

**COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE**  
**MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**Held at MAREE COMMUNITY CENTRE, CO. GALWAY**  
**Monday, 26<sup>th</sup> May 2025 at 11.00am**

**CATHAOIRLEACH:** Cllr. M. Kinane  
Cathaoirleach of the County of Galway

**I LATHAIR FREISIN:**

**Baill:** Comh. /Cllr. S. Broderick, I. Canning, J. Charity, D. Collins, D. Connolly, S. Cunniffe, T. Ó Curraoin, G. Donohue, P. Feeney, D. Geraghty, T. Grealish, A. Harney, L. Harney, M. Hoade, C. Keane, D. Kelly, D. Killilea, P. Killilea, G. King, M. Leainde, M. Lee, P. Mac an Iomaire, M. Maher, E. Mannion, J. McClearn, K. McHugh Farag, S. McHugh Ryan, E. F. Parsons, A. Reddington, M. Regan, N. Thomas, O. Turner, S. Walsh and T. Welby.

**Oifigh:** Mr. L. Conneally, Chief Executive, Mr. L. Hanrahan, Director of Services, Mr. U. Finn, Director of Services, Ms. K. O'Connor, Head of Finance, Mr. D. Mitchell, A/Director of Services, Mr. K. Coyne, A/Director of Services, Ms. J. Brann Meetings Administrator, Ms. L. Keady, A/Senior Executive Officer, Ms. S. Lawless, Administrative Officer, Ms. H. Riordan, Staff Officer, Ms. L. O'Donnell, Assistant Staff Officer.

**Thosnaigh an cruinniú leis an paidir.**

The Cathaoirleach welcomed everyone to Maree Community Centre for her last meeting presiding as Cathaoirleach, which is being held in her Municipal District. Local Government works on behalf of the people and shouldn't be confined to the

Council Chamber. It is important to bring the Council into the heart of the community to which it serves. She expressed her sincere gratitude to the volunteers and Council staff who prepared the Community Centre for the meeting.

Cllr. D. Killilea offered his condolences to the family of Mary Moriarty who passed away recently. He acknowledged the contribution she made as the first Traveller Liaison Officer in Tuam. Also of her late husband Frank, who also worked for Galway County Council.

#### **ITEM NO.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS** **4565**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher **SECONDED** by Cllr. D. Killilea the minutes of the Monthly Plenary Meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2025 were **AGREED**.

#### **Members raised the following points and queries:**

- Queries were made regarding Notice of Motion number 18 on the April plenary meeting. The motion proposed one-hour free parking in Ballinasloe town. It was asked that the motion be progressed.
- Ballinalsoe is a unique town as regards parking charges, due to its proximity to Roscommon and also the loss of employment that it has experienced.
- Standing Orders in relation to time restrictions on the proposal of motions was queried.
- It was asked why a vote was not taken by the Members on the motion at the April plenary meeting.

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

- He has spoken to the chair of the Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) and confirmed that the matter will be an item for discussion at the next SPC meeting in June.

The Cathaoirleach confirmed that the motion did come before the Members at the April plenary meeting and an internal reply was given to Cllr. Geraghty. The outcome of which, is the motion is to be considered at the June SPC meeting.

**ITEM NO.2 CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**4566**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher **SECONDED** by Cllr. Canning the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group held on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2025 were **NOTED**.

It was agreed by the Members, as per recommendation from the Corporate Policy Group (CPG) that Galway County Council would hold a Civic Reception to honour Michael Cronnelly, World Amateur Title holder in MMA.

**ITEM NO.3 (A)TO CONSIDER REPORT UNDER SECTION 183 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 TO RESCIND DISPOSAL OF LANDS AT COTHILL, WOODFORD, CO. GALWAY – 0.276 HECTARES.**

**4567**

*Statutory Notice issued in accordance with Section 183(1)(b) and report dated 16<sup>th</sup> May 2025 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.*

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. McClearn **SECONDED** by Cllr. Regan it was **AGREED** to rescind Resolution 4437 of 25<sup>th</sup> November 2024 which approved disposal of 0.276 hectares at Cothill, Woodford, Co. Galway.

**ITEM NO. 3(B)TO CONSIDER REPORT UNDER SECTION 183 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 FOR DISPOSAL OF LAND AT COTHILL, WOODFORD, CO. GALWAY – 0.276 HECTARES.**

**4568**

*Statutory Notice issued in accordance with Section 183(1)(b) and report dated 16<sup>th</sup> May 2025 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.*

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Regan **SECONDED** by Cllr. McClearn it was **AGREED** to dispose of property and 0.276 hectares of land at Cothill, Woodford, Co. Galway in accordance with the Statutory Notice dated 16<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

**ITEM NO. 4 FILLING OF A CASUAL VACANCY IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE FORUM CONNEMARA CLG.** **4569**

*Report dated 15<sup>th</sup> May 2025 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.*

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Hoade **SECONDED** by Cllr. Lee it was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. King to Forum Connemara CLG.

