

SPC 4 : Meeting on 10 November 2016.

A very interesting and important meeting, though without any direct Environmental Pillar issues.

Homelessness update – fortunately figures are relatively low compared with the major urban centres. Latest daily figure is 23 in emergency accommodation, 21 males in the Good Shepherd Centre, 3 in bed and breakfast. 15 family units are in a hotel, two of them with children. The KCC staff try hard to avoid this, particularly due to the complication of school travel and attendance.

The situation is exacerbated by the lack of private rental accommodation due to the cessation of construction during the financial crisis.

Traveller Accommodation Programme (TAP) – this involves a huge amount of work by dedicated Council staff for a fairly small community. Integration outcomes are relatively poor due mainly to objections by local communities. Rosbercon has the highest density of Traveller families outside Kilkenny city. A significant factor in the whole TAP programme is conflict both within traveller families, and between traveller families. School non-attendance is also a major issue.

Housing Needs Assessment (HNA).

The numbers on this list vary between 2012 in 2016, 2876 in 2010, and a peak of 3688 in 2012. This does not convert into homelessness as most couples live with family or friends, or other arrangements. There is a change in the pattern of housing preference, with about one third seeking each of one-bedroom, two-bedroom and three bedroom units. Also a large number do not wish to have a garden, and these preferences can change as families evolve between no children to one or two, and eventually empty nest-ers. The new housing scheme at Jail Road has been widely welcomed and lauded. KCC has bought 38 houses this year to date, with a target of 50 for the year. These are bought on the open market, are not new houses, and the emphasis now is to try and focus on delivering new houses to first-time buyers.

Declan Murphy.

Environmental Pillar representative.