



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

DRÉACHTBHUISÉAD 2023

DRAFT BUDGET 2023

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT

CHUIG GACH BALL DEN CHOMHAIRLE

DRAFT BUDGET FOR FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2023

To: The Cathaoirleach and each Member of Galway County Council

Introduction:

I enclose for your consideration the Draft Budget for 2023 together with a report from the Directors of Service in respect of activities in their functional areas which is submitted as an annual progress report of the Corporate Plan.

In accordance with the statutory requirements of Section 102 and 103 of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended), issues relating to the preparation of the Draft Budget were considered by the Corporate Policy Group at meetings held on 4th and 16th November 2022.

The Council considered and made its determination in relation to the local adjustment factor for the Local Property Tax at its meeting held on 24th October 2022 at which it was decided not to vary the Local Property Tax rate.

Circular letter Fin 09/2022 dated 11th August 2022 confirmed the prescribed periods for the 2023 budget meeting and budget related matters. The prescribed period for the holding of the budget meeting is 1st November to 30th November and the Draft Budgetary plan for the Municipal Districts took place between 7th November and 15th November 2022, as required.

The Council may by resolution amend the Draft Budget but is obliged to adopt the Draft Budget with or without amendment and determine, in accordance with the budget so adopted, the annual rate on valuation to be levied. The council is required to complete the statutory process within a period of 14 days. This allows for the adjournment, if necessary, of the statutory meeting scheduled for 28th November 2022, but the process must be completed by 11th December 2022.

The Local Property Tax:

Under the new model of Local Property Tax funding, all equalisation funding will be met by the exchequer to ensure all local authorities receive, at a minimum, an amount equivalent to their baselines. As the projected Local Property Tax receipts for 2023 are less than the councils baseline, Galway County Council will be in receipt of equalisation as set out below. In effect the councils allocation from Local Property Tax in 2023 will be €14,517,890, unchanged from previous years.

Galway County Council - 2023 LPT Allocation	
	€
LPT Retained Locally 100%	14,362,329
2023 Baseline	14,517,890
2023 Shortfall (LPT Retained Locally - 2023 Baseline)	<u>-155,561</u>



Distribution of equalisation funding	155,561
Total LPT Funding to be provided in 2023	<u>14,517,890</u>

In general, equalisation grants are payments to local authorities that have smaller tax bases (and/or higher expenditure needs) due to less economic activity, usually arising from the socio-economic profile and circumstances of the local authority area. As Galway County Council is the second most rural local authority in the country with over 75 per cent of its population living in rural areas, in principle it should be in receipt of sizeable transfers for equalisation purposes. Instead, of the twenty local authorities eligible for equalisation payments, Galway County Council receives the smallest equalisation grant.

The Local Property Tax is one of the few sources where the council can raise significant additional income by varying the local rate. The recommended increase in my report on the Local Property Tax dated 20th September would have realised an additional €2.2m to support existing services and leverage additional grant funding opportunities. In not varying the local rate, the revenue from Local Property Tax remains static while the costs of the public services it is meant to support continue to increase. In such a scenario it is difficult to prevent public services suffering as a consequence.

Supports from Department of Housing, Heritage and Local Government

On 9th November 2022, the council was informed that it would receive an additional once-off financial support in 2023 of €2.75m. This is a very welcome additional support, and it brings the overall support funding for Galway County Council in 2023 to over €12m, including Pay, Pensions and other supports. For your information I set out below the breakdown of these supports from 2022 to 2023.

	€	€	€
	2022	2023	Change
Payroll	4,444,006	8,161,780	3,717,774
Cllr. Remuneration	370,000	NIL	-370,000
Energy (etc.)	NIL	1,752,047	1,752,047
Special Grant Once-off	600,000	2,755,433	2,155,433

Obviously, the supports in relation to payroll and energy are being made available to all local authorities and they are much needed in any event. The additional support of €2.75m is, however, specific to Galway County Council and, although specified as a once-off allocation it has been necessary to include it in the budget to support all operational programmes.

Main Budget Adjustments



You will see from the budget tables that the draft budget for 2023 is €158,884,698 compared to €143,295,409 for 2022. Members will be aware that the majority of the budget in any year is comprised of non-discretionary costs such as loan charges, payroll, pensions, insurances, statutory demands and expenditure of a contra nature supported either in whole or in part by grant income received on the basis of being assigned to a particular service.

The current financial position of the council has been discussed in detail by the Corporate Policy Group and full council on many occasions and the funding available to the council remains a critical issue. As I reported in September, there is a requirement for additional funding in almost every area of council activity, including housing and estate maintenance, road maintenance, street cleaning, verge trimming, swimming facilities, libraries, tourism and economic development.

The council is faced with a significant financial challenge in 2023. The recently approved National Wage Agreement together with limited staff recruitment over the last 18 months will result in a much higher payroll cost. The council must also provide for new pensions and gratuities in addition to the increases for existing pensions. Members will be aware that inflation is running at close to 10% and this will have a very significant impact on the cost of all goods, services and contracts. Energy costs are soaring, and this too will have a major impact on 2023.

Naturally, because of the prevailing economic circumstances the overall budget for 2023 is significantly larger than 2022 and expenditure increases occur across all service areas as a consequence. And while I have highlighted some of the main changes in the Table below, it is indicative only and it is the Statutory Tables A-F that require consideration by the council.

	€
Increase in Payroll recoupment	3,717,774
Supplementary Support towards Costs	1,752,047
Payroll Increases	4,800,000
Reduction in Moorhead recoupment	370,000
Reduction in Special Grant 2022	600,000
Specific once-off support 2023	2,755,433
Increase in new Valuations/PEL	1,000,000
Commercial Rates, Bad Debts, Delistings	500,000
Reduction in NPPR	70,000
Reduction in IPB dividend	200,000
Reduction in Superannuation Income	150,000
Increased Pensions & Gratuities	800,000
Housing Maintenance	500,000
Disabled Person Grants	50,000
Local Roads	430,000
Notice of Motion	268,000
Tourism	50,000



Economic Development	56,000
Climate Change Office	70,000
Town and village maintenance	200,000
Burial Ground Grants	30,000
Waste Management Islands	50,000
Lifeguards, Blue Flag Beaches	240,000
Library Book	70,000
Piers & Harbours	50,000

The foregoing is a headline summary of some main budget movements, but it is important to refer to the statutory tables where all expenditures and incomes are distributed across all service headings.

Work Programme

Despite the financial constraints the council will still deliver a significant programme of works and public services in 2023 to the benefit of the citizens and economy of the county.

In March 2022 as a result of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the Ukrainian Refugee Response was required to be put into action by all local authorities. Immediately staff of the Council responded and stood up, with the support of the community in Oranmore, staffed 24hr cover weekend reception centres over the course of a number weekends. A Community Response Forum was also created and resourced to support the integration of refugees into the community and to support access to agencies and services. Throughout the rest of the year, the Council has responded by providing emergency accommodation at a number of locations, by reviewing and liaising with the Dept of Children on properties that have taken contracts to provide accommodation and we have reviewed and worked with IOM and the Red Cross on pledged properties. We will continue to do everything we can to support the response to the refugee situation.

Galway County Council has a key role to play in implementing the various housing initiatives under the Government's Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness. The Housing Delivery Action Plan, published earlier this year, set out ambitious targets to deliver 1,717 social housing units delivered between 2022 and 2026. The budget available for housing maintenance and estate management is less than what is needed, but an increase of €500,000 in 2023 has been budgeted to help minimise the time taken to re-let properties and bring void units back in to service. There will be a focus, too, on vacant homes and the operation of the Croí Cónaithe Fund Scheme. The draft budget also provides for an increase of €50,000 towards the council element of the D.P.G's and an increase in housing rent income from new tenancies.

As the council will not receive notification of its road grants until early 2023, the budget has been drafted on the basis of the grant allocations for 2022. It is hopeful there will be an increase in 2023 as the impact of inflation will erode the output of works, otherwise. Under the various grant works in 2022 the council carried out maintenance and improvement works on over 393KM of the network. An additional €430,000 has been budgeted for local roads and an additional provision for Notice of Motion of €267,000 is included. A provision has also been included to increase street cleaning. Through Transport Infrastructure Ireland and the National

Transport Authority the council is supported to advance a number of capital projects of significance. The Galway City Ring Road received approval from An Bord Pleanála but that decision is subject of judicial review. While not now looking to oppose the judicial review, An Bord Pleanála has indicated that it will be seeking to have the matter remitted back to them for further consideration.

In 2022, the council received an allocation of €7.89m to develop and implement active travel measures. This enabled intervention to take place at many locations around the county. It is expected the programme will continue in 2023 enabling further works to be carried out. The council is continuing to advance the Conamara Greenway between Clifden and Recess with some land acquisition needed to enable that stretch to be finalised. Planning has commenced for the section from Oughterard to Galway.

The council is continuing to co-operate closely with the OPW on Flood Relief Schemes in South Galway, Ballinasloe and Clifden and continues to seek funding for minor flood relief works which are of immense value to local communities. In 2022, €630,000 was received in funding for bridge rehabilitation works at 12 locations and it would be expected that a similar allocation will be available in 2023.

For a county with 689KM of coastline, 4 inhabited islands and many piers, harbours and slipways of various sizes, the marine function of the council is seriously under resourced. It is imperative that we begin to resource a Marine Section within the Infrastructure and Operations department to specialise in marine related functions and capitalise on available funding opportunities. Subject to available funding it would be my intention to recruit a resource to that area in 2023. Despite the lack of staff in that area we are continuing to lead on the development of a new pier at Inis Óir, undertake a coastal erosion study on Inisboffin and undertake improvement works at a number of piers and harbours with funding under the BALAMI Scheme. However, our capacity to continue leveraging funding for these schemes is contingent on being able to fund the staff needed to deliver the programme and meet the match funding requirement.

As part of the much needed modernisation of the council fleet and equipment it is planned to replace 3 No. lorries in the first quarter of 2023 and it is expected that a new patching unit will be delivered by the end of 2022 with the recruitment also of an additional driver. Tenders have also been received for the replacement of the old pay and display parking meters and these will be replaced on a phased basis throughout the county in 2023 and 2024. The council is part of the North-West Region for public lighting retrofit and it is expected that it will be tendered in Q1 2023 with installations to commence later in the year.

After a marathon process from issues papers, draft plan, material alteration, ministerial direction and the consideration of nearly 3,000 public submissions, the County Development Plan 2022 – 2028 was finally made in June 2022. While I am conscious of the importance of the plan for the development management function, it is vital that we have a much stronger emphasis on delivery of key strategic objectives of the plan in areas, such as economic development, transport and movement, climate change, energy and renewable resources and tourism. However, the planning function remains under resourced, and despite limited recruitment over the last year, it remains challenging to keep pace with existing and new statutory requirements.

As you know the residential land zoned maps were required to be prepared and published by 1st November 2022. Whilst this was achieved, it consumed available resources and will continue to do in 2023 as appeals and consequential matters are dealt with. This will impact on the preparation of local area plans which will now be delayed as a consequence. The recruitment of planners is proving difficult throughout the local

government sector making it challenging not only to fill additional posts but also to replace existing vacancies. Even so, I have prioritised the filling of posts in the development management function, and this enabled the resumption of pre-planning meetings in September 2022. Additional resources are urgently needed in planning enforcement and forward planning but resourcing it is hampered by the financial constraints.

The council has been to the forefront in the introduction of e-planning which enables the making of planning applications on an online portal and through which applicants will be kept updated on the progress of their application. To date over 1,000 applications have been made using the portal and during 2023 we will engage further with agents to increase the volume even further.

We will continue to work closely with IDA, Enterprise Ireland and other stakeholders to attract inward investment to help stimulate economic development and job creation in the region. The Strategic Economic Corridor in the County Development Plan has superb accessibility, and we will engage actively to attract specialist enterprise of significant scale and high value to the land banks assembled by the IDA, and the County and City Council in this area. Under the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund we will work with Irish Rail in 2023 to advance the passing loop at Garraun and the design of additional carparking and urban framework plan for the Garraun area.

The former Galway Airport site has been included in the County Development Plan with the vision of making it a Campus that will attract and secure long-term investment in Galway and the Western Region and underpin the development of the Galway Metropolitan Area. The Council is now progressing plans for the development of the site and commence of the overall masterplan as included as an objective of the County Development Plan.

There is continued strong interest from stakeholders in the Food Sector in the Bia Innovator Campus Development in Athenry. Although construction completion has been delayed it is expected that tenants will be in occupancy in Q1 2023. The council has been successful in funding applications under a number of programmes and has sourced €10.99M to date under the Rural Regeneration Fund. Subject to our capacity to meet the match funding required we will continue to pursue funding for projects in 2023 under Rural Regeneration, ORIS, Town and Village Renewal, Street Enhancement, Clár, LIS and other schemes as they arrive. In accordance, with the Department's Village and Town Centre First Policy which aims to support the regeneration and development of towns and villages, and to enable people to live and work in a vibrant environment, it is intended to appoint a Town Regeneration Officer in 2023.

The County Development Plan recognises the potential of tourism as a key driver of sustainable socio-economic growth across the urban, rural, island and coastal settings of the county. Galway is one of the most successful counties in terms of economic benefit derived as a result. The council is preparing the county's first Tourism Strategy which will guide the future development, integration and growth of the tourism sector encompassing all areas of the county. It will provide a structure for focused intervention that match current needs and future development potential. The strategy will fully align with and complement the Fáilte Ireland Tourism Development Strategy and it is intended that the draft county strategy will be brought to SPC towards the end of 2022 or early 2023.

In response to our obligations under "Delivering Effective Climate Action, 2030" I have established the appropriate governance structure for responding to Climate Change. This structure will ensure the effective



development and implementation of the Climate Action Plan. Provision has been included for a dedicated Climate Change Coordinator with responsibility to develop a prioritised work programme for reducing greenhouse gas emissions from council facilities and activities, build capacity and understanding across the organisation and create baseline data to facilitate measurement of progress. Projects in progress or planned include the public lighting energy retrofit, social housing retrofit - 56 properties in 2021, 70 active travel initiatives, development of an EV charging strategy and a range of biodiversity initiatives, and in that regard, it would be intended to recruit a dedicated Biodiversity Officer in 2023.

I will shortly be initiating a recruitment drive for a Community Climate Officer and a Climate Action Officer to support the growing work programme in this area to ensure that we are on track to achieve our targets in the first instance as an organisation and also, equally importantly, to support communities across the county to develop and deliver projects at a local community level.

Councillors will be acutely aware of the value of the library services throughout the county and the role they play in enriching lives in communities. Unfortunately, spending on library services in Galway is well below the level needed and is the lowest per capita in the country. While it may take some time to address that deficit, the draft budget provides for an additional €70,000 towards library books.

Our Blue Flag beaches and swimming areas are of critical importance to the tourist economy of the County. It has been particularly difficult in the last few years to recruit and retain lifeguards for the designated beaches. Ring buoys and safety measures need urgent upgrade and additional provisions have been included in the draft budget for lifeguards and safety measures.

Our ICT unit was very instrumental in our ability to continue service delivery across all units at the onset of the Covid 19 pandemic. This work will continue into 2023 as we formalise our Blended Working Policy which is currently being finalised through an internal steering group representative of all units in the organisation.

Cyber security and the protection of our data and information continues to be a key priority for the ICT unit and for the entire organisation, and increased ICT security is needed for monitoring and protection of all of our systems from potential threats.

Staffing:

The workforce plan was further implemented during the course of 2022, where it was possible to do so in the context of our financial resources. I have taken a phased approach in this regard identifying the critical & immediate needs in the first instance and also responding to emerging local and national priorities. But we remain critically low in terms of staff members. Opportunities to increase staff in 2023 appear very limited and will remain under constant review. But as indicated earlier we urgently need additional staff in areas such as planning, marine, facilities management, fleet management and all operations.

Commercial Rates:

As indicated previously, the two primary sources from which a local authority can derive income are by varying the rate of local property tax and the annual rate of valuation for commercial rates. As part of Budget 2022, it was agreed to increase the ARV from 70.59 to 74.82 the first such increase since 2009. It was accompanied by a rates payment incentive scheme with up to 88% of ratepayers eligible for the scheme.

Even with last year's increase, the ARV in County Galway remains low relative to comparable local authorities.

I am very conscious that the impact of rising energy costs, wage and inflation costs are being felt right across the board. On 27th October 2022 the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment and Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform announced details of a new €200M Ukraine Enterprise Crisis Scheme. There will be funding under the scheme to assist viable but vulnerable firms of all sizes in the manufacturing and internationally traded services and this support will greatly assist many businesses.

Members will be aware that the Valuation Office is undertaking a National Revaluation Programme and in the case of County Galway will issue final valuation certificates in September 2023 with the new valuations becoming effective on 1st January 2024. While an individual occupier's rate liability may increase, the revaluation will not increase the overall commercial rates income of the local authority as the rates increase of each authority is capped in the year following a revaluation. That in effect, means there can be no commercial rate increase in 2024.

The increase from commercial rates has always been a fundamental source for funding the local government systems. If the council is to maintain public services at or close to existing levels it must raise additional revenue from commercial rates. It is simply not possible to sustain existing service levels or staff numbers in a situation where costs escalate, and available revenue fails to keep pace. Therefore, I have drafted the budget based on a 6% increase to the annual rate of valuation which will have a gross yield of €1,963,130 in additional revenue.

I have included also a repeat of the rates payment incentive scheme for businesses whose rate demand in 2023 is no greater than €20,000. This will necessitate an increase in the provision for the rebate scheme in 2023 to €300,000 in 2023 and it is estimated that the net yield from the proposed increase will be €1.65m with more than 90% of ratepayers eligible to apply under the scheme.

Expenditure Proposals

Expenditure by Programme Group	2022 Budget	2023 Draft Estimated Budget
	€	€
Housing and Building	17,169,146	19,454,462
Road Transportation and Safety	51,152,220	56,507,601
Water Services	15,520,745	15,879,218
Development Management	12,991,922	15,647,985
Environmental Services	20,649,048	22,442,670
Recreation and Amenity	9,595,544	10,583,291



Agriculture, Education Health and Welfare	2,667,814	2,816,370
Miscellaneous Services	14,148,970	15,553,101
Total	143,895,408	158,884,698

Conclusion and Recommendation

The draft budget has been prepared against a background of turbulence in the economy with costs rising at rates not seen for many years or ever before in the case of energy. In that context it isn't possible to budget forward with the normal degree of certainty. The financial supports from the Department of Housing, Heritage and Local Government have been particularly helpful and without them it would simply not have been possible to draft a workable budget for 2023. The council remains underfunded relative to comparable local authorities, and it is to be hoped that when local authority baselines are next reviewed that Galway County Council will receive a deserved uplift.

I wish to thank all the members for their support throughout 2022 and in particular Cathaoirleach Michael 'Moegie' Maher and his predecessor, Cllr. Peter Keaveney for their assistance. I wish to thank also the Corporate Policy Group for their engagement.

I wish to thank also, Ms. Áine Fenton, Ms. Margaret Jordan and the staff of the Finance Unit for their efforts in framing and preparing the Draft Budget. To the Directors of Service and all the staff of the Council, I am indebted for their support.

I am confident that with the support of the Councillors and staff we will implement a programme of work in 2023 that will benefit all the citizens of Galway and accordingly I recommend the adoption of the draft budget as presented.

Mise, Le Meas,

Mr. Jim Cullen
Chief Executive
Galway County Council

18th November 2022



DIVISIONAL REPORTS INCLUDING ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT ON THE GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN 2020 - 2024

The Galway County Council Corporate Plan 2020 – 2024 as adopted by the Elected Members of Galway County Council, provides the framework to enable Galway County Council to guide the strategic direction and development of the County of Galway for the period 2020 - 2024.

The strategic goals and supporting strategies identified in the Plan support Galway County Council in carrying out its functions, prioritising its actions, and assessing its progress.

The Divisional Reports that follow detail the progress achieved during 2022 in relation to the strategic goals and supporting strategies. In addition, the Divisional Reports outline the main proposals to be advanced in 2023 to further progress the achievement of the strategic goals of the Council.

STRATEGIC GOALS

Community Participation & Social Inclusion

“To facilitate the broadest possible participation by citizens in local decision making and the sustainable development of their communities and their county.”

Economic & Enterprise Development

“To maximise the continued and sustainable economic and enterprise development of our county.”

Infrastructural Capacity

“To ensure that our physical and social infrastructure is sufficiently developed to support economic development, and to enhance our quality of life.”



**Organisational
Capacity**

“To maximise organisational capacity through the continuous review of operational efficiency, financial and risk management and the development of our Staff and Elected Members.”

**Protection of
Environment &
Heritage**

“To improve, protect and promote our environment, culture, heritage and language in the interests of present and future generations.”

**Quality
Customer
Service**

“To ensure that quality customer service is at the centre of everything we do.”

HOUSING AND ECONOMIC RURAL & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

HOUSING SERVICES - DELIVERING HOMES ∞ BUILDING COMMUNITIES

The Housing Department of Galway County Council continues:

- To help individuals and families meet their housing needs in communities of persons of varied ages, family composition, ethnic backgrounds and socio-economic status.
- To deliver early inter-agency supports and provide stable and supported housing options to homeless individuals and families to reduce the reliance on emergency accommodation.
- To accelerate the delivery of well managed and maintained social housing in sustainable communities for people to live while maximising the contribution to a climate friendly built environment.
- To ensure that existing housing stock is used to the maximum degree possible to improve the quality of housing stock and to contribute to the renewal of the built environment.

