

**Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Municipal District of Bray held
Via Zoom on Thursday
21st April 2022 at 4.30 p.m.**

Present:

**Councillor Rory O'Connor
Councillor Anne Ferris
Councillor Grace McManus
Councillor Dermot O'Brien
Councillor Aoife Flynn Kennedy
Councillor Melanie Corrigan
Councillor Joe Behan,**

Also present:

**Ms Lorraine Gallagher, District Manager
Ms Linda Healy, District Administrator
Helena Fallon, Senior Executive Engineer, Housing
Gillian Power, Senior Executive Engineer, Housing
Stephen Fox, Executive Engineer, Bray MD
Liam Bourke, Senior Executive Engineer, Bray MD**

Apologies: **Councillor Erica Doyle**

Cathaoirleach Aoife Flynn Kennedy commenced the meeting at 4.30pm. She welcomed all in attendance which included Council Officials, Municipal District Members, members of the public and members of the media. She outlined the procedures that must be adhered to in accordance with the standing orders for Bray Municipal District, they are as follows

- Members of the public and media may be present at a remote meeting of Bray Municipal District.
- Attendees must comply with Bray Municipal District Standing Orders and Supplementary Standing Orders to Regulate Remote Meetings.
- Members of the media and public shall give prior notice of a request to join an online meeting of Bray Municipal District.
- Requests must be emailed to the District Administrator at braymd@wicklowcoco.ie no later than 12 noon on the day of the meeting. A name and email address is required.
- The link to the meeting is for the recipient only and must not be forwarded on to any other person(s).
- Attendees must maintain silence and observe any directions given by the Cathaoirleach or by an official of the Council. Mics must be kept on mute at all times.

- Members of the public and the media do not have the right to speak, any interruptions or endeavours to interrupt will result in the remote connection being terminated.
- No other recording of the meeting and its proceedings by any person in attendance (elected members, media or members of the public) is permitted.

1. To discuss Housing Re-lets County Wicklow.

A Special Meeting of the Municipal District of Bray took place on Thursday 21st April 2022 regarding the above item on the agenda.

A member advised that the pilot policy for re-lets had previously been circulated to all elected members.

The pilot scheme is being proposed to deal with the limited funding for the high number of re-lets expected in the coming year.

Members welcomed the opportunity to discuss the issue further.

Members concerns included:

- How will the project work in practice, average re-let times and increased costs and engagement with the Department of Housing re funding.
- There are 50 vacant properties in Bray MD, questions were raised re the lack of funding available.
- What happens if the work involved may be more than a tenant had anticipated.
- What standard do housing officials consider suitable.
- Councillors don't want to see tenants penalised if they are not in a position to carry out works necessary under the scheme.
- Rent assessment, would it be less under the scheme
- Will there be a risk assessment for the scheme
- Is there a minimum standard for properties before they are included in the scheme
- What considerations are in place for dealing with vulnerable persons
- If some properties could be sold in order to finance the refurbishment of other vacant properties.

- Can tenants view the property before making a decision
- Who will be carrying out the inspections
- Will there be documenting of the inspections

Ms Helena Fallon, Senior Executive Engineer housing, informed members that this was a choice based scheme, if a prospective tenant turns down the offer of choice based let this would not be put down as a refusal. The tenant can wait to be offered the next new or renovated property, whichever is next available. This is why they chose to offer the choice based lets to people on the top of the housing list.

Ms Fallon informed members that increase in costs were down to a perfect storm of location, proximity to Dublin, 25% increase in construction costs globally due to inflation, lack of contractors and the number of re-let for this year has increased by 50%

She advised that all properties would be structurally sound and of a good and safe standard, any issues such as heating, electrical & plumbing would be listed for repair and not for the tenant to address. It would be just cosmetic works that wouldn't be carried out. She advised that previously for re-lets the property used to be painted, all flooring was removed and the kitchens were replaced, properties were brought to almost new standard. Now some re-lets may need painting, kitchens will be functional but not new.

Ms Fallon agreed that a photographic record of the properties would be taken as part of the inspection process

She informed members that there was no mechanism for a different rent assessment under the scheme.

She advised that there were currently no plans to sell any of the properties and that they were still hoping to get funding for most of the remaining re-lets.

Staff from Bray Municipal District will be carrying out the assessments on the properties available for choice based lets and prospective tenants will have the opportunity to view the properties prior to making a decision on whether to accept or decline them.

This concluded the meeting.

Signed:

CATHAOIRLEACH

Signed:

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

Dated:
