

HOUSING STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

THURSDAY 22ND JUNE 2017

ATTENDANCE

Members:

Cllr. Dáithí Doolan
Cllr. Alison Gilliland
Cllr. Anthony Conaghan
Cllr. David Costello
Cllr. Críona Ní Dhálaigh
Cllr. Sonya Stapleton
Cllr. Christy Burke
Cllr. Pat Dunne
Cllr. Éilish Ryan
Cllr. Patrick Costello
Cllr. Janice Boylan
Cllr. Éilish Ryan
Cllr. Tina MacVeigh
Cllr. Ray McAdam
Cllr. Cieran Perry
Cllr. Norma Sammon
Francis Doherty
Kathleen McKillion

Apologies

Aideen Hayden
Kevin White
Winnie McDonagh

Other Cllrs present :

Others:

Lois Kapila (Dublin Inquirer)
Olivia Kelly (Irish Times)

Officials Present:

Brendan Kenny Assistant Chief Executive
Tony Flynn, Executive Manager
Céline Reilly, Executive Manager
Eileen Gleeson, Director D.R.H.E.
Mary Flynn, Deputy Director D.R.H.E.
Colm Smyth, Principal Environmental Health Officer
Pat Teehan, Administrative Officer
Christy McLoughlin, Assistant Staff Officer

1. Minutes of meetings held on Tuesday 23rd May 2017 and Matters Arising.

Under Matters arising, the chair sought approval that point 7 on the agenda (Motion) be discussed next.

Agreed: Minutes agreed.

Agreed: Members agreed that the Motion could be discussed first.

7. Motion in the names of Cllr.'s Tina Mac Veigh, Dáithí Doolan & Criona Ní Dhálaigh

Acknowledging that the causes of mould and condensation are multi-factored and can arise from building performance and/or tenant activity and given that tenants should be able to conduct their day to day domestic life without fear or prejudice, this Committee agrees that the Local Authority (L/A) have a duty of care to tenants which warrants investigation and agrees that:

- a working group be established with the explicit task of:

* identifying the causes of condensation/mould that can be attributed to building performance/fabric; * establish the responsibility of the local authority in remedying such causes; * exploring the most effective evidence based solutions; * establish the guidelines that will inform unreasonable tenant activities.

- the wording 'carrying out repairs due to condensation' be amended under the local authority schedule of Tenant responsibilities to read: 'carrying out repairs due to condensation, insofar as such condensation results from unreasonable tenant activities';

- the local authority implement a series of trials in local authority dwellings based on the identified solutions.

Cllr. Tina MacVeigh explained the context of the Motion.

Members expressed their gratitude to Cllr. MacVeigh for bringing the Motion to the S.P.C. and supported the Motion.

Cllr. Alison Gilliland enquired about Dublin City Council's Policy (D.C.C.) to reduce condensation/mould when "turning" housing stock around. She highlighted the concern with regard to the ability of some tenants to heat their homes.

Céline Reilly, Executive Manager advised that as the City Council is the biggest landlord of 4 and five storey blocks of flats, the technical staff have more experience of dealing with condensation and damp than most other authorities in the country. She advised that there is a technical difference between the terms, damp and condensation, with different technical responses required to deal with each. There are also logistical and funding issues involved in delivering the required response as tenants may need to be relocated to allow staff to carry out improvement works. She stated that submissions were sent to the Department (Housing, Planning & Local Government) and that D.C.C. is also collaborating with other Public Bodies, for example the HSE, SEAI, and Dept. of Climate Change. Céline informed members that all refurbishment works are carried out to a high standard including SR 54.

Agreed: Motion Carried.

Agreed: Administrator of the Housing S.P.C. to seek an expression of interest from members to be a part of the "New Expert Working Group"

2. Housing (Standards for Rented Houses) Regulations 2017 Presentation

Circulated to members prior to meeting

Colm Smyth (Principal Environmental Health Officer) gave a presentation to members.

Member thanked Colm for presentation.

Cllr. Ray Mac Adam thanked the "Pre 63" members & staff and explained that a lot of recommendations from the Pre 63 have been superseded with the new regulations. He gave statistical information and explained Housing Assistance Payment (H.A.P.) requirements in relation to standards.