**ITEM NO.5 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).** **4570**

*Report dated 14<sup>th</sup> May 2025 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.*

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher **SECONDED** by Cllr. McHugh Ryan it was **AGREED** to authorise Cllrs. McClearn, L. Harney & Comh. O Curraoin to attend AILG May Training Module – ‘Emergency Response – Councils Supporting Communities in Weather Crises’ at Radisson Blu Hotel, Sligo on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025. (Retrospective Approval).

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher **SECONDED** by Cllr. McHugh Ryan it was **AGREED** to authorise Cllrs. Regan, Hoade & Finnerty, to attend AILG May Training Module – ‘Emergency Response – Councils Supporting Communities in Weather Crises’ at Rose Hotel, Tralee on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2025. (Retrospective Approval).

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher **SECONDED** by Cllr. L. Harney it was **AGREED** to authorise Cllrs. McHugh-Ryan & L. Harney, to attend AILG Induction Training (In-Person for Newly Co-opted Councillors) May 2025 at Athlone Springs Hotel, Athlone on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher **SECONDED** by Cllr. Canning it was **AGREED** to authorise Cllrs. McClearn, Regan & Hoade, to attend AILG June Training Module – 'A New Approach to Planning – the Revised National Planning Framework & Planning Act' at Hillgrove Hotel, Monaghan on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2025.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher **SECONDED** by Cllr. Canning it was **AGREED** to authorise Comh. O Curraoin, to attend AILG June Training Module – 'A New Approach to Planning – the Revised National Planning Framework & Planning Act' at Radisson Blu Hotel, Cork on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2025.

**ITEM NO. 6 TO CONSIDER AND IF DEEMED APPROPRIATE TO AUTHORISE THE ATTENDANCE AT CONFERENCES, MEETINGS, OTHER EVENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 142(5) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED).**

**4571**

*Report dated 14<sup>th</sup> May 2025 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.*

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. King **SECONDED** by Cllr. L. Harney it was **AGREED** to authorise Cllr. L. Harney to attend Mary Robinson Climate & Nature Conference 2025 at The Mary Robinson Centre, Ballina, Co. Mayo on the 26<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher **SECONDED** by Cllr. Keane it was **AGREED** to authorise Cllr. D. Killilea to attend National Sustainability Summit at the RDS, Simmonscourt, Dublin on the 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

**ITEM NO.7 TO NOTE THE SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS OF CONFERENCES ATTENDED IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 142 (5F) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED).**

**4572**

*Report dated 14<sup>th</sup> May 2025 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.*

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher **SECONDED** by Cllr. Lee the Summary of Proceedings at conferences attended were **NOTED**.

**ITEM NO. 8 TO CONSIDER THE MANAGEMENT REPORT – MAY 2025 IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 136(2) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED).** **4573**

*Report dated 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.*

The Management Report – May 2025, in accordance with Section 136(2) of the Local Government Act 2001 (As Amended) was **NOTED**.

The Chief Executive thanked the Community of Maree Oranmore for providing their community centre to host the May plenary meeting. It is important that local government, as the closest point of government to the people, visits the communities that we are part of and represent.

The Management Report is a comprehensive monthly report and informs the Members of the work that has taken place in each Municipal District (MD) and by each Directorate. He informed the Members that the roads & housing programmes are well advanced.

**Members raised the following points and queries:**

- The comprehensive Management Report was welcomed.
- The Council need to take action to provide more affordable housing.
- The Department should be written to requesting a change to the criteria that governs the affordable housing scheme.
- Housing provision should be a mix of 50% social housing and 50% affordable housing.

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

- Agreed with the Members that housing is the most urgent issue facing Galway County Council and informed them that the issue occupies a significant amount of his and his Management Teams time. The Council favours and implements a mixed tenure approach to the provision of housing. Expressions of interest are sought for every tenure of housing. The Council is actively seeking to accumulate residential zoned serviced land.
- The Council has asked the Galway Housing Task Force for a bespoke housing scheme for County Galway to address the viability difficulties resulting from the 15% below open market value requirement. He stated that there should be at least 2 affordable housing schemes in each MD. However, at the moment the County Galway Metropolitan Area is the only area that meets the criteria to provide an affordable housing scheme. He undertook to write to the department on the request for a change in the criteria of the Affordable Housing Scheme.

**Members raised the following points and queries:**

- The proposed development at St. Brigid's Road, Portumna was welcomed.
- It was asked if the Council could make serviced sites available for people that wished to build their own houses.
- An update was sought on the introduction of CCTV cameras at bottle banks to deter illegal dumping.
- It was asked how many illegal dumping fines have been issued by the Council.
- The launch of the dementia café initiative in Connemara was warmly welcomed.
- Marconi Men's Shed were congratulated on their selection to represent the County in the All-Island Pride of Place Competition.
- The work of the Director of Services, Clifden area staff and engineers, Gardaí and volunteers in preparing for the stage end of the Rás Tailteann in Clifden was acknowledged and complemented.

- It was enquired if the Repair and Lease scheme would be considered in rural areas.
- The circular that operates the affordable housing scheme is 4 years old. Inflation over the last 4 years has increased the cost of providing housing. The Department need to address this.

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

- 21 expressions of interest have been received under the Repair and Lease scheme. The implementation of the scheme is determined by the level of social housing demand in the area. If a social need is not present, then a proposal will not proceed. He assured the Members that rural properties are being considered, but applications cannot proceed if there is not a demand for social housing in the area.
- The viability of an affordable housing scheme determines if one can proceed. The cost of construction of housing is the same in Clifden as in Galway City, but the open market value in the City is higher and so schemes there meet the Department's affordable housing criteria.

**Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Coyne:**

- A social media campaign has been launched to combat illegal dumping.
- He undertook to provide figures in relation to the installation of CCTV.
- 1 fine for an amount of €150 was issued over the past month.

**Members raised the following points and queries:**

- Neither the Affordable Housing Scheme nor the Tenant-in-Situ scheme are working.
- The Tenant-in-Situ Scheme is a good scheme but is underfunded.
- It was asked that the Director of Services provide clarity on the planning requirements for modular homes.



- The Cathaoirleach was congratulated on the success of the Cathaoirleach Awards. It was a very positive and enjoyable night.
- The Northern and Western Regional Assembly (NWRA) have requested local authority submissions to the National Development Plan review. Cllr. Hoade will be attending a NWRA meeting tomorrow and will highlight the dangerous conditions on the N84 between Headford and Shrile and also between Headford and Kilgariff.
- Edel Talbot was congratulated on her retirement from the Headford library. She was thanked for her contributions and wished continued good health and success.
- It was said that providing grants to purchase houses will result in increased prices.

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

- The Assistant Secretary has been written to regarding the Tenant-in-Situ Scheme. Last September a change in criteria resulted in the Scheme being put on hold. Of the €6m funding allocated, there will be €500,000 left for 2025 Tenant-in-Situ applicants.

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

- He raised the shortcomings of the Tenant-in-Situ Scheme at the Galway Housing Taskforce meeting that was held last week. He will continue to articulate his views. Failure of these Schemes may lead tenants into homelessness.

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

- Confirmed that all residential structures require planning permission.

**Members raised the following points and queries:**

- Serviced sites for housing provision in villages is crucial.
- Tourism needs to be developed in East Galway.
- The Aughrim Interpretative Centre re-opened for the summer, but card payment facilities are not available.
- The loudspeaker at the bottle bank in Mountbellew is not effective due to the noise from passing traffic, CCTV is required. There are CCTV cameras in Ballinasloe that have been switched off for 10 years, they need to be switched on.

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

- The Council are exploring every avenue available to us to deal with the housing crisis. This includes the advanced purchase of residential land. The Council do not have a sufficient landbank to fulfil the asks of the Department regarding the provision of social housing. The housing land bank of the Council will be used to build housing and will not be sold.
- We are awaiting a circular from the Minister regarding the zoning of additional residential land. We have identified infrastructural constraints and these have been discussed with Uisce Éireann. There is a significant body of work to be carried out in this area over the next 6-10 months and Members will be kept informed on progress.

**Members raised the following points and queries:**

- Schools on the Safe Route to School waiting list must be informed as to which stage of the application process their application is at.
- Facilities at beaches need to be opened earlier in the year, especially with the early arrival of good weather.
- An update on Rossaveal Harbour was requested.
- It was asked that Ministerial circulars be circulated to the Members.
- A question was raised regarding what the Minister has requested from the Council in advance of the review of County Development Plan.

- It was suggested that a tax amnesty or tax incentives could serve as an incentive to apply for housing grants.

