

Square pegs and round holes: Dublin City's experience of the RAPID Programme.

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Introduction

This paper is concerned with the governance of spatial inequalities in metropolitan areas. As in other countries, Irish metropolitan areas are characterised by significant socio-economic inequalities. Despite various local initiatives Ireland has yet to achieve an effective model of urban or metropolitan governance capable of reducing these metropolitan socio-economic inequalities. This paper reviews, by way of an evidenced-based Dublin City case study, an Irish metropolitan governance process designed to counter specific metropolitan spatial inequalities - the RAPID (Revitalising Areas by Planning, Investment and Development) Programme. The paper begins by situating the analysis in literature relating to globalisation, governance, multi-level governance and new localism. It proceeds to briefly outline a profile of Dublin as a city characterised by high levels of spatial-economic disadvantage and an ongoing process of badly managed planning and development (Redmond *et al* 2008). To review the experience of recent innovations in metropolitan governance and their effectiveness at tackling social exclusion this paper utilises evidence from three recent evaluations/reviews of the Dublin RAPID Programme supplemented with stakeholder interviews¹. Having analysed Dublin's experience of innovations in metropolitan governance the paper concludes by outlining the key lessons for broader metropolitan governance theory and practice. These include the problem of geopolitical fragmentation and the difficulties of working in highly complex patterns of local administrative governance processes, the degree to which vertical and horizontal arrangements have hampered rather than assisted strategies to mitigate spatial social inequalities and finally key issues of community capacity and political participation.

The theory

The paper begins by situating the analysis in literature relating to globalisation, governance, multilevel governance and new localism (Moulaert 2000, Hambleton, Savitch and Murray 2003, Held 2004, Buck *et al* 2005 and Sassen 2007). A substantial body of contemporary research on metropolitan areas has coincided with the emergence of new urban governance arrangements in many western democracies. This material, concerning the relationship between globalisation and social policy, charts how various pressures combine to change not only policies but also the process of policy making. These pressures on economic and social policy arise from the impact of

¹ The reviews are

(a) A 2006 review commissioned by the Department of Community, Rural and Galteacht Affairs and carried out by Fitzpatrick Associates, a private Dublin-based economics consultancy, hereinafter referred to as the Fitzpatrick Review

(b) A 2006 review commissioned by Dublin City Council and Pobal, the RAPID Programme's national managing agency, hereinafter referred to as the Dolphin Review

(c) A half day Dublin City RAPID evaluation meeting which took place in February 2008, hereinafter referred to as the 2008 Review.

modernisation, globalisation, regionalisation, urbanisation and neo-liberalism on national states (Scholte 2000). Policy making is a highly complex and differentiated process. This process is made even more complex by globalisation's transformational influence on state-centred government processes as they adapt and evolve into multi-level governance processes (Cerny 2002).

Multi-level governance implies that local, regional, national and supranational authorities interact with each other vertically and horizontally. This is captured by the imagery of states moving "upward, downward and outward" (Clarke 2003:34) and of governments steering but not rowing (Pierre 2000 and Cerny *et al* 2005). Such innovation in the politics of place means changes in the nature of power and new urban institutions 'or new localism'. The role of the state changes and both power and functions shift between administrative levels and between statutory and non-profit and commercial agencies at these different levels. Local government becomes less a public administrator and more a public planner or regulator. In this new context, public governance processes need to adapt quickly and devise mechanisms that allow innovative, though manageable, risks to be taken to meet the diverse local policy agendas arising from the impact of globalisation.

For some commentators these developments represent a shift "from hierarchical modes of governance" (preoccupied with vertical relationships and the dominance of governmental authority), via market forms (based on competition and contracts), to "network forms" (built on trust and a sense of common purposes between partner agencies)" (Lepine *et al* 2007: 8). Others disagree with this assessment claiming that in nation states, governments retain sufficient influence over legal, financial and policy levers to ensure that governance takes place in the "shadow of hierarchy" (Jessop 2002: 5). Nonetheless, there is a general acceptance that governing now does occur in a wider range of spheres and includes a broader range of actors than previously. Pressurised nation states seek new options as they move from a situation where state-centred government is the norm to a less rigid process of multi-actor and multi-level governance.

Governance here is defined as 'including government but also the looser process of influencing and negotiating with a wider range of public, private and not for profit actors, to achieve mutual goals' (Hambleton 2003: 147) The flexibility and innovative capacity associated with multi-level governance are seen as ways to enable the state to address the threats and opportunities arising from globalisation. Cerny *et al* (2005: 18) identify a future of 'plurilateral' negotiations which aim to "co-ordinate myriad diverse actions - and to bring wider and more disparate coalitions into potentially tenuous forms of collective action". Such change is referred as 'a new localism'.

Hambleton, Savitch and Stewart (2003) and Sassen (2004) explore how such pressures impact locally and in particular impact on cities and urban environments. Sassen (2001) identifies global cities as those where wealth and employment creation processes are linked to service industries, particularly financial and legal services, and theorises they face significant challenges as globalisation becomes both wider and deeper in scope. Sassen expects that the governance of complexity gives urban civil society and urban politics specific roles in shaping globalisation.

