

MINUTES OF STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING ON HOUSING, SOCIAL INCLUSION & CORPORATE SERVICES on 9th June 2023 at 11.30 a.m. in the Council Chamber, Courthouse, Cavan.

In attendance:

- Cllr Val Smith, Chairperson
- Mr Eoin Doyle, Director of Service
- Mr John Wilson, Cavan County Council
- Ms Bridie McBrearty, Cavan County Council
- Ms Ramona McAvenue, Cavan County Council
- Cllr Patricia Walsh
- Cllr Trevor Smith
- Cllr Madeleine Argue
- Ms Lynda McGavigan, Corporate & Human Resources
- Mr John Donohoe, Community & Enterprise
- Mr P Elliott, Development and Construction

Apologies:

- Cllr Paddy McDonald
- Cllr Clifford Kelly
- Mr T Maughan, Social Inclusion,
- Ms Theresa Thompson, Trade Unions
- Ms Leanne Coyle, Community/Voluntary

Cllr Val Smith, Chairperson welcomed everybody to meeting.

30 MINUTES

Cllr T Smith proposed the minutes of the meeting held on 10th March 2023 and seconded by Cllr P Walsh.

40 SOCIAL INCLUSION UPDATE

J Donohoe gave a presentation on the preparation of the new Cavan Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP) 2023-2028. The LECP provides a clear and strategic framework for Cavan over the next six years. The plan provides a flexible and adaptable plan that our community and economy can work with to ensure the county reaches its full potential as a place to live, work, and grow in.

The plan contains 2 parts, a community plan which the LCDC have responsibility for and an economic plan which the Economic SPC have responsibility for. The plan will be organised around 6 high level goals which have been agreed by both the Local Community and Development Committee (LCDC) and the Economic SPC as follows.

Goal 1 - Cavan will have a dynamic, innovative, and equitable economy that supports enterprise and employment.

Goal 2 - Cavan will support the development of sustainable tourism in the county that appreciates the county's natural, built, artistic and cultural heritage.

Goal 3 - Cavan will facilitate life-long learning and education opportunities to support the personal development and attainment of its people.

Goal 4 - Cavan will support the regeneration and revitalisation of its towns, villages and localities as attractive places to live, work and visit.

Goal 5 - Cavan will be an inclusive, healthy and equitable county that supports wellbeing across its communities.

Goal 6 - Cavan will proactively support climate action to create resilient and sustainable communities.

Stage 1 was the preparation of a socio-economic analysis which has been completed following extensive public consultation, workshops with key stakeholders, including elected members and staff in Cavan County Council.

Stage 2 is the development of Objectives and Actions. These were drafted and revised following consultation with stakeholders. KPIs were devised and suitable benchmarks selected to ensure that the monitoring of the plan was effective and grounded in fact. Draft Objectives and Actions will be presented to the LECP Advisory Group before being presented to both the Economic SPC and the LCDC. It is envisaged this phase will be completed by the end of June 2023.

Stage 3 is the development of a draft plan which will be presented to the Advisory Steering Group, the LCDC and Economic SPC, Municipal District and Regional Assembly.

Following this the draft plan will be presented to the elected members for approval and form adaptation at the September meeting.

50 HOUSING PROGRESS REPORT

J Wilson presented the report on the capital and void programme of work as follows:

- The current Local Authority New Build programme consists of 18 no. housing schemes for 282 units at various stages of planning, design, and construction. There are 90 units under construction and 77 units are expected to go to site this year.
- Approved Housing Bodies – 1 no. housing scheme for 8 units at Drumalee Manor, Cavan will be provided by Tuath this year.
- The overall 'Housing for All' new build programme (LA & AHB) for 2022-2026 is 490 units. 98 units were delivered in 2022 and expected delivery for 2023 is 80 units.
- 5 no. house acquisitions have been completed this year to date. There are 10 acquisitions currently in process of being acquired. Improvement works have been

completed to 2 no. house purchases in 2022. In addition, works are on-going to another 6 no. houses.

