

Minutes of the Council Meeting of Galway City Council held in the Council Chamber, City Hall and Online via MS Teams on Monday 14th July 2025 at 3.45p.m.	
Presiding:	Cllr. Mike Cubbard, Mayor of the City of Galway.
Elected Members Present:	Councillors: A. Burke, A. Cheevers, M.J. Crowe, F. Fahy, J. Forde, S. Forde, C. Higgins, E. Hoare, D. Lyons, J. McDonagh, D. McDonnell, N. McNelis, T. O'Flaherty, H. Ogbu.
Elected Members Online:	A. Curran, P. Keane, E. Seoighthe.
Executive Present:	Chief Executive L. Cleary, Director of Services: P. Greene, H. Kilroy, D. Pender, A/DoS: E. Fanning, Administrative Officer: M. Duddy, Clerical Officers: M. McCarthy, M. Biggins. Online: SEO: A. Rohan.

In line with Standing Orders the Meeting commenced with a statement of intent to conduct the business of the Meeting in line with agreed Standing Orders which was followed by moment of silent reflection.

Mayor Cubbard noted the later start time of 3:45p.m.

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

No disclosures raised.

2. Confirmation of Minutes

2(a). June Plenary Council meeting held on 9 June 2025

Mayor M. Cubbard referred Members to agenda item 2(a) and invited matters of accuracy and/or matters arising.

Matters arising included updates requested on dialogue with residence of Shantalla, the issue of porridge oats scattered in the city, Park and Ride with Universities and at Westside, estates not taken in charge and local property tax, update on rents reviews and issue with Merlin access. A discussion ensued regarding the Local Community Safety Partnership and lack of west ward representation.

The following updates were provided on matters arising by the Executive:

The Chief Executive informed progress sensitively being made on the issue of porridge oats being spread in the city.

Mr. P. Greene informed that an update will follow in September's meeting regarding Park and Ride. In relation to Merlin Woods gate he advised discussions are being held with the Health Service Executive.

Mr. D. Pender confirmed that an application is due to be submitted by the National Transport Authority and a letter of consent to use Galway City Council land was issued.

Chief Executive L. Cleary advised that he will arrange for Elected Members to be briefed on rent reviews and impacts on maintenance.

Mayor M. Cubbard advised that his position on the Galway City Local Community Safety Partnership ceases when his Mayoral term ends and that the vacant position will be filled by the incoming Mayor who may already be a committee member. He added that this may leave a vacancy on the committee which will come before the Council for filling with a preference for a Councillor in the west ward to allow for geographical balance.

Proposed By: Cllr. F. Fahy	Seconded By: Cllr. D. McDonnell
2(a). Draft June Plenary Council Meeting Minutes, as circulated, be taken as read, adopted, and signed.	
The Minutes were adopted.	

2(b). Annual General Meeting held on 20 June 2025.

Proposed By: Cllr. D. McDonnell	Seconded By: Cllr. T. O'Flaherty
2(b). Draft Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 20 June 2025, as circulated, be taken as read, adopted, and signed.	
The Minutes were adopted.	

3. Business Prescribed by Statute

3(a). Loan Sanction for Capital Fund

The Chief Executive gave an overview of the proposal before Members for loan sanction to the value of a €60 million loan to accelerate project delivery in Galway city.

Ms. H. Kilroy, Director of Finance provided an overview of the Approval sought for a loan to fund priority capital projects and referred to documentation circulated to Members in advance of the meeting. Ms. Kilroy confirmed that funds will be drawn down only as required.

Cllr. A. Curran raised concerns on lack of information and speed at which this vote was being brought forward. He queried which budget will service the loan.

Cllr. A. Curran proposed "that the decision on the loan be deferred to a future date to allow for further details on how the monies would be allocated in a fair and transparent manner."

This was seconded by Cllr. E. Seoighthe.

Councillors discussed the proposal and matters raised included: if this was best interest rate available and if there was a possibility of reducing the interest rate in the

future, an explanation on the process of drawing down the loan, if any existing overdraft facility, if there was any facility fee on the loan arrangement and if the Housing Finance Agency require projections for loan repayments, feasibility of extending Crown Square building if needed for future staff expansion, discussions held on pricing with Bonham Quay, the need for government funding for lighting repairs after Storm Éowyn.

Cllr. D. Lyons requested assurance through the Audit Committee, Mayor and Executive that funding allocations would be brought to Members to know value for money regarding draw down.

