

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE
MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL
Held at ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, PROSPECT HILL
Monday, 27th July 2026.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. A. Reddington
Cathaoirleach of the County of Galway

I LATHAIR FREISIN:

Baill: Comh. /Cllr. S. Broderick, I. Canning, J. Charity , D. Connolly, M. Connolly, S. Cunniffe, T. Ó Curraoin, G. Donohue, P. Feeney, D. Geraghty, T. Grealish, A. Harney, L. Harney, M. Hoade, D. Kelly , P. King, M. G. King, M. Lee, P. Mac An Iomaire, M. Maher, J. McClearn, S. McHugh, S. McHugh Ryan, M. McNamara, M. Regan, O. Turner, S. Walsh and T. Welby.

Baill ar líne: Comh. /Cllr. N. Thomas, M. Kinane, E. F. Parsons, C. Keane, D. Killilea, G. Finnerty, M. Leainde, P. Keaveney, D. Collins, E. Mannion

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. K. O'Connor, Head of Finance, Mr. D. Mitchell, Director of Services, Ms. A. Dolan, A/Director of Services, Ms. J. Brann Meetings Administrator, Ms. L. Keady, A/Senior Executive Officer, Ms. S. Elwood, Staff Officer, Ms. T. Costello, Assistant Staff Officer.

Thosnaigh an cruinniú leis an paidir.

ITEM NO.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS

PL.07.2026.01

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Regan **SECONDED** by Cllr. Maher the minutes of the Monthly Plenary Meeting held on 22nd June were **AGREED**.

There were no matters arising.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Regan **SECONDED** by Cllr. Maher the minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 19th June were **AGREED**.

Cllr. Maher raised the following points:

He expressed his appreciation to the staff and the Director of Services for their work in delivering the new Fire Station in Loughrea. He noted that a brand-new station would be in place within the next 15 months, replacing the existing fire station, which is over 60 years old. He thanked all officials and all his colleagues in Loughrea Municipal District for their contribution and support in progressing the project.

ITEM NO.2 CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

PL.07.2026.02

On the **PROPOSAL** of Comh. Mac An Iomaire **SECONDED** by Cllr. Canning the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group held on 15th June were **NOTED**.

There were no matters arising.

ITEM NO.3 TO FILL A TEMPORARY ABSENCE IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE COUNCIL ARISING FROM THE TEMPORARY ABSENCE OF CLLR. KAREY MCHUGH FARAG IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 19 (A) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED) AND STANDING ORDER 75 OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL STANDING ORDERS.

PL.07.2026.03

Report dated 9th July 2026 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

The Meetings Administrator confirmed that Mr. Steven McHugh was nominated to fill a vacancy in the Membership of the Council following the temporary absence of Cllr.

K. McHugh Farag. The Meetings Administrator further confirmed that Mr. Steven McHugh was eligible for membership of the Local Authority.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Welby **SECONDED** by Cllr. Parsons it was **AGREED** that Mr. Steven McHugh would fill a temporary absence in the Membership of the Council arising from the temporary absence of Cllr. Karey McHugh Farag in accordance with Section 19 (a) of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended) and Standing Order 75 of Galway County Council's Standing Orders.

The Cathaoirleach congratulated Cllr. Steven McHugh on his appointment and welcomed him to the Council. Party Leaders and Members offered their individual congratulations to Cllr. Steven McHugh and extended best wishes to him in his new role.

The Cathaoirleach and the Members extended their congratulations to Cllr. Karey McHugh Farag and her husband Trevor on the arrival of their baby boy Sean Óg and wished them and their family every happiness for the future.

Cllr. Steven McHugh thanked the Members for giving him the opportunity to serve in the role and stated his goal for his time in the role is to represent the people of Tuam, while bringing up the need of constituents in the town. He also expressed his appreciation to the Members for giving him the opportunity to take up the position.

**ITEM NO.4 FILLING OF A TEMPORARY ABSENCE ON THE MEMBERSHIP OF
THE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION & AGRICULTURE STRATEGIC POLICY
COMMITTEE** **PL.07.2026.04**

Report dated 9th July 2026 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Welby **SECONDED** by Cllr. Parsons it was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. Steven McHugh a member of the Environment Protection & Agriculture Strategic Policy Committee arising from the temporary absence of Cllr. K. McHugh Farag.

ITEM NO.5 FILLING OF A TEMPORARY ABSENCE AS THE CHAIRPERSON ON THE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION & AGRICULTURE STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE. PL.07.2026.05

Report dated 9th July 2026 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Welby **SECONDED** by Cllr. Parsons it was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. Geraldine Donohue as the Chairperson on the Environment Protection & Agriculture Strategic Policy Committee arising from the temporary absence of Cllr. K. McHugh Farag.

Cllr. Donohue thanked the Members and said that she was looking forward to filling in during Cllr. K. McHugh Farag absence and that she was looking forward to attending the Corporate Policy Group meetings and contributing to their work during her term.

