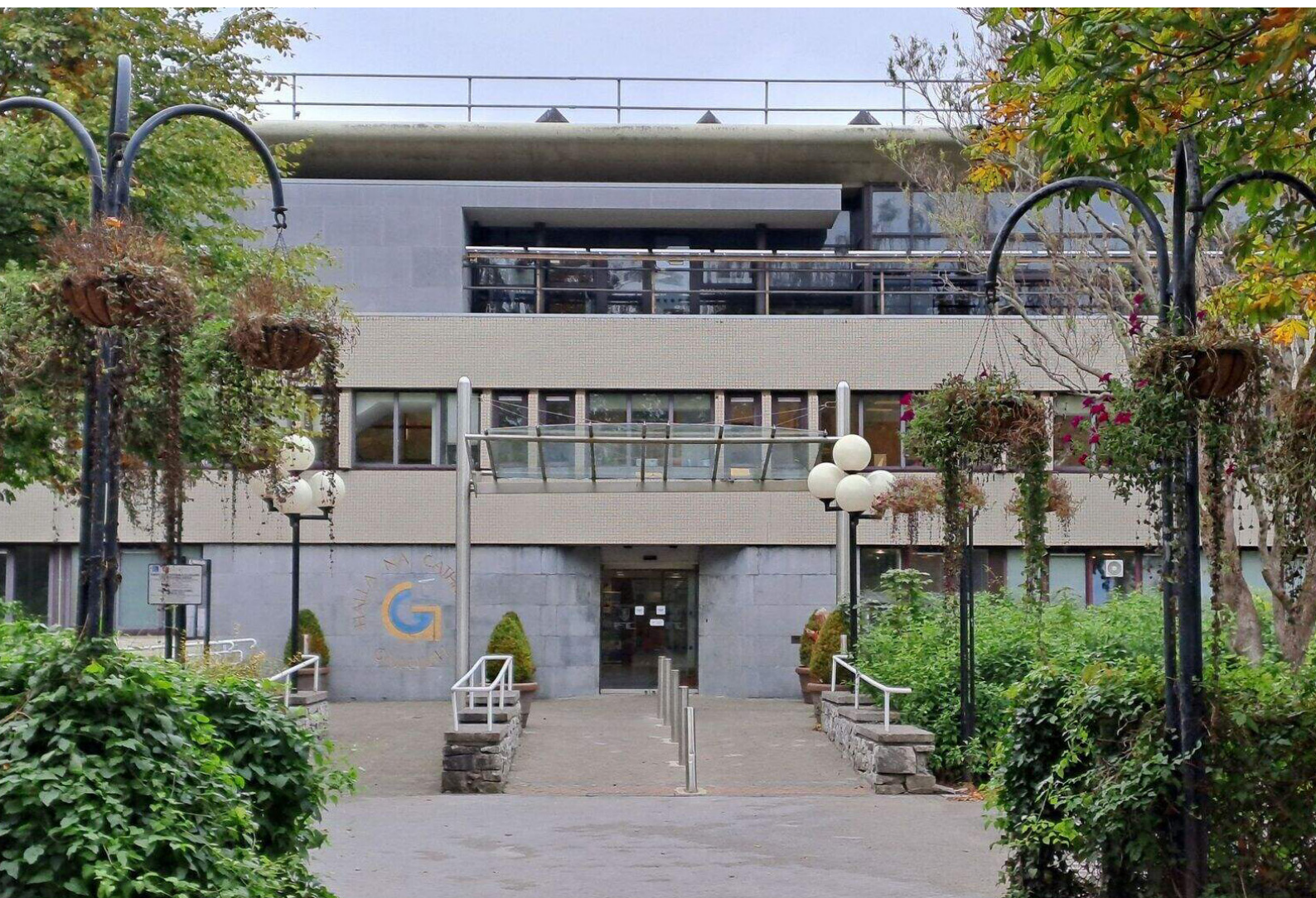




Galway City Council
Brand Evolution Project
Stakeholder Insights Report
Workshop 04: Steering Group



TurasBranda

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01. Executive Summary



Executive Summary



The fourth and final workshop in the Galway City Council Brand Discovery Programme brought together members of the Steering Group to consolidate the findings from the wider consultation process and explore the strategic role of the future brand. Building on insights gathered from Heads of Function, Elected Members and the Senior Management Team, this session focused on organisational alignment, implementation and the long-term opportunities presented by a unified brand system.

