

## Minutes of the Social Development Strategic Policy Committee Meeting Friday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2024 via MS Teams & in the Council Chamber

**In Attendance:** Cllr. D. McDonnell, Galway City Council (Chair)  
Cllr. N. McNelis, Galway City Council  
Cllr. T. O' Flaherty, Galway City Council  
Cllr. H. Ogbu, Galway City Council  
Cllr. J. McDonagh, Galway City Council  
Mr. A. Daly, SIPTU Representative  
Mr. E. Waldron, Construction Representative  
Ms. K. Golden, GSC Representative  
Ms. Olena Bratchenko, GCCN Representative

**Officials:** Ms. E. Fanning, A/ Director of Services, Social Development  
Ms. H. Martyn, A/Senior Executive Officer, Social Development  
Ms. A. Brett, Administrative Officer, Social Development  
Ms E. Killarney, Traveller Accommodation Officer, Social Development  
Mr. D. Healy, A/Administrative Officer, Social Development  
Mr. M Cormican, Senior Engineer, Infrastructure Development  
Mr. A. Falvey, Senior Executive Engineer, Infrastructure Development  
Ms. M. Fallon Ward, Administrative Officer, Social Development  
Mr. Michael McDonagh, Administrative Officer, Infrastructure Development  
Ms. C. Fahy, Senior Social Worker  
Ms. A. McManus, Tenancy Sustainment Officer

**Apologies:** Cllr. A. Burke, Galway City Council

**Present:** Ms. M. Kilgarriff, Staff Officer, Housing Department

Cllr. D. Lyons opened the meeting and welcomed all.

### **1. Minutes of Meeting 10<sup>th</sup> May 2024**

Minutes were proposed by Cllr. T O' Flaherty, seconded by Ms. K. Golden and agreed by all.

### **2. Matters Arising**

Mr. A. Daly asked for an update in relation to the homeless cold weather response which was due to roll out in Q4. Ms. E. Fanning advised that the cold weather response is in operation from November to April. The refurbishment of Seamus Quirke Road will commence in early 2025.

Cllr. T. O'Flaherty was advised that her query in relation to 32 Sliabh Rua could be dealt with after the meeting.

### **4. Regional Homeless Action Plan**

It was agreed to take Item number 4 on the agenda next.

Mr. D. Healy gave a presentation on the Regional Homeless Action Plan. Following the presentation, concerns were raised that there were omissions in the plan and no mention of NGOs. It was suggested that more consultation take place with the homeless service providers.

It was agreed that Galway Simon and COPE Galway will meet with Ms. H. Martyn and Mr. D. Healy to discuss the issues raised. A Special SPC meeting will then be held on Friday 31<sup>st</sup> January at 9.30am where Adoption of the plan can take place.

It was agreed that an update will be given at the next ordinary SPC meeting in relation to turnaround times for void properties.

Ms. H. Martyn advised that the Tenant in Situ Scheme has been suspended due to lack of funding and that Galway City Council is working with the DHLGH on this.

Ms. H. Martyn advised that Housing First targets are being reached. Positive trend in relation to number of Traveller families in Emergency Accommodation.

It is hoped that a site visit to Cork can be arranged to see best practice regarding infill development. This can be put on the SPC agenda as a Housing Capital Update.

### **3. Traveller Accommodation Plan 2025-2029**

Ms. E. Killarney gave a presentation on the Draft Traveller Accommodation Plan 2025-2029.

It was noted that there is a greater preference for the East side of the city based on the information submitted by Traveller families. Ms. Killarney confirmed that she would follow up with Mr. Daly on his query about overcrowding after the meeting.

Ms. E. Fanning advised that the Traveller Accommodation Plan must be approved by 9<sup>th</sup> December 2024 to comply with legislation. Reviews will take place through the LTACC but can be reported to SPC also.

Mr. M. Cormican advised that the Keeraun development was refused by An Bord Pleanála due to its location which is why the number of units on that site has been reduced. The Ballymoneen Road development is progressing, Environmental Impact Assessments have commenced, and it is hoped to apply for planning Q2 2025. It is hoped that increased unit density on the Doughiska site will offset the cost of knotweed removal.

A discussion took place in relation to the number of proposed traveller specific units in Fána Glas. Ms. E. Fanning advised that the plan will be reviewed over the course of its lifetime and the suitability of the site will be assessed once a design has been drawn up for the development.

Cllr. D. McDonnell proposed the plan be accepted. This was seconded by Cllr. Níall McNelis. 7 members voted in favour, Cllr. H. Ogbu abstained.

### **5. Affordable Housing Scheme Updates**

Mr. M. Cormican gave an update on the very successful information evenings which were held recently in relation to the Affordable Housing Scheme. The first took place in Menlo Park and was hosted jointly with Galway County Council. The second took place in the Connacht Hotel. Developers were engaged and there was a demonstration of the online portal which will go live in January. The Local Authority Home Loan team were also present to answer queries.

The LDA will be the main driver of cost rental developments in Galway city.. Planning will be submitted for 200 cost rentals at Dyke Road in 2026. There is a 5-year target of 151 homes.

The Garraí na tSailí scheme will be advertised in Q1 2025.

Stage 1 of the Cappagh Development, which will deliver 22 affordable units will be submitted the week of the 3<sup>rd</sup> December.

Galway City Council are engaging with Uisce Éireann for a connection for the Merlin Woods Scheme. Mr. Cormican stated that clarity would be sought from Uisce Éireann in relation to previous claims that the existing pump can accommodate a further 3000 homes.

Mr. Cormican acknowledged that the properties would be more affordable if the Council could take a higher

amount of equity. At the moment it is a max of 20%, a case may have to be made for a higher percentage, and this has been highlighted to the Department.

#### **6. Draft Work Plan 2025**

Cllr. McDonnell requested that the meeting be extended by ten minutes to allow discussion of the draft work programme for 2025. This was agreed.

The draft work plan was circulated in advance of the meeting. Members were advised that the plan can be circulated again and they can revert with comments. Cllr. D. McDonnell stated that dates for future SPC meetings will be agreed at the special meeting in January and it will be decided which items will be on the agenda of each meeting.

#### **7. A.O.B**

Cllr. D. McDonnell thanked all for attending and the meeting then concluded.

Dal. Mc Donnell  
31/1/25