ITEM NO.6 FILLING OF A TEMPORARY ABSENCE ON THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE LOCAL TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (LTACC). PL.07.2026.06

Report dated 9th July 2026 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Welby **SECONDED** by Cllr. Parsons it was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. Steven McHugh a member of the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee (LTACC) arising from the temporary absence of Cllr. K. McHugh Farag.

ITEM NO.7 TO CONSIDER REPORT UNDER SECTION 183 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 TO RESCIND THE LEASE OF 65 SQ. METRES OF LAND IN THE OWNERSHIP OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL AT MIDDLEQUARTER, INISHBOFIN FROM FOLIO GY116115F FOR THE PURPOSE OF BROADBAND INSTALLATION. PL.07.2026.07

Statutory Notice issued in accordance with Section 183(1)(b) dated 7th July and report dated 7th July 2026 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

Cllr. King sought clarification that the proposal had been agreed several years ago and that the matter before the Members related solely to a change of an alternative site location.

Mr. Finn replied that the site they are proposing to rescind was approved at a monthly meeting held 25th November 2024 and has since been deemed unsuitable, so he clarified that the proposal is to rescind original site and agree alternative site.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. King **SECONDED** by Cllr. Welby it was **AGREED** to rescind the lease of 65 sq. metres of land in the ownership of Galway County Council at Middlequarter, Inishbofin from Folio GY116115f for the purpose of broadband installation in accordance Statutory Notice dated 7th July and report dated 7th July 2026.

ITEM NO.8 TO CONSIDER THE REPORT UNDER SECTION 183 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 TO LEASE OF 36 SQ. METRES OF LAND IN THE OWNERSHIP OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL AT MIDDLEQUARTER, INISHBOFIN FROM FOLIO GY116115F FOR THE PURPOSE OF BROADBAND INSTALLATION.

PL.07.2026.08

Statutory Notice issued in accordance with Section 183(1)(b) dated 8th July and report dated 8th July was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. King **SECONDED** by Cllr. Welby it was **AGREED** to lease 36 sq. metres of land in the ownership of Galway County Council at Middlequarter, Inishbofin from Folio GY116115f for the purpose of broadband installation in accordance Statutory Notice dated 8th July 2026 and report dated 8th July 2026.

ITEM NO. 9 REPORTS ON ACTIVITIES AND OPERATION OF BODIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 141 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED BY SECTION 53 OF THE 2014 ACT).

PL.07.2026.09

Report dated 9th July 2026 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher **SECONDED** by Cllr. M. Connolly it was **AGREED** to approve reports on the activities and operation of the following bodies in accordance with section 141 of the Local Government Act 2001 Act (as amended by section 53 of the 2014 act) for the period June 2025 to May 2026 inclusive:

- (a) Northern & Western Regional Assembly (NWRA)
- (b) Forum Conamara Ltd.

ITEM NO. 10. TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE IF DEEMED APPROPRIATE, THE GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION FUND (LEAF) PROPOSED LIST OF APPROVALS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PERFORMANCE OF ITS FUNCTIONS UNDER SECTION 67 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 AS AMENDED.

PL.07.2026.10

Report was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

Mr. Owens outlined that LEAF is a community grant programme delivered through a partnership between IPB Insurance and the 31 local authorities to support Tidy Towns and other community groups and stakeholders in their locality to enhance their local environment and promote greener communities. Following consultation with the SPC, specific Tidy Town Groups and the IPB Pride of Place finalists for 2026 were invited to apply. One of the objectives of the agreed approach is to support Galway County Council's ambition to achieve a Tidy Towns national winner in the future. He recommended the approval of €100,000 funding to the applicants as per list that was circulated as part of the report.

Mr. Owens further outlined that based on consideration by the SPC, it was further agreed to host a workshop and networking event for all entrants in the Tidy Towns later in the year to allow for review of the adjudication reports, focussed support from key staff in the Council, the opportunity to benchmark progress against previous national winners, while also supporting newer entrants to progress in the competition.

Cllrs. Harney, McHugh Ryan and Maher raised the following points:

- Welcomed the LEAF initiative and the allocation of €100,000 in funding, noting that it is a very positive and super initiative.
- Recent project in Tuam, was a Children's Stimulation & Sensory Garden in the Palace Grounds.
- It was noted that this is an important initiative which facilitates networking and engagement with other groups, allowing participants to learn from other groups experiences.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Harney **SECONDED** by Cllr. Maher it was **AGREED** to approve the Local Environmental Action Fund (LEAF) proposed list of approvals, in accordance with the performance of its functions under Section 67 of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended.

ITEM NO. 11. TO CONSIDER AND IF DEEMED APPROPRIATE, ADOPT THE GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL ARTS PLAN 2026-2030 IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 67 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001, AS AMENDED, AND SECTION 6 OF THE ARTS ACT 2003.

