

Tuairisc/Reporting Template for Galway City Community Network Representatives

Please complete and email to communications@gccn.ie at your earliest convenience, preferably one week after the meeting and no later than two weeks.



1. Cruinniú / Name of Meeting	Galway City Council Housing SPC
2. Ionadaí LPCG (glacadóir - nótaí) / Name of GCCN Rep (note-taker)	Marcella Conneely (attended by Teams)
3. Dáta & Suite / Date & Location of Meeting:	26th May, Council Chamber, City Hall & on teams
4. I láthair / Attendance	<p> Cllr Donal Lyons Cllr Terry O'Flaherty Cllr Alan Cheevers Cllr Mike Cubbard Cllr Eddie Hoare Cllr Imelda Byrne </p> <p> GCCN: Marcella Conneely Apologies from Karen Golden GCCN </p> <p> Galway City Council in Attendance: Patricia Philpin – Director of Services Helena Martyn – SEO Housing Louise Esler – AO Affordable Housing Scheme Ann Brett Catherine Fahy – Social Worker Derek Healy – A/ Administrative Officer Siobhan Bowen Maria Fallon - Ward - Administrative Officer – Estate Management </p>
5. Príomhphointí pléite / Key Issues Discussed:	
<p>1) <u>Minutes of previous meeting 25th February 2023</u>: agreed.</p> <p>Marcella Conneely GCCN rep pointed out comments on minutes to previous meeting, received from Karen Golden GCCN rep by email on 21/05/2023 to Chair (who was unavailable to attend this meeting), in relation to the proposed new Day Centre. Cllr Donal Lyons. Cllr Lyons read out the information below:</p> <p><i>Concerns have been raised in relation to the dorm style accommodation by Dr Kieran Coleman, Nurse Regina Boyle, COPE Galway, Galway Simon Community and members of the Linkage Group over the last number of years.</i></p> <p><i>Is there is any further input from Ms Fanning or the Council in relation to the design?</i></p> <p><i>I believe it is important that the input provided consistently by Dr. Kieran Coleman, Nurse Regina Boyle, COPE Galway, Galway Simon Community and members of the Linkage Group over a couple of years should be specifically noted. There are genuine deep concerns on the part of the Service Providers in relation to this design, and the risks that it will introduce into the Service when located at the new premises.</i></p>	

Again, nobody is disputing the need for space. However, this model is designing in risk and is not aligned to best practice. There is an opportunity here to do this better and we are again asking the Council to relook at this.

Cllr Donal Lyons and Marcella Conneely GCCN rep raised these comments

- 2) **Matters Arising:** - None raised.
- 3) **Draft Scheme of Priorities Affordable Housing:** GCC provided presentation by Lousie Edler, Administrative Officer for Affordable Housing on Affordable Housing. Scheme aims to sell dwellings at a lower than market price.

Criteria for applications to qualify:

- 1) Is application valid i.e., was it received on time/ did it have correct info
- 2) eligibility i.e., income threshold met/ own no other dwelling.
- 3) Applicants' suitability
- 4) LA criteria – must live in Galway City, will be 30% of all allocations.

70/30 information will be in local paper, website – 70% must meet top 3 bands of criteria, final 30% met all 4 bands of criteria. Process must be auditable & transparent. All done by date/ time on the application going into LA. Date/ time system based – Housing Agency will have portal by the end of the year.

Outline of Stages of process given this makes up the Draft Scheme for discussion today.

Gave some example application – showed min & max income levels needed to be able to fund a purchase. Housing Agency doing a large publicity launch on affordable housing in September.

Cllr O'Donnell: - raised issue on 70% criteria is available to all of Ireland, 30% restricted to Galway City residents.

Cllr Cubbard – asked if each scheme will be advertised, what timescales to see people moving in, and is there none now? Confused by 70/30 split. Understands this could be a national thing. What provision for people who don't use IT.

Cllr Alan Cheevers – concerns over 70/30 split, will write to Minister on it. Gets lots of representations on affordable housing – suggested, this info is great etc but when time is right – do a drop-in day so people can come in & get info.

Cllr Imelda Byrne – lots of her questions already raised. Requested presentations – lots of contact on affordable housing, said it seems to be robust, queries on eligible but not prioritised – needs to be simple info for members to communicate.

Cllr O'Flaherty – is this a 1st come basis? Query on proof of address to be robust. Requested public meetings, opportunities for face-to-face discussion on this scheme in communities. Is there any clause stopping people renting the houses when bought. Wants affordable housing on stream quickly – so needed.

Cllr Hoare – concerns 70/30 split, welcomed presentation, wants income eligibility revised regularly as don't want people sitting on list losing out due to too low-income details when if reviewed, they could have increased their income.

Cllr Eddie Hoare:

- 1) raised some queries on the Part 8 info earlier, asking for clarification. If any affordable housing build has environmental issues will go to full public consultation.

Cllr Lyons – asked if single people ruled out. LA replied No as could qualify for 2 beds. Salary will depend on house itself. Only an example given in presentation. Cllr queried the 10km radius criteria, when it is 15km on

Housing Waiting List (HWL). Also, the income thresholds are different for the HWL and affordable housing scheme.

LA replies:

70/30 – is due to the legislation in place. Example of Wicklow who have done similar and found that they have given houses to local people. Can apply as a Galwegian, and fall in under the 3, 1st bands, if you don't you can fall in on the 4th band – all date and time based.

Proof of address – will follow advice from Dept. Will come back.

Type of housing – your application will depend on what your income in household is. Houses not built yet. Scheme will be well advertised, social media, website, newspapers, following Housing Agency direction. For every scheme.

Computer literacy – will refer to Housing Agency, those who are not should get assistance, as applications have to date/ time stamped, transparent.

