

WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL**Minutes of Special Meeting of Wexford County Council held on Monday 8th January 2024 in the Council Chamber at 11.30am (with some remote attendance via Microsoft Teams)****Attendance:****In the Chair:** Cllr. John Fleming, Cathaoirleach**Councillors:**

Barden	Pat	Farrell	Mary (online)	O'Rourke	John (online)
Bell	Maura	Hynes	David	Ó'Súilleabháin	Fionntáin
Bolger	Andrew (online)	Kavanagh	Willie	Owens	Jackser
Breen	Pip	Kelly	Leonard (online)	Sheehan	Michael
Browne	Aidan	Kenny	Donal	Staples	Frank (online)
Byrne	Cathal	Laffan	Garry (online)	Sullivan	Joe
Carthy	Ger	Lawlor	George	Walsh	Oliver (online)
Codd	Jim	McDonald	Lisa	Whelan	Michael
Connick	Anthony (online)	Moore	Jim		
Devereux	Diarmuid	Murphy	Barbara- Anne		
Donohoe	Anthony (online)	Murphy	Bridín		

Officials:

Mr. Tom Enright, Chief Executive

Mr. Eamonn Hore, Director of Services

Ms. Lynda Lacey, A/Head of Finance

Mr. Eddie Taaffe, Director of Services

Ms. Elizabeth Hore, Director of Services

Ms Carolyn Godkin, Director of Services

Ms. Amanda Byrne, A/Director of Services

Mr. Michael Drea, County Secretary

Ms. Anita McLoughlin, A/Senior Executive Officer

Mr. Shay Howell, A/Senior Architect

Apologies: Cllr. Kathleen Codd Nolan, Cllr. Jackser Owens & Cllr. John Hegarty

Mr. T. Enright outlined the Housing for All target to deliver 1,155 units within the lifetime of the plan, a target Mr. Enright advised Wexford County Council will far exceed. He detailed the 120 acres of land acquired in Wexford, 72 acres in Gorey, 11 acres in Enniscorthy and the potential to deliver significant units on these lands. Mr. Enright spoke of the importance to deliver social, affordable, and private housing within the County. He welcomed the opportunity presented by the Members to address a key priority for the Council.

1. Housing For All Update

Ms. A. McLoughlin outlined the breakdown of the Housing for All programme year by year and the distribution of social housing demand across the County. Ms. McLoughlin advised that 455 units have been delivered through turnkey, Part V and AHB's in the period 2022 – 2023, a further 771 are under construction, and another 409 are approved.

Ms. McLoughlin informed the Members that an Administrative Officer has been allocated to affordable housing to manage this delivery stream. An extended survey across the county will take place in January / February 2024 with a view to holding an Affordable Housing seminar for developers in February 2024. Ms. McLoughlin advised that affordable housing schemes are being developed for the Ramsfort Park, St. Walerans and Milehouse Road sites. She also indicated that there is interest from private developers in developing affordable housing as part of mixed tenure sites in New Ross, Rosslare and Wexford.

Mr. E. Taaffe outlined his area of responsibility which is the delivery of social and affordable housing build on Wexford County Council owned land. He indicated that the Council will be actively pursuing additional land in the main towns. Mr. Taaffe advised that there will also be a focus on delivering smaller sites for special local needs. Mr. Taaffe said his unit are currently master planning the Milehouse Road, St. Walerans and Ballynagee sites, all of which will be mixed tenure developments.

2. AHB - Targets, Allocation Process, Management

Ms. A. McLoughlin set out the policy context for AHB's under Housing for All with a targeted delivery of 40% of the units. Ms. McLoughlin also detailed the allocation process, management, and regulation of AHB units.

3. Questions and Answers

Mr. T. Enright, Ms. C. Godkin, Mr. E. Taaffe and members of the Housing Department responded to a wide range of queries from the Elected Members regarding the following:

- Has land been acquired across all villages in the Kilmuckridge district?
- Who decides whether a project is an AHB or Wexford County Council project?
- How is the allocation of AHB properties managed?
- How is the maintenance of AHB properties managed?
- How do we decide which AHB's we will work with?
- Are we exploring land acquisition in rural areas?
- Does the Council intend providing serviced sites for sale?
- Executive were congratulated on new emergency accommodation provided in the Moynes.
- The demand for 1 bed and 2 bed units.
- Request that the Council does not build 1 bed units as they can lead to social isolation.
- Concern over lack of accountability of AHB's to the Council and the Members.
- Concern expressed over AHB capacity to deliver units in Taghmon.
- Why aren't more units being delivered through Repair and Lease and Buy and Renew schemes?
- How many social units are Wexford County Council going to build, broken down by Municipal District and number of bedrooms?
- Is Wexford County Council liaising with Uisce Éireann re: getting sites serviced.
- Request that if 65 units are being delivered in Bunclody, units should be delivered on a phased basis, with mixed tenure, and all required services provided.
- Query on delay in delivery of units in Ramsfort.
- Can affordable housing units in Gorey be ringfenced for locals?
- Can a provision be put in place to allow single fathers to access a property having regard to the number of children they have?
- Is there a specific plan for the delivery of units in villages?
- Can rightsizing be facilitated?
- Is Wexford County Council considering log cabin type units?

Cllr.'s J. O'Rourke, J. Owens and M. Bell left the meeting at this point.

- Frustration expressed in relation to Respond units in the Irishtown which have been vacant for years.
- Query as to why the number of units being planned for Rosbercon is still changing?
- When will 24 units be built in Arthurstown?
- Do we know how many of the 1,075 units granted planning permission up to November 2023 have been commenced? Do we have any power to get these units built?
- How many units will be delivered in the Rosslare Municipal District up to 2026?
- Concern expressed that lack of investment in services in rural areas is leading to a lack of units being delivered.
- Proposal for 75 units at the Lyre was welcomed.
- What is the status of affordable housing proposals for Enniscorthy and across the county?
- Criticism of policy of acquiring turnkey units and thereby competing with first time buyers.
- Are there any proposals for modular housing delivery?
- Are there zoned land tax maps available?
- Request for a breakdown of demand and supply by area.
- View expressed that the Council should be far more vociferous in managing AHB's.
- Request for Local Area Plans to identify where development is needed.
Cllr. G. Carthy left the meeting at this point.
- View expressed that Wexford County Council need to engage with small developers as they won't quote for Council work due to stipulations.
Cllr. L. Kelly left the meeting at this point.
- Request for a map of Wexford County Council's landbank.
- What is the timeline for work in St. Walerans?
- Is construction at Ramsfort Park still on target to commence in March 2024?
- Frustration expressed that there aren't plans to deliver units in Marshallstown as there is serviced land available.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING.

Daingithe ar an

lá de Feabhra, 2024.

Cllr. John Fleming

Cathaoirleach

Michael Drea,

County Secretary