

**Minutes of the 494th Meeting of the Northern Ireland Housing Council held on Thursday 13
October 2022 at 10.00 am in the Boardroom, the Housing Centre and via Zoom**

	<p><u>PRESENT:</u></p> <p>Councillor A Fitzgerald Fermanagh & Omagh District (Chair) Alderman A Bresland Derry & Strabane Council – Left the meeting at 11.25 am Alderman T Nicholl Mid & East Antrim Borough – Left the meeting at 11.20 am Councillor C Elattar Mid Ulster Borough Alderman J Speers Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Alderman A Grehan Lisburn & Castlereagh City Councillor A McQuillan Causeway Coast & Glens</p>
	<p><u>IN ATTENDANCE:</u></p> <p>Mr P Price Director of Social Housing Policy & Oversight, DfC Mr D Polley Director, Housing Supply Policy, DfC Mr O McHugh Affordable Warmth & Energy, DfC – Left the Meeting at 11.15 am Ms J Gardiner Affordable Warmth & Energy, DfC – Left the Meeting at 11.15 am Ms G Long Chief Executive Miss M McLaughlin Senior Executive Officer, Chief Executive’s office</p>
	<p><u>APOLOGIES:</u></p> <p>Councillor M Cooper Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough (Vice Chair) Councillor M Kelly Belfast City Councillor M Ruane Newry, Mourne & District</p>

1.0	<p><u>Welcome</u></p> <p>Cllr Fitzgerald welcome all to the meeting, including representatives from DfC and the Housing Executive. She also welcomed Cllr A McQuillan, who was representing Causeway Coast & Glens. She asked that all in attendance introduce themselves.</p>	
2.0	<p><u>Apologies</u></p> <p>The above apologies were noted.</p>	
		<u>Action</u>
3.0	<p><u>Declarations of Interests</u></p> <p>None.</p>	
4.0.	<p><u>To adopt the Minutes of the 493rd Housing Council Meeting held on Thursday, 8th September 2022</u></p> <p>It was proposed by Alderman Grehan, seconded by Alderman Bresland and resolved, that the Minutes of the 493rd Meeting of the Housing Council held on Thursday, 8th September 2022 be approved and signed by the Chair.</p>	<u>Chair</u>
5.0	<p><u>Matters Arising from the Minutes</u></p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>	

6.0	<p><u>Forward Workplan</u></p> <p>The forward workplan was noted.</p>	
7.0	<p><u>Update by DfC on Housing Top Issues</u></p> <p>Mr Price and Mr Polley spoke in detail to their circulated report, which provided the Housing Council with an update summarising a range of strategic, major or routine matters, including any emerging issues. A summary of the current / emerging issues were outlined under the headings as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Housing Development Plan • Programme for Government Targets / Co-ownership • Revitalisation • Housing Executive's House Sales Scheme • Supporting People Programme • Homelessness Strategy • Private Rented Sector • Affordable Warmth Scheme • Caravans Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 • ERDF • Housing Executive Historical Debt • Housing Executive Rent • Non-ACM Cladding Remediation Scheme <p>PP and DP voiced a standing offer to provide a more comprehensive update, on any topic, should any member require it.</p> <p>Cllr McQuillan asked if further information could be given regarding where social housing is required and map it against investment and if</p>	<p><u>PP/DP</u></p>

	<p>there are any issues regarding planning in different council areas. DP advised that DfC/NIHE work in partnership with councils on LDP and their ambitions at planning policy level.</p> <p>Cllr Speers asked for an update on the issue of separate storm and foul sewers and the opportunities available to divide both. DP provided a brief update and asked if it would be beneficial to invite NI Water to a future meeting to discuss this issue.</p> <p>GL advised that NI Water, like the Housing Executive, are unable to borrow and has to ensure its statutory functions are met.</p> <p>AGREED: That NI Water should be invited to a future meeting of the Housing Council to discuss separate sewage and storm drains.</p>	<u>MMcL</u>
8.0	<p><u>Presentation on Affordable Warmth Scheme</u></p> <p>JG and OMcH, DfC gave Members a presentation on the Affordable Warmth Scheme outlining the follow:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Fuel Poverty? • What Impacts Fuel Poverty? • DfC Fuel Poverty Strategy and Engagement • The Path to Net Zero • Mitigations to Tackle Fuel Poverty • What Does the Affordable Warmth Scheme Offer? • Affordable Warmth Scheme statistics to date and for 2022/23 • Challenges Ahead & Next Steps <p>Cllr Fitzgerald thanked JG and OMcH for their very interesting presentation and invited questions from Members.</p>	

