

**MINUTES OF JANUARY MONTHLY MEETING OF MUNICIPAL  
DISTRICT OF BIRR HELD IN BIRR CIVIC OFFICES, WILMER ROAD,  
BIRR AT 5.00 P.M. ON MONDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2020**

=====

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Cllrs E Dooley, P Ormond, J Carroll  
J Clendennen, C Claffey and J Leahy

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr Frank Heslin, Director of Services, Mr John Mitchell SEE, Ms Monica Cleary SEO Housing Services OCC, Mr John Cunningham SEE, Housing Services OCC, Ms D Molloy, Meetings Administrator.

**Adoption of Minutes of Meeting held in Committee on 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2019.**

On the proposal of Cllr Carroll and seconded by Cllr Leahy the Minutes of the Meeting in Committee of Birr MD held on 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2019 were adopted.

**Adoption of Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2019.**

On the proposal of Cllr Claffey and seconded by Cllr Ormond the Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Birr MD held on 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2019 were adopted.

**Housing Services Report**

Mr John Cunningham SEE and Ms Monica Cleary SEO Housing Services OCC presented the Housing Services Progress Report to the Members. The Members welcomed the programme and raised the following:

- The length of time it is taking to provide new build houses versus the number of people on housing waiting lists is there any way to speed up the process, also is there a need for the employment of consultants on these projects, can the works not be carried out in-house. The Members were advised that the process to secure funding and approval from the Dept. is a very complex one with many stages involved and this contributes to the length of time involved for provision of housing and the need for consultants to be involved.
- In relation to the works being carried out under the Housing Estate Management fund, could this work not be carried out earlier in the year instead of leaving it until winter, Mr Cunningham advised that it takes some time to identify and agree on the projects to be carried out but that it is the intention that it would be carried out earlier in the year and it was hoped that proposals would be brought to the February meeting.
- The Members asked for an exact number to be provided currently on the housing waiting list in the Birr area and the exact number of homeless persons in the area, they asked what provision is there for an out of hours' service for homeless cases once the Council offices are closed. The Members were advised that the Simon community operate an out of hours homeless service in the county.

- Any sign of the provision of an Affordable Housing Scheme and what has the take up been like with Rebuilding Ireland Affordable Loan Scheme and is there a definitive timeline on this scheme for approval, the Members were advised that there are no plans for the provision of an Affordable Housing Scheme at this time. The Members also enquired about the Repair to Lease Scheme and were advised that take up on this scheme in the county was very low. They were further advised that applications under the Affordable Loan Scheme are processed as quickly as possible.
- The Members complimented the Housing Staff on the quick turnarounds with the void houses being made available for reletting.
- The Members enquired about the waiting time for DPGs and the funding available, Mr Cunningham advised that the budget for the DPGs needs to increase as the cost of building and the scarcity of contractors is pushing the price of carrying out the works up.
- The Members welcomed the carrying out of inspections of housing stock while tenants are in situ and enquired if many complaints of anti-social behaviour are received and how are they dealt with. They were advised that the carrying out of inspections has been very successful, and that any complaints of anti-social behaviour are investigated and dealt with by the assigned personnel.

### **Any Other Business**

1. The Meeting was made aware that an application by Ferbane Food Hub for funding had been unsuccessful, this funding is essential for the operation of the facility and a new application would have to be made to try again but if this application is unsuccessful once again it would be very difficult for the facility to survive.
2. Mr Frank Heslin, DOS advised the Members that OCC were the owners of a large parcel of land known as Rectory Lands in Birr which had originally been purchased a number of years ago by Birr Town Council. He showed the Members a map of the area in question and informed that a masterplan was going to be prepared for the area. Mr Heslin further advised that part of the land is zoned housing and part is currently zoned community/institutional. He would like feedback from the Members in relation to same. The DOS then informed the Members that contact had been received from the HSE enquiring if it might be possible to locate the proposed Primary Care Centre for Birr on this land. The Members welcomed the plans overall and advised that a number of sporting organisations were also anxious to secure new facilities and perhaps these could be considered within the context of the plan. The Members agreed to give permission to the HSE to further explore the possibility of the Primary Care Centre being located at this site with no negative impact on businesses in the town. Mr Heslin advised that they would proceed with preparing the masterplan for the area and it would be brought before the March MD meeting for consideration.

The Members congratulated Cllr John Clendennen on his recent engagement and wished him all the best for the future.

The Meeting then concluded.

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

\_\_\_\_\_

**CATHAOIRLEACH**

**MEETINGS ADMINSTRATOR**

**DATE:**