

Minutes of the May Plenary Council Meeting of Galway City Council held in the Council Chamber, City Hall and Online via MS Teams on Monday 12th May 2025 at 3.00p.m.	
Presiding	Cllr N. McNelis, Deputy Mayor.
Present (Elected Members)	Councillors: A. Burke, A. Cheevers, M.J. Crowe, M. Cubbard, A. Curran, J. Forde, S. Forde, E. Hoare, D. Lyons, J. McDonagh, D. McDonnell, T. O'Flaherty, H. Ogbu, E. Seoighthe.
Present (virtually)	F. Fahy, C. Higgins.
Present (Executive)	Mr. L. Cleary, Chief Executive; Mr. P. Greene, Director of Services; Ms. H. Kilroy, Director of Finance; Mr. D. Pender, Director of Services; Ms. E. Fanning, A/Director of Services; Ms. A. Rohan, Meetings Administrator; Ms. M. Duddy, Administrative Officer; Ms. M.R. Biggins, Clerical Officer.
Apologies	Mayor P. Keane.

Note: The Minutes of the Meeting and Agenda items are recorded in the order of their consideration.

Ms. A. Rohan, Meetings Administrator commenced the meeting with a statement of intent to conduct the business of the meeting in line with Standing Orders.

Deputy Mayor N. McNelis welcomed all attendees and proposed a demonstration of sympathy following the recent passing of His Holiness, Pope Francis, Garda Kevin Flatley, Emmanuel Familola and Matt Sibanda of Buncrana. A minute of silent reflection was observed.

Deputy Mayor N. McNelis suggested that the agenda would be taken as laid out. This was agreed. He referred Members to agenda item 1 and invited any disclosure of a Conflict of Interest from Members.

1. Disclosure of Conflict of Interest (Section 177 of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended).

There were no conflicts disclosed.

2. Confirmation of Minutes

(a) April Plenary Council meeting held on 14th April, 2025.

Deputy Mayor N. McNelis referred Members to agenda item 2(a) and invited matters of accuracy or matters arising.

No matters of accuracy. The matters arising were as follows:

- Storm damage programme and timeframe in relation to works
- Request for members of the National Transport Authority (NTA) to attend a future meeting regarding Bus Connects
- Query if wording of rent arrears letter has been amended

- Parking meters
- Planning conditions at Westside development
- Additional staffing for Communications Team
- Monthly Management Reports visibility on website
- Park and Ride
- Christmas Park and Ride
- Correspondence on Multi Modal set out on 9th December 2024; junction at Letteragh Road to be highlighted as green no land acquisition; query if the Council wrote to the NTA?
- Uisce Éireann restoration works.

The executive responded to matters arising.

Mr. P. Greene in response to parking meters stated that given the case is currently sub judice, it would be inappropriate to comment further at this time.

On the matter of clean-up operations following the storm Mr. P. Greene advised works expected to take approximately 12 months. He noted that initial efforts have focused on emergency areas, with work progressing to other areas and subsequently to woodlands. Mr. Greene informed that a working group is in place with both Uisce Éireann and GCC Roads regarding Uisce Éireann reinstatement of road openings.

Mr. D. Pender confirmed that the NTA is due to revert regarding attendance at a future meeting. Mr. D. Pender advised that a Memo will issue to Councillors outlining the Council's position regarding the Councils responsibilities with structures.

Ms. H. Kilroy confirmed that the ICT Department are progressing work to place the Monthly Management Reports to a more prominent location on the website. It was agreed that there will be a revised wording on rent arrears letters.

In response to Cllr. Cubbard queries on the student accommodation development within the grounds of the Westside shopping centre Mr. James Russell agreed to send Cllr. Cubbard the relevant compliance documents for these conditions, and confirmation that the Planning Authority is satisfied that the applicant is compliant with these conditions. Mr. Russell noted that conditions 8 and 13 requires the applicant to agreed directly with Uisce Éireann and the HSE, respectively.

The Chief Executive advised that correspondence regarding the sanction of the Communications Team is awaited and noted that funding will be from Councils own resources.

Ms. L. Fanning confirmed storm repairs to housing stock are continuing in parallel with planned maintenance by means of contractors and own resources.

Proposed By: Cllr. D. Lyons	Seconded By: Cllr. J. Forde
2(a) Confirmation of Minutes April Plenary Council meeting held on 14 th April 2025.	
The minutes of the April Plenary Council meeting were agreed and adopted.	