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

- The department are assisting with the Council's request to increase the number of staff in the housing department. Staff sanction requests are being dealt with quickly.
- Elected Members and staff are the first to be informed of Ministerial circulars.
- The population target for County Galway will be issued to the Council within weeks. The Elected Members and Executive will use this information to inform zonings in the County Development Plan. It will also determine in an evidence-based way the level of need for additional residential zoned land.
- Tax amnesties and capital gains tax are outside the legal scope of the Council.

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

- The Active Travel team will follow up with the schools under the Safe Route to School scheme.
- The Management Report includes an update on Scoil Na bhForbacha and Scoil Sailearna Safe Routes to School applications.

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

- The development at Rossaveal Harbour will require full planning permission.

**Members raised the following points and queries:**

- Funding for a pedestrian crossing in Clifden was welcomed.
- It had been expected that the Summer Ready Programme would have been before the Members in advance of the summer season.

- Other beaches in Connemara need to be promoted to ease the pressure on the beaches at Dogs Bay and Gurteen.
- Wheelchair accessibility needs to be addressed and beach mats provided at beaches.
- Facilities are required for camper vans at beaches.
- It was asked if paid toilet facilities could be introduced at beaches.
- It was asked if the mobile library is in operation in Connemara.
- Problems in the private housing market must also be addressed.
- Statistics were requested on planning application approvals for multi-unit applications.
- It was asked when housing offers will be issued for the 14 vacant houses in Tuam.
- There are ongoing issues of illegal dumping at Coral Leisure in Tuam.

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

- The Summer Ready Report will be before the Members at the June plenary meeting.
- The accessibility and parking requirements at our beaches is being examined.
- Beach byelaws need to be enforced, he will liaise with the Community Wardens on this.
- The illegal dumping at Coral Leisure in Tuam will be investigated.

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

- Referred to the information that the Members can access from the 'Housing Supply' and 'Housing Demand' dashboards. This information is updated daily.
- He outlined the various reasons that a house may be vacant.
- Following an audit review, it was found that the rate of housing vacancy in Galway County Council is below the national average.

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

- Referred Members to the response issue to Cllr. Donohue's question which is item 10 on the agenda. Planning applications for multi-unit developments require a significant amount of work. He has attended 2 meetings this month for planning applications involving large number of housing units. The Council are encouraging developers to start on site as quickly as possible.

**Members raised the following points and queries:**

- It was suggested that the Council should build houses on private land.
- It was requested that representatives from the schools in Conemara that are campaigning for Safe Routes to School programme, be invited to an MD meeting.
- While the traffic calming road signs that were erected in Bearna are welcome, road calming measures are also required.
- Cllr. Reddington informed the meeting that he had been lobbied on the Galway Airport Site.
- An update was sought on the proposed housing developments from Údarás na Gaeltachta.
- Queries were made on the expressions of interest that are currently being sought for the Galway Airport site. The number of expressions received, the evaluation process and when the final report will be before the Elected Members.
- Disappointment was expressed that prior notice was not given to the Elected Members before expressions of interest for the proposed use of the Galway Airport site were sought.
- Joint Corporate Policy Group Meeting minutes are not shared with all the Elected Members.
- Several Members expressed their opinion that the Galway Airport site should not be sold. That it should be utilised for the people of Galway.
- Requests to receive a copy of the Masterplan for the Galway Airport site were made.

The Cathaoirleach asked that requests for deputations at the Conemara Municipal District meeting, be raised with the Municipal District Director of Service Mr. Uinsinn Finn.

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

- The closing date for expressions of interests for the airport site was the previous Friday. Professional valuers have been tasked with compiling a report on the submissions received. This report along with recommendations will be forwarded to the Chief Executives of both the County and City Councils. A marking system will be used to evaluate the bids. The Joint Corporate Policy Group have been kept informed during the process.
- He explained that the airport site was previously owned by the Galway Chamber of Commerce. Galway County Council did not seek to purchase the airport site. The sale was not advertised on the open market as the Chamber were required in their constitution to sell to the Galway City and County Councils. As the site is located in County area, Galway County Council are the lead Council.

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

- He understood that Elected Members had been contacted regarding the Airport Site sale and made it clear that there is a clear and transparent lobbying process, lobbyists must be registered on the Lobbying Register.
- The power to dispose of the airport site is a reserved function of the Elected Members and is governed by Section 183 process. The decision to dispose of the land or not to will be based on the recommendation in the report prepared by the professionals and assessed by an independent board.
- The Joint Corporate Policy Group was considered the most appropriate way to consider the future of the site. Nothing will happen without the knowledge of the Elected Members. It is the Members that will make the decision to dispose of the land or not to.

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

- Discussions have been held with Údarás na Gaeltachta. However, the proposed sites are not appropriate for developing housing. One is situated on an industrial estate and the other two sites are too small in size.

