

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE
MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL
Held at ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, PROSPECT HILL
Monday, 26th January at 1.00pm

- CATHAOIRLEACH:** Cllr. David Collins
Cathaoirleach of the County of Galway
- I LATHAIR FREISIN:**
- Baill:** Comh. /Cllr. S. Broderick, I. Canning, D. Connolly, M. Connolly, S. Cunniffe, T. Ó Curraoin, G. Donohue, P. Feeney, G. Finnerty, T. Grealish, L. Harney, M. Hoade, C. Keane, P. Keaveney, D. Kelly, D. Killilea, P. Killilea, M. Kinane, G. King, M. Lee, P. Mac An Iomaire, M. Maher, E. Mannion, K. McHugh Farag, S. McHugh Ryan, E. F. Parsons, A. Reddington, M. Regan, N. Thomas, O. Turner, S. Walsh and T. Welby.
- Baill ar line:** Comh. / Cllr. J. Charity, D. Geraghty, A. Harney, M. Leainde, J. McClearn, and M. McNamara,
- Oifigh:** Mr. L. Conneally, Chief Executive, Mr. L. Hanrahan, Director of Services, Mr. Michael Owens, Director of Services, Mr. Uinsinn Finn, Director of Services, Ms. E. Ruane, Director of Services, Ms. K. O'Connor, Head of Finance, Mr. D. Mitchell, Director of Services, Ms. L. Keady, Meetings Administrator, Ms. V. Loughnane, Senior Planner, Mr. M. O Donnchadha, Oifigeach Forbartha Gaeilge, Ms. H. Riordan, Staff Officer, Ms. L. O'Donnell, Assistant Staff Officer.

Thosnaigh an cruinniú leis an paidir.

The Members expressed their condolences on the passing of Sharon Lawless, and her mother, Brid. Sharon was a highly valued member of staff in Corporate Services, and the thoughts and prayers of the Members and staff of Galway County Council are with her family at this difficult time.

Condolences were also conveyed to the family of the late James Skelton and to staff member Denise Feeney, on the passing of her father Martin.

ITEM NO.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS

4657

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Walsh **SECONDED** by Cllr. Canning the minutes of the Monthly Plenary Meeting held on 15th December were **AGREED**.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Hoade **SECONDED** by Cllr. King the minutes of the Statutory Budget Meeting held on 14th November were **AGREED**.

ITEM NO.2 CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 4658

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. M. Connolly **SECONDED** by Cllr. D. Killilea the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group held on 8th December 2025 were **NOTED**.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. McHugh Ryan **SECONDED** by Cllr. Broderick the minutes of the Physical Development, Transportation & Emergency Service Strategic Policy Committee Meeting held on 10th September 2025 were **NOTED**.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Mannion **SECONDED** by Cllr. Cunniffe the minutes of the Housing Strategic Policy Committee Meeting held on 25th September 2025 were **NOTED**.

It was agreed by the Members, following a recommendation from the Corporate Policy Group (CPG) that Galway County Council would hold a Civic Reception to honour the following:

- Kilkerrin Clonberne Ladies All Ireland 5 in a row Football Champions 2025
- Athenry Camogie All Ireland Senior Club Champions 2025
- Loughrea Senior Hurling Team, Galway County Champions 2025.

ITEM NO.3 TO CONSIDER THE AUDIT COMMITTEE'S REPORT ON THE 2024 AUDITED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT (AFS) AND STATUTORY AUDITORS REPORT (PURSUANT TO SECTION 60 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2014)

4659

Report dated December 2025 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

Director of Services Mr. Owens referenced that the Annual Financial Statement 2024 had been listed on the December plenary agenda, where it was proposed, seconded, and formally agreed.

The report before the Members today is the report of the Audit Committee on the Annual Financial Statement and the Statutory Audit Report. This report was prepared by the Chair of the Audit Committee, Dr. Martina Moloney, following consultation with the Audit Committee and the attendance by the Local Government Auditor at a meeting of the Audit Committee.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Hoade **SECONDED** by Cllr. Donohue the Audit Committee Report on the 2024 Annual Financial Statement (AFS) and Statutory Auditors Report pursuant to Section 60 of the Local Government 2014 was **NOTED**.