Cllr. D. McDonnell proposed “to sanction the loan for €60m to come back through Audit Committee and Corporate Policy Group so there is governance and transparency.”

This was Seconded by Cllr. N. McNelis.

Cllr. A. Burke requested confirmation that Elm Park will have lighting repaired by winter.

A motion was Proposed by Cllr. A. Cheevers and Seconded by Cllr. J. McDonagh for

“An amendment to the proposed €60m Loan application by Galway City Council on the proposed spending for projects. My understanding of the proposal you mentioned is that: Having approved €60m Capital Development Fund, that GCC will continue to pursue Government grants for projects. If new Government grants are received and if a lesser amount than the full €60m loan amount is needed, that the equivalent unused loan amount to the grant amount received will be retained for footpath repair up to €4m during the term of this Council (€1m per year x 4 years).”

Following discussion and the confirmation that footpath repairs cannot be used from the Capital Development Fund, Cllr A. Curran withdrew the motion.

Cllr. A. Curran requested to read a statement on behalf of Cllr. E. Seoighthe:

‘I will be abstaining from this proposal, it does not reflect the needs of the city (housing), and details are unclear all Members have been elected equally yet some Councillors knew far more than others.

Ms. Kilroy addressed the concerns raised regarding governance, loan repayment, and the drawdown process. She clarified that repayments will only be made on the amounts drawn down. She further explained that, if approved by the Elected Members, a detailed application will be submitted to the Department, and once approved, the funds will be released through the Housing Finance Agency.

Following discussion, Mayor Cubbard took the following motion:

Proposed by: Cllr. A. Curran	Seconded by: Cllr. E. Seoighthe
That the decision on the loan be deferred to a future date to allow for further details on how the monies would be allocated in a fair and transparent manner.	
In Favour: 2	Against: 15 Abstain: 0 Present: 17
Result: The motion was defeated.	

The Mayor proceeded to take the following motion:

Proposed by: Cllr. D. McDonnell	Seconded by: Cllr. N. McNelis
Loan Sanction for Capital Fund To sanction the loan for €60m to come back through Audit Committee and Corporate Policy Group so there is governance and transparency.	
In Favour: 15	Against: 2 Abstain: 0 Present: 17
Result: The Motion was carried.	

3(b). Mervue Football Club Lease – matter referred from Corporate Policy Group.

Before discussion or consideration of the matter commenced Cllr. D. McDonnell withdrew from the meeting due to a conflict of interest for the duration of the Agenda item being discussed.

Mr. P. Greene explained that Mervue Football Club are seeking a letter of the Councils consent for the lease extension which is required to draw down capital funding to progress works. It was noted that a Section 183 would be brought before the Council at a later date.

Proposed by: Cllr. M.J. Crowe	Seconded by: Cllr. A. Burke
Accept proposal to agree in principle to Mervue Football Club lease extension	
In Favour: 15	Against: 0 Abstain: 0 Present: 15
Result: The Motion was carried.	

Cllr. D. McDonnell rejoined the meeting.

Cllr. D. McDonnell assumed the role of Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned for break at 5:20p.m.

4. Reports of Committee Meetings

4(a). Notes of Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 7 July 2025.

Cllr. S. Forde referred to a motion he submitted to the Corporate Policy Group for consideration.

<u>NOM 41/2025, submitted by Cllr. S. Forde on 16/06/2025</u>
That Galway City Council provide a report on: 1. How development contributions from housing developments, particularly one off homes, are collected and allocated, including clarification on why such contributions are paid to Planning. 2. Whether the current development levies are sufficient to ensure developers cover the full cost of associated infrastructure, including roads and footpaths.

Furthermore, I propose that Galway City Council consider increasing development charges where appropriate, to ensure that essential infrastructure such as roads and footpaths are delivered by developers as part of the planning condition, rather than falling back on Galway City Council to complete these works at a higher cost to the public.

This motion is put forward in light of the increasing pressure on the Roads and Transport budget, which is already under resourced and should not be burdened with infrastructure costs that ought to be borne by developers.

It was agreed that an update from the Urban Development Directorate issue to Cllr. Forde regarding the Development Contribution Scheme 2020 - 2026.

Cllr. D. Lyons requested a timeline when the National Transport Authority (NTA) update will be circulated and requested same before October's Plenary meeting. Cllr. D. Lyons also requested a review and updated list of Payzone retail outlets in Galway City, where parking payments can be made using cash or card.