PL.07.2026.11

Report was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. S. Walsh **SECONDED** by Cllr. Maher it was **AGREED** to adopt the Galway County Council Arts Plan 2026-2030 in accordance with Section 67 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended, and Section 6 of the Arts Act 2003.

Mr. Owens advised that the Draft Plan had been circulated to the Elected Members, following a workshop with the Members and consideration and recommendation for adoption by both the SPC and CPG. He outlined that public information, and consultation meetings took place in the 5 Municipal Districts, an on-line survey was carried out, together with a series of focused consultations with various key stakeholders. This Arts Plan identifies five strategic priorities with a strong focus on the elderly, young people, inclusion and equality. The consultation process acknowledged that the Arts Office is delivering excellent work within a small budget, and this Draft Plan clearly sets out its ambitions and priorities. He thanked Sharon

O'Grady, Arts Officer and her team, Amie and Ramona for their dedication and commitment to developing and supporting the arts in County Galway.

Cllrs. Maher, Harney, Cunniffe, Mannion, Hoade, Welby, McClearn, Parsons and Canning raised the following points:

- Advised they attended the online workshop found it to be very informative and beneficial and expressed their appreciation to the Director of Services, Sharon and her team for all their hard work. It was highlighted that the Arts Office is a very easy office to deal with and praised Sharon for her enthusiasm, professionalism and solution focused approach.
- They outlined the ongoing need for support in sourcing venues to host events in local areas.
- It was highlighted that there is a need for a suitable venue to facilitate arts events in the Tuam area.
- It was noted that infrastructure is important for the arts and that the arts is a great outlet for people in the County.
- Stated that it is important to continue supporting this area and that consideration should be given to its needs during the annual budget process.
- Noted that Portumna Courthouse is a fantastic cultural event facility.
- Noted that funding is an issue; the need to pursue funding opportunities and strengthen collaboration with other local authorities.

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

He stated that the Draft Arts Plan is a highly important for the County's Creative Sector. Its ambition is an indication of the vibrancy in Galway, and it puts a structure on the governance and the delivery of arts in County Galway. He referenced the quote "small budget, big impact" in the plan, noting the significant work that the Arts office are achieving. He stated that it is intention to pursue an increase in the budget for the Arts office for 2027 and will be using this plan to leverage funding from other Government Departments. He thanked Mr. Owens and his team, and he advised that the Executive in partnership with the Members is committed to delivering progress on this plan as soon as possible.

ITEM NO. 12. 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) **PL.07.2026.12**

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

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Hoade **SECONDED** by Cllr. Maher it was **AGREED** to authorise Cllr. E. Parsons to attend AILG Northern and Western Women's Caucus Event at The Radisson Hotel, Galway on 17th June 2026. (Retrospective Approval).

Cllrs. Hoade and Maher raised the following points:

- Cllr. Hoade wished to thank and pay special tribute to Jean Brann and Helen Riordan for their contribution and hard work. She also acknowledged that this was a joint initiative with Galway City Council and expressed thanks to Helen Ogbu.
- Cllr. Maher added that he has attended this training and expressed hope that it would lead to increased representation of women in Council Chambers in the future.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher **SECONDED** by Cllr. King it was **AGREED** to authorise Cllrs. L. Harney, E. Parsons to attend OPR-AILG Councillors Planning Training at The Hodson Bay Hotel, Westmeath on 20th June 2026 (Retrospective Approval).

On the **PROPOSAL** of Comh. Mac An Iomaire **SECONDED** by Cllr. P. Killilea it was **AGREED** to authorise Cllrs. O. Turner & T. Ó 'Curraoin to attend AILG Autumn Training Seminar 2026 at the Clanree Hotel, Derry Road, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal on 30th September 2026.

ITEM NO. 13 TO CONSIDER AND IF DEEMED APPROPRIATE TO AUTHORISE THE ATTENDANCE AT CONFERENCE, MEETINGS, OTHER EVENTS IN

**ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 142(5) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT
2001 (AS AMENDED).**

PL.07.2026.13

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

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Hoade **SECONDED** by Cllr. McHugh Ryan was **AGREED** to authorise Cllr. S. McHugh Ryan to attend Women's Caucus Conference at Radisson Red Hotel, Galway on 18th June 2026. (Retrospective Approval).

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Hoade **SECONDED** by Cllr. Maher it was **AGREED** to authorise Cllrs. E. Parsons & T Ó' Curraoin to attend COPE Homeless Services at Galway County Council on 28th July 2026.

**ITEM NO. 14 TO NOTE THE SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS OF CONFERENCES
ATTENDED IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 142(5F) OF THE LOCAL
GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED).**

PL.07.2026.14

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

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Canning **SECONDED** by Cllr. Regan the Summary of Proceedings at conference attended were **NOTED**.

