



**Minutes**

**Housing SPC Meeting – 9<sup>th</sup> December 2021**

**Present:** Cllr. Brendan Weld, Cllr. Noel Connolly, Cllr. Tim Durkan, Cllr. Mark Leigh, Cllr Veralouise Behan, Cllr Chris Pender, Tom O'Malley, Pat Doyle, Billy Wall

**In attendance:** Annette Aspell, Ollie Brady, Brian O'Gorman, Veronica Cooke, David Creighton, Thomas Kelleher, Patrick Henderson, Letitia Hanratty, Shirley Farrar Patrick Harrington, John Healy

**Apologies:** Cllr Daragh Fitzpatrick, Siobhan Scully, Fiona Byrne

**1.** Minutes proposed by Cllr. Noel Connolly, seconded by Cllr. Mark Leigh.

**2.** No conflict of interests declared

**3.** Correspondence/List of Circulars: S Farrar advised that no correspondence was received and that copies of circulars available on request.

**4. Demountable Dwellings:** A Aspell referred to main issues arising from the discussion at the last SPC meeting related to Planning, a Sub-committee of SPC was established and met with the Directors for Housing and Planning on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2021 and meeting noted the following:

- Each scenario will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Part 8 will be required
- Screening for Appropriate Assessment and EIS also required.
- Local Need criteria, as set out in the Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023, must be met.
- Categories of cases for consideration for delivery of demountable units to be limited.
- CE can use emergency powers under S179 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, but this will only be in extreme situations
- Funding is a constraint as no funding available from DHLGH; funding from KCC's own resources via revenue budget. The extent of site preparation work required will have a bearing on overall costs.

Members acknowledged report and agreed Policy relating to provision of demountable dwellings to be prepared on basis of this report.

**5. Housing for All:** D Creighton referred to report circulated to members which outlined the targets as set out in the Housing for All scheme and confirmed work was ongoing on draft Housing Action Delivery Plan to



## Kildare County Council

---

be submitted to DHLGH by 17<sup>th</sup> December 2021, this plan will set out details of the social and affordable housing delivery for Kildare. He explained how information was collated, projections around the County and that assistance had been sought from the Housing Delivery Co-ordination Office. Members were advised that it was still a working document and the plan, when complete, would be circulated to members of SPC on a confidential basis. It is expected DHLGH will have queries and the members will be updated at next SPC meeting. A Aspell advised confirmation received for approval of 13 additional staff, funded by DHLGH, to support the delivery of social housing.

**Affordable Housing:** A Aspell updated members on Affordable Housing stating much of the detail regarding the operation of the affordable housing delivery streams is still awaited. Confirmation of staff resources for affordable housing not confirmed but it is understood that this is under consideration by the DHLGH and HDCO.

The Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) is currently being finalised and has identified an affordability constraint of 10.6% in Kildare, this constraint is evident across the five Municipal District areas. It is estimated that 5, 122 new properties will be required during the period of the next County Development Plan (10 years). Affordable properties will be delivered through cost rental and affordable purchase.

The Housing Agency recently issued a call for Cost Rental Equity Loan Proposals from AHB's, delivery is targeted at 700 units by Q4 2022. A fund of €70m is being made available and an additional €5m from the LA Affordable Housing Fund. Local Authorities will be requested to comment on the suitability of the location of properties.

The HDCO issued a press release recently calling for proposals for un-commenced residential developments with potential to deliver social and/or affordable housing in a number of counties including Kildare. The members noted 60% of the over-all social housing target is to be delivered by Kildare County Council; the balance is to be delivered by Approved Housing Bodies.

### 6. Allocation Scheme

#### (i) Update on separated tenants

O Brady outlined the background to this update and that existing policies, legislation and the Housing Allocation Scheme 2016 was reviewed on separated and divorced tenants. He outlined that the person leaving the family home would need to be assessed as having one/two bed housing need depending on access to children etc. Each case would be dealt with on its own merits and the tenant/applicant could possibly avail of housing options such HAP, Homeless HAP or Choice Based Letting. Mr Brady confirmed that as part of this review the Mid East Region Housing Authority and other LA's had been consulted to ensure any update in



## Kildare County Council

---

Kildare would be in keeping with their policies. A Aspell asked the members to consider the Allocation Policy for (a) housing applicants to split application into two new units and (b) tenants that leave the family home would be re-assessed. All members in agreement.

