

Municipal District of Edenderry
Bardasach Dúiche Éadan Doire

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF EDENDERRY
HELD ON WEDNESDAY THE 12TH OF JULY 2016 IN THE
TOWN HALL, EDENDERRY AT 3.30PM**

Present: Cathaoirleach Cllr Noel Cribbin, Cllr Noel Bourke, Cllr John Foley,
Cllr Liam Quinn Cllr Eddie Fitzpatrick & Cllr Martin O'Reilly

In attendance: Declan Conlon, Area Manager, John Connelly, Senior Executive Engineer,
Leonard Geoghegan, Assistant Engineer and Therese O'Meara, Meetings
Administrator, Edenderry Municipal District.

1. Confirmation of Minutes

On the proposal of Cllr O'Reilly and seconded by Cllr Bourke, the minutes of the June meetings were adopted.

2. Report and recommendation from Housing

Damien Grennan, Senior Executive Engineer/Head of the Capital Design/Technical Team and Anne Dillon, Senior Executive Officer gave the Housing report for the quarter. Housing demand in the district remains high with 487 1st preference applications. Edenderry remains the area of most preference in the district.

Housing Assessment

In relation to the social housing needs assessment, Ann advised that all applicants on the housing list will be written to and requested that they must complete a document and return it within a specified date. She stated that those who fail to fully complete and return this document on time will be removed from the housing list. Ann also stated that the Council will advise the Department of Social Protection in relation to closed applicants. She explained that if there are changes to applications that do not meet current regulations these applications will also be closed and removed from the housing list. Any applications that are closed may lose their housing supports as a result of same. For those who must re apply they will lose any time built up on the list to date.

Housing assistance payment (HAP)

Anne advised that 15 applications were processed for this district in the last quarter bringing to a total of 25 for the district for the year. She advised that those who are in HAP will remain on the housing list. Anne explained that as part of this process there will be inspections on properties. She welcomed the increase in the rent cap.

Housing Stock

Anne advised that there was 1 property allocated in the area in the last quarter and explained that there are currently 4 vacant (1 is at offer stage, 2 at pre let stage and 1 where works are to be assessed). Funding for vacant houses remains the same where Offaly County Council match funding is required.

Housing maintenance: call outs for the quarter totaled 174 in this district.

Homelessness: 5 adults and 3 children who presented homeless in the last quarter had the Edenderry district as their area for first preference housing. Anne advised that these people are being treated as a priority for suitable allocations/leasing/nominations to Approved Housing Bodies (AHB).

Approved Housing Bodies; Ann advised that Offaly County Council (OCC) have sought expressions of interests from approved housing bodies to develop on OCC lands. She also advised that lands in Killane are to be disposed off to Tuaith at market value subject to planning permission and funding. Anne explained that Tuaith had pre planning meetings in regard to same in 2015. They are currently preparing detailed costing and design for approval by the department. The management team have agreed to pursue planning through the Part VIII process in this regard. The estimated completion of this project is September 2018. Ann also advised that Tuaith are also proposing to purchase 20 apartments (9 new, 11 RAS) in the Downshire, Edenderry this is currently at early stages and the members will be kept up to date of proposals.

Expressions of interest from AHBs with have a potential to deliver accommodation in other areas are as follows

- 20 units in Daingean through Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS) (OCC property)
29 units in Portarlinton through CAS and AHB finance models (non OCC property)
- 10 units in Daingean (non OCC property).

Therefore including houses in Blundell Park (33) there are a potential of 85 houses to be constructed by 2018/2019. All tenants for these houses will be taken from current housing lists at the time of allocation, these include recommendations to AHBs.

Capital Housing Design Team

Damien Grennan advised that in May of this year the capital housing design team was set up. This section aim to deliver targets as set out in social housing strategy 2015 – 2017. In order to do this a dedicated team has been estimated. Blundell Wood, Edenderry will see the development of 33 new housing units. There are four stages to this development which were outlined to the members with an estimated time frame for completed given as September 2018.

Damien advised that an appraisal analysis of all Council lands in the Local Authority is currently being undertaken particularly in towns/villages where a housing need exists in order to ascertain their suitability for the development of future housing by either the Council or AHBs.

The team are also carrying out an analysis of the availability of private lands in towns/villages where a housing demand exists and where the Council own no lands.

The housing design team continues to be involved in areas such as extensions to housing stock; two such projects are to be undertaken in St Josephs Terrace, Portarlinton and St Oliver's Terrace, Geashill.

