

Minutes of Strategic Policy Committee 4 – Housing

Held on the 8th September 2016 in John’s Green House at 11.00 a.m.

Present: Cllr. Andrew McGuinness, Chairman, Cllr. Fidelis Doherty, Cllr. Mellissa O’Neill, Cllr. Pat O’Neill, Cllr. Michael McCarthy, Cllr. Joe Malone, Brian Dunlop, Yvonne Moriarty.

In Attendance: Martin Mullally, Margaret Newport, Ann Marie Walsh, Joe Scully, Martina Comerford, Mary Cashin.

Apologies: Margaret Leahy, Declan Murphy

1. Minutes of SPC 4 Meeting held on 09/06/2016

Proposed: Cllr. Fidelis Doherty

Seconded: Melissa O’Neill, and adopted.

2. Matters Arising

Cllr. Andrew McGuinness at the opening of the meeting commended Kilkenny County Council on the development of social housing units at Gaol Road, Kilkenny.

3. Homeless Update

Presentation by Margaret Newport, Senior Social Worker, Housing.

Margaret presented homeless presentation statistics, broken down by month, from January to August 2016. She advised that emergency accommodation continues to be at capacity due to lack of exit strategy for those referred and residing there. It was noted that the Good Shepherd Centre is at early stages of developing a wing of the centre for second stage accommodation.

1 family currently in Lodge Family accommodation

14 Adults and 14 children in emergency B&B

Amber continues to be at capacity

Contributions from Cllr. Fidelis Doherty, Cllr. Melissa O’Neill & Yvonne Moriarty.

4. Summary of Social Housing Assessments 2016

Presentation by Martina Comerford, A/Administrative Officer, Housing.

Martina informed the committee that a Housing Needs Assessment is carried out every three years with the last assessment held in 2013.

Process

1st Advertisement - July 2016

Web-site updated - July 2016

Radio Announcement	-	July 2016
Letters issued to 2,768 applicants	-	July 2016
2 nd Advertisement	-	August 2016

Martina advised that the assessment is a snapshot as of 21/09/2016 with a closing date for Departmental return of 12/10/2016. Every effort has been made to contact applicants. The return rate is currently at 47% but rising every day. Applicants who fail to engage can re-apply but will lose their time previously gained on the social housing waiting list. Applications submitted within the last 12 months were not contacted for this assessment.

Contributions from Cllr. McGuinness

Action: Martina Comerford to forward copy of advertisement to Committee members.

5. Void Management

Presentation by Martin Mullally, Senior Executive Officer, Housing.

Martin advised that there is a high percentage refusal rate nationally however Kilkenny County Council's refusal rate is at 4%. This is attributed to high take up in all areas where the Council has housing.

The Housing Section had 17 casual vacancies at 31/08/2016. Historically this figure was between 40 and 45 but has decreased due to substantial investment from internal funds to bring the properties back into stock.

Contributions from Cllr. McGuinness, Cllr. Pat O'Neill, Cllr. Melissa O'Neill, Yvonne Moriarty, Cllr Fidelis Doherty

6. Housing Report

Presentation by Martin Mullally, Senior Executive Officer, Housing.

Martin provided an overview of the following areas contained within the Housing Report:-

- Hap Cap increase
- Differential Rent Framework
- Tenant Purchase Scheme
- Capital Programme & Acquisitions
- RAS/Leasing
- Housing Loans Programme
- Private Grants
- Traveller Accommodation Programme
- Community & Estate Management

A discussion took place in relation to contributions from Kilkenny County Council on behalf of Council tenants in private estates towards estate management.

Action: Martin Mullally to liaise with Ronan Ryan regarding policy for Council contribution towards estate management in private estates.

Contributions from Cllr. McGuinness, Cllr. McCarthy, Cllr. Melissa O'Neill, Yvonne Moriarty, Cllr Fidelis Doherty

7. A.O.B.

The matter of dealing with anti social behaviour in advance of acceptance of an offer of a council house was discussed.

Cllr. McGuinness enquired regarding properties coming on stream through voluntary bodies.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____

Chairperson

Date: _____