Cllr. J. McDonagh requested comment on progress of the GLUAS.

Cllr. T. O'Flaherty asked for an update on parking machines.

Cllr. N. McNelis referred to funding and supports given by Galway City Council (GCC) to the Galway International Arts Festival (GIAF) noting that GIAF also pays GCC for use of venues and facilities, he called for GCC to further support the arts and the festival.

Cllr. M.J. Crowe in agreement need more funding for GIAF and arts in general and suggested budget process to be examined in regards to arts funding.

In response to queries Mr. D. Pender gave a commitment to follow-up with the NTA. He stated that to progress GLUAS now is premature, noting that the NTA is the authority to update on light rail.

Mr. P. Greene confirmed issue with parking machines remains sub judice. He confirmed several machines are out of order due to change in ownership of machines. Problems encountered with technical issue on the app have been resolved. He will arrange for update details on Payzone retail outlets. He informed Byelaws currently being updated to reflect changes on laws for parking and EV charging.

Ms. P. Philbin confirmed that Galway City Council is providing public realm space at Nimmo's Pier and Eyre Square to facilitate Galway International Arts Festival events. The fees associated with the use of this space is exempted by Galway City Council and results in a benefit in kind to the festival. She advised that a new scheme is proposed for 2026.

4(b). Lands adjacent to University Hospital – correspondence issued from HSE on 8 July 2025 to all Councillors and Residents Association.

It was agreed to leave this item on agenda for the September Plenary meeting.

Cllr. J. McDonagh advised Members that there were inaccuracies in a recent article published on the matter.

4(c). Adopted Minutes of Joint Meeting of the Corporate Policy Groups of Galway County Council and Galway City Council held on 25 February 2025.

On the proposal of Cllr. D. Lyons, seconded by Cllr. N. McNelis, it was agreed to discuss Notice of Motion 44/2025 regarding the Fire Station as this was raised in the minutes.

The Chief Executive L. Cleary informed that a written reply on the motion is forthcoming. He advised under the shared service framework the Chief Fire Officer and the City and County Council Chief Executives will deliver a presentation to the Department seeking funding in relation to design process and appointment of consultants for the new Fire Station. In response to Cllr. Lyons, he confirmed that a site has been identified and committed to briefing Members having consideration to the importance of synchronising efforts between the City and County to ensure alignment.

Proposed by: Cllr. N. McNelis	Seconded by: Cllr. C. Higgins
Adopted Minutes of Joint Meeting of the Corporate Policy Groups of Galway County Council and Galway City Council held on 25 February 2025.	
The Minutes were noted.	

5. Consideration of Reports of Officials

5(a). Monthly Management Report for July 2025 and Quarterly Report

Councillors considered the Report and matters raised included the following:

Cllr. S. Forde questioned why routine grass cutting was not carried out in the community. Cllr. H. Ogbu highlighted the need for an education piece on EV charging points as people are having difficulties with it.

Cllr. C. Higgins raised concerns about a sign which is on display in Silverstrand informing a ban on water sports. No notice or consultation on this has taken place to date. Cllr. D. Lyons advised sign is in front of a seating area and is causing obstructions.

The following Notice of Motion was raised by Cllr. C. Higgins and Seconded by Cllr. D. Lyons:

"In relation to Silverstrand beach I propose the following;

1. Signage is removed immediately.
2. That the Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) meets with water sport representational bodies to begin meaningful consultation.
3. That we work toward a Beach Management and Zoning Plan that allows for dedicated launch zones, improved access routes to the water, and safe, inclusive use of our coastal spaces."

It was agreed that the Motion be left on the agenda.

Cllr. T. O'Flaherty questioned if the Dexter cows are due to return to Ballyloughane Beach? Cllr. T. O'Flaherty raised question if funding is available for graveyards?

Cllr. J. McDonagh requested a breakdown on vacant housing units and asked if funding from tenants was used to repair stock.

Cllr. N. McNelis expressed concern regarding the absence of any reference to AirBnB in the Housing Update.

Cllr. E. Hoare asked for update in relation to the Thomas Hynes Road project.

Cllr. D. McDonnell requested update on dog fouling in parks.

Cllr. S. Forde requested update on Park and Ride for Christmas.

