

***Minutes of the Social Development Strategic Policy Committee Meeting  
held in Áras Contae an Chláir on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2018 at 2.30pm***

**Present:** Cllr. Gerard Flynn, Chairperson  
Cllr. P.J. Kelly  
Cllr. Tony O'Brien  
Cllr. Ann Norton  
Cllr. Pat Burke  
Dermot Hayes  
Anne Haugh, Director of Service  
Tim Forde, Head of Sports & Recreation  
Helen Walsh, County Librarian  
Mairead Corbett, Administrative Officer  
Tony Neville, Executive Engineer  
Niall O'Keeffe, Administrative Officer  
Liam O'Connor, Administrative Officer  
Kathy Lordan, Assistant Staff Officer

**Apologies:** Cllr Paul Murphy, Cllr Tom McNamara.

At the outset Cllr Gerry Flynn welcomed Anne Haugh as the new Social Development Director and wished her well in her new post and also welcomed Kathy Lordan to the Social Development Directorate.

**1. Minutes of meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2018.**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2018 were proposed by Cllr. Ann Norton, seconded by Dermot Hayes and agreed.

**2. Matters Arising.**

There were no matters arising.

**3. Information Notice from SIPO: Regulation of Lobbying.**

A. Haugh advised that this information was for noting by the SPC members. The Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015 is designed to provide information to the public regarding who is lobbying whom about what. External members of Committees need to be aware that in some cases the communications that take place within that Committee could be considered lobbying. A Transparency Code has been published by the Minister for Finance & Public Expenditure and Reform to address this situation. In order to comply with transparency issues, the Agenda

and Minutes of Committee meetings must be published on the Council's website. If this is agreed it will go to full Council for ratification.

This was proposed by Cllr. Pat Burke and seconded by Cllr. Tony O'Brien and Dermot Hayes.

#### **4. Proposal for "No Smoking/Vaping" signage at Council playgrounds.**

T. Forde advised as follows:

- Discussions are being held with other local authorities around the country and a policy is being developed for approval in Clare;
- The legal side is being examined in relation to enforcement of proposal;

Participating with the Rural Directorate on the preparation and implementation of the Healthy Ireland Strategy and a consultant is also on board in relation to this. The issue of smoking/vaping at play and recreational facilities will also be considered within the context of the relevant elements of the Healthy Ireland Strategy for Clare.

- A discussion took place in relation to the effects of passive smoking and vaping. It was agreed to expedite the proposal for signage at all playgrounds – Council and Community owned.

#### **5. Briefing on Atlantic Youth Project.**

T. Forde advised the meeting that the first transnational event of the 2018-2020 Atlantic Youth Project was hosted in Ennis, Co Clare, from Monday 28th May until Friday, 1st June.

The event saw 106 students and 26 accompanying adults from Portugal, Spain, UK, France and Ireland take part in a week of activity designed to encourage young people to consider maritime industry and recreation as a career path.

The week's activities included a visit to 'Wild Irish Seaweeds', Quilty to experience the harvesting and production of seaweed; Kayaking/sailing at ULAC Lough Derg; a trip aboard Doolin2Aran Ferries around the face of the Cliffs of Moher; surfing in Lahinch; a session with Dr. Simon Berrow, from the Irish Whale and Dolphin Group.

The week was rounded off by a 'Celebration Evening' on Friday 1 June where the students got an opportunity to showcase their culture to each other and receive a certificate of participation. Awards were also presented for various skills and achievements.

The objective of the Atlantic Youth Project is to encourage and develop the maritime culture of young Europeans, through the practice of water sports and maritime education at school.

With partners in Spain, Portugal, France, UK and Ireland (Clare County Council), the 'Atlantic Youth Project' will also contribute to the implementation of the Atlantic Maritime Strategy, through the development of a maritime culture among young people which in turn will encourage the upcoming generation to consider Maritime Sport/Recreation & Industry as a career path.

Clare has been selected to participate in the 'Atlantic Youth Project' due to its ready access to sea and river waters surrounding the County, maritime heritage, existing maritime infrastructure for hosting project activities, and Clare County Council's lengthy track record of delivering education outreach programmes.

Clare County Council, during the lifetime of this project, will facilitate the involvement of a significant number of our second level students (200) with opportunities to participate in water sports in our county whilst also participating in organised maritime education opportunities that this EU project will pay for.

The meeting was most complimentary of the manner in which the event was hosted and particularly the final awards night where the impact of the programme on the young participants was clearly evident.

#### **6. Update on Clare County Library Project.**

H. Walsh advised that Stage 3 approval has been received and it is expected to be on site before the end of the year. It is envisaged that the opening of the new Library will be in 2020.

