

Minutes of Strategic Policy Committee 4 – Housing

Held on 25th January 2018 at 11.00 a.m. in John's Green House

Present: Cllr. Andrew McGuinness, Cllr. Michael McCarthy, Cllr. Melissa O'Neill, Cllr. Maurice Shortall, Mary Egan, Declan Murphy

In Attendance: Mary Mulholland, Martin Mullally, Mary Cashin, Margaret Newport, Eimear Cody.

Apologies: Cllr. Joe Malone, Cllr. Fidelis Doherty, Yvonne Moriarty, Brian Dunlop.

Adoption of Minutes of 9th November, 2017

Proposed: Cllr. M. McCarthy

Seconded: Cllr. M. O'Neill

2. Matters Arising

Committee Appointment

Chairperson, Cllr. McGuinness, advised that Cllr. Maurice Shortall was elected to SPC 4 at plenary meeting of 18th December, 2017 and welcomed him to the committee.

Disability Strategy

Martin Mullally provided an overview on Disability Strategy commenting on the following:-

- availability of Quarter 4 stats
- membership of the Disability Steering Group
- inclusion of private grants in overall target of 186
- proportion of adapted properties in new schemes dependent on size of scheme

Contributions: Cllr. M. O'Neill, Cllr. M. Shortall.

3. Homeless Update

Martin Mullally provided a statistical overview of homeless presentations. He also advised that a Rough Sleeping Survey was held on the 28th-29th December, 2017, which resulted in a zero return. The survey will be carried out every 6 months going forward.

Cllr. O'Neill brought the Committee's attention to a specific case. As the Committee is precluded from discussing individual cases the matter was addressed by Margaret Newport in terms of homeless policy and she provided an overview of the Homeless Action Team role and the policy pertaining to homeless presenters presenting with active addiction.

The Chairperson requested that Cllr. O'Neill discuss the specific case with the Executive outside of SPC4.

Contributions: Cllr. McGuinness, Cllr. O'Neill, Cllr. Shortall.

A statistical overview of homeless presentations was provided to members in hard copy.

Actions: Policy in relation referral of service users who present as homeless and who are in active addiction to be circulated.
Aims and objectives of Homeless Action Team to be circulated

4. Refugee Resettlement Programme Update

Martin Mullally provided an update vis a vis Kilkenny County Council's commitment in terms of resettlement of 140 Refugees in 2017-2018. To meet this commitment he advised that Kilkenny County Council is sourcing properties via acquisition and turn key to avoid impact on the social housing list and priority is given to areas with family resource centres. 2 families have been resettled in Piltown and 4 in Urlingford to date. Martin advised that the Resettlement Worker and Inter cultural Worker are key players in the resettlement of these families.

Cllr. McCarty advised that the families had been very well received in Urlingford and commended Kilkenny County Council on how the matter was handled.

Cllr. O'Neill queried the allocation of a 3 bed to a couple with no children and was advised that the case could be linked to family re-unification or movement to a smaller unit once available.

Contributions: Cllr. McCarthy, Cllr. O'Neill, Cllr. Shortall, Declan Murphy.

Actions: Request that Resettlement Worker attends SPC4 once settlement process beds in.

5. Housing Capital Programme

Martin Mullally advised of the delivery target of 627 units under Rebuilding Ireland for 2017-2021 and that a report on housing delivery would be presented at the next Council Meeting in February.

A presentation in relation to housing delivery in 2017 was provided and the following matters were discussed:-

- Acquisitions
- Capital Assistance Scheme
- Leasing
- Introduction of 1 stage approval system for up to 8 houses

Mary Mulholland advised that a second housing summit would be held on the 7th February. That many different schemes feed into the overall target of 627 and that the Council will look at all proposals brought forward in order to meet this target.

Contributions: Cllr. McCarty, Cllr. O'Neill, Cllr. Shortall.

An overview of Housing Capital Delivery was provided to members in hard copy

6. Private Grants

Martin Mullally provided an overview of the Housing Aid for Older People grant in terms of extension of grant closing date to 11th December, 2017 and approved and paid in 2017. He advised that the Housing Adaptation Grant and Mobility Aids Housing Grant are recommended by an Occupational Therapist on medical need and this determines the priority of the application.

A discussion took place in relation to difficulty in securing quotations coming up to the end of the year. It was requested that the window for grant submission be reconsidered taking into account such difficulty. Martin advised that applications received prior to closing date without quotations will be accepted but quotations must be submitted.

The committee extended their compliments to Valerie Hayes and Laura Fitzgerald on their work in processing grants in 2017.

Contributions: Cllr. McGuinness, Cllr. Shortall.

An overview of private grants was provided to members in hard copy.

Actions: Consideration to move application date for receipt of 2019 grants to September & October 2018.
Revert to members with analysis of grant applications.

7. Rent Review 2018

Martin Mullally advised that the last rent review was undertaken in 2016 and it is anticipated that the next rent review will commence in quarter 1 of 2018. Kilkenny County Council is amalgamating the old Borough differential rent with the Council differential rent and anomalies have been identified in some categories. Martin advised that the rent review is an executive function and Elected Members will be updated on the process as a courtesy and requested that they utilise their position in the community to communicate the rent review process to tenants. Mary Mulholland advised that the Management Team would agree a scheme and this would be brought to the Members. Cllr O'Neill proposed that Kilkenny County Council advertise an explanation of the Rent Review.

Contributions: Cllr. O'Neill, Cllr. Shortall.

Actions: SPC 4 to agree communications policy for the scheme.

8. Date of Next Meeting

29/03/2018 at 11.00 a.m.

9. A.O.B.

Tenant Handbook

Cllr. McGuinness, Chairperson, advised that SPC is not responsible for signing off on documents and that ample information was given to Elected Members prior to the publication of the Tenant Handbook.

Cllr. O'Neill thanked Mary Mulholland for explanation of the Tenant Handbook given at the last Council meeting.

It was noted that a special meeting of Council would take place on 05/02/2018 and Cllr. McGuinness requested a statement from the Committee for the meeting.

Actions: Tenancy Agreement and Tenant Handbook to be circulated in advance of next meeting.
Housing Maintenance staff to attend next meeting

Agenda for next meeting

Agenda to include updates on Rebuilding Ireland Schemes.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____

**Cllr. Andrew McGuinness,
Chairperson,
SPC 4 – Housing.**

Date: _____