**Members raised the following points and queries:**

- The airport site is a strategic site with enormous potential.
- It was asked if a Draft Masterplan for the airport site has been prepared.
- The Membership of the Expert Group for the airport site was requested.
- It was asked that the minutes of the Joint CPG be circulated.

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

- Analysis of the strategic opportunities of the former Galway airport site can be found in Chapter 5 of the County Development Plan 2022-2028.
- A Masterplan will be prepared if planning application is required.
- The scoping element of the Masterplan has been carried out. Due to financial constraints, it was decided to seek expressions of interest as an initial step, to ascertain the potential land value and to ascertain what development is suitable at the site.

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

- The minutes of the Joint Corporate Policy Group (CPG) meeting will be circulated to the Members.
- The cost of producing the Airport Masterplan was high. We didn't want to inhibit the level of interest in the site by limiting its potential use to what was prescribed in a Masterplan. The new owners will prepare this work.
- The recommendation will be delivered to the Joint CPG and a report will be prepared for the Members of both Councils to consider and decide.

**Members raised the following points and queries:**

- The decision on the future of the airport site cannot be determined solely on economic grounds. Providing amenities in the interests of the communities must also be a consideration.
- It was asked if the needs of the Galway Flying Club will be considered.
- It was asked if a party that did not lodge an expression of interest in the site would still be included in talks on the future of the site.
- There are two airstrips at Cleggan and Inishbofin that are not in use. These could be of interest to the Galway Flying Club.
- Are the Flying Club after five consecutive leases now entitled to a 25-year lease.

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

- The expression of interest that was issued for the site was informed by the contents of the County Galway Development Plan.
- He cannot comment on what the outcome will be, until he receives the professional valuation report on the submissions and the recommendation that accompany it.

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

- The site is 118 ha in size. It is large enough to accommodate more than one land use.
- Galway Flying Club currently hold a year-to-year licence to use the Galway Airport site. The agreement will be up for renewal again at the end of 2025.
- The expression of interest process will not limit the use of the site. The EOI to purchase the site was well advertised. If a suitable EOI isn't received, then the report will recommend a different course of action.
- The bids are currently with the valuers, at this moment we do not know what they or the proposed potential uses are.
- The Galway Flying Club are not entitled to a 25-year lease following five consecutive leases.



**Members raised the following points and queries:**

- The progress on the roads programme in the Ballinasloe MD was welcomed.
- Sightline improvement works carried out between Ballygar and Creggs were welcomed.
- Concern was raised at the 53% failure rate of domestic wastewater treatment systems. The Council need to assist in improving the treatment systems.
- Increases in carbon tax, high specifications and over regulation have led to the increase cost of building private housing.

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

- The wastewater treatment system inspections are carried out by the Council on behalf of the Environmental Protection Agency. The Council will provide any guidance and help that it can. It is important from a health and safety perspective to ensure that wastewater treatment systems are working.
- The regulations governing housing provision are outside the scope of the local authority. We must follow national code.

**ITEM NO. 9 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BUSINESS & CORRESPONDENCE.      4574**

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

- Letter dated 4th March 2025 – Resolution Letter to Uisce Éireann – Aftermath of Storm Éowyn.
- Email dated 25th April 2025 – Reply from John Noone, LRSD/ERSD Analyst Uisce Éireann on Resolution Letter re Aftermath of Storm Éowyn.
- Letter dated 22nd April 2025 from Kerry County Council – Resolution Letter to Dara Calleary TD, Grant Calender for Grant Applications.
- Letter dated 13th May 2025 from Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport & Media – Dunguaire Castle.
- Letter dated 15th May 2025 from Fingal County Council – Resolution – Ban on Fox hunting on Fingal Lands.

**Members raised the following points and queries:**

- An update on the re-opening of Dunguaire Castle, Kinvara was requested.
- Concern was raised at the carparking situation at Dunguaire Castle and the safety of people at and walking around the castle was raised.

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

- Shannon Airport Group are the owners of Dunguaire Castle. The Council undertook a capital working costing programme for the essential upgrade of the Castle. The necessary works to open the Castle doors will be very significant. There will need to be a serious commitment of capital funding from Central Government if the Council are to take over ownership. Otherwise, the Council cannot afford to take on the asset.

