

MINUTES OF MEETING OF LIMERICK CITY AND COUNTY COUNCIL HOME AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT SPC

A meeting of Limerick City and County Council, Home and Social Development Strategic Policy Committee was held on **the 15th June 2022** in the Council Chamber, Dooradoyle and via MS Teams.

In Attendance: An Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Michael Murphy

SPC Members Present: Cllr. Sarah Kiely, Mr. Patrick English, Mr. P.J O'Grady, Cllr. Fergus Kilcoyne, Cllr. Mike Donegan, Cllr. Catherine Slattery, Ms. Anne Cronin, Cllr. Sharon Benson, Cllr. Brigid Teefy, Cllr. Joe Leddin, Cllr. Conor Sheehan, Cllr. Sean Hartigan, Ms Siobhan Reidy.

In Attendance: Ms. Sarah Newell, Senior Executive Officer
Mr. Conor Culloo, Senior Engineer, Housing
Mr. Brian Bourke, Senior Executive Engineer, Housing
Ms. Patricia Phillips, Administrative Officer, Housing
Ms. Miriam Donnelly, Administrative Officer, Housing
Ms. Triona O'Connor, Administrative Officer, Housing
Ms. Helen Creed, Administrative Officer, Housing
Mr. Seamus Hayes, Administrative Officer, Housing
Ms. Jennifer Brett, Administrative Officer, Housing
Ms. Aoife O'Brien Slater, Senior Staff Officer Housing
Ms. Jennifer Ahern, Staff Officer, Housing
Ms. Jurate Andrijauskiene, Staff Officer, Housing
Mr. Rory Culhane, Assistant Staff Officer, Housing
Mr. Eóin Lehane, Clerical Officer, Housing
Ms. Jeannine Butler, Clerical Officer, Housing
Ms. Amanda Glasper, Clerical Officer, Housing
Ms. Aoife O'Brien Slater, Senior Staff Officer Housing

Apologies: Ms. Caroline Curley, Cllr. Tom Ruddle, Ms. Noelle Deedigan, Mr. Mike McNamara, Ms. Elaine O'Connor, Mr. Shane Feane, Ms. Tracy McElligott, Ms. Dee Ryan, Mr. Adam Teskey, Cllr. Stephen Keary, Cllr. James Collins, Cllr. Tom Collopy, Cllr. Michael Collins, Cllr. Francis Foley, Cllr. Jerome Scanlan, Cllr. John Sheahan, Cllr. Liam Galvin, Mr. Ryan O'Rourke

Welcome by Chairperson – Cllr. Michael Murphy

Cllr. Michael Murphy opened the meeting and welcomed all members to the June SPC meeting.

Item 1: Confirm minutes from meeting held on 20th April 2022

Proposed: Cllr. Conor Sheehan

Seconded: Cllr. Sarah Kiely

Item 2: Matters arising from the Minutes

No matters arising from previous minutes.

Item 3: Development of New Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy

Ms. Patricia Phillips, Administrative Officer set out the structure, aims and objectives of the Community Sustainment Team within the Housing Directorate.

Mr. Seamus Hayes, Administrative Officer, Housing Support Services gave a presentation on the "Development of New Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy".

A discussion took place and the main points were:

- Cllr. Sarah Kiely asked (1) can the document be uploaded to MyPoint to allow for public consultation and (2) Where do Approved Housing Bodies (AHB) and their tenants fit into the strategy?
Mr. Hayes in response to Cllr. Kiely (1) yes this can be considered and (2) AHB's tenancies are between the AHB and tenant however where Limerick City and County Council receive complaints about AHB tenants the Council can liaise and progress the complaints with the AHB directly.
- Cllr. Kiely asked if there is a database of AHB's? In response Ms. Phillips informed Cllr. Kiely there is a record of the Council's nominations to AHB's.
- Cllr. Joe Leddin asked if the Community Sustainment Team can write to tenants informing them of their Community Sustainment Team contact? Mr. Hayes, advised that contact information for the unit is available in the tenant's handbook and that they will consider sending this information out with the tenant rent statements.
- Cllr. Joe Leddin enquired about the eviction process. Mr. Hayes explained the process, advised that it is slow and not easy to achieve a repossession order and that exclusion orders are much more effective.
- Cllr. Conor Sheehan asked (1) if there is a 24-hour confidential line for tenants to call and (2) if there are key performance indicators (KPI's) to inform the strategy and (3) highlighted that scrambler bikes are a serious danger and nuisance.
Mr. Hayes in response to Cllr. Sheehan (1) yes, there is a 24-hour free phone line that tenants can contact and this number is available in the tenant handbook, (2) Statistics are extracted through SugarCRM and included in the monthly Chief Executive report (3) Limerick City and County Council have a great relationship with the Gardaí and the Community Sustainment Team work very closely with the Community Gardaí.
- Cllr. Sharon Benson (1) reiterated the serious nuisance scrambler bikes are causing, (2) highlighted that Co-operative Housing Ireland have an impressive community model for tenants that can be replicated, (3) asked if anti-social behaviour matters with AHB tenants can be reported to Limerick City and County Council and (4) What do tenants and Councillors need to do to report anti-social behaviour?