3. Business Prescribed by Statute

3(a) Salmon Weir Pedestrian Crossing Section 38 Completion

Deputy Mayor McNelis referred Members to agenda item 3(a) and invited comments. He advised that the item was also considered at a Councillor Information Briefing and is for noting only.

Proposed By: Cllr. D. Lyons	Seconded By: Cllr. E. Hoare
To note Salmon Weir Pedestrian Crossing Section 38 Completion Report.	
The agenda item was noted per Report circulated.	

3(b) Approving of a loan allocation in relation to the Local Authority Home Loan Scheme

Proposed By: Cllr. D Lyons	Seconded By: Cllr. M Cubbard
To Approve a loan in the amount of €5,470,000 from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage through the Housing Finance Agency, for the purpose of granting house purchases and home improvement loans in Galway City.	
In favour: 17 Against: 0 Abstain: 0 Absent: 1 Present: 17	
This motion was carried and the loan was approved	

3(c) World Health Organisation (WHO) European Healthy Cities Network Phase VII Accreditation

Proposed By: Cllr. D Lyons	Seconded By: Cllr. H Ogbu
To approve a resolution supporting Galway City Council's Application under Phase VII Accreditation World Health Organisation (WHO) European Healthy Cities Network	
In favour: 17 Against: 0 Abstain: 0 Absent: 1 Present: 17	
This motion was carried.	

4. Reports of Committee Meetings

4(a) Notes of Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 6th May 2025.

Proposed By: Cllr. D. Lyons	Seconded By: Cllr. C. Higgins
Notes of Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 6 th May 2025	
In favour: 17 Against: 0 Abstain: 0 Absent: 1 Present: 17	
The draft note was noted by Council.	

Key points raised from the Corporate Policy Group notes included:

A discussion on the use of MS Teams transcription for minute-taking. In response to queries, Ms. Rohan advised that while a national policy on Artificial Intelligence is awaited,

the proposal is that the use of the transcripts feature be trialled at Area Committee meetings. The Chief Executive acknowledged that minutes are a formal record of decisions proposed and agreed upon by the Members and although it is not necessary to capture every detail, minutes should generally be concise, with some context included to reflect the discussion where appropriate.

A matter concerning porridge being spread around the city was raised and the measures taken to address it. Mr. P. Greene responded that the relevant authorities are working together on this matter.

Following a suggestion from Cllr. E. Hoare, it was agreed that the Council would extend an invite to former Mayors to attend the Lorient Twinning celebrations on Saturday 17th May 2025, in recognition of their previous contributions to twinning initiatives.

4(b) Report from Grants Committee meeting held on 23rd April 2025 - attached to consider for approval

It was noted that the Grants Committee of Galway City Council convened on the 23rd April, 2025 to consider applications for the following 2025 funding programmes.

Creative Practitioners Bursary 2025	
Name	Recommended Grant €
Emma Zukovic	3,000
Kezia Wright	3,000
Kate McSharry	2,500
Sarah O'Toole	2,500
Vicky Smith	1,400
Sahana Sridhar	2,000
Elena Santos	2,000
Steph Geremia	2,500
Dee Deegan	2,500
Martin Sullivan	2,500
Raphael Adams	1,900
Aoife Molly Delany Reade	2,500
Fionnuala Doyle Wade	2,000
Seán O'Riordan	2,000
Roberta Ceginskaite	500
Aine Rose Connell	1,200
Emer Lyons	1,200
Jess Harkin	1,200
Maria InesQuintanilha Martins	1,200
Benjamin Duffy	1,200
Shane O'Malley	1,200
Total	40,000

Galway City Council Band Grant 2025	
Band Name	Recommended Grant Amount €
St. Patrick's Band (Galway) Ltd	10,000
Merlin Woods Primary School	1,900
Radharc na Mara Primary School	1,800
Scoil Bhríde Shantalla Primary School	1,200
Scoil San Phroinsias	2,000
St. Nicholas NS Band	1,200
St. Patrick's Primary School	1,900
Total	20,000

