

Draft Minutes of Galway City Council Economic, Community and Cultural Development SPC Meeting held via MS Teams on 10th December 2021 at 2.00pm

<u>Presiding:</u>	Cllr. Niall McNelis.	
<u>Present:</u>		
<u>Councillors:</u>	Cllr Donal Lyons, Cllr Eddie Hoare, Cllr Noel Larkin, Cllr John Connolly, Cllr Michael Crowe	
<u>Sectoral</u>		
<u>Representatives:</u>	Mr Dominick Whelan, Mr Dave Hickey, Ms Fiona Neary, Ms Geri Slevin,	
<u>In Attendance:</u>	Patricia Philbin, Director of Services, Conor Kelly A/Senior Executive Officer, Gary McMahon, Arts Officer, Caitriona Morgan, Administrative Officer, Ruairi Lehmann, Tourism Officer, Thomas Melly, A/Staff Officer, Theresa Donohue, Staff Officer Duana Tuite, Clerical Officer,	Galway City Council Galway City Council Galway City Council Galway City Council Galway City Council Galway City Council Galway City Council Galway City Council
	Mr Johnny Duggan, Ms Eithne Verling,	Galway's Westend Galway City Museum
<u>Apologies:</u>	Cllr. Clodagh Higgins, Ms Ruth McNally Ms Breda Glynn	Galway City Council

1. Confirmation of the minutes of the Economic, Community and Culture Development SPC meeting held on 10th September 2021.

Proposed: Cllr Donal Lyons

Seconded: Cllr David Hickey

And agreed by the members

2. Matters Arising

Cllr D. Lyons corrected the date for previous meeting was 10th September and requested update on tourist office in Salthill at the last meeting and requested again today. Mr. R. Lehmann advised that the intention to relaunch expression of interest this year was pushed back, with the intention for this to be done early in 2021. On request R. Lehmann made a commitment to Q1 2022.

Mr D. Hickey queried Social Enterprise report draft in May meeting and Enterprise units in Westside raised in last meeting, looking for any updates today. Mr C. Kelly advised the Social Enterprise Report is completed, there has been a Social Enterprise Development Group formed from this to progress actions. Progress on refurbishing the Enterprise units in Westside are delayed due to statutory work, fire regulations etc. There is an issue that there is no engineer to oversee works and the section is relying on colleagues in housing to help. Work has commenced but not yet completed.

Cllr N. McNelis queried item 3, Gaillimh na Gaeilge, was the position ever taken up, welcomed new

Director of Services Patricia Philbin and gave thanks to Brian Barrett for his work for the past number of years as acting director. Mr G. McMahon advised that Michael Og Mac Aoidh was due to take up the position but didn't. Mr McMahon will advise the SPC members of any developments on this at the next meeting.

3. Presentation from City Business Quarters on Outdoor Dining Initiative 2021

Mr R. Lehmann provided an introduction about the challenging summer for hospitality, GCC had worked with business groups to facilitate outdoor dining throughout the City and that today, the SPC were joined by Johnny Duggan from Galway Westend and Business Association, to give a presentation on how the hospitality sector has dealt with the challenge of operating during the pandemic. Unfortunately other group representatives for other areas of the city could not make it for this meeting with some last minute cancellations due to Covid-19.

Mr Johnny Duggan provided a presentation by Galway's Westend on the outdoor dining scheme. Slides were circulated. A one minute video of outdoor dining in the Westend was shown.

Discussion followed with questions and concerns addressed by GCC staff members. Many comments on the overall success of the scheme and thanks and congratulations to all businesses and City Council staff involved. Comments about uniformity of aesthetic being important, and that most traders worked within guidelines.

The members of the SPC raised concerns about the extension of National Legislation for licences outdoors in 2022.

Mr J. Duggan hoped the date for next year would start from 1st May 2022. He would like it earlier than that as the weather can be nice in March and April, but acknowledges some residents have a conflict with it.

Mr D. Whelan noted from an hotelier point of view Galway has overtaken Dublin and Cork for destination of choice.

Ms G. Slevin suggested that we should aim for electric bollards, a full weather cover and uniformity of materials used like can be found in France. She noted the Latin Quarter is successful in funding lighting, perhaps similar could be done to fundraise for bollards and uniformity. She expressed concerns about the amount of general waste accumulating.

