

**Tuairisc/Reporting Template for Galway City
Community Network (GCCN) Reps**

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Galway City Community Network
Lionra Pobail Chathair Na Gaillimhe

Cruinniú /Name of Meeting	Housing & Social Inclusion Strategic Policy Committee
Ionadaí FPCG (glacadóir - nótaí) Name of GCCF Rep (note-taker)	Diarmaid O’Sullivan
Dáta & Suite Date & Location of Meeting:	Galway City Council. Thursday 24 th May 2018
I láthair/ Attendance	Cllr Mark Lohan, Cllr. Declan McDonnell, Cllr. Mike Cubbard, Alan Daly (ICTU) Diarmaid OSullivan, (Galway City Community Network) Patricia Philbin, Dermot Mahon, Helena Martyn, Sharon Carroll, (All Galway City Council)

Príomhphointí pléite / Key Issues Discussed:

1. Minutes/Matters Arising

O’Cualainn Housing are interested in visiting Galway to explore the development of cooperative housing in the city. They may make a presentation at a future Housing SPC meeting.

2. Draft Estate Management Policy

Sharon Carroll gave a presentation on the draft policy. The final document will cross reference other relevant policies such as the City Development Plan and the Local Economic and Community Plan. GCC currently has 2,500 properties with 9,000 occupants. A number of the key actions that will come out of the policy are: a new Tenant’s Handbook, a revision of the Tenancy Agreement, an audit of the Transfer List, training for LA tenants, development of a Halting Site Estate Management Strategy. There is a commitment in the draft policy to support communities and facilitate the involvement of residents associations. There was some discussion about the use of CCTV but no decisions as there is debate at a national level as to whether the use of CCTV, where it is used, should be managed by the Gardaí or Local Authorities. A consultation event will take place towards the end of June – invites will go out to members of the Housing SPC, AHBs, members of the LCDC and Residents Associations.

Voids – The meeting hear that there are currently 48 voids in the city. 8 are long term including properties at Fana Glas and Sliabh Ban; a further 3 properties will take approximately six months to turn around and approximately 20 properties will be offered to tenants in the next number of weeks.

3. Housing Needs Assessment

1923 applicants on the housing list were contacted (this excludes HAP/RAS/LTL tenants). There have been a series of letters and to date 1557 returns have been received. There has been no response from 366 applicants – this is primarily people who have moved address and not informed the council or who no longer require LA housing. Some applications will be closed following the HNA, primarily because they now exceed the maximum income thresholds.

4. Traveller Accommodation Programme

Little progress reported. Galway Traveller Movement had previously withdrawn from the LTACC. A mediator has been appointed to try to facilitate an agreement on the future operation of the LTACC and would enable GTM to re-engage. There is to be refurbishment of the Fana Glas and Circular Road halting sites. The works at Circular Road will be a CENA group housing scheme for 5 families with room for caravans. Fire safety works have been carried out on the Cul Tra site. The illegal site at Dougishka has been closed. An AHB is to develop a mixture of social and traveller specific accommodation on the site. Homelessness is a big problem with many Traveller families receiving notices to quit.

5. Homeless Update

Currently 40 families in private emergency accommodation, 15 families in transitional, families waiting to go into private emergency accommodation because none is available. 2 couple and 3 individuals are currently accommodated in tourist hostels. Approximately 14 people are currently sleeping rough. A Homeless HAP Officer has been appointed and will start work next Monday 28th May.

7. Choice based lettings

There was a presentation on a new Choice Based Lettings system, which is due to come into operation in September/October 2018. All applicants on the housing waiting list will be written to in July/Aug to inform them of the system. Under the new system, properties that are available under general allocation, including AHB properties, will be advertised on a website and people on the list will be able to register an interest in a specific properties. Certain properties such as properties for specific groups such as older people, people with disabilities and Travellers will not be included. Furthermore, allocations to priority needs groups under the scheme of letting priorities such as people who are homeless will not be made through the system.

GCCN Representative raised the challenges the new system might pose for certain communities that either have limited or no access to the internet or who are not IT literate - for example older people or people with disabilities. The council will consider use of a kiosk in the Housing Department and other public spaces such as libraries.

AOB.

The challenges posed to private rented sector by growth of Airbnb was raised by the GCCN Representative. It was acknowledged that there is a need for legislation at a national level. Airbnb were invited to speak to Planning SPC but declined. Rent increases in student accommodation raised. SPC to write to Department to raise concerns.

Socruithe déanta/ Key Decisions Made:

1. It was agreed that the SPC would write to the Department of Housing to raise concerns about the dramatic rise in rents that have been taking place in Galway. Change to law required to bring student accommodation under the Rent Pressure Zone rules.

Gníomhaíochtaí

Action(s) required from GCCN:

1. Inform relevant members of the network of consultation event in relation to the Draft Estate Management Policy that is due to take place at the end of June.

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Dáta don chéad chruinniú eile Date of next meeting :	20th September
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Moltaí breise /Any Other Comments:	
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