HOUSING FOR ALL – ACTION PLAN FOR HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

Housing for All is the government's plan to increase the supply of housing to an average of 33,000 per year over the next decade. The plan provides for an optimal mix of social, affordable and private housing for sale and rent. The plan is based on four pathways, leading to a more sustainable housing system:

- support home ownership and increase affordability
- eradicate homelessness, increase social housing delivery and support social inclusion
- increase new housing supply
- address vacancy and make efficient use of existing stock

The Housing Unit during 2022 continued to progress a range of direct-build housing projects through the 4 stage approvals process for design, planning, tendering and construction. To date, funding in the order of €43m has been approved by Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government for the advancement of direct-build social housing units since 2018. In addition, proposals for further units are being prepared or are with the Department for approval. The construction industry is recovering from the disruption caused by Covid19 and remains in a challenging position nationally with contractors experiencing price inflation and delays in obtaining materials, general labour shortages, and the recent increase in interest rates in accessing funding. The Housing Unit, together with the assistance of the Housing Delivery Coordination Office and the Department, has been working hard to manage these issues at a local level and strong delivery is expected for 2023. The following projects were progressed through various stages to date:



2022

Location	# Social Housing Units	DHPLG Stage
Fana Bui, Tuam	32	Under Construction
Gort na gCloch, Clifden	26	Under Construction
Garrai Ghuaire, Kinvara	10	Under Construction
Total	68	

2023

Location	# Social Housing Units	DHPLG Stage
Single Rural Dwellings	7	Under Construction
Bridge Street, Ahascragh	18	Under Construction
Baile an Theimpeal, Weir Road	30	Stage 2
Ballymoe	8	Stage 2
Total	63	

Part V - 2022

Location	# Social Housing Units	DHPLG Stage
An Saileachan, Athenry	5	Phase 1 – completed Phase 2 – under construction
Coill Ard, Moycullen	5	completed
Cullair Bán, Athenry	12	Under construction



Coill Ard, Oranmore	7	Under construction
Gairdin Cul, Loughrea	1	Under construction
Garrai Glas Drive, Athenry	5	Under construction
Carraig Weir, Tuam	1	Under construction
Total	36	
Gort na Fuinse, Headford (AHB)	7	Under construction
Total	43	

Part V - 2023

Location	# Social Housing Units	DHPLG Stage
An Saileachan, Athenry	4	Phase 3 – under construction
Limehill, Dunlo	5	Under construction
Lorrogate, Athenry	3	Under construction
An Maolan, Barna	5	Under construction
Total	17	

HOUSING DELIVERY ACTION PLAN

The Housing Delivery Action (HDAP) plan was approved on the 1st July 2022 and has been published on the Galway County Council website as required under the Housing For All programme. The HDAP provides for Plan-led sustainable delivery of housing in the right locations. It charts the pathway forward for Galway County Council to deliver on its social and affordable housing targets from 2022-2026, identifying where and how those targets will be met. Strong delivery by AHBs of build units will be a key requirement for this plan. However, it is important to note that the proposed delivery is subject to the delivery of National targets and availability of funding to deliver social and affordable homes under Housing for All and all developments are subject to the normal approval and planning processes for each development.



HOUSING ACQUISITIONS IN 2022:

There are three main mechanisms available for the acquisition of housing and these are Direct Acquisition, Developers Obligation under Part V and Turnkey processes

- **Direct Acquisition for 2022:**

Location	# Social Housing Units	Stage
Classaghroe, Williamstown	1	Purchase complete
Castlevew, Headford	1	Purchase complete
The Gables, Portumna	1	Purchase complete
Caislean Raithlin	1	Purchase complete
Total	4	

Galway County Council reviews the availability of houses continuously to meet the housing need within its functional area. Private units are assessed based on the housing need in the locality, compliance with the criteria, Engineering reports and legal assessment. A total of 4 units have been acquired by Galway County Council at a cost of €674,511 with a further 2 Units at the final stages of acquisition with an estimated cost of €565,000. The numbers of second-hand units acquired on this basis will remain at a low number for the foreseeable future due acquisitions of this nature being focused on cases of specific need.

- **Turnkey Process:**

During 2022, the Housing Unit are acquiring a total of 82 units from Turnkey Developments as detailed below.

Location	# Social Housing Units	Stage
Cullairbaun, Athenry	42	
Limehill Dunloe	17	
Tubber Road, Gort	5	
Ballyhugh, Gort	4	
Lough Curra estate, Williamstown	7	
Carraig Weir, Tuam	4	



Garrai Glas Estate in Athenry	7	
Total	86	

An advertisement calling for expressions of interest for turnkey developments (social and affordable housing) was published in September resulting in eleven (11) expressions of interest across the county of which eight (8) have planning permission. The expressions of interest are under assessment presently and some initial engagement has taken place with developers. It is expected that turnkey developments will form a large part of our Social Housing Delivery in 2023. There are currently 102 turnkey units under construction with negotiations ongoing in relation to other developments.

- **Developers Obligations under Part V:**

In accordance with Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2001 and amendments, the Housing Department continues to acquire units as part of Developers obligations under this act. It should be noted that the Part V legislation was amended in August 2021 regarding land purchased on or after 1 August 2021. Any new planning permissions for housing development on that land will have a 20% Part V requirement. A 10% Part V requirement will apply where land already has planning permission or was purchased between the 1st of September 2015 and 31st of July 2021 if planning permission is granted before 31st July 2026. In 2022, Galway County Council is acquiring 36 units under the Part V obligations with a further 7 units being progressed for delivery through AHB's. (43 in total) with a further 20 planned for 2023. The number of housing units acquired by the Council under this stream of delivery will increase in future years due to recent amendments to the legislation, providing for the acquisition of up to 20% of a development by the local authority, at least half of which units must be for social housing applicants.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

The Local Authority Capital programme will remain a key focus in 2023 with priority given to:

- progressing local authority direct-build projects through design, planning, tendering and construction stages in accordance with the approved Housing Delivery Action Plan.
- Identifying further potential sites for development, in line with the housing needs for various areas, in order to enhance the potential for a direct build programme post 2022. The direct build programme targets increase significantly in 2023 and land acquisition/acquisition of infill and brownfield sites will become increasingly more critical to provide for the upscaling of build delivery. The build target for 2023 is 351 units.
- engagement with builders with a view to advancing the delivery of units under Part V and increasing these numbers based on the new Part V requirements.
- A targeted acquisition programme to support specific housing needs and the achievement of a social mix that underpins sustainable communities.

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR HOUSING LANDS

The active management of the housing land bank is part of a range of actions being taken under Housing for All designed to accelerate and increase housing output.

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- Continue to advance sites to development stage at the earliest date possible.
- Continue to expand the bank of lands available to the Council for public housing; affordable and social.
- Progress the approved Housing Delivery Action Plan for delivery of the build programme by Galway County Council and AHBs of both social and affordable housing for the period 2022-2026.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

The Housing Unit will continue

- to progress high quality sustainable social housing schemes, subject to planning approval, on various suitable portions of its remaining landbank, in areas with high social housing demand. These schemes will be advanced in conjunction with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and will provide sustainable communities into the future.
- To advance the development of sites under the Affordable Housing Fund subject to approval by the Department and alignment with their guidelines. Further sites will be identified, and proposals advanced for affordable housing.
- to maximize the potential of the land bank to support housing need, including affordable housing and rental options, subject to the introduction of appropriate schemes and funding streams by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
- to seek new opportunities to acquire strategic lands suitable for the provision of high-quality social housing and/or affordable housing, in locations with strong social housing demand, in order to deliver on its housing targets under the Housing For All programme. This will be aligned with the approved Housing Delivery Action plan.

VOLUNTARY HOUSING

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

The Council is continuing to engage with the Voluntary sector to maximise the number of units being made available through the funding schemes CAS (Capital Assistance Scheme) and CALF (Capital Advance and Leasing Facility).

CAPITAL ASSISTANCE SCHEME (CAS)

The Capital Assistance Scheme funding is provided by the Department through the Local Authority for the provision of housing.



PROJECTS WITH CAS FUNDING COMPLETED IN 2022:

Location	# Social Housing Units	Stage
The Old Post Office, Inverin	4	
Letterfrack (Phase 2)	11	Keys handed over 29/03/2022

OTHER CAS PROJECTS PROGRESSING:

Location	# Social Housing Units	Stage
Tuath, Mountbellew	5	Projected Completion Q1 2023)
Tearmann Eanna Teo, Rossaveal Cottages	8	Acquisition
Tearmann Eanna Teo , Eanach Mheain, Carraroe	13	Design stage
Peter Triest Housing Association, Springfield, Ballinasloe	4	Progressing
Carrig Dubh Housing, Shannon Road, Portumna	5	Progressing
Peter McVerry Trust, School House, Portumna	1	Acquisition
Peter McVerry Trust Rivercrest, Tuam	2	Acquisition
Inis Housing Association - Ballylee House, Gort	6	Acquisition
Total	44	



CAPITAL ADVANCE AND LEASING FACILITY (CALF) AND MORTGAGE TO RENT (MTR)

The Capital Advance and Leasing Facility (CALF) and Mortgage to Rent Scheme provide social housing through off-balance sheet current expenditure.

The following units were delivered under CALF in 2022:

Location	# Social Housing Units	Notes
Cluid Housing, Gort na Fuinse, Headford (Phase 1)	4	closed 17/10/2022
Cul na Calanach, Ballinasloe – CHI	7	November 2022
Milltown	7	December 2022
Total	18	

The following units were delivered under the Mortgage to rent scheme in 2022 which enables homeowners in mortgage difficulty to switch from owning their home to renting their home as social housing tenants

Scheme	# Social Housing Units	Notes
Mortgage to Rent Scheme (MTR) Home for Life (HFL)	6	completed
Mortgage to Rent Scheme (MTR) Home for Life (HFL)	17	In progress

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- It is proposed that the Council will continue to engage pro-actively with the Approved Housing Bodies (AHB) in order to facilitate the sourcing of further units for the provision of housing under this funding model.
- The Housing Unit will examine the potential for AHBs to deliver additional housing units on Council held lands.

LONG TERM LEASING INITIATIVE

Long Term Leasing was introduced to facilitate the delivery of Social Housing under Pillar 2 of Rebuilding Ireland and has continued although on a reduced scale under Housing for all. The Local Authority or AHB is



the landlord to tenant and the property owner does not have a direct relationship with the tenant. The rent paid to the landlord is discounted monthly by 15-20% of the Open Market Rent Valuation.

- The Lease term is between 10 and 25 years, during this timeframe the Local Authority tenant the property. The Landlord will have a guaranteed rent even when the property is vacant.
- The Landlord will have no day-to-day maintenance responsibilities under long term lease arrangements.

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- Engaged with Landlords and Property owners and provide documentation and advice.
- Finalising arrangements for long term leasing on four units in Country Meadows and eight units in Cricket Court in Tuam.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Follow through on the properties already approved in 2022 for delivery in 2023.
- Continue to engage with Peter McVerry Trust and other agencies to bring further approved properties into use in 2023, and additional properties thereafter.

Leasing under the Government Programme Housing for All

The Government will phase out the use of current leasing models by 2025 through phasing out new entrants to the current leasing arrangements for long term delivery and enhanced leasing, in favour of delivery models which ensure long-term ownership of social housing homes. The DHLGH will retain flexibility for Local Authorities to use short term rental availability agreements (RAS-Type) in order to accommodate people on the waiting list in the most appropriate way possible, an annual projection of 200 homes over the course of the Plan.

VACANT HOMES

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

The role of the Vacant Homes Officer is to drive and co-ordinate actions at a local level, to attain the objective of the National Vacant Housing Reuse Strategy including data collection and analysis. The Croí Cónaithe (Towns) Fund was announced on the 14th July 2022. It is a fund of €50 million to support people to live in towns and villages in Ireland by providing a grant to refurbish vacant properties.

The fund is focused on home ownership and it is aimed to tackle vacancy and dereliction in urban centres specifically towns and villages around the country. A grant of €30,000 is available for a pre-1993 property that has been vacant for a minimum of 2 years and will be used as an Owner/Occupier primary residence. A top-up grant of €20,000 is also available for properties that are on the derelicts site register or where the property is confirmed derelict (i.e. structurally unsound and dangerous) by a suitably qualified person.

This scheme has also been expanded to allow for new builds in Urban areas where the Local Authority can provide serviced sites. Galway County Council have no serviced sites available at this time. It is anticipated that the scheme will be expanded further in November to take account of rural properties.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Investigate the potential to bring the vacant properties back into use for Social Housing.
- Investigate the vacant properties uploaded to www.vacanthomes.ie to determine if any are suitable to bring back into use.
- Implement actions identified in the Reuse Strategy at local level and bring forward measures to ensure, to the greatest degree possible that vacant and underused privately owned properties are brought back into use.
- Continue to advertise all relevant schemes in the local media and on social media.
- Secure accurate and up to date levels of vacancy in Galway County particularly in urban areas where housing demand is most acute.
- Roll out the Croí Conaithe scheme to the maximum number of vacant homes possible.

REPAIR AND LEASING SCHEME

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

The Repair and Lease Scheme has been developed under Action 5.7 of Rebuilding Ireland to assist private property owners and AHB's in utilising existing vacant housing stock throughout the county.

RLS allows the property owner to sign-up to a lease arrangement for a length that is linked to the value of the repairs, subject to a minimum of 5 years. The value of the Repairs will then be off set incrementally against the agreed rental value over a defined period within the lease.

- Continued engagement with property owners, estate agents and solicitors in an effort to attract expressions of interest to the scheme.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- The Repair and Lease Scheme will continue to be advertised on a regular basis in the local media and on social media.
- Property owners who make enquiries will be engaged with and given all necessary information on the Scheme as quickly as possible.
- Galway County Council will continue to engage with AHBs where appropriate in implementing this scheme.
- The expanded Croí Conaithe Scheme will be progressed in accordance with new guidance.

HOUSING GRANTS

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- To date the number of applications for Housing Aid for Older People paid in 2022 is 196 with the number of Mobility Aids Grants and Housing Aid Grants totalling 147(69 HAGs and 86MAGs).
- Department funding was made available in the sum of €2,920,479 for 2022. Co-funding of €325,000 was sanctioned from the Council's own resources.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- The Council will continue to administer the Housing Aid for Older People, Mobility Aids Grants and Housing Aid Grants availing of grant funding from the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government to the extent that co-funding provided by the Council allows.

HOUSE PURCHASE LOANS (PRIVATE AND TENANT PURCHASE LOANS)

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

Galway County Council provide financial assistance to enable first time buyers to purchase a home either through the tenant purchase scheme or on the private market through the Local Authority Home Loan Scheme and existing loans through the Rebuilding Ireland Scheme.

- The Housing Unit at the end of September 2022 have 10 Rebuilding Ireland Home Loans approvals in principle on hand to the value of €1.5 million.
- 15 Local Authority Home Loan approvals in principle on hand to the value of €3.01 million and 4 Local Authority Home Loans drawdown to the amount of €802,400.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Galway County Council will continue to assess and process all housing loan applications in a timely manner in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Local Authority Home Loan scheme.

RENTAL STANDARDS

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

The Housing Standards for Rented Houses Regulations - Statutory Instrument 137 of 2019 came into effect on 1st May 2019 that superseded Statutory Instrument 17 of 2017.

The Inspectorate is responsible for all Statutory Inspections of Rented Residential Dwellings within the functional area of Galway County Council.



- The Inspection Target for Galway County Council for 2022 was 1,745 inspections.
- As of October 2022, the number of Residential Standards Inspections carried out was 1584 with the remaining to be completed before year end.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- It is expected the inspection target for Galway County Council in 2023 will be circa 1,800 Inspections but this will be confirmed in Q1 2023.
- Priority will be given to rental inspections where the occupier has made a complaint in relation to the condition of the premises.

SOCIAL HOUSING NEED

APPLICATIONS UNIT

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- There are currently 4,164 applicants on the record of qualified households. 414 of this total are City Applicants with Area of choices in the County Area.

Social Housing Demand BASIS OF NEED	ORGANISATION		Grand Total
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Galway City Council	Galway County Council	
Homeless, Institution, Emergency Accommodation or Hostel	77	104	181
Unfit	3	55	58
Disability - unspecified		11	11
Disability requirement - intellectual	14	105	119
Disability requirement - mental health	23	266	289
Disability requirement - physical	10	215	225
Disability requirement - sensory	1	12	13
Exceptional Medical or Compassionate Grounds	1	104	105
Involuntary Sharing	66	271	337
Overcrowded	15	49	64
Requires Rent Supplement		2114	2114
Currently Dependent on Rent Supplement	34		34
Concluded that Mortgage is unsustainable	3	57	60
Unsuitable - Particular Household Circumstances	167	99	266
PROCESSING APPLICATION		288	288
Grand Total	414	3750	4164



TENANCIES CREATED

(Multiple Items)

BASIS OF NEED	ISITATION					Grand Total
	AHB	LA	Leasing	MTR	RAS	
Homeless, Institution, Emergency Accommodation or Hostel	23	44	2		6	75
Unfit	3	8			4	15
Disability - unspecified					3	3
Disability requirement - intellectual	2	10			19	31
Disability requirement - mental health	4	18			9	31
Disability requirement - physical	6	14			17	37
Disability requirement - sensory		4				4
Exceptional Medical or Compassionate Grounds	4	12			4	20
Med or Comp	1					1
Involuntary Sharing	1	5			3	9
Overcrowded		5				5
Financial		2				2
Requires Rent Supplement to provide for accommodation needs	13	23	1		38	75
Concluded that Mortgage is unsustainable	1		1	2		4
Unsuitable - Particular Household Circumstances		1				1
NONE		10	1		2	13
Grand Total	58	156	5	2	105	326

- During 2022 the Housing Unit advertised available houses on the Choice Based Letting system.
- The Summary of Social Housing Assessment assessed 1200 Applicants. 444 Applicants failed to return their assessment forms and will be closed. 276 Applicants submitted incomplete forms. 90 Applicants were returned by An Post.
- 5 BPIs were introduced in the unit using automation, reporting and internal online forms for improvements in service delivery
- The Social Housing Assessment (Amendment) (No.2) Regulations 2022 came into effect in 2022. This has resulted in the following changes to Income Eligibility Thresholds. With effect from 1 October 2022, five local authorities – Carlow, Clare, Galway, Laois and Westmeath County Councils – will move from Band 3 to Band 2 of the income eligibility framework. As a result, the baseline income eligibility threshold for these areas will increase from €25,000 to €30,000 on that date. This will impact on a number of families who will now be eligible for housing in County Galway.



Local Authority	Galway City		
Adult Age	18		
Maximum Income threshold (€)	35000		
% in respect of each additional household member over adult age	5 %	Subject to a maximum increase of	10 %
% in respect of each additional household member under adult age	2.5 %	Subject to a maximum increase of	99 %

Local Authority	Galway County		
Adult Age	18		
Maximum Income threshold (€)	30000		
% in respect of each additional household member over adult age	5 %	Subject to a maximum increase of	10 %
% in respect of each additional household member under adult age	2.5 %	Subject to a maximum increase of	99 %

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- The Council will continue its' progress in the provision of social housing supports for persons on the record of qualified households.
- The Council will continue to work in partnership with Approved Housing Bodies in nominating applicants for voluntary housing.
- The Council will continue to operate Choice Based Letting (CBL) as a means to facilitate participation by housing applicants. It is intended to extend the CBL process to include nominations for voluntary housing.
- Online Social Housing Application form to be developed and launched.
- Further development of CRM system to facilitate other housing services.

HOUSING ASSISTANCE PAYMENT (HAP) UNIT

INDICATIVES ACTIVITIES IN 2022

- A total of 2280 HAP tenancies have been supported by Galway County Council since it started in Oct 2015.
- 1464 Active HAP tenancies at the end of October 2022.
- Lack of supply of available properties remains a significant issue for HAP applicants.
- The increase in rents across county Galway has also been a huge factor for applicants as the local authority can only pay a maximum rent rate depending on the household size.
- A 35% discretionary rate to the HAP CAPs was introduced in July 2022. 14 HAP tenants have benefited from this increase by the end of October 2022.



PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- To continue transferring long term rent supplement recipients from the Department of Social Protection over to the HAP scheme, within the limits of available resources.
- Process all new housing applications for the HAP scheme.
- Continuation of inspection process for all properties under the HAP Scheme

RENTAL ACCOMMODATION SCHEME (RAS) AND LEASING

Funding has been allocated for local authorities and Approved Housing Bodies to lease or rent private residential properties for applicants on the housing list. RAS is aimed at persons who are in receipt of rent supplement for a period in excess of 18 months. Since the 1st April 2011, any housing applicants that are in RAS type accommodation are deemed to have their housing needs met.

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- There are 371 households accommodated currently through the RAS Scheme and short-term leasing Scheme (this figure is inclusive of RAS Voluntary).

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- The Council will continue to administer the RAS Scheme as well as working to progress supply options under Housing for All.

HOMELESSNESS UNIT

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- A further increase in the demand for homeless services was noted in 2022, with a significant increase in the number of families requiring Private Emergency Accommodation and an increase in the number of single people presenting as homeless during 2022. 116 households, including families and single people, were provided with Private Emergency Accommodation from January to October 2022.
- The limited availability of Private Emergency Accommodation presented many challenges in responding to homelessness and placed significant demands on the limited resources of the Housing Unit.
- Both families and singles have had difficulty in sourcing homes in the private rented sector due to lack of availability with an increasing number of Notices to Quit being issued.
- Larger families have an additional difficulty in sourcing homes in the private sector. The Council has a very limited housing stock of 4/5 bedroom houses.
- The Homeless Action Team met regularly to establish the housing and wrap around supports needed for people experiencing homelessness, including single individuals allocated housing under Housing First programme. Housing First enables single people with a history of chronic homelessness and complex needs to obtain a secure supported tenancy. Housing First supports are provided by Galway

Simon and to date in 2022 four additional individuals were allocated Housing First tenancies. Supports have continued to be provided to the 6 tenants who were housed under Housing First in 2021 with all successfully maintaining their tenancies to date.

- The annual Cold Weather Response is a facility provided for rough sleepers who may not be eligible for homeless services or may choose to sleep rough except during the harsher weather in Winter- time. Eight (8) individuals have been identified as sleeping rough in Galway City and County who have a need for such beds. Crash beds are provided from end of October to the beginning of April. This year beds are being provided in the mens hostel with some of the current occupants to be transferred to supported housing in the County, with Section 10 funding allocated for the cost of providing this service.
- Two Community based houses were provided in the County on a licence agreement to Galway Simon with 4 eligible individuals who were residents of the men's hostel allocated supported licences in the properties with Galway Simon.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- It is anticipated that the increased demand for homeless services experienced in the past 4 years will continue in 2023 due to the limited supply of housing and in particular the limited availability of housing in the private rented sector. It is necessary to identify and provide additional housing opportunities for families to minimise the time spent in PEA.
- It is expected that the HAP Place Finder, the Tenancy Sustainment Officer and the Homeless Outreach Worker will continue to positively impact firstly by assisting in preventing people becoming homeless by early intervention and by reducing the length of time people spend in Homeless services.
- Galway County Council will continue to progress cooperation with City Council with all Homeless services, including the Cold Weather Response, for a coordinated inter-agency approach to homelessness.
- Continue to work in conjunction with all Local Authorities in the Western Region, Simon, Cope and the HSE to ensure the Housing First Model in County Galway continues.
- Expand the provision of Community Based supported housing within the County, to include intensive supports to more complex individuals.
- Work in partnership with the Voluntary Sector and in particular Cope, Galway Simon, Peter Mc Very Trust, AHB's and other agencies in providing own door accommodation for both families and single housing applicants who require a tailored housing solution to meet their housing needs
- Progress a Housing led approach with all forms of social housing including transition accommodation for families in cooperation with Galway Simon, COPE Galway and Peter McVerry with supports tailored to needs.
- Continue to work with Statutory and Voluntary bodies through the medium of Homeless Action Team to prevent Homelessness (e.g., Threshold, Tusla etc.) with a focus on tenancy protection and sustainment.
- Continue with case management with an emphasis on move on to appropriate accommodation.
- Continue to provide long term accommodation with all the necessary supports for both families and single homeless applicants.