What might we expect to see in urban governance? Worldwide, various new governance techniques have emerged to enable the planning and delivery of policy. New terms such as *glocalisation* and *glurbanisation* has been coined to describe and define this new paradigm of local governance in the context the new challenges of facing larger cities competing in the global market place and within the wider metropolitan governance literature (Hoffmann–Martinot and Sellers 2005). These new forms of governance include networked local governance, community governance, institutional networking, social cooperation and micro regulatory networks. These concepts are characterised by strengthening local government through policy committees and stronger roles for mayors, more active roles for citizens in participative governance, decentralisation or devolution, institutional changes to strengthen local government's capacity for engaging in partnership and networking. Clark (2003: 81) summaries these approaches as a "new political culture". This can and does also include a new approach to fiscal management which includes service or user charges. These shifts are often facilitated by 'managerialism' where new public management administrative and financial devices including service level agreements, targets and indicators as well as re-regulation, decentralisation and privatisation are introduced to maximise local flexibility. There are obvious tensions between the contradictory pulls of participatory governance processes and this type of managerialism (Lister 2004).

What does all this mean for socio-economically deprived areas of Dublin City? While it is not clear that Dublin has sufficient scale to be 'a global city' it is characterised by financial and service industries. We should therefore expect to see in Dublin what Jessop (2002) calls 'glurbanisation', i.e. new forms of governance in the urban and through the urban. Deindustrialisation has already changed who lives and works in Dublin. Inward migration for example has changed the culture of the city with now over 11% of the population comprised of migrants. This poses substantial challenges for traditional community development processes in the city and requires a new urban community development approach in the context of Dublin as a globalising city. Such an approach

must address the new challenges of racism, apartment living, migration, transition, mobility, and connectivity and old problems of poverty and disadvantage. This new urban order has already led to tensions within the city and between the city and national level².

This paper will explore the underdevelopment of urban governance in Dublin City. It draws attention to tensions in managing metropolitan governance that arise when values of managerialism clash with community based local governance process. Further, it will argue that any attempts at multilevel governance or developing urban governance in Ireland are impeded by broader horizontal and vertical dysfunctional characteristics in Irish governance and acute levels of geopolitical atomisation. Weak local government systems compound the difficulties in rolling out effective metropolitan governance programmes in Dublin City.

Social segregation in Dublin City

The paper proceeds to briefly sketch a profile of Dublin as a city characterised by high levels of spatial present disadvantage (Kelly and Teljeur 2004). Dublin City has a long proud history but a history also characterised by strong patterns of spatial socio economic inequality and some of the worst urban slums in Europe. For practical purposes we take up the story of Dublin City in 1958 when the state's first integrated economic development programme was introduced and resulted in a greatly improved economic situation and a subsequent dramatic expansion in private house construction and rapid development of Dublin City suburbs³. By the late 1960s and early 1970s, a number of ill-fated design experiments were being applied to new local authority housing schemes including low density tower block projects (Ballymun 1966-69) and high-density, low-rise courtyard based schemes (Darndale,1973-78). While pioneering in their time these were subsequently acknowledged as planning failures. In 1967 the Wright Report recommended housing an expected population increase in four self-sufficient new towns of 100,000 people. While this influenced future planning in Dublin City a Wright Report core recommendation that "neighbourhood units" of schools and associated community and retail facilities accompany each unit of 5,000 people was not implemented. .. The suburban growth pattern of Dublin altered again during the 1980s as the outward expansion of the contiguous built-up areas slowed considerably.

² For example, key stakeholders in Dublin are now widely understood to have a perspective on the state's current decentralisation policy that is markedly different to the rest of the country. Furthermore the state's decision not to categorise Dublin as a 'gateway' in the National Spatial Strategy (2002) raised questions in the city as to the growing awareness of the role Dublin plays as the engine of Irish recent economic growth.

³ A 1963 Local Government (Planning and Development) Act created a standardised layout of housing estates in terms of density, public open space, road widths and services.

Reflecting the dismal national economic context, housing was increasingly focused on small infill schemes in inner suburban locations and in the improved economic circumstances of the late 1990's to inner city regeneration and gentrification and suburban regeneration including the Ballymun Regeneration project of demolition and replacement of over 2000 social housing units, the largest regeneration project in Europe.

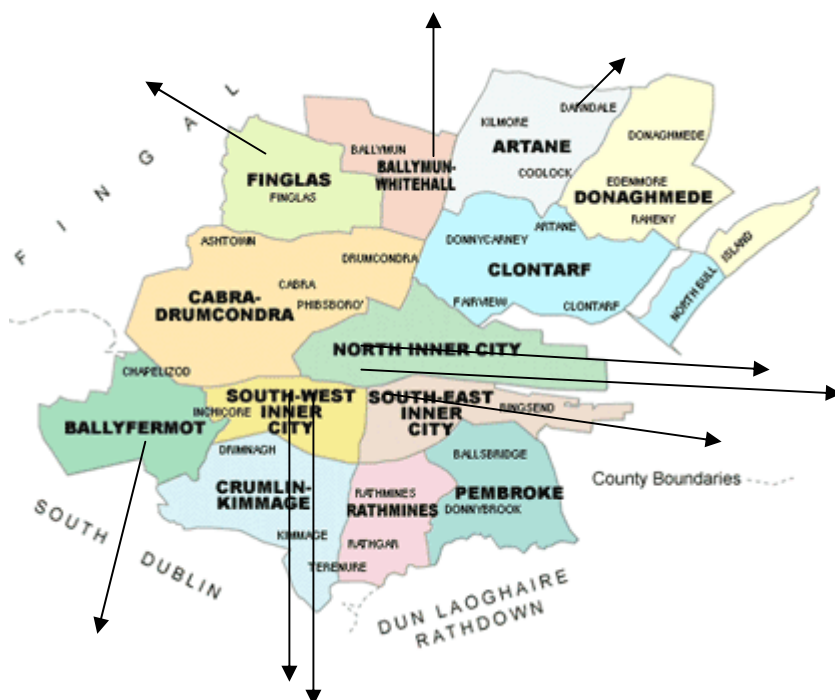
What ever the reason (lack of expertise, political corruption⁴ and inadequate governance and planning structures all contributed) the impact of this relatively recent failure to effectively plan and implement Dublin's urban development has contributed directly to the metropolitan spatial socio-economic inequalities in Dublin today. In particular the Dublin transport infrastructure was negligible. Without an accessible local employment infrastructure or adequate access to more distant employment, the large local authority schemes became "isolated enclaves of deprivation and social exclusion" (Bartley and Shine 2002). As Redmond *et al* (2008: 28) describe 'social polarisation became highly interconnected with spatial segregation' with inner city and large suburban local authority housing estates housing an urban poor characterised by high levels of unemployment, early school leaving and educational disadvantage, inadequate housing, low quality environment health inequality and drug alcohol addiction and finally low levels bridging and linking social capital.

