
HOUSING AND REGENERATION STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE

Work Programme

1. Housing for All ¹

Housing for All was launched on 2 September 2021. Housing for All provides four pathways to achieving the overarching objective of providing everybody in the State with access to home purchase or rental at an affordable level, built to a high standard and in the right location. The council has received targets to deliver 2,416 social properties and 226 affordable properties in the period 2022-2026. Updates will be provided at each meeting of the SPC in terms of meeting these targets under both Social Housing Investment Programme [SHIP] and Social Housing Current Expenditure Programme [SHCEP] by Build / Acquisition and Affordable delivery. The updates will be provided by way of the quarterly statistical report and the quarterly Chief Executive report, which also includes information in relation to HAP, home loans, adaptation grants, capital assistance scheme [CAS] and repair and lease scheme [RLS].

Note: ¹Will be reviewed on foot of publication of the next Programme for Government and Government Housing Programme.

2. Homelessness

The Mid-East Region Homelessness Action Plan 2024-2026 was adopted by the elected members of Kildare, Meath, and Wicklow in March 2024. The Chair of this SPC sits on the Mid-East Region Homelessness Forum, representing the elected members of the three counties in the region.

The SPC will be given regular updates in relation to homelessness in the county with reference to monthly and quarterly reports published by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. Updates will also be provided regarding the operation of the Homeless HAP Placefinder Service and Housing First. In addition, the SPC will receive a report arising from meetings of the Mid-East Region Homelessness Statutory Management Group and Forum, including an update on actions/objectives of the Homeless Action Plan.

3. Affordable Housing

Under the Housing for All Programme, the target delivery is for 226 affordable properties in the period 2022-2026. The committee will be updated on the council's build and turnkey programme and, where relevant, delivery by Approved Housing Bodies and the Land Development Agency.

4. Croí Cónaithe (Towns Fund)/County Kildare Serviced Sites Scheme

Under the National Planning Framework (NPF), Project Ireland 2040 was published in 2018. This plan commits to supporting local authorities in undertaking the necessary land acquisition, site preparation and local infrastructure provision to deliver self-build development options in towns, villages, and rural settlements across the county in line with the County Development Plan 2023-2029. The Croí Cónaithe (Towns) Fund allows for Local Authorities to make serviced sites available at reduced costs to support self-build home ownership. Updates will be provided to the SPC on the delivery of these schemes.

***Note:** On 5 November 2024 the Government agreed to progress and publish a draft schedule of amendments to the First Revision to the National Planning Framework (NPF) arising from the recent public consultation process.*

5. Special Projects and Public Realm [SPPR]

A significant portion of our capital programme is managed by the SPPR Team, in particular projects funded under the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund [URDF], Rural Regeneration and Development Fund [RRDF], Town and Village Renewal Scheme [TVRS]. In addition, this small team manages projects delivered by Kildare County Council funded by development contributions and local property tax for example. The SPC will receive quarterly updates on the SPPR work programme.

6. Addressing Vacancy

Addressing vacancy and maximising the use of existing housing stock is a primary objective of Government. A number of measures have been introduced to support objectives of Housing for All in terms of addressing vacancy in housing stock. A team has been established within the Housing Department to investigate and inspect vacant and derelict properties, identifying and contacting registered owners to promote/encourage engagement in bringing properties back into residential use.

Vacant and Derelict properties will continue to be acquired, compulsorily, if necessary, supported by the CPO Activation Programme.

The Team will continue administration and processing of the vacant property refurbishment grant. The SPC will receive regular updates on the number of Vacant Property Refurbishment grants approved and paid.

The Town Regeneration Officer has published the Clane Town Centre First Plan and work has commenced to prepare the Castledermot Town Centre First Plan. The SPC will receive updates in relation to the progress of town centre first plans, including delivery of aims/objectives of the plans.

7. Strategic Plan for Housing Persons with a Disability

The National Housing Implementation Plan for Disabled People 2022-2027 was published in 2023. The Housing Disability Steering Group has been re-established in Kildare and our Strategic Plan for Housing Persons with a Disability was agreed in 2024. The strategic plan has been published on our website. We will continue to update the SPC on progress of the strategy during the year.

8. Energy Efficiency Retrofit Programme

Housing for All; a New Housing Plan for Ireland, includes an objective to retrofit 500,000 homes to a B2 Building Energy Rating (BER) or Cost Optimal equivalent by 2030, of which approximately 36,500 are expected to be Local Authority owned homes. Challenges have been identified by the housing sector in managing the EERP on the basis of an annual funding stream. A preference for a multi-annual energy efficiency programme has been indicated, however, DHLGH advise that such an approach is not currently feasible as funding continues to be allocated by DPER on an annual basis.

We expect to receive the Department's Allocation for 2025 in March/April this year. Maynooth is the designated decarbonisation zone in the county. Given this, the Retrofit Team is working with the Climate Action Team, to carry out an extensive retrofit on, and make a property available for viewing, as a demonstration model as to what can be achieved in terms of retrofit

9. Asset Management

An objective of Housing for All work is the transition, over the coming years, to a Planned Maintenance and Management model for local authority housing stock, including a proposal to ringfence 100% of rental income for the purpose of housing management and maintenance. The SPC will receive quarterly updates in relation to progressing the change to asset management.

10. Traveller Accommodation Programme 2025 -2029

A new Traveller Accommodation Programme (2025 -2029) was adopted by the elected members on 25 November 2024. The SPC will also receive quarterly updates on the progress of the traveller accommodation programme. A presentation from the LTACC Chairperson to the SPC will be agreed with the members.

11. Tenant Purchase Scheme

Research in relation to the Tenant Purchase Scheme and the categories of properties which can be purchased is currently under way, and the SPC will be provided with a discussion paper on the relevant matters.

12. Keeping of pets

In 2023, it was agreed by the council that a motion relating to the keeping of restricted pets would be sent to the SPC for consideration. Research in relation to this motion is underway and we will provide the SPC with a discussion paper on the relevant matters.