### (ii) Assessment of bedroom need for Children aged 10 years and under

V Cooke referred to report circulated to the members and confirmed that this item had come from Octobers full council motion where it was agreed to refer to Housing SPC for further consideration. V Cooke outlined the current position as per the Allocation Scheme for Social Housing 2016, that contact had been made with DHLGH regarding legislative basis and that no reply had been received to date. The meeting noted current demand for properties, the housing stock, amending the age limit at housing assessment stage and that the creation of sustainable tenancies from the outset would reduce the number of transfers requests at a later stage, resulting in cost savings due to reduction in turnover of properties. The members discussed the report in detail referring to family size, options for extending properties and substantial number of existing transfer requests. A Aspell confirmed this update would be considered for all allocations from hereon and that the matter would be revisited in six months. All members in agreement.

## 7. Update Work Programme 2021

**Homelessness:** O Brady provided an update on Homeless Services. He confirmed the Homeless Team had been strengthened with staff including Tenancy Sustainment Officer and that Outreach staff are visiting each Municipal District Area assessing needs of rough sleepers. O Brady referred to difficulty securing accommodation, updated the meeting on the Kerdiffstown facility and Michael Garry House, he referred to Peter McVerry family hubs in Prosperous and Athy and the transitional facility at Jigginstown currently supporting 8 occupants. Pat Doyle gave update from Peter McVerry Trust stating regional response was best practice and he was confident all targets would be met. He referred to family hubs, hostels and would fully support town centre redevelopment, he acknowledged and fully supported the co-operation of Kildare County Council. Members discussed the various aspects of the homeless programme and agreed that encouraging landlords to engage with HAP is paramount. A Aspell and Cllr Weld acknowledged the work of the Homeless Team and Peter McVerry Trust.



## Kildare County Council

---

**Anti-Social Behaviour:** V Cooke provided an update outlining an estate management strategy is currently being drafted and it is anticipated it will be completed in Q1 of 2022. A meeting of the forum will be convened to review the strategy. Members acknowledged this update.

**Strategic Plan for Housing Persons with a Disability:**

S Farrar outlined an extensive public consultation process has taken place in relation to the national Strategic Plan for Housing Persons with a Disability 2022-2027. A public survey was conducted with 1,600 responses received. There are currently 6 draft strategic areas that are the main focus of the plan which are as follows: (1) Accessible Housing and Communities (2) Interagency Collaboration and Provision of Supports (3) Affordability of Housing (4) Communication and Access to Information (5) Knowledge, Capacity and Expertise and (6) Strategy Alignment. The national plan is on track to be completed by the end of the year and following its publication reviewing the county plan will be considered.

**Traveller Accommodation Programme:** B O’Gorman advised that the team are progressing work on the Traveller Action Plan and that to date 49 allocations have been made and Guidelines from DHLGH are expected in January 2022. Andrew Halting Site should progress early in new year as will Blacklion Halting Site. He advised on the annual estimate of travellers carried out on the previous Friday, working closely with Kildare Traveller Action Group and a Return will be made to DHLGH. He outlined challenges Covid-19 has had on the Traveller community and acknowledged the work of the social workers and interagency groups.

**Energy Efficient Programme/Midlands Energy Efficiency Retrofit Programme:** T Kelleher gave update on the current programme, outlining the schemes and the various stages of each from tendering, commencement of works and proposed completion date. A Aspell advised the meeting that the programme had been very challenging to date referring to repeat of tendering process on some projects to funding from the DHLGH. Members sought clarity on electricity dependency and affects of same on tenants. It was agreed the following issues would be raised with the DHLGH (i) backup of power supply and (ii) cost of heating bills.

Cllr Weld thanked all present for attendance and participation at the SPC meetings in 2021.

Next meeting 10 February 2022.