

## **COMHAIRLE CHONTAE DHUN NA nGALL**

Oifig Riarthóir na gCruinnithe  
Aras an Chontae  
Leifear  
23 Bealtaine, 2025

### **FOGRA CRUINNITHE**

A Chara,

Beidh Cruinniú Speisialta den Comhairle Chontae Dhún na nGall ar siúl Dé Céadaoin 28 Bealtaine, 2025 ag **10.00rn. in Áras an Chontae, Leifear.** Tá Clár an chruinnithe leis seo. Seolfar nasc leictreonach chuig an chruinniú i gcomhfhreagras eile.

Mise, le meas



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**Pádraig Ó Laifearaigh**  
Riarthóir Cruinnithe

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## **DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL**

Office of Meetings Administrator  
County House  
Lifford.  
23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2025

### **TO EACH MEMBER OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL**

#### **NOTICE OF MEETING**

Dear Councillor,

A Special Meeting of Donegal County Council will be held on Wednesday 28th May, 2025 at 10.00am in the County House, Lifford. The agenda for the meeting is attached. An online link to join the meeting will issue separately.

Yours sincerely



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**Patsy Lafferty**  
Meetings Administrator

## AGENDA

1. **Disposal of Land – Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended)**  
Notice under Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended) – to dispose of lands at Carraickmacafferty Lower, Derrybeg, Co Donegal to Edward McAteer.
2. Housing Capital Update.
3. Energy Efficiency Retrofit Programme.
4. Reception of Delegation from the Construction Industry Federation at 12 noon.

<p><b>MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNTY HOUSE, LIFFORD ON THE 28<sup>th</sup> MAY 2025</b></p>
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C/230/25

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Cllrs N Kennedy, Cathaoirleach, F Bradley, C Brogan, P Canning, T S Devine, A Doherty, M Harley, D M Kelly, M Mc Bride, M Mc Clafferty, D Mc Gee, P Mc Gowan, G Mc Monagle, Naughton and J S O' Fearraigh  
*Online:* Cllrs Beard, Blaney, Boyle, J Brogan, Carr, Crossan, G Doherty, A Farren, M Farren, N Jordan, J Kavanagh, M C Mac Giolla Easbuig, M Mc Dermott, P Mc Garvey, D Meehan , Nic Mheanman and Scanlon.

C/231/25

**OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE**

Liam Ward, Director Community Development & Planning Services, Patsy Lafferty, Director of Housing, Corporate and Cultural Services, Meetings Administrator, John Gallagher, Senior Engineer, Housing Capital, Donal Walker, A/Senior Engineer, Housing Capital, Eamonn Brown, Divisional Manager, Housing & Corporate, Donna Mc Groarty, Area Manager, Housing Design, Thomas Melly, Senior Staff Officer, Housing & Corporate, Eamonn Gillen, Executive Engineer, Housing Róise Ní Laifeartaigh, Rannóg na Gaeilge, Cliona Ni Ghallachoir, Rannóg na Gaeilge, Frances Friel, Communications Officer, William Colvin, Assistant Communications Officer, Anne Marie Crawford, Staff Officer, Corporate Services.

C/232/25

**APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from the Chief Executive who was unable to attend the meeting.

C/233/25

**IRISH CONSTRUCTION EXCELLENCE AWARDS**

The Cathaoirleach informed members that Donegal County Council and Lowry Construction had received the "Residential Award" at the Irish Construction Excellence Awards held recently in Dublin for the Trusk Road, Friendly Housing Project. She highlighted the fact that this visionary project had set out to create high-quality exemplary homes for older people designed to adapt as needs change, thus enabling residents to "age in place" in comfort and safety within their own communities. She congratulated all involved and said that the award was well deserved. This sentiment was echoed by the Director of Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services, Mr Patsy Lafferty and the Members of the Lifford/Stranorlar Municipal District.

Cllr Canning concurred and said that it was imperative going forward that consideration was given to the installation of generators and water storage tanks in social housing projects given recent issues with the Air to Water Heating system during power cuts.

C/234/25

**DISPOSAL OF LAND AT CARRAICKMACAFFERTY LOWER, DERRYBEG, CO DONEGAL TO EDWARD MCATEER.**

Members considered the report circulated with the agenda in relation to the above.

On the proposal of Cllr O' Fearraigh, seconded by Cllr Mc Gee, it was resolved to dispose of lands at Carrickmacafferty Lower, Derrybeg to Edward McAteer, in accordance with the provisions of Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, (as amended).

