging with all educational stakeholders at primary, secondary and tertiary level, including liaison with national government on outcomes;
- all traineeship/ apprenticeship schemes/ grants for unemployed young persons in Limerick; • collaborating with OPW on climate adaptation/flood defences;
- promoting the integration of energy saving and climate change adaptation measures into local development plans;

- responsibility for the identification and implementation of initiatives in relation to biodiversity and climate initiatives and the use of funding from the national carbon tax take to support green initiatives in Limerick;
- responsibility for all OPW /Heritage assets/locations in the entire county;
- maintenance of built and natural heritage along with associated funding
- Power to designate a cultural enterprise in Limerick as a national cultural institution;
- an enhanced grants scheme for existing cultural centres, including theatre; • a new “per cent for arts” scheme will be devised to support local artists;
- a devolved budget for local and regional sports capital programmes.

The IAG is recommending that the DEM is **a statutory consultee** across a range of Government policy areas and has a statutory right to be consulted in relation to any government policy as it relates to Limerick. “ A DEM will hold a direct democratic mandate from across the local authority area, and will form a highly visible and accountable focal point for empowered local political leadership across a full local authority electoral cycle. It is therefore appropriate that a DEM should have enhanced rights of consultation, including with Government Ministers.”

The IAG proposes, in particular, that the DEM would have a right in law to be consulted: -

- By the national PI 2040 Project Delivery Board in relation to the implementation of the NPF as it affects Limerick;
- In relation to the development of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) and tasked with leading the development of the new Limerick MASP;
- By Irish Water in relation to its plans and projects in Limerick;
- On the “Town Centres First” and the next Living City Initiative scheme iteration;
- On all national transport plans and policies as they relate to Limerick, as well as an expanded statutory involvement with the NTA insofar as Limerick is concerned;
- On the regional cycle design offices proposed in the PfG as they relate to Limerick;
- On National Aviation Policy;
- In relation to the SME and state bodies group including to coordinate the ongoing response to Covid-19 for SMEs in Limerick;
- As a member of the national sectoral taskforces for Manufacturing, Tourism, Hospitality & Retail, and proposed Shannon Estuary Economic Development Taskforce, if/when instituted;
- On all education and training plans and policies as they relate to Limerick, encompassing the Primary, Secondary, Higher Education and Further Education and Training Sectors;
- On the Regional Technology and Clustering Programme;
- On all aspects of Sláintecare as it affects Limerick;
- All matters relating to Garda resourcing in Limerick city and county council. In particular, any special expert forum established in relation to antisocial behaviour;

- Any Joint Agency Response to Crime;
- In relation to all environment, energy and marine plans and policies as they relate to Limerick;
- On all matters relating to Arts, Culture and Heritage in Limerick;
- Tourism, sports and recreation plans and policies as they relate to Limerick.

The IAG proposes that the DEM would also be given **overarching powers to convene stakeholders** in Limerick in relation to a particular policy agenda. In this way, the DEM will, for example, be able to convene all enterprise stakeholders in Limerick and be mandated to take appropriate action in support of economic development, including liaison with central government and state agencies. The IAG believes that, with these additional statutory functions, the DEM will have the mandate to fulfil the full potential in the new role. However, the IAG would also argue strongly that the DEM must have the financial means to deliver on the mandate. The IAG believes that a significant degree of both additional funding and autonomy over that funding is necessary. Above all, unfunded mandates – the assigning of additional functions without additional funding – must be avoided. A new approach to funding must therefore be considered for Limerick. The IAG proposes that this should involve

- Multiannual block grants, under the main capital programmes, to facilitate the DEM in planning and implementing strategic capital investments;
- A revision of the current “bid” process under the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) and Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF), whereby an estimated allocation would be made to Limerick over a 10-15-year horizon. Full planning and delivery of the investment would be devolved to the DEM who would lead a negotiated settlement with national Government;
- Additional DEM block grants linked to revenue raised locally under Commercial Rates or LPT;
- Decentralised power for borrowing to be assigned to the DEM, within set gearing ratios and a separate multi-annual borrowing limit provided to Limerick city and county council;
- a Special Sub-Fund of the Irish Strategic Investment Fund set aside for Limerick, co-managed by the DEM and ISIF and used for infrastructure projects on an investment return basis with specialised Sub-Funds in each case into which the private sector could also invest.

Finally, perhaps most importantly, the IAG proposes the establishment of a **new institutional forum** to facilitate ongoing engagement between a DEM-led Limerick city and county council and national Government. In that regard, the IAG proposes that the Minister responsible for Local Government would be required in statute to convene a Directly Elected Mayor Implementation Forum with the Mayor of Limerick, involving other Government Ministers. This body would meet twice yearly to monitor all aspects of the Limerick Mayor project, resolve bottlenecks and identify potential new devolved functions. It would meet at official level on an ongoing basis and be serviced by a small secretariat.

Appendix 4: Institutions of the Local Council

These are provided for in the Local Government Act 2001 and are designed to assist the elected council in undertaking its policy work.

Box 2: Institutions of Local Councils

Cathaoirleach (Mayor): elected each year by the members of the elected council. S/he presides at meetings of the council, may exercise a casting vote and performs a ceremonial representative role on behalf of the authority.

Strategic Policy Committees (SPC) SPCs are established in key policy areas and are composed of councillors (2/3) and representatives of sectoral interests (1/3). Each SPC corresponds to a Director of Services on the administrative side of the council and this Director attends meetings and provides information as requested. *Putting People First* (2012, 135) suggests SPCs should perform a monitoring/oversight role in relation to the implementation of policy with Service Directors accountable to the relevant SPC

Corporate Policy Group (CPG) Composed of Chairs of SPCs and the Cathaoirleach, the CPG acts like a mini-cabinet. The Manager (now Chief Executive) must consult with the CPG when preparing the budget.

Manager (now to be chief executive), Directors of Services and the administration

The Manager (now chief executive) is appointed for a seven-year term (which may be extended to ten years) and is responsible for executive functions. There is a team of Directors of Services reporting to the chief executive and Directors of Services attend meetings of the relevant SPC.

Source: L&RS NOTE The Role of Councillors following the Local Government Reform Act 2014.

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