**ITEM 10. QUESTION**

**4575**

**Cllr. Donohue submitted the following Question prior to the meeting:**

*'To ask the Chief Executive and Director of Planning for a briefing and report of the land portfolio held by Galway County Council and its potential or limitation to support for new zoning arrangements and in turn new homes and what are the latest figures of planning permissions granted and not yet commenced and details of all private lands zoned for housing where no planning permission has been sought.'*

**The following reply issued:**

**(1) Council Owned Lands**

In relation to the land portfolio held by Galway County Council and its potential/limitation to support new zoning arrangements the below table was compiled at for the RZLT liability on Housing Lands. Other lands owned by the Local Authority in towns are either existing green space, recreational and amenity lands or lands held for Roads & infrastructure purposes.

Baile Chlair - Droim na Gaoithe	R1	6.178
Oranmore – Oranhill	R1	2.05
Maigh Cuillin	R1	2.05
Gort - Courtney's Lane	Town Centre	3.576
Oughterard - Nan's Burkes	R2 only	2.72
Portumna - Noone's Field	R1	3.9
Tuam - Galway Road	R1	4.74
Tuam - Ballygaddy Rd	RI	12
Tuam - Sun street	R1	7.26

Number of residential developments granted planning permission in the settlement areas of the County Development Plan since it came into effect (20 June 2022).

Settlement Typology	Settlement	Residential Units to be delivered on Infill/ Brownfield Sites	Permitted during lifetime of the CDP 2022 to date	Residential Units to be delivered on Greenfield Sites	Permitted during lifetime of the CDP 2022 to date
Total Brownfield		2417	538		
Total Greenfield				6492	1312
Total					1850

## (2) Planning Permissions/Commencements

The number of planning permissions and commencements for 2024 and 2025 are laid out as follows:

Planning Data	2024	2025 to 20th May
Applications Received/Valid	2184/1779	740/624
Granted	1448	581
Grant Rate	85%	92%
Refused	252	53
Stage 1 LRD	5	1
Stage 2 LRD	2	0
Major Meetings	14	7
SID Meetings	4	1

Valid Commencement Notice	995	258
Valid Certificates of Completion	135	39

In conclusion, the County Development Plan shows that there are significant zoned lands available in the settlement areas for development and that applications and commencements are being received and progressed. The review of the National Planning Framework, Core strategy figures and the County Development Plan will commence later this year and identify if there are opportunities for additional zoning, density level changes within the County Development Plan.

#### **ITEM 11. NOTICE OF MOTION**

**4576**

**Cllr. Regan submitted the following Notice of Motion prior to the meeting:**

*'Re Footpaths and Tyres*

*I request Galway Co Co to provide the following information*

*To provide the amounts of claims and compensation paid out last year 2024 due to:*

- 1. Broken footpaths*
- 2. Burst Tyres due to potholes on our roads*

*How many claims have been made this year 2025?'*

**The following reply issued:**

Please see information below received from our insurer IPB

#### **Footpath and slip/trip 2024 (finalised)**

Count	Value
11	€312,398

**Pothole damage 2024 (finalised)**

Count	Value
109	€17,013

In respect of Q1 2025, the number of claims *made* (registered), are 3 Footpath and slip/trip Claims and 23 Pothole damage Claims.

Cllr. Regan spoke on his motion. He asked if the Council could invest the money that it spends on claims, on repairing the footpaths instead. This would avoid the Council having to make claims payments. Also, if the roads were in a better condition there would be less claims made for damage caused by potholes.

**Members Queries were responded to as follows by Ms. O'Connor:**

- The cost of paying claims is not taken from Council budgets, they are paid under our insurance cover by IPB.
- The cost of the Council's insurance cover has reduced recently.

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

- Agreed that increased funding in footpaths would make them safer and reduce risk. Extra funding is required to roll out footpath works. Discretionary MD funding is available. The Schedule of MD works also includes works to footpaths. Repairs are constrained by lack of available budget.
- The National Oversight & Audit Commission indicators for roads, indicate that the condition of County Galway roads is well above the national average.
- Overlay works are subject to finance. It is a difficult task to eliminate potholes completely.

**ITEM 12. NOTICE OF MOTION**

**4577**

**Cllr. Regan submitted the following Notice of Motion prior to the meeting:**

*'I would like you to supply me with the following,*

*1 How much land does Galway County Council own in the County.*

*2 How many people are on the housing list.*

*3 How many Towns/Villages are full to capacity with water or sewerage or both.'*

**The following reply issued:**

The Housing Section of Galway Co Co currently has a landbank of 27 HA. I have attached a breakdown and locations of these lands.

There are currently 3023 on our Housing list. The information is updated daily and can be accessed at the following link

<https://galway.ie/en/services/housing/supplydemand/>

I have attached the latest Capacity Registers issued by Uisce Eireann in December 2024.

In relation to WWTP, of the 35 WWTPs in County Galway, 5no, coloured red, are indicating that there is no spare capacity.

