

12th March 2018

To the Mayor and Each Member of Limerick City and County Council

Chairperson's Report for the Home and Social Development Strategic Policy Committee Meeting of the 26th February 2018.

A Chomhairleoir, a chara,

Summary Report/Main Issues:

Item 3: National Development Plan 2018-2027 Overview of Housing Issues

Ms. Sarah Newell, Executive Planner, gave a presentation on the National Development Plan 2018-2027 outlining the focus for investment over the next 10 years including the projects that will benefit Limerick and Limerick's targets under Rebuilding Ireland. A discussion took place with issues raised by members as follows:

One off rural housing: Ms. S. Newell advised that while the Draft National Planning Framework (NPF) had explicitly said there must be an economic need, this had been revised in the final NPF to include both economic and social need.

Rural regeneration and the infrastructure deficit: Ms. S Newell advised of a dedicated Rural Regeneration and Development Fund in the National Development Plan with an allocation of €1billion and in addition a fund of €6.8 billion over the period 2018-2027 for sustainable management of water and other environmental resources with Irish Water.

Cllr. J. Scanlan requested that a joint meeting of the Planning and Housing SPC's be held.

Audit on vacant properties: Mr. S. Hanrahan advised that an Urban and Village Renewal Team had been established with Empty Homes Officers appointed for each Municipal district to identify vacant/derelict properties and their owners.

It was agreed that a presentation from this team would be requested for the next SPC meeting.

Repair and Lease/Buy and Renew schemes: Mr. S. Hanrahan advised the members that the Council was actively engaged in these two Government Schemes which particularly address the under-occupied properties.

Item 4: Housing Summit – January 2018 – Overview of Key Issues

Mr Seamus Hanrahan, Senior Architect, gave an update on the second Housing Summit and items covered included:

- Level of funding available over a 5 year spending programme
- Buy and Renew Scheme
- Changes to Leasing Schemes
- Affordable Housing
- Second scheme of LIHAF

Item 5: Housing Delivery Overview 2017

Mr. S. Hanrahan gave a presentation outlining the main projects in the Housing Programme and progress to date under the following headings:

- Projects in Part 8 process/have received Part 8 Planning – 123 units
- Construction – 124 units approved in 2017
- Acquisitions and Leasing 2017 – 155 units
- Construction 2017 (completed) – 112 units
- Under Construction – 48 units, Carebright Community, Bruff, Community Enterprise Centre in Moyross and the Coonagh Knocklisheen road.

A discussion took place on the Housing project in Adare and the services in Montpelier.

Item 6: Presentation by Community Support Services on Housing Standards

Mr. D. McGuigan gave a presentation on the standards for rented houses and the number of inspections carried out. Items covered included:

- Requirements of both landlords and tenants
- Standards/Regulations
- Inspections
- Enforcement

A discussion took place on non-compliance with the standards and Mr. D. McGuigan stated that while a substantial number of properties were non-compliant, the reasons were minor.

Item 7: Notices of Motion referred to the Home and Social Development SPC

(1) Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. Prendiville referred from the December 2017 meeting of the Municipal District of Limerick was deferred to the next meeting of the SPC.

(2) Notice of Motion submitted by Cmhlr. Ó Ceallaigh, referred from the November 2017 meeting of Limerick City and County Council as follows was discussed:

‘I move at the next Meeting that this Council utterly condemn the letting of substandard accommodation, both publicly and privately, and commit to ensuring that its own housing stock is up to standard, as well as ensuring that appropriate action is taken against landlords letting substandard accommodation’ and the following issues were raised:

- Failure to respond to queries
- The requirement to ensure LCCC’s stock is to a high standard
- Non-compliance rates
- Non-compliance with fire standards

Mr. D. McGuigan advised the members that the scope of the unit within the Community Support Services deals with private rented accommodation and AHB’s also fall under the Regulations. He confirmed higher level requirements for multi units and the Council is rigorous in recording all details and if a serious issue relating to Fire standards is reported, it is referred to the Fire Department.

Cllr. Scanlan wished to be associated with the Notice of Motion.

Following discussion by the members and on the proposal of Cmhlr. Ó Ceallaigh, seconded by Cllr. Costello, it was agreed to submit this Notice of Motion to the full Council:

Recommendation

‘That the Council utterly condemn the letting of substandard accommodation, both publicly and privately, and commit to ensuring that its own housing stock is up to standard, as well as ensuring that appropriate action is taken against landlords letting substandard accommodation’.

Is mise le meas,

Cllr. William O’Donnell.

Chairperson

Home and Social Development Strategic Policy Committee