



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Housing, Community and Cultural Development SPC

16th July 2020, Council Chamber, County Hall, 2.30pm

Attendees Councillors: - Cllr Damien O' Reilly (Chairperson), Cllr Maria Murphy, Cllr Sean Drew, Cllr Nick Killian, Cllr Conor Tormey, Cllr Alan Lawes, Cllr Emer Tobin, Cllr Yemi Adenuga

Apologies:

Attendees Sectoral Representatives: - Niamh Ui Loinsigh, John Regan

Representatives: **Apologies:** Gerard Weldon, Sinead Smith

Officials: Barry Lynch, Fiona Fallon, Mark Harrington, David Jones

Item	Discussion / Action
1.	<p><u>Minutes of previous meeting held on 21st May 2020</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The minutes of the previous meeting were approved. Proposed by Cllr Murphy and seconded by Cllr Tobin
2.	<p><u>Matters Arising</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cllr Lawes queried the timelines in respect to the drafting of the new Regional Homeless Action Plan. It was noted that each County that forms the Mid East Region is currently updating sections within the existing plan, with a view to have a draft for review by the members in September/October, with full Council consideration at the December meeting
3.	<p><u>To Receive details of the Proposed Supplementary Community Grant Allocations for 2020 and if deemed appropriate Recommend for Approval to the Full Council of Meath County Council</u></p> <p>F. Fallon outlined the proposed supplementary allocations for 2020 under the various categories (documents circulated), with the following key points noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Of the 132 unfunded applicants following the first round of allocations, 90 applicants were still in a position to proceed or projects had taken place already, while 40 applicants advised that their project could not proceed ▪ Proposed that for those applicants whose event did proceed or can proceed, that they are awarded funding in line with the previously awarded grants ▪ The total value of grants awarded under the second round is as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community Grant Scheme - €139,396 ▪ Burial Grants - €440 <p>The proposed second round of 2020 allocations as presented were approved. Proposed by Cllr Lawes and seconded by Cllr Murphy.</p>



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4.	<p><u>To Consider Draft Policy on the Inspection of Private Emergency Accommodation</u></p> <p>D. Jones outlined draft policy statement on standards of emergency accommodation supplied by the private sector (document circulated), including reference to the National Quality Standards Framework for Homeless Services in Ireland, Policy Objective, Standards & Key Features and implementation.</p> <p>The draft document was welcomed, with the following key points noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Requested that reports completed on foot of inspections be made available for review, and circulated to those placed in the emergency accommodation facilities ▪ Reference to inclusion of furniture as a key feature to be assessed ▪ Suggested that the policy, once adopted, should be reviewed by the Committee bi annually ▪ The formalisation of standards and monitoring programme may impact on the supply of emergency accommodation in the future ▪ Terms & Conditions for a client placed in emergency accommodation to make reference to encouraging the communication of any concerns a client may have in respect of their placement <p>Noted that any further comments on the draft document can be submitted over the coming weeks, with the intention of approving at the next meeting of the Committee and recommendation to Corporate Policy Group thereafter.</p>
5.	<p><u>To Consider the following Notice of Motion (Cllr Damien O’ Reilly), referred to the SPC</u></p> <p><u>Call on Meath County Council, to begin the process of evicting anti-social tenants in the county’s housing stock. This will allow for the reallocation of this stock to respectful tenants who have being waiting over 7 years for allocations in the county</u></p> <p>The sentiment of the Notice of Motion was outlined by Cllr Reilly. Discussion by members present followed, which included reference to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Protracted process in respect Court system and the successful obtainment of vacant possession ▪ If tenant is evicted, they should be ineligible for any further housing support ▪ Tenancy Agreement should be clear on the repercussions of serious breach of tenancy and a zero tolerance approach should be taken ▪ Role of An Garda Síochána is critical in the process, with a multi-agency approach highlighted ▪ Procedures that Approved Housing Bodies operate and the fact that they fall under the Residential Tenancy Board ▪ Need to take into account the consequence of evictions, namely impact on family members, and in particular children. ▪ Evictions should be the last resort, with resources increased and targeted in respect of support services in order to tackle the root cause – particular reference to drug rehabilitation and mental health <p>B. Lynch noted the context of the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy, namely the Housing Act 2014, which replaced Section 62 of the Housing Act 1966, following challenges subsequent to the enactment of the European Convention of Human Rights Act 2003. In summary, the ability of a Housing Authority to terminate a tenancy by issuing a Notice to Quit prior to a hearing was removed. Noted that</p>



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	<p>clear,verifiable evidence is required to successfully securing repossession.</p> <p>M. Harrington provided a brief outline of the procedures involved, including investigation, warning process, referrals to other agencies, Exclusion Orders and the close working relations that exist between An Garda Síochana and the Housing Investigation team. Statistics pertaining to 2020 complaints to date and actions undertaken were also outlined.</p> <p>D. Jones outlined the operating environment in which the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy operates, including i) the legislative basis of the 2014 Housing Act, which places a greater onus on Housing Authorities to ensure due process is followed, ii) homelessness, as a Housing Authority, Meath County Council also has responsibility for homelessness, and in recent years, the consequence of an eviction is a direct route to homelessness, iii) judiciary system, which based on recent experience of illegal occupations in Navan, will apply the principal of proportionality and the exhaustion of all other reasonable remedies, prior to granting an order</p> <p>In the context of reviewing the Anti-Social Behavior Policy, it was agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To review the polices of a number of other Local Authority policies and Approved Housing Bodies ▪ To case study a number of serious breaches of anti-social behavior cases that are currently active ▪ To place as an agenda item at a future meeting of the Joint Policing Committee
6.	<p><u>To Amend the Scheme of Priority for Affordable Dwelling Purchase Arrangements</u></p> <p>This item deferred to next meeting.</p>
7.	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <p>No matters raised.</p>

Recommendations to the Corporate Policy Group (CPG)

Agenda Item No. 3 Refers:

- To Approve the proposed Supplementary Community Grants Allocations for 2020 as presented