**ITEM NO.15. TO APPROVE THE ATTENDANCE OF A DELEGATION FROM
GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL TO ATTEND THE MILWAUKEE AND
WASHINGTON COUNTY ENGAGEMENTS AND ASSOCIATED BUSINESS
MEETINGS AND EVENTS.**

PL.07.2026.15

Report dated 9th July 2026 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher **SECONDED** by Cllr. Regan it was **AGREED** to authorise the attendance of a delegation from Galway County Council to attend the Milwaukee and Washington County Engagements and associated business meetings and events in Chicago.

Cllrs. McClearn, Maher, D. Connolly and Hoade raised the following points and queries:

- Requested to receive a report on last year's trip to Milwaukee with particular emphasis showing how this trip benefits County Galway.
- It was noted that the trip represents good value for money, providing an important opportunity to meet with a wide range of stakeholders, build relationships, and network with key contacts in the U.S. These engagements can help strengthen connections and identify opportunities that will result in benefits for County Galway.
- Town Twinning's are beneficial & the need to look at future Twinning opportunities.
- It was suggested that consideration should also be given to other U.S locations for future visits.
- Any trip that helps promote Galway as a destination for business and tourism is welcomed. However, it is important that such trips are regularly evaluated to ensure they deliver value for money and that resources are focused on locations and opportunities that offer the greatest benefit to County Galway.

ITEM NO.16 TO CONSIDER THE MANAGEMENT REPORT – JULY 2026 IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 136(2) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED).

PL.07.2026.16

Report dated July 2026 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

Cllrs. Maher, Kelly, Donohue and McNamara, D. Connolly raised the following points and queries:

- This is an important Agenda item each month, provides a lot of information and updates on work going on behind the scenes, very beneficial report.
- Thanked Chief Executive and his team.
- A correction was noted on page 79 in relation to Loughrea Fire Station, where the date should be amended from the 20th to the 27th July.
- Requested an update on the two Houses located in The Grove, Gort, which was an item in a previous report.

- In relation to contract signing for residential development in Cullairbaun, very welcome to see the proposal for a purpose-built community care home facility. Public should be advised that the road closure is only temporary.
- Noted that works progressing to deliver draft Caheroyn Urban Framework (Athenry), commented that it is a good time for the Athenry area.
- Referred to Item 1. July Correspondence – In relation to traffic calming measures on national roads, noted Minister response says there is no funding for footpaths.
- In relation to Active Travel funding allocation of €15m, what portion did Galway receive?

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

- Grove House, Gort is advancing, there is a fantastic design, and next step is to submit to the Department for funding.
- Temporary road closure at Cullairbaun is on health and safety grounds, and it will re-open on completion of development.
- Advised that a meeting had recently taken place with the Department, during which the issue was raised. A positive response was received, and the Department indicated that it would consider the matter as part of next year's budget.

The Chief Executive referred to the report on Local Democracy Taskforce:

- He stated that the report on the Local Democracy Taskforce circulated was being taken as read by the Elected Members.
- He advised that the changes proposed in the Taskforce report would require legislative change which in turn need to be brought before the Oireachtas during 2027.

Cllrs. McClearn, Maher, Hoade, McNamara raised the following points and queries:

- Important that all Elected Members take the time to read and familiarise themselves with the report in advance of further discussions.

- It was noted that the recommendations and proposals contained within the report have the potential to significantly change local government as we know it, including how local authorities interact with the public and how services are delivered.
- Noted that all at one stage have experienced issues contacting government departments and not receiving a response or experiencing delays in communication.
- Requested to receive a hard copy of this report.
- What is the cost of this proposal and has the Council identified how much additional funding is required?

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Hoade **SECONDED** by Cllr. Maher it was **AGREED** that this item should be a future Agenda Item.

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

- The Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage Taskforce report and summary paper have been circulated to all Elected Members. Hard copies can be provided also.
- The summary report has highlighted the implications for Galway County Council.
- Agreed with Elected Members that this matter should be included as an agenda item for a future meeting/discussion.
- Stated that once the primary legislation is enacted, additional staffing resources will be required to support implementation, including administrative and technical personnel, to support as enhanced funding at Municipal District level.
- Stated that additional funding allocations will be necessary to facilitate any additional work requirements.

ITEM NO. 17 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BUSINESS & CORRESPONDENCE.

PL.07.2026.17

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

- Letter dated 26.11.2025 from Galway County Council to, Minister O'Brien, Department of Transport – Resolution Letter – Traffic calming.