- Cavan County Council has returned 283 vacant houses back to use over the past 5 years. The target for 2023 is 70 units.
- The Energy Retrofit Programme progress to date in 2023 – 6 no vacant houses have been retrofitted, 6 no. vacant houses are in the process of being retrofitted, 10 no. tenanted houses are in the process of being retrofitted.
- Croi Conaithe (Towns) Fund
Stream 1 Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant - 92 applications received to date, 40 of which require further information and 35 applications are approved in principle.

Cllr Walsh acknowledged the good work done to date.

Cllr T Smith asked is there a closing date for the Croi Conaithe Scheme. J Wilson advised no closing date has been communicated from the Department.

Cllr V Smith enquired about the maintenance of heat pumps in new houses. J Wilson advised new heat pumps are under contractor warranty for the first 12 months and after that the housing maintenance department are looking at training staff for maintenance.

Cllr Argue enquired about completion dates for Elm Grove. J Wilson advised it will be Q3 2023.

B McBrearty presented a report on progress in the housing office since previous meeting.

- Approved applicants for social housing support - 531 nett together with 564 on the transfer list making the total number approved 1095
- A total of 906 have availed of the Housing Assistance Payment Scheme and there are currently 417 total active tenancies.
- There are 340 household in accommodation provided under the Rental Accommodation Scheme and 131 through the Approved Housing Bodies.
- NTQs – a total of 68 RAS tenancies to date, 46 became Council or AHB tenants.
57 HAP tenancy NTQs to date, 16 became Council or AHB tenants, 17 others who made alternative arrangements.
 - Allocations and new LA tenancies
2023 offers: 67 (54 Council, 13 AHB); 7 refusals 10%
2023 tenancies: 62 (49 Council 13 AHB)
Cost Tenant in situ scheme (CRTIS) 2 assessed and gone to the Housing Agency.
- The Council have had 50 presentations to date and are currently providing TEA for 17 households (22 Adults and 5 Children). There are 12 active cases assigned to tenancy sustainment provided by Dublin Simon. 13 cases closed since the beginning of the year.
- Currently 7 active Housing First Tenancies. To meet Departmental targets, we are required to allocate 3 tenancies each year.
- 10 loan applications received in 2023, 2 approvals in principle issued, 8 in progress.
- 13 applications received under the Incremental Tenant Purchase Scheme this year and are in progress.
- €1,551,980 is the total allocation for grants in 2023. The total committed expenditure at 01/06/23 is €2,894,022 (90 grants).

- Rent App – work on the online payment system is almost complete and the App will be available for testing in the next couple of weeks.
- ASB – 65 complaints received since beginning of year, 49 cases closed. Regained possession of 2 abandoned properties, issues 2 Tenancy Warnings, 1 Exclusion Order and referred 7 cases for legal advice/action.

Cllr Walsh raised concerns around the Housing First Programme and a discussion took place on the roll out of the programme.

Cllr Argue enquired about the Tenancy Sustainment programme and B McBrearty explained the service provided by Dublin Simon.

E Doyle noted the progress made on anti-social behaviour and the amount of complaints cases closed out.

A discussion took place on the Housing Grants allocations and that 52% of the allocation was spent to date. E Doyle advised decisions around the funding of the scheme may need to be discussed later in the year.

60 HOUSING & DISABILITY STEERING GROUP MEETING REPORT

B McBrearty gave an update. She advised that no meeting has taken place due to waiting on the national implementation plan. In the meantime, the housing department continue to work to ensure Cavan County Council's responsibilities towards disability are met.

70 DIFFERENTIAL RENT SCHEME

B McBrearty informed the Committee that the Differential Rent Scheme have been revised and updated with no material changes. It is envisaged to roll out a full rent review in Q4 2023 and the new rents applied in Q1 2024.

80 AOB

B McBrearty gave an update on the Affordable Housing Scheme and the eligibility criteria for the scheme. A discussion took place around the criteria constraints of the scheme.

90 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Next Meeting: 15 September 2023 at 11.00 in the Townhall, Cavan.

Signed: _____
Chairperson

Date: _____