## **COMHAIRLE CONTAE ÁTHA CLIATH THEAS****SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL**

Minutes of South Dublin County Council October 2018 Special Meeting of County Council - Housing held on 16 October 2018

**PRESENT**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Councillors** |  | **Councillors** |
| Bonner, B. |  | Leech, B. |
| Casserly, V. |  | Looney, D. |
| Donovan, P. |  | Mahon, K.  |
| Duff, M. |  | Mc Cann, C.  |
| Dunne, L. |  | McMahon, C.  |
| Egan, K. |  | McMahon, R. |
| Foley, P. |  | Murphy, E.  |
| Gilligan, T. |  | Murphy, M. |
| Gogarty, P. |  | Nolan, R. |
| Graham, J. |  | O’Connell, G. |
| Higgins, E.  |  | O’Connor, C. |
| Hendrick. E. |  | O’Donovan, D. |
| Holland, S.  |  | O’Toole, L. |
| Johansson, M. |  | Richardson, D. |
| Kearns, P. |  | Russell, R.  |
| King, C. |  | F. Timmons |
| Lawlor, B. |  | Ward, M. |

**OFFICIALS PRESENT**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Chief Executive | D. McLoughlin.  |
| Directors/ Heads of FunctionA/Heads of FunctionHead of Finance | C. Ward, L. Maxwell, T. Walsh, F. NevinL. Leonard. R. FitzGerald. |
| Senior Executive Officers | C. Hurson, E. Leech, Neil Hanly, |
| Administrative OfficersT/Senior Business Transformation & Change Manager | C. Murphy, N. Noonan. M. Kavanagh, L. MaddenAoife O'Toole |
| Staff OfficerClerical OfficerIT. SupportSord | L. Abbey.D. MurphyT. McManus, D. CairnduffA. O’Brien. |

The Mayor M. Ward Presided.

Apologies were received from Councillors F. Duffy, B. Ferron, M. Genockey, W. Lavelle, D. O’Brien, E. O’Brien.

### **H1/1018 HOUSING SUPPLY UPDATE**

The following report by the Chief Executive, which had been circulated, was presented by Mr. C. Ward, Director of Housing, Social and Community Development was **CONSIDERED.**

[H1 Housing Supply Presentation](http://www.sdublincoco.ie/sdcc/departments/corporate/apps/cmas/documentsview.aspx?id=61421)

A discussion followed with contributions from Councillors M. Murphy, E. Higgins, C. King, P. Foley, M. Johansson, K. Mahon, M. Ward, G. O’Connell, T. Gilligan, P. Gogarty, F. Timmons, R. Nolan, L. O’Toole, and D. Looney.

Mr. D. McLoughlin, Chief Executive and Mr. C. Ward, Director of Housing, Social and Community Development responded to the Members queries.

The Report was **NOTED**.

### **H2/1018 BUILD RENTAL AHB PART V LEASING**

The following report by the Chief Executive, which had been circulated, was presented by Mr. C. Ward, Director of Housing, Social and Community Development was **CONSIDERED.**

[H2 Build Rental AHB Part V Leasing](http://www.sdublincoco.ie/sdcc/departments/corporate/apps/cmas/documentsview.aspx?id=61431)

A discussion followed with contributions from Councillors S. Holland, D. Looney, M. Johansson, C. King, D. Richardson, M. Ward,

Mr. C. Ward, Director of Housing, Social and Community Development responded to the Members queries.

The Report was **NOTED**.

### **H3/1018 RESPONSES TO HOMELESSNESS**

The following report by the Chief Executive, which had been circulated, was presented by Mr. C. Ward, Director of Housing, Social and Community Development was **CONSIDERED.**

[H3 Responses to Homelessness](http://intranet/cmas/documents/Special%20Meeting%20of%20County%20Council/2018/October/October2018SpecialMeetingofCountyCouncil-Housing/c123bef0-7227-4317-bde8-6e31d1e1717e.pdf)

A discussion followed with contributions from Councillors S. Holland, F. Timmons, C. McCann, E. Hendrick, P. Donovan, K. Mahon, C. King, B. Leech, M. Ward.

Mr. C. Ward, Director of Housing, Social and Community Development responded to the Members queries.

The Report was NOTED.

