



**Minutes of the 491st Meeting
of the Northern Ireland Housing Council held on
Thursday 9th June 2022 at 10 am via Zoom**

Present

Anne-Marie Fitzgerald	Fermanagh & Omagh District (Chair)
Jim Speers	Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough
Allan Bresland	Derry & Strabane Borough
Tommy Nicholl	Mid & East Antrim Borough
Catherine Elattar	Mid Ulster Borough
Michael Ruane	Newry, Mourne & District

In Attendance:

Paul Price	Director of Social Housing Policy & Oversight, Department for Communities
Kieran Devlin	Department for Communities
Martin Boyd	Department for Communities
Grainia Long	Chief Executive, NIHE
Kelly Cameron	Secretary (NIHE Secretariat)

Apologies:

Mark Cooper	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough (Vice Chair)
Michelle Kelly	Belfast City
John Finlay	Causeway Coast & Glens Borough
David Polley	Director, Housing Supply Policy, Department for Communities

1.0	<p><u>Welcome</u></p> <p>The Chair welcomed Paul Price, Kieran Devlin and Martin Boyd from the Department for Communities and from the Housing Executive, Grainia Long.</p> <p>It was noted that the Secretary had been in contact with Ards & North Down Council, to replace Nick Mathison who had recently been elected as an MLA, the Council will be appointing in due course.</p> <p>Members noted that unfortunately Alderman John Finlay is very unwell it was agreed that a card and flowers to be sent to him thanking him for all his hard work and dedication over the years for the Housing Council.</p>	Secretary
2.0	<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>No declarations were received</p>	

3.0	<p>To adopt the Minutes of the 490th Housing Council Meeting held on Thursday, 12th May 2022</p> <p>It was proposed by Alderman Bresland and seconded by Alderman Speers and resolved, that the Minutes of the 490th Meeting of the Housing Council held on Thursday 12th May 2022 be approved and signed by the Chair.</p>	Chair
4.0 4.1 4.2	<p><u>Matters Arising</u></p> <p>Chartered Institute of Housing All Ireland Housing Awards Friday 27th May in the Europa Hotel Belfast.</p> <p>Mr Speers commended the successful evening at the CIH All Ireland Housing Awards. He added that the Chair of the Housing Executive, Professor Peter Roberts was presented with a lifetime achievement award.</p> <p><u>HAPPI Principles scheme in Monkstown</u></p> <p>As the HAPPI principles scheme in Monkstown had now been completed, it was agreed that a short meeting would take place followed by a site visit either in August/September.</p>	Secretary
5.0	<p><u>Forward Workplan</u></p> <p>The forward workplan was noted.</p>	

6.0**Report from the Housing Executive's Chief Executive, Grainia Long on Housing Executive Business**

Ms Long spoke in detail to her 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:-

- NIHE Revitalisation Programme - Progress Update
- Finance - Budget Update 2022/23
- Draft Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland
- Services for Women experiencing Chronic Homelessness
- Supporting People Funding 2022/23
- Covid Funding
- COVID-19 Update and Return to the Workplace
- NIHE Pay and Grading Review
- Industrial Action
- 2021/22 Performance Report
- Cost of Living Crisis
- Ukraine Resettlement Budget

The Chair thanked Ms Long for her detailed report. She added that it is recognised of the several difficult challenges for everyone, in particular the financial hardship being faced throughout.

<p>8.0</p>	<p>Presentation on Labour Market Recovery Invention</p> <p>Andrew Irwin from the Department of Communities (DfC) gave Members a presentation on the Labour Market Recovery Invention. (Copies of the Presentation are appended to these minutes – Appendix A).</p> <p>It was noted that DfC’s main employment programme to assist people into work, One of the key components of the new offer is Labour Market Partnerships (LMPs), which aims to improve employability outcomes and labour market conditions by working through coordinated, collaborative, multi-agency partnerships, achieving regional objectives whilst being flexible to meet the needs presented by localised conditions. Designed to provide support for eligible benefit recipients to find and sustain employment by delivering a personalised service to meet individual needs.</p> <p>Mr Irwin highlighted some of the schemes/programme to enable those back into employment, such schemes as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job start • Adviser Discretion Fund • Work experience programme & Opportunity Guaranteed • Work Ready Employability Services (WRES) • Labour Market Partnerships (LMP’s) • Disability Health Intervention <p>Several Members commended the work being carried out and the importance and benefits these schemes have on people’s lives and mental well-being.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Mr Irwin or his attendance and for a comprehensive presentation.</p>	
<p>9.0</p>	<p><u>Housing Starts February 2022</u></p> <p>Members noted the Report.</p>	

<p>10.0</p> <p>10.1</p> <p>10.2</p> <p>10.3</p> <p>10.4</p>	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <p><u>Update by Department for Communities on the European Regional Development Funding (ERDF)</u></p> <p>Members noted the update.</p> <p><u>Social Housing Development Programme (SHDP) Year End losses 2022</u></p> <p>Members noted the information.</p> <p><u>Account of Local Councils role in Ukraine Arrangements</u></p> <p>Members noted the brief.</p> <p><u>Update on the Demolition of the Tower Blocks in Larne</u></p> <p>Alderman Nicholl requested an update on the demolition of the Tower Blocks in Larne.</p>	<p>G Long</p>
<p>11.0</p>	<p><u>Date of next Meeting</u></p> <p>The next Housing Council Meeting is scheduled to take place on Thursday, 11th August 2022 at 10 am venue to be confirmed.</p>	

The Meeting concluded at 11.30 am.

