

Minutes of Strategic Policy Committee 4 – Housing

Held on the 9th June 2016 in John’s Green House at 11.00 a.m.

Present: Cllr. Andrew McGuinness, Chairman, Cllr. Fidelis Doherty, Cllr. Mellissa O’Neill, Cllr. Pat O’Neill, Cllr. Michael McCarthy, Margaret Leahy, Declan Murphy,

In Attendance: Maria Melia, Martin Mullally, Margaret Newport, Tom King, Eimear Cody, Mary Cashin

Apologies: Brian Dunlop, Yvonne Moriarty.

1. Minutes of SPC 4 Meeting held on 31/03/2016

Proposed: Cllr. Melissa O’Neill

Seconded: Declan Murphy, and adopted.

2. Matters Arising

Action : Request by Declan Murphy for copy of Kilkenny Homeless Action Team Presentation to be circulated to members.

Clarification sought by Cllr. Melissa O’Neill regarding request for the inclusion of additional two, four bed and disabled access properties in future housing development and matter was clarified by Martin Mullally.

A discussion in relation to social housing downsizing and transfers took place.

3. Homeless Update

Presentation by Margaret Newport, Senior Social Worker, Housing.

Margaret Newport advised of a decrease in homeless presentations in comparison to previous months/last years figures but highlighted the increase in challenging presentations and the increase in duration of stay in emergency B&B and emergency accommodation due to lack of movement.

It was noted that emergency accommodation at Amber Women’s Refuge and Good Shepherd Centre including the Lodge (family accommodation unit) remain at capacity and emergency B&B caters for 12 adults and 3 children at the 31/05/2016.

A discussion took place in relation the Housing First Initiative and members were advised that two units are currently in use under this initiative.

Contributions made by Cllr. Melissa O’Neill, Cllr. Doherty and Declan Murphy.

4. Acquisitions Policy

Presentation by Martin Mullally, Senior Executive Officer, Housing.

Martin Mullally presented the Draft Acquisitions Policy to members for information and comment and advised that Kilkenny County Council prepared the policy to give guiding principles, in line with the Council's Code of Conduct and Ethics Register, due to the acceleration in acquisitions arising from the Social Housing Strategy 2020.

A discussion took place in relation to land bank acquisitions.

Contributions made by Cllr. Melissa O'Neill, Cllr. Doherty and Maria Melia.

5. Anti Social Behaviour

Presentation by Tom King, Tenant Liaison Officer, Housing.

Tom King provided a presentation to Members which outlined complaints by type, number and location. He advised that 80 complaints have been received by Kilkenny County Council to date and that the majority of complaints constituted rubbish and maintenance issues followed by noise, threats and intimidation.

Discussion regarding the remit of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2014, the manner in which Kilkenny County Council engages with tenants to prevent eviction and its authority to enforce repossession where all interventions have failed took place.

Contributions made by Cllr. Melissa O'Neill, Cllr. McCarthy, Cllr. McGuinness, Cllr. Patrick O'Neill, Margaret Leahy, Maria Melia.

The members expressed their gratitude to Tom King for his role as Tenant Liaison Officer.

Action: Circulation of Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2014 to Members as requested by Cllr. Melissa O'Neill.

6. Irish Council for Social Housing

Presentation by Paula Kenny, I.C.S.H

Paula provided an overview regarding the role and remit of the Irish Council for Social Housing. She outlined the membership, tiers of voluntary organisations and scale of properties in social housing. She highlighted the enhanced role of voluntary bodies in the Social Housing Strategy 2020.

Discussion regarding Focus Ireland tenancy support, I.C.S.H capacity for technical support with voluntary organisations took place.

Contributions made by Cllr. Melissa O'Neill, Eimear Cody.

7. A.O.B.

Request for inclusion of Report on Vacant Social Houses to be included on next agenda.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____
Chairperson

Date: _____