### **H4/1018 HOUSING INTEGRATED SYSTEM UPDATE**

The following report by the Chief Executive, which had been circulated, was presented by Ms. A. O’Toole, Senior Business Transformation & Change Manager was **CONSIDERED.**

[H4 Integrated Housing System](http://www.sdublincoco.ie/sdcc/departments/corporate/apps/cmas/documentsview.aspx?id=61422)

A discussion followed with contributions from Councillors K. Mahon, F. Timmons and L. O’Toole.

Mr. D. McLoughlin, Chief Executive and Ms. A. O’Toole, Senior Business Transformation & Change Manager responded to the Members queries.

 **Motions for discussion**

### **M1/1018 MAYORS BUSINESS - EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK LOANS**

### **It was proposed by Councillor M. Ward and seconded by Councillor D. Richardson:**

This Council welcomes the decision of the Department of Housing and Dublin City Council to shift the funding model for the St Michael’s estate housing development from a private led to a fully publicly led model through loans from the European Investment Bank. This will ensure that the development of that site will be better placed to meet the social and affordable housing needs of the local community. We call on the Chief Executive to explore the use of this funding model for similar projects in South Dublin including on The Grange/Kilcarberry site in Clondalkin.

**REPORT:**

The Kilcarbery Integrated Housing Project is before this Council Meeting and was tendered in 2017 on the basis of delivering 70% private residential units and 30% social housing units.  A letter has issued to the preferred economic operator to deliver housing based on this model.

In relation to affordable housing, all previous affordable purchase schemes were stood down in 2011 given the prevailing market conditions. Given the change in the economic conditions and the housing access and affordability situation in Dublin, the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government has been working on bringing forward Regulations on Affordable Housing. These Regulations are due to be published in the next few weeks.

A discussion followed with contributions from Councillors D. Looney, K. Mahon, M. Johansson, G. O’Connell, B. Leech, R. Nolan, P. Donovan, M. Ward, M. Murphy and P.Gogarty.

Mr. D. McLoughlin, Chief Executive responded to the Members queries.

Councillor D. Looney proposed and Councillor M. Ward seconded an amendment to the Motion as follows:

“We call on the Chief Executive to explore the use of the St. Michaels Estate funding model for similar projects in South Dublin.”

The amendment to the Motion was **AGREED**.

### **M2/1018 MAYORS BUSINESS - INFILL HOUSING**

### **It was proposed by Councillor M. Ward and seconded by Councillor C. King:**

### That this Council calls on the Chief Executive to produce a map of all potential small infill housing plots in the County and furthermore calls on members to assist the Chief Executive in producing this map using their local knowledge.

**REPORT:**

The infill sites that are currently under consideration for possible housing development are as follows:

* Greenfort Gardens
* Rossfield
* Lane at Lindisfarne Lawns
* Melrose Avenue
* Oatfield Crescent
* Rowalgh Gardens/Park
* St. Ronan’s Crescent between 26 & 27
* Rear Kilmartin/Fettercairn

The potential for development at these sites will be assessed and reports will be brought to relevant Area Committees to update Members on those assessments in due course.  An examination of other possible infill sites identified by the Members will also be carried out across the County and the Members can feed into that process by identifying possible suitable sites either by contacting the Director of Housing, Social & Community Development directly or by e-mailing construction@sdublincoco.ie.

A discussion followed with contributions from Councillors K. Mahon, C. King, L. Dunne and M. Ward.

The Motion was **AGREED**.

**M3/1018 HOMESHARE.IE**

As Councillor W. Lavelle was absent from the Chamber the following Motion **FELL** in accordance with Standing Order No. 19:

That this Council promotes the potential of home sharing initiatives such as thehomeshare.ie which is a social enterprise based in this country.

**REPORT:**

Information on this project is available at:  homeshareireland.ie.   This allows homeowners to remain in their home with support.  The person moving in (home sharer) provide companionship, an overnight presence (minimum of 5 nights per week) and up to 10 hours of practical help per week.  No money changes hand between the owner and the ‘companion’.  There is a fee paid to the company.  This can also give families peace of mind and cover during the week nights.  This would suit certain homeowners and those willing to provide support and share the house.  Selection, suitability, vetting etc. is a matter for the company.  This is strictly an “agreement” between the company, the homeowner and the house sharer.  There is no tenancy or security of tenure involved.

SDCC can request some leaflets etc. from the project which can be made available at the housing counters.

### **M4/1018 HOUSING SUPPLY**

### **It was proposed by** **Councillor G. O'Connell and seconded by Councillor F. Timmons.**

Given the current Housing Crisis which is most severe in the Dublin Region, the elected members direct that the Chief Executive formally write to the Minister for Housing with a proposition for a Pilot Housing Scheme(s) involving appropriate support from the Minister that would enable SDCC, alone or in collaboration with one or more Recognised Housing Agencies, to acquire residential land, in one or a number of plots, either by land swop or through purchase, so as to build 750 to 1000 Social and Affordable Housing units, as a matter of urgency, for persons on the current SDCC Housing list.

**REPORT:**

The Council has been set a target of delivery of 2,993 units during the period 2017 to 2021 by the Department for Housing, Planning to be met through a variety of measures including our Social Housing Build programme. There are currently 9 schemes under construction that will deliver 350 housing units between June 2018 to September 2019 under this programme.

Planning for the next tranche of social housing build projects has commenced with two Part 8's approved at the September Council Meeting, a further four Part 8 proposals are on the agenda for consideration at this Meeting and an additional 3 proposed schemes have been presented at Area Committee Meetings and the Housing SPC with a view to being developed for Part 8 publication in the coming months. This next tranche provides for in the region of 340 units to be brought through the Part 8 planning process up to May 2019.

In addition, there are a number of additional larger Council owned sites which are being examined and which have the potential to deliver significant numbers of homes.  Proposals for these sites will be brought before the Members in the coming months.

It was agreed at the September Housing SPC meeting that a presentation outlining all of the above proposals will be provided to the Elected Members at a Special Housing Meeting of the Council during October.

If the Motion is passed, a letter will issue to the Minister for Housing, Planning & Local Government.

A discussion followed with contributions from Councillors G. O’Connell, L. Dunne, M. Johansson, M. Murphy, M. Ward, P. Gogarty, and C. King.

Mr. D. McLoughlin, Chief Executive responded to the Members queries.

A **show of hands vote** followed on the Motion and the result was as follows:

**FOR: 3 (THREE)**

**AGAINST: 10 (TEN)**

**ABSTAIN: 9 (NINE)**

The Motion **FALLS**.

### **M5/1018 HAP**

### **It was proposed by Councillor D. Richardson and seconded by Councillor C. McCann**

That this council recommend that all people on the Council list receive Homeless HAP.

Due to the nature of the housing crisis it is not possible to find a house unless you have Homeless HAP.

And a letter to Minster asking for this to be approved.

**REPORT:**

The Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) scheme is a client led housing support which also features a Homeless HAP option for enhanced support for homeless persons.

HAP has been successful in providing accommodation sourced by the applicant to those on the Council's housing list and also for persons in homeless accommodation through the enhanced supports.  The figures in the table below show that the numbers sourcing properties through HAP are significantly higher than those utilising the Homeless HAP option:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Regular HAP** | **Homeless HAP** | **Total** |
| 2017 | 852 | 207 | **1,059** |
| 2018 | 227 | 122 | **349** |
| **Totals** | **1079** | **329** | **1,408** |

If the Motion is passed a letter will issue to the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government and the response will be circulated to members.

At the outset of the discussion Councillor M. Ward proposed and Councillor D. Richardson seconded an amendment to the Motion as follows:

“Due to the nature of the housing crisis it is extremely difficult to find a house unless you have homeless HAP.

We ask that this council agrees to write to the housing minister asking that he re-examines the HAP rates so that people on normal HAP can find homes quicker and stop them entering into homelessness.”

Councillor L. Dunne then proposed and Councillor R. Nolan seconded a second amendment to the Motion as follows:

“Due to the nature of the housing crisis it is difficult to find a house unless you have Homeless HAP. This council agrees to write to the Minister asking that he re-examines the HAP rates so that people on normal HAP can find homes quicker and stop them entering into homelessness.”

Councillor F. Timmons the proposed and Councillor G. O’Connell seconded a third amendment as follows:

“Due to the nature of the housing crisis it is difficult to find a house unless you have Homeless HAP. This council agrees to write to the Minister asking that he re-examines the HAP rates so that people on normal HAP can find homes quicker and stop them entering into homelessness and that the Minister ensure full enforcement of Rent Caps”

A discussion followed with contributions from Councillors R. Nolan, E. Hendrick, F. Timmons, C. King, E. Murphy, K. Mahon, L. Dunne, P. Kearns, B. Leech, E. Higgins, D. Richardson, M. Ward.

The amendment to the Motion was **AGREED**.

The second amendment to the Motion was **AGREED**.

The third amendment to the Motion was **AGREED**.

At this point the Mayor Councillor M. Ward asked to suspend Standing Order No. 5 to extend the Meeting time past 7.00pm and the Members **AGREED**.

### **M6/1018 It was proposed by Councillor R. Nolan and seconded by Councillor F. Timmons**

With house prices and rents in the private sector in South Dublin spiralling out of control, this Council extends the income threshold for eligibility for a council home, Increasing the €35,000 threshold for single people to €45,000 and the €42,000 for couples to €60.000.

**REPORT:**

Income thresholds for eligibility for social housing support are set by the the Department of Housing Planning and Local Government and are covered by legislation, these thresholds cannot be amended by Local Authorities.

Assessment is carried out on NET income i.e. Gross minus, PAYE, PRSI, USC and Pension-Related Deduction within the meaning of Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Act 2009.

Income from the following sources are disregarded for the purposes of assessing income:

Child benefit or guardians payment,

Exceptional or urgent needs payments;

Carers allowance;

Scholarships or higher education grants;

Foster care payments;

Domicilliary care allowance;

Allowances/assistance from charities;

Fuel allowance;

Mobility allowance;

Living alone allowance;

Rent or mortgage interest supplements and

Payments under job schemes (old FAS type schemes)

A discussion followed with contributions from Councillors R. Nolan, L. Dunne, C. King, K. Mahon, F. Timmons, M. Murphy, M. Johansson, G. O’Connell and P. Gogarty.

Councillor F. Timmons proposed and Councillor G. O’Connell seconded an amendment to the Motion as follows:

“With house prices and rents in the private sector spiralling out of control, we ask the Minister for Housing to look at extending the income threshold for eligibility for a council home. Increasing the €35,000 threshold for single people to €45,000 and the €42,000 for couples to €60,000. We commit to writing to the Minister for Housing.”

A vote on the amendment to the Motion was taken by a **show of hands vote** and the result was as follows:

FOR: 13 (THIRTEEN)

AGAINST: 6 (SIX)

The Amendment to the Motion was **AGREED.**

Meeting Finished at 7:15pm

**Motions not Reached**

### **(M7) LPT CONDITIONS**

### **Proposed by Councillor C. McCann**

That this Council calls on the Chief Executive to remove the requirement “All applicants are required to include with their grant application, proof that they are compliant with the local property tax.” From the conditions of applications on the following grant schemes.

* Housing Aid for Older People Scheme
* Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a disability.
* Mobility Aids Housing Grant Scheme

### **(M8) FUNDING FOR HOUSING**

### **Proposed by Councillor Emma Hendrick, Councillor M. Johansson**

The elected members of this council, in light of the Minister for Housing Eoghan Murphy’s statement that money is available for the council building on public land, request that the Chief Executive immediately makes plans for large sites (minimum 100 units) and make applications to the Department to draw down this money. This would involve using public land to build a combination of local authority housing and affordable housing for those not able to afford a house on the private market.

### **(M9) HOMELESS FAMILIES**

### **Proposed by Councillor K. Mahon**

This Council does not support statements regarding the "gaming of the system" or "years of bad behaviour" by senior housing officials in the Dublin Regional Housing Executive.

South Dublin County Council has changed its policy regarding the allocation of housing to those currently accessing homeless services through hubs, hotels or other means.

This Council regards hubs and hotels as a short term emergency measure and recognises the work and studies carried out by Focus Ireland and others regarding the negative impact of homelessness, hubs and hotels on the development and mental health of children and adults.

It is our position that HAP does not offer a secure, quality accommodation, or a value for money solution for homelessness.

This Council calls for a defined percentage of all available homes for allocation to be reserved for families currently in long term emergency accommodation in hubs, hotels and hostels based on their time in homelessness.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Mayor

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_