Cllr N. McNelis queried next steps, consultation re road use, national legislation, and solutions for road closures to reduce staff needs and if there was anything in the budget for this implementation? He also requested an update at the next SPC meeting? Noting that it is relevant for other areas such as Woodquay and Salthill and that there were issues with Foster Street.

Cllr M. Crowe noted the timeline around policy is important. Structure needs to be in place for drawing up policy. Policy needs to be clear for businesses and residents. He would like a comment on timeline for policy from the Director. Ms P. Philbin answered she can't give a timeframe today, it will have to be discussed with Planning and Roads and were awaiting clarity from Department on extension of relevant legislation.

Mr R. Lehmann answered that representatives from the other business districts had to cancel attending today. Residents parking issues came up most in Woodquay. The Westend only lost a small section of parking. Residents were offered extensions to park in additional zones nearby.

He outlined that the majority of funding came from NTA for outdoor Ireland, which is unlikely next year. Fáilte Ireland expected to put grants funding in place for business. We're looking at how GCC resources can be used next year. We are having conversations about closing streets, removable bollards, this year's legislation, 254 licence, section 71 licence by transport department, to see what flexibility allowed. Legalisation extended until May 2022.

Mr R. Lehmann stated that while there was teething issues at the start, the majority was worked through. He agreed with the proposal of starting before May 1st and uniformity, but it will involve planning, last year there was a limited supply of outdoor furniture, they allowed flexibility in what furniture could be used. "Access for all" have also been engaged with throughout the process and some teething issues arose. We have updated the sandwich board policy, an ongoing conversation is needed. No timeframe set yet and transport department are working on it.

4. Update on Tourism Revenue Funding Schemes

Updates were given to members by Mr Ruairi Lehmann on Tourism Funding for the following projects and slides were circulated.

- Outdoor Seating and Accessories for Tourism and Hospitality
- Local Live Performance Scheme

The Local Live Performance Scheme supporting professional musicians and artists is now in phase three. Figures of who supported and money involved were shared in the presentation. The scheme is ongoing with performances in many locations.

Projects supported include pop-up performances and live music events. The scheme was difficult to manage, it needed the use of an outdoor area where numbers of attendance could be controlled due to Covid safety requirements.

The Minister stipulated that some funding must support pantomimes, because of the 50% cap on attendees. Phase three of the scheme will go live in January, the intention is to get it up and running Q1. He explained that the Manager of the Town Hall Theatre has been engaging with Renmore Pantomime and offering supports. Yesterday Renmore pantomime released a statement cancelling shows in 2021 and 2022 for safety reasons. Galway City Council will continue the conversation with them.

5. Update from the Community Department. See report which was circulated.

Ms Caitriona Morgan presented on the report, including the following topics:

- Community Call Helpline
- HSE wellbeing programmes
- Healthy Galway Programmes
- Local Economic and Community Plan guidelines
- LCDDC approved Community Activities Fund
- Social Enterprise Capital Grants
- Department of Community and Rural Development dormant accounts funding for LGBT organisations 2021 and 2022.

The Community Call Helpline is still operating 18004001560 with the email covidsupport@galwaycity.ie.

A number of HSE health and wellbeing programmes starting in January 2022. Healthy Galway Programmes have had round three extended to the end of March 2022, with a new Galway coordinator started in early November 2021.

The LCDC recently were approved considerable funding under the community *activities fund*, administered locally by LCDC. C. Morgan indicated that she will be bring a proposed timeframe before the LCDC next week. The Scheme will open in early January. A key difference is that funding can go to running costs. Social enterprise capital grants are going to eight social enterprises.

The Department of Community and Rural Development Dormant Accounts funding for LGBT organisations allocated €21,000 to *Amach LGBT organisation* for 2022.

Cllr N. McNelis noted the amount of details in the report and thanks to all staff and volunteers.

6. Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP)

Mr Conor Kelly presented about the following topics and slides were circulated to the group:

- New guidelines for LECP with Aims and actions. Local Authority requirements were advised by Patricia Philbin Director of Services.
- The GCC and LCDC 2018 review of LECP will help inform direction of next LECP.
- The SPC today will be asked to nominate two members for this group. The first meeting of this group will be January 2022.
- Series of funding schemes channelled through GCC and LCDC.
- Summary of existing framework policies.
- Commencement will be in early January.

A discussion followed with questions and concerns addressed by GCC staff members.

The group were asked to be aware of gender balance in nominations.

