



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

**Minutes of the Economic Development, Enterprise & Planning Strategic Policy Committee
Meeting held on Wednesday 3rd December, 2025 at 11am – Council Chamber**

I LÁTHAIR:

- Baill:** Cllr. Donagh Killilea, Chairperson
Cllr. Mary Hoade (online)
Cllr. Gerry King
Cllr. David Collins (online)
Mr. Paul Carey, Development/Construction (online)
- Oifigigh:** Mr. Liam Hanrahan, Director of Services, Planning & Economic Development
Ms. Valerie Loughnane, Senior Planner, Planning
Mr. Eoin Connaire, Business Advisor, Local Enterprise Office
Mr. Ronan Conway, A/Senior Executive Engineer, Urban & Rural Regeneration Office
Mr. Brent Mostert, Town Regeneration Officer
Ms. Eileen Keaveney, Administrative Officer, Planning
Ms. Sinéad Burns, Assistant Staff Officer, Planning
- Leithscéal:** Cllr. Tom Welby
Cllr. Declan Geraghty
Ms. Lyn Donnelly, Community/Voluntary
Ms. Deborah Reynolds, Trade Union

Item No. 1 – Minutes of meeting dated 04/06/2025

Cllr. Killilea (Chairperson) opened the meeting. Minutes of the SPC meeting held on 04/06/25 were proposed by Cllr. King and seconded by Cllr. Hoade. No matters arising.

Item No. 2 – New Standing Orders

The new standing orders adopted on 24th November, which were circulated in advance of the meeting were noted.

Item No. 3 – Planning & Development Act 2024 Update

Ms. Loughnane said that there will be a training event for the Elected Members in early 2026 on the Planning & Development Act.

Parts of the Act will be enacted in early 2026.

Part 3 of the Act deals with the County Development Plan and Urban Area Plans.

Mr. Hanrahan added that processes under the New Act will be starting in January and that there will be more complications as time goes on. Mr. Hanrahan stated that the Variation of the County Development Plan will still come under the old planning act.

Item No. 4 – Variation No. 1 of the County Galway Development Plan 2022-2028

Ms. Loughnane shared that the reason for the Proposed Variation No. 1 is in response to 'The National Planning Framework's First Revision 2025' and the 'Section 28 Guidelines on NPF Implementation – Housing Growth Requirements' and for rectification of land use zoning map for Oranmore. Part A: Review and update of the existing Housing Strategy and Housing Need and Demand Assessment of the Galway County Development Plan with associated updates to the County Development Plan. Part B: Updates to existing Policy Objectives and narrative in the County Development Plan which will place a renewed focus on Residential Phase 2 lands in the County. Part C: Rectification of Land use Zoning Map for Oranmore. Ms. Loughnane added that the Variation is on public display from 24th November 2025 until 12 noon on Tuesday 23rd December 2025. Submissions can be made in person at the Planning Counter, made via consult.galway.ie or sent by email. There is a walk in consultation tomorrow 4th December from 12noon to 5pm at County Hall. A public consultation webinar will be held on the 10th December from 6pm to 7pm, there will be a short presentation followed by discussion. A Chief Executive Report will be prepared by the end of January and presented to the members on the 16th or 23rd of February, 2026 for consideration.

Ms. Loughnane further explained that the view of the Office of the Planning Regulator outlines that the Variation includes changes to the CDP following the publication of the section 28 NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements (2025) (Housing Growth Guidelines) and welcomes the approach to facilitate the immediate development of Residential Phase 2 lands with regard to the Galway Metropolitan Area, the Key Towns and tier 2 and tier 3 towns.

Ms. Loughnane noted that under the policy objective in the County Development Plan, any R2 lands will be considered on a case by case basis once the variation goes through.

Item No. 5 – Update of the Joint Retail Strategy

Ms. Loughnane said that the Joint SPC had a presentation from consultants in September on the Joint Retail Strategy. The document is being finalized and will be completed before Christmas. The document will go before the Elected Members to be endorsed in the New Year.

Item No. 6 – Update on the County/City Economic Development Strategy

County/City Economic Development Strategy. Confirmation of the consultants will be given next week. Thereafter contracts will be put together for signing and the compilation of the strategy will get underway.

Item No. 7 – Local Enterprise Office Update

Mr. Connaire gave an update on LEO Programmes year to date

- Start your own business training programmes – 260 participants to date.
- Lean for Business – 15 business participating on current programme
- Digital for Business – 52 applications approved year to date total value €231,975
- Grow Digital Voucher – 20 approved year to date to the value of €59,905
- Green for Business – 94 applications approved to date total value is €208,116
- EEG – 44 approved to date to the value of €360,185
- Mentoring and 1 to 1 Clinics – 814 individuals availed of this support so far this year.

Training Programmes Since Last SPC Meeting:

- Idea to Impact Programme
- Strategic Management Development Programme
- EMPOWER ELEVATE
- Completion of the strategic Female Founder programme for Galway businesses
- AI management development programme will be run in 2026
- Currently reviewing needs analysis for programmes for 2026
- 1 – 2 day Workshops

Local Food and Craft Fair – ran from Thursday 27th to Tuesday 2nd December – 58 stand holders and feedback from stand holders was positive. The LEO team were happy with footfall and is estimated that 8,000 attended. There will be an analysis of the event done of the event for future fairs.

LEO Galway Lunch & Learn events:

2nd September – Ballinalsoe Enterprise Hub

23rd October – Portumna Courthouse

4th November – Galway City Platform 94

Cllr. Killilea acknowledged the volume of work that is being done by the LEO Team, thanked the Team and asked that the detailed figures should be included in the Management Report.

Cllr. Collins thanked the LEO Team added that it is overwhelming the volume of work and said that the Craft Fair was a great event.

Cllr. Hoade said that it is not realized the amount of work that takes place and added her thanks to the LEO Team.

Item No. 8 – Urban Regeneration Office Update

Mr. Conway gave an update on the following projects

Buildings

Portumna – complete in June 2025

Loughrea Town Hall – still in progress, handover scheduled for Q3 2026

Tuam Town Hall - tender for contractor Q1 2026

Athenry - Tender for contractor Q1 2026

Tuam Station House - Funding approved, tender for design team to commence

Bridge House, Gort - Purchase progressing

Public Realm

Athenry - tender for contractor to issue in Jan/Feb 2025 and to progress to construction thereafter subject to contract sum

Clifden - planning permission granted by An Coimisiún Pleanála, awaiting suitable call for funding to progress detailed design and construction

Planning / Town Centre First

Gort - complete

Athenry - complete

Ballinasloe - complete

Rinville Park, Oranmore - complete Q1 2026

Station Quarter, Tuam – at draft stage, further engagement required

An Cheathrú Rua

Headford – to begin in 2026

Item No. 9 – SPC Work Programme 2026

It was agreed that SPC Work Programme would be circulated in the coming weeks.

Item No. 10 – Schedule of Meetings 2026


It was agreed that dates for the schedule of meetings would be circulated in the coming weeks.

Item No. 11 – AOB

No AOB

The meeting concluded.

Signed: Chairperson – Donagh Killilea



Date:

4/3/26