

Minutes of Meeting of Planning Strategic Policy Committee held on 12th May, 2020 via Zoom in Galway City Council, City Hall, College Road and Galway.

Presiding: Cllr Peter Keane.

Present: Cllr Frank Fahy
Cllr Mike Crowe
Cllr Owen Hanley
Cllr Niall McNeilis
Cllr Clodagh Higgins
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 Caroline Phelan, Senior Planner
Ms Helen Coleman, Senior Executive Planner
Mr Liam Blake, Senior Executive Planner
Ms Marian Spellman, (Irish Congress of Trade Unions)
Ms Emma Silke, Administrative Officer
Ms Caroline Crawford, Assistant Staff Officer

Apologies: Ms Norann Keane, Senior Staff Officer

Absent: Mr Jim Higgins

Cllr. P. Keane, Chairperson, welcomed members and officials to the meeting which was being held in the City Council Chamber where the Chair and senior officials were present as well as on the Zoom virtual platform. The Chair re-iterated the guidelines and protocol with regards to the holding of meetings by teleconferencing which were circulated with the meeting invite and reminded all participants of the obligation to abide by these.

1. Minutes & Matters Arising

The minutes of the last meeting held on 18th February 2020 were proposed by Cllr F. Fahy and seconded by Cllr. N Larkin.

Mr B. Mulligan requested an amendment to the minutes of 18th February 2020 to reflect his concerns regarding a lack of preparation of a Local Area Plan for the Headford Road.

Cllr F. Fahy asked that the minutes reflect that he discussed Menlo, Terryland and Merlin castles and was seeking an update to be provided on funding for the three castles. Cllr P. Keane requested the Heritage Officer would provide an update on funding upon receiving confirmation of such. He said the matter would be kept on the agenda.

Mr B. Mulligan asked for an update on Short Term Letting. Ms R. McNally responded that as a result of Covid-19 no further update was available as Short Term Letting was not deemed an essential service during lockdown.

Mr D. Hambleton asked for an update on the Harbour. The Director confirmed that an update on this matter from the Chief Executive was still a live item on the Galway City Council agenda which had not been considered by the Elected Members as yet. Mr. Hambleton requested that this item be kept on the agenda.

2. North West Regional Assembly– Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy Presentation

The Chair welcomed David Minton, Director of the Northern & Western Regional Assembly and his colleague Denis Kelly, Senior Planner who joined the meeting virtually. A presentation was then given to the Members on the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy which was adopted by the Regional Assembly earlier in the year.

A copy of the presentation was provided to members, the key points of which were:

- 70pc of our population will be living in cities by 2050 with a growing demand for living in urban areas.
- Successful cities around the world they have a number of pillars in common, Innovation, Diversity, Creativity and Tolerance. Galway has all three.
- The National Planning Framework has a target growth of 160 -180,000 people for the region with a further 115,000 in employment. For Galway city the target growth is 40 -50,000 people or a 50pc growth to 120,000 people.
- 50pc of new housing will be within the built up footprint of Galway City Council and suburbs including development on Brownfield sites.
- Local Authorities must now update their County and City Development Plans. They will help to drive changes along with Project Ireland 2040, Board Project Ireland Funds and RSES Implementation Group.
- Regional Economic Analysis Report suggest that Galway will be the city most likely to be exposed to significant economic disruption as a result of Covid 19.
- The RSES will support further investment in sustainable transport measures. In addition, to achieve our Vision for the region we need to strengthen our digital network and enable new technologies to work.
- More strategic actions are required to prepare the region for what is to come in terms of renewable energy and energy supply.

3. Update on the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF)

The Director gave an update on the application being prepared under the 2020 URDF scheme which comprise several projects based on the objectives of the Galway Transport Strategy, City Development Plan, Public Realm Strategy and MASP.

Projects include providing access route for the new suburb of Ardaun; a new pedestrian and cycle bridge from NUI, Galway to Waterside, along the old abutments of the Clifden Railway; delivering stage 1 and 2 of the Galway City Cycle Network and enhancement works under the Public Realm Strategy.

4. A.O.B.

Members discussed the steps being taken to assist businesses during the Covid 19 pandemic including the establishment of a City Mobility Scheme to identify and deliver temporary mobility interventions around the city. In response to a specific query regarding fees for tables and chair licences, it was confirmed by the Director that this scheme was provided for in national legislation and to deviate from the requirements of same would require legislative changes.

5. Next Meeting

Date of next meeting to be confirmed by Director with Chairperson in due course given the uncertainty prevailing during the pandemic. This concluded the business of the meeting.