# Housing & Community SPC
## Minutes of Meeting 1st February 2023

**In the Chair:** Cllr Joe Sullivan

**Present:** Mr William Considine, Cllr Jim Codd, Cllr David Hynes, Cllr John O'Rourke, Cllr Fionntán O'Suilleabháin, Mr Michael Wall, Mr Claude Clancy AO Community, Ms Dymphna O'Connor SEO Community, Mr Ger Mackey SEO Housing, Ms Anita McLoughlin AO Housing, Ms Caroline Creane SSO Housing, Ms Carolyne Godkin Director of Service, Ms Martina Donoghue AO Housing, Mr Paul L'Estrange Chief Fire Officer, Mr Darren Bucannon Fire Services and Mr Liam Mannix KPMG

**Apologies:** Cllr Frank Staples

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

## Minutes & Matters arising

The minutes of the SPC meeting dated 2nd November 2022 were approved on the proposal of Cllr John O'Rourke and seconded by Michael Wall.

There were no matters arising.

## Fire and Emergency Operations Plan

The Chief Fire Officer gave a powerpoint presentation to the SPC members outlining the Fire and Emergency Operations Plan 2022-2026. He informed the meeting that Section 26 of the Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003 states that each fire authority which maintains a fire brigade shall prepare (and, as occasion requires, revise) plans for fire and emergency operations showing the provision made by it in respect of Organisation, Appliances, Equipment, fire stations, water supplies and extinguishing agents, training, operational procedure and such other matters as may be relevant for dealing with operations of an emergency nature under Section 25.

He outlined the objectives contained in the plan and informed the members of the achievements from 2017 to 2021 inclusive. It was noted that there is a national review of the retained fire service and Wexford County Council have to take cognisance to that. The functions of the fire service are very much guided by National policy. The members informed the Chief Fire Officer that they do fantastic work throughout the County and they fully support the plan. The Fire and Emergency Operations Plan 2022-2026 was recommended by the SPC for submission to the Full Council for approved by Cllr John O'Rourke and seconded by Cllr David Hynes.

## Wexford LECP Socio-Economic statement

The Community SEO gave a brief outline of the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP). The new LECP will cover the period from 2023-2028. The first step is the Socio-Economic statement, and she informed the members that KPMG Future Analytics won the tender for the LECP. She stated that it is a discussion document with 6 stages, it has already been discussed at the Economic Development & Enterprise SPC. She introduced Mr Liam Mannix from KPMG who gave a powerpoint presentation about the progress of the Wexford LECP.

Mr Mannix outlined the work of KPMG and outlined the Wexford LECP preparation process. It was noted that this Socio-Economic statement is the first step, it's a discussion document, a starting

point and the final document will be published in June 2023. The members were informed that this document will contain 2016 census data as the 2022 census data won't be published until August or September 2023.

Mr Mannix outlined the objectives of the statement, the policy review and emerging themes, the overview of findings and the key strengths, constraints, opportunities and threats. It was noted that there are 6 emerging high level goals. A short discussion took place about the document and it was noted that there is no reference to social enterprise, that there is a lack of properly functioning transport system throughout the county, and an issue with climate change. Wexford has a soft coastline with lots of erosion throughout the county. A discussion took place about retrofitting houses and the cost of same and unless there is a 100% grant, many people won't be able afford to upgrade their homes. The Director informed the meeting that there will be a draft Climate Action Plan by year end.

Mr Mannix informed the members that the next phase is public consultation and that all the issues raised would be taken into account. The Wexford LECP Socio-Economic statement was approved by the members on the proposal of Cllr Jim Codd and seconded by Cllr John O'Rourke.

## Mid-Term review of TAP 2019-2024

The Housing AO informed the members that following the mid-term review of the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024 it was decided to increase the target by 26 to include the new families that were identified in the assessment of need. The revised target over the 5 years will be 126.

A total of 53 families have been accommodated since the commencement of the TAP 2019-2024 and 10 more families are in private rented receiving Housing Assistance Payment (HAP). A short discussion took place about the TAP and it was noted that it will be a challenge to meet the revised targets. A suggestion was made to the meeting about a project to embrace traveller culture possibly a mural to Pecker Dunne or look into something in the schools about informing students of traveller culture. The 2024 Fleadh would be an ideal opportunity, the Director agreed to pass this idea onto the relevant committee.

The mid-term review of Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024 was approved by the members on the proposal of Cllr John O'Rourke and seconded by Cllr Jim Codd.

## Affordable Housing

The Chairman asked for the Affordable Housing scheme of priorities to be on the Agenda for this SPC meeting, the main concern was the 70/30 split. The members felt that more units should be allocated to applicants from the area rather than just 30%. The members were informed that the Scheme of Priority determines how the Local Authority will allocate Affordable dwellings to eligible applicants, where demand exceeds supply. The draft scheme has been sent to the Minister for Housing for approval.

The meeting was informed that each council must abide by the guidelines of the national scheme. The Director said it was standard across the country, the last time there was a national affordable scheme a lot of units were left unsold.

## Review of Allocation Scheme 2023

The Director agreed to discuss the Housing Allocation Scheme 2023 which was adopted by the members in November 2022 as the members raised it as an issue at the last council meeting. The Housing AO gave a powerpoint presentation to the meeting about the scheme and the changes that were previously agreed and the legislative background relating to same.

The Director informed the members that the scheme had not been reviewed since 2011 and the new scheme has given more emphasis to applicants based on the length of time on the list. It was noted that 20% of allocation must go to persons with a disability, 10% to travellers and 5% to homeless so 40% of all allocations are ringfenced. A lengthy discussion took place about the scheme in particular the succession of tenancy, downsizing, overcrowding and transfers. The members felt that there was not enough time to discuss the issues at length, so it was agreed to hold another SPC meeting next Tuesday 7th February at 4.30pm.

## Next Meeting

The next SPC meeting is Tuesday, 7th February 2023.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____
Chairman

Dated: _____