Cllr. Donohue raised the following points and queries:

- A query was raised on whether the level of Development Contribution waivers applied under the Temporary Waiver Scheme had been established
- How will the Council address the shortfall arising from the waiver of Development Levies.
- What recommendations were made by the Local Government Auditor, as they are not included in the report.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Hanahan:

- Given the nature of development levy payments attached to planning conditions, there will always be a certain amount outstanding.
- There is constant engagement between developers and the Planning Enforcement section. Larger amounts can be paid in phased instalments.
- There is recoupment process in place with the Department. A loss was not incurred in 2024.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Owens:

- Clarified that in addition to the Audited Financial Statement and the Statutory Auditors Report the Local Government Auditor each year provides the Chief Executive with a management letter setting out recommendations, seeking management responses and these are reviewed quarterly by the Audit Committee.
- A copy of the most recent recommendations will be circulated to the Members.

ITEM NO.4 TO CONSIDER FILLING OF CASUAL VACANCY ON THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE MIDLANDS REGIONAL TRANSITION TEAM (MRTT).

4660

Report dated 12th January 2026 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Hoade **SECONDED** by Cllr. Regan it was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr Michael Connolly to the Midlands Regional Transition Team (MRTT).

Cllr. M. Connolly thanked the proposer and seconder for the nomination and spoke of the importance of the MRTT to the Ballinasloe electoral area.

ITEM NO. 5. TO CONSIDER AND ENDORSE THE JOINT RETAIL STRATEGY AS PER THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE RETAIL PLANNING GUIDELINES AND

**POLICY OBJECTIVE RET3 OF THE GALWAY COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN
2022-2028.** **4661**

Director of Services, Mr. Hanrahan, presented the Joint Retail Strategy. The strategy is derived from both the County and City Development Plans. The strategy focuses on retail activity within Galway City and the Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) zone, encompassing Bearna, Oranmore and Baile Chláir.

He outlined that the draft strategy has already been brought before the Strategic Policy Committee (SPC), the Corporate Policy Group (CPG) and the Joint City & County SPC and has also completed a round of public consultation. The next phase will involve reviewing the wider economic development strategy and assessing the economic performance of towns located outside the MASP area.

Mr. Hanrahan also acknowledged and thanked Ms. Valerie Loughnane and Mr. Brian Corcoran for their significant contributions to the development of the strategy.

Ms. Valerie Loughnane addressed the Members, noting that the preparation of this strategy fulfils Policy Objective RET3 of the County Development Plan. She acknowledged the contribution of Mr. Peter Staunton from Galway City Council, who was present in the Chamber. Ms. Loughnane requested the Members' endorsement of the Joint Retail Strategy, which will enable its inclusion in the forthcoming review of the County Development Plan and support the next stage of the process.

Cllrs. D. Killilea and Hoade raised the following points and queries:

- The Members acknowledged the many opportunities for engagement that the team provided throughout the SPC process.
- The importance of re-establishing Galway as a leading retail centre was emphasised, as the City/County is currently losing ground to other major towns in the region.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. D. Killilea **SECONDED** by Cllr. Hoade it was **AGREED** to endorse the Joint Retail Strategy as per the requirements of the Retail Planning Guidelines and Policy Objective RET3 of the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028.

ITEM NO. 6 TO CONSIDER A DATE FOR A SPECIAL MEETING IN RELATION TO THE CONSIDERATION UNDER SECTION 13 OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT (AS AMENDED) OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVES REPORT ON THE SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED ON PROPOSED VARIATION 1 OF THE GALWAY COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2022-2028. **4662**

A discussion took place on an appropriate date for the Special Meeting, after which it was agreed that it would be held on Monday, 16th February 2026. The Cathaoirleach confirmed that on this date the CPG meeting will take place in the first part of the morning, followed by the Special Meeting for the County Development Plan later in the morning, with an ESB workshop to be held in the afternoon. Invitations will issue to all Members with the exact times.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Hoade **SECONDED** by Cllr. Regan it was **AGREED** to hold a Special Meeting in relation to the consideration under Section 13 of the Planning and Development Act (as amended) of the Chief Executives Report on the Submission received on proposed variation 1 of the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 on Monday 16th February 2026.

Cllrs. Cunniffe, D. Connolly, Regan & D. Killilea raised the following points and queries:

- Have the Council received additional funding under the new National Housing Plan.
- The Council should not be required to 'bid' for funding from the Department across funding streams.
- Cost rental housing should be available in all areas of the County.
- Community amenities must be provided in conjunction with housing.
- Is it possible to change land-use zonings through a Variation of the County Development Plan.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by the Chief Executive:

- We must strike the right balance between delivering new housing and building strong, sustainable communities, supported by adequate services. There is also significant demand for sporting facilities across the County.
- A funding application by the Council will be made to the Housing Activation office to address the infrastructural deficits.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Hanrahan:

- A hybrid workshop will be held for the Members on the proposed variation of the County Development Plan, on 6th February.
- All matters will be reviewed as part of the Variation process.
- We are awaiting the implementation of recent changes to the lifespan of County Development Plans under the newly enacted Planning and Development Act.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Mitchell:

- The Council has undertaken a comprehensive analysis of all zoned land to identify the key constraints affecting housing delivery. Each local authority will submit an application to the Housing Activation Office to secure funding aimed at addressing and removing these constraints.
- Cost rental housing is not a viable option in Ballinasloe, at this time. The preferred approach is to work in partnership with Approved Housing Bodies.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Owens:

- The tenders to develop the first Sports Plan and Outdoor Recreation Strategy — including needs assessment, consultation, and strategic priorities — will be published in Q1 2026 and will be progressed via the SPC and Plenary for adoption during 2026.

ITEM NO. 7 TO CONSIDER AND IF DEEMED APPROPRIATE AUTHORISE THE ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 142(5A) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED). 4663

Report dated 16th January 2026 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Comh. O Curraoin **SECONDED** by Cllr. Kinane it was **AGREED** to authorise Cllr Hoade and Comh. O Curraoin to attend LAMA Spring Training at The Connaught Hotel, Galway on 28th & 29th January 2026.

ITEM NO. 8 TO CONSIDER AND IF DEEMED APPROPRIATE AUTHORISE THE ATTENDANCE AT CONFERENCE, MEETINGS OTHER EVENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 142(5) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED). 4664

Report dated 16th January 2026 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Lee **SECONDED** by Comh. O Curraoin it was **AGREED** to authorise Comh. O Curraoin and Cllr. Cunniffe to attend Celtic Conferences – “The Finance Act 2025” at the Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford, Co. Louth on 16th, 17th & 18th January 2026. (Retrospective Approval).

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Kinane **SECONDED** by Comh. O Curraoin it was **AGREED** to authorise Cllrs. Maher and Turner to attend Celtic Conferences – “Misinformation, Disinformation and Fake News – Finding the Truth” at O’Donovan’s Hotel, Clonakilty, Co. Cork on 6th, 7th & 8th February 2026.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Donohue **SECONDED** by Cllr. Hoade it was **AGREED** to authorise Cllr Donohue to attend Cope Galway – Domestic Abuse Seminar at Galway County Council, Council Chambers on 12th February 2026.

Cllr. Donohue requested that the attendance of the Cope Domestic Abuse seminar be extended to staff members. Director of Services, Ms. Ruane agreed that if there are places available, staff will be invited to attend.

ITEM NO. 9 TO NOTE THE SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS OF CONFERENCES ATTENDED IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 142(5F) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED). **4665**

Report dated 15th January 2026 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

The summary of proceedings at conferences attended were agreed and **NOTED**.

ITEM NO. 10. TO CONSIDER THE MANAGEMENT REPORT – JANUARY 2026 IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 136(2) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED). **4666**

Report was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

The Management Report – January 2026, in accordance with Section 136(2) of the Local Government Act 2001 (As Amended) was **NOTED**.

Cllrs. McHugh Farag, Reddington, McHugh Ryan, Hoade & Turner raised the following points and queries:

- The Chamber was informed about a recent protest that was held in Dunmore, in relation to the Bridge Street Regeneration Project. Support from the Members was sought seeking the completion of the Part 8 process.
- It was asked that the Regeneration Team update the residents of Dunmore regarding the Regeneration Project.
- It was requested that an update on the Dunmore Regeneration Project be provided to the Members at the February plenary meeting.
- The level of dereliction in Dunmore and around the County was highlighted.
- An update was requested on modular home legislation.

- Appreciation was expressed to the Active Travel Team for their high level of commitment, proactive engagement, and flexibility throughout their work.
- Welcomed the engagement that had taken place with the Muslim community regarding the provision of a dedicated Muslim burial space in Tuam.
- A request was made that Members be briefed on the new Planning & Development Bill.
- Clarification was sought as to whether should the County Development be reviewed this summer, will the re-assessment timeline be in 18 months.
- The new lighting scheme in Caherlistane, funded through the increase in Local Property Tax funding, was welcomed.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Hanrahan:

- Reassured the Members that Galway County Council are committed to the Dunmore Bridge Street Project. The Tuam Municipal District will continue to receive updates and be part of the decision-making process. Discussions have taken place with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) in relation to the project.
- Guidelines governing modular homes have not yet been issued.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by the Chief Executive:

- The Minister has directed all Local Authorities to begin the Variation process for their County Development Plans. This will allow for the expansion of zonings that are currently restricting the delivery of new homes.
- Galway County Council holds land suitable for housing development; however, a number of infrastructure constraints are currently preventing development progress.
- The Planning & Development (Amendment) Bill 2026 is still being considered by the Oireachtas. Its primary purpose is to extend the lifetime of County Development Plans by up to 30 months. Once the Bill has passed through the Dáil, a workshop will be organised to brief Members on its provisions.

- Clarification is needed regarding the timelines for the commencement of the County Development Plan review. The Department intends for all new CDP to be 10 years in duration and run concurrently and end at the same time.

Cllrs. Mannion, Keaveney, Welby, McClearn, Parsons, McNamara & D. Killilea raised the following points and queries:

- It was asked if Community Hubs will be provided with generators and if there was still time for hubs to lodge Expressions of Interest with the Council.
- Is there a generator on Inishbofin.
- The number of refusals of offers of social housing was highlighted. Reasons for the refusals was requested.
- Progress on the Clifden Public Realm Enhancement Project was welcomed.
- It was requested that the Summer Ready Plan be before the Members by March.
- A larger textile container at the civic amenity in Clifden is necessary.
- What level of interest has been expressed in 'Over Shop' Living.
- Details were requested on the use of Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) in the County. It was asked if it could be installed at Dunlo Running Track and at litter black spots.
- It was stated that there are currently no CCTV systems in operation in Tuam.
- It was asked which Local Authority is leading the Wild Swimming Bank Project.
- With the increased move towards online services, how is the Council ensuring that no one is excluded from accessing these services, and is data being collected to monitor this.
- When will contracts be signed for the Tuam Town Hall works.
- More information was requested on the Community Feasibility Study for Corofin.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Mitchell:

- 1 in 3 offers of social housing are refused. Refusals are for a myriad of reasons. Applicants are asked to decide on 3 areas of choice for housing, personal circumstances can lead to refusals.
- Rural houses that were built for a specific reason can be difficult to re-let. These tenancies may be offered through Choice Based Letting.
- Refusal of 2 offers of social housing leads to removal from the Social Housing Waiting List for a period of 1 year.
- The Council currently has a vacancy rate of 2%.
- Undertook to circulate information on over shop housing once it is received.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Hanrahan:

- The Regeneration team are currently completing the property registration process for the Tuam Town Hall project.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Ms. Ruane:

- Regarding the textile collection amenity in Clifden, she has linked in with the Environment team and undertook to revert directly to Cllr. Mannion.
- Further to the CCTV query, the Council have identified 4-5 places where CCTV will be installed. These will be ready to go in quarter 1 of 2026. She will revert to Cllr. Parsons with dates.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Owens:

- An Garda Síochána have not finalised codes of practice under the new Garda Síochána (Recording Devices) Act 2023, regarding CCTV. No new scheme can commence until codes of practice are published. This does not affect systems already in operation.
- Existing community-based CCTV schemes remain legally compliant under their current authorisations; however, once the new Code of Conduct is finalised and the relevant legislative provisions are commenced, all existing schemes will

have a four-year period to apply under the new framework if they wish to continue operating, after which they must cease unless re-authorised.

- Community hubs can apply at any time through the rolling expression-of-interest process.
- A list of community hubs has been published on the Council website. There currently is not an active application for Inishbofin, but they are welcome to apply.
- Staff will facilitate clinics in the Municipal Districts during the year to assist community groups with access to online systems.
- There is a separate procurement process for the provision of 4 mobile generators for the Council.
- It is not a requirement that a Community Hub have a generator to apply under this scheme.
- It was the intention that the Summer Ready Plan would be before the Members at the April plenary meeting, however if possible, it will be presented at the March plenary meeting, as requested.
- The contact for the Shannon Banks Wild Swimming project is Loretta Raftery a member of the Just Transition Tourism Team in Rural, Community & Tourism Development and Integration.
- The funding for the Project Development Measure for Corofin under Town & Village renewal scheme is valid for a period of 18 months.

Cllrs. Reddington, Geraghty, Kinane, Cunniffe, Kelly, Regan, King, Feeney, Keane & Mac An Iomaire raised the following points and queries:

- The frustration of Dunmore residents relating to the Bridge Street Regeneration Project, was conveyed.
- The condition of the roads around Dunmore were criticised.
- It was asked when public consultation will take place regarding the Oranmore Development Plan.
- Lack of communication with residents regarding the Safe Routes to School project in Oranmore was highlighted. It was asked that residents be consulted before works recommence.

- It was asked if the Executive could ask central Government when guidelines on modular homes will be issued.
- An update was sought on the Long Point, Loughrea.
- The sound in the chamber is not operating correctly.
- Is there a funding mechanism that can be used to provide 4x4 jeeps for the Civil Defence.
- Generic reusable public signage should be put up locally at all work sites.
- Welcomed the tender for improved lit walkways at Renville Park.
- Can CCTV be used on Council lands.
- The provision of stage-payment options within the Vacant Property Grant scheme would offer significant advantages.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Mitchell:

- Representations have been made to the Department requesting that stage payments be implemented under the Croí Cónaithe grant, we will continue to make further requests.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Hanrahan:

- Derelict properties are the responsibility of the landowners. A review is ongoing and if necessary, letters will be issued to the owners of these properties in Dunmore.
- Council team to carry out inspections on derelict properties.
- The Council have submitted a Part 10 Planning application for the Long Point in Loughrea. It is currently with An Coimisiún Pleanála. A response to which, is expected in the next few weeks.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by the Chief Executive:

- Public consultation is of the utmost importance in progressing public projects and works.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Finn:

- There will be cross directorate engagement regarding works in Dunmore.
- Safe Routes to School schemes originate with An Taisce, who engage directly with the school and its Board of Management. The Council also conducts its own engagement processes, even in cases where there is no legislative requirement to do so.
- An update on the Safe Routes to School project in Oranmore will be included in the next Management Report.
- Regards funding for Civil Defence vehicles, he informed that the matter should first be considered at national level as actions relating to severe weather response come from the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management, along with their associated recommendations.

Cllrs. Geraghty, L. Harney & Hoade raised the following points and queries:

- Will there be a contingency plan to alleviate road blockages in Dunmore for the duration works.
- Queried if the electrical systems in Community Centres were suitable for the use of generators.
- An update on the Galway City Ring Road decision that is expected by the end of January, was requested.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Owens:

- The Department do not provide funding for permanent generators in Community Hubs. The only funding stream currently available is through the Local Enhancement Programme with a closing date of the end of February.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Finn:

- He took on board the comments regarding the need to erect public signage in advance of Council works in an area. He noted that the section already

communicates through social media, the monthly Management Report, and by informing the Municipal Districts of upcoming works.

- The engineer assigned to the Safe Travel to School Scheme in Oranmore has met directly with local residents and an email update issued to residents. All works are being carried out in accordance with the relevant design standards and are subject to the appropriate road safety audit. On that basis, there should be no issues in relation to the safety of road users.
- Regarding Dunmore, he explained that many County towns have narrow roads. The Local Area Office will work with the owners of the properties being refurbished, to find the best solution.
- An oral hearing will not be required for the Galway City Ring Road. He expects a decision within weeks.
- An Coimisiún Pleanála do not require any further information from the Council on the Galway City Ring Road.

ITEM NO. 11 TO CONSIDER THE DRAFT CUSTOMER SERVICE ACTION PLAN 2025-2029. **4667**

Report was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

Director of Service Mr. Owens advised that consideration of the item had been deferred at the December Plenary to allow for further review by the Library Service regarding the requirement on page 26 that children under 16 be supervised. He advised that the Library Service had examined this further, and on this basis, the Library Service recommended that the supervision condition be removed.

Ms. Ruane added that the existing Galway County Council Safeguarding Protocol, which is included in the document and sets out the responsibilities of parents, already addresses the matter and is displayed in all libraries.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Hoade **SECONDED** by Cllr. Lee the revised Draft Customer Services Action Plan 2025-2029 was **AGREED**.

ITEM NO. 12 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BUSINESS & CORRESPONDENCE. **4668**

The following items of correspondence which were published on the extranet prior to the meeting were **NOTED**:

- Letter dated 27.11.25 – Resolution Letter from Galway County Council to Minister Dara Calleary, Department of Rural & Community Development & the Gaeltacht – Review Clár Area Map.
- Letter dated 11.12.25 from Dara Calleary T.D. – Reply to Resolution Letter dated 27.11.25 – Review Clár Area Map.
- Letter dated 02.12.25 – Resolution Letter from Galway County Council to Minister Dara Calleary, Department of Rural & Community Development & the Gaeltacht –Resolution: Cleggan & Inishbofin Airstrips Trial Basis.
- Email dated 19.12.25 from Éamonn McCormack, Programme Manager to Dara Calleary T.D. – Reply to Resolution Letter dated 02.12.25 – Cleggan & Inishbofin Airstrips.
- Letter dated 02.12.25 – Resolution Letter to Ms. Maria Walsh, M.E.P. – Resolution Letter Vote against Mercosur Trade Deal.
- Email dated 08.01.26 from Stefania Moise, Policy Advisor to Ms. Maria Walsh, M.E.P. – Reply to Resolution Letter dated 02.12.25: Resolution Vote against Mercosur Trade Deal.
- Letter dated 02.12.25 – Resolution Letter to Mr. Barry Cowen, M.E.P. – Resolution Letter Vote against Mercosur Trade Deal.
- Email dated 09.01.26 from Mr. Barry Cowen, M.E.P. – Reply to Resolution Letter dated 02.12.25: Vote against the Mercosur Trade Deal.
- Letter dated 02.12.25 – Resolution Letter to Regina Doherty, M.E.P. – Resolution – Vote against Mercosur Trade Deal.
- Email dated 13.01.26 from Office of Regina Doherty, M.E.P. acknowledgement of Resolution Letter dated 02.12.25 – Vote against Mercosur Trade Deal.
- Letter dated 02.12.25 Resolution Letter to each Dáil Deputy – Resolution – Vote against Mercosur Trade Deal.

- Email dated 09.12.25 from Danielle, Office of Deputy Tony McCormack T.D, – Acknowledgement of Resolution letter dated 02.12.25 – Vote against Mercosur Trade Deal.
- Email dated 12.12.25 from Aisling Boyle, Private Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Helen McEntee – Acknowledgement of Letter addressed to each Dáil Deputy.
- Letter dated 15.12.25 from Holly Cairns, T.D. Reply to Resolution Letter dated 02.12.25 to every Dáil Deputy – Vote against Mercosur Trade Deal.
- Email dated 16.12.25 from Aisling Dempsey, T.D, - Reply to Resolution letter dated 02.12.25 – Vote against Mercosur Trade Deal.
- Letter dated 09.12.25 from Clare County Council – Resolution – Ireland's declining economic competitiveness.
- Letter dated 09.12.25 from Clare County Council – Resolution – Call on Taoiseach Review Local Government Funding.
- Letter dated 09.12.25 from Clare County Council – Resolution – Request to Minister for Health on over the counter Medication.
- Letter dated 10.12.25 from Carlow County Council – Resolution – Nomination of candidates for Presidential Elections.
- Letter dated 16.12.25 from Galway County Council to Commission for Communication Regulation – Resolution – Issues with Mobile Phone Coverage.
- Email dated 17.12.25 from Consumer Care Team of Commission for Communications Regulation – Acknowledgement of Resolution letter dated 16.12.25.
- Letter dated 16.12.25 from Galway County Council to Kilkerrin-Clonberne Ladies Football Club – Letter of Congratulations.
- Email dated 17.12.25 from Kilkerrin-Clonberne Ladies Football Club – Acknowledgement and thanks for Letter of Congratulations dated 16.12.25.
- Letter dated 16.12.25 from Galway County Council to Department of Transport – Resolution – Works on Link Road – Loughrea By Pass.
- Email dated 12.01.25 from Susan Byrne, Roads Division, Department of Transport – Reply to Resolution letter dated 16.12.25.

- Letter dated 16.12.25 to Coillte from Galway County Council – Resolution – Full Investigation on Roadside Trees.
- Email dated 14.01.25 from Declan Garvey, Estates Manager, Coillte Forest – Reply to Resolution letter dated 16.12.25 to Coillte – Full Investigation Roadside Trees.
- Letter dated 15.01.26 from Sligo County Council – Resolution – Ratify CETA and Investor Court System.

The Chief Executive reminded Members that the deadline for submitting Annual Donation Statements for the Ethics Register is 31 January 2026.

He reiterated the schedule of meetings for 16 February, noting that the CPG meeting will take place first, followed by the Special Meeting on the Variation of the Development Plan, with an ESB Workshop later that day.

He asked Members to submit any questions for the ESB Workshop at least one week in advance, to allow the ESB sufficient time to prepare responses and ensure Members get maximum value from the session.

He also reminded Members that the deadline for submitting Local Representational Allowance 2025 expenses is the final day of January.

Cllrs. McHugh Farag, D. Connolly, O Curraoín, McClearn, Cunniffe, & Hoade raised the following points and queries:

- Disappointment was expressed at the responses received to correspondence issued by the Council to Oireachtas Members in relation to the Mercosur Trade Agreement.
- Frustration was expressed towards Oireachtas Members that did not vote in favour of a request for a legal review, on the Mercosur Trade Agreement, given the concerns raised for Irish agriculture.
- Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) should focus on local issues.

- Only 8% of public spending in Ireland occurs at local Government level, compared to an EU average of 23%. Ireland also ranks poorly regards per capita public representation.
- Local Authorities have very little financial autonomy and control over fisheries and farming.
- The Local Government Task Force is working to reform Local Government. The report needs the backing of politicians.
- It was proposed that a letter be issued to the Department requesting information on the Equalisation Fund.
- The Local Property (LPT) office should be asked to explain how the Equalisation Fund is distributed.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by the Chief Executive:

- Local Authorities depend heavily on grant aid and department funding, and a more sustainable long-term local government funding model is needed. Galway County Council requires a greater share of the LPT Equalisation Fund. These requests are submitted frequently by the Executive to the DHLGH, however insufficient progress has been made. This will ultimately be a political decision.
- We will write again following the request today.

A discussion took place on arranging a meeting between Galway County Council and Oireachtas Members to focus on the Council's funding. The Members agreed that the Oireachtas Members would be invited to a meeting attended by the Executive, Group Leaders, and one additional Member from each group.

ITEM 13. NOTICE OF MOTION

4669

Cllr. Andrew Reddington submitted the following Notice of Motion prior to the meeting:

'That Galway County Council executive would write to the Minister for Housing James Browne and ask that the following be added to the Housing for the older person Grant:

-The cost would be covered for the installation of a change over switch and a generator under the older person grant-

As Galway prepares for future storms, we have to be storm ready and this new aspect of the grant would protect our most vulnerable".

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Reddington **SECONDED** by Comh. Mac An Iomaire the above motion was **AGREED**.

ITEM 14. NOTICE OF MOTION

4670

Cllr. Martina Kinane submitted the following Notice of Motion prior to the meeting:

"That Galway County Council formally write to the Rural Water Unit of Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage seeking an extension to the response deadline of 27th February 2026, in respect of the revised conditions for funding approval for the Measure A8 Demonstration Projects for Clarinbridge and Craughwell.

Given the significant scale, complexity, and revised scope of the combined project I believe a face-to-face meeting with Minister Jack Chambers, Minister for Public Expenditure, Infrastructure, Public Service Reform and Digitalisation, Minister James Brown, Minister for Housing Local Government and officials from Rural Water Unit Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage is essential to ensure that the untenable conditions attached to the revised funding approval are fully addressed and that a more favourable outcome can be achieved for all stakeholders.

The current timeframe does not provide sufficient opportunity for these critical discussions to be undertaken. An extension to the response deadline is therefore required to allow the project to progress on a sound, transparent and fully agreed footing.

Cllr. Kinane spoke on her motion and enquired as to the outcome of the recent meeting between Galway County Council and the Department. She queried why the Council submitted an application for this project despite the absence of the necessary match funding.

Director of Services, Mr. Finn responded saying that an extension to the response deadline of 27th February would be welcomed. He confirmed that the letter of 28 November contained revised terms and conditions, which retained the existing 15% funding requirement for the project. However, the revised terms also introduced a new condition whereby any expenditure in excess of the approved budget would be funded 100% by the local authority. This represents a significant additional financial risk for the local authority. As this is a pilot scheme, a further meeting is to be arranged with the Department. The matters to be discussed are not issues as such, but areas requiring clarification, particularly in relation to the respective roles of the local authority, the Department, and Uisce Eireann in delivering this necessary infrastructure for locations such as Craughwell and Clarinbridge. These clarifications will include responsibility for the recoupment of connection charges and the ongoing operation and maintenance of the infrastructure.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Kinane **SECONDED** by Cllr. L. Harney the above motion was **AGREED**.

ITEM 15. NOTICE OF MOTION

4671

Cllr. Laurie Harney submitted the following Notice of Motion prior to the meeting:

"That Galway County Council petition the Government to ensure that low-income families do not retrospectively lose their positions on the Local Government Housing lists because of an increase in the Additional Needs Payment. This payment is intended to alleviate pressure on households budgets of low-income families. Increases in social welfare should cause an increase in the allowable threshold for qualification for a place on the local housing list.

Director of Services, Mr. Mitchell explained that the increases in social welfare payments that came into place in January 2025 has resulted in some applicants moving above the income eligibility threshold. He informed the Members that he understands that there is a scheduled increase in the Working Family Payment due in May, which may affect some applicants. The Local Authority has no discretion as regards this and confirmed that we will write to the Government, as requested.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. L. Harney **SECONDED** by Cllr. Collins the above motion was **AGREED**.

ITEM NO. 16 CATHAOIRLEACH'S BUSINESS

4672

Cllrs. L. Harney, Regan, raised the following points and queries:

- Cllr. L. Harney enquired if there has been a response to the letter issued to ComReg following his previous motion.
- An update was sought on the link road to the Loughrea bypass. To relieve congestion to the Gort Road.
- Pressure must be kept on Bus Éireann to address their requirement that school bus drivers retire at 70 years of age.
- Could the Department be asked if knock and rebuild works could be deemed eligible for the Croí Cónaithe grant.
- Has there been any relaxation on the regulations governing mobile homes.
- A specific property was highlighted as experiencing a significant rat infestation originating from neighbouring derelict houses. The Council was asked to take the lead in addressing this issue.

The Cathaoirleach confirmed that the motion was issued to ComReg in December, no response was received to date and a follow up letter will be issued.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Finn:

- There are a number of strategic roads included in the County Development Plan; however the Council is constrained by limited funding.
- The road in Loughrea has been reclassified from National Secondary (N66) to regional road status. As a result, the funding agency is no longer TII but the Department of Transport. The link road referred to is not currently included in the County Development Plan and a fresh report would be required in relation to funding from the Department. In addition, an objective for such a scheme would need to be included in a future County Development Plan.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Mitchell:

- If a property is completely or substantially collapsed or has been demolished, it will not qualify for grant aid under the Croí Cónaithe scheme.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Hanrahan:

- It was advised that planning permission is required for the installation of mobile homes, which are not regarded as a long-term housing solution. Extending an existing family home is generally considered the more appropriate and sustainable option, and all applications will continue to be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

The Cathaoirleach informed Cllr. Regan that this housing query he raised falls under the Municipal District, and a response will be provided at MD meeting.

ITEM NO. 17 VOTES OF SYMPATHY / CONGRATULATIONS

4673

A resolution of sympathy was extended to the following:

- Bríd Conroy, Cor na Rón, Inverin, Co. Galway
- Jack Hayes, Ballyhugh, Gort, Co. Galway

- Mrs. Ann Flanagan, Oaklands, Salthill, Galway
- Ian Skelton, Clonboo, Corrandulla, Co. Galway
- Lexi Marmion, Athenry Road, Loughrea, Co. Galway
- Geraldine Keane, Taobh Uisce, Gort Road, Loughrea, Co. Galway
- Ulick Burke, Abbey, Loughrea, Co. Galway
- Fergus Mahon, Gurteeney, Kilbeacanty, Co. Galway
- Richard Coghlan, Woodford, Co. Galway
- The family of the late Martin Feeney, Cloonascarberry, Ballygar, Co. Galway
- The family of the late Sharon Lawless and Bríd Lawless, Menlo, Galway

Chriochnaigh an Cruinniú Ansin.

Submitted, Signed and Approved

Cathaoirleach:



Date:



