

## **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 8th June 2023** in the Council Chamber, Dooradoyle and via MS Teams.

**In Attendance:** An Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Stephen Keary

SPC Members Present: Cllr. Michael Murphy, Cllr. Tom Ruddle, Cllr. Sarah Kiely, Cllr. Fergus Kilcoyne, Cllr. Catherine Slattery, Cllr. Sharon Benson, Cllr. Joe Leddin, Cllr. Conor Sheehan, Cllr. Brigid Teefy, Cllr. James Collins, Cllr. Eddie Ryan, Cllr. Sean Hartigan, Ms. Una Burns, Ms Siobhan Reidy, Mr. P.J O'Grady, Mr. Patrick English, Mr. Mike McNamara, Ms. Tracy McElligott.

**In Attendance:**

Ms. Mary Hayes, Senior Executive Officer  
Ms. Sarah Newell, Senior Executive Officer  
Mr. Brendan Kidney, Senior Engineer, Housing  
Ms. Helen Creed, Administrative Officer, Housing  
Ms. Martina Frawley, Administrative Officer  
Ms. Patricia Philips, A/ Head of Unit for Housing Welfare & Traveller Accommodation,  
Ms. Triona O'Connor, Homeless Operations Programme Manager, Housing  
Ms. Jennifer Brett, Administrative Officer, Housing  
Ms. Jurate Andrijauskiene, Staff Officer, Housing  
Mr. Rory Culhane, Staff Officer, Housing  
Mr. Shane Feane, Assistant Staff Officer, Housing  
Ms. Jeannine Butler, Clerical Officer, Housing  
Ms. Amanda Glasper, Clerical Officer, Housing  
Ms. Eileen Liston, Clerical Officer Housing  
Mr. Liam Dooley, Clerical Officer, Housing

**Apologies:** Cllr. Tom Collopy, Cllr. Mike Donegan, , Cllr. Adam Teskey, Ms. Dee Ryan, Ms Anne Cronin, Ms. Caroline Curley, Director of Service, Ms. Noelle Deedigan, Clerical Officer, Mr. Brian Bourke, Executive Engineer, Housing, Mr. Joe Delaney, Director of Service, Regeneration, Mr. Seamus Hayes, Administrative Officer, Housing, Ms. Aoife O'Brien Slater, Administrative Officer, Housing, Ms. Miriam Donnelly, Administrative Officer, Housing, Ms. Elaine O'Connor, Administrative Officer, Regeneration, Mr. Brendan Troy, Senior Executive Officer, Regeneration, Ms. Jennifer Ahern, A/ Senior Staff Officer, Housing,

### **Welcome by Chairperson – Cllr. Stephen Keary**

An Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Stephen Keary opened the meeting and welcomed all members to the June SPC.

The Cathaoirleach also communicated the protocol for the SPC meeting.

**Item 1: Confirm minutes from meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2023.**

**Proposed:** Cllr. Michael Murphy

**Seconded:** Cllr. Sarah Kiely

**Item 2: Matters arising from the Minutes**

No matters arising from previous minutes.

**Item 3: Mid-West Youth Services update**

Ms. Triona O'Connor, Homeless Operations Programme Manager, Housing gave a presentation entitled "Mid-West Youth Service update". The presentation was well received by the committee.

Several members of the committee commended the HAT team and their dedication. The committee members welcomed the various initiatives such as "DIAL" house and future plans for young adults who may be a risk of homelessness.

A discussion took place. Cllr. Sarah Kiely asked if there any plans to roll out Novas DIAL House service further. In response Ms. O'Connor confirmed that there is demand for the DIAL service and that there are plans to roll the service out further in Q2 2024 in line with the new "Youth Homelessness Strategy 2023-2025". Ms. O'Connor confirmed that Novas are currently the only provider to run the DIAL model.

Cllr. Kiely asked if HAT get many referrals from the HSE. Ms. O'Connor advised that there are several referral pathways mainly from the HSE and Tulsa and that the HAT team work closely with Voluntary Organisations and Approved Housing Bodies depending on client needs.

Cllr. Sharon Benson enquired how family disputes are resolved. Ms. O'Connor advised that a holistic needs assessment is undertaken and in some circumstances mediation services may be required.

