

**Minutes of Strategic Policy Committee 4 – Housing
held on 10th November, 2016 at 11am in John’s Green House**

Present: Cllr. Andrew McGuinness, Chairman, Cllr. Patrick O’Neill, Cllr. Michael McCarthy, Cllr. Fidelis Doherty, Cllr. Joe Malone, Mary Egan, Declan Murphy, Yvonne Moriarty, Margaret Leahy.

In Attendance: Mary Mulholland, Martin Mullally, Margaret Newport, Anne Marie Shortall, Martin Comerford, Joe Scully, Lisa Bourke.

Apologies: Brian Dunlop.

1. Minutes & Matters Arising

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 8th September, 2016 were adopted on the proposal of Cllr. M. McCarthy and seconded by Cllr. P O’Neill.

Mary Egan representing the Public Participation Network (Community Pillar) was welcomed as a new member onto the committee. Newly appointed Director of Services for Housing, Mary Mulholland was also welcomed by Cllr. Andrew McGuinness.

2. Homeless Update – Presentation by Margaret Newport, Senior Social Worker, Housing

Margaret Newport updated the committee members on homeless statistics for Kilkenny for January to October, 2016 (copy of report circulated). There were 296 homeless/potentially homeless presentations up to 31st October, 2016.

Lack of availability of private rented accommodation, vacant properties, the Repair & Lease Initiative and changes to the Housing Strategy regarding children in B&B/Emergency Accommodation and the challenges regarding same were discussed.

3. Traveller Accommodation Programme (TAP) 2014 -2018 – Update by Margaret Newport, Senior Social Worker, Housing

Margaret Newport gave a brief outline of what is involved in the review of the TAP, which must be completed by 31st December, 2016 (copy of report on same was circulated). In spite of progress made since Kilkenny County Council still faces a number of key challenges in addressing the accommodation needs of Traveller families living in its functional area. Cllr Andrew McGuinness stated that there is a need for Traveller accommodation issues to be discussed honestly and factually

without prejudice based on experiences. Martin Mullally reminded the committee that purpose of the SPC was discussed policy matters only. Contributions were made by Cllr. Joe Malone, Cllr. Fidelis Doherty, Declan Murphy and Patrick O'Neill.

4. Housing Needs Assessment 2016

A summary of the Social Housing Assessment 2016 was circulated giving details of housing applicants per area and house size requirements, these details were returned to the Department of Environment on 10th October, 2016. This is the last of the three year full Housing Needs Assessments and will be replaced by an Annual Assessment in May, 2017. The approved number of housing applicants at 10th October 2016 was 1,732. This does not include those households on a transfer list or in accommodation provided for under RAS or HAP. The housing list at 1st November, 2016 was 2,012. Some discussion followed regarding designs of any future developments and the need for mixed developments when creating communities.

5. Dates for 2017 Meetings

The following dates were agreed for SPC 4 meetings for 2017, all to be held at 11am in Johns Green, House:

26th January, 2017

30th March, 2017

8th June, 2017

7th September, 2017

9th November, 2017

6. AOB

It was requested by Declan Murphy that reports to be discussed at SPC 4 meetings would be circulated by email at least 2 days in advance of the meeting. This was agreed where possible.

Yvonne Moriarty asked if any policy is in place regarding the allocation of refugees into Kilkenny and the lack of facilities available regarding same. Some discussion followed with Mary Mullholland agreeing to prepare a document regarding the role of the Local Authority and others for the next meeting.

This concluded the business of the meeting.