Mr. Hayes stated in reply to Cllr. Benson (1) Limerick City and County Council work very closely with the Community Gardaí (2) that the Council are open to looking at any successful community models. Mr. Hayes highlighted the various supports the Council provides to tenants and that the Council encourages and supports the establishment of resident's associations within Council estates, (3) Limerick City and County Council can progress such complaints through the AHB and (4) to contact the Community Sustainment Unit within the Council and provide as much detail as possible

- Ms. Anne Cronin, Sectoral Representative Community/Voluntary asked if the issue of scramblers can be included in the new Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy and referred to a National Transport Authority report on the design of housing estates and speed. Mr. Hayes informed Ms. Cronin that the tenant's obligations are set out in their letting agreement and in the tenant handbook and that the Council work closely with tenants. Mr. Hayes stated it's not intended that the strategy would contain specific reference to scramblers.
- Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Michael Murphy requested the new Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy timeline. Mr. Hayes advised that it would take 2-3 weeks to have a draft document prepared for feedback by all relevant parties and a reworked draft would be brought before the next SPC in October, 2022 and subsequently brought forward to full Council meeting in December, 2022.
- Cllr. Eddie Ryan complimented the Community Sustainment Team for arranging to provide additional car parking spaces in areas where there were parking concerns.

Item 4: Re Notice of Motion submitted by the Municipal District of Newcastle West – Councillors J. Sheahan (Proposer), M. Collins, F. Foley, L. Galvin, T. Ruddle, J. Scanlan

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“We will move at the next Meeting that Limerick City and County Council change its Housing Allocation Scheme.”

A discussion took place and the main points were:

- Mr. Conor Culloo, Senior Engineer clarified that the intention behind the Notice of Motion (NOM) was the issue around the length of time taken from when the dwelling becomes vacant to when it is re-tenanted and not the Allocation Policy itself, which specifically refers to the assessment of prospective tenants. Consequently, this refers to the operational response to the return of a dwelling once it becomes vacant and as such is an Executive Function. For these reasons Mr. Culloo recommended that the NOM would not be referred to full Council, this was agreed.
It was proposed to deal with the intention of the motion that a small working group within the SPC would review the operational process around the return of dwellings (key to key) and revert with a report at the next SPC meeting.
A copy of the report will be forwarded to the Newcastle West Municipal District for information once it has been completed. NCW MD to be advised of above in relation to NOM.

- Cllr. Kiely stated she would like to put herself forward to participate in the working group.
- Cllr. Ryan confirmed he's happy not to get involved in day-to-day operations.
- Cllr. Sheehan thanked and commended the Housing Allocations team.

Item 5: Draft Housing One-Rep Policy

Ms. Helen Creed, Administrative Officer, Housing Strategy and Non LA Housing Construction gave a presentation on a "Draft Housing One-Rep Policy" outlining the background, consultation and next steps.

A discussion took place and the main points were:

- Cllr. Benson welcomed same and advised that Tipperary County Council have an effective Housing One Rep Policy.
- Cllr. Sheehan asked if an online version of the GDPR protocol could be made available.
- Cllr. Kiely added that there should be an online facility and that Councillors should have first priority on representations.

In reply to the Councillors Ms. Creed noted that the Council were aware of Tipperary County Council's policy and would review same. Ms. Creed highlighted the next steps as follows:

- Area Workshops to be scheduled in September, 2022 for discussion with members.
- Reworked draft to be presented at next Housing SPC in October, 2022
- Intention to bring the Policy before full Council meeting in December, 2022.

Item 6: Updates

Letter dated 27th May 2022 sent to the Minister for State for Public Health, Wellbeing and the National Drugs Strategy, on seeking additional funding for Mid-West Regional Drugs and Alcohol Services and provide more transitional housing.

Ms. Helen Creed, Administrative Officer, Housing Strategy and Non-LA Housing Construction confirmed the Minister's office acknowledged receipt of same in correspondence dated 1st June 2022 and that no further update was available.

Item 7: AOB

Cllr. Benson requested that Limerick City and County Council review its Homeless Policy Document on foot of legal information she received. Ms. Benson communicated the written advice to the committee.

- Cllr. Sheehan asked for a review of the homeless policy and for guidelines.
- Mr. Culloo requested that a copy of said letter be forwarded to Housing for review and that an update would be provided at the next SPC meeting.
- Ms. Siobhan Reidy, Sectoral Representative Community/Voluntary asked if the allocations team have considered or are actively collecting data on numbers of applicants

who are on the housing list, are currently in private rented accommodation and who have received Notice to Quits (NTQ's).

Ms. Phillips replied that once an NTQ has been received, it goes directly to the Homeless Action Team (HAT) who determine whether it's valid or invalid and the HAT team would liaise directly with the person or family at risk of homelessness.

- Ms. Reidy queried the process where AHB's tenants were served an NTQ and where landlords refused to accept HAP tenancies.

Ms. Triona O'Connor, Administrative Officer, Homeless Action Team stated that the Homeless Action Team are actively working with the relevant person's and families to prevent homelessness. Ms. O'Connor confirmed that the Homeless Action Team has a place-finder service for advice and support to ensure that a homeless person or homeless families stay in emergency accommodation is as short as possible.

Ms. Phillips informed the committee that Housing Support Services work very closely with the Homeless Action Team.

- Ms. Cronin requested a copy of the legal information Cllr. Benson received.
Mr. Culloo informed the Committee that Limerick City and County Council would seek the necessary guidance before issuing same.
- Mr. PJ O'Grady, Sectoral Representative Development/Construction asked if the Retrofitting Scheme undertaken in 2020 and 2021 would be replicated in 2022.
Mr. Culloo confirmed that the Retrofitting Scheme is active in 2022.

October SPC meeting date Wednesday, 19th October 2022.

An Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Michael Murphy thanked everyone who attended the SPC and for the contributions and presentations given and for the support provided to him as Chair.

END OF MEETING