

Minutes of The Housing Strategic Policy Committee of Wicklow County Council held in the Council Chamber, County Buildings, Wicklow Town, A67 FW96 on Wednesday 30th April 2025.

In Attendance: Cathaoirleach Graham Richmond, Cllr. Mark Barry, Cllr. Gerry O’Neill (Via Zoom), Cllr. Peter Stapleton, Cllr. Caroline Winestanley, Mr. John Douglas, Ms. Emma McMillen, Ms. Kathleen Kelleher, Mr. Paddy Mordaunt, Ms. Cici Zheng, Seán O’Callaghan, T. J. Foley, Ms. Caroline Fox, Ms. Lynda Healy, Ms. Helena Fallon, Mr. David Porter, Ms. Aideen Russell.

Apologies: Cllr. Paul O’Brien, Mr. Michael Nicholson, Mr. Joe Lane, Mr. Marc Devereux

Cathaoirleach Richmond opened the April meeting of The Housing Strategic Policy Committee and welcomed all present.

1. To confirm and sign minutes of The Housing Strategic Policy Committee of Wicklow County Council dated 26th February 2025.

It was proposed by Ms. Kathleen Kelleher, seconded by Ms. Emma McMillen and unanimously agreed to confirm and sign the minutes of The Housing Strategic Policy Committee of Wicklow County Council dated 26th February 2024.

2. Matters Arising - None

3. Housing – Capital Delivery

Following on from the presentation on the Part V process from David Porter Administrative Officer Transportation & Infrastructure Delivery, Ms. Debbie Quinn and Mr. Paul Driver presented on Wicklow County Council’s Affordable Housing Schemes.

Ms. Quinn gave an informative presentation explaining the Affordable Housing Scheme which makes homes available at a reduced price for first time buyers and fresh start applicants. Ms. Quinn gave a positive view on the Affordable Housing Scheme but advised that funding the scheme using The Affordable Housing Fund process can prove time consuming. Ms. Quinn listed the eligibility criteria for the scheme and explained how the scheme is advertised on an online portal and what is needed to apply. Ms. Quinn explained that when the total of eligible applicants exceed the number of dwellings available, accommodation need and the receipt date of the application can be taken into consideration. Examples of pricing were shown and Ms. Quinn explained the Help to Buy Scheme which runs in conjunction with the Affordable Housing Scheme. Ms. Quinn finished the presentation with the challenges experienced by Wicklow County Council to date with the Affordable Housing Scheme.

Mr. Paul Driver, Wicklow County Council’s Executive Quantity Surveyor, delved deeper into the figures relating to the scheme, explaining subsidy limits, showing house sale data by Eircode in the county, indicative construction costs and affordable analysis. Mr. Driver also explained the steps in the application for the Affordable Housing Fund stating the approval timeframe is approximately 6 months. Mr. Driver also finished his presentation with the challenges Wicklow County Council has experienced to date regarding the financial elements.

Following a discussion held regarding the challenges presented and a suggestion by Mr. John Douglas to contact The Department regarding the challenges, it was agreed by all, that Ms. Lynda

Healy write to The Department on behalf of The Housing Strategic Policy Committee highlighting all challenges.

4. Housing - Services – General Update

Ms. Fox gave a general update on Housing Services. Advising that a new Debt Management Team is being set up which should help to address the €3,066,687.00 rent arrears on the 5034 tenancies occupied at the end of February 2025. Ms. Fox informed the SPC Members that the maintenance fund for Wicklow County Council's Social Housing Stock, €3million, approximately €600.00 per house, is hugely inadequate to maintain the stock. Ms. Fox advised that re-lets / voids will be discussed in detail at a future SPC meeting.

5. Housing – Integration

As Mr. Devereux was unable to attend the meeting an extract from the CE report with numbers that LAIT and CIF interact with was emailed to SPC Members.

6. Correspondence – None.

7. Any other business:

Cllr. Mark Barry voiced the continuing concerns since 2017 regarding Farrankelly Close, Delgany, Co. Wicklow. Cllr. Barry listed defects that have been reported to him, remedial works, leaks, sub-standard windows & doors, damp and mould. Cllr. Barry stated that a full stock inspection was carried out in 2021 but reported works never progressed.

Ms. Fox advised Cllr. Barry and the SPC Members that Wicklow County Council are aware of the issues in Farrankelly grove, that she herself attended a site visit with the Mr. Pat Clarke, Senior Executive Engineer, recently and a full stock inspection is planned to ascertain the extent of work needed and what investment is required. Ms. Fox agreed to report back with details of the new report over the coming weeks.

8. Date of next meeting.

The next Housing Strategic Policy Committee meeting of Wicklow County Council will be held on Wednesday, 25th June 2025 at 2:30pm.

There being no other business, Cathaoirleach Graham Richmond, concluded the meeting.

Signed: _____
CATHAOIRLEACH, Cllr. Graham Richmond

Dated: _____