



## Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

### Housing, Community and Cultural Development SPC

**25<sup>th</sup> April 2019, Swift Room, Buvinda House, Navan**

**Attendees -  
Councillors:**

Clr Sarah Reilly (Chairperson), Clr Maria Murphy, Clr Sinead Burke, Clr Nick Killian, Clr Gillian Toole, Clr Maria O' Rourke, , Clr Stephen McKee

**Apologies:** Clr Caroline Lynch

**Attendees -  
Sectoral**

Niamh Ui Loinsigh, Gerard Weldon, Michelle McCullough, Robert Bradley

**Representatives:**

**Apologies:**

**Officials:**

Barry Lynch, Gerardette Bailey, David Jones

Item	Discussion / Action
1.	<p><b><u>Minutes of Previous Meeting</u></b></p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 28<sup>th</sup> March 2019 were approved. Proposed by G. Weldon, seconded by N. Ui Loinsigh.</p> <p>On Commencement of the meeting, the Chairperson welcomed M. McCullough to her first meeting, and a word of appreciation was expressed to two members who had recently stepped down from the SPC, namely V. Harris and C. Whelan.</p>
2.	<p><b><u>Matters Arising</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In relation to the update provided on Housing First and the available health related funding, Clr Toole expressed the view that said budget was not sufficient to deal adequately with the extent of the issue in regard to homelessness and addiction/mental health. It was noted that the North East Regional Drugs Task Force budget had not increased in recent years, despite an increase demand on related services</li> </ul>
3.	<p><b><u>To Consider and Approve the Draft County Meath Arts Plan 2019-2024</u></b></p> <p>G. Bailey provided a presentation on the draft County Arts Development Plan 2019-2024 (draft Plan circulated to members present). The following areas of the draft Plan were reviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Context and role of the Arts Office, including reference to recent positive assessment by the Arts Council and alignment with other strategic plans, such as Creative Ireland</li> <li>▪ Four Strategic Priorities (identified following consultation process) including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To nurture and support artists and creators</li> <li>▪ To enhance local culture and creative infrastructure</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To provide children and young people access to high quality participatory arts experiences</li> <li>▪ To promote inclusivity and diversity through the arts</li> <li>▪ A brief summary of proposed actions under each of the strategic priorities</li> <li>▪ Implementation, including direct responsibility of the Arts Office for certain actions within the Plan and partnership working with other organisations/groups. Dependence on available staff and financial resources also highlighted</li> </ul> <p>Discussion followed with the following key points noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The work of the Arts Office was commended, and the ambition captured in the draft Plan was recognised and welcomed</li> <li>▪ The proposed action centred on the creation of creative arts spaces/hubs in the County was highlighted. Noted that a focus on a pilot provision was the Kells Court House, with audit of County for possible spaces also to be conducted. The following facilities were suggested as possible hubs, including Dunshaughlin Court House, St Patrick’s School Navan and primary school, Clonalvy.</li> <li>▪ The positive benefit of youth drama/theatre was highlighted by many members present, and initiatives in this regard were particularly welcomed</li> <li>▪ The promotion of inclusivity was highlighted as important and to be encouraged. Reference was made to initiatives by Prosper Meath and Rehab and possible utilisation of Therapy graduates form NUI Maynooth. Reference was made to the forthcoming Cruinniú na nog event in Trim (June) and pilot in relation to autism</li> <li>▪ It was suggested that the School Instrument Programme be extended to pre schools, however, it was noted that this was not currently possible due to budgetary constraints, but has been included in an application to the Music Generation Programme</li> </ul> <p>The Draft Arts Plans was approved. Proposed by Cllr M. Murphy, seconded by Cllr G. Toole.</p>
4.	<p><b><u>To Consider and Approve the Draft Scheme of Priority for Affordable Dwelling Purchase Arrangements</u></b></p> <p>D. Jones provided a presentation on the Draft Scheme of Priority for Affordable Dwelling Purchase Arrangements, which cover the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Context for the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 – Act commenced by Minister on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2018</li> <li>▪ Section 81: Provision of Financial Assistance – will not be operationalised at present</li> <li>▪ Section 84: Assessment of eligibility – regulations on same to follow</li> <li>▪ Section 85: Scheme of Priority – statutory requirement to adopt same by 18<sup>th</sup> June 2019. It is a reserved function, but the content of same is heavily prescribed by regulation so as to ensure consistency across the Country. Guidelines on same issued on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2019</li> <li>▪ Section 94: Affordable Dwelling Fund – monies paid by purchasers for affordable dwellings must be paid into an Affordable Dwelling Fund which will be utilised for the purchase of lands by the sector</li> <li>▪ Delivery of affordable dwellings – dependent on available Local Authority land bank, the existence of an affordability challenge in an area and an economic assessment completed by the Local Authority</li> <li>▪ Equity Share – a discount between 10-40% on market value can be provided by the Local Authority on any affordable dwellings provided. The % of discount will represent the equity share retained in the property by the Local Authority and must be paid back in full by the purchaser</li> </ul>



