



Galway City Community Network
Líonra Pobail Chathair Na Gaillimhe

Galway City Community Network

The Public Participation Network in Galway City

5th December 2018

Menlo Park Hotel

Plenary Minutes

Attendance

Please see below

Apologies

John Rabbitte, Fiona Jennings, Karina Timothy, Marian Maloney, Martin O'Connor, Derrick Hambleton

Welcome & introductions

Tommy Flaherty, Chairperson, opened the plenary and welcomed members to the meeting. He invited those in attendance to share their names and organisations, and noted that there was a microphone available to ensure everyone could hear and be heard.

Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes of the previous Plenary were proposed by Nichola Tierney and seconded by Brendan Smith. The GCCN Co-ordinator gave an update on correspondence that had been sent to the Mayor to which a reply had yet to be received.

Reports from GCCN Representatives

It was restated and reagreed that brief reports from the GCCN Representatives are to be submitted prior to the Plenary so they can be circulated before the meeting.

Joint Policing Committee

Nicola Tierney gave the report on the JPC. She reported that the JPC had held a Public Meeting in Westside Community Centre. Nicola noted that there was poor public participation, but this reflected back to feedback from the public that they did not feel it was an appropriate space. There was positive feedback given in relation to speed limits and signage. The issue of cycling on the Prom was discussed as was a proposal for a Greenway as a possible solution. In relation to the Prom, there was an acknowledgement that there is an increase in usage by pedestrians and in particular by older people. No solution was proposed on the increased dangers and a number of those present added their concerns to this. Nicola gave feedback in relation to hate crimes as the local Superintendent, Garda Maria Cahill, stated that not a matter that came under local reporting as a national issue, despite the fact that a number of other JPCs have put hate crimes into local reports. It was suggested that the new Garda Commissioner, Drew Harris be invited to the next meeting of the JPC. There was a request from Brendan Smith that Cyber Crime feature in JPC reports.

As a member of the Galway Cycling Campaign, Shane Foran gave an input in relation to cycling on the prom. He stated that they are setting up a campaign in relation to this issue. He further stated that the use of the Prom by Deliveroo for deliveries was not a cycling but an employment issue.

Local Community Development Committee

Terence McDonough reported on the work of the LCDC and in particular highlighted the proposal to review the implementation of the Local Economic and Community Plan. GCCN LCDC Representatives had put a significant amount of work into presenting the case for a review of the LECP and more specifically, the development of a new Implementation plan based on a robust consultation process. As agreed at a meeting with Galway City Council in November, the GCCN Co-ordinator had forwarded two documents – one a proposal and one a tender document should the work be tendered – to Galway City Council.

GCCN have sought an update from Galway City Council in relation to the above and will discuss this at a meeting next week. Imelda Gormally (GCP) raised the issue of the Community Enhancement Fund and queried the roll out and re-application process. Margaret Ó Riada highlighted the Equality and Human Rights Statement that the LCDC had ratified. She re-iterated the requirement for those who had signed up to the statement to see it put into action. Ann Irwin updated the Plenary that GCCN had issued a joint press release with Galway City Partnership in relation to comments from a Galway City Councillor that contravened the Equality and Human Rights Statement.

Environment, Recreation and Amenity SPC

Eleanor Hough updated the meeting on the work of the Environmental, Recreation and Amenity SPC. She highlighted that there was a lot of time required in the compilation of reports for GCCN but acknowledged that this was a key responsibility of GCCN representatives. Eleanor gave an update in relation to GCC personnel - Dermot Mahon is now responsible for Environment. GCCN Representatives have consistently raised the issue of a Bio-diversity Officer and the Climate Change Strategy but have received no substantive responses. Eleanor stated that there was a real problem with Councillors leaving the meetings before they are over.

Housing SPC

Karen Golden gave an update from the Housing SPC. Karen restated the issue with Councillors failing to remain for the entire meetings. Karen highlighted a number of areas - the Mortgage to Rent Scheme and the draft Estate Management Strategy, which was adopted. Ann added that GCC are meeting with GCCN in the coming weeks to explore a consultation process for the implementation of the Estate Management Strategy. Pauline O'Reilly requested an update on letter that Housing Linkage Group submitted to GCC in November. This was following on from recommendations made at Housing Conference in February organised by GCCN. Ann updated Pauline that there were minor changes to be made prior to letter being sent.

Transport SPC

No update

Economic Development, Enterprise Support, Arts & Culture SPC

Garry Lohan provided the updates from the Economic Development, Enterprise Support, Arts & Culture SPC. He stated that there was little real progress on issues.