	<p>Cllr McQuillan commented that some of his constituents, who owned Housing Executive properties and required removal and replacement Cavity Wall Insulation, were being refused by contractors when they were told that it was an ex Housing Executive property. GL advised that any constituent could contact the Housing Executive's Energy Advice Unit who would provide advice and signpost them to the relevant agency, even if they were above the threshold for the Affordable Warmth Scheme. Contact details as follows:</p> <p>Nienergyadvice@nihe.gov.uk and 0800 111 4455 https://www.nihe.gov.uk/Community/NI-Energy-Advice/NI-Energy-Advice-GET-IN-TOUCH</p> <p>Cllr McQuillan also commented that DfC had now cut referrals for the Scheme from 30 a month to 20 and asked for the reasoning for this. OMCh confirmed that fewer referrals related directly to budget constraints and the number of referrals had reduced to ensure there is no overspend on the budget. Further discussion took place on the end of the AWS and it was noted that the Minister has been asked to review the Scheme to see if can be extended.</p> <p>Cllr McQuillan commented that the Cold Weather Payment, of £25, needed to be revised.</p>	<u>ALL</u>
9.0	<p><u>Draft Corporate Plan 2022/23 – 2024/25 and Year 1 (2022/23) Business Plan – For Public Consultation</u></p> <p>GL provided a presentation on the Housing Executive's Corporate Plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who the Housing Executive have helped 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successes over the past year • Development of the new Plan including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A need to building and invest in affordable, sustainable housing ○ A strategic shift to help prevent homelessness ○ Support economic development by investing in skills and supply chains ○ The delivery of green growth, to help create a carbon free future • The Role and Purpose of the Housing Executive • The Scale of the Business • Engagement with Customers and Stakeholders and their opinions • Changes in approach • Amended Vision Statement • Strategic Changes • New Objectives <p>GL advised that the Corporate Plan is currently out for consultation with all partners, including the Housing Council. She also advised that she had recently met with the Central Housing Forum who have a pro-active set of tenants who are interested in helping to shape what the Housing Executive do for its customers.</p> <p>Cllr Fitzgerald thanked GL for a very interesting and informative presentation and invited questions from Members.</p> <p>Cllr Fitzgerald commented that there was an issue with private landlords and the standard of accommodation offered from them for emergency accommodation. She asked how programmes are rolled out. GL responded adding that it depends on the programme but the Housing Executive are working with councils.</p>	
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	<p>AGREED: GL to send the Housing Council information on programmes.</p> <p>Cllr Speers voiced his concerns regarding constituency issues and not being able to contact Housing Executive managers directly. He found it unsatisfactory that he couldn't contact relevant managers to receive guidance and updates. GL advised that details should be forwarded to her.</p> <p>GL also advised that the Pandemic has had an impact on the ability to be close to customers and the Housing Executive is building connectivity and relationships are improving. She added that she attends all HIP presentations at councils.</p> <p>GL also asked if it would be beneficial for the Director of Housing Services, Jennifer Hawthorne to attend a future meeting to talk through the changes being made within the organisation regarding customers.</p> <p>AGREED: that Jennifer Hawthorne attend a future meeting of the Housing Council to present on NIHE structures.</p> <p>AGREED: that any individual issues regarding customers should be raised with GL directly.</p>	<p><u>GL</u></p> <p><u>JS</u></p> <p><u>GL</u></p> <p><u>ALL</u></p>
10.0	<p><u>Quarterly Report – Social Housing Development Programme (SHDP) Progress Report</u></p> <p>Members noted the Report.</p>	

11.0	<p><u>Housing Starts – August 2022</u></p> <p>Members noted the Report.</p>	
12.0	<p><u>Temporary Accommodation Expenditure</u></p> <p>Noted.</p>	
13.0	<p><u>Cost of Living Crisis Paper</u></p> <p>Members noted the paper.</p>	
14.0	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <p>Cllr Speers asked if the full quota, of 11 members, had been reached. It was noted that Cllr McQuillan was now the representative for Causeway Coast & Glens. North Down and Belfast Councils to be confirmed.</p>	MMcL
15.0	<p><u>Date of next Meeting</u></p> <p>The next Housing Council Meeting is scheduled to take place on Thursday, 10th November 2022 at 10 am in the Housing Centre</p>	

Meeting ended 11.40 am