

***Minutes of Meeting of the Social Development Strategic Policy Committee
held in Civic Room, Buttermarket Building, on Wednesday 11th March 2020
at 2.30pm***

Present: Cllr. Gerard Flynn, Chairperson
Cllr. Ann Norton
Cllr. Paul Murphy
Cllr. Donna McGettigan
William Cahir
Tommy Guilfoyle
Larry Brennan
Noel Kearney
Mary Leahy
Anne Haugh, Director of Service
Siobhan McNulty, Senior Executive Officer
Adrian Headd, Senior Executive Engineer
Helen Walsh, County Librarian
Tim Forde, Sports & Recreation
Siobhan Mulcahy, County Arts Officer
Liam O'Connor, Administrative Officer
Deirdre Ryan, Senior Staff Officer
Kathy Lordan, Assistant Staff Officer
Conor O'Connell, Construction Industry Federation
John Sweeney, Clare Sports Partnership

Apologies: Cllr. Tony O'Brien
Cllr. Joe Garrihy

Cllr. G. Flynn opened the meeting by welcoming Cllr. Donna McGettigan to the Committee. He also welcomed Mary Leahy from the PPN as an observer at today's meeting and advised that following ratification by the Council Mary will be Trudy Leyden's replacement on the SPC.

1. Minutes of Social Development SPC meeting held on 3rd April 2019

The Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd April 2019 were proposed by Mr. T. Guilfoyle, seconded by Cllr. G. Flynn and agreed.

2. Minutes of Social Development SPC meeting held on 11th December 2019

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11th December 2019 were proposed by Cllr. A. Norton, seconded by Mr. L. Brennan and agreed.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Climate Change and Biodiversity

A. Headd presented to the meeting on NZEB (Nearly Zero Energy Buildings) which he advised is a building that has a very high energy performance and therefore low running cost. The nearly zero or very low amount of energy required should be covered to a very significant extent by energy from renewable sources, including energy from renewable sources produced on-site or nearby.

5. Housing Supply in Clare

Following a PowerPoint presentation given by Conor O'Connell of the Construction Industry Federation, the following observations/discussions took place:

Discussion re. Help to Buy Scheme.

T. Guilfoyle queried why Clare County Council would go through the CIF – C. O'Connell indicated that they have the skills required in the industry.

T. Guilfoyle queried why a presentation was being given to the SPC by CIF. G. Flynn advised that the CIF was represented on the SPC.

N. Kearney queried what percentage of housing is for social housing. Advised that 10% of all housing estates have to be for social housing.

T. Guilfoyle queried why the Council don't go back to building houses on local authority land. C. O'Connell advised that a Local Authority could not deliver a house for €255k. G. Flynn said the model needs to be looked at. C. O'Connell indicated housing policy in Ireland is dictated to by the housing market in Dublin and there needs to be a housing policy that works for the towns in Ireland.

T. Guilfoyle queried why a person who earns more can't put their name on the housing list and pay more rent.

G. Flynn queried if the Council take rent payments into account under Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan applications. A. Haugh advised that they are not allowable under the Scheme.

L. Brennan said that Clare County Council need to make land available for building with the example of the large landbank in Council ownership in Shannon. T. Guilfoyle suggested the Council should only make land available where there is a detailed plan for the landuse.

N. Kearney queried what percentage of housing is suitable for disabled access. G. Flynn replied that all new houses have to be wheelchair accessible.

6. Housing Delivery 2019

Capital Housing Project report circulated to the members.

Following a discussion it was proposed by L. Brennan and agreed to invite Irish Water to a future meeting to give an update on their Capital Investment Programme as it relates to County Clare, with a focus on planned infrastructural upgrade works between 2020 and 2025.

N. Kearney queried how many were on the housing list. S. McNulty replied that there are currently 2,640 people on the list.

7. Housing Workshops

S. McNulty reported that 2 No. workshops were held in Shannon and Ennis. Both were well supported and feedback was very positive. Unfortunately the remaining workshops have had to be postponed.

G. Flynn indicated that people were looking for information from construction firms.

W. Cahir suggested that legal advice be available at future workshops – leaflets etc.

N. Kearney advised that the Clare PPN agreed the workshops were a great initiative.

8. Differential Rent Scheme

L. O'Connor advised that 4 slight amendments to the current Differential Rent Scheme were required as a result of social welfare increases.

The revised Differential Rent Scheme as circulated was approved by the members.

9. Private Rented Inspections

Deirdre Ryan gave a presentation in relation to private rented inspections.

T. Guilfoyle referred to an article in the media which stated that a large percentage of properties were below standard. S. McNulty advised that following inspection there is an obligation on landlords to complete works.

D. McGettigan indicated that tenants are afraid to report problems. S. McNulty advised they are well protected by legislation which is enforced by the Residential Tenancies Board.

10. County Arts Development Plan - Overview

S. Mulcahy delivered an overview on “Flouish” the Clare Arts Development Plan 2019-2024.

H. Walsh advised that the new County Library is proceeding – on site since 6th January.

11. Clare Sports Partnership

John Sweeney gave a presentation on Clare Sports Partnership

G. Flynn thanked John for his presentation and acknowledged the great work done by Clare Sports Partnership in promoting engagement in sport in the County.

12. Projects & Funding Update

S. McNulty advised:

- €66k ORIS grant received for upgrading walkways in Lees Road.
- €30k available per Local Authority for Playgrounds 19th March closing date for applications.
- Tenders have been returned for dressing room projects in Kilrush and Tim Smythe Park, the decision to proceed is subject to available funding for the balance. There is funding approved under the Sports Capital grant but own resources required.
- Sports Capital Grants 2018 call announced in early 2020 saw two CCC projects approved namely the tiling of Lees Road and Leisure Centre dressing rooms in addition funding was approved for the upgrade astro turf in Cloughleigh.

8. AOB

None.

The meeting then concluded.

Signed: _____ **Signed:** _____
Cllr Gerard Flynn **Anne Haugh**

Chairperson

Director of Service

Date: _____