

COISTE IARNRÓD IDIR-CHONTAE AN IARTHAIR
Western Inter-County Railway Committee

To:

Ms. Ruth McNally
Director of Corporate Services
Galway City Council,
College Road,
Galway



c.c. Mr. Brendan McGrath, Chief Executive, Galway City Council

28th June 2022

A chara,

At a recent meeting of the Western Inter-County Railway Committee it was agreed to invite Galway City Council to nominate up to four members to join the committee.

The committee currently comprises representatives of six County Councils: Clare, Galway, Mayo, Roscommon, Leitrim and Sligo. It is a non-statutory committee, first established in 1981, seeking the restoration of passenger and freight train services on the Limerick to Sligo railway, via Clare, Galway, and Mayo. As you are aware, the Limerick-Galway section came back into service in 2010. In 2019, 531,000 passengers used the service and funding has now been approved to double the track and passenger capacity at Oranmore, which was developed as part of Phase 1 of the Western Rail Corridor.

The Committee congratulates Galway City Council on prioritising the inclusion of the expansion of Ceannt Station in your recent successful application under the Urban Regeneration Development Fund and we welcome plans to increase platform capacity at Ceannt Station from two to five platforms.

This increased track and platform capacity will greatly facilitate the introduction of the next phase of the Western Rail Corridor and bridge the current gap between Athenry and Claremorris via Tuam, thereby providing direct rail passenger services between Galway City and Mayo destinations including Westport, Castlebar and Ballina.

The Western Rail Corridor Phase 2 will also introduce the opportunity for Galway to benefit from access to trains serving new Park & Ride Railway Stations at Tuam and Abbeyknockmoy, thereby contributing to the reduction of traffic congestion on the N17/N83 and N63 approaches to the City.

It is the case that the REGIONAL SPATIAL & ECONOMIC STRATEGY (RSES) explicitly supports the WRC for passenger and freight use as a growth enabler for the region, recognizing that

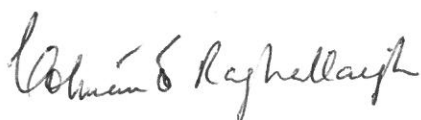
improved connectivity is vital to unlock the social and economic potential of the entire west coast that now constitutes the Atlantic Economic Corridor.

The current Galway City Development Plan Policy 3.5 recognises the social, economic and environmental opportunities associated with the expansion of rail services to and from the City when it sets the objective to "**facilitate rail transport, in particular the development of commuter rail and improved inter-urban services**".

The Economic Appraisal undertaken in 2021 by Dr John Bradley, circulated to you at the time, finds in a cost benefit analysis, that reactivating the railway between Galway and Mayo will yield a positive net present value (NPV) and benefit cost ratio of greater than 1.0. When additional non-monetised benefits are considered, a strong business case exists to carry out the project.

I should be most grateful if you would kindly bring this invitation to the attention of your elected members and advise.

Is mise, le meas,



Colmán Ó Raghallaigh (Asst. Secretary)

Droimnín,

Claremorris,

Co. Mayo

F12 R230

086-8859407

On behalf of Cllr. Michael Connolly MCC, Cathaoirleach of the Western Inter-County Railway Committee.