In response Mr. P. Greene will follow up and issue a response in relation to grass cutting and EV chargers. Mr. P. Greene was not aware of signage at Silverstrand and will investigate further. He responded on Dexter cows informing this was a funded programme and will investigate viability this year.

Ms. E. Fanning responded to questions on housing.

Ms. P. Philbin responded on Air BnBs that a Short Term Letting and Tourism Bill is proposed to be introduced to bring properties back to the long term market. Fáilte Ireland are to create a national register in May 2026.

Mr. P. Greene will have more updates on multi modal after the summer and in relation to dog fouling will get an update from the Environmental Awareness Officer.

Mr. D. Pender gave update on Thomas Hynes Project.

Ms. H. Kilroy advised there is some reserve monies for graveyards.

Mr. P. Greene gave update on park and ride and will bring to the Plenary meeting in September.

5(b). Annual Service Delivery Plan (ASDP)– Mid-year Review.

Cllr. E. Hoare requested information on the new burial ground. The Chief Executive committed to provide an update.

The ASDP mid-year review was noted by Members.

6. Notice of Motions

NOM 10/2025, submitted by Cllr. D. Lyons on 02/03/2025

In future in order to avoid what has emerged on the Upper Clybaun Road where two housing developments opposite each other are under construction with hoardings erected on either side of the road, giving only a 5m clear road space, no pedestrian facilities, very poor sight lines and no public lighting, I request Galway City Council would introduce a Condition which would be applied to every Planning Decision, to compel Developers to complete the public roadside footpaths, within a dedicated time of the Development commencing.

Discussion ensued on the motion with Cllr. D. Lyons raising concern regarding significantly reduced sight lines on the Upper Clybaun Road. He expressed dissatisfaction with the response provided.

Cllr. McNelis seconded the concern.

Ms. P. Philbin responded, stating that engagement with the Roads Department would explore measures to prevent similar issues in future planning applications.

Cllr. F. Fahy added that a planning condition should require the provision of a pedestrian footpath prior to development approval.

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:

1. The rationale for the purchase and how it aligns with the Council's Development Plan and strategic objectives.
2. The total purchase price, source of funding, and any additional financial commitments associated with the acquisition.
3. A breakdown of the due diligence process undertaken, including property valuation, structural surveys, legal title checks, and planning compliance.
4. Details of the procurement or selection process, including whether alternative properties were considered and if a competitive process was followed.
5. Any future plans for the property, associated costs, and the expected timeline for its use.
6. 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.

The Chair Cllr. D. McDonnell advised that the Notice of Motion 23/2025 had been addressed at the Special Meeting held on Crown Square on 14 July, 2025.

NOM 33/2025, submitted by Cllr. J. McDonagh on 02/06/2025

That this Council affirms its commitment to transparency and public engagement, and hereby resolves that no decision will be made to dispose of, sell, or otherwise transfer any part of Shantalla Park — including lands associated with the proposed helipad — without first conducting a full and proper consultation process with the local residents and relevant community.

The Chair Cllr. D. McDonnell advised that NOM 33/2025 was dealt with under Agenda Item 4(b).

NOM 34/2025, submitted by Cllr. N. McNelis on 02/06/2025

Proposed by: Cllr. N. McNelis Seconded by: Cllr. J. McDonagh.

That Galway City Council will write to the Minister for Housing and the Taoiseach requesting urgent increased funding for the Capital Acquisitions Scheme 2025 to prevent families and individuals from being homeless and to allow the scheme to function as previously, given its success.

A vote was taken on the motion

In favour: 11 Against: 0 Abstain: 0 Present: 11

The motion was carried.

Ms. E. Fanning agreed that a letter will issue to An Taoiseach.

NOM 43/2025, submitted by Cllr. D. Lyons on 04/07/2025

I am requesting Galway City Council to examine the feasibility of installing a pedestrian crossing at the junction of the Cappagh Road and Barna Road to facilitate pedestrians to cross the busy Barna Road.

Cllr. D. Lyons confirmed the Notice of Motion 43/2025 has been referred to the West Area Committee.

NOM 44/2025, submitted by Cllr. D. Lyons on 04/07/2025

The existing fire station on Fr. Griffin Road is in need of urgent replacement. In consultation with the Chief Executive of Galway County Council and the Chief Fire Officer of Galway City and County Fire Service can the Chief Executive give an update and time frame on the provision of a new site and fire station in Galway City for the Galway City and County Fire Service.

