

Minutes of Special Meeting held on 25th July, 2016 at 3pm

Chair: Cllr. P. Fitzpatrick

Cllrs: M.H. Cavanagh, M. Shortall, J. Brennan, P. Millea, M. Doyle, J. Malone, M. McCarthy, B. Gardner, E. Aylward, T. Breathnach, M. O' Neill, G. Frisby, D. Kennedy, P. McKee, S. Tyrrell, F. Doherty and G. Frisby

Officials: C. Byrne, M. Melia, M. Mulholland, M. Prendiville, M. Mullally, E. Cody, J. Scully, A. M. Shortall, K. Hanley, M. Delahunty, D Malone, M. Newport, M. Comerford, M. Cashin, R Moran, AM Shortall, M. OShea and T. King.

Apologies: Cllr. M. Doran, P. Dunphy, M. Noonan, P. O' Neill and A. McGuinness

Cllr. P. Fitzpatrick welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted the current frustration that there is in relation to the housing crisis.

Cllr. P. Fitzpatrick confirmed that Standing Orders applied and each member is allowed to speak once for 4 minutes and advised that all members would have an opportunity to make their points.

Ms. C. Byrne advised that the members would receive a number of presentations. She advised the members that the problems regarding housing were not just arousing social housing and advised the members that there is a shortage of housing stock in general. She advised of the need to open up new neighbourhoods.

Mr D Malone gave a PowerPoint presentation on an overview of the current situation in relation to housing in general. In his presentation he outlined the following:-

- Overview of the current situation
- The highlights of the recent CSO figures as they apply to Kilkenny
- Population changes
- Migration housing stock
- Vacancy rates
- Vacant Site Levy
- The planning challenges for the Council

Mr M Mullally gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Housing Report circulated to members. In his presentation he gave an overview of the governments action plan Rebuilding Ireland – An Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness 2017 – 2021. The presentation covered the 5 Key Pillars of Action to address these Challenges;

- Address Homelessness
- Accelerate Social Housing
- Build More Homes
- Improve the Rental Sector
- Utilise Existing Housing

Ms E Cody continued the PowerPoint presentation and briefed the members on the Housing Construction Programme

Mr M Mullally completed the presentation and briefed the members on:

- Housing Voids
- Approved Housing Bodies
- Capital Assistance Scheme
- Private Grants
- Tenant Purchases
- Housing Rents
- Traveller Accommodation
- Homelessness

Cllr. P. Fitzpatrick thanked the presenters and thanked all the housing staff that were in attendance.

Ms. C. Byrne advised the members that the purpose of presentation was to inform the members of the scale of the issues the council is trying to address and confirmed that the housing issue was not just the need to build social houses.

Members thanked the staff for the presentations. Contributions were received from Cllrs. J. Malone, F. Doherty, D. Kennedy, M. O' Neill, B. Gardner, M. Shortall, S. Tyrrell, M.H. Cavanagh, P. McKee, T. Breathnach and J. Brennan.

Issues raised by members relating to the following:-

- The new planning arrangements
- Whether there could be a site visit to the new Gaol Road houses
- Current position on the housing list
- Bringing rural houses back to life
- Unfinished housing estates
- Land bank owners
- Power to CPO
- NAMA property in Co Kilkenny.
- Serviced sites in rural areas
- Cost of fixing up houses
- What land banks do we own
- Policy on return of house when tenant dies
- Housing in Rosbercon
- Clarification re vacant units
- Are unfinished housing estates included in vacant units
- Update on Logan St Thomastown
- Staffing Resources for Housing Needs Assessment
- What programmes do the Housing Agencies currently have for Kilkenny
- Rural Cottage Programme
- Is there a grant for people when they vacate council house

- Can we have a local incentive scheme on Vacant Site levy
- Is the land at the Butts owned by the council
- Can we do anything to slow down the repossessions
- What constitutes homelessness
- Can something be done with derelict shops to turn them into housing units
- Mortgage to Rent Scheme
- Mapping of Void dwellings
- Staffing situation in housing
- Will all housing applicants be notified in respect of the Housing Needs Assessment
- Role of Local Authority where housing planning application is greater than 100 Units
- What will happen regarding relationships between landlords and tenant in relation to the HAP Payment scheme?
- Living Towns
- Grant Incentive Scheme
- Any plans re land bank in Castlecomer area?
- Are we talking to Respond and Oakley?

Ms. C Byrne, Ms M Melia, Ms. E Cody, Mr D. Malone and Mr. M. Mullally responded to all the queries raised.

Mc C Byrne advised that one of the big challenges for Kilkenny Co Co was to open up new neighbourhoods.

Mc M. Melia advised that she would get a report for the members on the land bank.

Ms C. Byrne reminded the members that the Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness 2017 – 2021 was a national plan and ask members to feed back to via the SPCs if the members felt areas of the plan were not working.

Cllr. P. Fitzpatrick thanks the members and the staff for the contributions throughout the meeting.

Ms. C Byrne advised that Ms M. Melia was leaving Kilkenny County Council to take up a new post.

Cllr. P. Fitzpatrick thanked Ms M. Melia for all her work and wished her well. Contributions from Cllrs M Shortall, M.H. Cavanagh, B. Gardner, P. McKee and S. Tyrrell.

Ms M. Melia thanked the members for the good wishes.

Meeting then concluded.

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