



**Minutes of the 490<sup>th</sup> Meeting  
of the Northern Ireland Housing Council held on  
Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2022 at 10 am via Zoom**

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**Present**

Anne-Marie Fitzgerald	Fermanagh & Omagh District (Chair)
Mark Cooper	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough (Vice Chair)
Jim Speers	Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough
Michelle Kelly	Belfast City (Joined at 10.30 am)
Allan Bresland	Derry & Strabane Borough
Tommy Nicholl	Mid & East Antrim Borough

**In Attendance:**

Paul Price	Director of Social Housing Policy & Oversight, Department for Communities
David Polley	Director, Housing Supply Policy, Department for Communities
Catherine McFarland	Director of Finance, Audit & Assuranc, NIHE (Joined at 10.30 am)
Jennifer Hawthorne	Interim Director of Housing Services , (NIHE)
Eamon Jones	Risk, Governance & Business Continuity Planning Manager (Observer) (NIHE)
Kelly Cameron	Secretary (NIHE Secretariat)

**Apologies:**

John Finlay	Causeway Coast & Glens Borough
Amanda Grehan	Lisburn & Castlereagh City
Catherine Elattar	Mid Ulster Borough
Grainia Long	Chief Executive, NIHE

1.0	<p><b><u>Welcome</u></b></p> <p>The Chair welcomed Paul Price and David Polley, Jennifer Hawthorne and Eamon Jones from the Housing Executive. Catherine McFarland would also be joining the Meeting shortly.</p> <p><b><u>NOTED:</u></b> the Secretary undertook to convey Members' wishes for a speedy recovery to Alderman Finlay.</p> <p><b><u>NOTED:</u></b> Congratulations were extended to Nick Mathison (Ards &amp; North Down Borough Council) who was successfully elected to the Northern Ireland Assembly. The Secretary undertook to liaise with the Council on his replacement.</p>	Secretary  Secretary
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<p><b>2.0</b></p>	<p><b><u>Declarations of Interest</u></b></p> <p>No declarations were received.</p>	
<p><b>3.0</b></p>	<p><b>To adopt the Minutes of the 489<sup>th</sup> Housing Council Meeting held on Thursday, 10<sup>th</sup> March 2022</b></p> <p>It was proposed by Alderman Bresland and seconded by Alderman Speers and resolved, that the Minutes of the 489<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Housing Council held on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2022 be approved and signed by the Chair.</p>	<p><b>Chair</b></p>
<p><b>4.0</b></p>	<p><b><u>Matters Arising</u></b></p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>	
<p><b>5.0</b></p>	<p><b><u>Forward Workplan</u></b></p> <p>Councillor Mark Cooper informed Members that the HAPPI principles scheme in Monkstown has now been completed and suggested a visit by the Housing Council.</p> <p><b><u>AGREED:</u></b> the Secretary to liaise with the relevant contacts to progress arrangements for the above visit.</p> <p>The forward workplan was noted.</p>	<p><b>M Cooper/ Secretary</b></p>

6.0

### **Update by the Department on the Department for Communities Housing Top Issues**

Paul Price and David Polley gave an update of changes under the specific headings on the Department for Communities (DfC) Housing Issues:-

- Social Housing Development Programme – Newbuild Starts

Disappointment was expressed that the target was not met, 1,713 units against the target of 1,900 units, resulting in an underspend of £6.9m.

Mr Price explained highlighted the impact of schemes lost within the last week of the financial year due to planning / procurement issues, including the added difficulties associated with an annual budget, which could not rollover. The Department has no leverage for Housing Associations to submit schemes earlier in the year. He added that the Department are working on proposals to eliminate these obstacles and also working on multi annual budgets.

**NOTED:** Mr Price undertook to provide a breakdown of the Social Housing Development Programme (SHDP) scheme losses that did not make the deadline at the end of the financial year 2022.