The Chair commented that Notice of Motion 44/2025 was discussed under Agenda Item 4(c).

NOM 45/2025, submitted by Cllr. H. Ogbu on 06/07/2025

Utility Reinstatement Standards and Oversight

That Galway City Council outlines the current measures in place to ensure quality control and proper reinstatement of footpaths and roads following works carried out by utility providers such as Irish Water, ESB, and others.

Given ongoing concerns about substandard reinstatement works in many areas resulting in long-term damage, safety issues, and additional costs to the Council, I call for the consideration of recruiting a new staff who will be assigned to the Licensing & Technical team to monitor and inspect utility works both prior to commencement and post-completion. This would help ensure compliance with agreed reinstatement standards and reduce the financial and operational burden on the local authority.

Mr. P. Greene advised there has been developments with an agreement between Uisce Éireann and Councils through the County and City Management Association (CCMA) committee.

7. Questions

Q17/2025, submitted by Cllr. J. McDonagh on 02/06/2025

Can the Chief Executive detail what consultations, if any, have taken place between Galway City Council and the HSE regarding (a) the proposed helipad in Shantalla Park, and (b) any potential disposal or transfer of lands within Shantalla Park? Furthermore, can all relevant correspondence, meeting notes, and records of communication between the Council and the HSE on this matter, from January 2025 to the present, be provided to elected members?

The Chair Cllr. D. McDonnell advised this Q17/2025 was discussed under Agenda Item 4(b).

Q18/2025, submitted by Cllr. N. McNelis on 02/06/2025

To ask the Chief Executive the number of applications received, approved and disallowed by Galway City Council for 2023 and 2024 year to date under repair and lease scheme, the buy and renew scheme; the types of properties involved (apartment, detached, bungalow etc) the amount paid under each scheme to date, and the length of turnaround time on average in tabular form.

Ms. E. Fanning committed to issue a response to question 18/2025.

Q19/2025, submitted by Cllr. H. Ogbu on 06/07/2025

Safety Concerns Related to E-Bike and E-Scooter Use on Shared Walkways

Can the Chief Executive advise if Galway City Council will consider installing signage and implementing other safety measures to address the increasing use of e-bikes and e-scooters on shared pedestrian walkways, such as the Railway Line Walk, which is particularly narrow in some areas?

In light of public concerns and safety risks especially for older people, children, and individuals with mobility challenges, can the Council explore options for signage,

awareness campaigns, and potential collaboration with An Garda Síochána and Iarnród Éireann, to support enforcement and safer usage?

A Response to issue from the Executive.

8. Correspondence

(a) Donegal County Council: Dismantling of the Triple Lock.

It was Proposed by Cllr. N. McNelis and seconded by Cllr. H. Ogbu that a letter of support issue in relation to the motion passed by Donegal County Council calling to safeguard the Triple Lock component of Irish neutrality.

It was further agreed to circulate same to all authorities for their consideration.

(b) Carlow County Council: Occupied Territories Bill.

(c) Carlow County Council: HIQA Coeliac screening

(d) Carlow County Council: Reinstate Tenant-in-situ scheme.

(e) Galway County Council: Review Affordable Housing Policy.

(f) Limerick County Council: Use of Smart phones

(g) LG10/2025 Local Government Act 2001 (Section 142) (Security Allowance for Local Authority Members) (Amendment) Regulations 2025 (S.I. No. 297 of 2025)

(h) Guidance for Public Representatives and Officials on Interaction with the Tobacco Industry

9. Items for Councillors Information

None.

10. Conference & Training

	Provider	Details	Date & Location
(a)	AILG CARO Webinar Training	Local Authority responsibility on Green Public Procurement.	Friday, 11 th July (Online) from 10:00a.m -11:30a.m.

11. Votes of Sympathy/Congratulations

Proposed by: Cllr. D. Lyons	Seconded by: Cllr. T. O'Flaherty
Patricia McTague R.I.P.	Oliver Neary R.I.P.
Martin McNamara R.I.P.	Mary Sweeney R.I.P.
Votes of Sympathy were noted.	

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

None.

13. Any Other Business

Cllr. D. Lyons queried if the National Planning Framework Plan was facilitated online. It was agreed that clarification would issue on this.

The meeting concluded at 6:55p.m.

M. Lyons
Minutes, Confirmed & Signed
Mayor of Galway

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