

Draft Minutes of Galway City Council Economic, Community and Cultural Development SPC Meeting held via MS Teams on 21st May 2021 at 2.00pm

Presiding: Cllr. Neil McNelis.

Present:
Councillors: Cllr Donal Lyons, Cllr Eddie Hoare, Cllr Declan McDonnell,
Cllr John Connolly, Cllr Clodagh Higgins, Cllr Noel Larkin, Cllr Michael Crowe,

Sectoral
Representatives: Mr Dominick Whelan, Mr Dave Hickey. Ms Fiona Neary, Ms Geri Slevin,

In Attendance:

Mr Brian Barrett, A/Director of Services,	Galway City Council
Mr Conor Kelly A/Senior Executive Officer	Galway City Council
Mr Gary McMahon, A/Senior Executive Officer	Galway City Council
Ms Caitriona Morgan, Administrative Officer	Galway City Council
James Harrold, Arts Officer	Galway City Council
Ruairi Lehmann, Tourism Officer	Galway City Council
Thomas Melly, Staff Officer	Galway City Council
Theresa Donohue, Staff Officer	Galway City Council
Angela Breslin, Staff Officer	Galway City Council
Breda Glynn, Clerical Officer	Galway City Council.

Apologies:

1. Confirmation of the minutes of the Economic Community and Culture Development SPC meeting held on 19th February 2021.

Proposed: Cllr Donal Lyons
Seconded: Mr David Hickey
And agreed by the members.

2. Matters Arising (2:00pm – 2:05pm)

Update on Salthill Tourism Office requested by Cllr Donal Lyons. Cllr Neil McNelis requested update on Health and Safety Audit on Salthill Tourist Office and Eyre Square Office update.

It was advised by Mr Ruairi Lehmann that work on this project is still ongoing but currently the administration of outdoor dining grants to facilitate in economic recovery for city businesses was to the forefront and he hopes to have a further more detailed update at the next meeting.

Mr Brian Barrett advised the work programme was on hold as restart of the local economy is taking priority at present.

3. LEO Office Presentation/Update Ms Breda Fox (2:05pm-2:40pm)

Ms Breda Fox opened her presentation to the committee with an outline of the staffing structure of the Enterprise office at present. The 4 Core Areas of Remit were advised to the committee. Ms Fox gave an overview of the Covid-19 supports brought about as a result of lockdown from last year such as the Business Continuity Scheme. The Covid 19 Micro Enterprise Assistance Scheme recently launched was also discussed. Ms Fox also presented to the committee the Start-up Training and Development programmes available to businesses at present. Financial supports were outlined to the group, advising budgets and types of projects which can and cannot be supported. The LEO Galway Performance Metrics were outlined to the committee with various outputs discussed in detail. The presentation was welcomed as comprehensive and recognition given to the adaptations made by the LEO office during the current pandemic. Supports for businesses reopening in coming months were discussed by the group.

4. Feasibility Study on enterprise space in Galway City for the provision of Social Enterprises and Business's operating in the circular economy (2:40pm – 3:00pm)

Mr Conor Kelly presented to the committee the findings of a feasibility study undertaken by Future Analytics on enterprise space in Galway City. He outlined the objectives and purpose of the feasibility study and the consultation which took place with key stakeholders. The structure of the study was outlined and the needs themes identified. National and Regional level policies included in the report were discussed. The conclusion of the report was advised and the next steps outlined to the members, including a meeting with various stakeholders with a final report to be finalised thereafter. Following questions from Mr Dominic Whelan on implementation Mr Kelly outlined that this would be informed by the formation of a new Social Enterprise/Circular Economy Stakeholder Subgroup and advised on at a later stage. Mr Kelly advised regarding social enterprise space that there has been interest from SCCUL in supporting same.

5. Draft Digital Strategy Galway City 2020-2024 (3:00pm-3:17pm)

Mr Brian Barrett gave apologies on behalf of Head of ICT who was unable to attend to present the Digital Strategy to the group. Mr Barrett was briefed and presented to the committee. Mr Barrett gave overview of the Digital Strategy and what it hopes to achieve. Through engagement with NUIG, Medtronic and GCCN the digital readiness study was completed which highlighted the strengths and weaknesses that have been included within the indicative strategic actions. Due to the Covid 19 situation work has slowed somewhat but it was continuing. Mr Barrett gave overview of the Digital Strategy and what it hopes to achieve. The key components of the strategy were outlined as Innovation, Society and Sustainability. Infrastructure Specific Actions identified were advised to the committee. Mr Barrett then advised the next steps for the Digital Strategy with the overall aim for Galway City to rise in all seven pillars described in the Digital Readiness assessment. Mr David Hickey thanked Mr Barrett for the update and asked if the committee would be facilitated to give feedback directly on this. It was advised that they can and it will try to be incorporated prior to presenting to council. Ms Geri Slevin welcomed the strategy and raised questions in relation to broadband nationally. Mr Dominic Whelan noted the lack of accessibility

incorporated into the strategy and need to address this. This was noted and to be looked at to incorporate a statement on accessibility.

