

**Draft Minutes of Galway City Council Economic, Community and Cultural Development SPC Meeting held in Council Chamber City Hall & MS Teams on 9<sup>th</sup> December at 2.00pm**

**Presiding:** Cllr. Niall McNelis.

**Present:**

**Councillors:** Cllr. Donal Lyons, Cllr. Eddie Hoare, Cllr. Declan McDonnell, Cllr. Noel Larkin

**Sectoral**

**Representatives:** Mr. Dominick Whelan, Mr. Dave Hickey.

**In Attendance:**

Mr. Brian Barrett, Director of Services,	Galway City Council
Mr. Gary McMahon, Senior Executive Officer,	Galway City Council
Mr. Dermot Mahon, Senior Executive Officer,	Galway City Council
Ms. Caitriona Morgan, Administrative Officer,	Galway City Council
Ruairi Lehmann, Tourism Officer,	Galway City Council
Theresa Donohue, Senior Staff Officer,	Galway City Council
Thomas Melly, Staff Officer,	Galway City Council
Liam Kitterick, Staff Officer,	Galway City Council
TJ Hughes, Assistant Staff Officer,	Galway City Council
Ms. Breda Fox,	Local Enterprise Office
Ms. Valerie Kelly,	Local Enterprise Office

**Apologies:** Cllr John Connolly, Ms. Fiona Neary, Ms. Geri Slevin, Cllr. Clodagh Higgins, Cllr. Michael Crowe

**Absent** Ms. Aisling Colreavy, Ms. Kate Howard,

**Prior to meeting commencing, the Chair, Cllr. Niall McNelis, advised the meeting that he was running late and Cllr. Donal Lyons deputised until the Chair arrived.**

**1. Confirmation of minutes of the Economic Community and Culture Development SPC meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2022.**

**Proposed:** Cllr. Eddie Hoare

**Seconded:** Mr. Dave Hickey

Agreed by all members.

**2. Matters Arising**

Mr. Dave Hickey enquired about the status of Branding for Galway City and the legacy report for Galway 2020. Regarding the Branding query, Mr. Ruairi Lehmann advised that the process is concluding and will have an update in due course. Mr Brian Barrett advised that Galway 2020 is still on the agenda for the full council. Cllr. Donal Lyons asked for an update on the status of the Tourist Information Office in Salthill. In response, Mr. Lehmann informed the meeting he is expecting to bring a full proposal to council in Quarter 1, 2023.

Following a query raised in September's SPC Meeting relating to potential contributions from both

University of Galway and ATU, Mr. Gary McMahon informed the meeting that invitations have issued for inclusion in 2023.

Brian Barrett welcomed Mr. Dermot Mahon to his new role in the Community/Ukrainian Response section.

### **3. Local Enterprise Office Update - Ms Breda Fox, LEO**

Breda Fox, Head of Enterprise for LEO, Galway made a presentation providing an update which included the following points:

- Team introduction
- LEO service breakdown
  - Information & Advice
  - Enterprise Supports
  - Entrepreneurship Supports
  - Local Enterprise Development Activities
- LEO Galway – Performance Metrics 2021 Outputs vs Targets
- LEO Galway – Metrics 2022 Outputs vs Targets
- Supports for Energy costs
- 2022 Support overview and 2023 focus
- Making It Happen

The Chair and members thanked Ms Fox for her presentation, acknowledging the important work LEO, Galway continues to do for Galway City. Cllr. Noel Larkin inquired, in relation to people setting up new businesses, if there were any assistance available to businesses in instances where Banks were looking for personal guarantees. In response, Ms. Fox informed the meeting there was no positive news in this arena. The best option, she advised, would be Micro Finance Ireland (MFI) where supports up to 25k were available, in such cases.

In relation to MFI, and resources available to businesses in 2022, Cllr. Eddie Hoare asked Ms. Fox if she could flesh out why uptake was so low in terms of businesses drawing upon same. He also asked for elaboration on interactions with secondary schools, regarding mentoring programmes and outreach activities LEO carry out with secondary schools. Ms Fox advised that some businesses have stopped trading, and may have had an effect on uptake of particular supports such as MFI. In relation to secondary school outreach, Ms. Fox pointed toward the Mentorship Programme as an exemplar of positive engagement facilitated by LEO, where students are guided in developing a business idea, with a Business Report. This programme is rolled out Nationally. In many cases successful students of the programme often end up in the Young Entrepreneur space.

