



10th March 2021

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

**Chairperson's Report for the Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning
Strategic Policy Committee Meeting of 15th February 2021**

A Chomhairleoir, a chara,

A virtual adjourned meeting of the Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning SPC was held on 15th February 2021. The principal items of discussion were;

Item 1 - Notice of Motion referred from Metropolitan District Meeting, held on 16th November, 2020, submitted by Cllr. C. Sheehan;
I will move at the next Metropolitan Meeting of the Council that the Council develop a policy for the taking in charge of estates to ensure that all estates are taken in charge within a defined period of 7 years post completion.

Cllr Sheehan agreed to amend the NoM to read – **I will move at the next meeting of the Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning SPC that Limerick City & County Council update its policy for the taking in charge of estates to ensure that estates are taken in charge within the shortest period possible, post completion.**

Members expressed various concerns regarding the delay in housing estates being taken in charge including no penalty for developers for unfinished estates, residents being caught in limbo, financial impact on the Council, inadequate bonds in place, cash deposits instead of bonds, phasing of estates being taken in charge, lack of 'as constructed' drawings, level of

contribution on each house too low, lack of information of members, etc.. The members urged the Council to ensure that developers meet their obligations.

It was confirmed that the existing policy for Taking in Charge was updated in Feb 2020 but the Council is open to relooking at it in light of the comments from the members. A copy of same is to be sent to the members for their observations. Estates may be taken in charge at the request of the residents.

The Council has taken 100 estates in charge in recent years and on average 10 additional estates are taken in charge each year. The Council is now taking estates in charge as phases of the developments are completed. Pre planning consultations with developers involve discussions on the eventual taking in charge of the estates.

Item 2 - Presentation on National Water Resources Plan (NWRP) Draft Framework – Consultation 2

The Chairperson stated that it has been agreed to hold a Joint Meeting between the Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning SPC and the Climate Action, Bio diversity and Environment SPC on the Councils proposed submission to Irish Water. This meeting will be held on 22nd February 2021.

Item 3 – Update of the Limerick Development Plan

The Chairperson circulated correspondence between the Forward Planning Dept and himself regarding his concerns he has regarding the rural housing aspect of the development plan process. It was confirmed that no substantive response has been received from the Ministers Office regarding the Notice of Motion sent to the Ministers Office after the Council meeting in January 2021

Ms K Burke stated that the Council was obliged to prepare a draft plan within 12 weeks from 26th January 2021. Workshops on various issues including rural housing will take place with the members in April/May with the view of publishing the draft Plan in June.

Several members expressed their frustration with the process and intimated that they would not be supporting the draft plan without the issue of rural housing resolved to their satisfaction. There was a feeling among some members that their concerns were not being taken seriously. Members urged that a pause be applied to the process to allow further debate and clarity on the rural housing issue. There is no definition of the terms 'economic, social or exceptional' need. There was concern that An Bórd Pleannála was interpreting these terms to prevent local people being housed in their own areas. Members were also seeking independent legal advice to be given to them to assist them in their deliberations. Clarification of the impact of the Flemish Accord on the issue of rural housing was sought.

All members supported the principle of investing in services in the towns and villages. Councillors were not looking for a free for all in the countryside but were advocating for some accommodation be made for those who were from the area to live in their area. The meeting was informed that the CE, through the CCMA were raising the issue of a time extension to the process at a national level. Members were also advised that the officials were listening closely to what the members were saying but there were constraints on them in relation to application of national guidelines on various issues. It was agreed that the PPN members would also be briefed on the various issues impacting on the preparation of a draft development plan.

Item 4 – SME Taskforce Plan

It was agreed to add this item onto the SPC Agenda for the meeting of 22nd February 2021 subject to the availability of the personnel involved.

Recommendation

That Limerick City & County Council update its policy for the taking in charge of estates to ensure that estates are taken in charge within the shortest period possible, post completion.

Signed: Eddie Ryan

Councillor Eddie Ryan

Chairperson