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	<p>Following the above presentation, D. Jones brought the members present through the draft Scheme (document circulated); detailing the methodology to be applied, order of priority (Class A-E), and the application of the order of priority should the number of eligible applicants exceed available affordable dwellings/available financial assistance.</p> <p>In relation to Class C &amp; D, it was noted that it was a matter for each Local Authority to determine radius of kilometers to insert, with a decision on same to be decided upon by the Committee.</p> <p>The following key concerns were noted by members present in respect to proposed Affordable Scheme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The scheme is too complicated to comprehend and a much more simplified scheme should be introduced</li> <li>▪ Will not be appealing for individuals seeking assistance in acquiring an affordable dwelling, particularly in respect to the shared equity aspect and repayment of same. Unlikely that the proposed Scheme will make any impact on the affordability issue being experience for many in Co. Meath, in particular east of the County</li> <li>▪ Inherent issues contributing to the affordability issue, including value of land/land costs will not be tackled by the proposed Scheme</li> <li>▪ That a monetary cap on the value of the maximum discount allowed would be introduced and it was advocated that no such cap be applied</li> <li>▪ Lack of priority given to households with a disability in respect to the Order of Priority Classes was highlighted, and it was recommend that the Order of Priority be amended to reflect this same</li> </ul> <p>In respect to the kilometre radius to be inserted for priority Class C and D (which will be applicable to also Class E), it was decided that a kilometre radius of 300 km be applied in all instances. This decision was based on the following rationale:</p> <p><u>Class C – Education facilities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There was concern expressed by members present that the application of a narrow radius would inadvertently exclude from priority, family households that that have a child with a disability, who requires traveling a distance to a special education school, rather than a local primary/secondary school. In addition, if a medium radius was inserted, it may not cover all eventualities regarding the above point. Furthermore, prioritising only certain third level institutions in terms of distance was deemed to be arbitrary</li> </ul> <p><u>Class D – Employment:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In recognition of the high commuting rate among residents in the County, it was deemed inappropriate to apply a narrow radius on this priority Class. The fact that a household member commutes a distance to work was deemed not to reduce their need for an affordable dwelling within the area that they live. Similar to Class C, prioritising certain areas as the main work locations for commuters was deemed to be arbitrary</li> </ul> <p>In relation to the above discussion, reference was made to the AECOM Transport Report completed for Dunboyne and environs, which detailed suggested improved conditions across the transport network, including public transport services.</p> <p>In recognition of Meath County Council’s statutory obligation to adopt a Scheme by 18<sup>th</sup> June 2019, the proposed Scheme as presented, with the insertion of 300 kilometers as the agreed radius</p>



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	distance for education and employment priority Classes and noting the serious concerns recorded above, was approved for adoption by full Council. Proposed by Cllr Toole, seconded by Cllr Killian.
5.	<p data-bbox="284 459 502 486"><b><u>Any Other Business</u></b></p> <ul data-bbox="338 521 1393 712" style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="338 521 1393 616">▪ N. Uí Loinsigh highlighted the introduction by BHB Insurance of a fee of €105 per Tus worker, noting the lack of information disseminated on the matter to affect sponsoring groups</li><li data-bbox="338 651 1393 712">▪ Chairperson expressed gratitude to members of the Committee for their attendance and participation over the current term of the Committee</li></ul>

### **Recommendations to the Corporate Policy Group (CPG)**

#### **Agenda Item No. 3 Refers:**

- To Approve the Draft County Meath Arts Plan 2019-2024 as presented

#### **Agenda Item No. 4 Refers:**

- In recognition of Meath County Council's statutory obligation to adopt a Scheme by 18<sup>th</sup> June 2019, and noting the serious concerns as recorded above, to Approve the Draft Scheme of Priority for Affordable Dwelling Purchase Arrangements as presented