

***Minutes of Meeting of the Social Development Strategic Policy Committee  
held in Áras Contae an Chláir on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2019 at 2.30pm***

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**Present:** Cllr. Gerard Flynn, Chairperson  
Cllr. Tony O'Brien  
Cllr. Pat Burke  
Cllr. Paul Murphy  
Cllr. Tom McNamara  
Cllr. PJ Kelly  
Trudy Leyden  
Patrick Keogh  
Thomas Guilfoyle  
Anne Haugh, Director of Service  
Siobhan McNulty, Senior Executive Officer  
Tony Neville, Senior Executive Engineer  
Helen Walsh, County Librarian  
Siobhan Mulcahy, County Arts Officer  
Liam O'Connor, Administrative Officer  
Mairead Corbett, Administrative Officer  
Kathy Lordan, Assistant Staff Officer  
Sarah Ferrigan, Clare PPN

**Apologies:** Patricia Callaly, Interim Director, Glór

The Chair, Cllr. G. Flynn, welcomed Sarah Ferrigan from the Clare Public Participation Network and wished Dermot Hayes best of luck in the future.

**1. Minutes of meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2018**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2018 were proposed by Cllr. T. O'Brien, seconded by Cllr. P. Burke and agreed.

**2. Minutes of meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2019**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2019 were proposed by Cllr. T. O'Brien, seconded by Cllr. T. McNamara and agreed.

**3. Matters Arising**

T. Guilfoyle requested that the Minutes of meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2019 to update the members on the Draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy be amended to reflect his request to strengthen the wording of the submission in relation to Shannon Airport.

#### 4. Differential Rent Scheme

L. O'Connor advised that it is proposed that the following changes will be made to the Council's Differential Rent Scheme;

- Income bands are to be increased as set out below. These changes are required in order to keep pace with social welfare increases that will be coming into effect this month. As a result tenants will continue to be eligible for a principal earners allowance.

Income Band	Less Principal Earners Allowance	Rent Percentage
Up to <del>€205</del> <b>€210</b>	€40	17%
Over <del>€205</del> <b>€210</b> up to <del>€235</del> <b>€240</b>	€33	17%
Over <del>€235</del> <b>€240</b> up to <del>€240</del> <b>€250</b>	€29	17%
Over <del>€241</del> <b>€250</b> up to <del>€265</del> <b>€280</b>	€20	17%

- Rent payable by subsidiary earners will remain at 10% of accessible income however those on a reduced rate of income of less than €115 will be liable to pay €5. Currently the cut off is €110. Again the proposed change is required to keep pace with social welfare increases.
- The maximum rent for a house in a traveller accommodation scheme is to increase from €50 per week to €60 per week.
- The minimum rent to be levied on a 4 bedroom unit is to increase to €30 per week from €29, and in the case of a 3 bedroom unit the current minimum charge of charge will increase to €27.50 from €25.50.
- A fixed charge of €20 per week for serviced bays in traveller accommodation sites is to apply.
- A provision has been inserted into the scheme outlining that tenant's are liable for management fees where there are such fees in place. This has been the practice over a number of years and is included in all tenancy agreements, and the provision is being inserted into the differential rent scheme in order to formalise this practice.

The amending of a differential rent scheme is an executive function however as has been the case for the last number of years the proposed changes are being presented to the SPC for their observations.

The revised Differential Rent Scheme was proposed by Cllr. T. O'Brien, seconded by Cllr. T. McNamara and approved by the members.

## 5. Rebuilding Ireland – 2019 Targets

M. Corbett advised the meeting that on the 13<sup>th</sup> March the Department of Housing Planning and Local Government issued housing delivery targets to all local authorities. The targets as set are outlined hereunder:

	<b>Target 2019</b>
<b>Build</b>	100
<b>Acquisition</b>	31
<b>Leasing</b>	80
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>211</b>
<b>HAP</b>	250
<b>RAS</b>	14
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>264</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>475</b>

In order to meet the ambitious build target the Housing Capital Delivery team will this week advertise an expression of interest competition focused on securing developments in Ennis to address the lack of housing lands and to meeting the greatest area of housing need, the County town.

Cllr. G. Flynn requested the support of the SPC to write to the Minister requesting approval to allow the purchase of houses in order to achieve targets.

This was seconded by Cllr. T. McNamara and agreed by the members.

A discussion took place in relation to the number of houses and housing estates being built presently and the allocation of same.

