**MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER MONTHLY MEETING OF MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF BIRR HELD ON MONDAY 11TH SEPTEMBER, 2023 IN BIRR CIVIC OFFICES, WILMER ROAD, BIRR AT 4.30 P.M.**

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| **MEMBERS PRESENT:** | **Cllrs E Dooley, P Ormond, J Carroll**  **J Clendennen, C Claffey and J Leahy** |
| **IN ATTENDANCE:** | **Ms A Dillon, DOS, Mr J Mitchell, SEE, Mr John Cunningham, SE Housing Services OCC, & Ms D Molloy, Meetings Administrator** |

**Adoption of Minutes of Meeting in Committee held on 10th July, 2023.**

On the proposal of Cllr Leahy and seconded by Cllr Carroll the Minutes of the Meeting in Committee of Birr MD held on 10th July, 2023 were adopted.

**Adoption of Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on 10th July, 2023.**

On the proposal of Cllr Ormond and seconded by Cllr Carroll the Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Birr MD held 10th July, 2023 were adopted.

**Matters Arising from the Minutes of the July meeting:**

There were no matters arising.

**Housing Services Report**

Mr John Cunningham, SE Housing Services OCC presented a Housing Activity report to the Members. The Members thanked Mr Cunningham for his report and the work carried out to date and raised the following:

* The Members enquired about accommodation being provided for Ukranian people coming to Offaly and advised that they were finding it very difficult to secure any information in relation to accommodation that is being provided, and what services are being put in place to support them The Members were advised that there is a dedicated team in OCC dealing with same and liaising with other agencies and the Executive advised that they would ask them to contact the Members to provide them with the relevant contacts for information.
* The Members welcomed the houses in Banagher and Moneygall and enquired as to when the houses in Belmont would be complete. The Members enquired about the length of time it was taking to deliver social housing and how this could be streamlined. Mr Cunningham advised that it is a lengthy process with many stages of approval required from the Dept. along the way. He also noted that the department had made a number of changes to the various stages that have brought about improvements and efficiencies.
* The Members enquired about turnkey housing and if there is much interest from developers in providing these schemes, the Members were advised that the Council are open to liaising with developers on these schemes but however the number of proposed units need careful consideration in terms of sustainable communities. The Members also highlighted the lack of housing being provided through Part V as there is not much private development taking place.
* The Members enquired if many responses had been received to the notice for Expressions of Interest for vacant land, the Members expressed concern in relation to the lack of available suitably serviced and zoned land within the MD and how this could be addressed. They advised that it may need to be looked at during the mid-term review of the County Development in order to try and rectify same.
* The Members enquired about Energy Retrofit Projects that are taking place and what feedback has been like from tenants in relation to same, they were advised that the feedback has been positive to date. The members were advised of the cap on funding available per unit and that proposed houses needed to be selected to match the budget available. The Members enquired about the length of time it is taking to bring voids back in to stock and can this process be more streamlined, they were advised that the costs of returning voids to housing stock has increased and there is a shortage of contractors to carry out this type of work.
* The Members enquired about the actual number of housing applicants on the housing list for accommodation in the Birr MD area and also how many homeless people are on the list in the Birr area, Mr Cunningham advised that he that all figures would be provided at the full meeting of OCC.
* The Members welcomed the works being carried out with DPGs but expressed concerns that a lot of these refurbishments are now major projects and smaller adaptations that are required are losing out.
* The Members expressed concern in relation to where rental accommodation would come from in the future, try to get landlords engaged in the current grant schemes to improve their dwellings. The Members welcomed the houses that were acquired through the mortgage to rent scheme and enquired if there was any progress in relation to an Affordable Housing Scheme.

**Any Other Business**

1. The Members raised concerns in relation to the recent Uisce Eireann Boil Water notice in the Birr area and expressed their frustration on the lack of information or communication that was available at this time. They agreed to contact Uisce Eireann to express their dissatisfaction in relation to same.
2. The Members highlighted the need for repair works to be carried out on the playground in Birr and enquired if there are any funds available to carry out same, The Executive agreed to investigate funding streams and liaise with LCDC to see if they had any money that they could make available.
3. The Members highlighted the need for a bus shelter in Birr, particularly approaching the winter months. They welcomed the new Rural link from Athlone to Roscrea but identified the need to allocate bus stops in each town. It was agreed to place this matter on the Agenda for the October MD meeting.
4. Ms Ann Dillon, DOS advised the meeting that she had received correspondence from Supt Alan Kerins of Birr Garda Station outlining his appreciation to Bernard Kennedy GSS and his staff in the MD area for their prompt attendance at the scene of a fatal crash recently and the assistance that they afforded to the Gardai on that occasion. The Members wished to extend their sympathies to the bereaved family.

The Meeting then concluded.

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**CATHAOIRLEACH MEETINGS ADMINISTRATOR**

**DATE:**