#### **7. Update on Creative Ireland Strategy.**

H. Walsh reported on this legacy project from the 1916-2016 celebrations. The budget received in 2018 was €96k and €25k was allowed for the implementation of a grants scheme for the county.

She informed the meeting of a national event on 22<sup>nd</sup> June - **Cruinniú na nÓg** – which aims to celebrate and encourage children and young people's participation in culture and creativity.

#### **8. Notice Board policies.**

The following policies were circulated and agreed by the members:

- Notice Boards in Libraries
- Use of Library premises
- Guidelines for conduct on Library premises

- Collection development policy

## 9. Rebuilding Ireland Action Plan.

M. Corbett report on the Rebuilding Ireland Action Plan – targets and progress to date as follows:

	Clare - Target 2018	Estimated Outturn 2018	Comment
Build	29	40	36 in Ennis by Cluid and Co-operative Housing Ireland and 4 at Meelick by Thomond Housing
Acquisition	35	55	24 sales agreed and 26 sales closed to end May 2018 - est. outturn 50 plus 5 no. acquired by Inis in Mountshannon
Leasing	100	100	50 no. completed to date. Meeting our target is dependent on the availability of houses on the market for lease during the year.
	164	195	
Voids		65	
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>260</b>	

*In relation to HAP and RAS a target figure was provided of 737 additional tenancies for 2018. However, this is overstated and we are in contact with the Department regarding same. It is expected that this will be revised when the results of the current Social Housing Needs Assessment for Clare are known. There is currently an average of 8. no. additional tenancies set up per week under HAP in the county but there are also some landlords leaving the Scheme - this will result in an estimated net outturn figure of 180 additional tenancies for the year. The combined total for RAS and HAP will be circa 200 for 2018.*

M. Corbett also reported on the status of capital housing projects as follows:

Project	No. of units	Status
Quilty	18	Planning was granted at the May Council meeting.
Feakle	13	The scheme is currently being prepared for tender launch.
Clonlara	9	The tender is complete and the tender report is being prepared for the Stage 4 Department approval.
Roslevan Ennis	8	Planning was granted at the May Council meeting.

<b>Ashline</b>	40	The design team is appointed and surveys are being carried out at present.
<b>Ennis</b>		

## **10. Homelessness**

N. O’Keeffe advised the members of the following statistics which are the latest figures available up to 30<sup>th</sup> April:

- 26 presentations seeking homeless assistance in April 2018

The following were the figures for persons in receipt of payment towards emergency accommodation at 30/04/2018 :

10 couples with 16 children,  
14 single parents with 25 children,  
21 single adults,

15 in Laurel lodge.

He also advised that the Homeless Action Team will have a single point of contact for delivery of homeless services in the autumn on completion of renovation works at Áras Contae and Chláir.

A discussion then took place on homelessness in general and possible options available to expand supports available.

## **11. Update on Planned Maintenance.**

T. Neville reported that the first step in the overall Planned Maintenance is the House Condition Surveys.

A draft Survey Template has been developed which was further developed on the ground by surveying 6 No. typical local authority properties county wide. Engineers/Clerks of Works/Estate Manager all gave their input and a final mandate has been agreed.

Notification will issue to tenants in advance of all surveys which are scheduled to take place as follows:

Initially Ennis which is split into Phase 1 and Phase 2 followed by Shannon (early July); East Clare (early August); West Clare (early Sept) and North Clare (October).

## **12. Differential Rent Scheme Revision.**

L. O'Connor advised that 3 slight amendments to the current Differential Rent Scheme were required as a result of social welfare increase which came into effect in March, as follows;

- Calculation of Rent – Income Band Over €241 now up to €265;
- Couples with separate social welfare claims, not including old age pensions, shall have their rent determined on the basis of a joint social welfare claim;
- Subsidiary Earners – After the rent payable by the principal earner has been determined, 10% of each subsidiary earners income shall be added, except for those on a reduced rate of social welfare of less than €110 (currently €105) who shall be liable to pay €5.

The revised Differential Rent Scheme was approved by the members.

### **New Department Circulars.**

The following Department Circulars were discussed and noted by the members:

- (a) Circular 21/2018 – Adaptations and extensions to Social Housing stock
- (b) Circular 23/2018 - Technical Fees for Local Authorities relating to Social Housing Construction Delivery
- (c) Circular 18/2018 – Summary of Social Housing Assessments 2018
- (d) Circular 22/2018 – Traveller Specific Accommodation – Determination of Capital Allocations for 2018

G. Flynn noted that the Housing Grants are very popular and this area needs more staff resources. This item to be on agenda for next SPC meeting.

The meeting then concluded.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Cllr Gerard Flynn**  
**Chairperson**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Anne Haugh**  
**Director of Service**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_