

**Minutes of Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee
(LTACC) Meeting – Wednesday 28th October 2020 (Meeting conducted via
Zoom)**

In Attendance: Mr. N. Crowley, Independent Chairperson

Cllr. D. McDonnell, Galway City Council

Cllr. F. Fahy, Galway City Council

Cllr. M. O'Connor, Galway City Council

Cllr. O. Hanley, Galway City Council

Cllr. J. Connolly, Galway City Council

Ms. M. O' Riada, Galway Traveller Movement

Ms. J. Corcoran, Galway Traveller Movement Representative

Mr. P. Sweeney, Galway Traveller Movement Representative

Officials:

Mr. D. Mahon, A/Director of Services, Housing Department

Ms. H. Martyn, A/Senior Executive Officer, Housing Department

Ms. S. Donoghue, Senior Social Worker, Housing Department

Ms. S. Carroll, Administrative Officer, Housing Department

Present:

Ms. M. Kilgariff, A/Assistant Staff Officer, Housing Department

Apologies:

Ms. A. Delaney, Galway Traveller Movement Representative

Ms. B. Kelly, Galway Traveller Movement

Cllr. N. Larkin, Galway City Council

Mr. N. Crowley welcomed all attendees and thanked everyone for attending. Apologies were recorded for Ms. B. Kelly & Ms. A. Delaney.

1. Minutes and Matters Arising

The Minutes of the Meeting dated 1st July 2020 were circulated prior to the Meeting and Mr. Crowley asked if there were any comments or corrections Ms. J. Corcoran advised that the membership of the Estate Management Sub Group has changed and that Ms. M. O' Riada and Ms. A. Delaney should be removed. Ms. J. Corcoran has been added as a member.

Ms. S. Donoghue gave an update on the working group which was established in relation to Traveller Homelessness. Ms. B. Kelly, Ms. C. Shanahan, COPE Galway and the HSE through the Traveller Health Unit are involved. The group is actively looking at different ways of combatting Traveller Homelessness. An ethnic identifier cannot be added to the Housing application form as this is national, however, one can be added to the Homeless Services form. The group is looking to connect with Offaly Traveller Group and they are looking at devising mental health supports for Travellers in homelessness.

The adoption of the Minutes was proposed by Mr. P. Sweeney, seconded by Ms. J. Corcoran and agreed by all.

COVID-19 Update

Galway City Council have been meeting with Public Health and the Galway Traveller Movement (GTM) weekly with a focus on education and awareness of COVID-19 for Travellers. Self-isolation plans are in place but have not been needed to date. GTM have been circulating information on Facebook.

Issues in relation to heating at Carrowbrowne Halting Site were also brought up for discussion as part of the Operations Sub-Group. GTM have set up a regional media team with Mayo and Roscommon to encourage families to stay in their respective counties.

A discussion took place in relation to the issue of heating and dampness at Carrowbrowne Halting Site and the Tuam Road Halting Site. It was agreed to follow up with the Clerk of Works.

Communication Protocol

As part of the Communication Protocol, the issue of integrated communities was featured. It was agreed that this area could be developed by the LTACC. Ms. S. Carroll noted that work had been done on this area through to LECP and that the LTACC could look at working with them and other partners to develop this. Many of the capital schemes being pursued are using an integrated model. Mr. N. Crowley asked the Estate Management Sub-Group to think about a values led approach to integration.

2. Traveller Accommodation Plan (TAP) 2019-2024 Year 1 Progress Update

Mr. D. Mahon introduced the report which was circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted that the TAP must be formally reviewed by 31st December 2021. A target of 50 accommodation supports in total was outlined in the plan for year one, with an output of 61. Not all targets were achieved with some schemes being delayed due to COVID-19, among other reasons. Fewer HAP tenancies have been allocated than expected due to a limited number of HAP and RAS properties. All 20 HAP tenancies were created through Homeless HAP. Due to the requirements of some families, it is more efficient to provide accommodation directly through the Local Authority. Alternative accommodation will have to be sourced for the Cúl Trá residents as the proposed scheme at Keeraun will not accommodate all tenants. In 2021, Galway City Council will seek funding for upgrades to group houses and the replacement of heating systems at Carrowbrowne. A number of mobile homes have also been acquired.

Consultation will take place with families in relation to the integrated units, and CENA have done some consultation with the families on the Circular Road site. The operational sub-group will lead this. It was also noted that many of the high allocation figures relate to properties acquired rather than families coming through Homeless Services. Interest has also increased in Long Term Leasing.

The number of Traveller Specific Units proposed for each development depends on the number of units within the development overall. The CENA report advised between 6-8 Traveller Specific Units within a larger development. There are no proposals for any standalone schemes. It was also noted Galway City Council is not proposing to acquire any further properties outside of its own administrative areas other than the two previously agreed acquisitions in Galway County. One property acquisition is complete and a second property has not yet been identified.

The adoption of the Report was proposed by Cllr. M. O'Connor, seconded by Ms. M. O' Riada and agreed by all.

3. Sub-Groups Update

Operations Sub-Group

The Terms of Reference were circulated prior to the meeting. Representatives from the GTM, technical staff and an Architect, as necessary, are part of the group. Consultation is important. Two meetings have taken place with a third to take place in the coming weeks. The Terms of Reference state that meetings will take place monthly but it was decided that this should be changed to monthly/six weekly to ensure that the target is realistic.

The adoption of the Terms of Reference was proposed by Cllr. M. O'Connor, seconded by Mr. P. Sweeney and agreed by all.

Estate Management Sub-Group

This Sub-Group has met three times to date. Initial meetings have focused on the development of the Terms of Reference, positive perspectives on Estate Management, integration, residents associations and tenant participation. The Sub-Group have focussed on the severe weather response and discussions have taken place on public consultation and how best to engage with people during COVID-19. Work has also commenced on the Estate Management Strategy. The next meeting will take place on 3rd December.

The importance of encouraging local residents to be involved in the maintenance of their area was noted. Mr. N. Crowley noted the importance of the Estate Management Strategy and growing the representation of organisations such as the GTM. Mr. Crowley asked that the Operations Sub-Group look at a possible communication channel that could be developed between the LTACC and the public.

4. Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) Equality Review

The importance of this review was acknowledged. The review has not moved forward since the last meeting of the LTACC, however, it was agreed to make further contact with Meath County Council who have completed a similar review. It was agreed that this Equality Review would be discussed at the third LTACC meeting in 2021. Consultation with the public will form part of the review.

5. AOB

It was agreed that dates for the 2021 meetings will be circulated after the meeting.

Mr. N. Crowley was appointed as independent Chair of the LTACC for one year initially. It was proposed that he continue as Chair for another year following a series of productive LTACC meetings. Mr. Crowley indicated his willingness to continue in the role of Independent Chair for a further year subject to the agreement of LTACC members

Mr. N. Crowley to be retained as Independent Chair of the LTACC for a second year was proposed by Cllr. D. McDonnell, seconded by Cllr. F. Fahy and agreed by all.

The meeting then concluded.