

Minutes of Meeting of the Social Development Strategic Policy Committee held in the Council Chamber on Wednesday 8th September 2021 at 2.30pm

Present: Cllr. Gerard Flynn, Chairperson
Cllr. Tony O'Brien
Cllr. Mark Nestor
Cllr. Ann Norton
Cllr. Paul Murphy
Cllr. Joe Garrihy
Cllr. Donna McGettigan
Larry Brennan
Noel Kearney
Mary Leahy
Siobhan McNulty, A/Director of Service
Helen Walsh, County Librarian
Siobhan Mulcahy, Arts Officer
Tim Forde, Sports & Recreation
Tony Neville, Senior Executive Engineer
Karina Timothy, Threshold
Padraig Rynne, Music Generation
Fiona McGrath, Music Generation
Kathy Lordan, Assistant Staff Officer

Apologies: Tommy Guilfoyle; William Cahir

1. Minutes of Social Development SPC meeting held on 10th March 2021

The Minutes of meeting held on 10th March 2021 were proposed by M. Leahy, seconded by Cllr. M. Nestor, and agreed.

2. Matters Arising

No matters arising.

3. Climate Change and Biodiversity

Tony Neville, SEE, presented on the Energy Efficiency/Retrofitting Programme which was announced on the 18th February 2021 by Minister Darragh O'Brien.

This programme is a revision of the previous scheme which was in place since 2013. Under this scheme Clare County Council were successful in;

Phase 1 - the upgrade of attic insulation and provision of cavity wall insulation &

Phase 2 – the upgrade of attic insulation, provision of external wall insulation, window/door upgrades and ventilation upgrades to solid wall constructed properties.

The members thanked Tony for the presentation. A number of items were discussed including:

- L. Brennan requested that pumping of cavities be ceased.
- M. Leahy queried how a home could be heated with threats to cut off electricity as it will be required for data centres.
T. Neville advised that the Council has not been made aware of any risk to supply by the ESB.
- G. Flynn queried how the selection and advertising process was carried out.
T. Neville advised that the Council have a stock condition survey and also Councillors & staff identify properties.

4. Housing Delivery Updates (capital programme)

Update circulated to the Members. Noted 329 approved currently and that there is an issue with land availability.

L. Brennan queried if all approved have gone through Irish Water.

S. McNulty confirmed there are pre-connection agreements for all approved developments.

N. Kearney advised that there are 3,000 houses vacant – an increase of 400 in recent months and over 1,000 people on housing list.

S. McNulty advised of approximately 40 vacant local authority homes currently; there are a lot of private vacant properties around the county.

Cllr. D. McGettigan queried who do residents of Shannon PPP houses contact re. back garden access issues.

S. McNulty advised they should contact Tuath who manage estates of behalf of the PPP.

Cllr. A. Norton queried how decision is made on how many houses are suitable for elderly and disabled and how is location decided on. Also referred to a lot of older people looking to downsize to 1/2 bed properties, opening up 3/4 beds.

S. McNulty advised that houses are built on interrogation of the Social Housing list and having regard to where land is available; there is no quota for elderly/disabled accommodation which is done on basis of need; 10% of all new developments are of universal design.

S. McNulty advised 70% of housing list are approved for 1/2 properties and it is a struggle to meet that need so there is very little availability for anyone looking to downsize.

M. Leahy referred to recently launched Housing for Elderly Plan by Age Friendly organisation in conjunction with Clare Council Council.

L. Brennan stated the Housing Strategy document is an important document and should be brought before this Committee.

S. McNulty agreed it is very important but it is under the County Development Plan.

Cllr. G. Flynn referred to recent document from the Department re. housing need and queried if there was a way more work could be put into it to identify specific needs.

S. McNulty replied that classification need is informed by the information provided by the applicant; there is an addendum to the application form re. medical need; SSHA to be returned by 14th December and applicants will have an opportunity to update their information.

Cllr. T. O'Brien stated that if an applicant on the housing list misses out on a CBL listing they should not miss out on that property.

S. McNulty replied the Regulations state you have to bid on a CBL listing.

Cllr. G. Flynn suggested this SPC could look at putting CBL as an item on Agenda.

5. Housing Workshop Update

Agreed to email reply from the Department of Housing following submission from Social Development SPC workshop to all Members.

6. Housing for All

Executive Summary of Housing for All – a new Housing Plan for Ireland, was circulated.

S. McNulty advised that the detail in relation to this Plan has not yet been provided; referred to ambitious programme for delivery which Clare County Council will do all it can to meet targets set.

T. Neville stated that it is a welcome document and will be fantastic if it achieves targets.

L. Brennan advised the Plan has been reviewed in his industry; of the opinion that figure of €22k should be €30k; foresee major problem with private houses and tenders; appealed to be proactive on vacant site levy.

7. Threshold – Presentation by Karina Timothy

K. Timothy's presentation on behalf of Threshold included the following.

- Who We are
- Renting, Homelessness and Housing
- Threshold's Work
- Legal Framework
- What You Can Do
- Challenges

The members thanked Karina for the presentation. A number of items were discussed including:

G. Flynn – services for people have been reduced to not being accessible.

Cllr. T. O'Brien – empathised with everything in the presentation and acknowledged the impact on people who can't engage

8. Music Generation – Presentation by Padraig Rynne

P. Rynne & F. McGrath presented in relation to Music Generation and advised of their objectives:

- Creating access to high quality performance music education
- To make sure that everyone, whatever their background, gets access to music tuition
- Music Generation is a national partnership programme whose mission is to create inspiring experiences for children and young people through music

P. Rynne requested the Council discuss the possibility of increasing funding to Music Generation.

Cllr. G. Flynn agreed to make reps. to have it increased.

Cllr. P. Murphy commended work being done by Music Generation and would lend support also.

Cllr. D. McGettigan also wished to support call for increased funding.

L. Brennan advised that as Music Generation is a registered charity there is corporate funding available and also more marketing could help.

P. Rynne expressed thanks for this suggestion.

H. Walsh advised that she, Siobhan Mulcahy and Cllr. Mary Howard sit on the Board of Music Generation and that it would be hugely beneficial to support it with a larger subvention.

9. Library, Arts & Culture

H. Walsh updated re. new Library and all going to plan work should be resuming on site before Christmas.

Library moving towards opening Saturday and back to use of PC's for research etc.

Kildysart Library has reopened.

Museum will be holding 2040 office and there are plans to move the DeValera car into the Museum.

S. Mulcahy reported on a particularly busy Summer; live outdoor performance scheme; currently working with Hotel Doolin and Las Paddys; Culture night will take place on 17th September.

10. Sports & Recreation

T. Forde reported on working together with Clare Sports Partnership – link between public and private; continuing to provide facilities; Leisure complex open under guidelines and awaiting LGMA guidance on further reopening; footpaths have been put in Lee’s Road; chess tables introduced in Tim Smythe Park; Green Flag awards maintained and Lee’s Road and Tim Smythe Park; new dressing rooms at Tim Smythe Park opening end of September; 3 No. applications in for Sports Capital Equipment project.

Cllr. G. Flynn indicated there is a need to take a closer look at what can be done to support Kilkee, Lahinch and Shannon.

S. McNulty advised the Chief Executive has committed to reviewing Sport and Recreation.

11. AOB

Cllr. P. Murphy requested clarification issue in relation to reporting of action taken in relation to Pyrite.

S. McNulty confirmed that Clare County Council are working closely with Clare Pyrite Group and are currently awaiting decision on report which was sent to the Department.

The meeting then concluded.

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

Date: _____