- Letter dated 26.11.2025 from Galway County Council to, Minister O'Brien, Department of Transport – Resolution Letter – Footpath Repair.
- Email dated 07.05.2026 from Amanda Corley Private Secretary to Minister O'Brien – Reply to Resolution letter and action to forward letter to Transport Infrastructure Ireland.
- Email dated 06.07.2026 from Alisha Harper Regulatory & Administration Executive, Transport Infrastructure Ireland, Reply to Forwarded letter and Resolutions raised in letters dated 26.11.25.
- Letter dated 28.05.2026 from Galway County Council to Electric Skyline – Resolution letter Lights on Poles in Galway County.
- Letter dated 09.07.2026 from Electric Skyline to Galway County Council- Reply to Resolution letter dated 09.07.2026.
- Letter dated 28.05.2026 from Galway County Council to Minister Norma Foley, Minister for Children, Disability & Equality – Resolution – Urgent Review of Maternity, Paternity & Parental leave.
- Email dated 20.07.2026 from Karen Martin, Private Secretary to Norma Foley, T.D. Minister for Children, Disability & Equality- Reply to Resolution letter dated 28.05.2026.
- Letter dated 23.06.2026 from Galway County Council to Mr. Simon Harris, Minister for Finance – Resolution Letter – Abolition of USC.
- Email dated 25.06.2026 from Niamh Murtagh, Private Secretary to the Minister for Finance – Reply to Resolution letter dated 23.06.2026.
- Letter dated 25.06.2026 to Mr. Liam Conneally, Chief Executive Galway County Council from Katie Clair, Principal Office, Personal Division, Revenue Commissioners – Local Property Tax Update.
- Letter dated 26.06.2026 to Mr. Liam Conneally, Chief Executive Galway County Council from Mr. Patrick O'Donovan, Minister for Culture, Communications and Sport – Acknowledgement of Staff in Famine Commemoration 2026.
- Letter dated 26.06.2026 to Mr Leonard Cleary, Chief Executive of Galway City Council – Resolution from June Meeting – Galway City Parking Meter query.

- Letter dated 17.07.2026 from Mr. Patrick Greene, Director of Services, Operational Development Directorate, Galway City Council – Reply to letter dated 26.06.26.
- Mayors for Peace Secretariat Update Newsletter

ITEM 18. QUESTION Cllr. Shaun Cunniffe

PL.07.2026.18

Cllr. Cunniffe submitted the following question to the meeting:

'To ask the Chief Executive for an update on the action of our Oireachtas members to assist Galway County Council in the rectifying the significant shortfall in our Local Property Tax Equalisation Funding'.

The following reply issued:

"Galway County Council continues to actively engage with elected representatives, Oireachtas members, and the Department in relation to the shortfall in Funding and the impact this has on the Council's ability to deliver services across the county.

On 30 March 2026 a meeting was held with the Oireachtas members where the funding deficit was highlighted, this meeting provided an opportunity to highlight the unique challenges facing Galway County Council and the need for a more equitable funding model. The actions from this meeting resulted in:

- *Minister Sean Canney raising the deficit in funding for GCC with senior cabinet Members and is actively seeking a meeting with same.*
- *There was a follow up meeting on 10 July 2026, with the Chief Executive, the Director of Finance, accompanied by the Cathaoirleach and the Group Leaders, with Minister of State Sean Canney to outline the Council's concerns regarding the current funding deficit.*
- *A business case was presented and discussed at the meeting 10 July 2026, which is to be updated to reflect specific opportunities which have not been pursued due to capacity restraints, to include financial and human resources.*

- *A further meeting has been scheduled for 27 July 2026, at which the matter will be discussed further and the Council's case for additional support will continue to be advanced.*

In addition, Galway County Council officials have engaged directly with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage on a number of occasions regarding the Council's request for additional funding. These discussions have focused on the financial implications of the current funding arrangements and the need to address the disparity that exists in the level of funding available to Galway County Council.

The Council will continue to work with local Oireachtas members, the Minister and Department officials to seek a positive resolution to this matter and will keep Members informed of any developments arising from these engagements".

Cllrs. Cunniffe, Reddington, D. Connolly, Donohue and Kelly raised the following points and queries:

- Noted that this is a longstanding issue on which little progress has been made. Concern was expressed that, with another budget is approaching, a clear position is required.
- It was suggested that, if there is no appetite to pursue measures to increase funding, this should be stated openly.
- Noted that continued engagement with Oireachtas colleagues is necessary to advance this matter.
- Noted this matter was raised in the Dail in June 2026 by 3 Oireachtas colleagues.
- Noted that the Irish Newspaper Archives contain extensive references to the longstanding issue of underfunding.

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

- Stated a discussion took place in March and was raised with Oireachtas members.
- Meeting was held with Minister Canney, 10th July 2026, follow up was held this morning before Plenary meeting and another meeting has been arranged for Ministers this afternoon.
- Business Plan has been prepared to present to attendees.

- Stated should any clarification be required or meetings with Cabinet members be necessary, the CE & DOS Finance will engage accordingly.

ITEM 19. QUESTION Cllr. Dr. Evelyn Francis Parson

PL.07.2026.19

Cllr. Dr. Evelyn Francies Parsons submitted the following question to the meeting:

'Does Galway County Council have a formal operational plan for responding to high-temperature or extreme-heat warnings and, if so, will the Chief Executive outline the arrangements for protecting vulnerable service users, outdoor staff and members of the public, including the provision of public information, access to drinking water and the identification of suitable cooler indoor spaces during a significant heat event?'