6. Galway 2040 (3:17pm – 3:33pm)

Mr Conor Kelly presented to the committee Galway City 2040 - A Global City for the Future. Mr Kelly briefed the members on the brochure and website developed for this project. The background and key aims of the project were outlined which will ensure as a priority for the city that growth is achieved in line with the UN sustainability goals. It was also outlined that Galway City is a key driver of sustainable development in the West of Ireland. The brochure outlines the project pipeline for investments in areas such as transport, cultural, business and tourism infrastructure. The progress to date was outlined with the presentation welcomed by members and discussion followed on what other projects could be included, which Mr Brian Barrett advised can be done as they commence with the website being continuously updated throughout the lifecycle of the project.

7. Tourism Update – Funding Programmes/Initiatives (3:33pm – 3:54pm)

Mr Ruairi Lehmann gave update to the group on the funding programmes and initiatives currently operating. The Failte Ireland Outdoor dining Enhancement Scheme 2021 opened on 12th April and will provide funding of up to €4000 for provision of outdoor dining furniture for hospitality businesses which serve food. He advised that to date there are 10 full and 174 unfinished application to GCC. The Local Authority Weatherproofing & Outdoor Dining Infrastructure Scheme 2021 was also discussed with GCC announcing a number of measures in relation to outdoor dining. GCC are considering how to maximise space for outdoor use. Plans for areas including West end, Latin Quarter, Woodquay and Eyre Square and among those being examined. Mr Lehmann outlined the Urban Animation Capital Investment Scheme is a Failte Ireland fund to develop public realm and urban animation projects that have potential to transform urban centres for visitors and create vibrant and creative community spaces. Minimum spend of €250,000 is applicable per project and available for up to 10 projects across Ireland.

Mr Lehmann also advised members of the Re-imagining Outdoor Spaces Fund 2021 and the Local Live Performance Scheme which has a total budget for Galway City Council of €143,000.

8. Update on Guidelines to Support LECP development process and submission made by the LECP Steer Group to the DRCD (3.55pm-4.05pm)

Mr Theresa Donoghue advised the committee of the development of comprehensive guidelines to support the planning process for the LECP as directed by the Department. The Department have provided an opportunity for all local authorities to make written submissions to inform the guideline development process. A submission was prepared and included perspectives from the implementation of both the Economic and Community elements of the LECP. Furthermore, a LECP Steering Group meeting took place on 19th March where a review and discussion took place on the submission as drafted. All comments were taken on board and included in the final submission to the Department by the closing date of the 24th March 2021

As noted in the correspondence from the Department, an LECP advisory group has been established at national level to support this process with representatives from a number of

bodies including the DRCD, Department of Housing, Planning, LG and Heritage, CCMA, NRWA and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment. It is hoped that the Guidelines will be available by the end of Quarter two/three. In the absence of census data, DRCD has written to Regional Assemblies to ask if their socio-economic datasets be shared with LAs in their region in order to support their LECP development process.

As the Department develops its guidelines and the review is rolled-out, members will be kept engaged and informed of the development process around the next Galway City LECP.

It was advised to the committee that GCC is supporting Galway City Community Network (GCCN) to co-ordinate and deliver on five actions as outlined in the current implementation plan for the LECP. It was agreed last year that funding from GCC would be made available to GCCN to help support a co-ordinator to oversee the delivery of these five actions.

Ms Donoghue advised she is in contact and requesting an update from all lead partners on the implementation of their actions for Quarter 1 2021, noting that the closing date for return was Friday 23rd April. The updated report will be circulated in the next week or so.

9. AOB (4.05pm – 4.15pm)

Funding Programmes/Schemes currently or due to open that maybe of interest to SPC were outlined to the committee by Ms Caitriona Morgan. These included the Covid 19 Stability Fund 2021, The Community Enhancement Scheme. The Mayoral Awards Virtual Ceremony due to take place on 26th May 2021 was also discussed and invite issued to all members.

Cllr Neil McNeilis also requested update on Galway Airport hangars which Mr Brian Barrett advised could not be discussed at present due to ongoing negotiations but an update can issue once appropriate.

Members also requested update on Galway 2020 responded by Mr Barrett that an independent evaluation is ongoing and once concluded would be an appropriate time to discuss further policy implications for the city.

The meeting concluded.