**Minutes of Galway City Council**

**Economic Development, Enterprise Support and Culture SPC Meeting**

**held on Tuesday, May 29th 2018 at 2.30 p.m., in the Council Chamber, City Hall.** 

**Presiding:** Cllr. Pádraig Conneely.

**Present:**

**Councillors:** Cllr.Donal Lyons, Cllr. Declan McDonnell, Cllr. Niall McNeilis, Cllr. Cathal O’Conchuir,

**Sectoral**

**Representatives:** James Coyne, Gary Lohan, Dave Hickey.

**In Attendance:** Brendan McGrath, Chief Executive;

Gary McMahon A/Director of Services;

Mark O’Donnell; Senior Executive Officer;

James Harrold, City Arts Officer;

Caitriona Morgan, Administrative Officer;

Davina Kelly, Clerical Officer.

**Presenting:** Barry Egan, Regional Director, Enterprise Ireland (West Region);

**Apologies:** Cllr. Noel Larkin;

Cllr. Mairead Farrell;

Cllr. Frank Fahy.

Geri Slevin

1. **Confirmation of Minutes**

Meeting of the Economic Development, Enterprise Support and Culture SPC held on 29th March 2018.

**Proposed:** Cllr. Donal Lyons;

**Seconded:** Cllr. Declan McDonnell**.**

**Matters Arising:**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined how he would have hoped for Galway 2020 to be on the Agenda, as he wishes to discuss funding & governance issues arising on foot of media reports. He expressed a wish to hear an update from Hannah Kiely, CEO of 2020, to receive confirmation on the accuracy of reports that the Creative Director of the Board is to resign shortly amidst internal issues in the company. He queried the implication of any such resignation by the Creative Director on any work programmes of 2020. Cllr. McNeilis concurred, and asked why this is not on the Agenda if it was the express wish of the Chair to receive an update on the matter. Cllr Lyons suggested that a Special Meeting of Full Council [as distinct from the SPC] might be an appropriate forum in which to hear updates from Ms. Kiely in the absence of her attendance before the SPC. Mr. Brendan McGrath intervened stating that at the current time, that there is a board meeting taking place, and in this regard it would be inappropriate for him to provide updates until all matters of that meeting had been finalised. He stated however, that Ms. Kiely does intend to provide updates on the position of 2020 and that it was a matter of settling on a mutually acceptable date in which to do so.

Cllr. McNeilis stated that while he was pleased to have met with Alfie Jones, Head of ICT, he still feels that the lack of Broadband as a wider issue needs to be addressed. There is currently insufficient coverage in Knocknacarra, which is to the detriment of residents & local businesses. Cllr. McNeilis feels that this is an issue that needs to be put on the Agenda.

The Chair queried any updates on the lands at Sandy Road & the ESB site. The CE confirmed that this is progressing, with ongoing discussion with ESB Rail on the matter.

Regarding the Bonham Quay development, the CE stated that the restoration of the Quay is essential as its development utilises land that would otherwise not be restored. It is hoped that a decision will be made by the end of the year.

With regard to Ceannt Station, he advised that there is ongoing discussion with Irish rail but any development will require revision as part of the overall Master Plan. David Hickey queried what the implication of a Master Plan would be? The CE said that there are parallel plans at play and no site specific master plan as such. He discussed the hierarchical nature of local area planning.

**2. Enterprise Ireland Strategy & Implementation 2020**

**-To receive a presentation from Barry Egan, Regional Director, Enterprise Ireland (West Region).**

Mr. Gary McMahon introduced and welcomed Mr. Barry Egan, Regional Director, Enterprise Ireland (West Region) to the meeting. Mr. Egan proceeded to deliver a comprehensive presentation highlighting the scope of the organisation’s work, with particular regard given to making the regional development of the Western region, namely Galway City & its environs.