The Water Treatment capacity register provides an indication of the available capacity to support 2033 population targets. Regarding the 43 Water Treatment facilities in the County, 14 coloured amber, are listed as requiring improvements to the level of service.

Cllr. Regan spoke on his motion. The figures given in the response indicate that the Loughrea MD would have the capacity to build 150 houses, while there are over 3,000 on the housing waiting list. The required unit size of houses should be reduced. Modular homes should be considered as a quick and cheaper way to

provide housing. There also needs to be an improved system for naming housing estates in Irish.

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

- When a house is built, it will accommodate more than one person. The current average occupancy rate in the County is 2.8. The main constraint in housing provision is the availability of zoned and serviced land and the cost of construction.
- The Council are investigating modular housing and other modern methods of construction. The housing directorate are achieving value for money. The Council are looking for the voluntary acquisition of serviced land for social and affordable housing via Expressions of Interest (EOI). We will evaluate what is received once the period for receiving EOIs have closed.
- The closing date for expressions of interest is 29<sup>th</sup> May. If required, there will be another Expression of Interest issued later in the year. It is intended that there will be a rolling EOI. Compulsory Purchase Orders will be used where necessary.
- The EOI was circulated in the media, it can be circulated to the Members as requested.
- County Galway has the highest rate of daily Irish speakers in the Country. There is a place names committee. The Council will provide what assistance we can. Our native tongue is a priority for this Council and we should use it as much as possible.

**ITEM 13. NOTICE OF MOTION**

**4578**

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

*'The FAI is planning to move all Irish football clubs to a calendar-year season, requiring all clubs to register in February each year. However, 77% of Galway clubs*

*have voted against this plan. It could be devastating for both football and GAA sports, effectively putting them in direct competition with each other.*

*We are requesting that Galway County Council write to the FAI and ask them to allow football leagues the flexibility to choose the season and registration periods that best suit their needs.'*

Cllr. Reddington spoke on his motion. He explained that 77% of clubs have voted against the proposed changing of season by the Football Association of Ireland (FAI). Clubs should be allowed pick their own season and registration dates. If this proposal is passed, it will result in GAA being in direct competition with soccer.

Comh. Mac An Iomaire expanded that if implemented, the proposal would be unfair to the children as the soccer season will coincide with the GAA season. It will lead to burnout and will negatively affect their mental health. Rural communities do not have the population to support both codes at the same time.

The above motion was **PROPOSED** by Cllr. Reddington **SECONDED** by Comh. Mac An Iomaire and **AGREE**.

#### **ITEM 14. NOTICE OF MOTION**

**4579**

**Cllr. Parsons submitted the following Notice of Motion prior to the meeting:**

*'That Galway County Council agrees to designate Safe Home Ireland as an eligible initiative under Sections 1.4 and 4.2 of the Housing Allocation Scheme. This would allow the Council, at its discretion and subject to housing need assessment, to allocate a proportion of age-friendly housing to returning Irish-born emigrants who are both -*

*(a) Approved by Safe Home Ireland,*

*and*

*(b) Qualify under the Council's existing social housing criteria.'*



**The following reply issued:**

I refer to your Notion of Motion in relation to the inclusion of Safe Home Ireland as an amendment to Galway County Council Housing Allocation Scheme which has been submitted for the May plenary meeting.

The procedure in place is that any proposed alterations or changes to policy such as the Housing Allocation Scheme are discussed and approved at the Housing SPC before being brought to the Plenary meeting.

Unfortunately, the Housing SPC meeting which was due to take place on the 22<sup>nd</sup> May, and in advance of the Plenary meeting of the 26<sup>th</sup> May, has been deferred until a date to be agreed in June.

Therefore, your Notice of Motion will be dealt with more comprehensively after the Housing SPC meeting has taken place.

Cllr. Parsons said that she was disappointed with the reply to her motion. The motion was to be discussed at the May Housing SPC meeting, but the meeting was deferred until June. She voiced her concern that a motion decided by the Council shall not be re-visited within 6 months of the date of such decision. Her motion is aimed at assisting those that were forced to emigrate, that have a low income, no housing but do have a connection to the area. These returning emigrants should be included as a category in the Housing Allocation Scheme.

**Members raised the following points and queries:**

- Unfortunately, the May Housing SPC meeting had to be cancelled. The Members of the committee had at the April SPC meeting, requested the Director of Services to gather information to present it. They will now receive this at the June meeting. The SPC must be given the time to discuss and consider the motion. The SPC will revert after their June meeting with a recommendation.
- The proposal has been ongoing for a long period of time, a decision must be made.

