

Corporate Plan / Business Plan Objectives and Key Priority Areas

[Northern Ireland Housing Executive]

Consultation Response from Fermanagh and Omagh District Council.

Brief Background for Fermanagh and Omagh District Council

The District Council area is home to 114,992 people (as of 30 June 2014). The District Council area is Northern Ireland's largest region in terms of land mass - approximately 3,000km², or 20% of NI - and the smallest in terms of population. As a result, the population density of approximately 41 people per km² is the sparsest in NI. This is a feature of the region which also provides challenges to service delivery.

Consultation Feedback

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council (Council) welcomes the opportunity to respond to NIHE's public consultation. NIHE is one of the Council's key statutory partners, particularly in relation to the development of the Community Planning Process. Currently, the Council and NIHE work together as part of the 'Themes Co-ordinating Group' in the Fermanagh and Omagh District Council area.

Strategic Themes

The Council agrees with the selection of the three themes outlined within the Consultation Documents, namely: 'People', 'Properties' and 'Places'.

Council strongly recommends that there should be a clear linkage between the Themes and Priorities identified within the Community Plans of the various localities, and those contained within the NIHE's Corporate Plan.

As one of the emerging priorities within the Community Plan is "Tackling deprivation in rural and urban areas including the working poor", Council supports the following commitments in principle and would welcome further detail on their outworkings:

Properties - This theme encompasses both private and public sector homes. Our activities include:

- Improving and maintaining NIHE homes;
- Managing the Social Housing Development Programme (SHDP) to deliver new social and affordable homes;
- Providing a Grants service for improvements to private sector homes;
- Our Home Energy Conservation Authority role to improve energy efficiency thus helping to reduce fuel poverty;
- Helping to return empty homes back into use.

The Council also recommends the inclusion of the following action: 'the need to install flood defence measures in the Northern Ireland Housing Executive properties that may be susceptible to flooding'. This is particularly relevant given the recent issues with flooding within the Fermanagh and Omagh District Council area.

Within theme three, 'Places', the Council welcomes the information included, particularly the bullet point stating 'community cohesion and anti-social behaviour management'. It is vital that NIHE, in partnership with other relevant statutory bodies, enforce Tenancy Agreements where necessary. This will help to ensure that the quality of life of all residents is maintained and not infringed upon. The enforcing of Tenancy Agreements would assist with issues such as: barking dogs, noise complaints, and so forth.

Key areas for NIHE to focus on for 2016/2017.

In relation to the prioritisation of the services listed, the Council recommends the following 6 areas:

1. New House Building
2. Repairs and Improvements
3. Increasing thermal efficiency of homes.
4. Adaptions to homes for people with disabilities.
5. Community Safety.
6. Better housing opportunities for homeless people.

Conclusion

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Northern Ireland Housing Executive on their Corporate Plan Objectives for 2016/2017. The NIHE is a key statutory partner of the Council and it is vital that the theme of 'Strong Partnership Working' is maintained to ensure that services are delivered in both an efficient and effective way.