- Co-ownership
- Programme for Social Reform
- Fundamental Review of Social Housing Allocations Policy

Concern was expressed that the funding allocation required to implement the proposals has not yet been allocated to proceed.

- 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

Mr Price explained that the original programme of works is under pressure to meet the deadline by 2023, due to several factors, and that a request has been made to the Department for Economy (DfE) for a possible extension to the deadline.

**NOTED:** Members requested a detailed report on the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), outlining progress to date and the proposed schedule to the end of 2023.

P Price

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Executive historical debt and exclusion from having to pay Corporation Tax</li> <li>• Programme for Government (PfG) Outcomes Framework</li> <li>• Long term rent trajectory</li> <li>• Affordability of social rents</li> <li>• Update on the Ukraine Refugee Scheme</li> </ul> <p><i>Catherine McFarland and Michelle Kelly joined the meeting.</i></p> <p>Councillor Cooper reinforced the need for collaboration with local Councils in relation to the Ukraine Refugee Scheme. Mr Price confirmed Council engagement adding that Councils are also part of the wraparound support working group, which is a sub-group of the Operational Planning Group.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> Paul Price undertook to provide an account of the role of local Councils within the Ukraine Resettlement Programme arrangements.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed and thanked the DfC representatives for their comprehensive briefing.</p>	<p><b>P Price</b></p>
<p><b>7.0</b></p>	<p><b>Update on the Housing Executive’s Budget 2022/23 and the year ahead</b></p> <p>Catherine McFarland, Director of Finance Audit &amp; Assurance gave an update on the Housing Executive’s Budget 2022/23 and the year ahead.</p> <p>It was explained that the Housing Executive had a draft 3 year budget which was withdrawn and remain in an annual budget process for 2022/23. Mrs McFarland highlighted the current financial position and the priorities to be delivered for the coming year.</p> <p>Members received a detailed breakdown of allocated monies received and how the resources will be allocated.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> Councillor Cooper requested a breakdown of the £260m for 2022/23 landlord spend by Council areas.</p> <p>Mrs McFarland explained that all of the programmes to be delivered for the forthcoming year around the areas. She added that the Housing Investment Programme is delivered annually to each Council which provides in detail the planned schemes for each area.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Mrs McFarland for a very comprehensive presentation.</p>	<p><b>Secretary</b></p>

<p><b>8.0</b></p>	<p><b>Social Housing Development Programme (SHDP) Year End 2021-2022</b></p> <p>Members noted the Report.</p>	
<p><b>9.0</b></p>	<p><b><u>Housing Starts February 2022</u></b></p> <p>Members noted the Report.</p>	
<p><b>10.0</b></p> <p><b>10.1</b></p> <p><b>10.2</b></p> <p><b>10.3</b></p> <p><b>10.4</b></p>	<p><b><u>Any Other Business</u></b></p> <p><b>Chartered Institute of Housing All Ireland Housing Awards Friday 27<sup>th</sup> May in the Europa Hotel Belfast.</b></p> <p><b><u>AGREED:</u></b> that the Vice Chair, Councillor Mark Cooper, would represent the Housing Council at the above event. The Secretary also undertook to seek availability from another Member to fill the additional seat.</p> <p><b>Housing Executive Cavity Wall Insulation – Action Plan</b></p> <p>Members noted the Action Plan.</p> <p><b>Co-Own for over 55’s</b></p> <p>Members noted the publication.</p> <p><b><i>Travellers</i></b></p> <p>The Chair referred to an influx of travellers in certain areas, and sought information on the support they are being offered.</p> <p><b><u>NOTED:</u></b> the Chair undertook to provide specific details to the Secretary for follow up.</p>	<p><b>Secretary</b></p> <p><b>Chair</b></p>
<p><b>10.0</b></p>	<p><b><u>Date of next Meeting</u></b></p> <p>The next Housing Council Meeting is scheduled to take place on Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup> June 2022 at 10 am via Zoom.</p>	

The Meeting concluded at 11.30 am.