Housing & Community SPC
Minutes of Meeting 9th February 2021

In the Chair: Cllr Joe Sullivan

Present via Microsoft Teams: Cllr Joe Sullivan, Cllr Jackser Owens, Cllr Frank Staples Cllr Fionntán O'Suilleabháin, Cllr David Hynes, Cllr Jim Codd, Cllr John O'Rourke, Mr Michael Wall, Mr William Considine, Cllr Lisa McDonald, Ms Alice Doyle, Ms Breda O'Sullivan, Ms Carolyne Godkin A/Director of Service, Mr Niall McCabe A/SEO Housing, Ms Caroline Creane SSO Housing, Ms Eileen Morrisey, County Librarian and Ms Grainne Doran, Archivist.

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Minutes

The minutes of the SPC meeting dated 3rd December 2020 were approved on the proposal of Cllr John O'Rourke and seconded by Mr Michael Wall.

Matters Arising

A brief discussion took place about Traveller Accommodation and whether Traveller Accommodation Expert Review published in 2019 was taken into consideration in Wexford County Council (WCC) Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024. The Chairperson agreed to put Traveller Accommodation on the Agenda for the next SPC meeting in April.

It was also noted that WCC didn't draw down any funding for Traveller accommodation last year. The Housing A/SEO informed the meeting the only capital projects can avail of this funding and as most Travellers in Wexford indicated that they want standard social housing which doesn't qualify for this funding.

Members Motion

The following motion was submitted to the SPC for consideration:-

Received from Cllr John Fleming

"When a Councillor makes a representation on behalf of a client on the housing list, the Councillor is then to be informed/updated and included in all correspondence between the County Council and the client."

The above motion was approved on the proposal of Cllr Jackser Owens and seconded by Cllr David Hynes.

A lengthy discussion took place about how the Councillors feel very frustrated that they cannot get access to the same level of information that they previously could in relation to reps made on behalf of housing applicants. It was noted that the applicants have a right to be represented and with the introduction of GDPR it is becoming much more difficult for the elected members.

Decade of Centenaries Programme 2021

The County Librarian gave a Powerpoint presentation to the meeting outlining the Decade of Centenaries Programme 2021. She informed that meeting that the final phase of the Decade of Centenaries from 2021 to 2023 will be marked with a three year programme, beginning in 2021. The programme is about getting people involved and letting their stories be available to all.

The Archivist outlined the 2020 commemorative programme which included digitising local newspapers for the revolutionary period 1920 local elections in County Wexford. Both the Archivist and County Librarian regularly receive correspondence from people searching for their ancestry.

The meeting was informed that some activities are not eligible for funding from this allocation, these include provision or maintenance of memorials, plaques, busts, or statues; hiring or purchase of replica weapons or uniforms and the production of commemorative medals or pins.

The programme was approved by the members on the proposal of Cllr Frank Staples and seconded by Cllr Fionntán O'Suilleabháin.

A brief discussion took place about other areas that the member feel should be looked at if funding becomes available. It was noted that some monuments have become illegible. The members congratulated both the County Librarian and Archivist on this great work and also Ms Celestine Rafferty, former employee of the Library who wrote many books on local historical events.

Any other business

- **Housing Clinics** – The members queried why the housing clinics are on just one day a week. It was noted that the Enniscorthy housing clinic is in the afternoons from 2-5pm, which doesn't suit women with school going children. The members agreed that it would be better being held in the morning. The Acting Director said that changing the time could be looked into.

- **Building Programme** - A discussion took place about how some sites have halted construction while other sites have to close. The meeting was informed that due to Covid restrictions any site that was substantially complete could continue but if not then they had to close but it is hoped that they will all reopen on 5th March.

- **Homeless** - A discussion took place about an email that was circulated by a member of the public listing people who were potentially homeless. The Director informed the members that this was being dealt with by the Homeless team. A number of people listed were already known to homeless services. It was noted that the current focus is on rough sleepers due to the cold weather.

- **Private Rented Properties / HAP** – A short discussion took place about the condition of private rented properties. The A/Director informed the members that the tenant must engage with the landlords in the first instance. It was noted that WCC will carry out HAP inspections where necessary however, some contractors won't go into people's homes while they are occupied due to Covid.

- **Re-let times / Repairs** – The members discussed the condition of the housing stock and the length of re letting. The A/Director informed the meeting that on average there is a 6 week turnaround on properties. Some properties take longer due to the condition that the previous tenant left the property in. It was noted that Housing Maintenance receive a lot of calls and they are responded to in accordance with the tenant's handbook.

Next Meeting

The next SPC meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, 7th April 2021.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____
Chairman

Dated: 07/04/21