The following reply issued:

"Galway County Council has established arrangements for responding to severe weather events through its Major Emergency Management Framework and Severe Weather Plan. These arrangements apply where Met Éireann issues weather warnings, including periods of exceptionally high temperatures.

Weather warnings are monitored by the Council's Severe Weather Assessment Team (SWAT), which determines the appropriate operational response. Where necessary, the Council Management Team and Local Co-ordination Group may also be convened.

The Council provides public information through its website, social media, MapAlerter and local media. Appropriate health and safety measures are implemented for outdoor staff, including access to drinking water, rest breaks and adjustments to work practices where required.

Responsibility for protecting vulnerable service users rests primarily with the HSE. Galway County Council supports the multi-agency response through the Major Emergency Management Framework and if required, would work with partner agencies to identify suitable public facilities during a prolonged or exceptional heat event".

Cllr. F. Parsons raised the following points and queries:

- Noted we are used to managing the impacts of storms, heat-related events present different challenges, and we need to ensure we are prepared for them.
- There is a responsibility to identify buildings for vulnerable people.
- Noted that, abroad, a range of measures and response plans are already in place. Given the changing climate, we need to ensure emergency planning arrangements are established.
- Noted the need to provide public water fountains

ITEM 20. NOTICE OF MOTION

PL.07.2026.20

Cllr. Geraldine Donohue submitted the following Notice of Motion prior to the meeting:

'That the Chief Executive make a statement on the Section 85 between Westmeath and Galway County Council and confirm if the Section 85 has been rescinded for the Galway to Athlone Greenway project, and if not, when is it to be formalised, and provide confirmation that any future project in Galway will come solely under the Galway County Council and Galway City Council remit.

The following reply issued:

I refer and reply to your Motion concerning the Galway to Athlone Greenway project. The Section 85 Agreement between Galway County Council and Westmeath County Council remains in place. It remains available as a statutory mechanism whereby Westmeath County Council may exercise certain functions on behalf of Galway County Council for elements or sections of the greenway, where agreed. However, as outlined in the Update Report given at the June Plenary Meeting, the delivery approach for the overall Galway to Athlone Greenway has changed, and the project is now intended to progress in phases.

The first approved phase by TII and the Department of Transport is the Athlone to Shannonbridge section. No section within County Galway has yet received approval to proceed to the next stage.

The advancement of future sections will depend on a number of factors, including project approvals, funding, statutory and environmental requirements, land requirements, deliverability and overall programme prioritisation.

The existing Section 85 Agreement may remain relevant where Galway County Council and Westmeath County Council agree that Westmeath should exercise functions on Galway's behalf for particular elements or sections of the greenway, including potential sections in the Ballinasloe and Portumna areas.

In relation to the advancement of Galway sections in the future, the delivery arrangements will be considered at that stage having regard to the relevant statutory powers, funding requirements and any inter-authority arrangements required.

For clarity, Galway County Council is not prevented by the existing Section 85 Agreement from progressing greenway infrastructure development within its administrative area under its own powers.

Cllrs. Donohue, Maher and Ó Curraoin raised the following points and queries:

- Noted a lot of stakeholders/landowners/groups are concerned with this Project delivery.
- Queried can Galway County Council rescind a Section 85 agreement.
- Clarification was sought on whether Westmeath County Council has any additional powers beyond those available to Galway County Council.
- Stated there needs to be clear direction for Galway County Council.
- There is a need for greater clarity in respect of the proposed Greenway.

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

- Stated that there is nothing preventing GCC from progressing the project under its own statutory powers, with GCC leading on the sections within its own area.
- Advised that he would examine the provisions of the Local Government Act in relation to rescinding a Section 85 Agreement

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

- Stated Westmeath County Council has no extra powers, above those that already exist in Galway County Council.
- Stated it is intended Galway County Council will be responsible for the Greenway sections in County Galway save for the Stage 1 elements.
- Advised that the request to include the Ballinasloe Greenway open in Stage 1; will be conveyed to TII/WCC.

ITEM 21. NOTICE OF MOTION

PL.07.2026.21

Cllr. Dermot Connolly submitted the following Notice of Motion prior to the meeting:

I propose that:

"This Council recognises that:

— the reunification of Ireland is an objective of Bunreacht na hÉireann; and

— there is a growing national discussion around constitutional change with people from diverse backgrounds now exploring the possibility of Irish unity;

notes that:

— the Good Friday Agreement 1998 provides the democratic and peaceful means to achieve reunification through the provision of unity referendums;

— the significant Joint Oireachtas Committee on the Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement report "Perspectives on Constitutional Change: Finance and Economics", recommends the establishment of Citizen Assemblies and other relevant forums, a designated Joint Oireachtas Committee and a Government Department to take responsibility for planning and preparing for constitutional change, received cross-party support;

And will write to the Office of An Taoiseach, seeking the Irish Government to plan and prepare for Irish unity, through the following actions:

- *establish an all-island representative Citizens' Assembly or Assemblies, to allow for informed debate, and a Joint Oireachtas Committee on Irish Unity to enable careful planning;*
- *produce and publish a plan towards Irish unity in conjunction with civic society and key stakeholders;*
- *engage with northern protestant and unionist opinion about the future of Ireland; and*
- *work to secure a date for the referendums on unity provided for in the Good Friday Agreement."*

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. D. Connolly **SECONDED** by Cllr. McClearn the above motion was **AGREED**.

