

**Q135. COUNCILLOR CLAIRE O'REGAN**

To ask the Manager to seek Child Friendly City status for Dublin under the UNICEF Child Friendly Cities Initiative in order that the voice of the child is heard and that the needs and rights of all children living in and visiting Dublin city are met, and to ask the Manager to begin implementing the spirit of Section 8 (1) (b) of the Planning (Amendment) Act 2010 in the new LAPs for the city in the new Development Plan, the relevant section stating that that children, or groups or associations representing the interests of children, are entitled to make submissions or observations regarding objectives and policies to deliver an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area of the development plan.

**CITY MANAGER'S REPLY:**

Dublin City Council is aware of the goals of the UNICEF Child Friendly Cities Initiative (CFCI) in its delivery of services to children and young people. The CFCI aims to guide local governance towards including children's rights as a key component of their structures, goals, policies and programmes. Becoming child friendly is a process involving a number of steps which CFCI identifies as 9 building blocks which are necessary for a child friendly city around structures/activities that are necessary to ensure a children's rights perspective and active involvement. In meeting the Council's commitment to the National Children's Strategy 2010 and Towards 2016 (lifecycle approach), a Children's Services Unit was established in 2007 as well as an interdepartmental Children's Services Steering Group. This led to the development of a children's services document, which was agreed by the Housing, Social & Community Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) in September 2009, which works "towards making Dublin a better place for children and young people". This statement is a significant step towards a child friendly city and is reflected in the new City Development Plan which includes a range of policies which support the interests of children and young people.

Work will continue in 2011 through the steering group and corporate plan to assist departments/areas in engaging with communities, government departments and statutory/voluntary agencies where appropriate to further meet the building blocks necessary to help make Dublin a child friendly city.

Groups representing a range of organisations, communities and sectoral interests have always been encouraged to make submissions to Development Plans, Actions Plans and Local Area Plans under preparation. However, by the 2010 Act highlighting the importance of submissions from organisations representing children, it is the intention that during future Local Area Plan consultations the Council will actively seek and encourage submissions addressing the rights, needs and wishes of children from organisations representing the interests of children.

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