



## Housing SPC Meeting Minutes-08<sup>th</sup> December 2022

**Present:** Cllr. Brendan Weld, Cllr. Noel Connolly, Cllr. Chris Pender (online), Cllr. Mark Leigh (online), Cllr Tim Durkan (online), Cllr Vera Louise Behan (online), Tom O'Malley, Wesley Rothwell

**In attendance:** Annette Aspell, Siobhan Scully, Shirley Farrar, Ollie Brady, Brian O'Gorman, Veronica Cooke, Paddy Henderson, John Healy, Siobhan Barry, Donnachadh Reynolds, Margaret O'Dwyer, Paul O'Sullivan. ( Cllr. Galvin, Cllr. Farrelly)

**Apologies:** Pat Doyle, Patrick Henderson, Cllr Daragh Fitzpatrick

- **Minutes proposed by Cllr. Connolly, seconded by Cllr.Pender**
- **No conflict of interests declared**
- **Correspondence/List of Circulars**

SFarrar advised that there was no correspondence and the list of circulars had been circulated and is available on request.

- Cllr. Weld welcomed Mr Wesley Rothwell as new member of the SPC and the new KCC staff present.
- Presentation to Housing SPC by John Healy on Housing Maintenance, Vacant Homes turn around times etc.
  - Cllr. Connolly queried if all oil boilers were being replaced in line with the future ban on oil, J.Healy informed that assessments are carried out on a case by case basis, and where possible oil is replaced and where not an upgraded oil condenser boiler is provided.
  - Cllr. Connolly also had a query on decommissioning existing chimneys, J. Healy explained the process.



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- Cllr. Connolly had a query in relation concrete stairs, in relation to fire damaged properties, J.Healy advised that not always suitable and usually replace like for like.
  - Cllr. Pender raised queries relating to the difference between minor/major works, the number of staff working on the maintenance team and if it would be possible to get a few case studies with costs breakdowns. J.Healy explained the process for minor/major works, tenders etc and advised of staffing details.
  - Cllr.Behan queried if acoustic barriers between houses were provided,if rubbish removal from gardens was becoming a more common problem and if damp/mold issues were common. JHealy advised that the standard fire barriers are provided but acoustic were not. There is an issue with rubbish removal and the cost of this is quite large. Mould is a big issue, guidance given to tenants, ventilation is key to preventing.
  - Cllr. Durkan queried if KCC could employ own staff to carry out works rather than employing contractors, the turnaround times for fire damaged properties and referred to an AHB property that had a short turnaround time. JHealy advised that there would not be constant work for each trade. Turnaround times vary, as soon as they can start work they will, other factors influence how quickly they can actually start works, e.g garda forensic investigations.
  - ADunney thanked JHealy and his team for the large volume of work carried out by them when they are a small team. ADunney also noted that there was a fire in a property the night before. He also referred to the limited availability of tradesmen and the challenge this poses.
  - AAspell thanks JHealy for the presentation & commented that tenants receive a handbook when moving into a property outlining good practices etc.
  - AAspell also informed the meeting that there is a Pilot Programme in 2023 of an Asset Management System.
  - AAspell also stressed the point that KCC do not hold vacant stock, it is turned around as quickly as is possible and noted that there are a lot of motions and unwarranted criticism and asked that the members of the SPC re-iterate this to their colleagues at full council.
  - Cllr. Weld agreed with AAspell and thanked JHealy for the very informative presentation and it was agreed that the presentation would be given to full council.



- Cllr Farrelly – Ideal timeframe for turnaround of vacant stock units be identified – Referred from July full Council

*That the Council outlines the budget allocated for renovating and reallocating it's social housing units in 2022 and what this budget equates to in the number of homes reallocated to date this year including where relevant, when these works resulted in an increase in BER, what number of reallocations it projects for the remainder of this year, how many units currently remain empty and unallocated and identify it's projections for 2023.*

  - It was agreed that this motion was answered throughout the presentation.
  
- Cllr Galvin – Radon levels – Referred from July full Council

*That the council outline measures it takes in the Municipal District to mitigate high radon levels both in its housing stock and to raise awareness of the need for residents to test for radon levels particularly in high risk areas.*

  - A Dunney advised that radon barriers are installed in all new units. Detectors are used for older properties and it hasn't been flagged as an issue within Kildare.
  - Cllr. Galvin referenced a report and the findings of this. It showed levels of radon within Kildare, and advised she would like to see testing resumed, and a pilot programme of testing be rolled out.
  - A Dunney advised a pilot may be considered but that there are limited resources in terms of funding such projects. Cllr. Weld suggested that the project could be funded by LPT at the MD level.
  - Cllr. Connolly, Cllr.Behan, Cllr.Durkan all showed support for this motion.
  - A Dunney informed that this would be looked at internally and an update provided at the next SPC meeting.
  
- Previous motions -defibrillators – Planning & Community SPC's responses



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- Both Planning & community SPC's are in favour of the motion. The placement/location is important and needs to be considered. This item is to be brought back to the next SPC meeting.
- Update on Ukraine
- SBarry provided updated. 70% of properties have withdrawn or are unsuitable. Liffey Lodge works have been completed and will be re-used. The Offer a Home Scheme has now launched. Refusal policy also coming into effect.
- Update on Work Programme 2022
- Housing for All—AAspell-Challenges meeting targets for 2022, land is required. There will be a deficit for 2022. 3 staff have been sanctioned for Affordable Housing, although 7 were requested. The Scheme of Priority for Affordable Housing to be agreed at full council.
  - Homelessness-OB rady-Number of presentations are up, unexpectedly. Focus on prevention at the moment, 90+ families receiving support. The shared housing pilot scheme was a success. New Youth Homeless Strategy.
  - Affordable Housing-ADunne y-Welcomed Margaret O'Dwyer, pilot schemes that are hoped to progress.
  - Anti-Social Behaviour Policy-VCooke-Review of Policy to be brought forward. Work ongoing with TLO's. Progress has been made. Cllr.Weld asked that this item be kept on the Agenda.
  - Strategic Plan for Housing Persons with a Disability-VCooke-November meeting postponed as awaiting publication of plan. Membership is being reviewed at the moment.
  - Energy Efficiency Programme / Midlands Energy Efficient Retrofit Programme-B2 ratings achieved. 2021 works completed. 2022 some changed to costs etc.
  - Rightsizing & Allocations-AAspell-Draft Allocation scheme ready, Special meeting to be held 19<sup>th</sup> January to discuss policies. Workshop style meeting requested that all attend in person.
  - Traveller Accommodation Programme-BOGorman-Mid year review completed. New target of 89 units. Ardrew in Athy, engagement from



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residents. Kildare Traveller Action Programme Kildare-new co-ordinator appointed. Funding of €1.6million applied for.

- Date of next Meeting – 10<sup>th</sup> February 2023. (Special Meeting to be held 19<sup>th</sup> January 2023 and all to attend in person where possible)