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Minutes of Meeting of Housing, Community and Culture Strategic Policy Committee held in via MS Teams on Wednesday, 15 February 2023.

Members Present:

Councillor Thomas Mulligan (Cathaoirleach)
Marie Eames McGowan
Aodh Flynn
Councillor Frank Dolan
Councillor Paddy O'Rourke
Councillor Padraig Fallon

Officials Present:

Mary Quinn, Director of Services, Housing, Corporate Services, Community and Cultural Services
Suzanne Duffy, SEO Corporate Services
Kieran Brett, Meetings Administrator
Susan Barry, Community Development
Ray Flynn, Assistant Staff Officer

Apologies:

Sean O'Reilly
Oluwakemi Aina Fawehinmi
Councillor Mary Bohan
Councillor Enda Stenson

1 Adoption of Minutes

Cllr Padraig Fallon requested an amendment to the minutes in relation to the item – Tenant Purchase Scheme. He requested that the minutes reflect that his support for the exclusion of new builds from the Tenant Purchase Scheme applies for five years after the new builds are constructed.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr Padraig Fallon
SECONDED by Cllr Sean McDermott

It was **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of 30th November 2022 with amendment as proposed by Cllr Fallon.

2 Healthy Leitrim Presentation

Ms Lorraine Mulvey, Healthy County Co-Ordinator, gave a presentation on “Healthy Ireland Fund 2023-2025 Local Strategy for Leitrim County Council” to the members. A copy of the presentation appears as **Appendix 1** to the minutes of this meeting.

The presentation outlines the two main goals of the strategy, which are:

- Increase in average number of remaining years that persons of a certain age can expect to live without disability.
- Increase in breastfeeding % rates at first Public Health Nurse visit and at the 3-month

follow up visit.

Ms. Mulvey also informed members of a community event for over-55s taking place on March 23, 2023, in the Bee Park Resource Centre Manorhamilton. There will be a variety of exhibitors and stakeholder groups at the event. It will seek to promote healthy lifestyle, provide crime prevention advice, and connect people with local resources.

Cllr. Paddy O Rourke praised the initiatives but expressed concern about how the strategy and events would be effectively communicated to the target audience, particularly those attending day-care facilities.

Ms Mulvey informed members that these initiatives are being worked on in conjunction with Leitrim Development Company which run five day care facilities, and other facilities are being directly informed of all events and initiatives. Ms Mulvey is also working with Ms Melissa Kelly, Older Persons Manger, HSE, to help ensure effective communication of initiatives and events to the appropriate persons. There will also be an official launch of the strategy in the county shortly, which will also help raise awareness.

Cllr Padraig Fallon outlined his support for the strategy and events outlined. He also offered to assist with publicity of the Manorhamilton event which was welcomed by Ms Mulvey.

Cllr Thomas Mulligan queried if the Breast Feeding Co-ordinator based in Mohill will have responsibility for the entire county. Ms Mulvey confirmed this and that they will be based in the Family Resource Centre in Mohill and will have a county wide remit.

Cllr Thomas Mulligan informed members of the issue of elderly single men not returning to socializing following the COVID-19 restrictions, and that this cohort should be appropriately targeted with older persons' strategies and kept informed of any upcoming events. Ms Mulvey stated that she is aware of the issue and will continue working with Leitrim Calling to help prevent isolation in older persons and to encourage socialisation.

3 Consider SPC Work Programme for 2023

Ms Mary Quinn, Director of Services, outlined the suggested policy areas for consideration under the SPC Work Programme 2023 to members. A copy of the Draft Work Programme appears as **Appendix 2** to the minutes of this meeting.

Ms Quinn advised that the SPC Work Programme can be reviewed during the year if necessary.

4 Love Where You Live Awards 2023

Ms. Susan Barry, Community Development, gave the members an update on the "Love Where you Live 2023" awards.

The event is an annual competition run jointly by Leitrim County Council and Leitrim PPN to promote sustainable communities where people work together to make their community

the best place to live, and to recognise and nurture the unique environment and heritage where they live.

There are six categories of awards in total:

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|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Cleaner & Greener: | sponsored by Leitrim County Council |
| 2. Primary Schools: | sponsored by Leitrim County Council |
| 3. Best Kept Estates: | sponsored by Leitrim County Council |
| 4. Heritage Project: | sponsored by Leitrim County Council |
| 5. Social Inclusion: | sponsored by Leitrim PPN |
| 6. Community Resilience: | sponsored by Leitrim PPN |

There will be a separate competition held for each Municipal District. Ms. Barry informed members that Éanna Ní Lamhna is expected to return as a judge for this year's competitions.

Cllr Mulligan welcomed the awards and outlined how they help motivate community groups.