There was strong consensus that Galway City Council requires an identity that better reflects the city it serves—one that captures Galway's creativity, energy, diversity and cultural richness while remaining authentic to its civic role. Participants recognised that the current identity no longer reflects the Council's evolving responsibilities or the ambition outlined within the Corporate Plan.

The workshop reinforced that the brand should extend beyond visual identity to become a practical framework for creating consistency across departments, services, communications and future initiatives. Participants highlighted the opportunity to strengthen public understanding of the Council's work, improve organisational cohesion and establish a flexible design system capable of supporting future projects, neighbourhoods and sub-brands without fragmenting the Council's identity.

Discussions also emphasised the importance of protecting the qualities that make Galway distinctive, including its independent character, creative communities, cultural life, bilingual heritage and welcoming atmosphere. Participants stressed that the future brand should celebrate both the city's historic identity and its contemporary personality, expressing not only place but also the people, energy and experiences that define Galway today.

Overall, the Steering Group validated the themes emerging consistently throughout the discovery process and confirmed a clear strategic direction for the next phase of the project. The insights gathered across all four workshops provide a strong foundation for developing a brand strategy and visual identity that is distinctive, future-focused and capable of supporting Galway City Council's continued evolution as a modern civic organisation.



02. Workshop Objectives



Workshop Objectives

The Steering Group Workshop formed the final stage of the stakeholder engagement phase of the Galway City Council Brand Evolution Project. The purpose of the workshop was to review the emerging themes identified throughout the Discovery Phase, validate the strategic direction of the project and gather final leadership perspectives before progressing to the development of the Brand Strategy.

The workshop explored participants’ views on Galway’s identity, Galway City Council’s evolving role, organisational consistency and the opportunities presented by a unified brand system. Discussions focused on how the future brand can strengthen public understanding, improve communication, support future initiatives and create greater alignment across Council services, departments and public-facing assets.

Building upon the insights gathered from the Heads of Function, City Councillors and Senior Management Team workshops, participants considered how the future organisational identity can balance Galway’s unique heritage and cultural character with the ambitions of a modern, progressive and future-focused local authority. Particular emphasis was placed on implementation, governance and ensuring the new brand provides a flexible framework capable of supporting the Council’s long-term vision.

The insights captured during the session will be combined with the findings from the Brand Audit Report, Galway City Identity & Context Review and the wider stakeholder engagement programme to inform the development of the Galway City Council Brand Strategy. As the final workshop in the Discovery Phase, this session confirmed a strong level of alignment across stakeholder groups and established a clear strategic foundation for the next phase of the project.

WORKSHOP DETAILS

Workshop	Steering Group
Date	7th July 2026
Duration	1.5 Hours
Participants	Steering Group of Galway City Council Brand Refresh
Facilitator	Clive Connaughton, Turas Branda
Workshop Format	Facilitated discussion, interactive exercises and collaborative group discussion

WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

- To validate the findings emerging from the Discovery Phase.
- To understand perceptions of Galway City and Galway City Council.
- To identify the organisation’s strengths, opportunities and future ambitions.
- To explore how GCC can continue to evolve as a modern, innovative and community-focused organisation.
- To gather strategic insights that will inform the development of the future Brand Strategy and organisational identity.



03. Key Themes



Key Themes



Theme 01:

A Brand That Connects the Organisation

Participants consistently viewed the future brand as an opportunity to create greater unity across Galway City Council. Rather than individual departments or initiatives operating independently, there was strong support for developing a cohesive identity capable of bringing together services, projects and future sub-brands within a single, recognisable framework.

The discussion reinforced the importance of creating a flexible design system that could evolve with the organisation while maintaining consistency across communications, infrastructure, cultural initiatives and future developments.



Theme 02:

Reflecting the Real Galway

The Steering Group strongly agreed that Galway's identity extends beyond its physical landmarks. While the city's maritime heritage, bilingual culture and historic environment remain important, participants believed the future brand should also capture the energy, creativity and diversity that define Galway today.

There was particular emphasis on representing the city's youthful population, cultural vibrancy, festivals, independent spirit and creative communities alongside its heritage, ensuring the identity reflects both tradition and contemporary life.



Theme 03:

Improving Public Understanding

Participants recognised that many members of the public have only a limited understanding of the breadth of services delivered by Galway City Council. The organisation was frequently described as misunderstood, with significant work happening behind the scenes that often goes unnoticed.