Cllrs Boylan & Dunne enquired about the regulations for local authority stock and the implications of goods such as washing machines needing to be serviced.

Cllr. Burke made reference to "Buckingham Village Apartments"

Cllrs Gilliland & MacVeigh raised the issue of some private tenants being afraid to make complaints for fear of eviction.

Cllr. Gilliland queried as to the timeline of senior citizen complexes being brought up to standard and if there is leeway for landlords to bring properties up to standard.

Cllr. Ní Dhálaigh asked if there are standards for fully furnished properties and unfurnished one's and whose remit is pest control under.

Colm Smyth informed attendees that the provision of "White Goods" is not for the L/A and is only an issue for private properties. He stated that D.C.C. carry out pro-active inspections (H.A.P. properties) to offset the fear tenants have of being evicted. He explained how the Rats and Mice Destruction Act 1919 is implemented and the roles of D.C.C. (L/A dwellings) & occupiers (private property) when it comes to dealing with pests.

Agreed: Write to the minister to seek a comment based on the recommendation of Focus Ireland in relation to protecting tenants.

Agreed: Note on Buckingham Village Apartments to be brought to the next S.P.C. meeting.

Agreed: Pre 63 Report Adopted.

3. Chairperson's Business:

- Correspondence
 - No Update

- **Sub-Groups Update:**

- Data Protection & Housing List:

Cllr. Pat Dunne provided an update on the Data Protection group. He stated that there is a meeting scheduled in the coming weeks with D.C.C. and councillors shall be notified of same within a week.

The subgroup itself shall meet later in June in relation to information access. The barristers report on Data protection shall also be reviewed.

Cllr. Ryan & Ní Dhálaigh raised questions about the issue of Data Protection and Cllr. Dunne explained the issue and stated that a full report shall be forthcoming.

Members thanked Cllr. Pat Dunne for his contribution.

The Chair advised that Céline would like to provide information on the following matters:

- Rental Pressure Zones
- Cladding to Dublin City Council Stock and other fire issues

Rental Pressure Zones:

Céline advised members that the consultation on the RPZ opened on 15th June and will close on the 30th June. The DHPCLG are inviting feedback on problems and possible solutions to the RPZ measures generally.

Information will be forwarded to the Councillors on providing feedback to the D.H.P.C.L.G.

Cladding to Dublin City Council Stock and other fire issues

Céline advised members that the cladding that is used on DCC stock is mineral fibre and non combustible and that the City Council are anxious to reassure any members of the public who may have concerns on this matter. In relation to general fire works, reviews of older persons' complexes and general stock has been ongoing for the past number of years and works have been carried out on 20 complexes with works ongoing or proposed for a further 10. This work will continue.

Cllr. McAdam enquired about Inner City complexes with regard to potential fire hazard. Have buildings been checked.

Brendan Kenny, Assistant Chief Executive explained that Dublin Fire Brigade are in the process of checking the Cladding of relevant buildings in the City. Currently under investigation.

- Pre 63
Update provided under the point 3 above.

Agreed: A report from the Data Protection sub group be brought to the July SPC meeting.

Agreed: Administrator of SPC to forward on details in relation to RPZ's

4. Homeless Update:

Circulated to members prior to meeting.

Cllr. Doolan enquired about the statistics in the report and what will happen to people presenting to homelessness post July 1st.

Cllr. Perry sought clarification about the cost of Family Hubs and if a deadline for family Hubs use be drawn up. He would like the finalised Complaints policy issued.

Cllrs. Gilliland & Doolan thanked D.R.H.E. in relation to the visit to the Mater Dei Hub and commented positively on the facilities included in the hub as well as the speed and quality of the work. She found the visit very informative.

The Cllr. sought clarification if the Rapid Builds are going to be fully furnished.

Cllr. Dunne would like information on further hubs to convey to constituents.

Cllrs. D. Costello, Connaghan & Perry raised issues about the Abigail Women's centre in Finglas. He enquired as to when the next S.L.A. is due.

Various Cllrs. enquired about Lynham's hotel and recent images on social media.

Cllr. McAdam asked what other local authorities are doing in relation to providing accommodation.

