

## COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE

### Minutes of Housing, Culture and Recreation SPC Meeting held in the Council Chamber on 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2015 at 11.00a.m.

#### I Láthair :-

**Baill:** Cllr. T. McHugh, Chairperson  
Cllr. M. Noone  
Cllr. E. Mannion  
Cllr. M. Fahy  
Cllr. P. Hynes  
Cllr. D. Killilea  
Ms. Helena McElmeel

**Oifigigh:** Mr. P. Gavican, D.O.S.  
Ms. J. Brann, S.E.O. Housing  
Mr. Michael Owens, S.E.O. Corporate Services  
Mr. M. O'Donnell, A.O. Housing  
Mr. T. Doherty, E.E., Housing  
Ms. S. Slattery, A.S.O.

Apologies were received from Margaret Jordan, A.O. Housing.

Cllr. Fahy expressed a vote of congratulations to Cllr. Killilea on his recent marriage. This was seconded by Cllr. McHugh.

1. Minutes of Meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2015  
The minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2015 were adopted on the proposal of Cllr. Fahy, seconded by Cllr. Noone.

#### 2. Capital Funding Programme

Mr. Gavican informed the meeting that the Council had received funding from the Department of €30.2 million to deliver the Current and Capital Programmes under the Social Housing Strategy 2015-2017. Details of the funding provided under the DPG works on Local Authority Houses, Energy Efficiency works and return of void houses were also outlined. Funding has also been allocated for the construction of 6 single rural houses, 10 houses at Gort Mhaoilir, Athenry, 10 at Garbally Drive, Ballinasloe, 3 at Esker Fields, Ballinasloe and 25 at Weir Road, Tuam.

#### 3. Targets for delivery under the Social Housing Strategy

Mr. Gavican stated that the Department had given the Council a target of 608 units for delivery by the end of 2017, under the capital and current programmes. This would involve housing construction and acquisition, return of void properties and involvement with Approved Housing Bodies.

Cllr. Killilea asked when the Part 8's would go before the Council. Mr. Gavican stated that it was hoped to have them before the Council by the end of the year.

Cllr. Mannion stated that a number of applicants had been approved for rural houses in the past. She queried if these applicants would have to reapply, or if the Council would be making contact directly with them. Ms. Brann stated that rural houses were only provided in exceptional circumstances, and the Council will look at alternative accommodation options for these applicants.

Cllr. Hynes asked if additional monies could be secured to provide more rural houses. Mr. Gavican replied that this had been included in the submission made to the Department, but no funding had been approved to date.

Cllr. Killilea asked if acquiring existing houses would be a better use of funds. Mr. Gavican replied that while there was value to be had in acquisitions at present, the Government are trying to kickstart the Construction Sector. When the 54 units have been completed, any remaining funding will be used to acquire existing properties.

#### 4. Voids Management Policy and update on voids

Mr. Doherty gave a presentation on the updated Tenancy Pack. The Tenancy Pack contains information on the Tenancy Agreement, Estate Management, Safety and Anti-social behaviour. It also contains a Repairs and Maintenance Handbook which sets out the responsibilities of the tenant and the Council respectively. The Council are introducing a Preventative Maintenance Programme. It is hoped to finalise the Tenancy Pack shortly, and have it available for circulation to all Members at the next Council meeting.

Ms. McElmeel asked if a radon survey had been carried out on the housing stock. Mr. Doherty confirmed that a survey of 300 houses had been completed, and 12 houses exceeded the acceptable limit. Remedial works were currently being carried out on these units. Ms. McElmeel also queried if carbon monoxide alarms were fitted in Council houses. Mr. Doherty stated that they are being installed when houses are being turned over for re-letting. He also stated that the Council are installing permanent vents, where needed, during retrofitting of properties.

#### 5. Draft 1916/2016 Centenary Programme – Update

Mr. Owens informed the meeting that public consultations on the Draft Programme were held in Tuam, Oughterard and Loughrea. The consultations were attended by Council staff and staff from the 2016 Project Office. The consultations were well attended by the public and many of the suggestions will be taken on board for the Draft Programme.

Mr. Owens stated that the Grants Scheme had also been launched, and the closing date was 26<sup>th</sup> June, 2015. Galway County Council has received a grant of €30,000 from the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, and a sum of €25,000 has been provided from the Council's own resources. Grants for preparatory work can be awarded up to a maximum of 75% of the cost of the event, with a maximum grant of €1,000.

A Register of relatives of participants in the 1916 Rising is currently being compiled. It is hoped to engage with the relatives with a view to organising a Civic Event in their honour.

It is hoped to host an inaugural event for the 1916/2016 Celebrations in Pearse's Cottage towards the end of July, 2015.

#### 6. Any Other Business

Cllr. Killilea proposed that any unnamed Civic buildings in the County be named after participants of the Easter 1916 Rising. This was seconded by Cllr. Noone. Mr. Owens agreed to investigate the matter.

Ms. McElmeel requested an overview on the Capital of Culture 2020 Galway Bid. Mr. Gavican stated that this did not come under the remit of this Committee. Mr. Owens confirmed that a presentation had been prepared by the Council, and he would make this available at the next meeting.

Mr. Gavican stated that at present the Fire Services were under the remit of the Environment Directorate, but it will be transferred to the Housing Directorate shortly.

Cllr. Fahy stated that the public were having difficulty in renewing their Driving Licences, since the offices were moved to the National Driver Licence Service at Ballybrit, Galway. He asked that a letter be sent to the Minister requesting the reinstatement of this service in the Council offices at Prospect Hill. Cllr. McHugh said that this matter should be brought before a meeting of the full Council.

This concluded the business of the meeting.