Regarding 'Energy Costs Support', Cllr. McNelis asked for further insight. Regarding the post-COVID space, he also asked for elaboration on whether Galway City is beginning to get 'back on track'. To Mr. McNelis' energy query, Ms. Fox advised that the support was contingent upon the size of the applicant, and that each was taken on a case-by-case basis.

Finally, the Chair informed the meeting this was to be Breda Fox's last before her retirement from

LEO, after a distinguished service. The Chair placed on record the City's thanks for her commitment and support for the City and County throughout her career, a fact he pointed out could not be overstated. He admitted that replacing her knowledge and expertise would be a huge challenge, but also acknowledged she leaves a lasting legacy, which can be harnessed going forward. Cllr. Lyons, Cllr. McDonnell, Cllr. Hoare and Mr. Barrett echoed the chair's comments, offering extended thanks to Ms. Fox for her extensive service to Galway City and County.

In conclusion, the Chairman and members paid tribute to Ms Fox and wished her well on her imminent retirement.

#### **4. Dormant Accounts Funding – Engagement Project - Ms Rebecca Jackson, GCCN**

Through the Chair, Theresa Donohue invited Rebecca Jackson, GCCN to provide a Presentation for the Engagement Project supported by the Dormant Accounts Fund and Pobal. Ms. Donohue gave a brief background to the Dormant Accounts Fund, and the role that Pobal plays in same pointing out that many supports across a range of Local Authorities will be rolled out in Q1, 2023.

Ms Jackson gave a presentation – *DAF LECP Pilot Engagement Project* – discussing the following points:

- Aims
  - Develop, apply, and disseminate a set of practical tools to be used at national and local level
  - Must support engagement and participation by marginalised communities
  - Be flexible and adaptable to the needs of those communities
  - Adhere to the principle of “Leave no one behind”.
- Progress
- Learning
  - Three LECP Themes most important: Equality and Inclusion, Health and Wellbeing, and Culture.
  - Traveller & Deaf Community: Exclusion from services and community Life...for very different reasons.
  - Travellers and the Trans and Non-Binary Community: Fear Discrimination, Harassment and Violence.
  - Deaf Community and the Trans & Non-Binary group need access to information.
  - Travellers, Young People and Deaf communities don't have access to cultural spaces.
- Reflecting on Public Sector Duty.

The group thanked Ms Jackson for her presentation and put forward a range of questions. Responding to the suggestion from Ms Jackson that some minorities felt marginalised, or denied access to certain cultural spaces, Cllr. Eddie Hoare, and other Cllrs. questioned whether this was a fair assessment of current and historical initiatives/approaches from Galway City Council and asked for clarity on some points raised in the pilot research findings. Ms. Jackson elaborated on same, pointing to the fact that these were snapshots of “lived experiences” – which was central to the purpose of the research. Speaking to the queries raised, Mr. Brian Barrett advised that perhaps some initiatives might need to be reworked but are not designed as a deliberate barrier to minorities. He added that improving engagement, and increasing awareness of need to encourage inclusion, are imperative to avoid such marginalization occurring. In addition, Ms. Caitriona Morgan pointed out that Ms Jackson's findings were preliminary, and judgement should be deferred until the research concludes. She added that GCC are engaged and supports marginalised groups.

In summary, Ms. Jackson reiterated that the project's aim was to focus on the lived experiences of participants. In that vein, she added that common themes emerge in such contexts.

The Chair thanked Ms. Jackson for her presentation and the quality of the work being done on the project.

## **5. Tourism Projects and Galway Convention Bureau update - Mr. Rúairí Lehmann**

Mr. Lehmann gave a presentation on a range of Tourism updates summarised below:

- Performance
- Sentiment
- Galway Convention Bureau
- GDX-Index: Top 30
- The Fáilte Ireland Destination Experience Development Plans
- Gala Dinner Venue: Application Submitted for St Nicholas Church
- Shop Local Content Creator Campaign
- Destination Towns – Outdoor Museum
- Night-Time Economy Advisor
- Blueway Feasibility Study
  - Report Due -February 2023
  - Public Consultation Now Live Until January
- Public Spaces
- Christmas 2022
  - Christmas Market finishes December 22nd
  - Park & Ride Commences 10<sup>th</sup> December
  - Review of the market ongoing. Tourism sector will be asked for input
  - New Tender for 2023 onwards
- Galway Branding
- Leisureland and Salthill Park Redevelopment
  - Plans for public consultation to begin in 2023
- New WAW Signage
- New Museum & Historical Signage
- Access for All & Galway's Westend
  - A Pilot project with 5 businesses in Galway's Westend and Access for all to create a more inclusive Galway
  - To include signage, training, and simple infrastructure signage
- Other Projects
  - Waterworks – A design team has been appointed for the development of the Old Waterworks building to a Water sports Hub
  - Woodquay Park – out for tender for a design team for this project
- Eyre Square – Tourist Information
  - Lally Tours
- 2023 Calendar of Events

In response, members raised queries to which Mr. Lehmann responded.

Queries related to VAT rates, electrical power in Eyre Square, the effect on bed capacity of the Ukraine War, the Tourist Kiosk at Eyre Square and town twinning.

**PROPOSAL:** Cllr. Lyons proposed an extension of 15 minutes to the meeting.

**SECONDED:** Dominick Whelan

Agreed by all.

## **6. Community Department Update – To hear a report**

Ms. Catriona Morgan provided a summary of the Community Department Update Report, expanding upon the following points:

- Ministers Humphreys and O’Brien announce €10 million Fund to support parish halls and community centres with energy bills
- Community and Voluntary Energy Support Scheme (CVESS)
- Community Centres Investment Fund
- First National Community and Voluntary Civic Forum Opened
- Minister Humphreys announces €1.5 million in supports for Social Enterprises as she opens Ireland’s Fourth National Social Enterprise Conference
- Intercultural Awareness Training
- Winter Vaccines Campaign
- Keeping on top of COVID, flu and other winter viruses
- Children’s Nasal Flu Vaccine Campaign
- Free on-line Stress control programme
- Mental Health Campaign
- Galway City Ukrainian Community Response
- Short Guide for Parents - Newly arrived to Ireland
- Galway City Ukrainian Support Team
- Healthy Galway City
  - Healthy Ireland Round 4
  - Nutrition
  - Physical Activity
  - Mental Health
  - Additional Funds
- Galway City Local Community & Development Committee (LCDC)
  - Next meeting is taking place on Wednesday 14th December 2022

Cllr. McNellis thanked Ms. Morgan for the report and extended broader acknowledgement of the work delivered by the Community Team throughout the year. Regarding the Ukrainian Response, he asked whether Galway are now taking the lead as opposed to Irish Red Cross. He also queried supports around integration hubs in terms of their location and function. In response, Mr. Barrett outlined that the Red Cross remain the coordinator/administrator regarding the of shared accommodation offers from the public, but that Galway City Council have taken on the role of administering non shared accommodation offers, within the City, through the recently launched “Offer a Home” Initiative, which will embed within existing wrap-around services in the City. However, he added that it is expected such offers will be low given existing housing/accommodation pressures in the City. In terms of support hubs, Mr. Barrett drew attention to the ancillary supports available through Galway City Partnership, who provide introductory supports in addition to building employment skills through outreach programmes. Additionally, the Community Ukraine Response Forum meeting regularly as part of coordinating these supports in the most efficient manner.

Ms. Catriona Morgan added such supports are evolving to reflect need on-the-ground using the example of the Ballybane Community Centre where they now offer a drop-in service. She reaffirmed

that such resources are well equipped to meet requirements, and that Galway City Council will continue to lead the way.

**7. Provisional dates for SPC meetings 2023 – Attached**

All agreed that attached dates were suitable save for one proposed switch from Cllr. McNellis, who asked if 24<sup>th</sup> February date could be switch to 10<sup>th</sup> March.

Proposed by: Cllr. Lyons  
Seconded by: Dominick Whelan  
Agreed by all and carried.

Schedule as follows:

- 2.00pm Friday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2023
- 2.00pm Friday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2023
- 2.00pm Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2023
- 2.00pm Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2023

**8. A.O.B.**

**The meeting concluded at 4.15pm.**