

**Miontuairiscí Choiste Forbartha Pobail Áitiúil Chontae na Gaillimhe a  
tionóladh ar an Dé Lúil 2025 @10.30 am**

Minutes of Galway County Local Community Development Committee meeting  
held on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2025 at 10.30 am in Council Chamber

**Present:**

Cllr. Michael Connolly, LA Member (Chairperson)	Public
Caroline McDonagh, Local Enterprise Office	Public
Máire Uí Mhaoláin, Comhar na nOileán Teo	Community
Dónal Walsh, GRET B	Public
Michael Owens, DOS, Galway County Council	Public

**Teams**

Cllr. Pádraig Mac an Iomaire, LA Member (Vice-Chair)	Public (Via Teams)
Cllr. James Charity, LA Member	Public (Via Teams)
Karen Mannion, FORUM Connemara Ltd	Community (Via Teams)
Steve Dolan, Galway Rural Development	Community (Via Teams)
Gerard Costello, PPN Community	Community (Via Teams)
Anne Mitchell, IFA	Community (Via Teams)

**Apologies:**

Regina Higgins, Department of Social Protection	Public
Eveanna Ryan, Galway Chamber	Community
Kevin Gavin, PPN Social Inclusion	Community
Laurence Gaughan, HSE West	Public

**Also in Attendance:** Liam Conneally, CEO Galway County Council, Lorna Baek, Chief Officer, Kieran Coyne, Theresa Donohue, Helen Melia, Mairead O'Malley, Marie Nicholson - Galway County Council.

Cllr. M Connolly, Chair of the LCDC welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies received. He welcomed Michael Owens, Director of Services to the LCDC committee and to Lorna Baek, the newly appointed Chief Officer to the LCDC committee and Senior Executive Officer in the Community Department. He also thanked Kieran Coyne for all his assistance during his tenure as Chief Officer.

**1. Miontuairiscí ó chruinniú an Choiste um Fhorbairt Pobail Áitiúil (LCDC) a  
tionóladh an 25 Feabhra 2025 agus an 8 Aibreán 2025.**

Minutes of Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) held on 25<sup>th</sup>  
February 2025 and 8<sup>th</sup> April 2025.

T. Donohue referred to the Minutes of the Meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> April and reminded members that at this meeting there was not a full quorum present. She advised members that Mary McGann had previously been in contact with the Department enquiring about the quorum for LCDC meetings. She was advised as per LCDC Guidelines 2016 that the quorum is 50% of the membership of the committee, rounded to



the nearest whole number plus one. Ms. T. Donohue raised the issue again with the Department and was told that the 2016 Guidelines are being reviewed and that the Department are still in a deliberative process and it is anticipated that they will be finalised later this year.

Ms. T. Donohue advised that there are two vacant PPN positions at the moment and that a PPN secretariat meeting was held the previous evening to ratify these nominees. The recommended nominees will be on the plenary agenda for the September meeting for approval. The two nominees can then join the LCDC committee in September. Cllr M. Connolly expressed concern and stated that the quorum needs to be reduced as it is very difficult to attend all the meetings.

Cllr. M. Connolly looked for the minutes of meeting of the 25<sup>th</sup> February and the 8<sup>th</sup> April to be approved by the LCDC members.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Padraig Mac Iomaire, **SECONDED** by Máire Uí Mhaoláin, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2025 were **APPROVED**.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Karen Mannion, **SECONDED** by M. Uí Mhaoláin, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2025 were **APPROVED**.

2. **SICAP – Faomhadh ar Thurascálacha Athbhreithnithe Lár na Bliana 2025 do Ghaillimh Thoir, GThaillimh Thia agus Oileáin na Gaillimhe. Cur i láthair ó gach Feidhmitheoir Cláir ar nuashonrú SICAP agus téama an staidéir cháis.**  
SICAP – Approval of Mid-year Review Reports 2025 for Galway East, Galway West and Galway Islands.  
Presentation from each Programme Implementor on SICAP update and case study theme.

T. Donohue gave an overview of the SICAP mid year review. The review assesses the Programme Implementors performance in delivering SICAP in accordance with the 2025 Annual Plan, SICAP programme requirements and the funding agreement prior to the end of the year review.

The SICAP subcommittee met to carry out the mid year review for the three Galway lots. The subcommittee's role is to oversee the reporting and planning process review and to ensure compliance with the program. The LCDC Sub-Committee met on the 20th and 24th June and all data as per the Pobal checklist was checked and the SICAP sub-committee is now seeking approval for the mid year review for each lot.

Donal Walsh, Chair of the SICAP Sub-Committee updated the members as follows: -  
**SICAP Mid-Year Performance Update - Galway East Lot 27-1**

A SICAP subcommittee meeting took place on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2025 to discuss Galway East with the programme implementor, Galway Rural Development. A checklist was



prepared in advance of the meeting by the admin staff and this was discussed at the subcommittee. All the necessary reports were uploaded onto IRIS and the achievement of KPI 1 is 49% (36/74) which is achieved (target 40% mid-year). The achievement of KPI 2 is 37% (292/785) (target 40% mid-year). The adherence to the Budget Parameters were all compliant. All spending is on target and will be spent by year end. The lot Level Performance and SICAP EU Communication and Visibility Guidelines are all adhered to.

The subcommittee felt that KPI 2 seemed low and queried this. GRD advised that a staff member had been absent on sick leave and that there was some outstanding data to be keyed into Iris. This has since been rectified and the KPIs are now as follows: KPI 1 is 58% and KPI 2 is 60%. Pobal also carried out a Mid-Year review and the feedback was good. D. Walsh concluded stating that it is visible that good engagement and positive work is being carried out by GRD throughout Galway East.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr M. Connolly, **SECONDED** by D. Walsh, the SICAP Mid-Year Review Report 2025 for Galway East Lot 27-1 was **APPROVED**.

Anne Cassidy, Galway Rural Development then gave a presentation on the Mid-year SICAP Review for Galway East. The following points were noted:

- to date 36 LCGs are registered.
- message in a bottle program was proving to be very important in rural areas and they are being distributed through many mediums including the library service.
- online grant information sessions were presented to clubs and community groups.
- in relation to the New Arrivals funding, a Community Interpreters Network has been established in collaboration with the University in Galway and has given support to 20 members on different issues at a low cost.
- 292 clients have received one-to-one supports to date under lifelong learning and skill development in LPTG areas and among SICAP area
- the Boys to Men programme has been very beneficial to vulnerable early school leavers.
- The Brothers of Charity have set up a micro enterprise and have helped individuals with the Driver Theory Test which has allowed individuals set up their own business.
- Mr. Price has hired 20 to 25 individuals in his business, and this has given confidence to the employees and provided opportunities to them.

M. Connolly thanked Anne for her very interesting presentation and stated he was very familiar with all the great work she did in the Ballinasloe area. K. Mannion commented on the great work in East Galway and their work with NUIG was very interesting and innovative.

A. Cassidy then outlined the case study theme chosen for 2025. She outlined that they had done a lot of work with the traveller community and were focusing on a project under



goal one, Community Animation. They had held a wellness retreat for the traveller women and it was very successful. This year they want to highlight domestic abuse, and they hope to have several people from different organisations at the event.

D. Walsh, then updated the members on the following lot; -

**SICAP Mid-Year Performance Update - Galway Islands Lot 27-3**

A SICAP subcommittee meeting took place on 24th June 2025 to discuss Galway Islands Lot with the programme implementor, Comhair na nOilean. A checklist was prepared in advance of the meeting by the admin staff, and this was discussed at the subcommittee. All the necessary reports were uploaded onto IRIS. The KPIs presented were both achieved KPI1 was 150% and KPI2 was 55%, which are both above target for mid year.

The adherence to the Budget Parameters were all compliant. All spending is on target and will be spent by year end. It was pointed out that no individual grants have been given out as the PI believe that the money is better to spent on providing training courses that more people can benefit from. Pobal also carried out a Mid-Year review and noted that Administration cost % is slightly below the expected 10-12.5% range but overall the spend is progressing well.

On the **PROPOSAL** of K. Mannion, **SECONDED** by Pádraig Mac an Iomaire, the SICAP Mid-Year Review Report 2025 for Galway Islands Lot 27-3 was **APPROVED**.

Máire Uí Mhaoláin, Comhair na nOilean then gave a presentation on the work carried out on the Galway Islands since they had taken over the programme in January 2025. The following points were noted:

- They have been working with community organisations on all four Galway islands to identify individuals within their communities that need essential workplace training.
- A Safe-Pass course was provided in partnership with Solas for the three Aran Islands. The course which was completed by 15 individuals, was held in Aer Arainn, Inverin, an ideal location for residents of the three Aran Islands.
- Also HACCP level 1 and 2 courses, provided by GRETB were held at this location, and 6 individuals completed this course.
- A Womens Health Programme was held across the four Islands in partnership with Healthy Ireland, Galway County Council, where 52 individuals attended.
- First Aid Responder training course took place on Inishbofin with three online and one in person training day.
- Upcoming courses and activities include Chair Yoga, Safe Pass Training
- Monthly SICAP Clinics are continuing.
- A range of classes and activities are being planned for the entire lot area aiming to promote the unique cultural identity of the Galway Islands. These will include activities and classes for the Irish language and traditional arts and crafts.



Comhar na nOileán are also actively supporting people to overcome barriers to digital access by providing free digital training in partnership with REACH. M. Uí Mhaoláin noted that there has been an increase in foreign nationals working on the islands. Some of these individuals have attended the drop-in SICAP clinics and have been signposted to relevant agencies to help them with issues such as residency and legal requirements.

M. Uí Mhaoláin then outlined the case study theme chosen for 2025. She advised that they have chosen Goal 1 Building Sustainable and Inclusive Communities. The local shop which was privately owned on the island closed down on 31 October 2023 as it was not economically viable. It was the only shop on the island and with the support of CSP and Inishboffin development they agreed to take over the shop in the community center. This was good for people who had no access by car, and it maintained the quality of life for people on the island.

D. Walsh, then updated the members on the following lot:

**SICAP Mid-Year Performance Update - Galway West Lot 27-2**

A SICAP subcommittee meeting took place on 24th June 2025 to discuss Galway West Lot with the programme implementor, Forum Connemara. A checklist was prepared in advance of the meeting by the admin staff and this was discussed at the subcommittee. All the necessary reports were uploaded onto IRIS and the KPIs presented were both achieved, KPI1 100% and KPI2 102%.

All spending is on target and will be spent by year end. The adherence to the Budget Parameters were all compliant. D. Walsh noted that all KPI's have been met., the PI is going to focus on having more interventions with individuals. Pobal have carried out a Mid-Year review and are satisfied with the programme to date.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Steve Dolan **SECONDED** by D. Walsh, the SICAP Mid-Year Review Report 2025 for Galway West Lot 27-2 was **APPROVED**.

K. Mannion, Forum Conemara then gave a presentation on the Mid-year SICAP Review for Galway West. The following points were noted:

- That they had met their KPI 1 target and had exceeded their KPI 2 target. They had collaborated with GRETB on course delivery and this had a positive impact in the community and promoted engagement.
- They had faced challenges with the New Arrivals as they were unfamiliar with forming Local Community Groups. They had worked with accommodation centers to support internal groups.
- They had also worked with social enterprises but there was limited engagement so far. In October there is an event planned for showcasing supports, networking, and guidance.
- They had also worked on several initiatives, the Carna Day Centre was reopening and office space was offered to the community council in An Turlough.



- Rural Isolation was addressed at a pilot event on 8<sup>th</sup> July in Roundstone Community Centre.
- The next step is to deepen impact with median interventions per group with the aim to intensify engagement. In quarter four, there will be training to strengthen governance capacity. Forum Connemara will continue driving innovative community-based initiatives.

M. Connolly thanked Karen for her presentation and complemented her on all the work she has completed. M. Uí Mhaolain also complimented Karen on their achievements to date.

Liam Conneally, Chief Executive, Galway County Council thanked everyone for their presentations and complimented them on their great work. He also complimented the great work done in Carna and it demonstrated communities coming together and good community spirit.

The Chief Executive sought clarification on FORUM Connemara's challenges in engaging community groups. It was explained that the difficulty relates to new arrival communities only, who are often unfamiliar with the concept of community groups. It was noted that Connemara has two IPA centres and a significant Ukrainian population. An example was given of the Clifden-based Ukrainian choir, which faced obstacles such as opening a bank account. To address this, FORUM Connemara intends to encourage each IPA/Ukrainian centres to establish their own community groups.

In response to a query on training, examples were provided of potential governance courses, including minute-taking, GDPR, social media, and officers' duties. It was also noted that a community resilience course is being developed, informed by experiences during Storm Eowyn when for example Roundstone Hall served as a hub.

