



## Minutes from Board Meeting No. 82 The Housing Agency

<b>Date</b>	28 <sup>th</sup> April 2020	
<b>Venue</b>	Video Conference Call	
<b>Time</b>	11.00am	
<b>Chaired</b>	Michael Carey	
<b>Board Members</b>	Tony O'Brien, Fiona Lawless, John O'Connor, Donal McManus. David Duffy, Frank Curran, Mary Hurley, John Burke	
<b>Apologies</b>		
<b>Attendees</b>	David Silke, Ciara Galvin, Catriona Lawlor (part), Jim Baneham,(part) Daragh McCarthy (part) (HA) Paul Melia, Paul Lemass, Maria Graham, Sarah Neary, Paul Hogan, Robert Nicholson (DHPLG)	
<b>Minute Taker</b>	Ciara Galvin	
	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Board Discussions</b>	
<b>1a</b>	<b>Maintaining Housing Delivery</b> Terrie Alafat and officials from the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government joined the meeting. Terrie provided an outline of the experiences in the UK during the economic downturn in 2008, including the measures taken to maintain a level of housing delivery. Michael Carey thanked Terrie for providing the meeting with hugely beneficial insights into her experiences and views, particularly in light of the current environment. Terrie and officials from the Department left the meeting.	
<b>1b</b>	<b>Homelessness Response to COVID-19</b> Dr. Austin O' Carroll joined the meeting and presented an outline on his appointment to oversee the response to the homeless services during the pandemic. It was noted that there has been an improvement in the supports for people living in homelessness, and one key outcome from the approaches taken is that there will be more coherent and joined up approach regarding the homeless sector. It was outlined that the main priority is to maintain people in accommodation that has been sourced, avoiding a return to overcrowded accommodation. It was reported that there is an interagency group in place which will continue to meet in the coming months. Mary Hurley, commended all parties involved in this response.	

	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Action</b>
	<p>It will also be important to replicate the model of health and housing working in partnership across the sector and maintained. These learnings need to be captured.</p> <p>Dr. O' Carroll confirmed that there is a lot of useful data available which should be captured and presented. It was confirmed that this is something that The Housing Agency could provide support on.</p>	Liaise with AOC re data collation
<b>2</b>	<b>Preliminaries</b>	
<b>2a</b>	<b>Minutes of Meeting #80, 24<sup>th</sup> March 2020 &amp; #82 14<sup>th</sup> April 2020</b> Agreed.	
<b>2b</b>	<b>Matters Arising</b> Reported and noted.	
<b>2c</b>	<p><b>Declaration of Interests</b></p> <p>Tony O' Brien confirmed he is on the Audit and Risk Committee of Limerick City and County Council (LCCC) and would not take part in any decision regarding the proposal to dispose of land to LCCC.</p> <p>The Chairman reminded members of the importance of independence and their duty regarding The Housing Agency, reiterating that input and decision making is for the Housing Agency itself, individual experience and representatives' backups are important, however decisions must be in the interest of the Agency.</p>	
<b>2d</b>	<p><b>Chairman's Opening Statement</b></p> <p>Michael Carey formally opened the meeting noting COVID-19 as a dominant part of discussion and in these challenging times, the key items for the Agency are to optimise our impact during the crisis while aiming to be stronger coming out of the crisis</p>	
<b>3</b>	<b>Matters Reserved</b>	
<b>3a</b>	<p><b>Land Disposal Proposal – Townsend Street, Skibbereen, Cork</b></p> <p>A resolution was proposed to dispose of lands at Townsend Skibbereen, Cork. It was resolved to dispose of this site subject to Ministerial approval.</p>	Request approval from the Minister
<b>3b</b>	<p><b>Land Disposal Proposal – Knocklong, Limerick</b></p> <p>A resolution was proposed to dispose of lands at Knocklong, Limerick. It was resolved to dispose of this site subject to Ministerial approval</p>	Request approval from the Minister

	Decision	Action
4.	<b>Finance Reports</b>	
4a	<b>Management Accounts at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020</b> John O' Connor provided high level commentary on the management accounts to the 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2020.	
4b	<b>Acquisitions Progress Report 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020</b> Noted	
4c	<b>Procurement Report</b> Report to be circulated to the Board.	Circulate Report to the Board
5.	<b>Sub Committees and Advisory Panels</b>	
5a	<b>Supply and Affordability Panel</b> Notes from the panel meeting held on the 24 <sup>th</sup> March noted. It was confirmed that presentations from panel meetings are now available within the Document Library on Decision Time.	
6	<b>CEO Report</b>	
6a	<p><b>Performance Report</b> John O' Connor presented the performance report. It was noted that processing time in respect of financial appraisals had increased in the first quarter. Clarification to be sought and circulated to the Board on this.</p> <p>It was noted that further KPIs and details will be reported in respect Housing Agency Land and technical support to LAs.</p> <p>A discussion was held in respect of the Acquisitions programme in respect of blockages to reaching targets on both the purchase of properties and the sale onwards to AHBs. It was reported that the availability of properties for purchase have significantly reduced. It was requested that the Executive examine other options for purchase, whilst being mindful of forecasted reduction in property prices.</p> <p>In respect of sales, issues identified previously have still not been resolved. It was also reported that the Property Registration offices had closed due to COVID 19 and this created further delays. The office is due to open again this week and should assist with the closing of some sales.</p> <p>It was recommended that a contingency plan be developed in respect of the sale of properties already purchased and how to deal with the potential forecast of property prices to the level of 20% drop in prices.</p> <p>A discussion was held in respect of vacant properties, as the data demonstrated an increase in the stock on hand. In relation to properties requiring remedial works, it was reported that the focus was in respect of properties which could be occupied quickly to ensure they would be ready for occupation. The April figures should demonstrate this. Further</p>	<p>Clarification to be sought</p> <p>Report back to next meeting on blockages and recommended solutions</p>

	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Action</b>
	<p>work on the longer-term problem properties needs stronger focus. In respect of designating essential projects this will be looked at.</p> <p>Tony O' Brien noted that the Acquisitions team are scheduled to provide an assurance presentation to the next meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee in May.</p> <p>A discussion was held in respect of Mortgage to Rent and it was noted that the output is significantly lower than expected. There were a number of issues regarding a technical error on contracts, and all contracts had to be redrafted by the provider. It is expected that the figures should increase in the coming month. A discussion was held in respect of the financial modelling of some providers and how sustainable this will be in respect of the predicted economic downturn.</p> <p>In relation to the Pyrite Remediation Scheme, it was noted that there are issues in respect of the approvals of applications into the scheme, this aspect has slowed down and has impacted the efficiency of the scheme in the first quarter.</p>	<p>JOC to liaise with DHPLG on delays in approvals</p>
<b>6b</b>	<p><b>Designation of Essential Projects (COVID-19) Social Housing</b> John O' Connor provided an update and background on the task being undertaken by the Housing Agency. Report circulated and noted. It was confirmed that a total of 39 projects have been designated as essential projects to date. 34 are on site . Local Authorities have put in place measures to ensure contractors are putting in place the necessary public health measures in line with government guidelines.</p> <p>The Irish Congress of Trade Unions raised concerns about issuing further protocols for workers, which have now been issued to support all workers.</p> <p>It was reported that the DHPLG would like to see more sites open in co-operation with the contractors to meet the urgent need for housing and also in light of supporting economic recovery. Projects which have been selected are based on the level of work required to get homes occupiable by the end of May, such as snagging and landscaping. The priority is to ensure the State can get people out of hotels and emergency accommodation. There are a potential 25 more sites to be designated soon.</p> <p>A discussion was held in relation to guidance being issued to by OGP and other bodies in respect of contract arrangements.</p> <p>It was recommended that details of the designations and how it is being implemented be on our website to outline details of designation of sites and how it is safely being done.</p>	<p>Insert piece on HA website</p>
<b>6c</b>	<p><b>Risk, Resources and Communications – John O' Connor</b> Report noted It was noted that position policy papers are complete and ready for issuance through the correct channels. John O' Connor to consult with Mary Hurley in respect of this.</p>	<p>Issue papers to DHPLG</p>

	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>AOB</b>	
	<p>It was noted that the Board recognised the importance of work and efforts the Executive and all staff in the Agency in ensuring that work continues and are also flexible to new challenges.</p> <p>It was also reported that the next meeting of the Board was scheduled for the 26<sup>th</sup> May 2020 and was assigned as the annual away day for the Board. Work is ongoing to still achieve a reflection session in respect of the Housing Agency strategy via a virtual medium. Further details to be relayed to the Board shortly.</p>	Issue details on Strategic Session -26 <sup>th</sup> May 2020
<b>9</b>	<b>Meeting without Executive members present</b>	
	The Executive left the meeting to allow discussion without the Executive present.	

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**Chairperson**

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**Date**

## Appendix

### Action Items arising from Board Meeting No. 82

#### Housing Agency

	Area	Summary of Decision/Action	Responsibility/ Timeframe
1.	<b>Homelessness Responses to COVID-19</b>	HA to liaise with Dr. Austin O' Carroll in respect of data collation	<b>Executive</b>
2.	<b>Land Disposals</b>	Issue letters to the Minister seeking formal disposal of lands as outlined above.	<b>Executive May 2020</b>
3.	<b>Procurement Report</b>	Circulate Report to the Board	<b>Executive</b> In advance of next Board Meeting - #83
4.	<b>Performance Report</b>	Provide clarification in respect of processing times for the financial appraisals.	<b>CEO</b> In advance of next Board Meeting - #83
5.	<b>Acquisitions Programme</b>	Report back to next meeting on Acquisitions, key areas for reporting include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Purchases –options for identifying further available properties</li> <li>▪ Sales – options to progress sales onto AHBs</li> </ul>	<b>Executive</b> Board Meeting - #83
6.	<b>Designation of Essential Projects</b>	Insert piece on HA website regarding work and processes	<b>CEO / Executive</b> April 2020
7.	<b>Position Policy Papers</b>	Issue papers to DHPLG	<b>CEO/Executive</b>
8.	<b>Next Board Meeting – Strategic Reflection Session</b>	Issue details on Strategic Session -26 <sup>th</sup> May 2020	<b>Board Secretary</b>