Healthy Galway City Community Grants 2025		
Group Name	Project Name	Recommended Grant €
FASD Ireland	Galway City FASD Aware Programme	5,000
Ard Gardening Group	Well Being In the Garden	1,000
Croí na Gaillimhe	Croí na Gaillimhe Lunch and social clubs Wellbeing project	4,000
Galway City Women's Shed	Foraging land, sea, and window sill	1,300
Galway Mental Health Association	Healthy Eating Campaign	2,500
Irish Wheelchair Association School Leavers - Briarhill	Growing Minds	2,000
UHUG/ Ukrainians Helping Ukrainians Galway	Health Above all	2,500
Blue Teapot Theatre Company	Theatre in Motion	2,500
Health & Wellness for Galway Parents	Health & Wellness Classes for Parents	2,000
Castlegar Active Retirement Group	Health and Wellbeing Activities for the Castlegar Active Retirement Group	1,000
Sexual Health West	Support to People Living with HIV in Galway	1,500
No4 Youth Service	Social Farming for 'at risk' young people	3,000
Making a Difference (Ballybane)	The Well Woman Project	2,000
COPE Galway CLG	Nature as respite	2,000
Ard Women's Circle Shed	Women's wellbeing	1,000
Bothar an Cháiste Women's Group	Bothar An Cháiste Women's Group - Wellbeing Project	1,000
Phrenz Group Galway	Health & Wellbeing Supports for Phrenz Group Galway	1,500

Knocknacarra Active Retirement Association	Exercise Classes by SielBleu	1,000
Link Galway CLG	Link Galway Community Fitness Programme	1,200
AMACH! LGBT+ Galway	Queer & Crafty, Teach Solais LGBT+ Library, Forest Bathing & Self-defence classes	2,000
Total		40,000

Cllr D. McDonnell proposed that "Where a Member cannot attend a meeting of the Grants Committee, he/she can nominate a named alternative Member to attend on their behalf for that meeting. The Chairperson must be advised of the name of the alternative Member two days prior to the meeting."

This was seconded by Cllr. T. O'Flaherty and agreed.

The Chief Executive notified Members of the Department's sanction for three Community Development Officers that are due to be recruited for each Ward area. The Chief Executive advised that these Officers will work closely with the Elected Members in their respective wards to ensure that projects with the greatest needs are identified and supported and each proposal will be assessed against set criteria by staff with relevant knowledge so proposals submitted to the Grant Committee will be a fair and equitable process, with confidence that funding will be directed to the most deserving groups.

Councillors considered the Report.

Proposed By: Cllr. D. McDonnell		Seconded By: Cllr. A. Curran		
Report from Grants Committee meeting held on 23rd April 2025 for approval				
In favour: 16	Against: 0	Abstain: 0	Absent: 2	Present: 16

5. Consideration of Reports of Officials

(a) Monthly Management Report for May 2025.

The Monthly Management Report was considered by Members, and matters raised included the following:

Members congratulated those in receipt of the Mayoral Awards and complimented the Mayor and Staff on the event.

Cllr. Lyons requested cleanup refer to Kingston not Knocknacarra in line with proposed masterplans.

Multiple concerns regarding illegal dumping and litter management were raised. Ms. Fiona Holland advised she is leading a team to address litter management with the involvement of the HSE and Gardaí.

The Chief Executive added that he is open to more business engagement to support city cleanliness and night-time economy engagement through the Communications Officer.

Mr. P. Greene agreed to provide an update on traffic flow improvements following enhancement works to the N59 signalised junction and committed to investigate the status of the pedestrian crossing at Parkmore.

Mr. P. Greene will arrange for review of road signage visibility at the Monivea approach roads and signage for Doughiska from the Dublin Road approach.

Mr. P. Greene to evaluate the standard of works at Letteragh Road and committed to progress works at the Plot of Angels in Bohermore cemetery.. Concerning safety at the Claddagh, the option of railings\barriers will be examined.

Members were reminded of the mechanisms available to report such matters on signage, signals and road conditions to dedicated liaison persons or send an email to relevant departments.

In relation to Galway cities funding designation status, the Chief Executive informed of a specific meeting being held by Senior Management to set-out a business case to submit to the Department in the coming weeks.

Ms. Fanning informed the meeting that a biocide treatment was used to clean Walter Macken of the opinion that was successful but could be reviewed again.

Cllr. D. Lyons proposed that a Report on 'Taking in Charge' be completed and circulated to Members. Mr. P. Greene, Director of Services advised that this will be facilitated. The proposal was seconded by Cllr. N. McNelis and agreed.

(b) The Electoral Commission Oversight Report on The Electoral Registers.

The Electoral Commission Oversight Report on The Electoral Registers was noted. Members complimented the work of the Franchise team working on the Register for Galway City. It has been one of the most effective local authorities with regard to recording of accuracy indicators for each elector.

Proposed by Cllr. D Lyons and Seconded by Cllr. D. McDonnell.

(c) National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC) Annual Report 2024.

The National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC) Annual Report 2024 was noted.

Item 3(c) was Proposed by Cllr. D. Lyons and Seconded by Cllr. D. McDonnell.

6. Notice of Motions

The Chief Executive advised that the Corporate Policy Group (CPG) recommended that Notice of Motion 23/2025 remain on the Agenda, with the matters raised to be addressed at a workshop scheduled for 3rd June 2025.

NOM 23/2025, submitted by Cllr. E. Seoighthe on 07/04/2025

Response issued 14/04/2025. Request to leave on the Agenda.

That this Council requests a full report from the Chief Executive detailing the purchase of Crown Square including:

The rationale for the purchase and how it aligns with the Council's Development Plan and strategic objectives.

The total purchase price, source of funding, and any additional financial commitments associated with the acquisition.

A breakdown of the due diligence process undertaken, including property valuation, structural surveys, legal title checks, and planning compliance.

Details of the procurement or selection process, including whether alternative properties were considered and if a competitive process was followed.

Any future plans for the property, associated costs, and the expected timeline for its use.

Confirmation of compliance with Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 and other relevant legislative provisions.

Furthermore, this Council calls for a review of the governance procedures surrounding property acquisitions to ensure full transparency, value for money, and accountability in all future purchases.

7. Questions

Deputy N. McNelis expressed concern regarding the lack of responses to queries submitted, some dating back to March and asked for the Executive to issue replies to same.

Q8/2025, submitted by Cllr. J. Forde on 05/03/2025

I would like to raise a question at the March meeting regarding the status of outside dining for commercial ratepayers in Woodquay for 2025. Last year, businesses such as McGinn's and the Italian restaurant were denied permission for outdoor dining. However, during discussions on the commercial rate increase, I highlighted the importance of reconsidering this decision. With commercial rates now increased, it is crucial that businesses in Wood Quay receive fair treatment, especially compared to those in the West, where outdoor dining is permitted from May to September. The businesses in Woodquay are requesting approval for a much shorter period - only from July to the end of August.

Response issued 12th May, 2025.

Q9/2025, submitted by Cllr. T. O'Flaherty on 26/03/2025

Please give a breakdown of all the properties that the City Council is currently renting for office space or other purposes; their location and use; how many staff are working in those offices/spaces (listed for each space rented); the yearly rents paid on those properties and the current status of the leases (start and finish month/year). Also, will Crown Square accommodate all of the office staff currently working in those rented properties including the staff in City Hall.

Q11/2025, submitted by Cllr. H. Ogbu on 07/04/2025

At the January Council meeting, I raised the need for access to the email addresses of Residents' Associations in Galway City. Previously, this information was available via a link on the old website, but it has since been removed. Given that restoring access would facilitate better engagement, empowerment, and information sharing for communities, as well as assist the Council in disseminating information on funding, grants, planning, and consultations, can the Council take steps to reinstate this access?

Furthermore, can this process begin while we continue recruiting the Community Development Officers, under whose remit this would eventually fall?

Q12/2025, submitted by Cllr. N. McNelis on 06/04/2025

Chief Executive, could you please let me know how many planning applications have been received by Galway City Council for retention of use for short term letting of residential properties and how many offices / commercial units for change of use to short term letting have been received in last 3 years. Can you please give numbers for how many have received permission for same. Will Chief Executive outline the planning process for short term lets and why as reported in local media that Galway City has hundreds of properties advertised online with no planning, In the middle of a housing crisis has this local authority enough resources to tackle unauthorised short term letting with staffing and current planning laws

Response issued 9th May, 2025

Q13/2025, submitted by Cllr. A. Curran on 06/03/2025

Can the council provide an updated report on the recorded speed data from the 19 driver feedback signs in the city, to include the following data in tabular format:

- Number of records
- Volume per Hour
- Mean Speed
- Median Speed
- Mean Speed by Hour
- Median Speed by Hour
- 85th Percentile Speed