The future brand was therefore seen as an opportunity to improve communication, humanise the organisation and better demonstrate the positive impact the Council has on the everyday lives of residents, businesses and visitors.

There was strong support for placing greater emphasis on storytelling, showcasing staff expertise and communicating achievements more proactively.





Theme 04

Building a Platform for Future Growth

The discussion extended beyond branding into the future development of Galway itself. Participants highlighted major opportunities including new civic infrastructure, improved wayfinding, neighbourhood identities, tourism development, cultural infrastructure and digital transformation.

Rather than treating these as separate initiatives, there was broad agreement that the new brand should provide the visual and strategic framework capable of connecting these projects under one coherent identity.



Theme 05:

Protecting What Makes Galway Unique

Alongside ambitions for growth, participants stressed the importance of protecting the characteristics that make Galway distinctive.

Independent businesses, arts and culture, bilingualism, festivals, local creativity, community identity and the city's welcoming atmosphere were all identified as qualities that should remain central to Galway's future. Participants noted that continued investment in these areas will be essential if Galway is to retain its authenticity as it grows.



Theme 06:

The Brand Should Inspire Confidence in the Future

Throughout the discussion, participants recognised that Galway is entering a period of significant change. Population growth, major infrastructure projects, housing delivery, economic development and continued investment will all shape the city's future over the coming decade.

Participants felt the organisational brand should communicate confidence, leadership and optimism, presenting Galway City Council as a progressive organisation capable of leading this transformation while remaining true to the city's unique identity and values.

Rather than simply reflecting where Galway is today, the future brand should express the Council's vision for where the city is going and the positive role it will play in shaping that future.



04. Workshop Common Words



Describe Galway City

- Friendly
- Welcoming
- Walkable
- Maritime
- Cultural
- Creative
- Young
- Vibrant
- Diverse
- Safe
- Artistic
- Progressive
- Independent
- Authentic
- Outward-looking
- Energetic

Describe Galway City Council

- Dedicated
- Hard-working
- Responsive
- Forward-thinking
- People-focused
- Misunderstood
- Professional
- Community-driven
- Passionate
- Efficient
- Open
- Transformational
- Strategic
- Under-recognised
- Evolving
- Ambitious

These words reflect a recurring contrast within the workshop: Galway was described through emotion, energy and place, while Galway City Council was described through service, commitment and organisational change.



05. Key Strategic Insights



Key Strategic Insights



STRATEGIC INSIGHT 01

The future brand should operate as a unifying system across the organisation and the city.

Participants consistently supported the development of a flexible identity capable of connecting Galway City Council departments, services, cultural assets, future tourism initiatives, wayfinding and neighbourhood projects. The opportunity is to create one recognisable system rather than a collection of disconnected identities.



STRATEGIC INSIGHT 02

Galway's identity is defined by its people and energy as much as by its physical environment.

While Galway's maritime heritage, waterways and historic character remain important, participants repeatedly emphasised the city's youthful population, cultural vibrancy, independent spirit and welcoming atmosphere. The future brand should capture this lived energy rather than relying solely on familiar landmarks.



STRATEGIC INSIGHT 03

The workshop reinforced the perception that much of the Council's work happens quietly and is not fully understood by the public. Services including housing, street cleaning, cultural provision, community development and emergency response often remain disconnected from the parent organisation in the public mind.

A stronger identity and communications framework can help make this contribution more visible and better understood.



STRATEGIC INSIGHT 04

Communication must become more human, proactive and accessible.

Participants highlighted opportunities to strengthen public engagement through staff-led storytelling, video, local radio, digital platforms and clearer customer communications. The Council's subject-matter expertise and public-service commitment should be more visible, helping replace perceptions of a faceless institution with a more open and relatable organisation.



STRATEGIC INSIGHT 05

Successful implementation will depend on coordination, governance and organisational ownership.

The workshop repeatedly returned to the importance of rollout. Previous branding initiatives were seen to have weakened through inconsistent application, limited ownership and fragmented implementation. The future brand will require clear governance, internal coordination, stakeholder engagement and a structured implementation programme if it is to achieve lasting impact.



06. Implications for Brand Strategy



Implications for Brand Strategy

The workshop findings suggest that the emerging Brand Strategy should:

Create one flexible identity system capable of supporting Council services, cultural assets, public facilities, tourism, wayfinding and future sub-brands.

Express Galway's youthful energy, cultural vibrancy and independent character alongside its maritime and historic identity.

