



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

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

**In attendance:** Annette Aspell, Siobhan Scully, Shirley Farrar, Ollie Brady, Brian O'Gorman, Veronica Cooke, Fiona Byrne, David Creighton, Letitia Hanratty, Emma Perry, Paddy Henderson, Tom Kelleher

**Apologies:** Cllr Daragh Fitzpatrick, Billy Wall, Pat Doyle, Alan Dunney

- **Minutes proposed by Cllr. Leigh, seconded by Cllr. Connolly**
- **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.

- **Update on Ukraine**

Siobhan Scully presented an update on Ukraine. Funding has been approved for the upgrade of the Liffey Lodge Rest Centre in Newbridge. Local Authorities have now taken on the responsibility for the inspection and matching of pledged accommodation. A new team is being set up in the housing department to manage this and this will consist of an Administrative Officer, Siobhan Barry and an Assistant Staff Officer. Local Authorities were requested to identify sites that may be suitable for the provision of modular accommodation. 16 sites were identified. Cllr Weld advised that the council had no input on the final decision in relation to the sites as this rests with the Department. Cllr Connolly asked if the council were to be responsible for the costs. Siobhan Scully advised that costs would be recouped from the Department

### **Update on Work Programme 2022**

- Housing for All
  - Update provided by Siobhan Scully in relation to Leasing Targets.



- AHBs have advised of delivery delays caused by interest rate increases and inflation increasing the cost of building supplies. It is expected that AHBs will provide 40% of KCC's delivery target.
- The First Home Scheme has been introduced for first time buyers. The house price ceiling in Co. Kildare is €400,000.
- An update was provided on the Cost Rental scheme in Co. Kildare with two schemes in the county, one delivered by Cluid (The Paddocks) and the other by Tuath (Belin Woods). Both schemes are in Newbridge.
- A new Targeted Leasing Scheme has been introduced by the Department. The National Target is 1,000 units. The committee will be updated as the scheme progresses.
- Croi Conaithe new grant funding scheme is now available.
- No update as yet on staff for the Affordable Housing Scheme.
- HAP discretionary payments have increased to 35%.

➤ **Homelessness**

Ollie Brady advised that family presentations remain high as result of Notices to Quit and a lack of available HAP properties.

Jigginstown Manor in Naas was opened in June and there are currently 12 young single adults being accommodated and receiving supports with the aim of progressing to full tenancies and longer-term accommodation.

Under Housing First there are 25 active tenancies. The contract with Peter McVerry Trust is due to expire this year and it is intended to extend it for another year.

Cllr Durkan queried the success rate of the council in purchasing properties under a Notice to Quit and asked if the price cap prevented any properties being purchased. Fiona Byrne advised that KCC were quite successful and that there were different caps per house price and that the purchases were being made under the caps.

Cllr Connolly asked about people being provided with homeless accommodation outside the county. Ollie Brady advised that that there was limited accommodation available in Kildare and in the event that none was available then accommodation outside the county would be sourced.

➤ **Affordable Housing**

The Affordable Housing Scheme of Priority was discussed and it was noted that while it could be varied over time this could not take place during development. Once agreed



the scheme will go to the Minister for approval and then back to the full Council. It is hoped staff resources will be sanctioned shortly.

Cllr Dukan proposed the Affordable Housing Scheme go forward to the Minister, seconded by Cllr Pender.

➤ **Anti Social Behaviour Policy**

The meeting noted the Policy was under review and would include Estate Management Strategy and the recommencement of the Forum would take place at later date. A Aspell advised the Council were limited legally with the Anti Social behaviour Policy and the Strategy will support this Policy. Members were asked to consider feedback back on this Policy and it would be discussed again at the December meeting.

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

V Cooke confirmed the recent circulation of document and Return to the Committee and the National Strategy was awaited. Members noted the update.

➤ **Energy Efficiency Programme / Midlands Energy Efficient Retrofit Programme**

Tom Kelleher updated the Committee on the current position with the retrofit programme confirming the 2021 programme was almost complete and the Department were assessing submitted claims. A Aspell noted a deficit of approx. €10,000 per unit.

The 2022 programme included a target of 69 units to be delivered in three estates, two tenders had been returned and a contractor should be appointed by end of September. While the allowances had been increased by the Department a deficit of approx. €4,000 per unit is likely and Kildare County Council will be seeking funding for this deficit.

Cllr Durkan queried tenants conducting some works themselves to assist with the retrofit and Cllr Weld raised the issue of increased ESB charges. T Kelleher advised that while increased costs with electricity tenants would no longer have gas or oil fuel bills. The Committee noted 175 units had been completed to date.

➤ **Traveller Accommodation Programme**

B O’Gorman update the members on the current position and confirmed the mid term review was almost complete. A formal Review of Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019 – 2024 will commence in approx. one year.

The Committee were updated on the Andrew Halting site.



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➤ **AOB**

AAspell mentioned motions that have been recurring queries in relation to vacant homes, and assured the SPC that KCC are not sitting on vacant stock and requested that the SPC members note this if brought to the attention of Full Council.

Cllr.Weld suggested a hand out be circulated at the next Full Council Meeting on the policy around vacant properties (KCC Stock)

Cllr. Leigh showed agreement with this and noted that Social Media is fuelling some negativity in relation to this matter.

Cllr. Weld expressed his thanks to SPC and closed the meeting.

**Date of next meeting: 08<sup>th</sup> December 2022**

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