When deprivation indicators are employed, it can be seen that the spatial pattern of deprivation is characterised by a high level of deprivation concentrated in a relatively narrow swathe of wards running west from Neilstown through Ballyfermot, Crumlin, the Inner City and to the Dublin Docks. West Tallaght is a significant outcropping of deprivation in the south west. In North Dublin, areas characterised by deprivation include North Blanchardstown, South and West Finglas, Ballymun and the Darndale/Priorswood area (RAPID Programme Areas). There is relatively little correlation between increased housing densities and poverty and deprivation. Irish metropolitan areas tend to be characterised by a lower density suburban environment (usually 20 dwellings to one hectare) in comparison with most of our EU partners. Our tradition of land use closely follows British, North American and Australian patterns instead of the compact nature typified by most European city forms (the contiguous built-up area of Dublin occupies roughly twice the area of Cologne, Copenhagen or Prague). Land use patterns in the peripheral areas of Dublin tend to be characterised by a strong degree of land use segregation, employment and retail functions tend to be

⁴ Issues associated with the failure to develop this neighbourhood infrastructure in one particular area is presently the subject of a tribunal of enquiry into corruption in local authority planning – the Flood Tribunal.

located at significant distances from residential areas, resulting in commuting, traffic congestion and social and economic exclusion for a large number of people in local authority and private housing estates. In addition, the scope for land use intensification in suburban areas remains limited due to the inflexible pattern of road layout. This acts as “a powerful constraint on the potential for redevelopment” (Williams *et al* 2001). Consequently, there has been a constant if unspoken drive to move further and further out to green-field development sites. Recent outward growth of the city has surpassed the rate attained in the 1970s. While there is a constraint due to the lack of serviced land, development continued unabated with development of commuting towns and villages at distances of up to 80k from Dublin. This is widely acknowledged as unsustainable and may lead a new but very different type of marginalised periphery. This ever-increasing sprawl is in direct contravention of the state's efforts to manage this growth and runs counter to Strategic Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area (introduced in April 1999 and in law since 1st January 2001). This failure to plan and execute transport and effective city management is an important context for what can be delivered under RAPID.

Map of Dublin City 13 administrative areas and 9 RAPID areas (designated with arrows)



As can be seen spatial concentrations of deprivation exist primarily in the inner city and outer suburbs bounded by the M50 motorway which runs in a C shaped ring around the north-eastern, northern, western and southern sides of Dublin. Dublin City area accounts for 11.9% of the population but above average levels of socio economic disadvantage, nationally however it

disproportionately accounts for over a quarter of special designated disadvantaged area based partnerships and also accounts for a third of urban RAPID projects. Using the SAHRU (Kelly and Teljeur 2004) deprivation index which measures deprivation using census data Dublin City accounts for 22% of the most deprived District electoral divisions in the country (76 out of 343) and includes the ten most deprived wards in the country (all of which are unsurprisingly in the city's RAPID areas). These areas are characterised by unemployment and low educational attainment (up to 50% leaving school at 16 or earlier), low social class, an absence of car or home ownership, over crowding and very high social welfare dependency (over 50% dependent with isolated areas and particular communities of interest like the Traveller community experiencing 100% welfare dependency).

While Dublin City 2006 census socioeconomic indicators have not yet been analysed there are initial signs of some improvement (Haase 2008). Distribution of growing affluence associated with Celtic Tiger Ireland highlights the overriding importance of Ireland's urban centres, affluent areas are distributed in concentric rings around the main population centres in urban commuter belts of large-scale private housing development in the outer urban periphery with high concentrations of relatively affluent young couples. The *relative* position of local areas over the past fifteen years is largely unchanged with the worst affected areas in 1991 in the same position in 2006, except Dublin's Inner City which has experienced significant gentrification. There is a noticeable narrowing of the distribution of scores due to the differential impact of the economic boom on areas with particularly high rates of emigration, overcrowding and unemployment however some of the most disadvantaged urban areas, particularly in Limerick, Cork and Waterford, have failed to participate in this generalised improvement in living standards, and have, as a consequence, fallen even further behind the more affluent areas of Ireland. Whether these changes are a result of government policy or more macro economic growth requires more in-depth evaluation.

