



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Housing, Community and Cultural Development SPC

30th November 2018, Swift Room, Buvinda House, Navan

Attendees -

Councillors:

Cllr Maria Murphy, Cllr Pdraig Fitzsimons, Cllr Gillian Toole, Cllr Sinead Burke, Cllr Maria O' Rourke, Cllr Nick Killian,

Apologies: Cllr Sarah Reilly (Chairperson), Cllr Caroline Lynch, Cllr Sharon Keogan

Attendees -

Sectoral

Representatives:

Robert Bradley, Niamh Uí Loinsigh, Gerard Weldon

Apologies: Cathy Whelan, Michelle McCullough

In Attendance:

Minister Damien English TD, Deputy Shane Cassells TD, Paul Smith (on behalf of Deputy Thomas Byrne TD), Cllr Joe Fox

Apologies: Minister Helen McEntee TD, Deputy Fergus O' Dowd TD

Officials:

Barry Lynch, David Jones

Item	Discussion / Action
1.	<p><u>Minutes of Previous Meeting</u></p> <p>In the absence of the Chairperson, it was agreed that Cllr Maria Murphy would chair the meeting.</p> <p>In respect to the minutes of the previous meeting, the following was noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attendance of Mr Alan Boyce was omitted ▪ The matter of Meath County Council pursuing church owned lands had been referred to by Cllr Keogan <p>Following the above amendments, the minutes of the previous meeting held on the 14th September 2018 were approved. Proposed by Cllr Killian, seconded by Cllr Toole.</p>
2.	<p><u>Matters Arising</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Minister English noted, that due to scheduling issues, he had not been in a position to attend a meeting of the SPC earlier, and is more than happy to attend as often as schedules allow
3.	<p><u>To Note High Level Housing Topics for Consideration by Oireachtas Members</u></p> <p>By means of context, D. Jones provided a summary update on 2018 delivery in respect to new social housing units. Projected year end delivery was recorded at 381 units (€88,645,909). The enhanced</p>



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	<p>target set for Co. Meath for 2018 is 326 units</p> <p>The progress achieved in delivery during 2018 was acknowledged by those members present.</p> <p>Discussion took place, and the following key points were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The need to maintain momentum behind delivery, in particular a pipeline delivery from 2020 onwards▪ The provision of affordable housing within the County▪ The need for land acquisition in order to allow for direct construction projects in the future. The role of the Land Development Agency was raised in this context as well as lands owned by other State Departments/Agencies and NAMA lands▪ HAP rates, in particular those that are applicable to single adult households▪ Encouragement of landlords into the HAP scheme, and certain disincentive of engagement regarding the inspection regime▪ Higher densities being requested by An Bord Pleanála in respect to Strategic Housing Developments, with negative consequence on the provision of bungalow type units required for persons with a physical disability▪ Oversight and engagement with the Approved Housing Body Sector▪ Mortgage protection requirement for home loans – eliminates those who may have a medical condition that disqualifies them for mortgage protection <p>Minister English responded with the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Acknowledged the strong delivery by Meath County Council in 2018, and noted that funding is available for pipeline delivery. Local Authorities should strive to maximise delivery across all mechanisms, including opportunities through the private market▪ Requests to acquire land will be facilitated, with the Department of Education site, Ashbourne cited as an example▪ Vacant units can represent a strong opportunity for social housing delivery. Recent submission regarding Kells noted and will be pursued▪ Land Development Agency – role is to co-ordinate state owned lands for a variety of purposes, including housing. Departments have been requested to submit to the LDA lands within their ownership. Noted in respect to NAMA lands, that they are not owned by the state and the land owners have the right to work their way out of NAMA if possible▪ €300 million has been set aside for the Affordable Housing Scheme. Reference made to the Service Site Fund and announcements due shortly



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enhanced Leasing – an open rolling call will be announced in January 2019 ▪ Noted that the matter of densities within developments are guidelines and should not be seen as definitive requirements. Noted that a new Chairperson of An Bord Pleanála has recently assumed the role ▪ Balance to be struck in the need to have adequate HAP rates to cover rents, while simultaneously not driving rent inflation. Increased local discretion regarding certain rates (single adult households) may provide a solution to same ▪ Suggestion of a scaling range of requirements for Private Rented Standards, with only certain high level requirements generating an automatic ‘fail’ was noted
4.	<p><u>To Adopt Draft Policy on the Provision of Low Cost Sites (Affordability Measure)</u></p> <p>The following amendments were suggested and agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reference to engagement with pre planning by successful applicants to be inserted ▪ Reference to ‘applicable VAT rate at the time of purchase’ to be inserted. <p>Based on the above amendments, the draft policy was approved. Proposed by Cllr Toole and seconded by Cllr Killian.</p>
5.	<p><u>To Consider Draft Community Amenity Project Scheme 2019</u></p> <p>Draft document had been circulated, including draft application form. It was noted that it was the intention to approve draft scheme at the next SPC meeting in order to open the proposed scheme as early as possible in 2019. Feedback on the scheme should be submitted to A. Bird, Community Section.</p> <p>Initial feedback was noted as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proposed Scheme was welcomed ▪ The matter of 100% grant payment on completion of works poses a problem, particular for community groups that do not have the bridging finance capacity. Suggested that 50% up from payment be provided, with 50% drawdown on completion. Matter to be reviewed ▪ Queried who would assess the applications – noted that staff within the Community Section would complete same ▪ Exclusion of professional fess as eligible grant funding – requested that this be reviewed as often a certain level of professional fees will be incurred by groups in the development/delivery of capital projects. Suggested that same could be capped ▪ Suggested that track record of community groups and sustainability of proposed projects should factor into the assessment process <p>The staff of the Community Section were commended for their work and the efficient manner in their</p>



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	<p>interaction with the Community & Voluntary sector in the County.</p> <p>Recognition with regard to the success of the recent Pride of Place awards, both local and national, was expressed.</p>
6.	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An update on progress in developing an Estate Management Policy was requested. Commitment given that same would be drafted during the term of the current SPC ▪ Requested that the Allocation Scheme and the introduction of a number system be considered ▪ The onerous nature of the Governance Code covering the Community & Voluntary Sector was highlighted. Noted that this was discouraging voluntary and community participation and activity. The significant improvements within the County achieved through community effort was recognised ▪ Noted that an Affordable Housing Allocation Scheme is required to be adopted by Local Authorities next year. Members were advised that it is the intention to complete same during the term of the current SPC ▪ Next meeting scheduled for 1st February 2019, 2.30pm

Recommendations to the Corporate Policy Group (CPG)

Agenda Item No. 4 Refers:

- To approve the draft Low Cost Private Site Scheme (Affordability Measure) as presented.