



Title of Report:	Correspondence
Committee Report Submitted To:	Council Meeting
Date of Meeting:	4 January 2022
For Decision or For Information	For Decision

Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-2025)	
Strategic Theme	Cohesive Leadership
Outcome	Council operates as one effective and efficient corporate unit with a common purpose and culture
Lead Officer	Director of Corporate Services

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	Nil
Included in Current Year Estimates	N/A
Capital/Revenue	
Code	
Staffing Costs	

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to present correspondence for Members' consideration.

2.0 The following are listed:

2.1 Margaret Kelly, Ombudsman, Northern Ireland Public Service Ombudsman (correspondence dated 17th December 2021) (copy attached)

Correspondence from Ombudsman Margaret Kelly, following their recent public complaints handling consultation - Extract correspondence below for Council consideration.

“Currently all responses are being carefully analysed. Following this analysis, I intend to publish a report of the findings of the consultation. Alongside the report, it is also my intention to publish the individual responses received from all organisations and public bodies. I am satisfied that no contractual or confidentiality restrictions apply in regard to the publication of public bodies’ consultation responses.

*If you or your organisation have any concerns regarding the publication of your organisation’s response, please contact NIPSO’s Head of Communications, Andrew Ruston, no later than **12 noon on Friday 14 January 2022**. In the event that no response is received NIPSO will assume that you have no objection to the publication of your organisation’s response”.*

2.2 Alison McCullagh, Chief Executive, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council (correspondence dated 17th December 2021) (copy attached)

To request that Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council consider making representation to the Department for Communities and the Department for Economy to request these departments match funding, as they have done historically, to facilitate the continuation of European Social Funded projects in 2022/2023.

2.3 Northern Ireland Housing Council (correspondence dated 9th December 2021) (copy attached)

The Housing Council November bulletin dated 9th December 2021 and 485th Meeting of the Northern Ireland Housing Council minutes.

3.0 It is recommended that Council consider the correspondence.

NIPSO PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON A STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES AND MODEL COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURES

17 December 2021

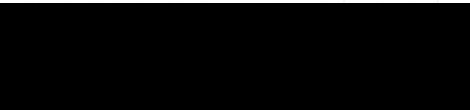
As you are aware, my Office recently conducted a public consultation on complaints handling. We consulted on three documents: a draft Statement of Principles; a Model Complaints Handling Procedure (MCHP); and the approach my Office intends to take in the implementation of MCHPs across the public sector. The consultation ran from 10 June 2021 until 30 September 2021.

I would like to thank you for taking the time to respond to the consultation. The responses received will greatly assist NIPSO staff in our complaints standards role and with the implementation of MCHPs across the public sector in Northern Ireland.

Currently all responses are being carefully analysed. Following this analysis, I intend to publish a report of the findings of the consultation. Alongside the report, it is also my intention to publish the individual responses received from all organisations and public bodies. I am satisfied that no contractual or confidentiality restrictions apply in regard to the publication of public bodies' consultation responses.

If you or your organisation have any concerns regarding the publication of your organisation's response, please contact NIPSO's Head of Communications, Andrew Ruston, no later than **12 noon on Friday 14 January 2022**. In the event that no response is received NIPSO will assume that you have no objection to the publication of your organisation's response.

Kind Regards



Margaret Kelly
Ombudsman

Alison McCullagh
Chief Executive



Fermanagh & Omagh
District Council
Comhairle Ceantair
Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí

Our Ref: Democratic Services

Date: 17 December 2021

Email: democratic.services@fermanaghomagh.com

Mr David Jackson
Chief Executive
Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council
66 Portstewart Road
COLERAINE
BT52 1EY

Dear Mr Jackson

Re: The Workspace Group – European Social Fund Match Funding

At the Council's Regeneration and Community Committee meeting on 14 December 2021 our Council considered correspondence received from The Workspace Group regarding European Social Fund Match Funding.

The Council has made representation to the Department for Communities and the Department for the Economy to request these Departments to continue to provide match funding, as they have done historically, to facilitate the continuation of European Social Funded projects in 2022/23.

Members asked that I write to you to encourage your Council to make similar representations to these departments on behalf of the Workspace Group.

The Council trusts that you will give due consideration to this request.

Yours sincerely

Alison McCullagh
Chief Executive



CHAIR
Councillor Anne-Marie Fitzgerald

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DECEMBER HOUSING COUNCIL BULLETIN

The Northern Ireland Housing Council met on Thursday, 9th December 2021 at 10.00 am via Conference Call.