## 6. Draft Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024

The Draft Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024 was circulated to the members. S. McNulty advised that members of the public have the opportunity to inspect the Draft Plan at the following locations:

- Clare County Council, Housing Department, Áras Contae and Chláir, New Road, Ennis,
- Clare County Council, Ennistymon Area Office, Ennis Road, Ennistymon.
- Clare County Library branches in Shannon and Ennistymon.
- West Clare Municipal District, Town Hall, Kilrush.
- Clare County Council website; [www.clarecoco.ie](http://www.clarecoco.ie)

Noted that any interested parties have been invited to make a submission to the Draft Plan in writing up to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2019.

The Draft Plan will then be brought to the Council and final date for adoption is 30<sup>th</sup> September.

## **7. Housing Choices for Older People**

A. Haugh referred to the Alone Executive Summary which was circulated to the members and advised that a more recent report from the Department entitled "Housing Options for Our Ageing Population – Policy Statement" would be circulated to the members and will be an item on agenda for next SPC meeting.

## **8. Update on Planned Maintenance**

T. Neville reported on Property Surveys which commenced on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2018 and advised that the current status is as follows:

- Phase 1: Ennis – 98% complete - 443 No. surveys completed from 454.
- Phase 2: Ennis – 94% complete – 346 No. surveys completed from 368.
- Phase 3: North Clare – 98% complete – 346 No. surveys completed from 352.
- Phase 4: West Clare – 93% complete – 412 No. surveys completed from 443.
- Phase 5: East Clare – 96% complete – 331 No. surveys completed from 344.
- Phase 6: Shannon – 94% complete – 458 No. surveys completed from 489.
- Recent Acquisitions, Countywide – 75% complete – 95 No. surveys completed from 127.

In total, 2431 Surveys have been completed, which equates to 94.3% of the total stock surveyed, 2577.

Of the 146 No. not surveyed, an average condition from that area/estate is applied until such time as access is available to carry out a survey.

The SPC were advised that the Council is exploring the possibility of applying the Planned Maintenance approach to management of all buildings under the remit of the Social Development Section, i.e. Libraries, Leisure centres etc..

A pilot tender to include 70 No. units from Ennis Phase 1 has gone to procurement. Included are items classified as "Priority" from the condition survey as well as all Statutory Items listed in the Housing Regulations 2017 (Standards for Rented Houses). These Statutory items include the provision of;

- Smoke Alarms
- Carbon Monoxide Alarms
- Fire Blanket
- Window Restrictors

The result of this competition will determine how best to proceed but it is envisaged similar sized competitions will be run concurrently within each of the Phases.

## **9. Arts Plan presentation**

S. Mulcahy, Arts Officer, gave a presentation on the County Arts Plan 2019-2023 which will be before the Council at their May monthly meeting.

Cllr. G. Flynn queried the fee rates and whether the SPC could put forward a suggestion to deal with this. Agreed that S. Mulcahy would draft letter and circulate same.

## **10. Decade of Centenaries**

H. Walsh, County Librarian, informed the meeting that the Commemorations Unit of the Dept. of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht have granted €10,000 towards the Clare's Decade of Centenaries commemorations. A series of historical lectures has been organised for library branches around the county and a History Ireland 'Hedge School' with a theme of Clare and the War of Independence will take place in September in Ennis. Mike Hanrahan will perform his 'Clare: Songs of Independence' show in eight venues around the county in the Autumn. Other elements of the schedule will be organised as the year progresses.

## **11. Creative Ireland**

H. Walsh, County Librarian, advised that the grant awards scheme was advertised in January with a total of 43 applications received – of these 9 were successful, the amounts awarded were larger than the previous year so therefore less were awarded. A total of €22,500 was awarded – these included a coming-of-age drama 'Radha' which will be made in Clare with actor/writer/director Sonya O'Donoghue. Other innovative pieces include the "Creating Local Solutions to Climate Change" project with Mary Immaculate Secondary School and the local North Clare community and a folklore and well-being project working with Burren schools and older community members with Eilís Haden-Storrie. The Musicale Festival in Cultúrlann Sweeney, Kilkee organised by Music Generation Clare, Cumann Merriman Winter School also received grants. The remaining successful applicants include an Art Studio project for people with disabilities with courses in painting, ceramics and drama and Sparks Youth Film Festival in Scariff. Lastly, a 'Ploughing Ahead' project in Mountshannon with Mark Wilson aims to produce a sculptured seating area designed, developed and produced with the local community.

The cultural cross disciplinary in-house team are carrying the remainder of the CI programme for 2019 with activities in the areas of Arts, Heritage, Libraries, the Museum, Rural Development and Tourism. The overall budget for CI in 2019 is €96,000 with an additional €15,000 for Cruinniú which takes place in June.