Planning SPC

Shane Foran gave an update from the Planning SPC. Shane reported that questions of accuracy were raised as to the reporting of minutes in relation to Galway Harbour Board and what was happening. An update was given on funding for roads specific to the upgrade of Galway Clinic Roundabout. An update

on funding for cycle lanes in the city was also provided, but no details were given to the SPC. There were also discussions on the Sandy Road development, the Nun's Island regeneration project, Headford Road, the Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy, the Vacant Site Register and a proposal for a supermarket in Castle Park. There was a further update in relation to the Public Realm Strategy and the upcoming consultation process.

Galway Sports Partnership

No update

Western Regional Drugs and Alcohol Task Force

No update

Galway City and County Child Care Committee

No update

Comhairle na nÓg

No update

Motions

Two motions were presented and approved:

- An invitation be issued to the Police Commissioner, Drew Harris, to the next meeting of the Joint Policing Committee;
- A motion on the future of Galway City Community Network:
 - Without causing undue concern, there is discussion in relation to the Public Participation Networks that are independent of their local authority, of which there are only a small number. In that context, we propose a motion that we, the membership of Galway City Community Network, reaffirm the importance of GCCN independence and the critical role that it plays in the way that GCCN operated and reaffirm our commitment to remain independent.

Any other business

There was no further business and Part I was concluded.

Part II - Community Celebration

The GCCN Co-ordinator welcomed Tom Connell, Galway City Council, and Nollaig Mc Guinness, Galway 2020, to the meeting and gave a brief presentation on GCCN work.

Presentations

Tom Connell gave the Plenary an overview of a number of issues that he has been asked to address:

Proposal to merge Galway City and County Councils - legislation is currently going through the Dáil, the majority of which deals with Cork city. Items which relate to Galway are the abolition of separate CEO positions for the city and county and merging the two positions into one.

Local Economic and Community Plan - GCC have received the GCCN submissions and will come back to this in the next number of weeks. GCC envision that a review will take place in relation to the actions.

Transport and Housing – these are the two biggest challenges facing Galway city.

In relation to housing, projects are being advanced. On the matter of transport, Tom provided an update on the Outer Ring Road, on which he said that future transport policy depended. He stated that the best possible scenario would be that it would be completed by 2024. He stated that other projects were also being progressed in public transport, of which the NRA are supportive and will provide a far more regular service across a Public Transport route across the city.

Public Realm Strategy - Consultants have been appointed to the strategy. A key issue is the extension of pedestrianisation to extended areas of the city centre. There are also plans to re-pave Shop Street and it is anticipated that this will be in early 2019.

Questions/Comments from GCCN Members

- Ann Irwin gave an update that GCCN have written to Galway City Council CEO and have requested stakeholder status in relation to the Public Realm Strategy but have yet to receive a reply.
- Joan Kavanagh requested information on pedestrianisation. Tom Connell stated that there will be re-paving of existing pedestrianised streets.
- James Coyne sought further clarification in relation to the proposed merger of the city and county. Tom Connell stated that there will be one CEO but the city and county councils to remain in place for five years.
- Joe Loughnane commented on existing vacant houses & retrofitting, the links between transport & housing and the selling off of public lands. Tom Connell gave clarification on where compulsory purchase orders have been used (three in Ballybane) and retrofitting where vacancy within stock kept to a minimum. He stated that Galway City Council had appointed a Vacant Housing Officer. He further stated that public land is being used but that the land bank was limited due to the plans for the outer bypass.
- Caroline Stanley queried why two Park & Ride sites were located in such close proximity to the city when traffic is backed up as far as Claregalway and Oranmore. Tom Connell stated that previous studies had been carried out in this area where these sites had been identified. He added that when Park & Ride was in operation in Carnmore Airport it had not been taken up on.
- Karen Golden stated that the Vacant Houses Officer post was again vacant and queried whether it would be filled again. In addition, Karen queried the update Minister Eoghan Murphy had been given in Q1 and Q2 in relation to houses. Karen stated that to date there had been 18 new homes in when there was a target for 2018 of 96 new builds. Tom Connell acknowledged that currently 18 direct builds by GCC. He added that this did not take into account Approved Housing Bodies that are not included in these numbers. He acknowledged that these targets were not sufficient, but targets will be reached.
- Brendan Mulligan queried connection between transport and climate change. He stated that the public, GCCN and the Galway Environment Network need to be used as a resource in relation to consultation and engagement. There appears to be a policy of decisions being made and an approach of defending these decisions and therefore any impact in relation to subsequent decisions have little impact. Ann Irwin added that there needs to be a differentiation between public and stakeholder consultation, and more weight given to the latter.
- Shane Foran stated that GCC are the largest commercial car park operator in Galway city and this is a conflict of interest. Tom Connell stated that no influence on policy.
- James Coyne queried whether there was a role for local authorities in sub-dividing housing stock and policy shift in going up an extra floor. He also highlighted the impact that student accommodation can have on communities. Tom stated that the division of housing stock was covered in national policy and question of the heights of buildings was covered in the City Development Plan and was limited to the area around the Docks. On student accommodation permission was granted under the Galway City Local Development Plan.
- James Coyne sought an update on the proposed bridge over the River Corrib towards Dangan as to whether there were plans for a pedestrian walkway. Tom stated that there are no plans for access by pedestrians to the proposed bridge.
Tom Connell was thanked for his attendance and it was hoped that GCC could in the future attend more.