C/235/25

**PRESENTATION - HOUSING CAPITAL UPDATE AND ENERGY RETROFIT PROGRAMME**

Mr John Gallagher, Senior Engineer, Housing Capital, introduced the presentation and gave an overview of the items to be covered.

Mr Donal Walker, Senior Executive Engineer, confirmed that a total of 130 units were being progressed under the Turnkey process and listed the status and number of housing units associated with each project. It was noted that 18 of the units had been completed with 118 at various stages of construction throughout the county.

Mr John Gallagher, Senior Engineer, updated members in relation to the various in-house, design and build projects and the status of same together with an outline of the Letterkenny Flagship projects.

Ms Donna Mc Groarty, Area Manager, Housing Design, provided a detailed analysis of the Turnkey Acquisition Model. She outlined the processes involved and applicable to each developer and explained the rationale involved in the completion of the solution template form and the provision of the overall solution costs. Members were provided with a breakdown of the scored assessment criteria applicable for turnkeys and it was noted that a minimum of 70% of the overall mark available were required to progress to the next stage in the process.

Concluding the Housing Capital update, Mr Donal Walker, A/Senior Executive Engineer updated members on the benefits of the competitive dialogue procurement process. He said that the cost criteria for turnkeys utilised the Department of Housings Building Units Costs (BUC'S) as a guide. These, he added, were reviewed annually in accordance with market trends and informed by tender data from local authority direct delivery projects. The 2023 Turnkey process, he advised, had generated 23 valid submissions from 18 developers with the potential to deliver 800 homes. Developer costs, he said, were reviewed by an independent Chartered Quantity Surveyor and the report submitted to the Department for consideration. It was noted that the submission deadline for Pre-Qualification Questionnaires under the current procurement model was the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2026.

In relation to the Part V process, it was confirmed that when making Part V Agreements for private housing developments, the local authority had to consider value for money and in all cases the cost of the dwelling should have regard to the basic unit cost or that of a similar new build in the local authority area.

Cllr A Doherty referred to the fact that recent Ministerial correspondence had directed local authorities to scale up housing delivery in accordance with the revised national framework. This, he noted, had asked all local authorities to update their County and Local Development Plans to realign with the framework. He thus asked for an in depth response to the Minister's request and to outline and provide a timescale as to when our own County Development Plan was going to be reviewed to reflect housing requirements.

He noted that Uisce Éireann had in their recent presentation to Government indicated that they needed an additional €2 billion to deliver their programme nationally and queried what impact this would have on development locally.

The Northwest, he advised had considerable catch up to play and suggested that a presentation be given at the next Special Plenary Meeting as to how these issues would be dealt with.

Mr Eamonn Brown, Divisional Manager, Housing provided detail in relation to the number of properties retrofitted in the period 2021 to 2025 with 52 houses retrofitted in 2021 at a cost of €935k and a projected number of 166 units to be completed in 2025 with a projected funding allocation of €5.64m. Details in relation to the current status of the 2025 programme on a Municipal District basis was provided with 196 properties earmarked for delivery in 2025.

Mr Eamonn Gillen, Executive Engineer, Lifford/Stranorlar MD gave an overview of the Donegal County Council approach to property selection. He said that there was a focus on poor energy performing estates and a concentration in high density areas. There was an acknowledgement of the fact that the overall costs would increase into the future when the geographical spread of properties would be greater. He alluded to the fact that each MD utilised the same contract documents and that the 5 MD housing engineers met once a month to discuss programmes. Members were informed that there were challenges associated with the programme and that going forward the existing heating and plumbing network would possibly need to be retrofitted. He noted that there was an issue with mould growth in certain properties and that demand control ventilation and mechanical extraction ventilation had been introduced to combat same. A number of case studies were presented outlining the impact of the retrofit works. Concluding, he said, that the programme had been of great benefit in terms of reducing energy/fuel costs, leading to improved living conditions and generating a positive environmental impact.

Overall, it was noted that the value of the properties concerned increased and that there was a reduction in terms of the annual maintenance budget. All in all, he contended, there were considerable economic benefits and Donegal County Council compliance with

energy performance standards was increased. These all, he said, led to improved tenant satisfaction.

Mr Patsy Lafferty, Director Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services acknowledged the contributions and noted that the case studies alluded to, reflected the real life status of the programme.