Mr David Hickey voiced his objection on behalf of the Chamber, to only having one day's notice in relation to the group being asked to nominate two representatives. But indicated he would accept the decision of the group today. Ms Patricia Philbin replied that it is the decision of the committee if they wished to nominate someone today

Ms C. Morgan informed the group that the current steering group includes Cllr N. McNelis and Mr D. Whelan from the SPC who represent the community and private sectors. The Chief Officer of the LCDC Caitriona Morgan and Director of Services Patricia Philbin are designated as members in the national guidelines. Ms Morgan outlined that the request of the SPC today is to establish a steering group, with nominees from within the SPC. Two nominees will be requested from LCDC next week also. The first meeting to take place in early January and overall structure of the committee and gender will be in place by then. All SPC members will play a key role in next year's actions. The Advisory Steering Committee is an addition to that. The Chamber is also represented on the LCDC.

Cllr John Connolly nominated Ms Geri Slevin. Cllr Mike Crowe seconded the nomination.

Mr Dominick Whelan stated GCCN wished for him to go forward as a nominee so he put himself forward, Mr David Hickey seconded the nomination.

Cllr Donal Lyons nominated Cllr Niall McNelis, Cllr Mike Crowe seconded this nomination.

Cllr N McNelis asked that everyone vote for two of the nominees by email to Ms Patricia Philbin.

The results of the vote were: 7 votes for Dominick Whelan, 7 votes for Cllr Niall McNeils, and 6 votes for Geri Slevin.

It was agreed that the SPC representatives on the LECP Advisory Steering Group would be Dominick Whelan and Cllr. Niall McNeils.

7. Update on Museum Operations

Ms Eithne Verling provided an update to the group on the museum since the start of lockdown March 2020 until present. Slides were circulated. Topics covered:

- Covid 19 and the museum, the first covid response plan in 2020, all protocols still in place.
- Extended online platform and digital content – new museum blog, updated website.
- *Dear Galway* project – over 200 letters written ‘To Galway’ will be available on website in 2022.
- Exhibitions – *monument ECOC 2020*, excavation of Dun Aengus Aran Islands.
- New cinematic experience in the museum. Colum Hogan created a 15 minute film about Aran Islands.
- *Gaelic Ireland* a new exhibition didn’t get much traction due to Covid.
- *Collections* – getting new contributions weekly from individuals and institutions of items.
- Designated museum, *National Monument Act*. Accredited *Museum Standards Programme*.
- *Keepsakes* Project from DP. *Misleor* Community Project from GTM. Treaty 100 project.
- Museum Café is closed, due to covid. Currently the space is being used for other projects.
- Funding to Create a Claddagh Model. Currently overlooking the real Claddagh out top window.
- *War of independence in Galway 1920-21* book should be available December/January.
- Sensory Space – creative Ireland supported, cubby space primarily for children with autism.
- Climate Change Gallery – project they want to do next year with two scientist.
- Extension – visitor experience plan, interpretive strategy, on second floor ‘Atlantic Voyages’.

The members thanked Ms Verling for her work.

Questions and comments followed and were addressed by Ms Verling.

Gary McMahon advised that they have attempted a Galway History Festival and will continue to work on that next year. The national guidelines associated with Decade of Commemorations activities and funding require that as these involve sensitive times in Ireland on WW1 and War of Independence, they must be remembered in a balanced and considerate manner.

175th anniversary of the famine is next year, Cllr Niall McNeils has made enquiries on this matter.

8. To agree a schedule of Meeting Dates for 2022

Proposed dates were circulated. Proposed by Cllr D Lyons. Seconded by Cllr E Hoare.

It was noted that some dates conflict with other meetings. Revised schedule to be confirmed.

9. A.O.B

The Chair welcomed Mr Gary McMahon to the role of Arts Officer. Gary addressed queries re arts funding and other funding allocations and indicated the Section will try to get as much as possible grants processed by end of the year.

Mr Hickey raised concerns about the lack of progress on the Airport site and its future plans in particular regarding the 4 acres being leased as Film Studios.

Ms P Philbin replied that a meeting was held yesterday with Galway County Council regarding Galway Airport. The Draft County Development Plan continues to be on public display until March. There has been some engagement with IDA and other businesses on possible uses of the site. An update will be provided on proposals for the site once the Draft Development Plan has been agreed.

The meeting concluded.