For Information, a report of the attendance is undernoted:-

Present by Video Conferencing

Anne-Marie Fitzgerald	Fermanagh & Omagh District (Chair)
Mark Cooper	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough (Vice Chair)
John Finlay	Causeway Coast & Glens Borough
Nick Mathison	Ards & North Down Borough
Jim Speers	Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough
Michelle Kelly	Belfast City
Allan Bresland	Derry City & Strabane District
Amanda Grehan	Lisburn & Castlereagh City
Tommy Nicholl	Mid & East Antrim Borough
Mickey Ruane	Newry, Mourne & Down District

Apologies

Catherine Elattar	Mid Ulster Borough Council
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Discussions on the undernoted matters took place as follows:-

1. Update from the Department of Communities on the Housing Top Issues.
A summary of the current / emerging issues are outlined **as follows**:-
 - Social Newbuild starts
 - Co-ownership
 - Programme for Social Reform
 - Fundamental Review of Social Housing Allocations Policy
 - Reclassification of Northern Ireland Social Housing Providers
 - Supporting People Delivery Strategy
 - Homelessness Strategy
 - Regulation of the Private Rented Sector
 - Increasing Housing Supply
 - Affordable Warmth Scheme
 - NIHE Rent Increase
 - ERDF Investment for Growth and Jobs Programme 2014 -2020
 - Housing Executive historical debt and exclusion from having to pay Corporation Tax

Continued.....

- Programme for Government (PfG) Outcomes Framework
 - Long term rent trajectory
 - Affordability of social rents
2. Members received a Presentation by the Housing Executive's Sustainable Development Manager on Reducing the impacts of Climate Change.

Once the minutes of the meeting are ratified at the January Meeting, they can be accessed on the Housing Council website: www.nihousingcouncil.org

The next Housing Council Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 13th January 2022 at 10.00 am via conference call.

Should you require any further information or have any questions regarding the content.

Contacts

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Minutes of the 485th Meeting
of the Northern Ireland Housing Council held on
Thursday 11th November 2021 at 9.00 am via Zoom

Present:

Anne-Marie Fitzgerald	Fermanagh & Omagh District (Chair)
Nick Mathison	Ards & North Down Borough
Jim Speers	Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough
Michelle Kelly	Belfast City
Allan Bresland	Derry City & Strabane District
Amanda Grehan	Lisburn & Castlereagh City
Tommy Nicholl	Mid & East Antrim Borough

In Attendance:

Paul Price	Department for Communities
David Polley	Department for Communities
Grainia Long	Chief Executive, Housing Executive
David Moore	Director of Corporate Services, Housing Executive
Leeann Vincent	Assistant Director of Asset Management, Housing Executive
Kelly Cameron	Secretary (Housing Executive Secretariat)

Apologies:

Mark Cooper	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough (Vice Chair)
John Finlay	Causeway Coast & Glens Borough
Catherine Elattar	Mid Ulster Borough
Mickey Ruane	Newry, Mourne & Down District

1.0	<p><u>Welcome</u></p> <p>The Chair welcomed Paul Price and David Polley from the Department for Communities and Grainia Long, David Moore and Leeann Vincent from the Housing Executive.</p>	
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	<p>It was noted that Alderman John Finlay was unwell and the Secretary was asked to pass on Members good wishes.</p>	Secretary
2.0	<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>None.</p>	
3.0	<p><u>To adopt the Minutes of the 484th Housing Council Meeting held on Thursday, 14th October 2021</u></p> <p>It was proposed by Alderman A Grehan, seconded by Alderman J Speers and resolved, that the Minutes of the 484th Meeting of the Housing Council held on Thursday 14th October 2021 be approved and signed by the Chair.</p>	
4.0	<p><u>Matters Arising</u></p>	All Members
4.1	<p><u>Page 2 Item 4.1 – Planned Maintenance Scheme</u></p> <p>It was noted that Alderman Grehan asked Leeann Vincent to review several planned maintenance schemes within her local area and report back on the outcome.</p>	
4.2	<p><u>Page 5 Item 8.0 – Intermediate Rent Consultation (previously circulated)</u></p> <p>Members were reminded that they had received a copy of the Intermediate Rent Consultation Report and were asked that if you have any comments or views on this Report to pass to the Secretary by the beginning December, in order for her to compile a composite response.</p>	
4.3	<p><u>Page 6 Item 10.0 – Housing Executive’s Key Staff Contacts</u></p> <p>As circulated.</p>	