HOMELESS HAP PLACE FINDER SERVICE

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

The Homeless HAP Place Finder Service was introduced in Galway County Council in November 2018. The Service has been rolled out to Local Authorities to assist homeless households find accommodation where the high demand and low levels of supply make the rental market very challenging.

- 195 homeless households have been assisted by the HAP Homeless Place Finder between November 2018 to date.
- Ongoing engagement with property owners, estate agents in an effort to source accommodation units.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Review of the priority homeless cases and the properties available to rent in County Galway.
- Continued engagement with property owners, estate agents in an effort to source all available accommodation units.

HOUSING STRATEGY FOR PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

The main aim of this Strategy is to promote and mainstream equality of access for people with a disability to the full range of housing options available, suited to individual and households need.

- Housing applications database indicates that there are 657 people with disabilities on the Housing list - with 289 of these having a Mental Health condition, 225 having a Physical Disability, 119 having an Intellectual Disability, 13 having Sensory Disabilities and 11 having an Unspecified Disability. People with severe and enduring mental health conditions have a very clear requirement for security of tenure and easy access to services.
- The review of the Disability Strategy has been completed and is currently in place and operational. This includes an updated Action Plan.
- The Housing Disability Steering Group has been re-established in addition to a specific subgroup for Mental Health which includes representatives from Galway County Council and HSE Mental Health services. A subgroup for Intellectual Disability has also been established with the Brothers of Charity, Ability West and Galway County Council.
- The action plan of this strategic Plan for people with a disability is being achieved within existing resources currently.



PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Continue to work with Approved Housing Bodies and Disability service providers to provide suitable accommodation in individual tenancies or in shared accommodation. The CAS Call remains open and the Council welcomes all applications from Approved Housing Bodies.
- Consider a “Lifetime Adaptable Housing” approach and for a % of all new Council housing to be designed to be wheelchair accessible.
- Develop further communication links with stakeholders and clients directly in respect of their specific needs.
- Continue the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Housing People with a Disability 2021-2026.

TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION PROGRAMME

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- A Mid-Term review was carried out of the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019 – 2024. The Council achieved 164% of its overall target of providing accommodation to Travellers. However, it is noted that it is necessary to increase the provision of Traveller Specific Accommodation in line with the targets in the Programme.
- Major refurbishment works were completed on a individual traveller specific house at Abbeyknockmoy.
- Extensions and major refurbishment works were completed on 2 traveller specific houses at Loughrea and Carnmore. The occupants of the property in Loughrea were rehoused temporarily whilst works were ongoing.
- Refurbishment, adaptation and extension is ongoing on a property in Portnick, Ballinasloe.
- Fire Safety training was provided at halting sites in Tuam and Caira during the year.
- There is ongoing monitoring and replacement of fire safety equipment at halting sites in Tuam and Caira and at 2 bays in Cluain Órtha, Craughwell.
- Preparatory works have commenced for the refurbishment of 3 houses at the Traveller Group Scheme at Clontuskert, with an extension to be provided at one of the properties for a multi-generational family. These works will be completed in 2023.
- The Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee met on 4 occasions to date in 2022 to discuss housing solutions for Travellers with a 5th meeting to take place before the end of the year.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- The major refurbishment of 3 properties at Clontuskert, Ballinasloe and extension to 1 of the properties is to be completed.
- The refurbishment, adaptation and extension of property at Portnick, Ballinasloe is to be completed.
- Fire safety training will continue to be delivered at all halting sites.
- Refurbishment works will be progressed at the following Traveller Specific Accommodation, subject to Departmental approval of funding -

Attymon, Athenry

Ballygurrane, Athenry

Gortbride, Loughrea

Ballydavid, Athenry

Individual houses at Mountbellew and Castleblakeney (2)

- The reconstruction and major refurbishment work including the reconstruction of a property which was demolished following fire damage, at the Traveller Specific accommodation at Cloonlyon, Ballygar are to be commenced, all proposals are subject to the availability of funding.
- Refurbishment works will be progressed at the Traveller Specific Group Scheme in Creggane. The extension of the scheme will be considered in line with the needs of the expanding households.
- The re-development of the Halting Site in Tuam to provide Traveller Specific Group Housing and halting site bays will be progressed with a proposal to be completed and submitted to the Department for funding.
- A section of the An Ceathrú Bán development in Athenry with 4 houses to be identified as Traveller Specific Group Housing.
- The Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee will continue to play a lead role in overseeing the implementation of the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019 – 2024.
- The Annual Traveller Census will be completed.

LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING STOCK MANAGEMENT - MAINTENANCE UNIT

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- As of end of October expenditure on the voids refurbishment programme in 2022 amounted to €1,049,710, while funding was received from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage amounts to €407,000 in respect of 37 voids.
- An allocation of €959,999 was received in March 2022 for Disabled Persons Grants. At the end of October, the total expenditure for 2022 amounts to €336,699 for 23 adaptations and 4 extensions.
- Housing maintenance was delivered on a priority basis with the necessity to focus on essential maintenance, including plumbing and electrical with available funding.
- As part of the Planned Maintenance Programme upgrade works commenced on electrical certification and fire safety installations in 450 houses in the Connemara and Oranmore Areas. Works were delayed due to Covid-19 restrictions but have since been substantially completed. Work has commenced on a further 3 contracts in Loughrea, Tuam and Ballinasloe Municipal Districts, an additional 1,780 houses.
- A heat pump servicing contract has been entered into with a contractor to service the remaining 180 heat pumps in Galway County Council owned properties. This work was funded under the Planned Maintenance Programme.
- A Deep Retrofit Energy Efficiency Upgrade was successfully completed on 119 houses in the County including 26 in Gort Mhaoilir Athenry; 12 The Glebe Tuam, 8 in Fairgreen Roundstone; 11 in Tynagh;

10 in Cill Feichin, Athenry and 7 in Clifden. The works include replacement windows and doors, external insulation and the installation of heat pumps and solar PV panels. These works are funded under the 2022 Energy Efficiency Retrofit Programme. All achieved a BER rating of A.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- The ability of the housing unit to continue to return void housing units to occupation will be dependent on continuation of funding from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage under the Voids Programme.
- In 2022 the EPA issued a revised, more detailed national Radon Risk map. It is intended to reassess areas previously surveyed to identify further areas of potential high risk. Any new houses identified with Radon levels above the Reference Level of 200 bq/m³ may require remediation works.
- The Deep Energy Retrofit of a further 120 houses in County Galway will be progressed to include properties at The Pottery and Country Meadows in Tuam; Ard na Gréine, An Cheathrú Rua and Cullairbaun, Athenry. The works include replacement windows and doors, external insulation, the installation of heat pumps and PV panels as deemed necessary. These works will be funded under the 2023 Energy Retrofit Programme. BER Rating of A to be achieved.
- We will continue to prioritise and complete adaptation works on Council properties, based on medical need, subject to the approved funding made available from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. It is anticipated that extensions will be progressed on 2 properties, subject to approved funding being made available.
- Deliver a response maintenance programme on a priority basis within the constraints of available funding.
- Under the Planned Maintenance Programme, progress the installation of fire detection systems/smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, fire blankets, electrical repairs and certification as required.

TENANCY AND ESTATE MANAGEMENT

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- The Housing Unit continued to work with vulnerable families in assisting them in sustaining their tenancies.
- The Tenancy Enforcement Officer continued to work intensively in a number of areas across the County, this is done in conjunction with the Gardai, other Departments of the Council and other relevant stakeholders from outside agencies.
- The Council's Tenancy and Estate Management Strategy involves active community engagement and participation at local level on an ongoing basis with an emphasis on the early identification of Anti-Social Behaviour and breaches of Tenancy Agreements. The Council continued to engage with the Gardaí and the unit meets regularly to discuss problem areas and how both organisations can work together to address anti-social behaviour.
- CCTV is under review at various locations across the County.



- A successful pilot project took place in Council Estates in Tuam, in collaboration with the Environment Section, Residents Association and estate residents which involved clean-up and improvements of the public areas in the estates. An environmental awareness campaign also took place, with plans to develop biodiversity areas within the estates.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- As part of the interdepartmental and inter-agency strategic approach, the Housing Unit will identify and target housing estates which will be the focus of extensive estate management activity over 2023.
- Estate management staff will continue to assist tenants with the sustainment of their tenancies as per the Tenancy Sustainment Strategy.
- Enforcement action will be carried out if required in accordance with the Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy.
- Tenants in estates, particularly in newly developed estates will be encouraged and assisted in setting up Resident Associations to take responsibility for their public spaces.
- Special Housing Taskforces for Tuam & Ballinasloe to be supported.

TENANT PURCHASE SCHEME

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

The introduction of the Incremental Tenant Purchase Scheme in 2016 afforded eligible Local Authority Tenants the opportunity to purchase their Local Authority homes. The *Housing (Sale of Local Authority Houses) (Amendment) Regulations 2021* give effect to amendments which include changes to (a) minimum income criteria for applicants and (b) the period of time applicants must have been receiving social housing support to be eligible under the scheme. The amendments came into effect from 1st February 2022. Specifically, the changes are as follows –

- Minimum income requirements:** The minimum income required for an applicant to be eligible to apply under the scheme has been revised downward from €15,000p.a. to €12,500 p.a.

This change will ensure persons whose pension is their primary source of income can now apply under the scheme. The change only applies to pensions – other social welfare payments may only be regarded as secondary income.

- Time receiving social housing supports:** The period of time tenants will be required to be in receipt of social housing support to be considered eligible under the scheme has been changed from one to 10 years.

In the case of joint tenancies, both tenants must be in receipt of social housing support for at least 10 years before being eligible to apply.

- To date in 2022 the Housing Unit has completed the sale of 11 houses under the tenant purchase scheme. The sale value of these properties is €757,321.00.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Galway County Council will continue to process all tenant purchase applications in a timely manner in accordance with the Incremental Tenant Purchase Scheme 2016.

HOUSING RENTS

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

The final ending of the Covid-19 PUP payments and the continued return to work have led to large number of rent reviews again being undertaken in 2022. These reviews are continually being revisited as people's circumstances continue to change. Galway County Council is cognisant of the changes in people's financial circumstances. The weekly rent accrual payable for the 2821 Galway County Council owned and leased properties currently stands at €177,958.66 as at the end of October 2022.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

The Differential Rent Scheme will be reviewed in 2023 with rent reviews to be undertaken for all current tenants.

CONTROL OF HORSES

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- The Council continued to implement its protocol in conjunction with the Gardaí on the Control of Horses.
- A total of 3 horses have been seized this year as of October 2022.
- The Control of Horses Act is currently under review nationally with a view to simplifying and further improving the legislation. A broad Stakeholder engagement process will follow to facilitate a cohesive national approach in considering and implementing the proposals. It is intended to review of The Control of Horses Bye Laws for County Galway pending the introduction of this legislation.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Galway County Council will continue to work with the Gardaí in tackling the issue of stray and abandoned horses on public roads and Council owned land.
- Once the new legislation has been enacted, a redraft of the Bye laws will be undertaken to reflect the changes in the legislation.

STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- The Housing, Culture and Recreation SPC has met on 4 occasions to date in 2022. A fifth meeting is planned for November. Areas covered relating to Housing Delivery Action Plan, Social work & Housing, Housing Maintenance Update, Capital Schemes update, Presentation from Threshold, Building Inspection statistics, Tenancy Estate Management, Housing Applications & Statistics update, Garda Matrix, and Refugee Settlement Programme.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

In 2023, it is anticipated that the Housing Strategic Policy Committee will examine a range of policy areas relating to Housing including, Differential Rents Scheme, Tenancy Agreements etc.

UKRAINE RESPONSE

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- The Housing section responded to the call for assistance from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth last March in relation to the displaced people from Ukraine. On three occasions emergency rest centres were provided to accommodate Ukrainians – this was a multi sectional response from Galway County Council involving Housing, Fire Services, Civil Defence and Economic, Community and Rural Development Sections, as well significant input from Oranmore Community Centre and Calasanctius College who willingly provided the locations and support for the rest centres.
- In addition, the Housing Section continues to liaise with the Department of Housing and DCEDIY in providing leads for long term multi-occupancy accommodation, and with the Red Cross and IPAS in providing pledged accommodation with the assistance of our partnering body IOM. To date expenditure has been €189,540.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

The Housing Section will continue to respond to this dynamic geopolitical crisis;

- Identifying long term leads for the DCEDIY.
- Working with the Red Cross and IOM regarding pledged accommodation.
- Engaging with the Community Response Forum.
- Work with the Department in relation to identifying vacant houses and assisting in matching these to Ukrainian tenants.



ECONOMIC, RURAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Economic, Rural & Community Development (ERCD) unit continued to guide and facilitate the sustainable development of the County supporting economic, community, social, cultural, and environmental initiatives at both macro and micro levels. While operating within limited resources, significant activity took place and there was a continued focus on working in partnership with a broad range of stakeholders to achieve the maximum impact. The focus of the work on the economic side continues to be on the key sectors such as food, tourism, creative sector, supporting indigenous firms and facilitating FDI as well as focusing on regenerating our towns and villages including the retail and hospitality sectors. Through the LCDC, PPN, Arts Office, Creative Ireland and Galway Sports Partnership as well as initiatives/programmes such as SICAP, CSS, CEP, Age Friendly, the Ukrainian Community Response Forum, Tidy Towns and many more, the unit assist individuals and communities to improve their quality of life.

FOOD SECTOR

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES 2022:

- Continued to play an active role in the construction phase of the BIA Innovator Campus CLG (BIA) including with the provision of staff on the Board and various sub-committees. While the construction of the campus has been a lot slower than desired, considerable progress has been made in terms of advancing the project and delivering direct supports to the food sector. Some examples of the supports/suite of Commercial, Technical and Business Mentorship Supports include:
 - Technical Services across New Product Development, Scaling Up Your Offer, Equipment, Ingredients, Quality Systems and meeting correct production standards.
 - Growing team of experts, currently at six, hoping to rise to eight in Q1 2023 offering expertise across Commercial, Finance, Funding Business Strategy, Retail and Hospitality sectors, Food Science, Meat Technology, Charcuterie, Coating Systems, Dairy, Events and Customer Service.
 - Bread and Jam Industry Training & Events have had over 500 participants in 2022 alone.
 - Food Technology Training Series running for the month of November across challenging topics for the sector.
 - Partnership with Safefood has helped to support over 65 businesses in 2022 across Food Safety, Allergens, Labelling etc.
 - 15 Businesses currently going through QQI Level 5 HACCP training at Bia Innovator Campus.
 - Educational Subcommittee are launching a report on the 12th of December in partnership with the Regional Skills Forum on; 'Appetite for Growth: Insight into the Skills needs of Food and Drink Manufacturers in the West'
 - Operational Handbook to Support Food Tourism Businesses in relation to Events to launch in early 2023.
- Worked with BIA at strategic level to progress the project and played a central role in securing additional funding from the Enterprise Ireland and other sources.



- Actively participated in projects and presentations at a local, regional, and national level. The BIA project is being recognised nationally as a critical piece of infrastructure that provides a unique ecosystem to support the food and associated sectors.
- Online promotional work to encourage economic activity including through the Made in Galway and tourism marketing on Discover Galway platforms as well as facilitating food writers and media in promoting the County
- Participated in a number of successful EU funding applications in association with the BIA Innovator Campus and developed network of EU partners for potential projects to support additional areas including tourism and culture
- Worked closely with the Regional Enterprise Plan Coordinator to ensure that food and related sectors were progressed under the new West Region Enterprise Plan (WREP) and that the BIA Innovator Campus plays a central role in maximising opportunities and growth of the sectors for the wider west region. This included securing Enterprise Ireland funding through BIA which will enable further scoping of opportunities for the Ag-Tech sector in Galway and the West, an action which was called out in the WREP
- Lead partner for the development of a successful application for €250,000 under the Shared Island Initiative, partnering with Leitrim County Council and Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council as well as the BIA Innovator Campus, the Food Hub Drumshanbo and the South Regional College in the North. The project will focus on the development of the Agri Food and Ag Tech sectors and will complement existing works being undertaken by the Council and BIA with EI funding. The project is one of the projects which has been spotlighted by the government as an important initiative under the Shared Island programme.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Work with the BIA Innovator Campus to complete the capital/construction phase and to ensure that it meets the needs of the Council, community, and wider stakeholders to support economic/enterprise activity.
- Finalise onboarding of tenants for own door units and work with a range of partners to build on the programme of works already being delivered as outlined above.
- Work with a range of partners including the LEO and GRETB to programme activities throughout the year to maximise use of the facilities for training and development.
- Progress the work on the potential of Ag-Tech under the Shared Island and Enterprise Ireland funding/WREP.
- Progress the Food & Agri-tourism Strategy with a focus on the key priorities and objectives identified.
- Work with the other local authorities to drive regional growth of the sector and to realise the objectives of the WREP.

CREATIVE & CULTURAL SECTORS

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES 2022:

- Continued to support the Audio Visual and Film Sector through a number of initiatives including partnering with the Ardán and other relevant partners on the UNESCO City of Film 2020 programme.
- Following a review of the original WRAP fund and the economic benefits which are accruing from investment, the Council continued its support for WRAP II which is a larger fund developed with investment from the WDC and other partners which will continue to support the development of the sector. The WRAP Fund ensures that there is production activity in the region to provide our creative talent with the opportunity to work and establish a career in the region while also enabling local producers to scale their operations to better leverage national supports and international funding.
- While the market conditions for Film & TV projects have remained challenging since COVID, Ardán has negotiated an advanced recoup position with Screen Ireland for the WRAP Fund to give projects a better chance of a successful application.
- Ardán and the WDC have also created a new funding strand within the WRAP Fund to support the scaling of production companies in the WRAP region. Despite the challenging prevailing conditions, investments were made into two productions, one of which produced by Galway County based Tua Films.
- There has been a growing interest in the WRAP fund in Q4 with three productions looking at filming in the region and two companies interested in company investment. Ardán is also working with Screen Ireland to structure their ringfenced €3.5million in funding for regional activities for 2023 and is also in discussions with key stakeholders on the business proposition for the replacement of the S481 Regional Uplift to be presented to the Department of Finance.
- Continued to progress the process for the potential development of a film studio at the former Galway Airport site in Carnmore.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Continue to work with the Ardán and wider stakeholders to realise opportunities under the WRAP II fund.
- Support the UNESCO, Creative City designation and to explore opportunities for economic and enterprise growth through the network for the Creative Sector and opportunities for working with other Creative City designations such as Gastronomy.
- Progress the process for the establishment of the AV/Film Studio at Carnmore in line with process and subject to planning and other regulatory/legislative requirements.
- Continue to work with the wide range of stakeholders to support the sector.



TOURISM

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES 2022

- Galway County Council tendered for an integrated and ambitious sustainable Tourism Strategy for the County for the eight-year period 2022-2030. CHL were awarded the tender in Q4 2021 and progressed work on the programme in 2022. The Tourism Strategy objective is to harness the 'Galway' brand as an opportunity to disperse visitor numbers across the County; to support investment in tourism products, experiences, and services; and to attain longer visitor stay and spend over the lifetime of the strategy. This will be achieved by working in partnership with Galway's tourism industry and networks, communities, and key stakeholders. Following scoping; the strategy was deemed subject to the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive 2001/42/EC and European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004, S.I. 435 (as amended). It will also be subject to the requirements of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC and European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, S.I. 477 (as amended). These are otherwise known as Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment. A comprehensive consultation and engagement programme took place to inform the Co. Galway Tourism Strategy- this programme of consultation took place from March – June resulting in 199 survey responses including open submissions; 33 individual consultations (in person and online), 3 SEA submissions at initial scoping phase (5th April 2022, 11th April 2022, 5th April 2022), 2 industry ideation workshops (16th & 17th May), and ongoing meetings with GCC project team members inclusive of two Cllr specific workshops and presentations to the Economic and Enterprise SPC throughout.
- Galway County Council continue to support festivals and events with 50 communities granted supported through the scheme now complete. Galway County Council supports value at €69,250 for 36 events with Fáilte Ireland providing an additional €18,000 for 7 events. The objective is to ensure that CSS supported festivals gain additional marketing support in the shoulder season (outside summer months) and we will arrange to deliver individually produced festival brochures to partners
- The Lough Derg Blueway was recently accredited with the Chief Executives of Galway, Clare and Tipperary launching the project in late April; this project was supported by Fáilte Ireland and Sport Ireland and led by Waterways Ireland who worked through the accreditation process with Tourism Officers from the three counties around Lough Derg. The Great Western Blueway Galway City and County Tourism Officers are currently managing the research and consultation phase of the 'Corrib' Blueway project and supporting community and local consultation with key individuals and groups. The collaborative project ongoing and funded by Galway County, Galway City and Mayo County Councils. The project team Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland engaged with Officials from Galway County, Galway City and Mayo as well as the Corrib Navigation Trust and Fáilte Ireland. Discussions at these consultation sessions included issues pertaining to the regional biodiversity; including invasive species issues; environment and water quality; potential strategic projects and infrastructure projects that may link with the study area (such as those funded through ORIS and the Connemara Greenway) and the tourism potential of the study area. Work will continue and engagement with communities of interest will form part of the research as well as a public survey. The feasibility study will be delivered by Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland by early 2023.