RAPID

The RAPID Programme was launched in February 2001 in order to direct State assistance towards improving quality of life and access to opportunities for communities in 25 (now 27) designated disadvantaged urban areas throughout Ireland. A year later, the second strand of the programme extended its coverage to a further 20 provincial towns. RAPID's guiding principles reflect several governance concepts including community participation and local ownership but also include principles that reflect the language of new managerialism or new public management; promotion of

strategic planning; co-ordination of provision of public services; flexibility; targeting of 'additional' services, investment and facilities. To implement RAPID a multi-tiered implementation structure was established, consisting of a National Monitoring Committee, County/City Social Inclusion Monitoring Groups (SIMs) and local Area Implementation Teams (AITs) supported by a full time RAPID Co-ordinator (RCO). At the outset of the programme, each RAPID area developed an Area Plan, a strategic document to outline the overall aims and objectives of the programme in the area, and a series of actions to be undertaken based on identified local needs. The central ethos of the programme was to provide priority and frontloaded access for RAPID areas to existing statutory funds and no overall defined RAPID budget was put in place. The legacy of this that it has been difficult to precisely measure the added value of RAPID⁵.

In the first national evaluation of the RAPID Programme the Fitzpatrick Review (2006) concluded that while all national departments and agencies appeared committed to RAPID⁶ there were different approaches to implementation with substantial differences across government departments. While acknowledging the pro-activity of the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, the review highlighted the underdeveloped role of the Department of Education and Science (DES), the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE), and FÁS (employment services and labour market programmes) in the planning of programme activity at local level and the consequences for disadvantaged areas of investment in education, training and employment. A major national reorganisation of the health administration and the establishment of a new national agency, the Health Service Executive, also impeded effective partnership work at national and local level. Hence we see the difficulty of multilevel governance when the vertical and horizontal governance links are so clearly inconsistent and the quality of national government department's participation so variable.

Despite some initial scepticism, the review found RAPID associated with increased levels of, and effective use of, public sector investment facilitating important local projects. Clear prioritisation of

⁵ RAPID's stated objective was to focus the attention of state agencies and their existing budgets (there was no new funding available for projects but £5million was put in place to support the programme) on the 25 most deprived urban neighbourhoods.

⁶ A very detailed survey of AITs was undertaken as part of the evaluation process, with responses received from over two-thirds of the 45 RAPID areas. Some of the key findings included local authority, HSE, FÁS, An Garda Síochána, local community organisations and the local community were represented on all of the AITs, with the VEC, Elected Members and Department of Social and Family Affairs (DSFA) involved in the majority of cases. In some areas the Local Drugs Task Force, Probation and Welfare Service, Youth Services Board and local schools also participated on AITs.

RAPID areas in the allocation of funding by a number of departments, effective working partnerships and the use of 'leverage' schemes in the areas of health, estate management and playground improvements were seen as pivotal in providing funding that could be linked directly to the programme. The Fitzpatrick Review also identifies outstanding issues and gaps, including funding, education, employment and training, and family support interventions. While capacity of the community to engage in the development and progression of local projects appeared to have grown significantly focused work was required to engage the most marginalised groups including older people, new communities of non-Irish nationals and youths. While the Fitzpatrick Review found a number of 'impressive' positive outcomes associated with RAPID⁷ they identified a small number of areas where RAPID had a limited impact on the effective prioritisation of resources and where there has been limited formation of good working partnerships or project momentum, a general weakness in strategic planning, *ad hoc* and reactive approach to bringing forward projects, little holistic sense of area needs, lack of success in empowering the participation of the relevant community and lack of commitment of some key stakeholders involved in the implementation process.

While not all of the above problems relate only to Dublin City RAPID and while not all Dublin City RAPID Programmes have all those problems it is fair to say that the Fitzpatrick Review and other more informal reflections confirm that the experience of RAPID in Dublin city has been qualitatively different to the rest of the country. The question, from a metropolitan governance perspective, is why the Dublin RAPID experience has been markedly different from the rest of the country. Is it some thing about Dublin City Rapid projects that makes them less likely to succeed? Or is it something about RAPID governance processes that makes RAPID less likely to succeed in Dublin, a metropolitan area? Is there an argument for different governance structures to tackle spatial inequality in metropolitan areas?

Dublin RAPID

When an interim Fitzpatrick Review's highlighted particular challenges for the Dublin City RAPID Programme, Dublin City Council and ADM (now Pobal) initiated a Strategic Review of the RAPID Programme in Dublin City. The lessons from this review, called hereafter the Dolphin Review,

⁷ Fitzpatrick highlights 97% of AITs believed actual activity reflected that planned to a significant or to some extent. AIT structures demonstrated in most areas an ability to act as a conduit for funding, a coordination mechanism for funding and an important local information source. Effective work is associated with ongoing commitment to strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation. The most prominent types of projects progressed in RAPID areas focused on the physical environment, recreational facilities and community development, accounting for over 60% of all projects progressed.

were subsequently considered by the Social Inclusion Measures group (a subcommittee of the Dublin City Development Board)⁸ and were the subject of a February 2008 SIM consultation meeting with RAPID stakeholders. The discussion below evaluating the issues for RAPID in Dublin City combines material from the Dolphin Review, the February 2008 Dublin City RAPID consultation and supplementary follow up interviews with key stakeholders.

The Dolphin Review found a number of positive aspects of Dublin City's RAPID experience, the programme has for instance, increased the level of networking and co-ordination at local level between and within the local community, staff in statutory agencies and elected representatives, *"only for RAPID, we wouldn't know people in the agencies"* (RAPID Review 08). RAPID has also made a significant contribution in some areas to building capacity at individual and community level, provided substantial training and development for community representatives in some AITs and fast-tracked the development of particular flat complexes, *"at the very least, it gives us a voice that we wouldn't have otherwise"* (RAPID Review 08). Dublin City RAPID also influenced how spending programmes have been developed in RAPID areas. Without this capacity some community representatives felt more direct RAPID resources available initially *'would all have gone to the statutory agencies.'* RAPID is acknowledged as a significant catalyst for change in some areas/agencies, has increased the awareness of some statutory agencies of the need for more inclusive dialogue with the community and provided models of interagency projects. It has been particularly successful in achieving significant small-scale objectives, for example the local enhancement of flat complexes, introducing concept of schools as lifelong learning centres, the development of local health and sports centres. The review's examination of on the programme's weaknesses and barriers to progress varied depending on the local area and stakeholder group so it is important to note that following summary of key concerns and barriers does not apply to all areas.

Resources

From inception of RAPID, awareness of needs and, possibly more important, the funding expectations of community groups in Dublin City exceeded those in smaller towns and cities. The Fitzpatrick Review (2006) observes that in urban areas and particularly Dublin City very ambitious plans were submitted by AITs in the expectation of significant additional funding which did not

⁸ The Dublin City Development Board was established on a non-statutory basis in 2000. It was given a statutory basis by the Local Government Act, 2001. Development Boards (34 linked to the 29 counties and 5 city councils) provide a forum for interaction among public agencies, quasi-public agencies like area partnerships, elected representatives (councillors) and nominees for the local community and voluntary sectors.

then materialise. The Fitzpatrick Review notes that there was a strong consensus that a major barrier to progress in the programme to date has been this lack of tangible, accessible resources. The Dolphin Review similarly notes that while RAPID started with “great fanfare” and excitement, it created the expectation of significant resources and then failed to deliver on these in terms of additional funding. The absence of specific additional resources meant no financial ‘carrot’ for the main statutory stakeholders in Dublin City to take the RAPID Programme seriously. While RAPID has been successful enabling directly or indirectly appropriately sized and often small additional projects to small towns or areas in large towns or smaller cities, the scale and cope of need in Dublin City simply cannot be facilitated by the concept of RAPID or by treating Dublin’s RAPID areas as having the same need as other RAPID areas (Dublin RAPID stakeholders, for example, point out the frustration of seeing rural groups hand back money while they had insufficient funds). 'disproportionate historical resource allocation' - perhaps highlight the fact that because of the lack of discretion regarding what funding can be spent on by Pobal - this results in oversupply of facilities for which funding can be sought and lack of other facilities because there is no funding stream agreed by central government i.e. community just applies for funding to get it because it's available and also that often the amount of funding is outweighed by the level of monitoring and reporting back on the funding expenditure.

Statutory Agencies Involvement

Some of the problems in Dublin RAPID are those experienced world wide and well documented in literature examining local development and partnership working processes. This literature emphasises, the need for the right people with appropriate decision making power to be consistently at the table with well informed statutory objectives about what they hope to achieve. Dolphin found, across the stakeholder groups, a low level of ownership and understanding of the programme and an absence of clear strategic direction and leadership overall for RAPID in Dublin City. Specifically there has been a lack of clarity from the outset of the programme as to the management culture in statutory agencies required to support the implementation of RAPID. There is a particularly low level of buy-in to the programme from many of the statutory agencies, and strong negativity from some representatives who perceive RAPID as an unnecessary layer that adds little value as projects ‘would be happening anyway.’ It was evident from the consultation meetings that only a minority of statutory representatives have grasped how a culture of empowerment, partnership and integration can benefit them in their work. There may be a specific Dublin experience of this. Statutory agencies in smaller towns have more immediate loyalty and identity with the local area,

the statutory actor in Dublin City will often not live in the city and may have no local connection with the actual RAPID area and no personal relationship with community leaders.

It is clear that RAPID generally, and Dublin RAPID in particular, is suffering at a local level from the geo political fragmentation, a dysfunctional overly centralised national policy process and that there is a functional problem with how national planning is integrated with local delivery. There are clear structural issues that need to be resolved if agencies are enabled to play an effective role, the national structures of Department of Education and Science for example do not facilitate local involvement. The failure to achieve a coherent reorganisation of the Health Services Executive means local confusion about roles, boundaries and budgets. Most crucial of all there is a complex pattern of administrative and governance jurisdictions within Dublin City which is highly fragmented. None of the six main statutory agencies, comprising local government, health, policing, education, labour market and social welfare have common administrative boundaries and none are consistent with local development or social inclusion territorial designations. Perhaps you could include a point in relation to the difficulty this poses in collating information as a means of assessing future need, future planning, benchmarking, target setting, and quantifying progress and that this also makes it difficult to provide evidence based argument to amend any government procedures/practices. Ireland remains highly centralised with little devolution of core service functions to local government and no local taxation or revenue capacity for local administration (Ó Broin and Waters 2007). It is clear that horizontal and vertical governance relationships have hampered both policy and practice in relation to spatial inequality.