- Further information on the proposal is not required to make an informed decision.
- Members voiced support for the proposed motion.
- If the motion is passed, the housing applicants will still be required to satisfy the other criteria in the housing allocation scheme.
- Motions cannot force an SPC into a particular course of action.
- It was asked how Members can contribute to a policy if they are not on the particular SPC. A structure needs to be put in place to facilitate this.

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

- Changes in policy must be discussed at SPC where the background work is first carried out. A recommendation will then be brought to the full Council at plenary.

The following motion was **PROPOSED** by Cllr. Parsons **SECONDED** by Cllr. Welby:

*'I propose that Galway County Council calls on the Housing Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) to amend the Housing Allocation Scheme to include Returning Irish-born Emigrants as a specific eligible category*

*In doing so, the SPC shall designate Safe Home Ireland as a recognised applicant support initiative for this category, enabling the Council, at its discretion and subject to housing need assessment, to allocate a proportion of age-friendly housing to returning Irish-born emigrants who:*

*(a) are approved by Safe Home Ireland, and*

*(b) meet the Council's existing social housing eligibility criteria.*

*The Housing SPC is to complete this work and bring the amended Housing Allocation Scheme forward for adoption at the June Plenary Council Meeting.'*

The Cathaoirleach and the Chief Executive gave commitments to the holding of an urgent Housing SPC to expressly consider the amendments proposed in the motion (page 26 May minutes – re returning Irish born emigrants / Safe Home Ireland) so that the Housing SPC's recommendations and the GCC Housing Allocation Scheme would come before the Elected Members to consider in relation to exercising their reserved powers on the agenda in the June plenary meeting.

**ITEM NO. 15 CATHAOIRLEACH'S BUSINESS**

**4580**

The following motion was **PROPOSED** by Cllr. McHugh Farag **SECONDED** by Cllr. Welby:

*'I propose that we write to the Minister for Housing to call for an immediate review of the Affordable Housing policy, to facilitate wider development catchment. I also propose that motion is forwarded to all local authorities.'*

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. McHugh Farag **SECONDED** by Cllr. Welby the above motion was **AGREED**.

The following motion was **PROPOSED** by Cllr. Reddington **SECONDED** by Cllr. Collins:

*'I propose that the Affordable Housing Officer be invited to make a presentation at our next plenary council meeting. The presentation would provide an overview of any current or upcoming plans for affordable housing in Galway, allowing for an informed discussion and opportunity for feedback from council members.'*

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

The Cathaoirleach thanked Kieran and Jean, Denise Feeney and their teams and Cllr. Ollie Turner for their work in organising the Cathaoirleach Awards. She thanked the Chief Executive, the Directors and Members for their help during her term as Cathaoirleach and described it as a privilege to serve.

**ITEM NO. 16 VOTES OF SYMPATHY / CONGRATULATIONS**

**4581**

**A resolution of sympathy was extended to the following:**

- Frank Burke, Corbally, Knockdoe, Turloughmore, Co. Galway
- Mary Kelly, Gurraune, Oranmore, Co. Galway
- The O Sullivan Family, Garrybreda, Loughrea, Co Galway
- The Jordan Family, The Square, Gort, Co. Galway
- Alacoque Fahy & Family, Caherlinny, Kilchreest, Loughrea, Co. Galway
- Michael & Tom Fullard, The Rectory, Athenry Road, Loughrea, Co. Galway
- Elizabeth Kelly & Family, Ballyfintan, Gurtymadden, Loughrea, Co. Galway
- The Finnegan Family, Kilmacduagh, Gort, Co. Galway
- Therese Cunningham & Family, Tynagh, Loughrea, Co. Galway
- Mike Walsh, Hillview, Tullahill, Loughrea, Co. Galway
- Marty, Michael, Maureen & Marian Fahy, Ballyara, Bullaun, Loughrea, Co. Galway
- The Finnerty Family, Fahy Gardens, Loughrea, Co Galway
- Rita Fallon & Family, Templemartin, Craughwell, Co Galway
- Anne Marie Flaherty, Eoin & Éabha, 18 The Maples, Gort, Co Galway
- Patrick Fahy, Woodford, Co. Galway
- Francis & Emma Moriarty, Lissadyra, Tuam, Co. Galway
- Anna O Donnell, Blackacre, Tuam, Co. Galway
- Ciaran McLoughlin, Main Street, Clifden, Co Galway

**Chriochnaigh an Cruinniú Ansin.**

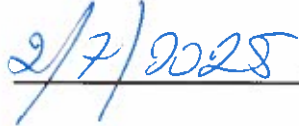
**Submitted, Signed and Approved**

**Cathaoirleach:**



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**Date:**



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