- A busy campaign of Tourism promotion has continued throughout 2022 with the Council leading on the 'Discover Galway' brand and 'Connemara agus na h'Oilean' brand as well as supporting the 'Discover Lough Derg' brand. The Tourism Office also curated content and invested in advertising in the Connacht Tribune supplement '**Where in the West' published for Summer 2022**. Featuring Galway castles, Islands and an advertorial covering festivals and events and towns and villages.
- In September, Galway County Council supported delivery of a package for a November edition of Neven Maguire **Irish Food Trails** (Bord Bia/ In Production). As part of the programme, Neven Maguire will be captured cycling the 'currently open' section of the Greenway from the bridge at the back of Ballynahinch out into the countryside. Food businesses that will be highlighted along or near the route include; The Connemara Hamper, Connemara Smokehouse, Greenway Café Oughterard and will highlighting local produce like Mc Geoghs dried lamb while Ultan Cooke from Glenlo Abbey will also appear in the programme.
- In June, Tracks & Trails Series, featured Lough Derg and Portumna in series 10 of the RTE production. This programme highlighted key visitor attractions around Portumna and was presented by RTÉ Radio & TV Sports Presenter, Darren Frehill.
- A large bank of tourism photography for County Galway has been developed and uploaded to a publicly available Flickr platform for use by the tourism industry. These images can be used to promote the rich visitor experience throughout the County including many less know areas and local treasures
- The Tourism Destination brand project is now in development phase with design work; copywriting and project team engagement taking place until end of 2022. GCC Tourism sought and attained a further €4,000 funding from Fáilte Ireland 'Ireland's Hidden Heartlands' team to capture additional images from East Galway in the shoulder season for the forthcoming brand implementation projects.
- Additional funding was awarded to a reprint of the Tourism/ Creative Ireland book 'An Ait Seo'. Plans are in place to collaborate with the Galway Library Service to launch books that have been developed through the Creative Ireland programme. Tourism was also a strategic partner for the Galway Wandering Kite Festival which was funded through the Creative Ireland Programme. The event took place on Omey Strand Claddaghduff in September 2022.
- The Tourism Office worked with Fáilte Ireland, Údarás na Gaeltachta and industry partners in a delivery of a suite of actions to progress the Connemara and Aran Islands Visitor Experience Development Plan, in addition to ongoing support and technical support for Connemara.ie; this Council owned website is the landing page for Splash4U site (collaboration with Broadband Officer). Continued resourcing and support of The Lough Derg Visitor Experience Plan and support of the Shannon Tourism Masterplan and ongoing engagement with Clare, Tipperary and Waterways Ireland, Failte Ireland and Coillte in Destination Lough Derg, and cross-agency partnership in Portumna in relation to tourism and development projects. Continued to implement actions in all VEDPs and regional tourism plans. Ongoing engagement with Roscommon RRO and Roscommon Tourism Officer in relation to promotion of the Suck Valley Way, Local authority partnership with Mayo and Galway City on Corrib/ Mask Blueway, partnership with Failte Ireland and Galway City on destination brand Galway, representation for Galway County Council on the Banagher Tourism masterplan which is linked to the Shannon Tourism Masterplan
- Worked on the redevelopment of the proposal for the Clifden Destination Town project to audit the wayfinding and orientation strategy and reworking of public realm elements in context of Town Centre



Enhancement Plans with a view to maximising value for money, impact and tourism development. Presented a proposal around signage, wayfinding and orientation to Conamra MD in July 2022

- Worked on a number of development projects including Portumna Vision 2030; Athenry wayfinding and orientation and Clifden RRDF project to ensure the tourism development potential was enhanced
- Lough Derg Discovery sites project in progress with Portumna identified and Coose North now registered in GCC ownership. This project will create a loop of six visitor 'discovery points' around Lough Derg with two each in Galway, Clare and Tipperary.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Tourism Strategy: Progress the development of the Galway County Tourism Strategy and establish working group and set of actions for year one and two of Strategy in line with LECP.
- Connemara Greenway campaign: Implement a marketing and promotion campaign for Connemara Greenway based on the ORIS funding awarded to Tourism in Galway County Council for this project.
- Clifden Destination Town: Progress a number of elements under the Clifden Destination Town project including wayfinding and interpretation.
- Destination Brand: Progress the development of the Galway destination brand, in conjunction with Galway City Council and Failte Ireland.
- Corrib Blueway Feasibility finalise this project document in conjunction with Mayo County and Galway City.
- Marketing: Continue to development marketing, social media and promotion of tourism in Co Galway.
- Lough Derg VEDP Progress and implement Lough Derg VEDP actions and network.
- Conamara Coast and Islands VEDP: Continue to work with the Connemara and Islands actions and network and build on the successes to day .
- Burren VEDP Build on engagement with the VEDP and seek opportunities for south-west Galway
- CSS Festivals and Events Assess and manage the Community Support Scheme: Tourism projects and festivals and events.
- Support Failte Ireland and agency partnerships as required.
- Continue to support Greenway and Blueway projects through engagement with relevant colleagues and partnerships.
- Support the Beara Breifne Way development project.

ATLANTIC ECONOMIC CORRIDOR

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES 2022:

- Worked with the Broadband Officer and other stakeholders in the delivery of the Digital Strategy for County Galway and assisted in identification of locations for Broadband Connection Points.
- Worked with the WDC and Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC) network on regional projects, including the development of hubs along the AEC.
- Participated in AEC Strategy and AEC Hub Strategy processes.
- Assisted new hubs with funding options and advice in relation to the Hub Outreach Scheme.



- Assisted with the development of an image bank for Galway County including images related to enterprise.
- Participated in the Departmental Connected Hubs call by assisting applications from individual hubs in addition to supporting LA projects such as the one concerning Broadband Connection Points (BCPs).

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Work within any revised arrangements for the AEC following the review by the Department.
- Support the development of Creative Clusters in the region.
- Work with the WDC and other AEC counties to promote the West as an attractive place to live and work.
- Work with projects to support the regeneration of town centres including the development of hubs and addressing vacancy/dereliction in towns and villages.
- Continue to work with the Broadband Officer to identify and realise opportunities for communities
- Progress AEC Smart Towns and Villages Initiative.
- Work with the WDC, AEC network and other local authorities in the delivery of regional initiatives including under the West Region Enterprise Plan as appropriate.
- Support the development of the Food Sector and linking of hubs with a particular emphasis on the BIA Innovator Campus as an engine for growth and innovation in the region.

DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORTS FOR WORKING HUBS

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES 2022:

- The ERCD Unit acted as an information and advisory point of contact, to facilitate Community based Hubs in County to avail of the national www.connectedhubs.ie funding Scheme.
- Assisted to progress the plans for the development of working hubs as part of the existing approved RRDF projects in Loughrea, Portumna, Tuam and Athenry and assisted in the identification of opportunities for further investment.
- Supported a number of community-based hubs through the Town & Village Scheme including the development of a Hub in Clifden and put forward application under Town and Village to support a Hub proposal in Ballinasloe. Worked with Údarás na Gaeltachta in the promotion and development of the G-tec hubs.
- Funding of €49,950 was allocated to Galway County Council to support marketing campaigns to attract remote workers to locations in Galway County, under the Town & Village Renewal Market Scheme Measure. It is intended that Galway County Council will collaborate with its AEC partner counties to achieve cost efficiencies on any similar marketing actions (e.g. development of marketing collateral, creation of digital media) where appropriate. This will also extend to collaborating on coordinating county campaigns (in particular scheduling) so as to maximise each county's national impact.
- Phase 2 of the Connected Hubs Voucher Scheme was launched by Minister Humphries and will run from 21st September to 31st December, 2022. The Connected Hubs Voucher Scheme is administered via the connectedhubs.ie platform. Registered customers will automatically receive 3 vouchers each, credited to their online profile. Participating hubs may accept up to 50 vouchers each. Phase Two will run from 21 September to 31 December 2022 and is aimed at any person registered via ConnectedHubs.ie or via the ConnectedHubs mobile app.



PROPOSALS 2023:

- Progress existing proposals for working hubs as part of RRDF projects.
- Identify new opportunities for hubs in the county and to work with the relevant stakeholders to deliver on same.
- Provide ongoing advisory services on www.connectedhubs.ie and target supports for set up of additional remote work centres in County and work with Údarás na Gaeltachta who are leading on G-tec Hub Network in Gaeltacht.
- Host a hubs event in 2023 to support Hubs in their business planning when the Broadband Officers Network have their next meeting in Galway.
- Continue to support the Marketing Scheme in association with the WDC and other AEC Officers.

GENERAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES AND STRATEGY

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES 2022:

- Fed into the County Development Plan process, particularly in relation to Town & Village Regeneration, Tourism Development, Economic & Rural Development and the future use of former Galway airport site.
- Worked with EI to support job creation, indigenous firms and to progress the potential for investment in FDI for the food sector.
- Worked with the IDA to promote County Galway as a location for Foreign Direct Investment.
- Identified key locations in the East Galway region as designated Just Transition Funding (JTF) areas and submitted same to the Climate Action Regional Office (CARO).
- Progressed the review of the current LECP and worked on the Socio-Economic Statement and position papers for the next LECP.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Lead the development of the 6-year Local Economic and Community Plan in line with the national guidelines working with the Economic Development & Enterprise SPC.
- Continue to take a strategic approach to regeneration of our towns.
- Feed into the development of the Masterplan for the former Galway Airport site at Carnmore.
- Continue to work with EI and IDA to support economic development and job creation.
- Submit proposals and work with designation locations under the Just Transition Funding programme as the programme develops in 2023.



TOWN AND VILLAGE RENEWAL SCHEME

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES 2022:

- The Town and Village Renewal Scheme (TVRS) 2022 placed particular emphasis on projects supporting bringing vacant and derelict buildings and sites back into use as multi-purpose spaces. Since 2020 the TVRS has pivoted from general infrastructure to individual sites, re-use properties and design led public realm and hubs. The level for grant aid was increased from 80% to 90% with 10% to be matched by the approved applicants.
- The Building Acquisition Measure was a new measure in 2022 to immediately acquire derelict or vacant buildings with the intention of using the project for town regeneration purposes in line with the aims of TVRS. The Project Development Measure (50k) was introduced in 2021 to assist in pre-development costs for capital projects. The purpose of the project development measure is to assist Local Authorities to contribute to a pipeline of significant, well-developed projects which might be subsequently progressed to construction stage, subject to the availability of further funding.
- Galway County Council engaged in an EOI process in May 2022 and shortlisted 8 projects to be submitted to the Department of Community and Rural Development in July 2022. Applications are awaiting approval in December 2022 and include applications for capital funding under TVRS for substantial Co-work Hub projects in Ballinasloe and Clifden, which are being led by Community organisations in both locations.
- The following ongoing projects have received administrative and technical support in 2022. Many projects have experienced increased costs and therefore amendments to the works and options for further funding had to be explored.

GRANT APPROVED	TOWN / VILLAGE MAIN SCHEME 2019	Status
€ 200,000.00	Oranmore	Ongoing – Final Recoupment Phase
€ 100,000.00	Craughwell	Complete
€ 80,000.00	An Cheathrú Rua	Complete
€ 100,000.00	Corofin	Complete
€ 100,000.00	Killimor	Complete - Final Recoupment Phase



€ 72,000.00	Tir An Fhia, Leitir Móir	Complete
€ 100,000.00	Ballyglunin	Ongoing – Final Implementation Phase
Grant Approved	TVRS Programme 2020	Status
€ 200,000.00	Claregalway Báile Chlair	Ongoing
€ 100,000.00	Portumna	Ongoing – Final Implementation Phase
€ 100,000.00	Belclare	Completed
€ 100,000.00	Castleblakeney	Completed
€ 90,000.00	Creggs	Ongoing
€ 100,000.00	Leitir Móir	Ongoing
GRANT APPROVED	TOWN AND VILLAGE 2021 PROGRAMME	STATUS (TARGET COMPLETION DATE JULY 2023)
€ 250,000.00	Leenane – Community Park in association with Leenane Development Association	Ongoing
€ 100,000.00	Barnaderg – Accessibility and Pedestrian Improvements	Ongoing
€ 50,000.00	Project Development Measure – GCC Property - Woodford Courthouse in	Ongoing



	association with Woodford Parish Development Committee	
€ 48,000.00	Village Audits / Checklist Project	Commencing January 2023

PROPOSALS 2023:

- To provide administrative support for all projects ongoing in the TVRS programme including those approved extensions under the 2019, 2020 programmes and ongoing projects approved under the 2021 programmes and 2022.
- To identify potential projects in the County through engaging community organisations, committees and colleagues in Municipal District offices and other Departments as well as via the formal Expression of Interest Process in QT 2 2023.
- Support the roll-out of key Strategies including targets in the CDP, Tourism Strategy and Rural Regeneration Programme, identifying potential projects to meet these targets and capacity to develop these into capital applications including vacant or derelict Properties acquired by the Council for community re-use.
- Continue to identify funding opportunities under Our Rural Future Strategy to help deliver rural development objectives bearing in mind the County Development Plan and in its settlement strategy and for dispersed rural areas.
- Continue to work with the Public Participation Network to promote Schemes and engage with the Community and Voluntary Sector about funding opportunities.
- Continue to review options for digital transitions and innovations in our service provision (including on-line application systems). Work with GIS/IS and other service co-ordinators to ensure make continual improvements in our report and administrative systems to reduce inefficiencies and maximise availability of information on rural schemes.

TOWN & VILLAGE RENEWAL SCHEME - NATIONAL STREETSCAPE SCHEME

- In May 2022 Galway County Council concluded works on the first National Streetscape Scheme. Staff assisted applicants from the six locations across the County to deliver a series of focused enhancement measures. Over 170 applicants availed of total funding in excess of €290,000 in the towns and villages of Ballygar, Glenamaddy, Headford, Loughrea, Oranmore and Oughterard.
- In August a second Street Enhancement Scheme was announced by DRCD. Galway County Council were permitted to apply for funding for one town only on this occasion with maximum funding of €100,000 being allocated to successful applicants.
- It was decided that an application be put forward for Tuam Town Centre. This proposal aligns with the Regeneration Masterplan for the Town and provides for capacity building between residents/business owners and staff within ERCD Rural Schemes and Regeneration teams.
- In September and October ERCD staff facilitated a series of drop-in clinics and evening workshops in the Tuam MD office to assist with the application process and query handling. A total of 44 applications were received and subsequently submitted to DRCD. A decision on Galway County Council's application is currently pending.



PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Pending DRCD approval, staff will continue to liaise with successful applicants under the Street Enhancement Scheme for Tuam Town Centre. A series of colour consultation workshops will be facilitated along with further engagement with owners of properties identified in key locations within the town. Following feedback to DRCD regarding the 2021 scheme, a more realistic timeframe for completion of works has been agreed. Applicants will have until end of August 2023 to complete approved works.
- Continue to identify funding opportunities under Our Rural Future Strategy to help deliver rural development objectives bearing in mind the County Development Plan and in its settlement strategy and for dispersed rural areas.

CLÁR PROGRAMME

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES 2022:

- Staff continued to support the projects which were approved in 2021. Of the 7 projects approved 4 have been completed with works on the remaining 3 due to conclude before the end of Q1 2023.
- In 2022, CLÁR funding totalling €612,864 was awarded to 15 projects across the County. An outline of approved projects is displayed in the table below.

Applicant	Project Description	Funding Awarded
Comhairle Ceantar na nOileán Teo	Development of a community cinema and drop in youth hub facility at the Hall Pobail Tir an Fhia to include library, coffee dock & game area.	€ 41,827.23
Mountbellew Moylough GAA Club	Construction of 1.1km walking/running track around site perimeter. Enhancements also to parking and lighting on site.	€ 50,000.00
Cleggan - Claddaghduff Community Council	Enhancement to surface and surrounds of ballcourt at Cleggan Community Centre	€ 36,492.00
Kilchreest National School BOM	Development of a car parking facility to allow access to community walking track and pitch area.	€ 50,000.00
Clonberne Community Centre Co Ltd	Enhancement to access roadway allowing for increased & accessible use of existing community facilities. Associated landscaping works & development of a pollinator area.	€ 50,000.00
Gort GAA Club	Development of an 850m accessible perimeter walkway around the 20acre site for community use.	€ 45,000.00
Ahascragh Fohenagh GAA Club	Level existing car park, improvements to site accessibility, drainage, surfacing and lined finish.	€ 49,500.00
Ballinasloe Rugby Club	Develop a walking track around the perimeter of their site encompassing two pitches.	€ 32,400.00



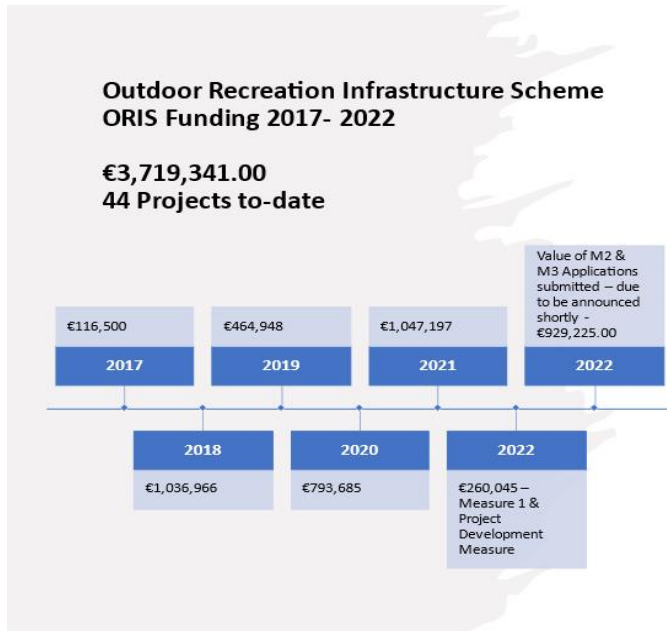
Clontuskert Community Development Group	Resurfacing and lining of parking area, upgrade to lighting, install CCTV, painting of building facade, heating system upgrade, seating & garden area also being developed	€ 30,267.00
Ionad Oideachas Pobail Glinnsce & Caiseal	Development of safe accessible parking facilities at the education centre.	€ 27,000.00
Galway County Council	Enhancements to the community playground in Portumna	€ 36,472.50
Skehana Community Development	Upgrade to car parking area at existing Skehana Community Facility	€ 50,000.00
Killyan Community Field	Upgrades to include works on walkway and lighting around perimeter of pitches. Plans also include improvements to site drainage and installation of seating area.	€ 45,000.00
Collins Park Playground Committee	To enhance facilities at the community playground	€ 18,904.34
Donaghpatrick National School	Development of a community walkway and small playground on the school grounds which will be accessible to the wider community.	€ 50,000.00

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- To oversee the conclusion of remaining 2021 projects before the end of Q1.
- Staff will work closely with community groups and projects leaders to facilitate delivery of the approved projects under the 2022 CLÁR Scheme.
- To identify potential projects across the County through enhanced engagement with local development committees and with colleagues in other Municipal District offices and Departments.

OUTDOOR RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE SCHEME (ORIS)

The Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) contributes to the strategic objective of strengthened rural economies and communities as set out in the Project Ireland 2040 strategy. The objective of the Scheme is to provide funding for the development of new outdoor recreational infrastructure and for the necessary repair, enhancement or promotion of existing outdoor recreation infrastructure in countryside areas.



INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES 2022:

- Work continued to ensure the delivery of a number of projects approved in previous years. These included Measure 2 Projects - Woodford Millenium Oak Forest, Atlantic Waterfall Letterfrack, Kilcornan Trail Project, Portumna Way Loop, The Walks Project Loughrea, Lúibin Leitir Móir, and Knockdoemore - Lackagh Walking Trail. Measure 3 Projects Connemara Trails and Eurovelo Route, Portumna Blueway Wayfinding Sculpture Park. Project Development Measure, The Long Point Loughrea as well as a number of Measure 1 projects.
- The 2022 Scheme provided for several Measures as follows:
 - Measure 1: Small Scale Repair/Development/Promotion and Marketing – up to €30,000.
 - Measure 2: Medium Scale Repair/Upgrade and New Trail/Amenity Development up to €200,000.
 - Measure 3: Large-Scale Repair/Upgrade and New Trail/Amenity Development – up to €500,000.
 - Project Development Measure: Development Costs for Strategic Large-Scale Projects –up to €50,000.
 - 7 projects were submitted under Measure 1 and were funded as follows:

MEASURE 1 FUNDING RECEIVED FOR THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS - 2022

Project Name	Outline	Grant
Carrabane Forest Muddy Walks	Upgrade of trail at Carrabane Forest	€29,250
Connemara Greenway Maintenance	General maintenance of the completed 15kms of the Connemara Greenway along section between the town of Clifden and the village of Recess. Works to include grass cutting to verges and pruning of overhanging trees.	€28,350



Connemara Greenway Marketing	Marketing materials and promotion of the Connemara Greenway section from Clifden to Recess	€27,000
Glenamaddy Walking Trails	Establishing a link return to the start point of Frass Clooncon Bog Walk which restores the trail as a loop rather than its current 'out and back' design.	€21,072
Gort Riverwalk	This project includes an upgrade of an old village road to a class 2 trail and the completion and registration of a 3.5 km looped trail from Gort Town Centre.	€27,424
Monivea Woods Walking	Enhancement to Monivea Woods walking, running, and cycling trails to include the upgrading of signage and pathways, and the development of marketing infrastructure for the trail.	€27,000

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT FUNDING RECEIVED FOR THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS - 2022

Project Name	Outline	Grant
East Galway Eco Park	The development of a trailed eco park on a former landfill site offering experiences in Amenity & Recreation; Biodiversity and Heritage; Health & Wellbeing; Educational and Sustainable Practices.	€50,000
Portumna Outdoor Recreation Park	The development of an overall masterplan for the future development of Portumna Forest Park and Bathing Areas incorporating new activity and recreation zones, visitor hub, performance areas and enhanced public realm.	€49,950

MEASURES 2 & 3 FUNDING 2021 BEING PROGRESSED THROUGHOUT 2022

Project Name	Outline	Grant
M2 - Woodford Millennium Oak Forest	Forest paths; trails and recreational area to make the project accessible for local; national and international ecotourism	€200,000
M2 - Atlantic Waterfall Walk Letterfrack	Upgrade an existing loop trail through an old woodland with a stream with a series of small waterfalls	€200,000
M3 - Portumna Blueway, Wayfinding, Sculpture Park	The project consists of Portumna Blueway (Phases 2 & 3), a Sculpture Trail (Phase 1) and the Outdoor Recreation Wayfinding project, part of the overall plan for the development of Portumna as a tourism destination	€499,585



MEASURES 2 & 3 APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED IN 2022 - AWAITING DEPARTMENTAL APPROVAL

Project Name	Outline	Grant Requested
M2 - Creggs Mountain Walk	The Mountain Walk project in Creggs involves the creation of a trail in a tranquil area in East Galway, part of the Beara Beifne Way and the Suck Valley Way which provides an ideal location for rural outdoor activity. Rich in folklore, heritage and biodiversity, this area has scenic views of four counties and would be a huge benefit to people of all ages and abilities.	€200,000
M2 - The Walks Loughrea	Complete further section of Walks Project. it will allow the repair of The Walks wall to be finished, improve trout breeding grounds and enhance biodiversity.	€200,025
M2 - Killarainy Woods Trail	Upgrade/Develop utilize and enhance existing Community trails for the benefit of the entire community/public and tourism. Create a new multi access trail suitable for those with reduced mobility. This will encourage community involvement and participation and promote a sense of ownership and belonging	€103,950
M3 - Western Way Trail Upgrade	Upgrade and improvement of existing Western way Walking trail to include improved wayfinding, marketing and trail surface and carpark upgrade.	€425,250

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Continue to support the delivery of already approved schemes and work with the various stakeholders to ensure a strategic approach is taken in relation to ORIS 2023

LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (LCDC)

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES 2022:

- The LCDC has held 4 meetings to date this year in addition to meetings of sub-committees dealing with SICAP, Health and Wellbeing, and Funding Evaluations, which are tasked with detailed assessment of programmes and making recommendations to the LCDC. A further two meetings of the LCDC are due to take place in November and December as well as additional meetings of the various sub-committees.
- In accordance with a Mid-Programme review of SICAP (Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme), 3 priority areas were agreed for the programme activity up to end 2023, i.e., Older People, Mental Health, New Communities.
- Members and support staff of the LCDC attended a series of webinars by the Department of Rural and Community Development on the development of an LECP for the 6-year period 2023-2028, and work has commenced on a Socio-Economic Statement which is the first phase of this process which will be subject to a public consultation process.
- A Community Activities Fund was introduced by the Department of Rural and Community Development to assist community groups with running/operating costs, and the LCDC also agreed to prioritise applications which focused on essential repairs or adaptations to facilities, or applications which

promoted social inclusion and community wellbeing at grassroots level. A total of 262 applications were received with a total value of €994,083 vis-à-vis the available allocation of €286,802 and the LCDC approved 168 applications for funding.

- Round 3 of the Healthy Ireland Fund ended on 31st March 2022 and all reporting was finalised by end May 2022. Round 3 funding was in the amount of €246,050 in addition to the Community Resilience Fund in the amount of €67,225 which was aimed at keeping individuals and communities well during the COVID-19 pandemic through a range of health and wellbeing initiatives. Round 3 comprised a range of projects from Independent Living Skills for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities, Healthy Food Made Easy Courses and upgrading of kitchens in community facilities, Social Farming, Nature for Health programmes and Walkability Audits. An allocation of €40,000 was received for a transitional Healthy Ireland Programme from June to December 2022 and a range of projects have been undertaken including Healthy Food Made Easy Courses and Leader Training, Woodlands for Health Programmes, Older Adult Physical Activity Programmes, Community Health and Well Being events, October Mental Health Programme, Inclusive Equipment Grant for Sports Clubs, Pilot Library Outdoor Play Initiative, Farmer Mental Health Leaflet, Social Farming for Leaving cert Applied Students. A Strategy and Programme of Works is also being developed for Round 4 of the Healthy Ireland Fund which will run from 2023-2025 and will target key socio-economic and health indicators which will be analysed based on local and national data sources.
- The LCDC received a ringfenced allocation for actions to support the Ukrainian crisis in the amount of €165,376 and the agreed actions under this allocation included the recruitment of a Community Worker and targeted capacity building with communities and organisations hosting Ukrainian Nationals.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- A key area of work will be development of the community elements for a new 6-year Local Economic & Community Plan 2022-2028 through targeted discussions with the LCDC and other interagency structures, and a comprehensive public consultation process. The objectives and actions identified as part of this process will form the basis for prioritisation of LCDC funding programmes to target disadvantage and social exclusion.

UKRAINE COMMUNITY RESPONSE FORUM

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES 2022:

- The Ukraine Community Response Forum was established in April 2022 and is an interagency group tasked with coordinating supports to Ukrainian Nationals hosted in Accommodation Centres throughout the County. The Forum comprises representatives from the agencies tasked with providing supports such as Department of Social Protection, HSE, GRETB, An Garda Síochána, Túsla and the Children and Young Persons Services Committee, Galway Childcare Committee, Local Link, Red Cross, Volunteer Centre, Local Development Companies and officials from relevant local authority departments. The Forum met regularly to share information on new and existing accommodation centres and presented to Minister Joe O'Brien outlining emerging issues in the County, in particular,

pressures on English Language supports and the need for additional community transport services. The wider issue of integration of Ukrainians into the community was also raised as a key issue.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- It is proposed to establish a Sub-Group of the Ukraine Community Response Forum to focus on social integration issues and this forum will also include community representatives through the PPN.

SOCIAL INCLUSION FORA AND INITIATIVES

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES 2022:

- The Age Friendly Alliance has met 3 times to date this year to agree a Workplan for the Joint Age Friendly Programme in Galway City & County and to discuss initiatives relating to Older People, for example, the Healthy Homes Pilot Project, events and activities for Bealtaine, Positive Ageing Week, etc., and to update on developments from the National Age Friendly Programme. The Gort na Créige Housing Development for Older People in Claregalway was shortlisted for a National Age Friendly Recognition Award.
- Following a decision to establish separate Older People's Councils in the City and County, nominations were sought for members of an Executive Committee in the County which has now been established and received training from the Regional Age Friendly Programme Manager. The Group meet bi-monthly to discuss progress on the Age Friendly Work Plan and develop initiatives such as a Directory of Services and Activities for Older People.
- The Comhairle na nÓg Steering Committee met quarterly throughout the year to discuss progress on broadening engagement in Comhairle na nÓg at local level and on progressing the 2022 topic which is LGBTI+ Awareness and Education.
- Staff from ERCD also partake in the Interagency Committee overseeing the Planet Youth Initiative and took part in an Interagency Workshop highlighting key achievements and integration of the findings from Planet Youth into the funding programmes and policies of the partner organisations.
- The Traveller Interagency Group met quarterly throughout the year to discuss local implementation of the National Traveller & Roma Integration Strategy (NTRIS) and also developed a Good Practice Framework for Public Bodies responding to Traveller Ethnicity which has been adopted by all agencies on the TIG.
- The Community Section support the joint City & County LGBTIQ+ Interagency Group particularly the roll-out of a Public Recognition Marker and associated Resource Packs aimed at Community & Voluntary Groups and increasing their visibility as safe spaces for LGBTIQ+ people at community level.
- The Community Section supported 11 projects for National Play Day 2022 under the theme of "All Play Together" which is targeted at promoting play and recreation opportunities for all children and youth. Projects funded ranged from Play Equipment Libraries, Workshops, Introductory Sessions to Sports, and materials for Wall Art and Gardening.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- The Community Section will continue to support all interagency fora to support social inclusion, integration and diversity through programmes and funding initiatives.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK (PPN)

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES 2022:

- The Galway County PPN continues to develop understanding of the vital role of PPNs in democratic processes. By the end of 2022 the PPN will have attended each Municipal District meeting and presented on the role and purpose of the PPN to Councillors and Council Staff.
- The Galway County PPN plays an important role in the regional representation of PPNs and is organising the Northwest Regional PPN Workers meeting.
- The Galway County PPN continues to support its representatives on Boards and Committees and has appointed a representative from County Galway to the National Working Group of the PPN Structural Review Process.
- In line with the PPN's role in supporting representation on local authority committees and other interagency fora, election processes took place during the year for 7 new representatives (5 on the LCDC and 2 on the Climate Change and Biodiversity SPC).
- During 2022 the Galway County PPN contributed to several consultative processes including the National PPN Structural Review Process, the PPN Pre-Budget Financial Submission, Galway County Council's Litter Management Plan and the DRCD's consultation on training needs of the Community and Voluntary Pillar.
- A series of training courses were held throughout the year to build capacity of Member Groups including training on PR and Branding, Fundraising, Legal Duties of Groups, Conflict Resolution, Biodiversity, the SDGs, Volunteer Management, LGBTQI Supports, Sustainable Living.
- As part of the PPN's role to act as an Information Hub between communities and the local authority and other agencies, the PPN continues to issue its Weekly Digest, its Monthly Newsletter and has further developed its website including its popular Event Calendar which is now also linked with the 'LOCAL HUB' App. This new App is designed to bring communities together and help users stay informed about local events and activities. The PPN also fulfils its mandate of being an information hub by running funding webinars, for example the Digital Towns award, and has launched and distributed its Booklet to all new Members registered since 2020 titled: 'Your Quick Guide to your Local PPN'.
- The PPN fulfils its mandate of responding to local, topical issues of concern with a focus on social action and inclusion by supporting unique projects around Sustainable Energy (funding application submitted to SEAI for an Energy Master Plan), Accessibility for People with Disabilities (Make Way Day campaign), Integration of Migrant (Who's She integration event) and marginalised Women, and the participation of women in local politics (SHE Project).



PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- The PPN will also continue to act as an information forum for its Member Groups, facilitating information sessions on funding schemes and acting as a consultative forum for policy such as the new LECP.
- The Galway County PPN will host a meeting of members in each Municipal District to engage with local members and develop a local plan of action based on the needs identified.
- A Process of re-registering of all PPN members (currently 1139), will take place to determine which groups are still engaged and active.
- A Regional PPN Reps FORUM is planned and will include a networking and training elements to help support reps in their important role, bringing together all representatives from the Northwest regions.
- To support capacity building of local groups, advocacy training for groups will be organised with the civic action group: Uplift and the Community Law and Mediation Clinic.
- The PPN will work with the Galway City PPN on a joint project to translate PPN Information into Irish Sign Language.
- Succession planning for the current Secretariat will begin. This will focus on creating an overlap between incoming and outgoing members and on recruiting younger persons, bringing in a younger cohort of representative voices.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT SCHEMES

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES 2022:

- The Community Section coordinates the advertisement and processing of the Community Support Schemes for the relevant departments of the Council and in 2022, the overall allocation under the Schemes was €276,250 which was allocated as follows:

	Communit y	Cultural	Economic	Total
No. of Applications received	128	101	61	290
No. of Applications funded	57	78	57	202
Total Allocation	€101,000	€88,000	€87,250	€276,250

- In line with previous years, the Community Support Scheme for Community Development focused on works to improve access or energy efficiency in community facilities, in addition to Tidy Towns activities and other amenity works to improve the visual appearance of our towns and villages.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- The Community Support Schemes will continue to be targeted to support volunteer activity throughout the County and promote economic, cultural, and social development.



COMMUNITY AWARDS

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES 2022:

- The Cathaoirleach Awards are an annual initiative to acknowledge the commitment of individuals and groups who participate in unpaid community and voluntary activities, and the significant impact which this has on quality of life in their communities. The Cathaoirleach Awards for 2022 were for the first time, held in conjunction with the Cathaoirleach's Ball which took place in the Ard Rí Hotel, Tuam, on Saturday 11th June, and this revised format was a huge success. The winners of the Award Categories, which are jointly sponsored by the PPN and County Council were:
 - Arts and Culture Award - Athenry Arts & Heritage Group
 - Best Contribution to Heritage Award – Headford Lace Project
 - Environment & Climate Action Award – Ballymoe Development Group
 - Social Inclusion Award – Loughrea Men's Shed
 - Sports Award – Club Iomanaíochta Bearna / Na Forbacha
 - Heritage Publication Award – Scoil Bhriocáin Rosmuc
 - Gradam na Gaeilge - Féile Chois Fharraige
 - Pride of Place Awards – Lawrencetown Community Development Group & Woodford Parish Development Group (to recognise the current year entrants to the national awards)
 - Tidy Towns Recognition Award – Milltown Tidy Towns (to recognise the achievement of the County's first Gold Medal in the National Competition)
 - Special Award – Headford Lace Project (to recognise their achievement in being Runner-Up in the National Pride of Place Competition in the Creative Place Category)
- Galway County Council submitted 2 entrants to the National Pride of Place Awards 2021, however, due to Covid-19 restrictions, the Awards Ceremony was not held until May 2022. The purpose of this competition is to acknowledge the work being done by communities all across the island of Ireland across a range of categories. The communities chosen to represent County Galway were Killanin in the Community Resilience Category, and Headford Lace in the Creative Place Category. As outlined above, Headford Lace came runner-up in the highly competitive Creative Place Category.
- The Community Section continues to collaborate with the Environment Department and Heritage Officer to provide training and capacity building programmes for Tidy Towns Groups to ensure compliance with the National Pollinator Plan and local Heritage & Biodiversity Plan, and in particular, in 2022 there was a focus on sustainable gardening courses. Forty-four groups from County Galway entered the National Tidy Towns Competition in 2022 and marks in the competition are improving year-on-year with Milltown retaining their Gold Medal and Abbey retaining their Silver Medal, and An Spidéal gaining a large increase in marks to take Third Prize at County level.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Work will continue to streamline the timing of local Awards to tie in with national Awards and to integrate the local awards with other relevant ceremonies where feasible. Targeted supports and training will continue to be provided to Tidy Towns Groups to enable them to continue to improve their

marks in the National Competition, in addition to carrying out pilot projects particularly aimed at sustainable planting initiatives in town centre.

PROMOTING AND DEVELOPING ARTS ACTIVITY & CULTURE

INDICATIVE ACTIONS FOR 2022:

- Arts Grants: Arts Office administered, adjudicated and supported arts grants for voluntary groups and organisation to pursue the development of the Arts in the County through the Community Support Scheme (Culture) 2022.
- Advice and Advocacy: Provided ongoing professional arts information and advice to community groups, artists and organisations in the county. Provided continued professional development opportunities are planned in collaboration with ITI, VAI, Tulca, ISACS and Create. Contributed to Meitheal, an initiative to support theatre artists creating work for young audiences developed and delivered by Branar.
- Public Art: Set up of Public Art Management group to oversee Public Art programme.
- Artists Bursaries: supported 15 artists based in the county working in the following artforms dance, music, literature, visual arts and traditional arts
- Artists Residencies: Supported 5 residencies for artists based in Galway County. Artist to be confirmed at Áras Éanna (Inis Óirr), dance artists Magdalena Hylak and Lionel Kasparian at Galway Dance Project, artist to be confirmed Centre Culturel Irlandais (Paris), street art and spectacle artist Mark Carry at Interface (Inagh Valley). Remaining residencies will take place in 2022 and 2023.
- Platform 31: supported one County Galway based artist on this nationwide artist development scheme led by the 31 Local individual Arts Office's in partnership with the Arts Council. Dance artist Stephanie Dufresne was our 2nd recipient of Platform 31.
- In partnership with Ardán and Galway City of Film Arts Programme offered a Misleór Bursary and two Short Documentary Bursaries to film makers based in Galway County. The 2022 Misleór Bursary was awarded to PJ Mongan. Emma O'Grady and duo Anna Konieczna and Deqa Ibrahim were awarded the Short Documentary Bursaries.
- Supported Galway Community Circus to engage with a group of 15 young people from Clann Resource Centre in Oughterard to take part in funambulism workshops and perform as part of Lifeline at Galway International Arts Festival in July 2022.
- Directly supported Galway Community Circus to begin a pilot offering free term of circus for children aged 5-11yrs in Tuam from Sept-Nov. It is hoped that this pilot will lead to regular circus offerings in Tuam, this has already been agreed and Galway Community Circus will expand their reach in Tuam in 2023.
- Worked with Macnas and a group of 5th class students in Athenry. They workshopped and created pieces that featured in this Macnas Conn Mór installation on 28 & 29 October in Fisheries, Field Galway.
- Supported GRETB Writers in Schools Programme in 7 schools and Artist in Schools 4 artists and schools were supported to take part in our Artist in Schools scheme Sept – Dec 2022.



- Galway County Council make a significant contribution to the Music Generation programme in the County. This offers children a wide range of music tuition and music education across a wide range of musical genres and music technology.
- Supported *Book It! Children's Book Festival* programmed by Galway County Library Service
- Youth Arts Programmes: continued to offer other programme supports for children and young people in partnership with our professional partners: Baboró International Arts Festival for Children, Galway Community Circus, Macnas, Branar T  atre do Ph  aist  , Tulca, Galway Music Residency, Galway Junior Film Fleadh and Galway Film Centre who present and tour in the county.
- With advice from Age & Opportunity progressed an open call for an arts and older years commission led by a socially engaged artist. There is ongoing collaboration with colleagues in the Age Friendly Programme and Age Friendly Older Persons Council to identify suitable groups and organisations in the county for the artist to work with. The development phase will continue to take place in 2022 and the call out and commission in 2023.
- Collaborated directly with Blue Teapot to develop training for artists to work with children with disabilities in schools across the county for 2023. TRAINING: A six-day intensive course delivered in Blue Teapot Theatre Company's space, which is a commuting centre point for six county located artists & tutor.
- Creative Places Tuam: We are continuing to partner with Creative Places Tuam, supporting their funding programmes to deliver community led arts projects in Tuam, supporting the project directly in terms of offering accommodation in Tuam Town Hall for the project.
- Culture Night 2022: Supported 37 Culture Night events across 22 locations and online. We also included 7 Local Live Performance Programming Scheme events on Friday 23rd Sept which added huge value to this year's offering to audiences
- Directly supported the establishment and continuation of the Northeast Galway Fit up Festival (Three Rings Festival Team) in 2022 for a 3-week programme.
- Cultural Diversity Programme Commission: Worked in partnership with the newly formed Galway County Intercultural Forum to engage specialist arts expertise to work with groups and individuals who have yet to access arts programmes and encourage submissions from artists with diverse backgrounds and cultural experiences to deliver projects in their own communities.
- Supported Aras   anna, Arts Centre on Inis O  r.
- Galway County Council's Creative Ireland Programme. Led, managed and administered the Creative Ireland Programme 2022 and directly curated and programmed Cruinni   na n  g 2022 (national creative day for children) in Galway County.
- Local Live Performance Scheme 2022: Designed, produced and delivered Ceol an tSamhraidh and Ceol an Fhomainn; a series of live music events to support the live entertainment sector in county Galway from March- October 2022. Collaborated with Shorelines Arts Festival, Clifden Arts Festival, Ballinasloe Town Hall, The Mall Theatre Tuam, venues Gort, Headford, Oranmore, Corr na Mona, Athenry and Ballyglunin and large-scale outdoor events in Athenry, Tuam and at Ballinasloe Horse Fair.
- Erasmus+: Galway County Council Arts Office took part in Erasmus + project Culture UP programme. This capacity building programme with Cultural Institutions and Local Authorities in five rural areas sets out to share and exchange knowledge and practices of cultural development across the public, private

and civil sector. Arts Office hosted a successful four-day professional programme in Galway County in October 2022 showcasing best practise in the region.

- Specialist Staffing Scheme: Recruited an Assistant Arts Officer with the support of the Arts Council's Specialist Staffing Scheme on a three-year contract to support the Arts Office in the delivery of youth arts, festivals and community arts programmes.
- Arts in Disability Programme: Supported Blue Teapot Film Project Telling Our Stories Through Documentary, Autumn 2022 in Clifden. The project works inclusively with a total of 10 youth participants: 5 with Intellectual disabilities and 5 without disabilities to create a documentary on their lives. Supported That's Life Festival Magic Garden Summer Festival in Clarinbridge which featured outdoor spectacle performances and sculptures created and designed by the artists of That's Life. That's Life is an award-winning arts program of the Brothers of Charity Services, Galway.

PROPOSED ACTIONS FOR 2023:

- Arts Grants: Arts Office to administer, adjudicate and support arts grants for voluntary groups and organisation to pursue the development of the Arts in the County through the Community Support Scheme (Culture) 2023. The Arts Grants is the lifeline support for many community and voluntary organisations providing arts programmes in the County and supports a very large range of programmes.
- Arts Advice and Advocacy: Provide ongoing professional arts information and advice service to community groups, artists, professional arts organisations and festivals in the county.
- Develop a programme of Public Artwork through the Public Art Management group.
- Create a new database of artists & artists networking opportunity project will have been established to collect & communicate opportunities to practitioners living and working in county Galway. If successful through an Invitation to Collaboration application Substructure 2023; will develop and create an Artist Network and Exchange Platform for professional artists based in Galway City and County. It aims to explore opportunities for Galway artist to collaborate nationally and internationally. Offers dedicated and structured support to artists of all artforms in an artist led exchange forum.
- Platform 31: Following on from the successful pilot, we will support the 3rd Platform 31 which will offer a bursary and national network opportunity to one Galway County based artist in 2023.
- We will continue to partner with Ardán (Galway Film Centre) on supporting Galway County Artists to receive mentoring and bursary support to develop short documentaries.
- Artists Bursaries: Offer bursaries to Artists to develop work and ensure excellence and rigour on peer assessment panels for all awards.
- Artists Residencies which will be supported in 2023 include: Áras Éanna, Tyrone Guthrie Centre and Cultural Centre Irlandais Paris and Interface Inagh Valley.
- Continue to engage with our Creative Schools Regional Coordinator and Creative Associates to ensure professional development opportunities are available for artists who to work in arts education. We also support and advise the Arts in Education programmes led by the Education Centres which offer training and supports for artists to work on creative projects in schools across the county'
- Book It Festival 2023; continue to programme throughout October 2023, bringing writers and reading events to schools and libraries across the county.
- Artists in Schools- opportunity to offer six schools' artists in school's residencies in 2023.



- We will create a performing arts commission for young artists aged 13-19 in the county which will include support from professional artists and a producer. This work will be presented to an audience at an arts festival in the county. The commission will be inspired by [Broei](#) a radical Arcadia 2023 project from Fryslan, The Netherlands.
- Creative Youth Programme - working with Galway Community Circus, Macnas and Live Music performance leaders to support performance opportunities for young Artists Galway County
- Following on from a pilot of afterschool circus classes in Tuam we will continue to partner with Galway Community Circus as they develop a longer-term programme. projects into the future. Tuam Youth Circus programme, 1 day a week reaching 50 young people for the 30 weeks of Circus Term. 20% of all participants on a full or part time bursary to promote access/Inclusion and Diversity.
- Council's Creative Ireland Programme 2023: Deliver a new Creative Ireland Strategy 2023-2027 for Galway County. Lead, manage and administer the Creative Ireland Programme, Creative Ireland Bursaries 2023 and directly curated and programmed Cruinniú na nÓg 2023 in Galway county.
- Erasmus+ Culture Up: Galway County Council Arts Office will embark on a new Erasmus + application to support culture in rural areas with European partners under a number of themes which will support capacity building for our communities, artists and organisations.
- Review our Arts and Disability Programmes in collaboration with our partners in the regions which will inform our priorities for 2023/2024 in terms of investing in artistic programmes to support our agreed priorities in investing in these contexts.
- Arts in Older Years: Capture the creativity and contribution of older people in county Galway through artists' commissions across a wide range of artforms and engage with local and national organisations such as Age & Opportunity, Age Action and Galway Older People's Council.
- Festivals: Take the lead on delivering and supporting festivals and events to programme & commission quality arts experiences to enhance and animate their community and festivals.
- Support East Galway Fit up Festival (Three Rings Festival Team) in 2023 for a 3-week programme to enable them to apply for larger Arts Council in 2024
- Work directly with Creative Places Tuam to fund and support community led arts projects in Tuam in its final year (2023).
- Poetry Ireland Collaboration: following on from the very successful Poetrytown Collaboration we scale up national Poetry Day Ireland in Galway County by supporting a series of events and workshops across the county showcasing Galway Poets with the support of Poetry Ireland.
- Cúirt- continue to work with Cúirt Festival on the Shining Light Creative Writing and Spoken Word Performance Project on the intercultural programme developed with them and members living in direct provision. Their work will be featured in the Cúirt 2023 Festival and workshops will take place in Ballinasloe Library.
- Continue to Support Aras Éanna and its expanded professional programme on Inis Oírr.
- Culture Night 2023. Continue to invest in the Culture Night Programmes with opportunities to commission new work and work with new communities in 2023 with an increase in budget to match 2022 investment. Directly programme a number of showcase live events with established partners, building on their capacity from delivering the LLPS scheme over past two years.
- Work in partnership with Music Generation Galway County to support Music Education Programme in collaboration with GRETB.



- Collaborate directly with Blue Teapot to develop training for artists to work with children with disabilities in schools across the county for 2023. TRAINING: A six day intensive in October will be delivered in Blue Teapot Theatre Company's space, which is a commuting centre point for six county located artists & tutor.

LOCAL SPORTS PARTNERSHIP

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES 2022:

- Community Sports Hubs continues to provide local opportunities for participation in sport across a diverse range of groups
- Sourced and secured funding from Sport Ireland, Dormant Accounts, HSE, Local Authorities, National Transport Agency, Healthy Galway amongst others to deliver programmes in sport and physical activity for all target groups within Galway.
- Arranged and facilitated meetings of GSP Steering group and relevant workgroups throughout 2022
- Initiatives supported in 2022 included; Bike Week; Jumpers for Goalposts, Buggy Buddies, Introduction to the Gym, Festival of Women's football, Couch 2k, Park run Mountbellew, Loughrea Active under the work of the Community Sports Development officers; Yoga, Learn to swim, Community cycle as part of bike week, FAI football for all, activator walking and Aquarobics under the work of the Sports Inclusion Disability Officer; Mountain Skills Level 1 training course in North Connemara, Leenaun (1 weekend course); Adult Stand Up Paddle Boarding for beginners in Loughrea (3 week block); Needs analysis for Direct Provision residents; HER Outdoors week – 5 days, 10 events from sea to land in Galway city and county; Men and Women on the Move programmes in disadvantaged areas (Letterfrack/Tuam); Fishing and disability Regan; Supported Ellie on the Disability Triathlon in Kilcornan; 5 Safeguarding Courses; 2 First Aid Courses; Football for All Blitz; Autism in Sport Online Workshop ; Disability & Fishing Program; Triathlon Event ; Ower Equine Time; Activator Walking Salthill.
- July 9th was National Play Day and to celebrate Galway City Council teamed up with Galway Sports Partnership, Galway City Partnership, Music Generation and a number of local clubs to host and event for children in Westside pitches. The initiative targeted children from 8 to 12 years of age. As well sports, arts and music GSP arranged for the delivery of over 80 play bags to Ukrainian and Homeless service users containing arts, music and activity elements. Funding of €3,000 was received towards the event from the Dept. of Equality.
- European Week of Sport took place between the 23rd to 30th September. GSP asked all clubs and community groups to register their activities during this week.
- Galway Sports Partnership worked with various parties continue to support Ukrainian people to be involved in activities. Many National Governing Bodies of Sport and local clubs have opened their arms to those who have come to Ireland. In most cases this has the form of free membership.
- Connacht Table Tennis delivered two sessions to Ukrainian children in NUIG. Each child received a table tennis bat long with an adjustable net so they can play on any table. It was also the first outing of Galway City Council's new glow sports equipment which went down well with the children.
- €25,000 was allocated to Galway towards supporting clubs and groups to reopen their activities. In all eleven applications were received with the total amount allocated to 10 clubs was €12,327.54.



- Sports Inclusion Disability Officer (SIDO) activities included; Ower Equine Time, Learn to Cycle for Children with Disabilities, Programmes in gym work and equestrian activity, Autism and fundamental skills and autism swim project, positive ageing week, bocchia and the horses connect program.
- Community Sports Development Officer (CSDO) activities included; Summer paddle series in Loughrea, established a walking group to promote activity, *Race Around Galway* to enhance activity offering, established a Park Run in Mountbellew, Letterfrack Community Centre Womens Intro to Gym Programme, Open Water Swim Programmes with Swim Ireland and Open Water Swim Camp for children, and *HER Outdoors Week*.
- GSP secured €196,250 in Dormant Accounts funding for 2022. Specifically, this funding will support Round 1 and Round 2 Hub funding, volunteer supports funding, sports inclusion disability projects and active cities.

PROPOSED ACTIONS FOR 2023:

- Apply for and secure CORE funding from Sport Ireland to fund general operations of Galway Sports Partnership for 2023.
- Produce an up-to-date database for schools, clubs, leisure centres and community groups in compliance with GDPR.
- Introduce a variety of programmes that target women and girls, older adults, people with disability, members of traveller community, men 45+ amongst many others.
- Link with the University of Galway, Health Promotion, Geography and other departments to complete a baseline study
- Deliver Training Programmes in the areas of Balance bike programme to preschools, Learn to Cycle programme, Sports Hall Athletics Programme, an outdoor adventure programme for teenagers in Connemara and Galway City, a WOW (Women On The Water Programme in 4 areas of Galway), an outdoor activity programme for Youth at risk in Connemara, 4 Senior Circuit programmes in socially disadvantaged areas, 4 Buggy Buddies programmes in Socially disadvantaged areas of Galway, 3 Midnight Soccer programmes in disadvantaged areas of Galway and 2 Community Coaching Programmes.
- Deliver Coaching Children workshops and Physical Literacy workshops.
- Deliver programmes with a variety of populations with low levels of participation or lack of participation opportunities.
- Deliver sport and physical activity opportunities during Bike Week.
- Deliver 4 sports specific First Aid courses, and Activity Leader course to youth leaders and walking leader and Nordic walking leader courses.
- Deliver an Online Dance Programme and specific programmes in youth volleyball, social badminton and Capoeira.
- Set out a template for the instigation, progression, monitoring, evaluation & exit plan in respect of all GSP programmes.
- Promote coach education courses for all sports especially minority sports on social medial platforms.
- Promote programmes for schools to help gain the Active Schools Flag including but not limited to Daily Mile and Get Ireland Walking.



- Deliver club officer training.
- Maintain compliance with Governance Code for Sport.
- Continue to represent, support, advocate on alliances such as Older Adult groups, Disability Groups, National Policy groups, working groups, Galway Traveller movement.

LOCAL ENTERPRISE UNIT (LEO)

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- Provide an excellent and effective First Stop Shop for businesses in Galway County & City
- Delivery of Covid -19 supports as directed by Government. These included Business Continuity Vouchers, Trading On-line Vouchers, Microfinance loan funding support, Mentoring and advisory support.
- Delivery of Green for Micro and Lean for Micro Initiatives.
- Provide Brexit supports for clients (customs training, mentoring cost reduction, new market development etc.) and manage awareness events
- Increase awareness of LEO services available to businesses locally and nationally and help develop relationships between businesses and these service providers.
- Provide a suite of capability building supports and services that add value and bring benefits to business.
- Support employment creation in the county through investment in eligible businesses.
- Support economic development aimed at job creation in the county and region.
- Engage with partners at local and national level to design and deliver enterprise creation and support initiatives.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Information provision – First Stop Shop and outreach events
- Business Advice, Mentoring & Networking
- Management development, Sectoral development programmes
- Training, workshops and advisory clinics
- Funding (direct – limited eligibility, indirect – via Microfinance Ireland)
- Delivery of Green for Micro and Lean for Micro Initiatives.
- Delivery of Digitalisation supports & Trading on Line supports
- Research and Development funding delivery to high potential sectors (Agile R & D funding)
- Client participation in National events – Local Enterprise Week, National Enterprise Awards, Student Enterprise Programme, National Women’s Enterprise Day, Showcase & National Ploughing Championships
- Support for delivery Bia Innovator Food hub and support client engagement.
- Promotion of Export development for targeted clients to scale and grow
- Delivery of supports for businesses impacted by Ukrainian war and its impact on energy costs
- Continued support for Brexit impacts for clients (training, mentoring, cost reduction programmes, new market development etc.)

INFRASTRUCTURE AND OPERATIONS UNIT

DIVISION B – ROADS, TRANSPORTATION AND SAFETY

Notification has not yet been received of grants for 2023 from Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and the Department of Transport, (DOT). The figures included in the budget for 2023 are therefore in line with the 2022 grant allocation. Road Grant allocations are distributed amongst the Municipal District based on the KM of road within the district and in line with the 3-year Road Works Programme.

Road Lengths per MD					
Municipal District	Motorway	National Primary	National Secondary	Regional	Local
Athenry/Oranmore	31.82	2.17	29.86	86.15	555.40
Ballinasloe	16.85	0.00	30.13	218.37	1350.98
Conamara	0.00	0.00	109.60	229.40	1142.68
Loughrea	51.26	0.00	60.34	271.68	1626.50
Tuam	14.15	20.95	61.41	94.06	937.44
Total	114.08	23.12	291.34	899.66	5613.00

NATIONAL ROADS - INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022

Funding was provided in 2022 to facilitate the continued advancement and delivery of the Major Routes. The following projects are managed by the National Roads Project Office and the costs associated with this programme are recouped, in full, from Transport Infrastructure Ireland.

National Road No.	Route Section
N6	Galway City Ring Road
N59	Clifden to Maam Cross
N59	Maigh Cuilinn Bypass

N67	Ballindereen to Kinvara Realignment
N59	Maam Cross to Oughterard
N63	Liss to Abbey Realignment
N17	Milltown to Gortnagunnad Realignment
N84	City Boundary to Clonboo
NCN	Galway to Athlone Cycleway
	Galway to Clifden Greenway

- N6 Galway City Ring Road – An Bord Pleanála approved the GCRR with conditions and modifications. Three judicial review challenges were taken against the Boards’ decision to approve the GCRR. An Bord Pleanála wrote to one of the challengers, Friends of the Irish Environment, informing that it would not be defending a point in the judicial review challenge relating to the Climate Action Plan 2021. The judicial review proceedings are listed for mention on the High Court’s Strategic Infrastructural Development list for 21 November 2022.
- N67 Ballindereen to Kinvara Realignment – Construction works were successfully completed in 2021 concluding with the Final Account agreement and completion of snags in 2022. Close-out of land acquisition also continued throughout this period.
- Maam Cross to Oughterard has been granted planning permission and is being advanced in two phases. Phase 1 - Maam Cross to Bunnakill is complete. Phase 2 - Bunnakill to Claremount is the subject of ongoing discussions and communications with National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) and Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI). Land acquisition on the scheme is ongoing.
- NCN Galway to Athlone cycleway - NCN Galway to Athlone cycleway – An Emerging Preferred Route Corridor was chosen and public consultation No 3 closed in February 2022. The Option Selection Report was published in July 2022. Liaison with landowners on potential routes for the cycleway within the emerging preferred route corridor is ongoing.
- N59 Maigh Cuilinn Bypass – The tender process was concluded with the appointment of Wills Bros Ltd as the main contractor in late 2021. Works have been progressing throughout 2022 with the main focus of the construction activities being site clearance, traffic management, earthworks, bridge and underpass structures, drainage and utility works. The majority of construction works to date have taken place off-line with minimal impact to traffic on the national and local road network.
- N63 Abbeyknockmoy to Annagh Hill – The construction contract is complete with snagging and land settlements continued to be addressed during 2022.
- N63 Liss to Abbey Realignment Scheme – An application for approval of the scheme was submitted to An Bord Pleanála in February 2022. An Oral Hearing is to be held in November 2022.

- N17 Milltown to Gortnagunnad Realignment – An application for approval of a CPO and NIS were submitted to An Bord Pleanála with both being approved, March and October 2022 respectively.
- Galway to Clifden (Conamara Greenway) – construction is ongoing on sections between Clifden and Recess.
- Galway to Oughterard (Conamara Greenway) – consultants have been appointed to progress this scheme through phases 0-4 of the TII Project Management Guidelines. Currently at Phase 2.
- The annual resurfacing and maintenance programme for National routes was undertaken in accordance with the budget for maintenance works notified by Transport Infrastructure Ireland.
- A full programme of Pavement Overlay works was undertaken on the National Primary and National Secondary Road Network in the context of the 2022 grant allocations from Transport Infrastructure Ireland.
- Active Travel Schemes – The NRPO are currently progressing 4 active travel schemes; N67 South of Ballinderreen AT, N63 Abbeyknockmoy AT, N67 Kinvara Village AT and N67 Ballinderreen Village AT.

NATIONAL ROADS - PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- N59 Maigh Cuilinn Bypass – Construction works to progress, and it is anticipated that they will be substantially complete by Q3 2023 with the scheme being opened thereafter to traffic, bypassing the village of Maigh Cuilinn and removing traffic congestion through one of Galway’s most congested villages. The main elements of the proposed scheme include 4.6km of type 1 single carriageway, realignment of the Knockferry roads over 850m, 1.7km of farm/accommodation roads, 2 no. at-grade roundabouts and 8 structures consisting of 5 bridges, 2 underpasses and 1 culvert.
- N6 Galway City Ring Road - Subject to legal challenges the scheme could be remitted back to An Bord Pleanála. Subject to a remittal, a second ABP decision, further legal challenges and available funding, the project can progress to the next stages - land and property acquisition, detailed design and enabling works. The procurement of a contractor for the main construction phase to follow in subsequent years.
- NCN Galway to Athlone cycleway - NCN Galway to Athlone cycleway - Liaison with landowners to proceed on potential routes for the cycleway within the emerging preferred route corridor. Design and environmental evaluation to be carried out.
- N67 Ballindereen to Kinvara Realignment – Close out of land acquisition to continue.
- N59 Bunnakill to Claremont - Progression of method statements with National Parks & Wildlife Services (NPWS) & Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI). Progress advance contracts for ground investigation works and topographic surveys and archaeology investigations.
- N63 Liss to Abbey Realignment – It is anticipated that An Bord Pleanála will make a decision in the Q1 2023 and then the Scheme will advance through Phases 5 and 6 of TII Project Management Guidelines.
- N63 Abbeyknockmoy to Annagh - Land settlements will continue to be progressed through 2023.
- N17 Milltown to Gortnagunnad Realignment – Progress land acquisition and detailed design.
- Galway to Clifden Greenway - Complete remaining 6km from Clifden to Recess. Land acquisition ongoing.

- The annual resurfacing and maintenance programme incorporating ordinary maintenance, winter maintenance, bridge maintenance and traffic route lighting maintenance will be undertaken within the limits of available funding from Transport Infrastructure Ireland.
- In addition, the programme of Pavement Overlay works will continue the National Primary and National Secondary Road Network in the context of the 2023 grant allocations from Transport Infrastructure Ireland.
- Active Travel Schemes – Progress the N67 South of Ballinderreen AT, N63 Abbeyknockmoy AT, N67 Kinvara Village AT and N67 Ballinderreen Village AT schemes through the planning consent process.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL ROADS MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT WORKS

The 2022 total grant allocation of **€36,393,523** for Regional and Local Roads divides as follows:

Restoration Improvement (RI) Works	€31,060,523
Restoration Maintenance (RM) Works	€ 5,333,000

The grant allocation can be classified under the following broad headings:

Grant Category	2022 Allocation
Restoration Improvement Grant	€19,357,000
Restoration Maintenance Grant	€2,986,500
Supplementary Restoration Maintenance	€2,346,500
Discretionary Maintenance Grant	€5,687,500
Specific Improvement Grants – Bridge Rehabilitation Programme	€630,000
Low Cost Safety Improvement Grants	€417,500
Specific Improvement Grants	€1,650,000
Strategic Regional and Local Roads	€250,000
Speed Limits – Housing/Signage	€155,800
Training	€128,000
Drainage Works	€1,397,683
Community Involvement Scheme	€964,160

Former National Roads	€370,880
PSCI: Survey Support	€ 52,000
OVERALL TOTAL	€36,393,523

RESTORATION IMPROVEMENT (RI) - INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022

Funding of €19,357,000 was allocated by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport for road reconstruction works on Non-National roads in 2022. This funding was allocated as follows and facilitated improvement works at 199 locations throughout the County:

<i>Restoration Improvement 2022</i>		
Municipal District	No. of locations	Allocation
Athenry/Oranmore	16	€1,906,822
Ballinasloe	41	€ 4,664,439
Conamara	74	€ 4,078,111
Loughrea	38	€ 5,641,792
Tuam	30	€ 3,065,836
Total	199	€ 19,357,000

2022 was the first year of the 2022-2024 Multi-Annual (RI) roads programme. This programme was collated in conjunction with the elected members and approved by the Municipal District Councils during October 2021. This programme forms the basis of planned works under Restoration Improvement works for the next three years.

RESTORATION IMPROVEMENT (RI) - PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

A programme of restoration improvement works will be compiled when notification of the 2023 funding is received and will be detailed in the Annual Roads Programme 2023.

Restoration Maintenance (RM) - Activities in 2022:

Funding of €5,333,000 was allocated for Restoration Maintenance (surface dressing) by the Department of Transport. It was allocated as follows and facilitated surface dressing works at 183 locations around the County:

Restoration Maintenance 2022		
Municipal District	No. of locations	Allocation
Athenry/Oranmore	16	€ 525,344
Ballinasloe	48	€1,285,088
Conamara	32	€1,123,551
Loughrea	50	€1,554,356
Tuam	37	€844,661
Total	183	€ 5,333,000

RESTORATION MAINTENANCE (RM) - PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

A programme of restoration maintenance works will be compiled when notification of the 2023 funding is received and will be detailed in the Annual Roads Programme 2023.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT SCHEMES

As part of the 2022 Regional & Local Road allocation, the Department of Transport approved funding in the amount of €953,00, which allowed the progression of 36 projects from the priority list that was submitted in 2019. Work is still in progress for these schemes, with the intention of completion by funding allocation deadline of 30th November 2022.

In accordance with RW09/2021 a priority list of 75 projects for 2022-2023 programme was submitted to the Department in September 2021. It is intended to progress 32 projects in 2023, however this is subject to funding approval under the Regional & Local Road allocation which is expected to be announced in Q1, 2023.

TERTIARY ROAD REPAIRS (DG)

Investment in Local Tertiary roads repairs continued in 2022 with a specific allocation from Discretionary Grant (DG) to be set aside for such roads. A total of €900,000 was allocated specifically which enabled restoration improvement works on 37 Local Tertiary roads in County Galway.

It is intended to continue allocating a specific portion of the Discretionary Grant towards improvement works on tertiary roads. A programme of restoration maintenance works will be compiled when notification of the 2023 funding is received.

BRIDGES REHABILITATION AND REPAIRS

12 bridges were allocated funding, totalling €630,000, under the Bridge Rehabilitation Programme in 2022 for which works are ongoing and is expected to be completed by the end of November deadline. Bridge repair works were completed on a further 24 bridges, which were allocated funding of €395,000 from the Discretionary Grant.

In accordance with circular RW14/2022, each local authority was invited to submit applications for bridge rehabilitation and repair works, of which the total should not exceed 130% of 2022 allocation. Based on this and available resources to carry out the works in 2023, a submission for 19 no. projects was submitted to the Department for approval, totalling €790,000. Details of proposed bridge rehabilitation projects for 2023 is set out in the table below.

Proposed Bridge Rehabilitation Programme 2023			
<i>*Subject to Departmental approval</i>			
Priority	Road Number	Bridge Name and Location	2022 Proposed Expenditure €
1	L6143	Mahanagh Bridge 1	20,000
2	L3117	Cormucagh (Clogh)	20,000
3	L8229	Derrygarraif	20,000
4	L85141	Derreen Bridge 4	20,000
5	R336	Waterfall Bridge	20,000
6	L87902	Mountain Park Bridge	20,000
7	R345	Cornamona Bridge	20,000

8	L3111	Licklea Bridge	20,000
9	L12010	Formweel, Shannapheasteen	100,000
10	R348	Suck Bridge, Ballinasloe	150,000
11	L51374	Derrynavglau, Ballinafad	140,000
12	L50101	Tirneevin, Gort	30,000
13	L2314	Timacat, Glenamaddy	25,000
14	L8515	Ballardiggan, Gort	25,000
15	L7152	Ballynanulty, Attymon	20,000
16	L2307	Newvillage, Newgrove	25,000
17	L6331	Kingstwn, Newbridge	15,000
18	L53313	Claremount Bridge 1	30,000
19	R363	Ballinamore Bridge	70,000
Total			€ 790,000

It is intended to continue to make provision from the Discretionary Grant allocation for bridge repairs in the amount of €395,000 for 2023. This is dependent on the level of funding allocated by the Department. Full details of approved works will be detailed in the Roads Programme 2023.

Grant funding application requires an amount of work to have been completed to establish the feasibility of and constraints applicable to a particular project. The availability of a budget to undertake this work will ensure a sustainable pipeline of priority works is in place. It is proposed to provide a budget of €100,000 for this purpose in 2023.

SPECIFIC IMPROVEMENT GRANTS (SIG)

A specific improvement grant allocation, totalling € 1,650,000, was received for projects in 2022:

- R374 Causeways & Bridges
- R332 Kilbannon
- R339 Belville
- Doire Fheartha

Submissions were made by Galway County Council to the Department for funding for suitable schemes, including balance of funding to complete works already commenced in R332 Kilbannon, R339 Belville and

R374 Causeways & Bridges. Further funding will be sought in 2023 for the continuation of these multi annual projects. Works at Doire Fhearta were completed in 2022.

STRATEGIC REGIONAL AND LOCAL ROAD GRANTS

Detailed design is ongoing and nearing completion for the Athenry Northern Ring Road and it is expected that the CPO for the western section of this project will be published shortly. Detailed design work is continuing on the eastern section of this project.

LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES

The Local Improvement Scheme was re-advertised in January 2021. 237 valid applications with an estimated value of €10.8 million were submitted. In May 2022 the Department of Rural & Community Development approved an initial allocation of €958,831. In early August 2022, an additional €724,010 was allocated to Galway County for this scheme.

50 projects were completed under the Local Improvement Scheme from a total allocation of €1,682,841 for 2022 from the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD).

Due to the popularity of the scheme, it is anticipated that the LIS funding will continue in 2023. The amount of funding available will be dependent on funding allocation from Department of Rural & Community Development. An estimate for Budget 2023 included under SubServ B0406 is based on the initial allocation received in 2022.

NON-NATIONAL ROADS - OWN RESOURCES

The shortfall in the budgetary allocation for the maintenance of local roads over time has resulted in a significant reduction in the level of maintenance works the Council has been able to carry out. Inflationary pressures coupled with rising energy costs are impacting on pricing and costs. Some essential elements of maintenance including drainage, verge trimming, and the renewal of signs and markings have been particularly impacted by these rising inflationary costs. Local road maintenance is funded from both the Council's own resources and the Discretionary Grant.

The sum provided from the Council's own resources in 2022 was €6,462,799 which included provision of €1,350,000 for public lighting.

The distribution of the Local Roads Budget 2023 will be presented to Council for approval in the context of the Roads Programme 2023. The level of discretion that will be available to the Council in the allocation of funding in 2023 for Regional and Local Roads will be restricted by the requirements of the Memorandum on Grants for Regional and Local Roads as issued by the Department of Transport.

CLIMATE CHANGE

During 2022, a national allocation was made available to local authorities under the Department's regional and local road maintenance and renewal grant programmes for Climate Adaptation and Resilience scheme. The eligible projects could include but are not limited to the following –

- (i) preventative measures such as drainage works to mitigate flooding
- (ii) works at bridges to take account of increased hydraulic loads due to flash floods
- (iii) protection measures for roads which would be vulnerable to severe weather events such as embankment stability measures to protect the road and prevent slippage
- (iv) altering the level or the road to mitigate flooding, road edge protection measures
- (v) replacement/repair of seawalls or retaining walls.

Provision for €1,032,500 was made in the budget 2022 for 22 projects.

PUBLIC LIGHTING

A sum of €1,350,000 was provided, from Council's own funds, in the 2022 budget to fund the cost of the public lighting programme in County Galway, including the maintenance, energy and upgrade costs, while funding of €113,665 was provided by the TII to cover the cost of the operation & maintenance of public light on the National Road Network.

To achieve compliance with National Energy Efficiency statutory targets set by Central Government Galway County Council is committed to the retrofit of all its inefficient public lights with energy efficient LED units & in this regard has committed to the delivery of this project as part of the National Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project. This project is being progressed on a regionalised basis with Galway County Council forming part of 10 Local Authorities participants within the North West Region with Mayo County Council acting as the lead authority for the region. All necessary agreements to participate in the project are in place. The Contract for the North West Region went out to tender in the second half of 2022, a contract award will be made in early 2023 with works to follow.

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

Traffic Management Plans

Under the Active Travel, a series of community transport studies are being progressed for a number of locations and it is expected that Traffic Management Plans will follow thereafter.

TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENT MEASURES

A sum of €10,000 exclusive of service support costs has been provided in the budget to progress 'Bike Week' in the County of Galway.

ROAD SAFETY ENGINEERING IMPROVEMENT

LOW COST REMEDIAL MEASURES

The Council, as with headings B01 – B04, has not yet received notification of the level of grant that will be available for Low Cost Safety Improvement works in 2023. An allocation of €417,500 was received in 2023 from the Department of Transport and the projects included for completion in 2022 are outlined in the table below.

Proposed Safety Improvement Works 2022				
<i>*Subject to funding approval from Department</i>				
LA Rank	Road Number	Description of Location of Safety Improvement Works	Description of Proposed Scheme	Cost €
1	L8401/R446	Cahar Cross Junction	Advance warning signs & improve sight line by removal of hedge growth & tree	€30,000
2	R374	Eanach Mheáin, Bealan Dangan	Set back of walls to improve sight lines	€55,000
3	R328	Bridge at Knockatee East	Reduce bridge carriageway width to one lane, appropriate signage & anti-skid to new layout	€35,000
4	L2132/L6186	Junction at Knockdoe	Set back wall, rebuild existing wall & lower wall 2, remove trees and vegetation	€40,000
5	R351/L82241	Grallagh	Set back existing wall to improve visibility	€17,500
6	L3102	Cregmore Bridge	Provide traffic lights to operate a stop/go system	€50,000

			at bridge, one lane operation at a time	
7	L2220	Ratesh Junction between L6447 & L2220	Removal of ditch on eastern side for L2220 to increase sight lines and provide passing bay along new fencing	€35,000
8	L5102	Letterettrin	Realign existing approach road to provide staggered junction	€30,000
9	R362/L2201/L2233	Cashel Cross, Glenamaddy	Realign existing approach road to provide staggered junction	€75,000
10	R348	Kilconnell Village	Provide anti-skid coating before Zebra crossing, renew markings and upgrade lighting to LED	€20,000
11	L1320	Cooney's bend – An Spidéal to Maigh Cuillinn road	Provide advance warning signs, chevrons and lining	€30,000
				€417,500

A submission was made in October 2022 by Galway County Council in accordance with Circular RW 16 of 2022 outlining proposals for 2023 in order of priority. The table below sets out the proposals included this submission, with a total estimate cost of €585,700. Projects are subject to approval by the Department of Transport, and not all projects may be approved. Projects are 100% recoupable from the Department once funding is committed.

LA Rank	Road Number	Description of Location of Safety Improvement Works	Description of Proposed Scheme	Cost €
1	R348/R446	Derrydonnell Beg. Junction of R348/R446.	Review design of layout/audit	€40,000
2	R374	Casla to Bealadangan, Carrowroe West	Studs, chevrons, lining, signage	€45,000

3	R446	Moyveela (Oranmore to Craughwell)	Signage, trim vegetation	€20,000
4	R446	Oranbeg (Oranmore to Craughwell)	Review design of layout/audit	€40,000
5	L-4304/L-43042	Loughturk West (Kiltormer)	Improve sightlines	€30,000
6	R380/R460	Gort to Loughrea/Gort to Corofin	Vehicle activated signage	€44,900
7	R-333/L-2109	Creavins Bend, Caherlistrane	Signage, markings, tidy vegetation	€28,000
8	R360	Knockaunbrack	Improve sightlines	€25,000
9	L-4322	Killimor to Kiltormer road at Derrew Cross	Vertical alignment improvements	€25,500
10	R341	Derrigimlagh	Improve road width	€40,000
11	R363/L-3210	Muckloon	Improve sightlines	€30,000
12	L-1322/L-5383/L-5382	Boleybeg East	Enhance junction visibility	€30,000
13	L-2212	Dalgin	Improve sightlines	€20,000
14	LP-3412	Killeen corner	Improve sightlines	€30,000
15	R380 / R351	Loughrea Town	Raised tables to reduce speeds	€62,300
16	L-6444	Belmont outside of Milltown	Mitigation of roadside height differential	€20,000
17	R364/L-2303	Rushes Cross	Improve sightlines	€25,000
18	L-1322	Cnocain na Bodaigh	Improve sightlines	€30,000
				€585,700

OTHER ENGINEERING IMPROVEMENTS

A provision of €99,800 was made available in 2022 for replacement of speed limit signage, a provision of €42,000 was made for the provision of speed limit signage in housing estates, and a provision of €14,000 was made available for cycle signage.

In its Circular RW 20 of 2022 the Department of Transport has invited local authorities to submit applications for a road signage grant for consideration for funding in 2023 under the same three headings:

- Rural Speed Limit signage;
- Speed Limit in Housing Estates signage;
- Safe Overtaking Width for Cyclists signs.

Galway County Council is in the process of making a submission for funding in 2023 under the above headings.

The Unit will continue to implement Road Works Speed Limits; in consultation with the Gardaí and Transport Infrastructure Ireland, as deemed necessary to facilitate the delivery of the Council's various work programmes.

ROAD SAFETY PROMOTION AND EDUCATION

There are a number of costs incurred under this heading including the Junior School Wardens Scheme, publicity campaigns including Road Safety Week, European Mobility Week, Drive for Life Course, Cycle Training for National School and promote awareness of road safety issues for the benefit of the public with a focus on vulnerable road users.

Galway County Council's Road Safety Together Committee consists of representatives from the County Council, Galway City Council, the Road Safety Authority, An Garda Síochána, Transport Infrastructure Ireland, and An Taisce. The Committee meet four times during the year and jointly examines options available to improve road safety for pedestrians, motorists, and road users, in general.

CAR PARKING

A budget provision under B09 inclusive of service support costs, is for the operation and maintenance of both On-street (6 locations) and Off-street (6 locations) parking facilities provided throughout the County along with parking enforcement costs.

Works have commenced on the rollout of new solar powered Pay and Display machines throughout the county. Phase One covering Loughrea and Tuam commenced in Q3 2022. Phase Two which will involve the replacement of all other units will follow in 2023.

SUPPORT TO ROADS CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The administration costs (i.e., indirect costs) in relation to supporting the Roads Capital Programme are met from the revenue budget. This budget contains the staff costs associated with providing support to the programme, as well as a proportion of the service support costs.

AGENCY AND RECOUPABLE SERVICES

The Council can charge an agreed overhead rate for all jobs undertaken by its staff. The income derived from the overhead charge meets the costs of holiday pay, sick pay, and insurance costs. All applications for licenses to open the public road are lodged through the national MRL system, managed by the Road Management Office. The Council's Roads department processes the licenses for County Galway and from the MRL system and attaches conditions and fees to the license. Income from Road Opening Licenses and works undertaken for other bodies are accounted for within this budget heading.

UNFINISHED HOUSING ESTATES

The Taking in Charge section actively engages with Residents, Developers and Bondholders for the completion of residential estates to required standard for taking in charge and/or for bond release.

To date, 9 estates have been taken in charge in 2022 with a further 6 estates to be considered for Taking in Charge by the Elected Members by year end.

The Council is currently engaged on over 40 developments at various stages of the Taking in Charge process. The work on these estates may be carried out directly by Developer(s) for Bond Release/Taking in Charge or by the Taking in Charge Section following receipt of the bond monies.

The financial resources available to the Taking in Charge Section is by way of Bonds, specifically assigned to developments and/or funding received through Site Resolution with Irish Water. Works on older historical estates across the County are funded through a Council budget allocation for Unfinished Historical estates enabling the Taking in Charge section to carry out remedial works to bring these estates to required standard for taking in charge.

The Taking in Charge Section engages with Bond Holders for the release of monies to complete works on estates and with Developers and/or other interested parties to ensure estates are completed to the required standard for the benefit of all, especially the residents.

The progress of works on estates is governed by the funding available, engagement with third parties and the complexity of the work involved which may include wayleave agreements.

PROPOSALS 2023:

The Taking in Charge section will continue to assess and process taking in charge applications. Having regard to the resources available, every effort will be made to ensure developments are completed in compliance with grant of planning and to a required standard for taking in charge.

Where non-compliance issues are identified, the relevant Departments will be notified to initiate appropriate proceedings.

AGENCY AND RECOUPABLE SERVICES

COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT SCHEME

During 2022, 5 Community Employment Schemes continued to operate. Villages and towns benefitted from such works as village maintenance; landscaping; grass cutting and stone wall building. The CE Schemes are as follows: Clifden/ Roundstone; Maigh Cuilinn/Oughterard; Gort and Environs; Laurencetown/ Abbey and Tuam and Environs. The 5 Community Employment Schemes will continue to operate and provide such works as village maintenance; landscaping; grass cutting and stone wall building in 2023.

LAND DRAINAGE COSTS

MAINTENANCE OF LAND DRAINAGE AREAS

ARTERIAL DRAINAGE

The Council discharged its statutory responsibility for the maintenance of certain drainage works in the County through the Roads and Transportation Unit and the Council's Municipal District Offices. The Council has charge of twelve Drainage Districts and there are two Drainage Districts in County Galway which extend into Roscommon and Clare County Councils. The budget provided for this work in 2022 was €175,000.

FLOOD MITIGATION WORKS AND STUDIES

Galway County Council continued working in partnership with the OPW during 2022 to identify and progress works aimed at reducing the risk of future flooding. Works at 6 locations are in progress under the minor works scheme for 2022, with these projects to be substantially complete by year end. A programme of works for 2023 has been developed based on already approved schemes. Further applications will be made for consideration and approval by the OPW based on identified need.

Galway County Council to liaise with the OPW about future minor works schemes that are under consideration with the aim of securing funding for these schemes.

A provision of €450,000 has been made under this heading for carrying out works of this nature. These works are 90% recoupable from the OPW.

Grant funding application requires an amount of work to have been completed to establish the feasibility of and constraints applicable to a particular project. The availability of a budget to undertake this work will ensure a sustainable pipeline of priority works is in place.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF PIERS AND HARBOURS

OPERATIONS OF PIERS AND HARBOURS

An allocation of €200,000 was provided from the Council's own resources in 2022 for the ongoing marine maintenance programme in relation to approximately 100 landing places in County Galway which have been identified as in the charge of/responsibility of Galway County Council. This involves varied works including safety repairs to access steps, rails, and repairs to slipways. It also includes the removal of algae growth as the budget allows on piers in County Galway. The allocation included an amount of €50,000 to cover the recruitment of a Harbour Master for Inis Oírr. In addition, there was a need to commission various reports for piers and harbours under this allocation to inform works required under the Department of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine. DAFM provide funding of 85% of construction costs under the BALAMI funding scheme.

Improvement works to piers, part funded by the Department of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine, were completed in 2022 at Inishboffin, Blackweir, Inver, Aircin, Sconnsa, Loughan Beg. Works at Ballyconeely, Spiddal and Cleggan have commenced and will be completed in early 2023. There was a bundle of safety works carried out in South Galway area. As per the maintenance and repair programme, repairs were carried out on navigation lights and removal of silt and other obstruction at slipways has been carried out at a small number of locations, as financial resources allowed.

An increase in budget to €250,000 for Operation and Maintenance of Piers and harbours is required in 2023. This is required to improve a seriously restricted system of maintenance, giving a total increase of €50,000 on 2022 budget allocation. It is proposed to use the additional funding to cover the costs various initial consultants' reports including security assessment, safe system of work for island piers that are served by passenger ferries and commissioning of relevant environmental and engineering reports to progress projects to the planning phase to avail of DAFM funding into the future.

A first phase system of maintenance has been developed which will require additional maintenance funding to implement in 2023. This increase of €50,000 is a realistic initial step in the aim to provide a less restrictive budget.

There are circa 60 visitor moorings located in various areas such as Cill Ronán, Killary Harbour, Clifden Bay, Srutháin, Roundstone, Cill Chiarán and Maumeen, which require chains and shackle replacement every 2 years. Maintenance was carried out this year on approximately 20 moorings. Provision of €20,000 for 2023 has also been made under this heading to continue the maintenance on yacht moorings.

A budget of €200,000 was provided in 2022 for the Maintenance of Kilronan Harbour. This was required for ongoing maintenance of the harbour and for the payment of legal fees regarding the Warehouse Building on the pier.

This budget of €200,000 will be required again in 2023 for the maintenance of Kilronan Harbour to cover the recurring items such as wages, minor works etc with the balance to cover remaining legal fees and works to the warehouse on the pier. There will also be a requirement to implement any findings of the safety system of operation plan for the pier.

An application for a second tranche of BALAMI funding was submitted in September 2022. This proposes work in 2023 at 12 locations with a total estimated cost of €906,000. With 85% funding provided, there will be a requirement for €135,900 matched funding to be made available in the 2023 budget from Galway County Council own resources.

There has been an ongoing issue with the way external funding is provided for Pier & Harbour works which has constrained the ability to avail of optimal funding levels. Projects must be shovel ready and only construction costs are covered (to a level of 85% under the BALAMI model). To date this has meant that we are limited to putting forward projects that are relatively simple in nature, do not require statutory approvals and do not incur costs for environmental or other assessments. Given many of the piers and harbours are protected structures, are in areas of environmental sensitivity and that any works below the high-water mark will require foreshore licence it is clear that in many instances significant work is required to get a project to shovel ready status and this will also involve cost. Currently any such costs incurred are charged to the already stretched Pier & Harbour Maintenance Code. Separate funding provision from

Galway County Council own resources is required if we are to be in a position to optimally utilise available funding for pier and harbour refurbishment works.

Water Services

CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

The Council continues to implement Irish Water's Capital Investment Programme, as an agent of Irish Water. Projects are prioritised by Irish Water to provide critical infrastructure which will help to achieve compliance with the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive and the Water Framework Directive. Investment priorities are set out in Irish Water's Capital Investment Plan which is prepared at least every five years and submitted to the Commission for Regulation of Utilities for approval of funding. In 2022, the following works have progressed:

- Tenders have been received and assessed for the Athenry Sewerage Scheme Network project and contract signing is imminent. Construction will commence early in 2023.
- An Bord Pleanála confirmed the Compulsory Purchase Order for the Roundstone Wastewater Treatment Plant proposed sites and wayleaves in March 2022. This decision is currently the subject of a judicial review, the results of which are awaited.
- A decision on the CPO for the acquisition of the site for the Carraroe Wastewater Treatment Plant is awaited pending the outcome of two judicial reviews.
- Construction of the wastewater treatment plants at Spiddal and Ahascragh by Coffey Water Ltd has progressed and both projects are expected to be substantially complete by the end of 2022. Commissioning and handover of both plants will take place early in 2023.
- Under Irish Water's Treated Water Storage Programme, a new 1,500 m³ capacity reservoir at Gort has been completed by Cleantech Civils Ltd.
- Planning and design have progressed, and work continues on, Mountbellew, Ballygar and Eyrecourt wastewater treatment plants.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- It is expected that the Tuam RWSS extension to Loughrea will be fully operational early in 2023. The existing water treatment plants at Lake Road and Knockanimma will be decommissioned and Loughrea, Craughwell and environs will be supplied with treated water from Lough Corrib.
- Under the Infrastructure Programme, it is envisaged that new wastewater treatment plants at Spiddal and Ahascragh will be fully commissioned and handed over in the first quarter of 2023. Planning and design for new wastewater treatment plants at Roundstone and Carraroe will proceed to planning once the CPO processes are completed for both.
- Planning and design of new wastewater treatment plants for Mountbellew, Ballygar and Eyrecourt will progress with a view to going to tender on some, if not all, by year end.

MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF WATER AND WASTEWATER SCHEMES

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- The Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the Council and Irish Water continued to operate in 2022. Under the SLA the Council continues to operate the water and wastewater schemes as agent of Irish Water under the terms set out in the agreement and the annual service plan. Irish Water is now operating within a regulated environment under the Commission for the Regulation of Utilities and the practical effect of this has been a much greater emphasis on reporting of activities and measurement of performance based on that reporting. This has resulted in the adoption of new practices and new technology along with more time and resources spent on gathering data within an environment where resources available to undertake these extra duties remains unchanged. Emphasis continues to be placed on Health and Safety and quality compliance. The operation of new technology and processes is challenging in a regulated environment where constant efficiencies in input resources are demanded while demand for outputs and standards increase.
- The WRC hosted talks among the stakeholders in the sector and agreement was reached resulting in the Framework for the Future Delivery of Water Services being published in June 2022 and its implementation has started. The most immediate step will be the separation of Irish Water from Ervia and the commencement of the replacement of the current SLA. An information note and brochure has been prepared by Irish Water and circulated to the local authorities which outlines the approach and how staff will transition to Irish Water.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- The Council will continue to operate the Service Level Agreement and perform within the parameters set out in the Annual Service Plan within available resources. It is expected that further transformation initiatives will be rolled out resulting from the publication of the framework mentioned above and Irish Water or its formal new name from 1/1/2023 will assume the necessary control of water services operations and staff, with full accountability for same, on a phased basis during 2023.

WATER CONSERVATION

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- Leakage reduction works continued throughout the county under planned and reactive leak repairs in conjunction with the Water Network Program (WNP). The works were carried out by both direct labour crews and Contractors crews working across different activities of the WNP.
- These included the following: Find & Fix, Lead Replacement, Metering & Pressure Management, Mains Rehabilitation, Mains Decommissioning and First Fix. An additional 7.3km of mains rehabilitation will have been completed in 2021 increasing the total length of mains rehabilitation in areas of high leakage

or where water quality issues required works to be undertaken to date to approximately 37k. The works included fitting all pipeline fittings and connections and installation of meter boundary boxes at every connection. In addition, 4 Pressure Reducing Valves (PRV's) have been commissioned (some with day night controllers) throughout the county in 2022 and are now operational yielding considerable water savings. Customer side leakage continues to be targeted under the First Fix Program.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Continuation of leakage reduction will progress throughout the county with resources targeted at public and private side leakage in the network. Additional areas for rehabilitation have been selected and are currently awaiting and are currently at design stage with works planned to begin on site in 2023. Upgrading of PRVs will continue, aiding pressure management, and metering works will continue to progress in tandem with leakage reduction.