## **12. Large Scale Sports Infrastructure Fund**

S. McNulty reported as follows:

The Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport has announced the 'Large Scale Sport Infrastructure Fund'. This is a capital allocation of at least €100m over the period 2019 to 2027 for the entire country. The funding is aimed at National Governing Bodies (NGBs) as well as Local Authorities.

Clare County Council sought expressions of interest in this fund with five expressions of interest submitted for consideration.

The applications were considered and it was decided to support 2 applications, one under each funding stream. The successful applicants were notified and are working on preparing the application detail for the application process.

The closing date for submission of applications under this fund is **5pm on Wednesday 17th April 2019.**

### **Hereunder is a synopsis and requirements of the Fund:**

- The scheme is initially open to applications from National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and Local Authorities (LAs).
- The scheme will consist of two streams. Stream One, which is aimed at smaller NGBs and Local Authorities, will help fund the development of proposals to tender stage. Stream Two will assist applicants to bring projects from tender stage to completion.
- The scheme will require a minimum contribution of 30% from applicants toward the cost of any works/design.
- The scheme encourages multi-functional sports facilities that will serve more than one sport. Sharing between sports, NGBs and LAs is encouraged and such projects will be viewed more favourably.
- The existing Local Authority Swimming Pool Programme is closed for new applications and any proposed funding for swimming pools will be considered under the LSSIF

### **Eligibility**

In considering investment in infrastructure, priority will be given to projects that:

- Can be identified as a priority within a local authority's development plan and strategic vision, demonstrating cross-sector collaboration and clearly identified local priorities.
- Can be identified as a priority of an NGB in its strategy for the development of active participation, social participation and improvement of high performance in the sport it governs e.g. development centres.
- Are multi-functional in nature and cater for a number of sports and other activities.
- Provide facilities that are open to the general public.
- Meet the needs of a mixed group of clubs and associations.
- Prioritise the needs of disadvantaged areas and groups including people with disabilities.
- Require funding for the development of capital infrastructure (new build, modernisation or refurbishment) and major fixed equipment where it is an integral part of a project.
- Are located on a site(s) where the applicant holds ownership or long-term lease with at least 25 years remaining.
- Are seeking a grant of at least €300,000 under Stream two.

- Identify confirmed capital partnership funding (30%) for the project from the applicant and/or other parties (not state funded).
- Provide and demonstrate a commitment and financial management strategy to effectively manage the facility.
- Address the potential for delivery of sustainable energy conservation for the facility and promote sustainable travel.
- New swimming pool projects will also be considered
- Do not include costs for non-fixed equipment which are not covered by this fund.
- Projects with already committed expenditure cannot be considered.

On receipt of the completed application forms and associated documentation this Council will undertake a review to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the scheme and that the project meets the criteria of the fund.

S. McNulty advised that 5 No. expressions of interest were received and 2 are going to proceed to application stage subject to the groups meeting the eligibility criteria.

### **13. Atlantic Youth Project Update**

S. McNulty informed the meeting that Clare County Council is one of 5 international partners participating in the Atlantic Youth project; the premise of the project is to encourage European students to consider maritime careers. The project is targeted at disadvantaged children deemed at risk of not completing their secondary school education. The transnational events are aimed at children who would not ordinarily have the opportunity to travel abroad.

This three year project is funded under the Erasmus + programme. The overall approved budget allocated to Clare County Council for the duration of the project is €67,020.

The participating schools are Scoil Mhuire, Ennistymon and Scarriff Community College. The final local activity for this academic year took place on the 21<sup>st</sup> March which saw 64 students take part in a surf event in Lahinch. Clare County Council was represented at the partners meeting in Moulin Mer, France at the end of February. The 2019 transnational event will take place at this venue in 27<sup>th</sup> -31<sup>st</sup> May during which there will be further meeting of the partner to discuss project progress.

The final year of this project commences in September with a meeting of the partners in Cornwall in October. The final transnational event is in Viana de Casto in Portugal in May 2020.

#### **14. Dates of 2019 meetings**

Tentative dates for remaining 2019 meetings agreed as follows:

- Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2019 at 2.30pm
- Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2019 at 2.30pm
- Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2019 at 2.30pm

#### **15. AOB**

T. Leyden queried if there was any action being taken with the homeless in relation to washing facilities and hot meals. A. Haugh advised that the launch of the HAT office would take place in June and the team will be looking at delivery of supports to the homeless. More information will be available for the next SPC meeting.

T. Guilfoyle advised the meeting that a voluntary organisation will be commemorating Michael Russell in the International Brigade.

T. Guilfoyle thanked the Chair for his work on the Social Development Strategic Policy Committee.

The meeting then concluded.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Cllr Gerard Flynn** **Anne Haugh**  
**Chairperson** **Director of Service**

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