5 Housing

Ms. Mary Quinn, Director of Services, gave an overview of the 'Homeless Action Plan North-West Region (2023-2028)'. A copy of the plan is attached as **Appendix 3** to the minutes of this meeting.

The plan was developed as a regional framework between Sligo County Council, Leitrim County Council and Donegal County Council with Sligo County Council designated as the lead authority.

There was a workshop with the Leitrim Homeless Action Team (HAT) during the preparation of the plan. Leitrim HAT consists of representatives from:

- Leitrim County Council
- HSE
- An Garda Síochána
- North West Simon Community
- Túsla
- Department of Social Protection

Leitrim HAT meets monthly to discuss and review cases of homelessness pertaining to County Leitrim. As a result of the workshop feedback was provided on what worked well from the previous action plan and what could be improved going forward.

The new plan has been signed off on by the North West Joint Housing Consultative Forum and the Homelessness Management Team.

Over the past five years in County Leitrim, 10.1% of housing allocations were to homeless presentations. During 2022, Leitrim County Council responded to 22 presentations of homelessness and provided temporary emergency accommodation on 28 occasions.

Despite the moratorium on evictions, there was an upsurge in people seeking temporary emergency accommodation in the final quarter of 2022.

The HSE has provided funding to Sofia Housing Association to provide a Mental Health Tenant Sustainment Officer for the Mayo and Leitrim Area to help people live independently.

Leitrim County Council are tendering for a Resettlement and Tenancy Support Service Provider to support high need individuals/households to retain their tenancies.

Cllr Thomas Mulligan queried whether there are plans to provide a more permanent facility to provide accommodation for homeless presentations in County Leitrim.

Ms. Mary Quinn stated that Leitrim County Council will continue to work with Sligo County Council for the provision of some temporary emergency accommodation, however the majority of County Leitrim's need for temporary emergency accommodation is met by the private market. Ms. Quinn continued that for a permanent facility to be established, an NGO or Voluntary Body would be required to identify the need and manage any facility that would be established.

Aodh Flynn stated that HSE has moved people that need support from large institutions to community housing and queried whether these people are continuing to receive the support that they need.

Ms. Mary Quinn stated that the Homeless Action Team including the HSE, continues to provide support to those identified individuals. Leitrim County Council also reports to a Housing Disability Steering Group on a quarterly basis on the number of housing allocations made to people with disabilities, and the report also outlines the level of HSE support that was available to these allocations.

6 Playground Policy

Ms. Mary Quinn, Director of Services, outlined the proposed amendment to Leitrim County Council's Playground Policy to address the issue of community groups inability to meet funding and insurance requirements. Ms. Quinn stated that these amendments will also be presented before the plenary Council's March meeting.

Ms. Quinn outlined that the policy now adds that community groups who seek funding for playgrounds must consider the operation, maintenance, and management of the facility to ensure the continued safe use of the playground. The new amendment also outlines how Leitrim County Council may consider supporting a community group in procuring insurance for a new playground, subject to a Memorandum of Understanding being put in place.

Cllr Paddy O'Rourke stated that these amendments are a welcome addition to the policy.

7 Community Recognition Fund 2023

Ms. Mary Quinn, Director of Services, informed members of the newly announced Community Recognition Fund 2023. The Fund aims to support the development of community infrastructure and facilities in recognition of the contribution being made by communities across the country in welcoming and hosting significant numbers of arrivals from Ukraine and other countries.

Leitrim County Council received an allocation of approximately €2.2 million which, includes a level of funding for the administration of the fund.

Ms. Quinn stated that a call for Expression of Interests will be announced shortly, and that applications have to be submitted to Department of Rural and Community Development by mid-March. It is also a condition of the fund that 60% of the funding is spent by November 2023, so projects of a significant capital nature and with the ability to commence immediately will be in a more favourable position to receive funding.

Cllr Thomas Mulligan queried whether the funding was open to sporting organisations. Ms Quinn stated that the funding is open to sporting organisations and that the funding overall is very broad in terms of eligible projects.

Cllr Paddy O'Rourke stated that ideally various groups in communities would come together and submit one significant and substantial project for an area.

8 Summary of issues for the Corporate Policy Group

Ms Mary Quinn, Director of Services, summarised the items from this meeting for presentation to the Corporate Policy Group and plenary Council Meeting.

9 Date and Time of the Next Meeting

It was agreed the next meeting of the Housing, Cultural & Community SPC is scheduled for 17th May 2023 at 10am.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

SIGNED: _____
Councillor Thomas Mulligan
Chairperson

SIGNED: _____
Kieran Brett
Meetings Administrator
Housing, Community and
Culture Strategic Policy
Committee

DATE: Tuesday, 23 May 2023

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