Cllrs. D. Connolly, McClearn, Ó Curraoin and M. Connolly raised the following points and queries:

- Noted that 20 Local Authorities have already called on the Government to prepare for a United Ireland, supported by the Joint Oireachtas Committee.
- It was stated that Galway needs to take proactive steps to advance the matter.
- Noted that any progress will require open dialogue with the people of Northern Ireland
- The view was expressed that the people of Ireland should work together to shape their shared future.

ITEM 22. NOTICE OF MOTION

PL.07.2026.22

Cllr. Declan Kelly submitted the following Notice of Motion prior to the meeting:

'Galway County Council will express support now for the GLUAS team in calling for the advancement of the Galway Light Rail Transit Feasibility Study, published in October 2024, by having further studies carried out by the National Transport Authority to explore the potential route options with the aim of identifying an

Emerging Preferred Route for Light Rail in the Galway Metropolitan Area as soon as possible'.

The following reply issued:

The National Transport Authority, in conjunction with Galway City Council and Galway County Council, is currently preparing the Galway Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy. The findings of the Light Rail Feasibility Study are being considered as part of that process, alongside proposals for active travel, bus, heavy rail, roads and demand-management measures.

It would therefore be appropriate for Galway County Council to support the further assessment of light rail and potential route options as part of the development of GMATS.

Any subsequent process to identify an Emerging Preferred Route should be informed by the conclusions of the adopted transport strategy and undertaken in accordance with the statutory planning processes.

- ***Cllr. Kelly submitted an amended Notice of Motion under ITEM NO. 24***
CATHAOIRLEACH'S BUSINESS

ITEM 23. NOTICE OF MOTION

PL.07.2026.23

Cllr. Shaun Cunniffe submitted the following Notice of Motion prior to the meeting:

That Galway County Council supports the request by Milltown Community Council to the North Western Regional Assembly to insert a definitive Regional Policy Objective (RPO) into the new Regional Spatial Economic Strategy (RSES) that supports the provision of a passenger railway halt at Milltown, Co. Galway, as a key deliverable in the next phase of the Western Rail Corridor infrastructure project.

We urge the Assembly to include explicit wording in the draft strategy to: "Support and facilitate the development of a passenger railway halt, associated Park-and-Ride facilities, and surrounding service infrastructure at Milltown, Co. Galway, utilizing the existing historical station footprint, intact bypass line layout, adjacent community assets, enterprise zones, and existing water and wastewater treatment capacities, in

conjunction with Iarnród Éireann, Uisce Éireann, and the National Transport Authority."

Context:

A successful RSES requires moving past high-level visions and ensuring clear, measurable implementation pathways with robust indicators. We urge the Assembly to champion infrastructure projects like the Milltown railway halt to show a tangible commitment to sustainable rural development. We look forward to reviewing how these considerations are reflected in the upcoming Director's Report and subsequent Draft Strategy.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Cuniffe **SECONDED** by Cllr. Turner the above motion was **AGREED**.

Cllrs. Cuniffe, M. Connolly, McClearn, Turner, Hoade and Ó Curraoin raised the following points and queries:

- Noted that it is important the proposal is supported.
- Milltown is ideally located approximately eight miles from Tuam and would be a suitable location for a passenger railway halt.
- The proposal is a wonderful opportunity for the area and stated that it would be a great shame if the opportunity were missed.
- Noted that the location benefits from a twin-track railway line and offers several advantages, including the availability of space for parking facilities.
- Noted that the location offers the potential for the development of park-and-ride facilities,

ITEM NO. 24 CATHAOIRLEACH'S BUSINESS

PL.07.2026.24

Cllr. Kelly submitted an amended Notice of Motion (Item No. 23), which read as follows:

'That Galway County Council expresses its support for the further assessment of light rail for the Galway Metropolitan Area as part of the development of the Galway Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy, including, where supported by the outcome of

that strategy, the undertaking by the National Transport Authority of further studies to examine potential route options and identify an Emerging Preferred Route’.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Kelly **SECONDED** by Comh. Ó Curraoin the above motion was **AGREED**.

Mr. Finn, Director of Services responded as follows:

- Advised the Galway Metropolitan Area Transportation Strategy (GMATS) by the National Transport Authority (NTA) has been reactivated. This important Strategy will identify the transport needs for Galway and inform the future development of Galway.
- Potential for Light Rail Development to be considered, in line with previously completed report.
- Noted that the strategy is being developed on a multi-modal basis.
- Advised that the outcome of the existing feasibility work and supporting studies will inform the strategy process.
- Stated that in the absence of detailed route selection process it would be premature to call for the identification of a route.

