



PRESS RELEASE

No: 404/2020

Date: 18th June 2020

DPC Holds First Virtual Meeting

The Development and Planning Commission (DPC) held its first full meeting using virtual technology this morning.

This has become necessary as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and public health advice on gatherings and social distancing.

The format allowed members of the Commission to view application documents on their screens, to debate and discuss applications and to take decisions.

The applications considered were already the subject of public participation and an applicant and objector were able to address the Commission in the usual way.

This is the first phase of the project.

The second phase will allow the general public and the media to view the entire meeting through a live stream as the meeting happens.

This first meeting has been recorded and will be placed on-line in its entirety.

There were a few teething issues at the beginning as members, applicants and objectors got used to the new technology. However the general impression was that the meeting had gone very well and that the continued use of this modern technology would allow the Commission to meet more frequently and in this way provide an added impetus to the planning process.

The Minister with responsibility for Town Planning and for Digital Services Albert Isola said: "I want to thank the teams in the Town Planning Department and in ITLD for working together to deliver transparency to the planning process even at this difficult time. We have now tested a full meeting of the DPC, with applicants and Objectors being heard and will now move forward with confidence to phase 2 where these meetings will be streamed live permitting media and the public to attend these virtual meetings. My thanks to the ITLD and Town Planning teams for making this happen."