

**Minutes of Meeting of Planning Strategic Policy Committee held on 18<sup>th</sup> February, 2020 in Galway City Council, City Hall, College Road and Galway.**

**Presiding:** Cllr Peter Keane.

**Present:** Cllr Frank Fahy  
Cllr Noel Larkin  
Mr Brendan Mulligan (Galway City Community Network)  
Mr Derrick Hambleton (An Taisce)  
Ms Patricia Staunton (Business Sector)

**In Attendance:** Ms Ruth McNally, Director of Services  
Ms Helen Coleman, Senior Executive Planner  
Mr Liam Blake, Senior Executive Planner  
Ms Emma Silke, Administrative Officer  
Mr Jim Higgins, Heritage Officer  
Ms Joan Higgins, Staff Officer  
Ms Caroline Crawford, Assistant Staff Officer

**Apologies:** Cllr Niall McNeilis  
Cllr Mike Crowe  
Cllr Clodagh Higgins  
Caroline Phelan, Senior Planner  
Marian Spellman, (Irish Congress of Trade Unions)  
Norann Keane, Senior Staff Officer

**Absent:** Cllr Owen Hanley  
Cllr Ollie Crowe

**1. Minutes & Matters Arising**

Mr B. Mulligan requested an amendment to the minutes of 10<sup>th</sup> December 2019 to reflect his concerns regarding development plans for the Headford Road.

The minutes of the meeting held 10<sup>th</sup> December 2019 were proposed by Cllr. F. Fahy and seconded by Cllr. N. Larkin.

Mr D. Hambleton referred to the request of the committee to include the report on the due diligence process for the Galway Harbour on the agenda and queried why it had not been included. The Chair confirmed that this item was still live on the City Council agenda but the Chief Executive is agreeable to attending a meeting of the SPC to address this request.

Cllr F. Fahy raised issue regarding three castles at Menlo, Terryland and Menlough and queried what stage were they at and it was agreed an update would be provided by the Heritage Officer in his presentation.

## **2. Update on Short Term Letting.**

Ms E. Silke gave an update on short term letting and confirmed Galway City Council had recently received notification of a funding allocation from the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, of €241,500 for 2020 and €262,500 for 2021 to cover staffing and legal costs.

It was further confirmed that recruitment of staff was currently on-going and it was envisaged that the additional staff would be in place by Q2 2020.

To date Galway City Council has received 27 complaints, 29 Form 15 Registrations and 5 planning applications – 1 for construction of extension for use of STL purposes, 3 for change of use and 1 demolition of existing building with replacement building, 2 of which have been refused, 2 had further information requests issue and 1 is awaiting decision.

Following a general discussion it was confirmed that difficulties were being experienced in some instances when trying to ascertain ownership of properties owned by companies especially when registered overseas and the members thanked Ms. Silke for her presentation and requested that an email contained the figures quoted be issued by email.

## **3. SPC Work Programme categorisation for 2020**

It was confirmed that the revised work programme requested by members at the previous meeting had not been circulated for discussion as the Senior Planner was not in attendance. It was agreed that it would be circulated to the members in advance of the next meeting

## **4. Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy**

Ms H. Coleman confirmed that under the planning and development legislation a variation of the City Development Plan was required to incorporate the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the North West Region, incorporating the Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) for Galway which was adopted by the Regional Assembly in January this year. The process for the variation must commence within six months of this adoption and will include a public consultation period.

Ms. Coleman also confirmed that guidance was awaited from central government on how a governance framework can be put in place to ensure the proper management and development of the MASP area which includes parts of Galway County. The Director further confirmed that the concerns of the City Council with regards to the delays in implementing this had been clearly communicated to the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.

## **5. U.R.D.F 2020 Application**

Ms H. Coleman confirmed that a call for proposals on the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund has been announced. This provides for an allocation of €2bn up to 2027 by when works must be completed, primarily to support the five cities and other large urban centres including Galway city to support compact sustainable cities and rejuvenation projects in line with the National Planning Framework and National Development Plan.

The closing date for applications is March 31<sup>st</sup> and all applications must come through the local authority including those being made by external bodies and be ranked in order of priority. The key assessment criteria includes supporting the wider climate objectives and “liveability” within cities to deliver a low carbon and climate resilient society.

Applications must have a €10m minimum development value of developments with 25% matching funding and be linked together under a single clear strategy that accords with the relevant MASP.

It was clarified by the Director that previous unsuccessful applications will be examined and considered for submission again where they meet the criteria of the latest scheme.

The members requested that consideration be given to including the development of a Local Area Plan for the Headford Road could be included

## **6. Heritage Grants**

Mr J. Higgins, Heritage Officer outlined details of available Heritage Grant schemes and projects for which funding had been applied for including a field school for environmental and archaeological purposes; St Nicholas 700<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference; ‘Galway Heritage in Stone’ stone carvings publication and the Bohermore Cemetery Restoration project, excavation at Spanish Arch and a schools pack and publication.

The members complimented Mr. Higgins for the level of work delivered with modest resources.

Members requested that priority be given during 2020 to promote and celebrate Galway’s physical manifestation as a Medieval City.

Mr. Higgins provided clarifications in response to queries in relation to grants for at risk structures and undertook to provide updates at a future meeting as to the allocation of funding under the Historic Structures Fund.

Mr. Higgins further confirmed in response to item raised under matters arising that tenders had been sought by the Architects Department to carry out essential works to the City Council’s three castles.

## **7. A.O.B.**

The next meeting was agreed for Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May at 9.15am. This concluded the business of the meeting.