

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE

Minutes of Housing SPC Meeting held on Thursday, 25th September 2025 in the Council Chamber, Galway County Council at 11.00 a.m.

I Láthair:-

Baill: Cllr. Michael Maher (Chairperson)
Cllr. Eileen Mannion
Cllr. Shaun Cunniffe
Cllr. Jimmy McClearn
Cllr. Declan Kelly
Cllr. Peter Keaveney
Mr. Rachel Stewart
Mr. AJ Dean
Mr. Seamus Duffy

Oifigigh: Mr. Damien Mitchell, Director of Services - Housing
Mr. Gerard Scully, Senior Executive Officer
Mr. Kieran Keon Senior Social Worker, Housing
Mr. Daithi Flood, Senior Engineer, Housing
Ms. Nuala Heffernan, Administration Officer, Housing
Ms. Angela Spellman, Administration Officer, Housing
Ms. Sharon Horan, Administration Officer, Housing
Ms. Rachel Murtagh, Staff Officer, Housing Capital
Mr. Brendan Kelly, Assistant Staff Officer, Housing

Leithscéal

Cllr. Gerry Finnerty
Ms. Helen Jennings

1. Minutes of the meeting of the 13th of June 2025

- The minutes of the Housing SPC meeting held on the 13th of June 2025 were proposed by Cllr. Shaun Cunniffe and seconded by Mr. AJ Dean and agreed.

2. Matters Arising

Homeless Services Update Query:

Cllr. Shaun Cunniffe asked if the people who cannot be provided with emergency homeless accommodation by Galway County Council where they recorded in the Homeless statistics.

In response, **Ms. Nuala Heffernan** outlined that GCC uses the national PASS database to record all persons who present as homeless. She outlined that all presentations are assessed by the Homeless Services Team and a decision is made regarding their Homeless status in accordance with the Act. Ms. Heffernan stated that all homeless assessments are carried out by telephone on their direct line number on 091-509203. She stated that all presentations are assessed within 24 hours and a record is kept of each assessment and in most instances homeless clients are provided with emergency accommodation within a short period of time after their initial presentation. Ms. Heffernan outlined that it is unlikely that a presenter would be provided with emergency accommodation on the day that they present for assessment, and the Homeless Team would actively seek to source some form of alternative temporary accommodation by way of a HAP Placefinder referral, but in most instances, individuals often find temporary accommodation with either a friend or close family member.

Cllr. Cunniffe requested that the committee be provided with the following Homeless statistics:

- The number of homeless Presentations & Assessments
- The number of current homeless placements
- The number of presentations that could not be provided with emergency accommodation on the day of their presentation.

Actions Required:

Ms. Heffernan gave a commitment to provide the committee with the above requested statistics and the latest Homeless quarterly returns that are sent to the Department.

3. Anti-Social Behavioral Strategy

Ms. Angela Spellman provided the members with a detailed presentation on Galway County Council's updated Anti-Social Behavioral Strategy. All members were provided with a draft copy of the updated Strategy in advance of the meeting. The following topics were discussed.

- **Anti-Social Behavior Strategy**
 - Section 1: Why we have a ASB Strategy.
 - Section 2: What is our Strategy & Mission Statement.
 - Section 3: How is it implemented & Process for investigating a complaint.
- **Introduction and purpose of the strategy**
 - Purpose and Scope
 - Legal & Policy Framework
 - Key Objectives
- **Constitutional & Legal Framework**
 - Stakeholder Consultation
 - Legal Framework Overview
 - Policy Approval Process
 - Commitment to Equality
- **Mission Statement & Prevention measures**
- **Complaint Investigation & Enforcement Actions**
- **Contact the Tenant & Estate Management Team**
 - Housing Counter 9am – 1pm Monday to Friday
 - Email tem@galwaycoco.ie
 - Tel. 091 509304

A PDF copy of the presentation was emailed to the committee members after the meeting.

The **Chairperson** thanked Ms. Spellman for her detailed presentation on the updated draft ASB Strategy and he invited the members to put forward any comments or suggestions that they may wish to have included in the strategy.

Cllr. Shaun Cunniffe asked the following questions:

- How many Housing staff are currently working in this area and will additional staffing resources be provided to meet the growth in social housing.
- Who is responsible for the maintenance of shared spaces particularly with apartment social housing units.
- Who authorizes permission for the installation of CCTV in Council Estates.

In response, **Ms. Spellman** stated that there are five Housing Liaison Officers who are the first point of contact to deal with Anti-Social complaints and depending on the seriousness of these complaints, then they may be referred to the Tenancy Enforcement

Officer (Mr. Glen Craven) and he is supported by one Assistant Staff Officer and one Clerical Officer. Ms. Spellman stressed that issues related to Anti-Social Behavior is a shared responsibility for many other staff members within the council. She outlined that there were 27 ASB complaints in 2023, and 32 in 2024 and to date in 2025 there have been 30 complaints.

In relation to the management of shared spaces, **Ms. Spellman** acknowledged that there was more potential for conflicts and issues to arise in these estates, and she said that these problems could be addressed at the design phase of new developments and the pre-tenancy training could be used to prevent and potential ASB issues.

Ms. Spellman confirmed that all requests by Galway County Council for the installation of CCTV must be reviewed and approved by the Garda Commissioner whereby the decision is based on the crime conviction statistics for that specific area.

In reply to a question from **Cllr. Eileen Mannion**, Ms. Spellman confirmed that the strategy applies to all council tenancies and properties that are managed by Galway County Council.

In response to a query from **Mr. AJ Dean** on the complaints procedures, Ms. Spellman confirmed that all Anti-Social Behavior complaints are responded to within 5 working days and investigated within 10 working days. Depending on the seriousness of the complaint, she explained that most complaints can be resolved by a phone call, while other more serious complaints may need to be escalated to a Breach of Tenancy whereby warning letters may need to be issued prior to the commencement of any Litigation procedures. She outlined that mediators are often employed to resolve any issues that may arise between council tenants.

In response to a query from **Cllr. Cunniffe** on additional resources that may be required to meet the long term Anti-Social Behavior needs, **Mr. Damien Mitchell** said that he is actively seeking and would welcome any additional staffing resources in this area, and he pointed out that between 2022 and 2026 GCC has almost doubled the number of Social Housing units in the county area. Mr. Mitchell stated that an additional Housing Liaison Officer had been recruited, and representations have been made to the Department regarding the allocation of additional maintenance staff, and these would also help with Anti-Social Behaviors.

In relation to the management of shared/communal areas within apartment housing, **Mr. Mitchell** outlined that it is a condition of Planning Permission that a Management Company be appointed to manage these estates and their shared/communal spaces. He outlined that GCC have relatively few apartment complexes under its control, but this may change in the future as more apartment-based schemes that allow for higher densities are developed to meet the Social Housing need within the County. Heretofore, GCC has tended to use Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs) to manage housing schemes with shared/communal spaces and these organizations effectively function as the management company as set out in the Planning Conditions. Mr. Mitchell stated that he foresees the possible need for more apartment building in the future, particularly within the

Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) area and this will become clearer once the new housing delivery targets and densities are published in the updated Housing for All Plan.

In response to a query from **Cllr. McClearn** regarding the stringency of GCC's pre-tenancy vetting procedures, **Mr. Mitchell** stated that there is an exhaustive vetting procedure in place for all Housing Support Applicants that are shortlisted for an allocation as per the priorities listed in the Housing Allocation Scheme 2024. He said that as a housing body GCC must provide social housing to all members of society that are on GCC's Housing Waiting List (HWL) and each applicant is Garda Vetted during the allocation process.

Mr. Ger Scully was invited to discuss the current Garda vetting process, and he outlined that the garda check provides information on the applicant and their immediate family for any issues. The information received in the Garda check in the form of convictions is then entered into GCC's Garda Matrix formula and the results are calculated between 0 to 20 and a score of 9 or less is deemed as a pass. Any applicant who fails the garda matrix vetting are automatically suspended from the HWL for one year and they remain suspended until they pass the Garda Matrix vetting. He outlined that if there are extenuating circumstances relating to a failed applicant, whereby housing is a requirement, then exceptional transitional accommodation can be provided to them. He outlined that GCC's Garda Matrix Vetting process was subjected to a Judicial Review some years previously and it was deemed to be highly robust and a tight matrix system. He reiterated that it is the responsibility of the Tenant and Estate Management (TEM) Section to investigate and deal with any criminal activity that occurs at a Local Authority property. Unlike the AHB sector which operates under RTB legislation, he stated that Local Authorities must operate under Section 12 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2014 to gain possession of a local authority dwelling.

In reply to a query from **Cllr Declan Kelly** on charging tenants for damages caused to an LA dwelling, **Ger Scully** confirmed that GCC had in some severe cases of damage charged tenants for damages caused to properties and this is recouped over several years. He stated that any rent arrears or damage costs owed to the council from a previous LA tenancy will be identified during the Allocation Assessment process and this can be requested in full or paid back over time. In some cases, where excessive damages were caused, GCC can refuse an applicant to join the Housing Waiting List or to allocate them a dwelling.

Cllr. Sean Cunniffe asked Ms. Spellman to outline the main changes to this updated ASB policy. In reply, **Ms. Spellman** outlined that the ASB strategy is based on consultation between all the relevant stakeholders being involved to create sustainable communities. She stated that the involvement of the Joint Policing Committee (JPC) had played a major role in the consultation process associated with the ASB strategy until they were replaced by the new Local Community Safety Partnerships (LCSPs). The updated ASB strategy also reflects recent changes made to CCTV legislation whereby the Garda Commissioner now has responsibility for the installation and operation of new CCTV.

In reply to a query from the **Chairperson**, **Ms. Spellman** confirmed that the current recurring Anti-Social Behavioral Strategy was adopted in 2021, and the amendments to the

policy discussed today reflect the changes in the framework that the policy was based on in 2021.

Mr. Mitchell stated that the function of today's presentation was to bring the updated Anti-Social Behavior Strategy to the committee's attention whereby it would be adopted at today's meeting or at the next Housing SPC meeting in December. He also wished to thank Ms. Spellman for her work on updating the ASB Strategy since the introduction of the Local Community Safety Partnerships (LCSPs).

The updated Anti-social Behavior Strategy 2025-2030 was proposed for adoption by **Cllr. Declan Kelly** and seconded by **Cllr. Sean Cunniffe**.

The chair outlined that the ASB strategy would now go to the Corporate Policy Group (CPG) for review before it goes before the Plenary Council for review and adoption.

4. Update on the application of Part V

Mr. Daithi Flood presented an update on the Part V Implementation and the following items were discussed.

- **Legislative Background**
- **Urban Regeneration & Housing Act 2015**
- **Affordable Housing Act 2021**
- **Transitional Part V Arrangements – Timeline**
- **Delivery Stats**



Part V delivery – Galway County

	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Part V Delivery	36	24	24	30	72**

Number of Developments with Part V at 20%	1	4
Number of Units delivered with 20% Part V	6*	26***

- * Of which 3 are affordable Part V units
- ** Estimated based on developers whom have engaged with GCC
- *** Tenure to be determined based on Part V costings and Housing Demand

- **Part V Delivery – Challenges**
- **Case Study**
 - **Seven 2-Bed Part V units at Bun Na Coille, Moycullen**
 - **Two 2 & 3-bed Part V Units at Cluain Na Cathrach, Athenry**

A PDF copy of the Part V presentation was emailed to the committee members after the meeting.

The **Chair** thanked Mr. Flood for his update, and he welcomed the inclusion of more Affordable Homes under the Part V construction requirement, and he opened the floor to members to ask questions.

Cllr. Eileen Mannion stated that she is aware of families that have been working and renting for many years in their communities, and they have been issued with a Notice to Quit (NTQ) and don't qualify for Social Housing, and they cannot afford to buy a property. She stated that there is a real crisis for people who cannot get on the Social Housing List and there is a real need for the role out of more affordable homes.

Cllr. Jimmy McClearn stated that builders/contractors state that they cannot make money from building homes, and yet they are being asked to provide 20% of the units built under Part V and he said that this needed to be addressed by the Government. He outlined that he has discussed this issue with the Minister, and he said that Part V needs to be reviewed if we want more homes to be built.

Mr. Flood stated that if GCC was successful in delivering the Part V Affordable units then GCC would be the first Local Authority to do so in the country.

Cllr. Sean Cunniffe asked if a developer would lose money on a development due to the cost of finance and Part V costs.

In reply to **Cllr. McClearn** and **Cllr. Cunniffe**, **Mr. Flood** reiterated that Part V costs are a tax on land that has been granted planning permission whereby the value of that land has substantially increased due to the benefit of planning being granted. He explained that Part V costs are taken into consideration when the Developer buys land and not when the houses are being built. Essentially, the Part V costs are applied to the site costs and not the build costs. He stated that a developer does not lose money on the delivery costs, but rather the Part V costs are applied on the land costs.

Mr. Mitchell thanked Mr. Flood for his presentation, and he acknowledged the complexities associated with Part V and he stated that there is significant engagement with developers to resolve any issues they may encounter due to the Part V requirements. He explained the aim of today's presentation was to highlight the transitional arrangements regarding Part V implemented in 2021 whereby Part V could be applied to residential developments at either 10 or 20% depending on when the lands were purchased by the applicant and that these transitional arrangements would cease to be applied to all grants on residential units of 5 or more units from the 31st of July 2026. Whereby, from this date forth, Part V will only be applied at 20%. He said that the delivery of Part V Affordable units will be limited and GCC will be aiming to concentrate on mixed tenure developments that contain both social and affordable units. In terms of increasing the number of Affordable Housing Units, he stated that GCC is aiming to bring forward Affordable Schemes in every Municipal District and there is currently an EOI survey underway that relates specifically to bringing forward proposals for new Affordable Housing Schemes within the county.

5. Update on the Galway Residential Zoned Land Report

Mr. Damien Mitchell Director of Service – Housing gave an update on the review of the Galway Residential Zoned Lands. A PDF copy of the update was provided to the committee members before the meeting. The following items were discussed in detail.

- **Background** - The purpose of this exercise was to identify the infrastructure constraints delaying residential development and justifying the necessary funding required to remove these constraints.
- **Purpose** - The objective is to estimate the number of hectares potentially available for development in the short to medium term, supporting early-stage planning considerations and identifying priority areas for infrastructure intervention including the estimated costs of interventions and a detailed analysis on landbanks in both authorities necessary for housing delivery.
- **Objectives** – Provide an initial categorisation of land availability (short, medium, long term) and identify the necessary infrastructure interventions needed to release lands to development in the short term(3yrs).
- **Scope of work** –
 - **served and Likely Available (Short-Term – 0-3yrs):**
 - Zoned lands that benefit from public water and wastewater infrastructure (e.g. Irish Water), road access, and footpath connectivity, with no major constraints identified.
 - **Un-served lands or constrained (medium-Term 3-5 Years)**
 - **Not Currently available (long term or excluded)**
- **Key Findings** –
 - Galway County has 741.02ha of land zoned residential. This equates to a capacity of **18,807 units**.
 - **78.66ha (10%)** of this land has granted planning permissions. 2,413 units were granted on these lands.
 - **126.44ha (17%)** available to potential provide **2,770** units. Many of these lands are not in our areas of greatest housing demand or are in locations where there is already a large concentration of social housing.
 - A total of c.**535.58ha** (178.95ha medium term & 356.63ha long term)
 - undevelopable in its present state due to critical infrastructure deficits, most notably, inadequate footpath provision, public lighting, road widening & upgrades, junction upgrades, sewer network upgrades, watermain network upgrades, storm water network upgrades, land acquisition, overhead electricity lines and insufficient capacity at existing wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs).
 - Unlocking this c.**535.58** hectares of zoned land would facilitate the delivery of approximately 13,625 housing units.
 - The estimated costings to upgrade these lands to facilitate residential development are **€33,891,000** for lands deemed medium term and **€41,425,000** for lands deemed long term. This is a total combined cost of **€75,316,000**.

- **Next Steps –**

- The infrastructure requirements for Galway City and County Councils will now be submitted to the new **Housing Activation Office** (HAO) for consideration and further negotiation/ discussion to address the constraints outlined in this report.
 - GCC will be meeting the HAO on the 7th of October to discuss this plan
 - Additional funding will be sought to unlock additional lands in county Galway for development.
- The key elements of the submission from a Galway County Council perspective will be:
 - Infrastructure requirements for Galway County in the short and medium term
 - The number of housing units that could be delivered based on this infrastructure.

The Chairperson thanked the Director for his detailed update on the Galway Residential Zoned Land Report and he opened the topic to the floor for any comments and questions.

Ms. Rachel Stewart welcomed the level of detail contained within the report and she asked if the estimated funding/costings of €33,891,00 to upgrade the lands will be easily attained. **Ms. Stewart** reiterated **Cllr. Mannion's** earlier comments whereby she agreed that something had to be done for those individuals and families who cannot afford to purchase a home, and yet they do not qualify for social and affordable/Cost Rental housing supports. She stated that any help for these families is greatly appreciated.

Cllr. Sean Conniffe thanked the Mr. Mitchell for his comprehensive update and he wished him luck in his meeting with the Housing Activation Office on the 7th of October 2025.

In response to queries from **Ms. Stewart** and **Cllr. Mannion**, Director Mitchell said that Galway County Council will be the first LA to meet with the Housing Activation Office. He said that it is unlikely that GCC would receive all the funding requested, however he is hopeful that some additional funding will be made available to open-up additional zoned lands for development. He stated that GCC has identified the specific R1 and R2 zoned lands that can be used for social and affordable housing units, and it would also open additional adjacent zoned lands for redevelopment. For example, he outlined how improvements to public lighting, footpaths, water services in a particular area like Clifden would also benefit other zoned lands in that area for private development. Mr. Mitchell stated that these lands are needed to meet GCC's current housing demand and delivery targets, and he will be seeking funding to address the infrastructural deficits that are preventing the delivery of additional housing stock. He clarified that the lands identified relate

to R1 and R2 zoned lands that are already listed in GCC's County Development Plan and Local Area Plans. These R1 and R2 lands have already been assessed by the Planning Department, and GCC is actively looking for funding to make that land available for housing developments.

In response to query from **Cllr. Cuniffe**, Mr. Mitchell stated that once land is zoned R1 or R2, its value increases and he explained that R1 lands will be developed first in the County Development Plan. R2 Lands are typically looked at for development during the mid-term review of the County Development Plan. He acknowledged that there are increased costs associated with the acquisition of R1 and R2 lands. He stated that developers typically carry out a feasibility study on land to determine what additional costs are required to bring that land into play for development.

The **Chair** thanked Mr. Mitchell for his update, and he wished him luck for his meeting with the HAO.

6. Housing Grants Update

Ms. Nuala Heffernan (Administrative Officer) gave an update on the housing Adaptation Grants for Older People and Disabled People. The following items were discussed in detail.

- The conditions applicable to Housing Adaptation Grants for Older People and Disabled People were updated on 01st December 2024
- Increase in grant limits and income thresholds for the grant
- DHLGH provides 85% of the grant awarded
- LA's Provide 15% of the grant awarded
- The grant cannot be used to buy new fossil fuel boilers
- There are three types of Housing Grants
 - Housing Adaptation Grant for Disabled People
 - Mobility Aid Grant
 - Housing Aid for Older People

Grant Category	Maximum Amount pre 01st December 2024	Maximum amount 01st December 2024 onwards	Increase
Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability	€30,000	€40,000	€10,000
Mobility Aid Grant	€6,000	€8,000	€2,000
Housing Aid for Older People	€8,000	€10,700	€2,700

- **2025 Statistics**
 - **733** housing grants applications have been received in 2025
 - **442** Housing Aid for Older People
 - **292** Housing Adaptation/ Mobility Aid Grants
 - It is expected that **1,120** applications will be processed in 2025.
 - **584** inspections have been carried out by The Housing Inspectorate
- **Housing Grants paid out in 2025**

Grant Category	Number of Grant Applications Paid	Amount Paid 2025
Housing Adaptation Grants	63	€577,128
Mobility Aid Grants	128	€659,569
Housing Aid for Older People	350	€2,010,971
TOTAL	541	€3,247,668

- GCC have contributed just under €600,000 of the €3,247,668 that has been paid out in 2025 paid out.
- 1 million euro in matching funding has been assigned in GCC's 2025 budget
- It is expected that there will be an increased draw down of grants funding in 2026, as applications from late 2023 and 2024 are processed.

