

An aerial photograph of Limerick, Ireland, showing the city center, the Gaelic Grounds stadium, and surrounding green fields and hills. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

**Housing Support Services LCCC
Presentation to Meeting of
Joint Policing Committee
21st February 2020**

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Introduction & Context

- LCCC is by far the biggest landlord locally with a total of 5,178 properties accommodating approximately 14,000 people
- Local Government housing legislation promotes the principle of good estate management
- LCCC Corporate Plan: “Enhance quality of life in our neighbourhoods, through collaborative, pro-active and supportive estate management, working with partners to promote the work of residents’ associations and support for community engagement”.
- JPC Strategic Plan: “Working with communities to improve cohesion, social inclusion and reduce anti-social behaviour.”

Community Sustainment Unit - LCCC

Recent Developments

- Report commissioned by Chief Executive recommended reorganisation and strengthening
- Title of Unit has changed from that of “Estate Management” to “Community Sustainment” to reflect more accurately its aim and purpose
- Existing and new personnel will have the title of “Community Sustainment Officers”

Community Sustainment Unit - LCCC

Aims

- Developing a service which connects with people in the communities, where people are known to officials and where their issues are clearly understood.
- Being a service where trust is established and maintained through good communication
- Making effective enforcement by the Council and all other state agencies as visible as possible and recognised as an integral part of Community Sustainment

Community Sustainment Unit - LCCC

Aims

- Encouraging and supporting members of the community to engage with the Council and other relevant authorities and agencies and to become actively involved and acquire a sense of “ownership” of their estates

HOW DO WE ACHIEVE THESE AIMS?

- The Community Sustainment Unit LCCC is comprised of three main strands: Estate Supports, Individual Tenant Support and Tenancy Enforcement/Anti-Social Behaviour

Estate Supports

- The main aim of this programme is the provision of supports with a view to improving quality of life and developing community spirit within Council estates. To this end, the Unit works closely with existing residents' associations and encourages the formation of new such groups, supporting the implementation of key actions identified by them to improve their estates. The support provided varies from assistance in provision of minor infrastructural works such as fencing, walls, signage etc. to softer measures such as committee skills training, contributing towards clean-up days, events for children etc.

HOW DO WE ACHIEVE THESE AIMS – Contd.

Individual Tenant Support

- The Unit provides a service, in conjunction with the Housing Welfare Officer, of intensive support for tenants who may be identified as vulnerable, or in need of such help for any other reason. In addition, there is monitoring of individual tenancies that may require particular attention to prevent problems occurring.
- Tenancy Induction is provided for all newly-appointed tenants. Among other things, the terms of the Letting Agreement which is signed are clearly explained so that the obligations of both the tenants and, indeed, the Council are clearly understood.

HOW DO WE ACHIEVE THESE AIMS – Contd.

Tenancy Enforcement/Anti-Social Behaviour

- The Unit deals with in excess of 400 complaints each year, with approximately half of these relating to anti-social behaviour. The Council's policy is to respond to these issues quickly and firmly and it works in close co-operation with An Garda Siochana where necessary.
- The Unit carries out garda checks on prospective new tenants.

Approach To Dealing With ASB

- Allegations of criminal behaviour are a matter for investigation in the first instance by An Garda Siochana.
- An Garda Siochana is the Council's key partner in trying to curb ASB. Extensive contact and co-operation occurs on a daily basis.
- Critical that all complaints are detailed in terms of dates, times and description of activities.
- Many issues can be resolved by simply talking to people and reminding them of their obligations.

Approach To Dealing With ASB – Contd.

- In more serious cases, a series of measures may apply ranging from verbal warnings, to written warnings, to statutory written warnings and, ultimately, issuing of proceedings in District Court.
- Court application may be for repossession of house or issuing of excluding order against offender.
- In some instances, a request may be made under Section 20 of the 1997 Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act to AGS to request a person or persons to vacate a house. It is a criminal offence not to comply with such a request.

Challenges going forward

- Significant ramping up of social housing provision – new build, purchase, leasing etc. Don't repeat mistakes of the past
- Greater visibility on the ground. Joint visits by Council and Garda personnel
- Improve collaboration with other agencies such as TUSLA, HSE, DSP and development companies such as Ballyhoura, West Limerick Resources and Paul Partnership