DfC Labour Market Provision Update for Northern Ireland Housing Council

Martin Boyd
9th June 2022

JobStart

Who Is the Scheme For?

16 – 24 year olds *at risk of long term unemployment* get into the job market by providing funding for employers to create 6 month job opportunities. 9 month job opportunity available for young people with Disabilities, Looked After Children and Returning Citizens

What does the young person get?

- A quality job opportunity where they will develop their skills
- Training plan – comprising of 5 x occupational skills alongside employability skills
- Any additional equipment, uniforms, accredited training employer deems appropriate for the job

What happened?

- 1,427 young people participated
- 391 young people have completed their opportunity (including 77 completing the 9 month route)
- 75% of completers retained employment or found alternative employment
- 10% of participants left the scheme

Current Status? Scheme closed to new applications at end of April 2022

JOBSTART 
www.nidirect.gov.uk/jobstart



Who is the scheme for?

Adviser Discretion Fund (ADF) is a solution based product to assist customers in removing a barrier towards and into employment, retaining employment, increasing hours of employment, progressing within employment so as to increase earnings, assisting with self-employment and / or recommencing former self-employed businesses.

Support through ADF can include: job interview clothing, driving lessons, childcare costs, enhanced disclosure checks (e.g. Access NI checks), travel costs, short training courses, marketing for self-employment, professional registration fees, tools or equipment (incl IT).

Key changes since April 2021:

- an increase in the annual limit available, from £300 to £1500 per person
- broadening of the guidance to allow for an increased range of support
- introduction of the payment of upfront childcare costs (25 Oct 2021).

What happened?

- 2,970 successful applications for assistance (304 for childcare costs)
- 65% of applicants had positive work related outcome (into work or increased hours)

Current Status? Scheme continues



Who is the scheme for?

There are two separate strands:

- 2-8 Weeks Work Experience for 18-65 year olds and
- 13 Weeks Opportunity Guarantee for 18 to 24 year olds.

What does the participant get?

- an incentive payment of £10 per day (£50 per week) per participant which will be paid alongside existing assistance for travel and childcare expenses
- an incentive payment of £250 to employers after a participant has been on a placement for 1 week
- Opportunity Guarantee pays an additional employer incentive of £250 when placement is completed with opportunities are linked to the guarantee of an interview for a job or an apprenticeship

What happened?

- 110 Work Experience placements
- 57 Opportunity Guarantee placements
- 40% into work outcomes

Current Status? Scheme continues

**Who is the scheme for?**

Work ready individuals who have no other development needs. Primarily focused at newly unemployed who had limited recent experience of finding work.

What do participants get?

Short training modules on 6 areas of core employability skills :

- CV Building
- Job Search Techniques
- Interview Skills
- Mock interviews
- Confidence Building and Personal Development
- Digital Skills and Social Media

Participant travel and childcare costs reimbursed

**What happened?**

- 1391 modules delivered to participants
- 95% participant satisfaction rate

Current Status? Contract terminated



- LMPs are multi-agency partnerships at local (LGD) and regional levels.
- Local LMPs are required to develop Action Plans detailing proposals within key high level themes set by the Department
- Local Action Plans for 2022 -23 include
 - **Academy for unemployed** - 6 week academy in partnership with employers, focus on sectors with available jobs;
 - **Reskilling for job vacancies** - Engagement with local employers to ascertain potential job vacancies and to ensure training is provided that match job vacancies (eg HGV drivers, hospitality workers, health and social care workers);
 - **Gateway to choice for long term unemployed** - Provide a bespoke, personalised, job search and careers service covering BCC area for those 18+ who are LTU;
 - Development of **Digital Badges** which capture learning in employability and skills sector and world of work - Recognising non-accredited training and experience;
 - **Work placements and work experience** - Target group is 16-18 year olds in full time education to enable them to gain work experience in local companies; and
 - **Provide support and training for disabled people** – aimed at those who are currently out of work, enabling them to examine their aspirations alongside a specialist mentor, address any training needs and secure a flexible placement with a suitable employer.



Theme	No. of Participants
Economic Inactivity	2,257
Economic Shock	195
Long-term Unemployed	1,578
Skilled Labour Supply	1,205
Youth	2,659
Disability	168
Total	8,062



The Department also offers three Labour Market Provisions aimed at assisting citizens with a disability or health condition stay in or move closer to the labour market:

Access to Work Programme(NI) (AtW)

- Access to Work (NI) provides flexible forms of support to help customers with disabilities move into or retain employment. Assistance includes adaptations to premises and equipment, communication support at interview, special aids and equipment, support workers and travel to work. Help will be approved for as long as it is required and will be reviewed annually.

Condition Management Programme (CMP)

- Condition Management Programme (CMP) is a work-focused rehabilitation programme, delivered by experienced Health Care Professionals from the 5 Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland, which helps customers understand and manage their health condition(s) to enable them to progress towards, move into and/or stay in employment. It is designed to be completed within 12 sessions usually over a 3 month period, but a short extension of up to 6 sessions is available if necessary. It is entirely voluntary and has no impact on benefits.

Workable NI

- Workable (NI) offers a flexible range of long-term support to help people with disabilities who have barriers to employment to find and keep work.
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