

Draft Minutes of Galway City Council Economic, Community and Cultural Development SPC Meeting held in Council Chamber City Hall & MS Teams on 08th December 2023 at 2.00pm

Presiding: Cllr. Niall McNelis.

Present:

Councillors: Cllr. Donal Lyons, Cllr Noel Larkin, Cllr John Connolly,

Sectoral

Representatives: Dominick Whelan, Dave Hickey, Geri Slevin

In Attendance:

Gary McMahon, Senior Executive Officer,	Galway City Council
Dermot Mahon, Senior Executive Officer,	Galway City Council
Caitriona Morgan, Administrative Officer,	Galway City Council
Ruairi Lehmann, Tourism Officer,	Galway City Council
Theresa Donohue, Senior Staff Officer,	Galway City Council
Kate Howard, Nighttime Economy Officer	Galway City Council
Aisling Colreavy, Healthy Galway City	Galway City Council
Thomas Melly, Staff Officer,	Galway City Council
Chelsea McConn, Clerical Officer	Galway City Council

Apologies: Ms. Lieze Fanning, Mr. Brian Barrett

Absent

1. Confirmation of minutes of the Economic Community and Culture Development SPC meeting held on Friday 22nd September 2023.

Proposed: Cllr. Donal Lyons

Seconded: Cllr. Dominick Whelan

Agreed by all members.

2. Matters Arising

Mr. Ruairi Lehmann gave an update on the Tourist office in Salthill. Due to the zoning of the site, some of the proposed uses would not be possible. Two options remain with the Active Travel team considering if it could be used as an indoor bike hub or failing that the site might revert to T&A use.

Mr. Dominick Whelan noted he had a few queries including some typos with the LECP documents which were noted.

3. Local Enterprise Office, Galway (LEO)

Ms. Caroline McDonagh gave a presentation on the Local Enterprise Office on behalf of Ms. Valerie Kelly. The following points were outlined:

- Soft supports

- Management Development programmes
- Financial Supports
- The 2022 LEO Galway Impact report
- Priorities for 2023/2024
- Focus for Q1 2024
- LEO client story

A discussion took place with queries from Cllr Niall McNelis and Mr. Dave Hickey which were answered by Ms. Caroline McDonagh. Mr. Gary McMahon thanked the LEO and noted to help boost uptake of the Energy Efficiency Grant mention will be included in the Rates newsletter. Ms. Caitriona Morgan added that Galway LEO is 10 years in existence and has a continuing presence in City Hall.

4. Irish Language Plan for Galway City

Mr. Gary McMahon welcomed Ms. Majella O'Meara, Irish Language Planner with Gaillimh le Gaeilge. Ms. O'Meara introduced herself and outlined the following in relation to the Plean Teanga for Galway City:

- The main objective is to increase the usage & communication knowledge of the Irish Language as a community language on an incremental basis.
- Language Plan over a period of 7 years.
- Strong aspect: Services through Irish.
- 36 Measures in the plan.

The presentation was welcomed by members and a discussion then took place. Cllr. John Connolly raised a number of issues including the use of Irish for City Council Meetings and the employment of three separate Irish language development bodies between Galway City, Bearna and the Mionlach areas. These were addressed by Ms. O'Meara. Mr. Ruairi Lehman noted that an Irish language festival will be taking place over the Bridget's Day weekend funded through the Marketing Fund.

Cllr. Niall McNelis thanked Ms. Majella O'Meara for her presentation.

5. Draft Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP)

Ms. Caitriona Morgan provided an update on the LECP since the last meeting. She advised that following engagement with the Northern & Western Regional Assembly (NWRA) it was noted that the NWRA had its meeting which was held on 17th November 2023, in accordance with the powers set out in Section 66C 2(c) and 3(c) of the Local Government Act 2001 and following consideration of the Draft Local Economic and Community Plan (Draft LECP) for Galway City, determined that its generally consistent with:

- (i) The Core Strategy and Development Objectives of the Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029 and
- (ii) The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032 (RSES) for the Northern and Western Region.

She also noted that furthermore it was determined that the Draft LECP demonstrates consistency between the economic and community objectives of the plan.

In relation to the screening for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) she confirmed that the Draft LECP has been subject to both screening for SEA and AA as required. The screening exercises examine the need to undertake full SEA and/or

Stage 2 AA. Screening for SEA and Screening for AA reports will accompany the plan and have informed the Council's determinations that full SEA and Stage 2 AA are not required for the Plan.

She advised that the Draft LECP had also been presented to the 3 Local Area Committee meetings which took place during November 2023, noting that several queries / questions were dealt with at the meetings. She further advised that no changes to the objectives or actions were required following this engagement and discussions.

Following a couple of minor corrections and some clarifications which were responded to by Ms Morgan and Mr D Mahon it was proposed by Cllr Neil McNelis, seconded by Ms Geri Slevin, and agreed by all that the SPC recommends to Galway City Council to adopt the LECP Framework Plan 2024 – 2029 at the January Ordinary Council Meeting in January 2024.

It was also proposed by Cllr Donal Lyons, seconded by Mr Dominick Whelan, and agreed by all that the SPC recommends to Galway City Council to adopt the LECP Implementation Plan 2024 – 2025 at the January Ordinary Council Meeting in January 2024.

6. Provisional dates for SPC meetings 2024

The proposed dates of Friday 26th January and Friday 12th April 2024 at 2:00pm were agreed by all members.

Mr Gary McMahon noted that in January's meeting the SPC workplan must be considered. He also referenced the national review of Strategic Policy Committees being carried by the IPA on behalf of the Department including an online survey to be completed by 24th November in which SPC members had been invited to participate. The current SPC Scheme 2029-2024 will cease as of the local elections in June.

7. A.O.B.

Ms. Caitriona Morgan advised the DRCD are set to launch the National Social Enterprise policy on the DRCD website to the public on the 21st of January 2024, in which she asked members to circulate. Cllr. Niall McNelis raised three queries. The first was in relation to the future uses and development of the former airport site at Carnmore. In response, Mr. Gary McMahon advised that a master planning exercise in relation to the site is to commence in 2024. The second query related to the board membership of Galway Culture Company and the allocation of funding by it to a variety of bodies and how the dispersals had been determined. Mr. McMahon referred Cllr. McNelis to the response to these queries already issued by the Interim Chief Executive and further suggested that his queries would be more appropriately directed to the Culture Company. In conclusion, Cllr. McNelis suggested that the St. Bridget's Day holiday should be an occasion primarily to celebrate women. Mr. Ruairi Lehmann responded by outlining the draft programme for the Tonnta festival between 1st and 5th February 2024.

Mr. Dominick Whelan requested that the Nighttime Economy Advisor present to the SPC in the New Year. Ms. Kate Howard confirmed that she will be making a presentation in the January meeting. Mr. Gary McMahon also advised that Creative Communities Engagement Officer, Adam Stoneman will be giving a presentation in January.

Cllr. Donal Lyons suggested that the Galway Culture Company might make a presentation in 2024.

The meeting concluded at 3:55 pm.