Galway 2020

Nollaig Mc Guinness began by acknowledging that 2018 had been a particularly hard year. Nollaig went through a number of events with a particular focus on community events.

- **Small Towns Big Ideas** - 51 projects were funded under this initiative. the most rooted in communities.
- **Legacy** – the work on the G2020 legacy has started to progress
- outlined stakeholder consultations and legacy champions
- **Volunteering** - the Volunteering Engagement Strategy will be launched in early 2019.

Nollaig offered to work with GCCN and informed the meeting that there will be a new call for Small Towns Big Ideas projects in 2019.

Questions/Comments from GCCN Members

- James Coyne sought clarification on the shortfall of funds and how it would affect Small Towns Big Ideas. Nollaig stated that this would not affect the above. He clarified uncertainty in relation to overall funding. He stated that the government had re-committed €15 million to G2020. Corporate funding is not known at the moment. Galway 2020 value overall monetary benefit to Galway as €39 million.
- Martina Finn stated that 30% that was committed to community projects was not in the Bid Book. Nollaig stated that not clear that 30% for community projects.
- Eleanor Hough questioned feedback from the Legacy event and what difference would G2020 make? Nollaig acknowledged that the ‘Champions’ need to meet.
- Brendan Smith stated that he had attended the Legacy event and is the Green and Blue Champion. He further stated that he had concerns in relation to governance and communication. There had been an undertaking at the Legacy event in June that the champions would meet but there had been no follow up in six months and no mention of legacy at the G2020 event in the Print Works. Nollaig acknowledged that there was a lot of priorities that had moved down the list in the aftermath of the resignation of the G2020 CEO. He stated that the work on the legacy would be progressed in early 2019.
- Joan Kavanagh stated that there is an absence of arts infra-structure in the legacy of G2020. Nollaig stated that Galway’s bid had intentionally not included arts infrastructure. This was based on lessons learnt from previous European Cities of Culture where problems had arisen in the aftermath.

Nollaig was thanked for attending the Plenary and GCCN looked forward to opportunities for working with G2020 in the future.

Tommy Flaherty concluded the meeting by acknowledging all the work that GCCN had completed throughout the year.

Signed _____

Date _____

Attendance

Name	Organisation
Aidan Reade	Blackrose Racing
Brendan Mulligan	Engineers West Ireland Region
Cameron Keighron	AMACH! LGBT+
Brendan Smith	Terryland Forest Park
Joan Kavanagh	Galway Age Friendly Older Person's Council
Caroline Stanley	Friends of Merlin Woods
Pauline O'Reilly	Stay at Home Parents
Derrick Hambleton	An Taisce
Karen Golden	Galway Simon Community
Eleanor Hough	Grattan Court Residents' Association
Maeve Mulrennan	Galway Arts Centre
Gary Lohan	Youth Work Ireland Galway
Imelda Gormally	GCP
James Coyne	Westside Resource Centre
Joe Loughnane	Galway Anti-Racism Network
John Cleary	GAFOPL
Terrence Mc Donough	An Taisce
Margaret Ó Riada	Galway Traveller Movement
Marian Maloney	Action for Equality
Martina Finn	Third Space Galway
Nichola Tierney	Westside Age Inclusion Ltd
Shane Foran	Galway Cycling Campaign
Terry McDonough	An Taisce
Tommy Flaherty	Ballybane Community Resource Centre
Ann Irwin	GCCN
Fiona Blaney	GCCN
Tom Connell	Galway City Council
Nollaig Mc Guinness	Galway 2020