Overlap between RAPID and existing Area Based Partnerships

In order to draw in the existing budgets of state agencies, the Area Implementation Team (management committee, hereafter AIT) of each RAPID area had to draft a strategic plan and needs analysis. This was announced some months after the well established area partnerships⁹ had completed the same process for the same areas. Despite the obvious duplication of effort, the statutory members of the partnerships were obliged to join the AIT and two community members were nominated by each partnership (in fact the boards of the partnerships were reproduced except for the social partners). It was unclear whether community members of the AIT should be nominated by the partnership or whether a new round of consultation should take place as to how to select the community members. In Dublin a number of area partnerships had to take over the

⁹ Area-based local development partnerships which had been established in 1991 and covered the same but wider geographical areas as the RAPID.

running of the RAPID Programme as it ran into problems of consultation fatigue on the part of the community and the lack of experience of many of the recently appointed RAPID Co-ordinators. In five of the original RAPID areas in Dublin the Manager/Chief Executive of the partnership became the chairperson of the AIT. In addition statutory agencies are pressurised trying to service up to five 'competing' local social inclusion structures; local area based partnerships, local drugs task forces, RAPID AITs, Area Policing Committees, Homeless Forums and Community Development Programmes.

Local community

Irish urban areas characterised by high levels of socio economic and education are also characterised by lower levels of bridging and linking social capital, this suggests more intensive community development processes may be needed to enable community participation in disadvantaged urban areas. Many Dublin based community and local development representatives are vocal about what they perceive as the failure of RAPID to deliver on the original expectation of significant resources and by the ongoing lack of statutory buy-in. While resources were now increasing, there were several concerns in relation to this. The resources coming on stream were very small 'drip-feeding crumbs', the huge amount of paperwork associated with it which is a source of frustration, community representatives felt they were asked to *'play god'* in relation to endorsing applications for this funding and received little training for this level of decision-making and responsibility. In addition, given Dublin's larger population and pockets of significant disadvantage there are very different levels of capacity among community groups themselves and tension and mistrust between those who are strong, well established and politically skilled and those groups who are newer and more vulnerable. In addition, there is no process of periodic reviews to update whether RAPID areas remain appropriate or whether they should be amended.

The experience of RAPID has also reinforced a culture of blame in some communities and a 'them and us' mentality between community groups and statutory agencies. This tension is also borne out at national level where Dublin City's RAPID representatives are perceived as 'moaning'. It is possible that patterns of ineffective communication have been embedded over the eight years and, at this stage, neither side is effectively listening to each other. In terms of political participation and political behaviour there are marked spatial patterns in both voter turn out (lower in spatially deprived areas) and voting choices (less median voter patterns and more protest voting of non establishment parties, especially Sinn Féin, in spatially deprived areas). While the weak system of

local government means there is little flexibility to administer local resources other than on a prorated population basis, an examination of the GIS mapping survey of the city clearly shows disproportionate historical resource allocation processes and perceptions of variable standards in service delivery across the city.

RAPID Co-ordinating Officers (RCOs)

In the absence of clear guidelines and strategic leadership, RCOs have a sense of being left to carry the burden of motivating people at a local level. Among RCOs there is a wide diversity of experience and skills, resulting in significantly different approaches to their role and the capacity they bring to their work. The RCOs have had to negotiate their reporting relationships with DCDB Management, AITs and DCC Area Management – three distinct players. Hence there is no clear comprehensive line management structure for the RCOs that would ensure a consistent integrated approach to their work. In addition there is significant DCC staff turn over where RCO's transfer to other posts and hence little DCC staff continuity in RAPID areas. The increasing managerialist culture within the wider public service has increased administrative workloads, particularly complying with Pobal's onerous bureaucratic processes takes up an increasingly inappropriate amount of time for RCOs and, consequently, RCOs feel that their talents, skills and time were being under-utilised.

Lack of leadership in a weak system of local administration

The aforementioned lack of strategic input to RAPID from the political and managerial leadership of Dublin City Council requires explanation. It is questionable whether the operational structures for leadership on social inclusion in Dublin City can be effective given the size and scale of the challenge of RAPID programme in Dublin City¹⁰. More significant however is the weak system of local government in Ireland, an outcome associated with Ireland's colonial past. The legacy is a system more akin to local administration for a highly centralised national government and a system with 'a relatively narrow remit' devoid of influence in key areas for social inclusion; health,

¹⁰ While the larger problems addressed here can only be addressed through local government reform and addressing Dublin City's governance needs there are some more immediate areas where the city could act. Hence while DCC has contributed substantial resources to the programme and is a consistent and active participant in the process it is also perceived as slow in giving RAPID the focused attention, direction and support needed to have it succeed and develop to its full potential. Various consultations and evaluations recognise that DCC need to ensure required operational planning and performance management systems are put in place across the programme are essential to its successful delivery and in particular at city level reduce number of AIT meetings to manageable level. DCC could also try to overlap RAPID and city budgetary planning processes by formally linking the Area Budget and annual plans to the RAPID. DCC could also make more active use of the local community structures or forums for consultation and more consistent communication with community representatives.

education, social welfare labour market and policing (Callanan and Keogan 2003:9). A significant challenge for all social inclusion measures is that they rely for leadership on monitoring and support structures that themselves have only evolved in the time frame of RAPID. National evaluations show that the leadership structures in Irish local government (the Strategic Policy Committees, and their co-ordinating mechanism the Corporate Policy Group [attended by SPG Chairs, the City Mayor and City Manager and relevant senior management staff]) were slow to evolve or reach full functional effectiveness. In Dublin City, the evolution of these structures had proved particularly problematic with new structures competing in leadership roles with a system that still recognises political party group leaders as the formal political leadership of the city¹¹. This leaves those in formal policy leadership positions less powerful than envisaged and less able to impact on policy.

