

*Municipal District of Edenderry*  
*Bardasach Dúiche Éadan Doire*

**MINUTES OF NOVEMBER MEETING OF THE  
MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF EDENDERRY  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY THE 9<sup>TH</sup> OF NOVEMBER 2016 IN THE  
TOWN HALL, EDENDERRY AT 3.30PM**

**Present:** Cathaoirleach Cllr Noel Cribbin, Cllr Noel Bourke, Cllr John Foley,  
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.

**Apologies:** Cllr Liam Quinn

**1. Confirmation of Minutes**

On the proposal of Cllr Foley and seconded by Cllr Fitzpatrick, the minutes of the October meetings were adopted.

**2. Report and recommendation from Housing**

Damien Grennan, Senior Executive Engineer gave the housing report and gave apologies for Ann Dillon, SEO who was unavailable.

The report showed that there were 338 people on the **housing list** for the Municipal District of Edenderry.

In relation to **Housing Assistance Payment**, Damien advised that there was 20 tenancies signed up in this district in the last quarter with a total of 40 in the district to date. Any new tenancies which commenced in 2016 remain on the housing waiting list. Those in receipt of rent supplement also remain on the Housing waiting list while in receipt of financial support.

With regard to **Social Housing / Social Leasing / Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS)**, Damien advised that there was 7 local authority houses allocated from July to October, 2 social leasing allocations and no RAS tenancies.

In relation to **vacant dwellings**, Damien advised that there are currently 6 houses vacant, 2 at pre allocation stage, 1 which has been offered to an applicant and 3 where works are ongoing.

Damien advised that there were over 100 new **Homeless** presentations in the first 3 quarters of 2016. Notice to quit by private rented landlords, unaffordable private rents and the lack of private rented supply were the main reasons for presentation. All emergency accommodation beds in the county and the region were continually fully occupied in 2016. At the end of September there were 22 adults and 26 children from the Offaly Housing list in emergency accommodation. The budget

for Homeless Services for 2016 was €193,000. Expenditure on Homeless Services at the end of August was €185,000 due to the significant demand for emergency accommodation. Some additional funding contribution towards emergency accommodation was received from Government in October 2016.

With regard to **Traveller Accommodation** A mid term review has sought submissions on the 2014-2016 Traveller Accommodation Plan. Submissions are to be considered and the review completed by the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee by year end. A review of Fire Safety on Traveller Halting Sites was completed by the County Fire Service in 2016 and a national report issued.

### **Housing Capital Design and Maintenance Section**

Damien explained that the delivery of targets under the Social Housing Strategy 2020 is an integral part of the Governments overall response to tackling current and future social housing needs. In order to fast track the Housing Capital Programme, a dedicated **Capital Works Housing Design Team** has been established since May 2016 .

The primary aim of this design team will be the the delivery of Offaly County Councils targets under the Social Housing Strategy 2015-2017 and beyond which includes New house Construction, Acquisitions, Voids, Capital Assistance Schemes and Part Vs etc. in partnership with the Approved Housing Bodies under the guidance of the DHPCLG

**Blundellwood, Edenderry 33 no. Housing Units** – Construction of 33 no Mixed Housing Units consisting of 8 no. single storey 2 – bed, 16 no 2 storey 2 bed and 9 no 2 storey 3 bed along with all associated site development works. The scheme is currently at Detailed Design Stage. Damien advised that the detailed design is now with the Department and it is hoped that there will be a quick turnaround on same.

The Capital Housing Design Team is currently undertaking an appraisal analysis of all lands in Local Authority ownership especially in Towns/Village where a housing need exists to ascertain their suitability for the development of future housing by either Offaly County Council or by Voluntary Housing Associations (AHBs) working in partnership with Offaly County Council.

The Capital Team are currently **appraising** Local Authority **lands** in both Daingean and Cloneygowan presently aswell as undertaking an availability analysis of private lands in towns/villages within the Edenderry Municipal District where a housing demand exists and the Local Authority have no lands available.

The Capital Design Team continue to work with the **Approved Housing Bodies** (AHBs) under the Capital Assistance Scheme on a daily basis with a view to progressing a number of possible schemes within the Edenderry MD. There are AHB (Tuath) proposals for Edenderry Town with a potential for 27 units (2 already approved) along with a proposal for Portarlinton with a potential for a further 20-25 units in total.

**In regard to Disabled Persons Grants** which included extensions to the Social Housing Stock, Damien advised that tenders have been sought for works to some social housing units which require significant house alterations /adaptation to be constructed to facilitate the particular needs of certain tenants. The closing date for these tenders was Friday 23rd September 2016.

Two such projects within the Edenderry MD are to be undertaken at St Josephs Terrace Portarlington, and St. Oliver's Terrace, Geashill.

Damien advised that Offaly County Council own 423 units in the Edenderry MD. There have been 598 recorded repair requests from Tenants associated with these properties to date.

**Energy Efficiency Upgrade** works will be completed on a total of 262 Local Authority Housing Units by year end. This upgrade work mainly consists of insulation retrofitting (Wall and Attic) to Local Authority Houses. Works have been undertaken on LA Houses situated in Walsh Island, Daingean, Bracknagh, Cloneygowan, Geashill, Portarlington and Edenderry Town.

In terms of our **Acquisitions** Damien explained that the technical team have now had Bids Accepted on over **35** housing units. The agreed Target for 2016 is **36** Housing units throughout the County. 6 of these units are located in Edenderry Town with 1 each in Walsh Island, Daingean, Portarlington and Ballinagar.

### **Expressions of Interest**

Offaly County Council Housing Section advertised for "Expression of Interests" seeking to purchase schemes of units up to a maximum of 25 on one site for Social Housing purposes in County Offaly. Criteria for same included:

- A) Social Housing need in the area concerned.
- B) Value for money.
- C) Quality and design.

Currently we have 22 expressions of interest from developers throughout the County. 10 of these expressions of interest are located within the Edenderry Municipal District. The Housing Capital Design Section have met with all of these developers to date with a number of these applications now being progressed through to Pre Planning Stage.

### **Questions**

Cllr Cribbin asked in relation to working with developers, if a developer needed money to finish an estate would there be finance available for same. Damien advised that the council are looking at options with all developers who have made expressions of interest. In a case like this the Council would agree a price to buy the estate and the developer could go to the bank seeking funds with this commitment in place.

Cllr Cribbin also queried houses for older person who are living in two storey houses for example a 3 bed house where mobility may be an issue. He asked if the Council were looking at building more ground floor accommodation which allow some tenants to move and which would also be eligible for those who owned their own homes also. He gave an example of a scheme of housing built in Louth, it was agreed that the houses given to those who had owned their own home previously would return to the council when these tenants pass away.

Damien advised that the Blundell Wood scheme is designed with all age groups in mind as is the proposed scheme of houses to be built by Tuath in Killane Drive.

Cllr Foley queried the time frame for the Blundell Wood scheme, Damien advised that he hoped there would be a fast turnaround from the department. He stated that tenders would issue once the go ahead was given by the department.

Cllr O'Reilly asked that the Council continue to push ahead with plans for land banks owned by the Council with a view to developing designs for schemes of houses on same. He also queried the amount of disabled person grants completed. Damien advised that 25 – 26 projects would be completed in a year.

Cllr Bourke asked why it took so long to turn over vacant houses, in some cases 6 – 8 weeks. He highlighted houses in Edenderry town which were vacant. He said that he hoped that some of the expressions of interest could be progressed.

Cllr Cribbin asked that in future Tuath hold off on telling people that they have been allocated housing until the unit is available. He gave an example of where a person presented as homeless as they had left their accommodation having been told by Tuath that they would be allocated housing. He also asked if there was any possibility of having emergency accommodation for homeless people in Offaly. Damien advised that this is something that is being looked at.

### **3. Agreed Agenda Items**

#### **Job Creation**

The members met with Orla Martin, Head of LEO prior to this meeting in order to discuss this topic. Cllr Foley advised that a positive meeting was held and said that he welcomes Orla's ideas.

#### **Bus Shelters**

Declan advised the members that Edenderry had been allocated 100k from an Urban Renewal Scheme. He said that there was a very strict criteria to be met in order to apply. He explained that it was planned to use this money to carry out paving and landscaping works which would include the installation of the bus shelter in O'Connell Square, Edenderry. Declan advised that as part of this process there is a period for public consultation and stated that he would have more information in this regard at a later date. He also advised that this 85% of the overall cost of the project.

Cllr Cribbin asked the press to report that this 100k is not a fund which will be made available to groups as he had queries in this regard.

Cllr O'Reilly asked that we informed the class accordingly from St Mary's secondary school that had originally made the request for the bus shelter at this location. Therese confirmed that she would contact same.

#### **Hotel Site**

Declan advised that no update was available but stated that discussions were ongoing with the ETB and landowners in the surrounding area of the site. He said that we were anxious to see Oaklands school on this site in a hope that this area could be regenerated.

## **Ambulance Services**

Cllr Cribbin advised that Minister Corcoran Kennedy has arranged a meeting with Minister Harris for the 7<sup>th</sup> of December in Leinster house. He said that he was awaiting clarification in relation the number of members who can attend on the day.

Cllr Foley expressed his disappointment with the Minister who had given a commitment to make available in writing that funding was available for the construction of the new ambulance base in Edenderry. This commitment has not been received.

Cllr O'Reilly agreed that this was what had been said at the special meeting held with the Minister and the other local TDs. He said that the provision of temporary accommodation is still an issue and needs to be progressed.

Cllr Bourke advised that at a previous meeting with Willie Merriman from the National Ambulance Services, he advised that he did not foresee any issues with funding.

On the proposal of Cllr Foley and seconded by Cllr O'Reilly the members requested that the minister be written to again seeking same.

Cllr Bourke advised that Deputy Cowen had, the previous evening raised this issue in the Dail and sought a commitment to the commencement of construction and to the seeking of temporary accommodation for ambulance service in Edenderry.

## **Area Issues/updates**

### **Irish Water**

In relation to same John Connelly advised that Irish Water are off site at present and advised that a lot of connections are still to be made. Offaly County Council Resident Engineer for this project is to seek a schedule of outstanding works. He advised that the request for a full overlay in road surface is still outstanding for St Francis St, Edenderry also. John also reminded the members that the new main is not live until all old connections are switched off.

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

### **Christmas Lights**

Cllr Cribbin advised that on Sunday the 4<sup>th</sup> of December the Christmas Lights will be officially turned on in Edenderry town. Music and entertainment will take place prior to this in the square.

### **Congratulations**

Cllr Cribbin congratulated our neighbours Rhode, Bracknagh and Clonbullogue on advancing to Leinster football finals.

Cllr Cribbin congratulated his fellow Elected Member Cllr Liam Quinn who is due to be married in the coming weeks.

Cllr Cribbin congratulated Donald Trump who has been announced as the next President of the United States of America and asked that he not forget the connections to Ireland and the Irish in America.

**School bus services**

Cllr O'Reilly asked if any correspondence had been received from Minster Halligan in regard to school bus services. Therese advised that she had followed up on this several times but have yet to get an answer.

Christmas Parking arrangements were read to the members by Declan and will circulate to the press after the meeting.

This concluded the business of the meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for 14<sup>th</sup> of December 2016 at 3.30 pm.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Cathaoirleach**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_