Mr Liam Ward, Director Community Development & Planning Services noted the earlier comments from Cllr Doherty and said that he would be happy to come back in greater detail on the comments raised at the Special Meeting in June. He noted that when the Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage had visited the county on the 12<sup>th</sup> May, he had been given an update on the status of the of the County Development Plan and the various Town Plans. He had also been informed, he added, of the fact that other strategic towns in the county were being looked at and that members would be consulted later in the year with regard to draft plans and the public consultation process.

He said that there was significant headroom in these to facilitate further housing delivery and that the Minister's letter would be looked again in detail, and an additional response would be forwarded to the Minister and shared with members.

At this juncture, he confirmed that he was leaving the meeting to attend another appointment.

The Cathaoirleach opened the meeting to the floor and the following issues were raised:

- What is the situation regarding the houses in Falcarragh?
- Independent Living accommodation urgently needed in all areas
- Has there been any update in relation to the Social Housing Remediation Scheme?
- Considerable difference in the cost and pricing of retrofit materials. Value for money aspect needs to be looked at.
- Noted that the real barometer of housing delivery would be the number on the housing waiting list in the next 5 to ten years.
- Every opportunity outlined by the Department for housing delivery must be acted on including further collaboration with the Approved Housing Bodies and the construction industry to deliver the maximum amount of housing given the projected population increase.
- Price of housing generally a major issue and this has created a massive issue for local authorities generally with an increased demand for social housing.
- Mould an issue in properties that have been retrofitted.
- Query as to the actual number of houses that have been built in each MD over the last 10 years. Need for all stakeholders to be on one wavelength in terms of housing delivery as current delivery times are far too slow.

- Delivery of housing in Letterkenny not on par with the rest of the county. Southern Letterkenny left for development, but the relevant services are not in place.
- Issues with the Office of the Planning Regulator where viable developments are being overturned because they are too far from the town centre and despite all the services being in place.
- Rental costs creating homelessness and creating additional pressure for social housing.
- Not enough land for housing in the Ballyshannon area.
- Lack of housing provision in the Pettigo, Laghey and Mountcharles areas despite the relevant infrastructure being in place.
- Suggested that the services of a quantity surveyor be sought to progress turnkey development and that they are present on all jobs.
- Issues raised in relation to abnormal costs and the fact that just over 100 houses had been delivered in the Donegal MD over the last ten years.
- Poor condition of the Ard na Guala Duibhe development in Moville highlighted and a suggestion made that the apartments on site be taken away and 4/5 bedroom houses built in their place. Noted this would allow for defective concrete block affected households to be rehoused in the short term and allow for the remediation of affected properties. Concern expressed that many defective concrete affected estates were now in a serious state of deterioration.
- Delay in Social Housing Remediation Scheme a cause for concern.
- Emergency measures should be put in place by the Government to deal with the current housing emergency which is contributing to increased homelessness.
- What funding will be allocated to the Inishowen MD for retrofit works in 2025?
- Concern that homeowners had received no instruction in relation to the proper ventilation measures associated with the Air to Water Systems.
- Solar panels should be the norm in all housing stock and would help with overall electricity costs which have increased significantly.
- Review needed as to how the Air to Water System is working. Noted that the filters associated with the system were in need of regular replacement and radiators systematically cleared. Concern expressed that in some houses the radiators were too old to allow for the efficient working of the heating system.
- Tenants need to get proper training in the management of the Air to Water System.
- Query as to who is responsible for the replacement of the pumps in the Air to Water units.

- Has there has been any negative feedback in relation to the new heating system based on overall house size?
- Additional staff needed to manage the Council's housing stock.
- Need to re-examine projects that have fallen off the radar.
- Traffic light system needed to enhance housing development and flag where the relevant services are in place. Must be backed up with ongoing engagement with the Department and the Office of the Planning Regulator.
- Shortage of contractors and no available workforce a major source of concern.
- 1318 housing units needed in the Letterkenny/Milford Municipal District where approximately 700 HAP tenancies are in a perilous situation because of ongoing rent increases.
- Proper water and roads infrastructure needs to be in place at Ballymacool to accommodate the additional 170 planned housing units.
- Uisce Éireann need to be brought around the table as the lack of water and sewerage infrastructure is the biggest hindrance to housing delivery at present. Highlighted the fact that members are experiencing difficulties in arranging meetings with Uisce Éireann.
- Housing delivery in West Donegal an issue and there needs to be pressure put on Uisce Éireann to replace and upgrade the water and sewerage infrastructure.
- Query as to why more use has not been made of the S179 (A) provision in housing delivery.
- Concern that lack of water and sewerage capacity was hindering development in Ramelton, Milford and Carrigart.
- 17 houses sitting completed in Milford. Every effort must be made to progress the purchase of same either through the developer or with an Approved Housing Body and in consultation with the Department.
- What is happening with the houses in Falcarragh and Annagry?
- Query regarding the overall length of time taken to complete a turnkey acquisition.
- Delay in getting planning permission holding up development.
- Suggested that the 1.5% cap on abnormal costs was not realistic and needed to be addressed.

#### **Follow-Up**

- Request that correspondence issue to the Minister in relation to the remediation of defective concrete block affected houses at Ard na Guala Dubha as residents need to be out of these houses before the Autumn.
- Update requested on the number of houses being provided throughout the county and how this compares with provision nationally.



- Need to engage with the Minister in terms of getting a special dispensation for Donegal in light of the defective concrete block crisis.
- Call for Donegal County Council to support the use of dehumidifiers in all defective concrete houses.
- Housing delivery must be ramped up and rezoning issues sorted to accommodate same.
- Dedicated team must be put in place comprising Donegal County Council, Uisce Éireann, Planning staff, Quantity Surveyors and developers to look at all aspects of delivery and where it can be expedited. Housing team must liaise closely with the construction industry
- Clarification needed in relation to abnormal costs.
- Need to contact Government and request that where lands are built in within three years there is a refund of any residential zoned land tax paid.
- Requested that a report on “Housing First” be brought to a meeting and as to how the various problems encountered are addressed.
- Asked that where a couple of sites were side by side especially on land near town centres that Donegal County Council looks at the overall masterplan and liaises with the developer in order to move projects forward. Specific reference made to land on the Letterkenny Road outside Stranorlar.
- It was resolved on the proposal of Cllr Harley, seconded by Cllr Mc Gowan that the Government be contacted, and request made that that where designated lands are built on in within a three year period that there is a refund of any residential zoned land tax paid so as to encourage development.
- Cited the need to sit down with developer in relation to the 15 houses in Letterkenny as a matter of urgency as this has an impact for the 47 units in Ballyshannon.

C/236/25

### **PRESENTATION BY THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY FEDERATION**

The Cathaoirleach welcomed the following members of the Construction Industry Federation to the meeting and outlined the general protocol for visiting delegations:

- Mr Justin Molloy, Director Western Midland & Northern Region C.I.F
- Mr Dermot Gildea, MBC Construction, Chair Donegal Branch, C.I.F
- Mr John Gildea, MBC Construction
- Mr Bernard O’ Donnell, Source Civil
- Mr Dessie Dorrian, Dorrian Construction
- Mr Daniel Doherty, GDL Ire Ltd
- Mr Michael Kelly, Glebe Construction

On the proposal of Cllr C Brogan, seconded by Mc Gowan it resolved to suspend Standing Orders No 51 and 52 to facilitate a detailed discussion on the housing issue.

Mr Justin Molloy, Director Western, Midland & Northern Region C.I.F thanked members for the invitation to address the meeting and noted that the CIF frequently met with Donegal County Council to pinpoint obstacles to housing and to discuss potential solutions. He outlined the key challenges to housing delivery and gave an overview of the current housing situation in Donegal. He alluded to the fact that the strong construction programme presented by Donegal County Council in 2024 for the development of 650 new homes offered much needed stability and confidence for local contractors and would address 22% of the county's housing need. The average contract value per unit, he noted was €286,000 (hard costs) and represented an investment of €186 million.

In relation to turnkey developments, he noted that there were no staged payments in this process and that this impacted on the developer's cash flow thus increasing costs. Completion of such projects, he said, could take up to four years with the contractor covering the entire cost over that period. He highlighted the fact that the turnkey procurement process was based on the principle that payments for such units were capped at the Departments Basic Unit Costs plus a max of 1.5% to cover abnormal or additional works. Thus, he contended, only developments with abnormals or costs below 1.5% were viable for delivery thus rendering many potential sites financially unviable for development.

CIF, he said, recommended that where the basic unit's costs were to be used for assessing turnkey developments that abnormal costs should be assessed based on actual costs as determined by the quantity surveyor appointed by the local authority.

It was also acknowledged that Approved Housing Body's costs varied often falling below the basic unit costs and consistently remaining under the market rates. He recommended that Part V proposals be evaluated in line with the guidance issued by the Department and Donegal County Council in 2021 and that a quantity surveyor appointed by the Council approve the evaluations. Viable Part V agreements needed to be achieved, he added, otherwise the financial viability of any remaining private units in a development could be undermined. Concluding he recommended the following:

The appointment of a professional quantity surveyor by the Council to assess contractor and developer led proposals for all housing delivery methods and evaluate in line with the Department guidelines.

Stage Payments needed across all housing delivery methods.

Donegal County Council needs to work proactively with all service providers to ensure critical infrastructure is extended to areas adjacent to zoned lands. He referred to the need for all stakeholders to collaborate on the delivery of housing and said that the C.I.F looked forward to meeting the challenges and working with the Council to fulfil the county's housing needs.

Mr Dermot Gildea, Chair Donegal Branch C.I.F, following up on the points raised by Mr Molloy in relation to basic unit costs and abnormals said that builders faced similar costs to local authorities on direct build projects in terms of hard and soft costs and had to deal with the same site conditions, development challenges etc. Increasing the allowable abnormal cost threshold would, he contended, make more sites financially viable. He said that developers were experiencing cash flow issues compounded with infrastructure deficits that had to be remedied onsite and outside site boundaries. All, he said needed to be addressed for the mutual benefit of all concerned as often the cost of delivery placed an additional burden on the contractor in respect of projects which often had a far reaching impact for the wider community concerned. A better and collaborative approach to cost sharing was needed, he added.

He informed members that there were many sites across Donegal ideally suited for residential development but were located just outside the town boundaries. The local authority, he said, should be able to access such sites on a case by case basis and as the need arose for residential development. Another issue of concern, he stated, was the slow turnaround time in accessing Uisce Éireann services and the excessive upfront fees involved in procuring same.

Alluding to the Residential Zoned Land Tax and its proposed aim of making land available for development, he said, that it was having a negative effect on housing delivery in Donegal. Developers would, he said, be spending the money on paying the tax rather than clearing and developing sites. Small builders would not have the resources, he advised, to pay the tax and develop the land and thus were effectively discouraged from buying land in the first place. These, he said, were the key issues that needed to be addressed to deliver housing in Donegal.

Members welcomed the informative presentation, and a lengthy debate took place during which members raised the following issues:

- That Donegal County Council needed to work with the C.I.F on all aspects of housing delivery and that it was possible to find the middle ground to progress this aim.
- General support for the C.I.F recommendations.
- Noted that a substantial number of houses were being built and available but that this needed to translate into acquisition.

- It was acknowledged that every site was different and that the basic unit cost plus 1.5% provision would not work going forward as all sites were different should not be judged on the same criteria.
- Acknowledged that there were issues for developers getting Part Vs accepted and taken over. Issues need to be sorted at an early stage and an agreed price determined.
- Highlighted the fact that C.I.F could be of assistance in progressing projects that had fallen off the Housing Programme.
- Needs to be engagement between Donegal County Council and the C.I.F in terms of the overall procurement process and that the national procurement process needed to be simplified.
- Query as to what the C.I.F could do to encourage more apprenticeships and to bring young people into the trade and the construction industry.
- Noted that the developer was in instances caught in terms of the planning aspect and that there needed to be flexibility here.
- Members asked what the C.I.F saw as being the major drawbacks to housing delivery.
- How can the C.I.F help Donegal County Council in dealing with the defective concrete block crisis in terms of repairing and rebuilding homes?
- Responding to the recommendation that a professional Quantity Surveyor be appointed by Donegal County Council the question was asked as to how many houses could be delivered and how quickly if this was put in place.
- Query as to whether there was an average requirement for an abnormal cost and where did the 1.5% come from?
- When the Approved Housing Bodies submit an independent evaluation to the Department which must include confirmation of need and back up from the local authority, who is actually responsible for refusing an application?

### **Follow-Up**

- Request that the C.I.F report be digested, and a report brought back to the Housing SPC as to what can and cannot be accommodated.
- Cllr Mc Gowan proposed, seconded by Cllr Mc Bride that the key recommendation identified in the C.I.F presentation be adopted and that a further meeting take place in 6 months' time to assess same.
- Suggested that Donegal County Council and the C.I.F come together and work on a plan to deal with the housing crisis.
- Request that the C.I.F assist in any way possible with access issues on the N56 as it is still possible to make a relevant submission to the Office of the Planning Regulator.

Mr Patsy Lafferty, Director Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services said that it was hoped to focus for the remainder of the meeting on the

issues raised by the CIF and that queries raised earlier in the meeting in relation to a range of issues would be followed up by the Housing team with the members concerned and through the Municipal Districts.

He thanked Mr Molloy and Mr Gildea for their input and noted that there were regular meetings with the C.I.F and a good two way communication process.

Everybody, he said, was on the one page and that all stakeholders despite coming from different perspectives wanted to deliver social housing. Alluding to the range of items covered in the presentation, he said that he would be happy to look at the recommendations.

It was important, he said, that there was a recognition of what exactly was under the Council's control and that the broader issues such as water and sewerage utilities together with labour shortages were matters outside of the Council's remit. A continued effort, he advised, would be made to lobby the Department on the need for the introduction of staged payments but that this also necessitated lobbying through the political system. An effort had been made, he sated, to phase payments but this had not been possible on all sites.

With regard to abnormals, he advised, that the competitive dialogue process laid out the criteria for the spending of public monies and allowed the Council to make funding submissions to the Department based on the public spending code and the value for money aspect. There were challenges, he advised, and the competitive dialogue process was up for review again in 2026. The new Housing Programme would, he said, look further at the abnormals issue. It would be possible, he added, to talk to other local authorities and look at their processes as there was no one fits all strategy for dealing with turnkeys. Ongoing efforts would be made it was confirmed to strike a reasonable balance and improve the processes in place.

The presentation would, he confirmed, be looked at in further detail and in the context that the issues raised are being looked at presently. It was acknowledged that this could be discussed at the SPC as suggested.

Cllr Mc Bride proposed, seconded by Cllr Naughton that representatives from the Approved Housing Bodies together with the Council for Social Housing be invited to meet with members.

Responding to a query from Cllr Naughton in relation to when a review of the abnormal costs and the appointment of a quantity surveyor would take place, Mr Donal Walker, A/Senior Engineer, said that a quantity surveyor looked at every final tender and every assessment that goes to the Department in respect of every turnkey project.

Mr Justin Molloy, C.I.F said the issue here was the 1.5% for abnormal costs as each site was different and thus the designation of a specific % was not always workable for the contractor. He suggested that the abnormal costings could be drawn up by the contractor's quantity surveyor and presented to a quantity surveyor appointed by the local authority who could then liaise on the specific details of same. Thus , he contended, the development in question could be looked at in the round and a recommendation made which would be satisfactory to both parties.

The Director of Service confirmed that the process had started in terms of the reviewing this aspect. He noted that the current competitive dialogue procurement process ending next year and the anticipated publication of the new Housing Programme would potentially also include changes.

Cllr Naughton expressed concern that only 100 units had been completed. All involved, he contended, wanted the same outcome and queried who decided when the tender went to the quantity surveyor and at what stage were the Council using the quantity surveyor. The issue, he said, was the slow pace of delivery and this needed to change.

Cllr C Brogan asked if the competitive procurement policy being used was the council's own or in line with departmental guidelines as there were issues with the interpretation of this process and it was too late to wait until next year for the required amendments. He cited the need openness and transparency as the current model of delivery was not working. The message needed to go out, he added, that the Council was open for business as that its priority was to get people off the housing list.

Mr Dessie Dorrian, C.I.F noted that the Minister's letter had referenced the fact that abnormals should be separately classified, thus necessitating the need for anything under this classification to be separately measured, rated and costed and then checked by a quantity surveyor. This would then, he advised, be checked by the quantity surveyor in the Department who would be able to see the scope of the work carried out in relation to abnormal items. It did not necessarily mean, he said, that the contractor would get more money but be adequately compensated for supplying the additional infrastructure. Staged benefits, he said, would benefit many builders and that the option alluded to in the Minister's letter provided for the cost of finance. He said that if the contractor was allowed to add for the cost of finance this would make a huge difference to the cost of delivering the houses. Citing the example of a house costing €284,000, he said that if it was permitted to add the cost for abnormals, finance costs and the risk margin to same then a figure could be reached for the supply of houses which would be beneficial to all concerned.

Cllr Mc Monagle noted that a previous Minister for Housing had said that there was no impediment to Department funding or support in terms of housing delivery, yet provision of accommodation remained slow. He said that the C.I.F recommendations and solutions needed to be looked at and that there was room for flexibility. The current approach, he said was too rigid and cautious. It was imperative, he said, that the C.I.F were met halfway and that Uisce Éireann had access to additional funding to invest in the necessary infrastructure.

The Cathaoirleach thanked members and the C.I.F delegation for their input and welcomed the positive and constructive comments. Responses would issue, she said, in relation to the queries raised.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Cathaoirleach:\_\_\_\_\_

Dated:\_\_\_\_\_