Q14/2025, submitted by Cllr. J. McDonagh on 07/04/2025

Questions for Galway City Council Regarding Street Lighting Failures and National Infrastructure Issues

1. What immediate actions are being taken to restore street lighting in the Galway estates left in darkness since January due to Storm Eowyn And how many are there?
2. How is the Council addressing the widespread issue of outdated underground cabling—particularly the pre-1995 two-core systems lacking earth wires, which no longer meet modern safety standards?
3. Given that these underground systems were inherited from the ESB in 2009, what efforts have been made since then to assess, upgrade, or maintain this critical infrastructure?
4. Why has there been a delay in replacing such obviously unsafe and obsolete cabling, and what are the risks posed to public safety in the meantime?
5. Is the estimated cost to repair the affected Galway estates €1 million, with a citywide upgrade potentially exceeding €10 million. What funding mechanisms are being pursued to cover these costs?
6. Has the Council engaged with national government agencies to seek emergency funding or a broader infrastructure investment plan? If so, what was the outcome?
7. Can the Council clarify if this infrastructure is covered by insurance, and if not what steps, if any, are being taken to address the lack of coverage?
8. What is the Council's position on the claim that this is not just a Galway issue but a nationwide infrastructure failure requiring urgent national intervention?
9. Are there any plans to conduct a full audit of the city's underground lighting infrastructure to identify other at-risk areas before further failures occur?
10. What is the timeline for restoring lighting in the currently affected estates, and how will residents be kept informed.

Q15/2025, submitted by Cllr. J. Forde on 03/04/2025

Residents of Muster Avenue have once again raised concerns about parking, especially with the busy summer season approaching. Is there a plan in place to manage the situation?

The residents are requesting a meeting with the Director of Services, along with myself and city centre councillors, to discuss this matter. Could we look into arranging this meeting?

Q16/2025, submitted by Cllr. N. McNelis on 01/05/2025

Following council motions passed and previous written questions to Galway City Council executive, can you please advise what is the update on the removal of the Iron Railings at the Queens Gap on the River Corrib.

In 2022 a motion was passed following concerns raised then and still in place about safety issues raised by Galway Fire Station, Claddagh Watch, RNLI and Garda.

8. Correspondence

Deputy Mayor N. McNelis referred Members to agenda item 8.

Proposed by Cllr. D. McDonnell	Seconded by Cllr. A. Curran
(a) Correspondence received on 29/04/2025 from Kerry County Council – motion passed regarding grant applications.	
(b) Ireland West Airport 2024 Annual Review	
Correspondence was noted.	

9. Items for Councillors Information

None

10. Conferences & Training

Deputy Mayor N. McNelis referred Members to agenda item 10.

Cllr. McDonnell noted the dates and location listed were incorrect. It was agreed to circulate revised dates to Members.

Proposed by Cllr. D. McDonnell		Seconded by Cllr. J. McDonagh	
	Provider	Details	Date & Location
(a)	AILG	Elected Member 2025 Training Programme	29th May 2025, Athlone Springs Hotel
Conferences and training were agreed and approved.			

11. Votes of Sympathy/Congratulations

Deputy N. McNelis referred Members to agenda item 11 and called for a proposer and seconder.

Proposed By: Cllr. D. Lyons	Seconded By: Cllr. T. O'Flaherty
Gertrude Jennings R.I.P.	Michael (Mike) Mulkerrins R.I.P.
Francis Roberts R.I.P.	Michael (Mick) Herlihy R.I.P.
William (Bill) De Renzy R.I.P.	Bridie Hopkins R.I.P.
Marlene Lavelle R.I.P.	Freddie Byrne R.I.P.
Sean A. Grey R.I.P.	Kay Ruane R.I.P.
Votes of Sympathy were noted.	

12. Other Business set forth in the notice convening the meeting

None

13. AOB

Cllr. M.J. Crowe and Cllr. Cheevers raised the issue of Tenant in situ scheme funding for persons not in a position to acquire property and what can Elected Members and Officials collectively do to secure additional funding for the scheme. Serious concerns were raised regarding this situation as when property cannot be acquired the officer is then assisting tenants to find other properties.

The Meeting concluded at 18:05.

The next plenary council meeting is scheduled for Monday, 9th June, 2025.

P. O'Sullivan
Minutes, Confirmed & Signed
P. O'Sullivan
Mayor of Galway
9 May 2025