Housing Acquisition

Damien advised that over 20 bids for house purchase have been accepted with bids placed on several other housing units. Some of these house purchases require work. Two of these bids relate to houses in this district with bids placed on other houses in this area also.

In relation to private developers, Damien explained that OCC Housing Section advertised for Expressions of Interest seeking to purchase schemes of units up to a max of 25. He explained that there were 7 in total submitted, 4 of which are in Edenderry district. Damien will meet with each of these developers and discuss options.

Members comments/questions

Cllr Cribbin asked that the journalist present report on the assessment of housing needs and explain the importance of returning these forms.

Cllr Quinn thanked Damien and Anne for their report. He asked if there was a limit on the increase of HAP and welcomed the news that the council are talking to developers with live planning applications.

In relation to homelessness, Cllr Fitzpatrick stated that some of the people who are presenting as homeless have brought some problems on themselves and this has had a knock on effect for landlords who may have been unpaid for periods of time. He empathized with the housing staff who have very varied and sensitive situations to deal with and thanked them for their work to date. He asked that the Council try to move on securing housing units as soon as possible.

Cllr Foley asked if there is a delay or something happens with the construction of units in Blundell Park can this money be used to purchase housing units instead.

Cllr Bourke said that he felt there was a serious need for housing in this district. In relation to Blundell Park he felt that it will be a long time before houses will be built and occupied. He noted that there are a number of people currently living in unsuitable and overcrowded accommodation. He also asked that the Council move on design for houses on our land banks and asked that all processes be kept as speedy as possible.

In relation to Blundell Park, Damien advised that it is a high priority to try to advance the timescale, however he stated that plans were well advanced. He took on board the concerns of the members and advised that there have been positive meetings with department inspectors who are anxious for scheme to be built.

Cllr O'Reilly noted the level of work that the housing section administrative staff are dealing with and acknowledged the work load that the HNA will add to this. He also stated that he felt that HAP work has added to the pressure in the section. He stated that he felt that the local TDs should raise the issue with recruitment of Council staff at department level.

Ann advised that the services are now suffering the effects off the reduction in staff by a third in the Council. However she acknowledged the positive development within housing in relation to housing acquisitions and consideration of other options.

3. Agreed Agenda Items

Job Creation

Cllr Foley stated that he felt that the IDA and Enterprise Ireland need to get on top of the situation in relation to job creation in the area. He said that he felt that the local TDs should help to promote this area.

Cllr Cribbin advised the press that a very positive meeting had been held with the Chief Executive prior to that meeting. He asked if a press release could be issued regarding same.

Bus Éireann & Bus Shelters

No update

Hotel Site

Declan advised that as announced the Department of Education have expressed an interest in the hotel site as a site for the construction of a new school for Oaklands College. Discussions have been held over some months. He stated that he felt that they were committed to the project. He advised that land valuations have delayed the status of the project together with the holiday period. He advised that he is putting pressure on the Department regarding same and said that their site could be a site for further use by the Council.

Cllr Cribbin thanked Declan for the update and congratulated all involved to date. Cllr Foley thanked Cllr Quinn for his involvement in the project. Cllr Quinn thanked the staff of the Council and off the ETB for being pro active in their approach to same.

Ofalia House

The site for new ambulance base in Edenderry currently has a live planning application with the Council.

Area Issues/updates

Accessibility

As a member of the Regional Assembly, Cllr Fitzpatrick advised those present that at a recent meeting the members met with people with disabilities. He advised that following on from this meeting he had arranged to meet with Charlie Mc Carthy, Senior Engineer in order to discuss issues raised with a view to looking at issues in the district and county. He mentioned the need to keep in mind people with disability when planning infrastructural works. Cllr Fitzpatrick advised that he will keep the members informed regarding same.

Footpath in Ballinagar

John Connelly advised that the creation of a footpath in Ballinagar will start at the end of the month.

Rhode Enterprise Park

Cllr Quinn asked if there was any way of restricting traffic flow on the road way into the Enterprise park in Rhode. A lot of people use this area for walking. John Connelly advised that he was working with the Gardai in relation to an illegal encampment in that area.

Watermain Rehabilitation in Edenderry

John Connelly advised that he has raised the issue of the quality of re instatement works on Fr Paul Murphy St, Edenderry with the Contractors. He reminded those present that these contractors are working for Irish Water.

4. **Notice of Motion** - None
5. **Written Questions** – None
6. **Correspondence** - None
7. **Any other business** - None

This concluded the business of the meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for 14th of September 2016 at 3.30 pm.

Signed: _____

Cathaoirleach

Date: _____