- It is anticipated that 1 million euro will be needed again in the 2026 budget
- Housing Grants Contact Details
 - Housing Grants E-mail: **housinggrants@galwaycoco.ie**
 - Housing Grants Phone No.: **091 509301**

The **Chairperson** thanked Ms. Heffernan for her very detailed presentation, and he acknowledged that councilors spend a lot of time helping elderly constituents with Housing Aid for older People grant applications. He welcomed the increased to the maximum amounts that can be awarded to applicants given the age of the dwellings involved and the increased construction costs. He also complemented the Housing Grants staff for their hard work and dedication.

In reply, **Ms. Heffernan** stated that the Housing Grant Application's staff work extremely hard to process and they are always willing to prioritize specific applications when the need arises.

Cllr. Declan Kelly also wished to acknowledge and praise the hard work of Polly Morgan, Loretto Duggan and John Moore for their work in the Housing Grants Section.

7. Any Other Business

Mr. Ger Scully gave an update to the Committee on the Housing Supply and Demand Interactive Dashboard. **Mr. Mitchell** outlined that Mr. Scully will be giving a presentation in October to the National Oversight & Audit Commission (NOAC) with a view to highlighting and expanding the Dashboard to other Local Authorities across the country. The following items were discussed by Mr. Scully.

- The Housing Dashboard can show GCC's Housing supply and demand
- The dashboard is updated twice daily
- The dashboard can be viewed on the Council's website here:
 - [Social housing supply and demand | Galway County Council](#)
- Social Housing Demand can be viewed by category
 - Area Of Choice
 - Age Profile
 - Basis of need
 - HAP
 - Length of time on the Housing Waiting List (HWL)
- What type of units are in demand
 - 1 and 2 beds are combined
 - Of the 3,100 applicants on the HWL, 1,750 are in the 1 and 2 bed categories
 - 1,100 applicants are in the 3-bed category
 - 170 are in the 4-bed category,
 - 27 are in the 5-bed category and

- 5 are in the 6-bed category
- 1, 2, 3 and occasional 4 bed units can be sourced by Turnkey acquisitions, while 5 and 6 bed units are usually purpose build one off build units.
- Of the 3,100 applicants, 704 are in the disability/physical category
- Of the 3,100 applicants, 700 are in the OAP category
- This information can be used by GCC, HSE and Developers to determine the demand for current and future Social Housing developments.
- FOI queries on GCC's Housing Supply and Demand can now be directed to the Dashboard
- Housing Supply
 - GCC has 4,500 social housing Units
 - 25 Vacant Units (LA & AHB)
 - 10 Vacant LA Units
 - 34 Under Construction
- Looking at the 3, 4, 5 and 6 may be useful for Downsizing Programs in specific areas of choice.

Mr. Scully said that he is available to discuss or give a walkthrough of the Dashboard to members of the committee at any time and he welcomed any questions on the topic.

In reply to several questions from the **Chairperson**, Mr. Scully explained that the Dashboard was primarily created to provide housing demand data for developers in the first instance, and it took about 2 years to develop and implement the project. In terms of cost, he outlined it was free, as he worked closely with Morgan Matthews in IT to design and develop the dashboard. He outlined that the dashboard can also be used to train both new and existing Housing staff. The Dashboard will be submitted for an innovation award and there have been several queries from other Local Authorities.

Cllr. Eileen Mannion congratulated and thanked Mr. Scully and Mr. Matthews for developing and implementation the Supply and Demand Dashboard.

Cllr. Sean Cunniffe congratulated and thanked Mr. Scully for his leadership, dedication and effort for making the dashboard project such a success and he said that GCC was lucky to have Mr. Scully as a staff member. Cllr. Cunniffe said that he uses the Dashboard on a regular basis.

Mr. Mitchell thanked and congratulated Mr. Scully and his staff for the huge volume of work that was involved in developing the Dashboard project. He said that it is so helpful to Developers as it reduces the amount of time needed to identify the current demand within a particular area.

The **Chairperson** confirmed that the next Housing SPC meeting is scheduled to take place on the 18th of December 2025 at 11am in the Council Chamber. The Chairperson requested that the Homeless Statistics requested by Cllr. Cunniffe be presented at the

December meeting. He also requested that Mr. Scully give an update on GCC's Garda Matrix procedures. He thanked all participants and concluded the meeting.

Minutes Confirmed by Chairperson

Michael Maher

Cllr. Michael Maher

Date: 18/12/2025