Furthermore the sheer size and scale of governance issues in Dublin City, not only the largest council in Ireland but also the council with the most complex policy agenda, makes it very difficult to provide a more micro level leadership for RAPID. Many question the capacity of 52 part time councillors to provide adequate leadership in managing the governance of these complex urban policies and submissions to a Green Paper on Local Government (2008) have argued urban governance needs must be a priority for local government reform (Lacey 2008)¹². The relatively low attendance, of the larger parties (Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael) in city and local level social inclusion related policy committees highlights the lack of political commitment of the two larger parties to social inclusion but also means that those committed to social inclusion are overburdened with social inclusion related work (that bears little electoral rewards).

Role of the Social Inclusion Measures Group

The national implementation structures for RAPID stressed the importance of city or county level monitoring and in theory gave this role to the Social Inclusion Measures group (SIM)¹³. Given the previous discussion it should be of little surprise that SIM in particular was slow to develop in Dublin City. Some of SIM's development problems arise from the legacy of a particular period of institutional building by the local authority and other local actors in the CDB where a strategic decision was taken to develop social inclusion task forces in each of the five areas of the city. This

¹¹ While theoretically it might have been assumed that political party group's leaders might have assumed policy leadership positions as chairs of the city's six strategic policy committees the work load involved in carrying all roles simultaneously worked against this outcome.

¹² Since 2004 over a third of Dublin City Councillors have resigned. This is unprecedented and unique among Irish local authorities and generally understood to be a result of failure to reform metropolitan governance processes to meet the challenge of governing a complex urban city like 21st Century Dublin.

¹³ SIM is a sub-committee of the City Development Board, a partnership structure composed of statutory agencies, community representatives and the six political chairs of the council's strategic management committees.

strategic direction was controversial and perceived by many local social actors to be in competition with existing social inclusion structures especially the area partnerships in the city. There were various impacts from this direction, the fall out severed effective communication between key stakeholders, it distracted CDB staff and members from the task of supporting, politically and practically, the Dublin City RAPID¹⁴.

While political and management leadership of SIM is now affirmed there are still obstacles to SIM's monitoring role in Dublin City¹⁵. Taking the endorsement process as an example, SIM are required by Pobal to endorse the annual and strategic plans of all social inclusion agencies in the city. Theoretically it is assumed that this endorsement process provides an opportunity to achieve integration and avoid overlap and duplication in the various plans. In smaller councils with less spatial concentration of socioeconomic inequality this can work well. SIM might, for example, achieve some added value for a review of and endorsement of one area partnership Plan, Three Community Development Project (CDP) plans and two RAPID plans. In Dublin City however the scale of the problem means reviewing 48 CCP plans, 9 RAPID plans and 9 area partnership plans. This cannot be achieved in a meaningful way and no one could blame the agencies being endorsed for perceiving the Dublin City endorsement exercise as a fruitless exercise in power by SIM. For this reason SIM has adopted 'a light touch' approach to endorsement which while effectively managing political tensions also realises little integration or added value.

Square pegs into round holes.

This paper has identified several structural issues relating to the size and density of Dublin City and the need for appropriately designed metropolitan governance structures consistent with Dublin's scale and size. Specifically the fact that there are nine RAPID areas in Dublin City means it is difficult to ensure active participation on all of these by all statutory agencies due to the number of meetings involved. The number of social inclusion projects, while perhaps warranted, is also impacted by the obvious boundary inconsistencies in the operational structures of the different statutory agencies. There are practical implications arising from this, for example the capacity of statutory agencies to attend meetings in different areas. The Dublin City RAPID areas geographical

¹⁴ Dolphin (2005) observed no evidence of SIM working effectively in the provision of strategic support or monitoring to RAPID., there is no clear strategic direction about the level of support to be given at City level, no positive written policy statement of commitment to continuation of the programme and a clear understanding of where long-term structural relationship of RAPID to SIM.

¹⁵ Various leaders have accepted some level of responsibility for the lack of clear direction for Dublin City RAPID

boundaries are inconsistent with local community or statutory priorities. This overlap of committees' membership and the statutory agency boundary confusion is experienced more intensely in Dublin City than anywhere else in the country. Membership of AITs often comprises staff or members of other social inclusion agencies in the same area, for example a community development project, a drugs task force, an area partnership or a local area policing committee. It is not unrealistic that the same people could meet at different meetings but talking about similar themes three times in one day- as one participant observed '*we are literally tripping over ourselves*' (Review 2008). City scale and density requires also require different funding structures and Dublin City Council's funding mechanisms cannot use leverage in the same way as smaller areas where, for example a playground budget of €6,000 will have a significant local impact. The fact that RAPID is perceived more favourably in rural areas may be because RAPID as it is presently designed and executed simply works better for smaller geographical areas. A different structure is required to access the scale of funds and deliver projects capable of making a difference to Dublin City.

The issue of scale means Dublin needs different governance and support structures for enabling national social inclusion initiatives to be successfully implemented in Dublin City. While a national *cohesion process* which began in 2004 achieved some consistency nationwide the issues of cross participation, boundary confusion, time and scale are still intense in Dublin City. There have been some suggestions of a central social inclusion co-ordinating body in each local administrative area of the city but little progress has been made towards addressing these problems. The cohesion process remains an ongoing opportunity or context to reform metropolitan governance but city level and national leadership is required to make further progress.

