



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Special Housing Meeting 22nd October 2009, Council Chamber

An Cathaoirleach, Councillor William Carey, presided.

Members Present:

Councillors Shane Cassells, Eugene Cassidy, Jimmy Cudden, John V Farrelly, Jim Holloway, Seamus O'Neill, Joe Reilly, Francis Deane, Anne Dillon Gallagher, Regina Doherty, Jimmy Fegan, Brian Fitzgerald, Oliver Fox, Wayne Harding, Noel Leonard, Tracy McElhinney, Niamh McGowan, Jenny McHugh, Maria Murphy, Bryan Reilly, Tommy Reilly.

Officials in Attendance:

County Manager: Tadhg McDonnell (A)

Directors of Service: Kevin Stewart, Eugene Cummins, Liam Henry, Fiona Lawless, Michael Killeen.

Meetings Administrator Olive Falsey

Senior Planners:

Senior Executive Officers: Larry Whelan.

Housing Staff: Joe Fahy, Tom Traynor, Jim White, Caroline Power, Noeleen Doggett, Mary Carey, Rosemary Dooner, Louise Clinton.

Apologies:

Councillors Sirena Campbell, Joseph Bonner, Ray Butler, Eoin Holmes, Suzanne Jamal, Nick Killian, Catherine Yore.

- 1. Disposal of leasehold Interest** in 10 no. unsold affordable housing units at Ashewood, Ashbourne (6), Academy Square, Navan (2), Cluain Beag, Nobber, (1) and Curragh Park, Carlanstown (1) to North & East Housing Association Ltd for a period of 5 years.

Approved on the proposal of **Cllr. Noel Leonard, seconded by Cllr. Bryan Reilly.**

2. Presentations:

A detailed presentation (circulated at the meeting) was made by Housing staff on the following topics:

- ❖ Housing Policy & Legislation
- ❖ Social Housing Investment Programme (SHIP)
- ❖ Part V - Social & Affordable Housing
- ❖ Social Inclusion / Miscellaneous.

A question and answer session followed the presentation and the following is a summary of the main issues and responses.

Issues	Responses – Brendan McGrath, DOS, Housing
Housing lists.	The Council was advised that RAS and social leasing will be the way forward for dealing with Housing lists. There will be no funding for Capital build for the next number of years.
Vacant housing stock.	It was pointed out that there is a waiting period with regard



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	to taking action on vacant houses. The cost of boarding up houses is c.€600 per month. The use of metal shutters is a requirement for insurance cover, and these shutters have to be rented.
Housing maintenance.	The Council was informed that Meath County Council is not allowed borrow for this purpose and that there are insufficient funds in the Revenue Budget for planned maintenance. There is a legal obligation to maintain boilers and this cost is off-loaded on the tenant. A centralised approach is the only way forward for maintenance so as a fair system can be implemented.
Affordable Housing and clawback situation in current climate.	The issues regarding the affordable housing scheme were explained and the Council was informed of the work completed in 2009 i.e. 170 houses sold resulting in a € liability for Meath County Council. The clawback is determined by the market value at the time of the transaction. In the case of negative equity, the clawback is based on the lower market value. If a home is sold for less than the affordable price, the clawback no longer applies.
Resources in Housing Department	Brendan McGrath, DOS, outlined some of the pressures that the housing team must deal with to deliver the services required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scarce resources both financial and staff. • New Government policies • Staff who have to deal with difficult clients and the potential risks involved. • Need for a shelter for the homeless.
Brendan McGrath, DOS, advised the Council that difficult decisions and choices will have to be made at budget time and certain aspects of the service will have to be examined.	

3. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Joe Reilly:

“That Meath County Council in its 2009-2010 Annual Budget ring-fence 60% of all income derived from the renting of its housing stock for the purpose of:

- *Implementing a program of maintenance and upgrading of its housing stock in the county.*
- *Ensuring MCC fulfils its legal responsibilities as landlords.*
- *Creating employment in the construction industry.*
- *Having necessary works completed at a time when it is competitive to do so.*



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- *Maintaining the value of council housing stock.*

Councillor Reilly apologised and informed the Cathaoirleach that he would have to leave the meeting before the agenda item was reached.
The motion was deferred.

This concluded the business of the meeting.