Ms. Una Burns, Sectoral Representative for Social Inclusion advised that research was commissioned on the impact of DIAL House entitled "A Social Return on Investment Analysis on the Impact of DIAL House". Ms. Burns added that the key findings of the evaluation highlighted the significant benefits of DIAL for young people who are transitioning from care to living on their own and that the innovative service creates positive outcomes for stakeholders working alongside DIAL house.

Ms. Mary Hayes, Senior Executive Officer, Housing informed the SPC that there is a Steering group established under the auspices of the National Homelessness Action Committee (NHAC) to drive the delivery of actions set out in the Youth Homelessness 2022-2025 Strategy and to monitor progress. Ms. Hayes advised that the group meet on a regular basis and are reviewing Limericks experience of DIAL.

Mr. PJ O'Grady, Sectoral Representative, Development/Construction enquired about the upper age limit. Ms. O'Connor replied that the youth services are targeted at 18 to 25 year olds and that for general homeless services there is no age limit.

An Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Stephen Keary enquired if there is any form of career guidance for care leavers or young people at risk of homelessness who are referred to DIAL House. Ms O'Connor advised that both Novas and Focus work with the Education and Training Board (ETB) and run Training, life skills programme, courses and apprenticeships.

#### **Item 4: Presentation on the Affordable Housing Launch**

Ms. Martina Frawley, Administrative Officer, Housing presented on the Affordable Housing Launch for the Brú na Gruadán, Affordable Home Purchase Scheme. The presentation was well received by the committee who complimented the comprehensive information available on the website.

A discussion on the Affordable Home Scheme took place. Cllr. Sharon Benson welcomed the Affordable Housing Scheme in Limerick but commented that the scheme is not affordable and that many applicants will find that their income and additional savings required will make these units out of reach for them. Cllr. Benson stated that a new Affordable Scheme needs to be considered by the Government.

Cllr. Tom Ruddle enquired if the banks are willing to work with his, how the equity share is paid back and what interest is charged? Ms. Martina Frawley replied that there are priority lending agreements in place with the main banks AIB, Permanent TSB and Bank of Ireland.

An Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Stephen Keary enquired if there was indexation on redemption repayments on the equity share.

Ms. Frawley explained that the information on equity share and obligations of the purchaser and the Council are set out in the legal contract "Affordable Dwelling Purchase Arrangement".

Tracy Mc Elligott, Sectoral Representative, Community/Voluntary enquired about the example on slide 8 of the presentation and the price the purchaser has to pay. Cllr. Seán Hartigan asked about minimum income and deposit required. An Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Stephen Keary enquired about the figures presented and asked if they were only applicable to the Brú na Gruadán, Affordable Home Purchase Scheme. Ms. Frawley advised that it is not necessary for applicants to calculate how much they will contribute to the cost of an affordable home. LCCC will do this for each successful applicant. There is also an income calculator for each home type included in the Eligibility Criteria and FAQ document for the scheme (available on the Affordable Housing website).

Cllr. Conor Sheehan also welcomed the first Affordable Housing Scheme in Limerick and stated that the scheme is not affordable as it's a market discount scheme and applicants will be taking on too much debt. Cllr. Sheehan enquired when data on applicants would be available, what impact inflation would have on the scheme and if the Council can advise on the affordable price of units built on Council land.

Ms. Frawley responded that the online portal opens on the 20<sup>th</sup> June and that the affordable applicant data would be analysed in due course.

An Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Stephen Keary enquired if Limerick City and County Council would consider making land available for new modular homes similar to which Cork City Council have provided for Ukrainian refugees.

Ms. Frawley added that the Council have some local authority land that we have looked for AHF funding, including Curragower Lands for 9 affordable purchase units and Toppins Lands for 28 affordable purchase units. Ms. Sarah Newell stated that Toppins Field is a pilot scheme for Modular Build and that Mr. Mick Forde-Bradley gave a workshop on Modern Methods of Construction earlier this year.

**Item 5: Updates**

***Report to SPC from Housing Disability Strategic Group***

For noting and circulation after the meeting.

**Item 6: AOB**

**None**

**October SPC meeting date Thursday, 12<sup>th</sup> October 2023.**

An Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Stephen Keary thanked everyone who attended the SPC.

**END OF MEETING**