



**Miontuairiscí Chruinniú Choiste Polásaí Straitéiseacha Pobail, An Ghaeilge, An Ghaeltacht, Turasóireachta & Comhtháthú a tionóladh Dé Luain, 12 Bealtaine trí Microsoft Teams @ 2pm**

**Minutes of Meeting of the Community, Irish Language, Gaeltacht, Tourism & Integration Strategic Policy Committee held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May @ 2pm via Microsoft Teams**

**Members in Attendance online:**

Cllr Seamus Walsh	Galway County Council
Cllr Alan Harney	Galway County Council
Cllr Evelyn Parsons	Galway County Council
Cllr Michael Regan	Galway County Council
Cllr Noel Thomas	Galway County Council
Cllr Máirtín Lee	Galway County Council
Cllr Michael Leainde	Galway County Council
Chika Onyia	Social Inclusion Representative
Colleen Baxter	Business/Commercial Representative
Paul Carey	Development/Construction Representative
Paul Dillon	Community/Voluntary Representative

**Staff in Attendance:**

Kieran Coyne A/Director of Service, Eimear Dolan Administrative Officer, Máirtín O'Donnchadha Oifigeagh Forbartha Gaeilge, Elizabeth Keane, County Librarian, Diane Gallagher A/Staff Officer.

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Cllr. Walsh welcomed all present to the meeting.

**2. Adoption of Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 17<sup>th</sup> February 2025 were proposed by Cllr Evelyn Parsons and seconded by Paul Carey.



### **Matters Arising:**

Cllr. Evelyn Parsons asked for an update on the Age Friendly Strategy that was discussed at the last meeting.

Kieran Coyne advised that the Draft Age Friendly Strategy would be brought before this SPC in 6-8 weeks for their consultation. Mr. Coyne stated that the members would be consulted for their input and that a special meeting of the SPC would be facilitated to discuss the strategy.

### **3. Rural Schemes update – Eimear Dolan, Administrative Officer.**

Cllr. Walsh introduced Eimear Dolan to give an overview to the members on rural schemes.

Ms. Dolan gave a brief overview of the Town & Village Renewal Scheme 2025 and Clár 2025, outlining the amounts available under each scheme and the criteria for each scheme.

Ms. Dolan advised the members that the maximum grant available under the Clár scheme has increased from €50,000 to €65,000.

Cllr. Walsh thanked Ms. Dolan for her presentation and opened the floor to questions/observations.

Cllr. Harney asked that an updated Clár map be requested from the Department as the current one is causing some confusion to community groups. Cllr. Harney stated that the focus of mobility is very narrow and that it needs to be a wider strand.

Cllr. Parsons thanked Ms. Dolan for her presentation and stated that there is a lot of difficulty in rural villages in relation to active travel. Cllr. Parsons stated that the rural schemes are too focused on large areas with very little focus on smaller villages. Cllr. Parsons asked if this matter could be looked at under the Clár scheme.

Ms. Dolan advised that connectivity/accessibility is not usually funded under Clár.

Cllr. Parsons stated that this leaves a definite gap and that accessibility improvement needs must be met.

Ms. Dolan advised that groups can put accessibility projects on their Expressions of Interest and it would be taken into consideration.

Cllr. Regan thanked Ms. Dolan for her presentation and stated that it is great to see the increase in the amount of Clár funding available. Cllr. Regan gave an example of Ballinakill who were successful in getting Clár funding and it has made a huge impact on their community.



#### **4. Libraries update – Elizabeth Keane, County Librarian.**

Cllr. Walsh introduced Elizabeth Keane to give an update on the County Libraries.

Ms. Keane advised the members of a number of new initiatives being rolled out through County libraries this summer.

##### ***My Little Library.***

Minister for Children, Disability and Equality, Norma Foley, together with Minister of State for Charities, Gaeltacht and the Islands & Rural Transport, Jerry Buttimer, announced the launch of this year's My Little Library free book bag for almost 60,000 children starting primary school, these free library bags are also available in Irish.

##### ***Summer Stars Reading Programme.***

The Summer Stars Reading Programme runs in all Galway Libraries and Mobile Service from June to the August 31st. This is a free campaign to encourage children to continue to read throughout the summer. This programme encourages reading through the following:

- Storytelling and group visits
- inductions to showcase library services
- children's workshops, arts and crafts
- Guest Speakers and Authors

##### ***Ealaín***

Ealaín na Gaeltachta Teo promotes the development of the contemporary and the traditional arts in the Gaeltacht and is a joint venture between Údaras na Gaeltachta and the Arts Council. Ealaín na Gaeltachta provides services and grant schemes that support the development of arts organisations and individual artists. Ealaín also support training and offer mentoring support, as well as supporting initiatives that help build the capacity of and infrastructure for the arts in the Gaeltacht.



Ealaín na Gaeltachta are offering funding of €1,000 worth of drama/story telling workshops in Gaeltacht Libraries, including the islands, scaling this to incorporate Loughrea and Clifden to align with the Language Planning actions.

Cllr. Walsh thanked Ms. Keane for her presentation and for the updates and opened the floor to questions/observations.

Cllr. Parsons thanks Ms. Keane for her presentation and stated that it was good to hear that there are Irish language options being made available through the libraries and stated that this is important in encouraging Irish reading.

Mr. Coyne concurred with Cllr. Parsons and stated that it is great to hear of all the new projects coming through the libraries, in particular the Summer Stars Programme which will be good for encouraging continued reading throughout the summer.

## **5. Irish Placenames – Máirtín Ó Donnchadha, Oifigeagh Forbartha Gaeilge.**

Cllr. Walsh introduced Máirtín Ó'Donnchadha to give an update on Irish Placenames.

Mr. Ó'Donnchadha advised the members of new legislation which was signed by The Minister of State for the Gaeltacht Thomas Byrne to bring the final provisions of the Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021 into force on 21 December 2024, in line with the statutory deadline set for it. These provisions include significant ones that will have a major impact on the language rights of the people of Ireland from that date on.

With the commencement of these provisions:

- posts to public bodies on social media will now have to be responded to in the official language in which they are received
- correspondence sent out by public bodies to the public to market themselves or their services will be done in Irish only or bilingually
- the names of newly established public bodies will be in Irish only and new or updated logos of public bodies will be in Irish or bilingual - a trend that has already been established with the likes of the Media Commission, Tailte Éireann and the rebranding of Irish Water
- elements of services provided by third parties on behalf of public bodies will now also come under the Act.
- the provision that will ensure that jury summonses will be issued bilingually from now on was brought into effect in July.



- Titles of Staff to be in Irish Only.

Mr. Ó'Donnchadha advised that Public bodies have until the 01st January 2026 to have old signage replaced (this would be signage that was erected before the 2003 Official Languages Acts).

Mr. Ó'Donnchadha advised that the Council have commenced updating addresses on the register of electors. Mr. Ó'Donnchadha advised that The Council use Tailte Éireann to clarify names in Irish, the Council do have a placename committee, but they are only used for Planning purposes.

Cllr. Parsons requested that the name Eoin Ó Tuairisg be taken into consideration in relation to Dunlo Court.

Cllr. Parsons queried if there is a reserved function in relation to placenames.

Mr. Ó'Donnchadha advised that councillor representations in relation to placenames are taken into consideration.

Mr. Ó'Donnchadha stated that placenames must have a relevance to the area.

Cllr. Harney concurred with Cllr. Parsons in relation to the Eoin Ó Tuairisg placename.

Cllr. Walsh thanked Mr. Ó'Donnchadha for an informative presentation and for his help with any Irish related queries.

## **6. AOB**

There was no AOB.

Cllr Walsh thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

**Chríoghnaigh an chruinniú ansin.**