Francis Doherty stated that the Peter McVerry Trust supports the Hub initiative. He explained the challenges faced by the D.R.H.E. and commended their work.

Eileen Gleeson – Director of D.R.H.E. provided an update on current report/statistics/Initiatives. She stated that no one will be asked to leave hotels on July 1st.

She explained that there is Inter-Agency co-operation at present and H.A.P. is an example of this co-operation.

The D.R.H.E. shall look for more Hubs and she advised that they are temporary. Rapid Builds will not be fully furnished. Tenants will get a letter (DSP) "Essential Needs Payment" to allow them to get their "White Goods". Representatives met with Dept. of Social Protection to streamline the process.

A new community worker has been employed to aid the local communities. (To assist with integration).

She provided an update on Abigail Centre.

Eileen stated that Lynham's hotel was used purely as an emergency and provided ancillary information about the facility and current initiatives/audits taking place within the hotel from a safety point of view. She provided information concerning the recent images on Social Media and explained how the facility is being used currently.

D.R.H.E. is responsible for Dublin Region and stated that other local authorities are providing accommodation.

Eileen stated that costs of Hubs will be known at the end of the process (Q.S. monitoring ongoing costs).

Cllr. Dunne would like to see plan/Information regarding Hubs in his administrative area. He would like to have a report as to what is happening on the lower Kimmage road and Rialto sites.

Cllr. Boylan enquired about the a safety measure being undertaken in Lynham's.

Cllr. Burke sought an update about the meeting with Sr. Consillio (Residential Recovery Program).

Eileen explained/clarified the role of the Community worker and she stated that a meeting shall take place to discuss the Clonard site.

She expanded on information about the Fire consultant and what needs to be done to ensure that Lynam's facility is safe.

She clarified that contact has been made with Sr. Consillio.

She stated that D.C.C. has been responding to Social Media to counteract the miss-information and that Lynham's Hotel won't be used until extra work is completed.

Brendan Kenny, Assistant Chief Executive stated that D.C.C. is working on getting the Abigail centre relocated and provided information on the difficulties in achieving this.

Members thanked the D.C.C. staff associated with Homelessness.

Agreed: Report noted.

Agreed: Visit to Clonard road Hub at a future date to be arranged.

5. Housing Program Report:

Circulated to members prior to meeting.

Cllr. Doolan asked the manager as to what should be the committees' demands to the new minister to speed up the delivery of housing.

Cllr.'s & Kathleen McKillion highlighted the timeframe/procedures/bureaucracy to deliver units within the report.

Tony Flynn, Executive Manager briefed members on the Capital Works Framework and using D.C.C.'s existing Framework.

He explained the process of the Framework and stated how the Construction program differs.

The manager stated that D.C.C. needs to be to the forefront with regard to enabling all D.C.C. lands with the required infrastructure. He informed members about Multi Unit sites and what is required to make the sites "Shovel Ready". A collation of services is needed (Gas, Water, ESB etc.)

The capital works program could be 2 stage rather than 4, however, a review of the Public Spending Code 2011 is required. Under the code a Cost benefit Analysis is required if project is over €20 million.

A review of the caps to acquire houses review is urgently required as no units from Part V in D2, D4, & D6 will accrue to D.C.C.

He updated members with information that was not contained in the report (Repair & Leasing, Buy & Renew, Change of Use, Stock Transfers & refurbishment).

Cllr. Gilliland enquired about the Cost Benefit Analysis procedure on a specific site.

Tony stated that Streamlining needs to be considered & process needs to be reviewed by the Dept. Project splitting can't happen.

Brendan Kenny stated that a meeting with minister is to be held. He informed members that a report will be created highlighting S.P.C.'s requirements

Agreed: Report noted.

Agreed: A Rapid Build program report (identify suitable sites for Rapid Build) at a future meeting.

Agreed: Report to S.P.C. on process involved in developing sites & possible streamlining. (Fast Track Delivery).

6. Traveller Accommodation Update:

Circulated to members prior to meeting.

Agreed: Report noted

8. AOB

Chair thanked all for attendance.

Cllr. Daithi Doolan
CHAIRPERSON