It was further highlighted that other community groups are highly engaged, with strong demand and uptake of LEADER grants

K. Mannion then outlined the case study theme chosen for 2025. The Case Study theme is Building and Caring for Coastal Communities. They currently have a man from the Ukraine who is a film maker and who is helping with the case study. They are also engaging with people in isolated areas and providing lifelong learning e.g. lunch clubs to improve the quality of life for them.

M. Connolly highlighted the importance of generators following Storm Eowyn and suggested that if future grant funding was available, the provision of generators should be considered.



### 3. **Ceadú ar Mhaoiniú Breise SICAP do Dhaoine Nua a Tháinig isteach i nGaillimh Thoir agus i nGaillimh Thiar**

Approval of additional SICAP Funding for New Arrivals in Galway East and Galway West

T. Donohue briefed the meeting that the Department notified us in May that they had secured an additional €10m in funding for continued delivery of SICAP supports to New Arrivals in 2025. The Department requested the local development companies requiring additional funding for provision of fundamental services/supports submit an application by the end of May. Both GRD and Forum Connemara submitted applications seeking €16,000 & €33,200 respectively.

Each proposal received was reviewed on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the number of BOTPs (beneficiaries of temporary protection) and IPAS (international protection accommodation services) residing in SICAP Contract Areas and the need to allocate funding commensurate to the great need across all areas.

Galway Rural Development secured funding of €16,000 and Forum Connemara received €12,200. This funding is to be expended by year end in line with SICAP 2024-2028 programme requirements.

On the **PROPOSAL** of D. Walsh **SECONDED** by M. Uí Mhaoláin the Approval of additional SICAP Funding for New Arrivals in Galway East and Galway West was **APPROVED**.

### 4. **Clár Feabsúcháin Áitiúil 2025 – Ceadú Leithdháiltí** Local Enhancement Programme 2025 – Approval of Allocations

Cllr. M. Connolly thanked L. Conneally for attending the meeting as he had to leave for another appointment. The CEO stated it was great to see the positive effect this work was having on the lives of the people of Galway.

T. Donohue gave a list of all applicants that had been awarded funding under the Local Enhancement Programme 2025.

Galway County Council had been awarded Capital Funding of €183,086 and this was to be used to carry out necessary repairs and improvements to facilities, energy efficiency type project, purchase of equipment. The maximum grant for capital works/equipment is €5,000. 30% of the Fund has been ringfenced for small grants under €1,000 to ensure that small grassroots groups with limited funding can access the equipment they need to support their community. 111 applications were awarded funding under this scheme.



Current Funding of €30,514 was awarded to Galway County Council for small social grassroots groups such as Men's Sheds, Women's Sheds, Older People's Groups, to assist with their energy and running cost, and help them continue their important work in their community and prevent social isolation and loneliness. The maximum grant given for Running costs was €1,000. 51 applications were awarded funding under this scheme. T. Donohue sought approval of the Local Enhancement Programme 2025 allocations

On the **PROPOSAL** of M. Uí Mhaoláin **SECONDED** by K. Mannion the approval of the Local Enhancement Programme 2025 allocations was **APPROVED**.

K. Mannion stated that this funding is of great benefit to communities and P. Mac An Iomaire agreed that these grants are a great help to community centers and the whole community gets the benefit.

#### 5. **Aon Ghan eile**

Any other business

T. Donohue highlighted some events that are coming up over the next number of weeks.

#### **Pride of Place Awards 2025**

- Clarinbridge Tidy Towns has been selected in the population Award Category 300-1000. Clarinbridge Tidy Towns on behalf of their community will showcase all their facilities and amenities which impact on quality of life for residents and visitors.
- Marconi Men's Shed has been selected under the Community Wellbeing Award Category. They will showcase the inter-agency approach taken to establish and develop the Men's Shed. It was established exclusively by male family carers who have benefited from ongoing partnership projects between the HSE Carers Department, Forum Connemara, and Galway County Council through Creative Ireland and Healthy Ireland funding.


The judging panel will visit both locations on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> September.


Caroline Mc Donagh mentioned that in relation to the shop in Inishboffin she will be meeting with the group in November to see what support she can put in place for them.

K. Coyne advised that the Galway Age Friendly Programme are hosting the **National**

**Age Friendly Recognition and Achievement Awards 2025** in the Galmont Hotel on Thursday 23rd October 2025.

M. Connolly noted that the next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> September at 10.30 online.

  
LORNA BAEK.  
CHIEF OFFICER.

  
CLLR. MICHAEL CONNOLLY