He outlined how the IDA collaborates with a wide range of clients to drive job creation for Galway and the Western Region with clients from entrepreneurial backgrounds & early stage start up companies that employ 10 people or less with a specific focus on the enterprise Eco-system. He detailed how the IDA as an organisation supports all aspects of potential businesses from financial aspects to operational & strategic phases. He also emphasised how the IDA as an export orientated organisation seeks to power the economy through a strong focus on diverse export markets. Mr. Egan also highlighted the importance of diversification in a post- Brexit climate, and accentuated the importance of Irish markets not maintaining an over-reliance on British markets, this currently being a challenge for Irish exports. He advised that the IDA is suggesting that Irish exports focus its growth in the Eurozone instead as it is a more stable environment. Mr Egan went on to discuss the promotion of female entrepreneurship in the Irish Market as an action of strategy implementation in support of Galway’s Development. In addition, he also mentioned ‘New Frontiers’ – the Entrepreneur Development Programme which allocates €15k in funding with optional office space for start-ups as well as other initiatives like 2018 BioInnovate Fellowship which welcomes applications from engineering, business & technology sectors.

In a discussion that followed a number of questions and queries were raised across a number of areas and these were answered and addressed by Mr. Egan. The Chair thanked Mr. Egan for his presentation.

**3. Galway Local Economic and Community Plan: Action Plan 2018**

Mr. Gary McMahon gave a verbal update on the process followed in terms of developing action Plans since the last meeting. He explained that the mid-term review is still ongoing.

**4. Galway City Culture and Creativity Plan 2018- Update**

Mr. Gary McMahon provided an update on this item, and explained that Cruinniú na nÓg as an off-shoot event of Crinniú na Cásca is currently finalising its programme of events, being collectively organised through 2020 with the participation of cultural organsations. Cruinniú na nÓg aims to celebrate and encourage children & young people’s participation in culture and creativity, through the performance arts. Mr Coyne advised that Galway City Community Network will assist in the promotion of this event, but also advised that there needs to be more on social media to assist in support of event.

Saturday June 23rd was established this year under the Creative Ireland programme as a national day of creativity for children and young people.

**5. Galway City Purple Flag Interim Renewal**

Ms. Caitriona Morgan provided an update on the renewal process of this scheme, with a decision due by the beginning of September. She advised that in the meanwhile, local businesses are collaborating with the Economic Development Section in support of the renewal. Members of Committee suggested that public awareness of Purple Flag is inadequate at the present time, therefore going forward a more strategic and collaborative approach among the various stakeholders should be applied to counteract this.

**6. Urban Regeneration projects in Galway City**

The Chair advised that he had requested this item to be included on the Agenda as it was important to get an overview and update on a number of projects being planned for Galway City. In relation to the Council owned lands on Sandy Road, Mr. McGrath advised that it was hoped that consultants would be engaged to develop the master plan for this site to be completed by the end of this year, which could set out strategic redevelopment opportunities of this site which is a prime location. Following questions in relation to regeneration of Ceannt Station, Mr. McGrath noted that it has been indicated to the CIÉ Board that Galway City Council will engage in an immediate pre-planning process if required. In relation to NUI Galway’s major generation project for Nun’s Island he advised that Galway City Council is involved in the steering committee and he understood a project team was to be appointed shortly to advance work in this regard.

**7. Galway City Museum Extension & Enhancement Project:**

A progress update was provided by Mr. Mark O’Donnell. He explained that a decision from Failte Ireland is due in November 2018 upon which will commence a construction phase of 18 months. Howley Hayes Architects have been instructed to lead the design team in respect of works carried out. Mr O’Donnell explained that in the interest of public engagement, a drop-in information session would facilitate any queries on Wed, June 6th June in the context of the museum being a public space. Invitations will also issue to elected members and other representational or interested groups/bodies. An eight week public consultation will commence on foot of a Part 8 application which will be made in late June- August. Mr. O’Donnell also discussed elements of the project, which included the refurbishment & re-opening of Comerford House; access to the top of Spanish Arch; and the expansion of the current museum which will be commissioned under Failte Ireland by means of funding from Ireland 2040. Questions were answered by Mr O’Donnell in relation to possible flood risks and any related risk assessment, aesthetic aspects of the project. The members felt that Galway’s maritime heritage warranted a particular focus on any design features of the new museum.

**8. Confirmation of dates for SPC for 2018 & any other business.**

The next meeting needs to be confirmed.