

County Wicklow Public Participation Network

Representative Reporting Template

Name of Committee: Housing Strategic Policy Committee

Name of Representative(s): Eamonn McCann

Date of Meeting Attended: 28th February and 19th April 2017

Most important actions or issues to emerge from a County Wicklow PPN perspective:

- The members noted that there were currently over 3,000 people on the Council's Housing List following the 2016 Housing Needs Assessment.
- It was noted that there was about 15 Approved Housing Bodies primarily operating in County Wicklow
- Senior Engineer advised the members that there were 12 projects in progress at various stages of approval with a total potential of 158 units
- PPP (public private partnership) project which is being led by Dublin City Council. Partnership between DHPCLG, NDFA and Five Local Authorities to deliver c. 500 Social Housing units through a PPP. Wicklow, Kildare, Louth, South Dublin, Dublin City Council The Wicklow Scheme consists of 51 units to be developed on the Convent Lands site in Wicklow Town.
- Senior Engineer updated the members on general housing maintenance issues. He advised that the Council had over 4,000 houses in stock and that it was not possible to survey all houses.
- The allocated budget was outlined as below
 - Bray - €500,000
 - Arklow - €316,000
 - Greystones - €303,000
 - Wicklow - €331,000
 - Tinahely - €144,000
 - Blessington - €101,000
- National Housing Agency Strategy for People with Disability 2011-2016 and the associated National Implementation Framework requires housing authorities to develop specific strategies to meet the identified housing needs of people with physical, intellectual, mental health and sensory disabilities locally.
- Senior Executive Officer advised the members that there have been a total of 106 presentations of homelessness to the Housing Section to date in 2017 – 39 individuals and 67 families. Assistance and support was given to seek alternative PRA.
- **Fairfield Park, Greystones** The Council's project team commenced on site clinics in Fairfield Park, Greystones in early January 2017. The project is operating very successfully with a constant presence on site.

Carraig Eden, Greystones

Department approval of €3m to purchase and refurbish property to accommodate (a) those who are homeless after exiting addiction and (b) other homeless initiatives was received on 16th February.

- **Traveller Accommodation Programme**

- Senior Executive Officer stated that the review of the Traveller Accommodation Plan will commence in 2018.

Senior Engineer stated that works have commenced on the Vale Road site (next to the Halting Site) to provide fencing and hard stands. He stated that Departmental approval is still awaited for the 3 units at Ballintesklin.

In relation to Silverbridge it was stated that it is hoped to prepare a Part 8 application to rebuild and extend units on this site and to upgrade water and sewage facilities together with improving access to the site.

Ongoing works are in process to improve facilities at the Half Moon, Windgates and the Rocky Valley, Kilmacanogue.

- **Review of Mortgage to Rent Scheme**

To qualify for the scheme an applicant must qualify for social housing and the property must be considered suitable under the terms of the scheme – maximum valuation of the property €365,000 - €310,000 for an apartment. The applicant must have no cash assets above €20,000 and must not own another property.

- **Inter Authority Movement - HAP Scheme**

In relation to the HAP scheme Senior Executive Officer stated that people could now access properties under this scheme which are located in another local authority area with the same income bands. Each local authority, however, will still have to operate within their own particular threshold in relation to rental limits.

- **Repair to Lease Scheme.**

- Under this scheme an owner of a house or apartment which has been vacant for more than a year and which requires repairs to bring it up to rental standard can contact their local authority and express an interest in the scheme. The local authority or approved housing body may provide the money for this repair work in return for the property being handed over to them to be used for social housing through a lease for a period of at least 10 years. The maximum cost of the works to be carried out cannot exceed €40,000 per unit and the maximum rent to be agreed between the landlord and the local authority or approved housing body will generally be 80% of the current market rent. To be eligible for the scheme the property must have been vacant for over a year and be considered to be a viable property for social housing.

Date of Next Meeting: 11th September 2017