Improve public understanding of the Council's role by making services, facilities and achievements more visibly connected to Galway City Council.

Develop a more human and proactive approach to communication, using staff voices, digital content and local media to build trust and understanding.

Place bilingualism and accessibility at the centre of the future identity and communications framework.

Protect Galway's independent businesses, creative communities, cultural infrastructure and sense of authenticity.

Establish clear governance and implementation standards to prevent fragmentation and ensure long-term consistency.

Position the brand as a foundation for future city initiatives rather than a standalone corporate identity.



07. What We Heard



What We Heard

A selection of recurring themes and comments captured during the workshop.



The city's energy comes from its people, not just its landmarks.



Galway is maritime, cultural, young and outward-looking.



People do not fully understand how much Galway City Council delivers.



The Council is misunderstood rather than ineffective.



We need to show the human side of the organisation. What happens behind the scenes?



The public should recognise one Galway City Council across every service and facility.



Independent businesses and artists are part of what makes Galway authentic.



Implementation is where previous branding work has fallen down.



Irish should be prioritised and accessibility should be built in from the beginning.



08. Looking Ahead



Looking Ahead

From Insight to Strategy

The insights gathered through the Steering Group Workshop will be considered alongside the findings from the Heads of Function, City Councillors and Senior Management Team workshops, as well as the Brand Audit Report and Galway City Identity & Context Review.

Collectively, these findings provide a comprehensive evidence base for the development of the Galway City Council Brand Strategy. The next phase will synthesise the recurring themes, areas of alignment and differing stakeholder perspectives into a clear strategic framework defining the organisation’s purpose, positioning, values, personality, tone of voice and brand architecture.

The Brand Strategy will then inform the development of three visual identity directions. These options will be assessed against the strategic principles established throughout the Discovery Phase, ensuring that each creative route is rooted in Galway’s identity, the Council’s ambitions and the practical requirements of implementation.

The Steering Group will continue to play an important role in reviewing the emerging strategy, guiding the evaluation process and supporting a coordinated pathway towards approval, implementation and rollout.

Workshop Summary

Workshop	Steering Group
Participants	6
Duration	1.5 Hours
Themes Identified	6
Strategic Insights	5
Overall Sentiment	Collaborative, Strategic and Implementation Focused

The workshop demonstrated strong alignment around the need for a more unified, authentic and future-ready organisational identity. Participants recognised that the success of the project will depend not only on the quality of the final design, but on the Council’s ability to coordinate implementation, communicate more proactively and embed the brand consistently across services, places and future initiatives.



Turas Branda Reflection

Our Reflection

The Steering Group Workshop reinforced many of the strategic themes emerging throughout the wider consultation process while providing a valuable implementation perspective. Rather than debating the need for change, discussions focused on how the future brand can become a practical tool for organisational alignment, communication and long-term transformation.

Perhaps the strongest insight to emerge was that the brand should function as an enabling system rather than a standalone identity. Participants consistently described the opportunity to create a flexible framework capable of supporting Council services, cultural initiatives, neighbourhoods, tourism, placemaking and future organisational change through a single, coherent approach.

The workshop also highlighted the importance of communication. Creating a stronger visual identity alone will not change public perception; it must be supported by clearer storytelling, greater visibility of Council services and continued engagement with residents, businesses and stakeholders.

As the final workshop in the discovery phase, the Steering Group confirmed a clear and consistent direction. Across all stakeholder groups, there is broad alignment that Galway City Council requires a modern, authentic and flexible identity capable of reflecting the city's character while supporting the organisation's ambitions for the future.

Key Points

UNITY

One Council. One Identity. One Vision. Creating a consistent organisational identity that unites Council services, places and future initiatives.

LEADERSHIP

Strong leadership will ensure the brand becomes part of the organisation, not just its identity.

Successful implementation will depend on clear governance, ownership and long-term commitment.

AUTHENTICITY

Protect Galway's unique character while embracing its future.

Celebrate the city's heritage, bilingual culture, creativity and community as it continues to evolve.

COMMUNICATION

Tell Galway City Council's story with greater clarity, confidence and consistency.

Improve public understanding by making the Council's work more visible, accessible and engaging.

IMPLEMENTATION

Consistency across every touchpoint will build trust and recognition.

The future brand should be embedded across communications, signage, services, digital platforms and public spaces.

FUTURE

Create a flexible brand that grows alongside Galway City.

Develop an identity system capable of supporting future placemaking, tourism, cultural initiatives and organisational transformation.





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