

# COMHAIRLE CONTAE ÁTHA CLIATH THEAS SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL



## HEADED ITEM NO. 1

### MEETING OF HOUSING SPC

#### Report of the November Housing SPC Meeting

held on Wednesday, November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025 @ 6.00pm

#### Hybrid Meeting – Council Chamber and Via Microsoft Teams

**In Attendance:** Cllr. M. Duff (Chair), Cllr. W. Carey, Cllr. M. Johansson, Cllr. J. Tuffy, Cllr. C. Brady, Cllr. A. Smyth, Motuba Misori (PPN), Betty Tyrrell- Collard (ICTU), Krystyna Zalewska (Community)

**Apologies:** Isabelle Gallagher (DC)

**Officials Present:** Elaine Leech (Director of HD), Vivienne Hartnett, (SEO HD), Fiona Hendley (A/SEO HD), Amanda Mills (SEO HD), Michael Murtagh (SEO HD), Mary Connell (AO HD), Ellen Meyler (A/SO HD), Bill Fowler (CO HD)

The Chair Cllr. Duff opened the meeting at 6.00pm.

#### **Agenda Item No. 1: Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the Housing SPC held on the 11th of September 2025 were proposed by Cllr. Smyth, seconded by Cllr. Tuffy and agreed.

#### **Agenda Item No. 2: Matters arising.**

A nomination to replace Isabelle Gallagher, who is currently on extended leave, has been requested from the Construction Federation. An update was provided on the Housing Customer Care Centre, which opened on Monday, November 3<sup>rd</sup> for mornings only and for full days on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> November. Visitor numbers were approximately 80 in the first week, increasing to over 160 in the second week. The most common queries related to Housing Allocations and the Homeless Unit. It is planned to use the space for workshops on Private Housing Grants and training on the Housing Online System in early 2026. The opening of the counter has been positively received.

Further to a request by Cllr. Duff, the Private Grants Team has reviewed and re-drafted the Private Grant Notification letters to improve clarity for applicants. This was welcomed by the committee, which acknowledged the team's work. E. Leech also informed the group that a feature on Private Housing Grants will be included in the December Chief Executive's Report.

### **Agenda Item No. 3 – Report on Housing Rents**

M. Murtagh presented a report to the committee outlining the current position in relation to Housing Rents and the funding arrangements supporting the management and maintenance of the council's social housing stock. Cllr. Johansson stated that she could not support any proposal that would lead to an increase in rent for tenants. She emphasised that many households are already experiencing financial pressures and that any amendment to the scheme must take account of the realities facing tenants. Cllr. Carey expressed disappointment with aspects of the report. He observed that while the council is presented as having one of the lowest rent percentages, it does not operate a maximum rent limit. Cllr. Tuffy emphasised the importance of ensuring that members have a full understanding of the implications and requested that comprehensive information be provided to the committee in advance of any proposed changes to the scheme.

In response, E. Leech confirmed that affordability considerations for tenants will be central to the review. She acknowledged the point raised concerning maximum rent levels. It was reiterated that the Housing Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) will serve as the primary forum for discussion of the Differential Rent Scheme prior to wider consultation with all the Elected Members. The committee was advised that further detail will be made available when the Local Government Audit Service issues its overview of Differential Rent Schemes and Rent Reviews across local authorities. The matter of stock condition surveys was also discussed. Cllr. Smyth raised query regarding outstanding works in a house purchased under the Tenant in Situ scheme. It was confirmed that where maintenance issues are not categorised as emergency works, they are addressed through the planned maintenance programme.

The report was noted.

### **Agenda Item No. 4 – Housing Delivery Report**

V. Hartnett presented the Housing Delivery Report, outlining progress across the council's housing delivery programme. The committee was advised that the annual target of 772 homes within the council's delivery pipeline is expected to be met, with a significant proportion of delivery anticipated in December 2025. Updates were also provided on the council's direct build programme, delivery by Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs), Part V delivery, and the housing acquisitions programme.

The committee was informed that, in relation to Clonburris Phases 3–6, the competitive dialogue process has been identified as the preferred procurement method due to the complexity of each phase of the overall project. The new build

social housing delivery targets for 2027-2030 are expected to be notified to each council in the coming week, following publication of the government's new housing delivery plan – Delivering Homes, Building Communities 2025 - 2030. A discussion followed, during which questions were raised. In response, it was confirmed that, in general, Part V units are acquired by the AHB sector. Under the council's Housing Delivery Action Plan, up to 50% of new build social housing should be delivered in partnership with the AHB sector to support the council's overall housing delivery programme. It was also confirmed that four-bedroom dwellings continue to be both acquired and constructed to meet identified demand.