<p>4.4</p>	<p><u>Members Queries</u></p> <p>Members had received responses to their queries, as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alderman Jim Speers – Response received by DfC on Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Council’s on the delivery of the Affordable Warmth Scheme 	
<p>5.0</p>	<p><u>Forward Workplan</u></p> <p>The Paper was noted.</p>	<p>Secretary</p>
<p>6.0</p>	<p><u>Update by the Grainia Long Chief Executive on the Housing Executive’s business</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JMC Mechanical and Construction Ltd <p>Leeann Vincent gave an update on the current position, following the formal notice that JMC Mechanical and Construction Ltd who had entered administration and an administrator had been appointed.</p> <p>Ms Vincent gave an update on the Housing Executive’s immediate priority was to ensure minimal disruption to services for tenants and those planned maintenance improvement works which are currently on site. She explained that contingency arrangements were put in place regarding these services and the Housing Executive are engaging with new contractors to ensure a hand over of the repairs contracts and planned maintenance work.</p> <p>Councillor Kelly referred to possible delays in window replacements in Tullycarnet and undertook to provide Ms Vincent with further details.</p>	<p>M Kelly</p>

Grainia Long then briefed Members on the Housing Executive's business, under the headings, as follows:

- Temporary Accommodation / Single Lets

Members expressed their concerns at the sub-standard accommodation in which some private landlords are providing and reiterated their preference to using this sector would be as a last resort.

- COVID-19 Update

Members welcomed the Housing Executive's preparations for a phased and controlled return to the workplace, in particular the increase of the interaction with tenants, but fully appreciate the complex issues with home visits etc.

- Corporate Plan 2022-2025
- Stakeholder Engagement / Mapping, Press and Public Affairs
- Housing Investment Plans (HIP's)
- Update on the Sustainable Development Strategy and COP 26

It was noted that European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Retrofit Thermal Improvement Programme has launched

Tranche 3, consisting of 593 dwellings, and will shortly be issued for tender. The end state is approx. 1900 dwellings retrofitted by Sept 2023.

Ms Long assured Members that due to several factors impacting the delivery, it is hoped to deliver, as many as possible of the 1900 dwellings by 2023

- Housing Executive Revitalisation (HER)
- Supporting People Bank Scheme
- Department of Justice - Plans to bring forward legislative change via consolidated Hate Crime Legislation in New Mandate
- DfC - Social Housing "No Eviction" agreement for COVID-19 related arrears

	<p>The Chair thanked Ms Long and Ms Vincent for a very informative update.</p> <p>Leeann Vincent then left the Meeting at 9.20 am</p>	
<p>7.0</p>	<p><u>Housing Executive’s Corporate & Business Plan</u></p> <p>David Moore, the Housing Executive’s Director of Corporate Services consulted the Housing Council, as key stakeholders on the work to develop a new a three year Corporate Plan for 2022/23 – 2024/25.</p> <p>Members noted some of the key themes which will have a significant influence the Corporate Plan, as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Change and Sustainable Development; • COVID Recovery; • Housing Supply; • Housing-Led Regeneration; • Skills and Learning • Revitalisation of the Housing Executive <p>Members welcomed the focus of climate change and sustainable development and appreciated that this is going to require a significant level of funding to deliver the changes that are required and where would these resources be sourced from.</p> <p>It was noted that in terms of revitalisation, one of the key elements is to improve the Housing Executive stock, in terms of efficiency and work is ongoing on the total cost of the delivery of these changes. Also, giving the Housing Executive the powers to borrow would enable the Housing Executive to include decarbonisation within their stock.</p> <p>It was recognised that capital funding will be required from the Government to meet these challenges.</p> <p>It was noted that the Department for Communities would bid for the retrofitting, not just for social housing sector and to provide evidence of the cost of the delivery.</p>	

	<p>Members raised the issue of skills within the Province to carry out this work, which is a huge challenge and investment in skills to have firms capable and equipped to deliver the work.</p> <p>It was noted that a Presentation on Climate Change has been arranged for the December Meeting.</p> <p>The Housing Executive welcomed Members feedback, in order to draft the new Corporate Plan for formal consultation expected before March 2022.</p> <p>The Chair thanked David Moore for his comprehensive presentation and looked forward to receiving the Plan for consultation in the New Year.</p>	Secretary
8.0	<p><u>Housing Executive's Scheme Starts October 2021</u></p> <p>Members noted the report as circulated.</p>	
9.0	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p>	
9.1	<p><u>Housing Executive Policy on pets permitted in properties</u></p> <p>At the request by the Chair, Ms Long undertook to provide information regarding the Housing Executive's policy on the number of pets tenants are permitted to keep at their properties.</p>	G Long
10.0	<p><u>Date and Venue of Next Meeting</u></p> <p>It was agreed that at the Meeting scheduled for Thursday, 9th December at 10 am via Zoom.</p>	Secretary

The Meeting concluded at 10.15 am.