Drop In – liked this suggestion, will consider and communicate if can happen.

The application will be on the Housing Agency portal and GCC have asked to see it before launch.

An affordable house must be occupied by the owner, no rental allowed.

Affordable housing list is strictly 1st come; 1st served – no links to Housing Waiting List.

Doesn't envisage numerous schemes being launched at same time. One at a time is preference.

On the equity payment there is a minimum of 10k needed.

LA confirmed there is discussions between Docks Company & LDA re: residential development but very early days, no outcomes yet but agreed to provide update asap.

4) Housing capital & Affordable Housing Update.

Covered by report provided and info/ discussion above.

5) Acquisition Update:

Report circulated to members, Cllr Lyons, raised queries on specific development. Requested more details i.e., numbers, more comprehensive map, unit size. Raised some local concerns. Will be some consultations within GCC dept & area Cllrs,

Cllr Lyons asked if any plan for build/ timescales – must commence by 2024 to qualify for funding. Tender due out will have better timeline then. Any developments between now & Dec 2024, unless environmental concerns there will be no need for public consultation instead of full Part 8 process. LA rep confirmed a briefing note on process will be circulated to all members.

Cllr Mark Lohan queries:

- 1) Raised acquisition target, have 50 for 2023 – where are we up to?
- 2) Tenant in situ scheme query – at different stages of purchasing, target of 50 – some Landlord's engaged, confidant will reach & likely go over. If they do will go back to Dept.

Overall LA 24 tenants in situ houses, and the balance is vacant – high level info.

Cllr Cubbard:

- 1) Asked on EOI's, LA confirmed received a lot, 50% are vacant. Asked if enough staff to deal with – HGCC looking at pressure points in Housing dept. One scheme generated a lot of interest, mainly acquisitions, cost rental tenant in situ is a diff scheme, very limited take up – only 1 or 2. Also, queries on the trans boundary scheme,

Cllr Flaherty:

- 1) Regarding acquisitions are you getting rep from Landlord's that have sitting tenants for LA to purchase home and leave tenant there.

Cllr Hoare:

- 1) In terms of NTQ's – do we know what's happening with houses where tenants have had to leave due to NTQ.

LA confirmed purchased 7 homes with tenants in situ, considering 24 more.

Dept issues a restriction on properties and applicable to unit size, funding provided must include legal fees & works needed.

Some properties are older, also some are ones LA built themselves in the past.

Technical inspection done in house before acquisition considered. Then an independent inspection if it advances, then meet to discuss pro's/ cons of buying. Confirmed all minor works on the 7 already bought – GCC confirmed the tenants on the HWL. Also, the tenancy sustainment service would be involved with sitting tenants.

6) Strategic Plan for People with a Disability – Q1 2023 update

A good bit of detail, updating the SPC. Info in report what done in 2022 & 23. The funding info – grants awarded to date info, that LA must fund 20%/ 80% funding – 24 (confirm from report) across the 4 bands of disability, identified number on transfer list what have a disability, list of units in report, given details under SHIP & CALF schemes, universal design info.

Objectives at the end – Housing Agency asked for a meeting on City Development Plan in terms of provision of Housing for Disability.

Cllr Byrne – acknowledged work done by LA, especially Social Work dept in Housing.

7) Homelessness update.

Taskforce meeting recently. The measures at that meeting from Dept, lifted from the Circular since the moratorium ended.

Haven't seen a lot of first right to refusal, tenants outside the HWL criteria, only 2 EOIs extended income.

Figures in City decreased in March from 260 to 211, thinks it will decrease more in April.

Roughly 70 families, mostly couples. Have decreased too – worried about tourist season. Dept putting pressure on LA to reduce dependency on private rented homes.

Tenancy sustainment success.

121 NTQ's ongoing since October 2022 – haven't escalated but keeping an eye on it.

As it's a standing item, could look in more depth in Sept when we see if moratorium has had more affect.

Cllr O'Donnell – asked about advert he saw on building modular homes, GCC confirmed none being built.

Cllr Cheevers: what do we have in our stock at the moment for people on the verge of a NTQ

Cllr Hoare: thanks for the presentation, acknowledged lift of moratorium hasn't impacted too much.

Cllr Imelda Byrne – asked for more clarity on the breakdown of traveller families in homeless situation.

GCC confirmed we are challenged very much in terms of emergency accommodation, don't have a huge waiting list but trying to prioritise. Working very closely with COPE, Peter McVerry, Galway Simon.

Will have more info on preparation for the cold weather response plans soon.

Cllr Lyons – thanked everyone.

7) Amendments to Scheme of Letting Priorities 2017

LA gave details of proposed amendments which were circulated: proposed new wording on legal guardianship. There may be a guardian that could step in and take responsibility to help child stay in property until 18 and can have a tenancy.

New clause – emphasis that all applicants for succession, must be part of household and part of rent for at least 2 years,

Wants to remove section 12.04 – links to tenant purchase scheme, was introduced in 2018, joint tenancy where a child can become Joint Tenant to enable the parents to buy house. A Joint Tenant at that time only

had to be in situ for 1yr, now it's changed they must be in place for 10yrs so this point in scheme is incorrect due to national legislative changes.

Cllr O'Donnell: raised queries on the 10yrs, difficult for families with elderly parents who can't get a mortgage.

8) AOB: nothing raised as all agreed everything covered within meeting.

6) Socruithe déanta / Key Decisions Made:

Agenda item 7 – all agreed to progress proposed amendments.

7) Gníomhaíochtaí / Action(s) required from GCCN:

None

8) Dáta don chéad chruinniú eile / Date of next meeting :	29th September 2023
--	---------------------------------------

9) Moltaí breise / Any Other Comments