In response to a query regarding the proposal to acquire sites with planning permission, commencing in early 2026, it was stated that such sites will be procured through a competitive process, and each proposal is assessed on its individual merits to determine suitability for council housing delivery. The committee was further advised that the 125 social homes to be delivered in the development at the Killinarden Foothills will come into council stock when complete. An update was also provided on the St. John's Road, Clondalkin development, comprising 44 apartments. All 44 apartments have been approved for CALF funding to be acquired by an AHB including 4 Part V units.

The report was noted.

#### **Agenda Item No 5 – Housing Allocations Report**

A. Mills presented a report providing an update on housing allocations, including information on households experiencing homelessness. It was noted that allocations in 2025 have increased by 33% compared to the same period in the previous year. The increase in allocations was acknowledged as a positive development.

The committee was informed of a pilot programme whereby multiple properties within new AHB housing developments will be advertised through Choice Based Lettings (CBL). Under this pilot, applicants will be assigned their new home following consultation with the relevant AHB. It is anticipated that this streamlined approach will facilitate more efficient allocation of new properties. A discussion followed, during which Cllr. Carey expressed concern that the new process may result in applicants being offered homes that do not meet their needs and that they could be penalised should they subsequently refuse an offer. In response, the committee was assured that extensive consultation will take place between applicants and AHBs. While specific dwelling addresses are not provided on the CBL platform, applicants receive an overview of each property's location, including the floor level, with ground floor units prioritised for applicants with medical needs. It was noted that this process operates in other local authorities, where it has reduced allocation times without generating negative feedback. The committee was further advised that ongoing engagement with AHBs will take place to address any issues arising during implementation.

Members were informed that the Housing Needs Assessment is currently underway and is due for return on 3rd December next. A discussion was held around the number of allocations arising from rightsizing and the level of interest from private homeowners. Cllr. Brady noted that over 1,000 tenancies have been identified as under-occupied and sought clarification on whether modelling had been undertaken to assess the long-term implications of this trend. It was confirmed that, as part of the preparation of the forthcoming Housing Delivery Action Plan, data will be examined from the Housing Needs Assessment, the Central Statistics Office, and local authority datasets. This was acknowledged as a substantial body of work that will form part of the committee's 2026 work programme.

The report was noted.

#### **Agenda Item No 6 – Tenant Participation Strategy**

F. Hendley presented an update on the draft Tenant Participation Strategy 2025–2029. The contributions of Cllr. Duff and K. Zalewska who participated in the sub-group established to examine the strategy, noted as the first of its kind in Ireland, were acknowledged. The purpose of the strategy is to ensure that the council works in partnership with tenants to enhance and improve local housing services.

The committee was advised that Balgaddy has been selected as the pilot tenant participation area. The council will support the establishment of local structures and the development of a local action plan. Members welcomed the strategy as a positive initiative that will give tenants a stronger voice and help promote pride of place within their communities. The launch of the pilot project in Balgaddy was welcomed. It was acknowledged that encouraging participation can be challenging, and that proactive engagement by housing officers will be essential. The importance of officers going out into the community, using creative and innovative approaches to invite and support tenant involvement is crucial. It was noted that housing officers are already visiting schools and delivering workshops as part of efforts to engage with communities at the earliest possible stage. The importance of attendance by council staff and Elected Members at the upcoming Balgaddy meeting scheduled for 20th November was noted.

Reference was made to the council's Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy, adopted on 12<sup>th</sup> of June 2025, described as the “other side of the coin,” where contributes to the development of integrated and inclusive communities by addressing anti-social behaviour. In such an environment, tenants are better able to work with the council to improve their local areas.

The report was noted.

#### **Agenda Item No 7 – Reports for Noting: Traveller Accommodation Programme 2025 – 2029; Housing Disability Steering Group Minutes and Presentation**

F. Hendley presented a report on the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2025–2029. The update included that families are scheduled to move to temporary

accommodation in Kishogue in the coming week. An update was provided on the relocation of tenants from Lock Road, with Members advised that a Part 8 planning application for the proposed work there is expected to commence in early 2026.

It was reported that fire safety training had been provided; however, attendance was lower than anticipated. Additional training sessions will be scheduled to ensure that all relevant households receive the necessary information and support.

A. Mills presented information on the Housing Disability Steering Group.

The reports were noted.

#### **Agenda Item no 8 – Any Other Business**

The committee was informed that training on the Multi-Unit Developments Act, delivered by the Housing Agency, has been attended by both council staff and Elected Members. Feedback from participants indicated that the training was beneficial. Should the committee express interest, training sessions can be arranged specifically for committee Members, and the Housing Agency can attend an SPC meeting if required.

An update was provided on the Allocations Strategy, which is currently on hold pending forthcoming changes to housing legislation. Once the legislative amendments are enacted, the new requirements will be incorporated into the strategy and a sub-group established to review.

Before concluding, E. Leech thanked the committee for their contribution to the work of the Housing SPC throughout 2025, acknowledging the commitment and engagement of Members during the year.

The meeting concluded at 7.30pm. Pending approval by the OP&F Committee the date for next meeting is Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2025 at 5.30pm.