National and city level relationships

Progressing appropriate urban governance structures for Dublin requires integrated thinking between national departmental and statutory agencies, political leadership and local government leadership. The integrated leadership between DCC and Pobal required to develop a shared vision and build ownership of the RAPID Programme at a city level has not so far been sufficient. There has been a failure of the political leadership of the city to represent or articulate a vision for Dublin RAPID or socio economic spatial disadvantage more generally. RAPID Co-ordinating Officers have tried but to date also failed to articulate this need for Dublin City (and have in the process developed conflictual relations between Dublin City RAPID and the national level support structures (Pobal). It is acknowledged that a fresh approach is needed by all sides to break out of the

current impasse and to once again keep the focus on the 'big picture' and a solution of sufficient scale to match the scale of the problem.

However part of the evolving story about the relationship between Dublin City RAPID and the national supporting structures (Pobal) has been the significant structural, political and ideological change at national level, when in 2002, a new department was created, the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, to become the principal interlocutor with the social inclusion sector. At the inception of RAPID a relatively independent quango, Area Development Management, was given initial responsibility for the administration of the RAPID Programme and co-ordinating its implementation on behalf of the parent department. In 2002 this agency was reorganised and brought under direct ministerial control.¹⁶ Harvey (2008) argues these institutional shifts represent an abrupt paradigmatic shift to the type of managerialist agenda identified earlier in the literature review¹⁷.

Harvey (2008) argues that considerable policy stalemate over the last two decades in agreeing the policy about the relationship between the state and civil society was in part due to territorial rivalry between government departments but also in deeper political or ideological tensions within the state experienced as to what should be its relationship with the sector. The change in 2002 saw a reconfiguration by the state of that voluntary - statutory relationship into a 'highly contested political space' where there is a climate of subservience and convergence and an unhealthy situation for voluntary and community activity likened by Harvey (2008) to an "asphyxiating circle" Certainly Pobal is perceived by some Dublin RAPID stakeholders as highly restrictive¹⁸ and controlling and not particularly supportive. This is consistent with both a managerialist and new

¹⁶ Area Development Management's (ADM) parent departments since 1999 are The Department of Arts, Sports and Tourism (1999-2002) and The Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (2002-).

¹⁷ The policy context within which ADM/Pobal operates is set by the "successive National Social Partnership Agreements and the National Development Plan 2000-2006" (ADM 2003, 4). The agreed "Programme for Government" following the 2002 General Election forms the most recent policy context for Pobal's work. In October 2005 following a private economic consultancy, Indecon review of ADM's activities recommendations to reduce the strategic autonomy of the agency and reconfigure its relationship with the parent department. In November 2005, ADM changed its name to 'Pobal', the Irish word for community. Its parent department's name in Irish is "Pobail", the Irish word for communities.

¹⁸ The administrative procedures Pobal have engineered for the administration of the 16,500 euro pa community support budget (which has five headings and 25 sub headings) shows how Pobal are micromanaging projects are requiring significant technical detail which makes coordinators into administrators rather creative facilitators.

public management ideological agenda. It is not consistent with a community empowerment approach offered in the original conception of RAPID.

The politics of the state's relationship with society is an important context for RAPID. RAPID exists in the deeper political or ideological context described above. If Harvey (2008) is correct, the political agenda behind Pobal's existence is to mediate poverty and social exclusion in a fashion that disempowers community development approaches then the political commitment to RAPID and community led approaches to social inclusion is itself under question¹⁹. This lack of political leadership or even awareness of poverty and lack of understanding of community development led approaches to poverty is a crucial issue for the city and at a national level. This ideological tension needs to be separated from the more pragmatic question of area boundaries and urban governance structures for Dublin City.

Conclusion

To date Irish approaches to urban governance have been primarily based on social partnership processes but, with the growing awareness of 'process fatigue' and governance limitations to resolving social deficits and spatial inequalities, there is now a national debate about how to reform governance processes to achieve greater social innovation and address geographical inequalities (NESC 2005). Dublin is not a 'global city' but, increasingly dominated by financial and service industries, it has all the characteristics of a complex urban society with the extremes of wealth and poverty often found in those societies. However we do not see in Dublin what Jessop calls 'glurbanisation', i.e. new forms of governance in the urban and through the urban (Jessop 1997).

The paper's argument for a more cohesive relationship between local actors in Irish urban governance opens up the question of whether this examination of Irish metropolitan governance processes has any wider application. Targeted area-based governance initiatives can bring only limited results unless they are tied into regional or national governance processes with power to shift mainstream funding or to reform national housing, industrial, employment and development policies that are continuing (as in Dublin's case) to cause and reinforce concentrations of disadvantage. The paper also highlights the value of governance processes that enable community participation but the difficulty in sustaining community participation in the context of ill-fitting and badly supported participative structures, and low social capital. It draws attention to the significant

cultural shifts required within both community and statutory organisations to make 'partnership' work. Above all however what the paper demonstrates is that, in the context of 'glocalisation', the importance of urban governance structures that enable cities find appropriate responses to spatial disadvantage cannot be over stated. Irish urban governance is hindered by nationally imposed problems of geopolitical fragmentation and the difficulties of working in highly complex patterns of local administrative governance processes. Vertical and horizontal arrangements have hampered rather than assisted strategies to mitigate spatial social inequalities. Community development strategies have failed to address key issues of community capacity and participation. The Irish case demonstrates the dangers of fitting square pegs into round holes and the asphyxiating choke this can have on urban governance and its capacity to revitalise socio economically disadvantaged areas.

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