Housing & Community SPC
Minutes of Meeting 2nd February, 2022

In the Chair: Cllr Joe Sullivan

Present: Mr William Considine, Cllr Jim Codd, Cllr Lisa McDonald, Cllr John O'Rourke, Ms Breda O'Sullivan, Mr Michael Wall, Ms Carolyne Godkin Director of Service, Mr Michael Drea, SEO Housing, Mr Ger Mackey, A/SEO Community, Mr Claude Clancy, AO Community, Ms Eileen Morrissey County Librarian and Ms Caroline Creane SSO Housing and Ms Helen Meehan, SSO Housing

Apologies: Cllr David Hynes, Cllr Frank Staples

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending in person. He welcomed Ms Carmel Masterson who accompanied Breda O'Sullivan and he extended sympathy to Breda on the passing of her husband, Larry.

Minutes

The minutes of the SPC meeting dated 11th November 2021 were approved on the proposal of Cllr John O'Rourke and seconded by Cllr Lisa McDonald.

Matters Arising

A brief discussion took place about the mid-term review of the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024 which was due to be completed prior to 31st December 2021. The Housing SEO informed the meeting that the Dept issued a letter to Local Authorities that the review will be delayed and that a circular and guidance will issue shortly. He agreed to bring an update to the next meeting.

The members thanked the Housing staff for their work during the Christmas flooding. A lengthy discussion took place about the damage caused by the flooding and what can be done if we experience that level of rain in the future. The Director informed the members present that this was a freak occurrence, an unprecedented amount of rain fell in a 24 hour period.

A short discussion took place about a house sold in Rathnure for community purposes. It was noted that there is a formal process for when the Council disposes of a property which has to be adhered to.

Housing for All Programme

The Housing SEO gave a presentation to the meeting on the Housing for All programme. He explained the Net need *(in need of housing)* and the Gross need *(currently accommodated)*. He informed the meeting that a draft Housing Delivery Action Plan has been drawn up and submitted to the Dept on 17th December 2021 and is currently waiting on feedback from them regarding same. The target for delivery for the 5-year period from 2022 to 2026 is 1,150. It is worth noting that this is a minimum target.

A lengthy discussion took place about the programme including own build, Approved Housing Bodies, housing acquisitions and the HAP programme. Additional staff resources have been

sanctioned for delivery of the programme together with the appointment of a Vacant Homes Officer.

Strategic Plan for Housing Persons with Disability

The Housing SEO gave a presentation to the meeting on the Strategic Plan for Housing Persons with Disability 2021-2026. The purpose and vision of the plan is to facilitate disabled people to live independently and to enable equal access to housing with integrated support services. It was noted that strategic plan contains 8 objectives and to achieve these objectives the SEO outlined the delivery targets.

A brief discussion took place on grants, the meeting was informed that the Dept increased the grant allocation for 2021 during the year which was a once-off allocation which had to be spent by the end of November. This was an unrealistic target due to Covid restrictions.

Tenant Purchase Scheme

The members were informed of the changes to the Tenant (Incremental) Purchase Scheme 2016 which came into effect on 1st February 2022. The Housing *(Sale of Local Authority Houses) (Amendment)* Regulations 2021 give effect to these amendments. The minimum income required to be eligible to apply under the scheme has been revised downwards to €12,500 per annum. The time period of tenants receiving social housing supports has been changed from one year to ten years to be eligible to apply.

A short discussion took place about the regulations and the changes to the criteria. The members were informed the Wexford County Council won't sell houses unless they are in their ownership for a period of 10 years. A discount is applied to the sale based on the tenant's income ie 40%, 50% or 60% off the market price.

Decade of Centenaries Programme 2022

The County Librarian gave a presentation to the meeting, she outlined the Decade of Centenaries Programme 2022. This is the penultimate year of the Decade of Centenaries in 2022. It will include a historian in residence Historian in residence community engagement with schools and community groups, publication of The Archaeology of Conflict: Wexford in the Civil War 1922-1923, Wexford Playwright Commission Award – performance, Digitisation Day Wexford Library, Digitisation of Archival Collections including Wicklow Gaol autograph book "The Treaty 1921: Records from the Archives" nationwide travelling exhibition, Family Life in Wexford 1920-1925, Projects at Municipal District Level, public lecture programme and Inventory of monuments and maintenance.

The members and Director praised the work of the library staff. The programme was approved by Cllr Jim Codd and seconded by Michael Wall.

Local Economic Community Plan

The Acting Senior Executive Officer in Community gave a presentation to the meeting on the Local Economic Community Plan (LECP). He outlined the background to the plan and the guidelines which were launched in November 2021. The members were informed of the LECP process and framework. There are both Community and Economic requirements. It was noted that the Economic Development and Enterprise SPC will have more input in the plan. Each

Local Authority is to establish an Advisory Steering Group to assist in the preparation, drafting, adoption, implementation and monitoring of the LECP with a maximum of 10 members. There is a statutory requirement to review the LECP at least once within the 6-year timeframe. A LECP Project Working team is to be established, their role is to coordinate the preparation of the plan.

Next Meeting

The next SPC meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, 6th April 2022.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____
Chairman

Dated: _____