Cllrs. Kelly, Reddington, Ó Curraoin, M. Connolly, Grealish, Charity, McNamara, Donohue, Geraghty, Mac An Iomaire and McClearn raised the following points and queries:

- Noted the significant increase in the use of rail and the growing demand.
- Highlighted that Galway City is heavily congested with traffic, which is having a negative impact on workers, local communities and shoppers travelling into and around the city.
- Stated that the proposed GLUAS project represents a visionary project.
- Expressed the view that a strong case can be made for the consideration of light rail system as part of an overall traffic solution for Galway City/County.
- Elected Members were encouraged to support the further assessment of light rail as part of the ongoing transport planning process.

- Reference was made to the light rail project in Dijon, France, where it was stated that the project progressed from planning to completion in approximately four years.
- Joint up thinking is needed.
- Noted the recent upgrade and redevelopment works at Ceannt Station.
- Noted that that Luas Cork has received the go-ahead to move forward.
- Queried whether there was an update on the NTA's proposal for a Park and Ride site in the Galway East area.
- Noted that the quality and reliability of bus services have worsened in areas.
- The issue of city parking meters was raised, with concerns expressed that the parking app is not accessible to all users. Noted that the issue should be followed up with the City Council.

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

- Stated happy to follow up correspondence to City Council in relation to Parking App issues raised by Members.
- Stated that he welcomed the designation of placing the Galway City Ring Road as a critical infrastructure project by Government and welcomed its prioritisation at the top of queue for delivery by Galway County Council and TII.
- Stated that elected members views on GLUAS are noted and that all modes of transport should be considered, including light rail, and that all transport options should be investigated.
- Stated that a proposal for a light rail strategy would be put forward to the NTA

Cllrs. Reddington, Kelly, Harney, Ó Curraoin, McHugh Ryan, Turner, Parsons, Regan, L. Harney, McClearn, M. Connolly, Mac An Iomaire, Welby, Parsons and Geraghty raised the following points:

- Congratulated Galway U-20 ladies footballers and noted a Civic Reception to be considered and go before the CPG for recommendation.
- Noted there is a homecoming for the Galway Senior Ladies football team at Tuam Stadium on the 3rd August.

- Thanked the staff and management team of Corporate Services and staff of Ballinasloe MD office for all their hard work in organising the homecoming for Galway Senior Hurlers in Ballinasloe which was held 20th July.
- Queried whether the GAA could be encouraged to reconsider the 3.30 p.m. start time, as it is considered late for spectators who have lengthy journeys home afterwards.
- Expressed disappointment that Minor matches are no longer broadcast on television.
- Requested an Email clarification from the Director of Services, in relation to new Planning and Development (Exempted Development) Regulations 2026 announced, specifically whether they affect all landscape sensitivity classifications or does it only apply to those designated scenic and special areas.
- Stated that the new planning regulations should be publicly advertised and that the public should be informed of the changes.
- Noted that, while the standard speaking time is two minutes, the Cathaoirleach may allow additional time at his discretion for matters of particular significance.
- Extended congratulations to Mayo on their All-Ireland victory and agreed letter of congratulations would be sent.

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

- Acknowledged that the staff of Corporate Services is a strong and committed team that is regularly called upon to support multiple priorities and consistently works together to deliver successful homecoming events.
- Stated that, on behalf of the Elected Members, he would extend congratulations to his Counterpart in Mayo.
- Stated that clarification can be provided in relation to the new Planning and Development (Exempted Development) Regulations 2026. As the regulations came into effect today, further information will be provided as it becomes available.

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

- He advised that the new planning exemptions would be circulated to Elected Members. He noted that anyone considering development should seek professional advice from a planning agent and familiarise themselves with the relevant planning regulations and make an informed decision on whether or not planning permission is required.
- Confirmed that a workshop would be held and that details would be presented to both SPC and MD meetings and that the Planning DOS would also present the latest changes to the next meeting of the Planning Agents group.

ITEM NO. 25 VOTES OF SYMPATHY/CONGRATULATIONS

PL.07.2026.25

A resolution of sympathy was extended to the following:

- Johanna Clancy, Emerson Avenue, Salthill, Galway
- Hilda Clarke, Gortymadden, Co. Galway
- Michelle & James Bateman, Tullahill, Loughrea, Co. Galway
- Damien Leahy & Family, Gort Road, Loughrea, Co. Galway
- Martin Diviney, Ballinakill, Gort, Co. Galway
- Coilín MacDonncha, Rinn, Carraroe, Co. Galway

A resolution of congratulations was extended to the following:

- U20 Galway Ladies Football Team
- Kevin Kelly, Chief Executive – Mayo's All Ireland Victory
- Fiona Murtagh
- Kris Weeradoon
- Roisin Walsh

Chriochnaigh an Cruinniú Ansin.

Submitted, Signed and Approved

Cathaoirleach:



Date:



