

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT SPECIAL MEETING OF LIMERICK CITY AND COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DOORADOYLE, LIMERICK, AND ONLINE, ON THURSDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> JUNE, 2022.**

**PRESENT IN THE CHAIR:**

Councillor D. Butler, Mayor.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Councillors Benson, Carey, Collins (B), Collins (J), Collopy, Daly, Donegan, Egan, Galvin, Hartigan, Keary, Kiely, Leddin, McSweeney, Mitchell, Murphy, O’Dea, O’Donoghue, O’Sullivan, Ruddle, Ryan (E), Ryan (M), Scanlan, Secas, Sheahan (J), Sheahan (K), Sheahan (M), Sheehan (C), Slattery, Talukder, Teefy.

Apologies: Councillor Novak Uí Chonchúir

**OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Deputy Chief Executive (Mr. Sean Coughlan), Director, Community, Tourism & Culture (Mr. G Daly), Director, Planning, Environment & Place-Making (Ms. N. Gallagher), A/Director, Economic Development & Enterprise (Mr. V Murray), Senior Executive Officer, Housing (Ms. S Newell), Senior Engineer, Housing (Mr. C Culloo), Senior Engineer, Travel & Transportation (Mr. H McGrath), Meetings Administrator (Ms. L. Flannery), Senior Staff Officer, Corporate Services and Governance (Ms. A. Foley),

The Mayor commenced the Meeting by welcoming the Members who were present in the chamber and online for the Meeting. He stated that the Special Meeting had been convened to discuss the issue as set out in the proposal received on 31st May, 2022, and signed by a number of Members as follows:

**“We, the undersigned, wish to call for a Special Meeting of Limerick City & County Council to discuss and propose the following motion:**

**This Council calls on the Government and Minister for Housing to declare a housing emergency and user their emergency powers to introduce an immediate ban on evictions.**

**Signed: Councillors S. Benson T. Collopy, P.J. Carey, S. Hartigan, S. Novak Ui Chonchúir.”**

Members thanked the Mayor for holding the special meeting and commended those responsible for bringing the motion forward but raised concerns over the wording of the motion, and in particular in relation to proposing a ban on evictions. Members spoke in turn on the motion and unanimously agreed that the issue of the housing crisis needs to be addressed. Members pointed out that there is a low number of houses available to rent at present, and raised concerns over the lack of emergency accommodation available in Limerick. They went on to say that many people fall outside the threshold for housing support but find it difficult to obtain a mortgage, stating action needs to be taken to address this.

Members queried the delays in certain projects. They asked the Executive if anything can be done to reduce the time it takes to refurbish voids, and work towards making voids available for allocation sooner.

The Senior Executive Officer Housing Development thanked the Members for their questions and supported their sentiments. She went through the recent changes to the relevant legislation with the Members, discussing the key changes for Tenants and Landlords, and welcomed working with them to address the issues.

The Senior Engineer of Housing discussed the turnaround and delivery of voids in depth. He shared the timelines in relation to refurbishing voids, and went into detail on the Council's approach to derelict projects. He said Covid had quite an impact on these works but now that restrictions have lifted it will help with the delivery.

Members expressed their concerns in relation to the time it is taking to deliver on projects and in relation to the amount of stages that have to be passed before works can begin.

It was proposed by Cllr. Scanlan, and seconded by Cllr. Leddin to setup a working group consisting of the Executive and Members to address the housing crisis in Limerick City and County and try to identify where the delay in delivering housing is.

An adjournment of 10 minutes was proposed by Cllr. John Sheahan, and seconded by Cllr. Daniel McSweeney to discuss an amendment to the wording of the motion.

After reconvening the meeting, an amendment to the original Motion was proposed by Cllr. J. Sheahan, and seconded by Cllr. S. Benson. The amended Motion read as follows:

**“That this Council calls on the Government and the Minister for Housing to declare a housing emergency and to use emergency powers to introduce a moratorium on evictions similar to Covid emergency measures until the Minister for Housing raises the income thresholds for social housing supports for a three month period with an option to review thereafter.”**

It was proposed by Councillor Kevin Sheahan, and seconded by Councillor Sharon Benson, to circulate this motion to all Local Authorities.

After further discussion it was proposed by Councillor Conor Sheehan and seconded by Councillor John Sheahan that this Council invite the Minister for Housing, Mr. Darragh O'Brien to attend the Plenary Council to listen to the Members' suggestions to simplify the process.

Members raised concerns in relation to the risks associated with the uses of AHBs. The executive agreed to add an agenda item to the July Full Council Meeting on affordable housing.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
**Mayor**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_