RURAL WATER PROGRAMME

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- There was no Multi Annual Rural Water Programme in place during the year with emphasis on closing out projects funded during the previous programme which was significantly hampered due to the Covid pandemic. In addition, technical staff resources in Rural Water were and continue to be significantly under resourced with the recruitment and retention of staff proving challenging. The Council will be engaging with the sector to compile the next Multi Annual Rural Water Programme 2022-2024. In the next programme the investment in the sector will be driven by looking at whole life costs when considering options for investment with sustainable and compliant water quality remaining the central objective. The Council continued to assist schemes in their day-to-day operations by implementing the approved Subsidy scheme and substantial funds were paid out.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- The main objective for 2023 is to compile an ambitious and focused Multi Annual Rural Water Programme and recruit the necessary staff to make sure it is implemented and delivered.

PLANNING & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND CORPORATE SERVICES

PLANNING FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022

- 2,177 Planning Applications have been received to date (20th October 2022).
- Participated in the National e-Planning initiative, to date 1,082 e-applications have been received, 63 submissions have been received via the portal (26th Oct) Part VIII applications are now also part of the portal for both viewing and making submissions.
 - 2 pre-planning applications with An Bord Pleanála (SHD), 2 Stage 1 LRD
 - 18 meetings for major developments have taken place.
 - 64 Exempted Development applications have been processed to date (19th October 2022).
- Finalised and adopted the Ballinasloe Local Area Plan (2022-2028).
- Preparation of Tenders for the various plans and strategic for the Local Area Plans
- Prepared and agreed the Governance structure with our Strategic Partners – Irish Rail, NTA, Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government regarding URDF Project at Gurraun Oranmore.
- Prepared the Residential Zoned Land Tax Maps for public display on 1st November 2022 – 1st January 2023 and liaised with GIS with this preparation.
- Liaised and undertook Student Survey Work with Queen’s University Belfast and University of Galway on a number of settlements in the county (Loughrea Gort & Athenry)
- Liaised and established partnership with Roads Directorate in relation to Transport Modelling/Local Transport Plans for a number of settlements and Walking/Cycling Strategy. Co-ordinated the appointment of Transport Consultants in relation to the same.
- Provided Planning inputs into various Steering groups relevant to the County
- Arrange and manage the translation of all new policies (Draft CDP, relevant Local Area Plans) in accordance with An Scéim Teanga.
- Participate in the Town Team Initiative as a pilot local authority.
- Participated in the Planning Spatial Data Capture Pilot initiative with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.
- Established a database for Monitoring of Planning Decisions in accordance with the Regional Spatial Economic Strategy (RSES).

PROPOSALS 2023

- Continue monitoring planning application data as per RSES requirements.
- Prepare and publish Draft Development Contribution Scheme.
- Prepare and publish Local Area Plans for Tuam, Loughrea, Athenry and Gort.
- Liaise and manage with the Environmental Consultants on the Tuam, Loughrea, Athenry and Gort Local Area Plans. (SEA/SFRA/AA Reports).

- Prepare Report on submissions received on the Draft Maps in relation to Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT).
- Publish Submissions on the Draft RZLT Maps online on/before 11th January 2023
- Prepare Supplemental Maps (1st May 2023 – 1st June 2023) & Final Maps (1st December 2023) for publication and subsequent public submissions that will be received on the RZLT: liaise with Department, Irish Water, TII An Bord Pleanála and Revenue Commissioners on this project and deal with queries arising from this.
- Review policy objectives in relation to strategies that have been committed in the Galway County Development Plan 2022 – 2028.
- Progress the URDF project.
- Liaise with Roads Directorate/Transport Consultants appointed on a number of Transport Strategies (transport Modelling/Local Transport Plans/Walking/Cycling Strategy).
- Provide Planning inputs into various Steering Groups relevant to the County.
- Participate in the Town Team Initiative/RRDF Teams
- Preparation of Public Realm strategies for identified Local Area Plan towns, where resources allow.
- Participate in the Planning Spatial Data Capture Pilot initiative with the Department of Planning, Housing and Local Government.
- Engagement in statutory licensing events legislation with Officials where appropriate.
- Project manage the Consultants on the design of the local centre, carpark and open space provisions outlined in the Draft County Development Plan & URDF project for Garraun.
- Project Manage the Consultants on the Topology Study for Garraun, Oranmore.

BUILDING CONTROL

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- 670 commencement notices have been validated to 19th October 2022, which represents a 2% decrease on this time last year.
- 92 completion certificates have been validated to 19th October 2022, which represents a 19% decrease on this time last year.
- 124 inspections have been carried out by the Building Control Officer to ensure compliance with the Building Regulations to 19th October 2022.
- 795 new buildings commenced to 19th October 2022.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- The Building Control Officer will continue to implement the statutory building regulations and to carry out at least the minimum level of inspections of new developments required.

ENFORCEMENT MEASURES

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- 78 Warning Notices/Letters served to 19th October 2022.
- 79 Enforcement Notices served to 19th October 2022.
- 17 Files have been referred for legal action to 20th October 2022.
- 181 Unauthorised development complaints received to 19th October 2022.
- 56 approx. Enforcement Files have been resolved/closed as of the 19th October 2022.

PROPOSALS 2023:

- It is proposed to continue to provide resources to the Enforcement Team to ensure the implementation of the Planning Regulations in 2023 and proactively follow up complaints and referrals in respect of unauthorised developments.
- To prioritise unfinished housing estates for enforcement action as necessary.

HERITAGE

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- Athenry Walled Towns Day – This family fun day was held on Sunday 14th August. It showcased the wealth of the built, natural and cultural heritage in medieval Athenry.
- Athenry Town Walls Conservation Works -Funding was received from Heritage Council and works have been undertaken.
- Loughrea Medieval Festival – This 3- day heritage event was held in on 26th to 28th August 2020 in partnership with Loughrea Medieval Festival Committee with the support of the Heritage Council
- Heritage Grant Scheme as part of Community Grants: Assessed grants, assigned conditions to the same and in the process of paying out grants
- Invasive Species Control has commenced work on this project and survey work is taking place.
- Quagga mussel project is nearing completion
- Creative Ireland part of the Creative Ireland team are working on the “Galway Forged Gates project”
- Biodiversity Projects - Providing advice and guidance on various aspects of biodiversity including tree planting, dealing with invasive species and pollinator plans to Tidy Towns, Biodiversity & Pollinator Action Plans have been prepared. Biodiversity training has been facilitated for staff. The Barn Owl project, an audit of Wetlands in Northeast Galway, Bird survey in Connemara Blanket bogs and Wildflower Swatches projects are taking place.
- Decade of Commemoration involve an array of projects including Artists & Activists 122 Women in a changing Cultural Landscape, “Gardai in Galway 1922-2022” A Bi-Lingual Exhibition, Bi-Lingual Book A History of An Garda Síochána in County Galway, A sixteen page supplement in the Connacht Tribune, Workbook on An Garda Síochána in County Galway, The Loughnane Brothers Heritage Trail – Go Explore the Historic Sites & Memorials of Ireland’s War of Independence Creation of a Z-Card and Story

Map, Liam Mellows Film and Conference, conference organised for December and Merchant Gate Films working on the film. Concert and Exhibition (Old Tuam Society Joint Project)

- The Aleen Cust Commemoration Project 2022 this included projects with Secondary School Transition Students. A Conference was held on the 11th and 12 August 2022. An Exhibition is being worked on and it is envisaged that it will open in December 2022. Workbooks for Primary School Children a bi-lingual workbook for primary school children will be integrated into the primary school curriculum.
- Podcasts and Videos a short video showing the places associated with Aileen’s life will be produced
- Artistic/Creative Project an artistic/creative project as part of the Aleen Cust commemoration project will be undertaken.
- Alcock & Brown it is proposed that Dr Conor McNamara in Residence, Galway County Council will work with Eithne O Halloran, expert on the development of school workbooks to devise and develop the bi-lingual workbook
- ICAN – Community Heritage website - The Heritage Office continued to work in partnership with the Museum of County Life Castlebar and various communities throughout the county to further develop this website.
- Féile na gCloch 15th-18th September 2022 Working in partnership with Comhar Caomháin Teo and the Drystone Walling Association of Ireland, Tír Chonail Stone Wall Fest, Stein und Wein (Austria) and Stone Carvers from USA. The festival was extremely successful saw a large number of participants from all over the world including Canada, USA, Australia, Austria and Korea for the first time.
- *Digital Mapping of Graveyards in the County* – Continued to work with Galway Rural Development on mapped and memorial inscriptions will be recorded and uploaded to www.galway.ie . Also working on a new mapping system with GIS Department to incorporate the use of drones and Survey 123.
- Community Events, Conferences and Workshops
- Assistance, advice, and support was also given to numerous Tidy Town, Community Heritage and schools groups in 2022 and included advice and guidance on heritage publications, development of heritage trails, oral heritage recordings, Heritage Week Events, heritage training and relevant local heritage conferences and seminars etc.
- Participation on Committees/teams such as the *Placenames Committee, Loughrea Heritage and Development Company*.
- Community Monument Fund – Funding has been accepted in relation to conservation management plans and works for a number of recorded monuments in the county.
- Holy Wells Audit Phase 3 - Working in the Municipal Districts on this phase of the project.
- Community Archaeologist Programme - The Community Archaeologist has worked with numerous groups in the county with regards to the provision of advice and guidance with regards to their archaeological heritage and has produced several online resources. Also see <https://field-monuments.galwaycommunityheritage.org/>
- Bio-lingual Geological Heritage Workbook for Junior Certificate (including videos and podcasts) Stream 1
- The Galway Community Archaeology Project 2022 (Strand 2) being run in conjunction with Bernie Doherty Community Archaeologist.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Work in partnership with several local community groups, LEADER Companies and GIS Department of Galway County Council to provide free access to the wealth of heritage and local history information contained within the graveyards of County Galway in the form of a graveyard map, memorial inscriptions, exact location of burial plot and photographs of the memorials as resources allow.
- Produce further resources relating to the Geological Heritage Audit of County Galway in partnership with the Geological Survey of Ireland and the Heritage Council.
- Continue to work on the Invasive Species Strategy.
- Develop more Story Maps.
- The community archaeologist will work with various groups, schools and individuals in the county to increase awareness, knowledge and appreciation of the archaeological heritage of the county. He will also provide guidance and assistance on undertaking archaeological heritage-based projects to best heritage practice. Also apply for Community Monument Funding.
- Continue with the 'Sound Map' of the County of Galway Project.
- Reading the Landscape Course - To continue to work with community groups to learn field skills and use same to upload content onto the new community heritage website.
- Continue with the Biodiversity Project and continue to work in partnership with community groups, Tidy Towns Groups, Schools, NUIG, GRD etc.
- Athenry Walled Towns Day – Funding will be sought from the Walled Towns Funds of the Heritage Council and if successful a walled town Day will be held in August 2023.
- Athenry & Loughrea Walled Towns Educational Project – Funding to be sought to continue this worthwhile project.
- Athenry Town Walls Capital Works – Funding will be sought to undertake another programme of works for the Walls and an ensuing body of work will also take place if successful.
- Loughrea Medieval Festival – Seek to develop an event in partnership with Loughrea Medieval Festival Committee.
- Decade of Commemoration - Further development and updating of the bi-lingual website for the Decade of Commemoration with additional information and podcasts. Continue with the development of the Galway County Decade of Commemoration publication series.
- ICAN – Community Heritage website. The Heritage Office will continue to work in partnership with the Museum of County Life Castlebar and various communities throughout the county to further develop this website.
- Community Events, Conferences and Workshops – Assistance, advice, and support will also be given to numerous Town and Community events in 2023 including Féile na gCloch, Heritage Week Events, heritage training and relevant local heritage conferences and seminars etc.
- The Beo Schools Project with INSIGHT, NUIG and Galway Education Centre will be ongoing.
- Participation on Committees/teams such as the Placenames Committee, Loughrea Heritage and Development Company, Creative Ireland, and other such initiatives
- Roll out of the Heritage Grant Scheme as part of Community Grants.
- The Golden Mile Competition and Calendar and awards ceremony will also take place during the year.
- Continue with Townland Research and Parish/Local Area Heritage Audits

- Hold meetings and progress heritage initiatives with Galway County Heritage & Biodiversity Forum.
- Develop a new *Heritage and Biodiversity Plan for the County of Galway 2023- 2030*
- Continue to develop the town heritage booklets.
- Undertake the Féile na gCloch festival in Inis Oírr.
- Develop and deliver heritage training.
- Support and undertake events for Heritage Week and National Biodiversity Week.

CONSERVATION

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- Identified, evaluated and provided advice on structures, groups of structures areas and other features of architectural heritage significance. Provided advice to owners and occupiers of historic structures on good practice and on the availability of assistance, including financial assistance, for such conservation.
- Assessed structures on Record of Protected Structures (RPS) with a view to issuing Declarations as to works that require planning permission and provide pre-planning advice.
- Offered advice to owners /occupiers of traditionally built structures, in particular energy efficiency measures.
- Reported and advised on planning applications where architectural heritage issues arise both in Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) and with Protected Structures (individual buildings or groups of buildings) where development was proposed.
- Monitored the state of repair of structures on the Record of Protected Structures, and as necessary, made recommendations on the need for the planning authority to take enforcement action.
- Maintained Architectural Inventory database.
- Consulted with the relevant department, state agencies, voluntary and international organisations on matters of architectural conservation including Association of Architectural Conservation Officers, ICOMOS, and Irish Georgian Society.
- Liaised with local communities regarding Tidy Towns and community initiatives.
- Liaised with ICOMOS Ireland *Baile* town and village working group to promote sustainable development in pilot project in Gort- Creative Ireland funded pilot survey on energy efficiency in traditional buildings in association with Burren Lowlands and residents.
- Historic Assets group – the internal inter disciplinary- inter departmental working group continued its work to maintain Protected Structures in the care of the local authority. Consulted with Regeneration Team on repurposing and refurbishment of several local authority owned properties.
- Promote and administer *The Walks, Loughrea*; conservation project to boundary walls and bridges in historic public realm.
- Liaised with GRETB, CIF and Departmental Built Heritage Advisory service re traditional building skills training courses.
- Participation in *Architecture at the Edge* festival of architecture with *Repair* theme- Events attracted participation at Kylemore, Loughrea, Mountbellew , Esker, Ballygar as well as hybrid events online and in Galway.

- Administered the Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS) and Historic Structures Fund (HSF) made available through Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and Community Monuments Fund scheme from National Monuments Service in the same department.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Continue to carry out the statutory duties of Architectural Conservation Officer as set out in Circular 5/99 or as amended.
- Review Record of Protected Structures by proposing additions to the RPS and research and propose Architectural Conservation Areas and liaise with owners and occupiers.
- Maintain Architectural Inventory System.
- Promote opportunities to raise awareness of the architectural heritage and its appropriate conservation and reuse through Creative Ireland, Irish Architectural Foundation, Arts Council and other funding opportunities as available.
- Promote the initiatives and funding made available by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
- Continue to promote traditional skills use and training initiatives in association with the Building Limes Forum Ireland, Construction Industry Federation and GRETB
- Continue to contribute to the Historic Assets working group and work with local communities to incorporate the historic built environment into the community life of towns and villages.
- Prepare costed project outlines and plans to be able to avail of capital funding in historic towns and ACAs and for Historic Assets in care of the local authority as it becomes available in association with Regeneration Team.
- Avail of and promote any funding initiatives available, including Built Heritage Investment Scheme Fund, Historic Structures Fund, Rural Towns and Village funding, Historic Towns Initiative, Community Monuments Fund & Creative Ireland.
- Provide advice to the local authority on architectural conservation matters; Liaise with Roads re conservation of masonry stone arch bridges; Liaise with corporate services re historic assets in LA ownership; Liaise with Environment re graveyards; Liaise with local area engineers re public realm and issues arising. Liaise with Housing re energy efficiency in traditionally built houses.

LIBRARY SERVICES

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- Galway Public Libraries provide lending services, pc access, printing, scanning, request service, study spaces, newspapers and magazines.
- We also provide a selection of online resources that are available free to registered library members, these include:

Borrowbox- eBooks & eAudio books.

Universal Class-This resource provides a wide range of over 500 courses, including Yoga, Digital Photography, Computer Basics, Excel, and much more.

eMagazines-Libby is our app for eMagazines. There are more than 3,000 magazines from which to choose and you can access them for free with your library card.

Press Reader-Press Reader provides global news coverage. With Press Reader you can: Access top newspapers and magazines from more than 120 countries. Download and save titles to read offline whenever, wherever. Translate foreign language content in up to 18 languages.

Medici TV -The world's leading classical music channel, Medici TV offers access to the best of classical music to viewers worldwide.

Over 150 live events broadcast each year and the largest on demand library of classical music available for viewing on all devices.

Comics plus which offers unlimited, simultaneous access to thousands of digital comics, graphic novels and manga from over 100+ publishers

- Regular events during the year include- Book clubs, Craft groups, Poetry groups.
- Seachtain na Gaeilge, Heritage week, Positive Ageing week, Space week, Bealtaine Festival were all celebrated and promoted in Libraries.
- The library service had a full programme of children’s events across all branch libraries:
 - School visits
 - Childcare group visits
 - Spring Into Storytime
 - Summer Reading Challenge
 - Children’s Book Festival
 - Family Time at your Library
 - Rhyme times
- **Our Summer Reading Challenge “Summer Stars”** encourages children to read during the summer months we also had some creative workshops including:

Flower Fairy workshop in Killimor library, Hands on History in Moylough Library, Creative writing workshops with GRETB in Westside & Galway City libraries, Music of the Plants: Irish Wildflowers & Trees through the Arts in Portumna Library, Butterfly walks in Eyrecourt, Loughrea & Portumna Libraries, Lego Workshops in Athenry, Tuam & Westside Libraries.

Children’s Book Festival “Bookit!” ran during October, events were held mostly in libraries, but the library service also facilitated author visits to schools. The theme this year was “Be Kind to your Mind”. The events held included:

Storytelling events with Niall de Búrca.

Niall de Búrca – who needs no introduction as one of Ireland's finest traditional storytellers – engaged in a series of interactive story sessions curated to appeal to young adults on the difficulties and worries that they face every day using the medium of storytelling to inspire and reassure.

Total number of students involved in story telling sessions – 912

Mindfulness workshops & storytelling with Lizzy Shortall.

Lizzy Shortall is an author and mindfulness/wellbeing trainer. Her sessions involve a story reading from her book, 'Joy's Playground' and a mindfulness workshop geared towards younger children. Lizzy introduces the children to themes of mindfulness, gratitude and self-belief through the story in the book and a few simple exercises such as mindful breathing and engaging the five senses.

Total number of students involved in workshops – 157

Hands on History – Making Prehistoric Pottery with Donna Gilligan of Scéal Heritage.

Donna Gilligan is a museum curator, researcher, cultural event and project manager, design and material culture historian, and heritage educator, who leads Scéal Heritage Consultancy and runs workshops for the Heritage in Schools Scheme for the Heritage Council of Ireland.

Workshop Description: Children have the opportunity to get hands-on with their prehistoric past, as they work with clay to create the type of pottery made and used during the Stone Age, thousands of years ago. Children are introduced to information on everyday life in the Stone Age and are guided to make a simple 'pinch pot' using only their hands and clay. They then can use a variety of pottery tools to design and decorate their creations. The pots air-dry easily and provide a unique visual souvenir of what they learned about their Stone Age past.

Total number of students involved in workshops – 79

Gringer the Whinger storytelling workshops with Jane Landy.

Gringer the Whinger is a naughty and irritating dragon who visits the family when things are becoming tense or disagreeable. With his whingy voice and cheeky ripostes, he commands Mammy's attention and stretches her patience to the limit, much to the delight of the children and the exasperation of their weary daddy. Jane's book is illustrated by Sheena Dempsey, who captures the humour and domestic mayhem of life with small children just perfectly. Jane reads from her story, talks to the children about how she came to create Gringer, and the process of how an idea can become a story and eventually a book. She also discusses with the children emotions and how to handle them.

Dee the Bee storytime with Dolores Keaveany.

Author and illustrator Dolores Keaveany reads from her picture book Dee the Bee, talks to the children about bees, the life of a hive and how bees pollinate and are vital to the production of our food. She gets them to draw and colour a bee and flower montage to bring back to school.

Mindfulness workshops with Marie Cronnelly.

Marie Cronnelly is a Children's Mindfulness & Meditation Practitioner. She is a certified practitioner with the "Mindfulness Teacher for Life Programme" with full accreditation to teach mindfulness to children, pre-school, teens, and adults as well as professionals including individual mindfulness coaching sessions both in person and online. The Mindful Heart Curriculum helps to promote an environment of calm and peacefulness in the classroom.

As a Creative Mindfulness for Kids Practitioner and a Mindful Heart Curriculum Practitioner, Marie helps to empower children’s mental, emotional and physical health and well-being by using techniques to reinforce her ethos that ‘everything we need is already within us’. Marie helps to equip children with their own personal ‘tool kit’ for helping them to understand, deal with and overcome the many mental, emotional and physical challenges they are faced with, particularly in this global pandemic crisis.

- **Cruinniu na nÓg** took place across the 3 city libraries, local national school pupils were invited to take part. The theme this year was The Sea, Oh the Sea, a collaboration between author Trish Forde and illustrator Kim Sharkey.

- **Decade of Commemoration:**

1922: A Dialogue through Poetry and Music is a collaboration between 3 poets and 3 musicians who were commissioned to create new poetry and musical works on the theme of 1922. Events will take place from October-December 2022.

Nora Barnacle & James Joyce: The Galway Story, a celebration of Nora & James through readings, conversations & music in St. Nicholas’s Collegiate Church, Galway.

1922 Artists & Activism with Dr. Eimear O’Connor, Dr. Angela Griffith, Mary Clancy, Jean Moran Weaver.

- **Galway’s Great Read 2022:** Wandering West with Words, is a continuation of last year’s programme celebrating travel writing in Galway. Some of the writers to be featured will be Máirtín Ó Cadhain, Joe Steve Ó Neachtain & Caitlín Maude. The programme comprises of 3 travel documentaries & 2 live events in Spiddal & Carraroe Libraries.
- **Cúirt:** During Cúirt illustrators painted a selection of windows in various libraries.
- **Healthy Ireland at your Library** talks continues throughout the year on various topics:
 - Wellbeing workshops
 - Alzheimer’s disease
 - Dementia
 - Palliative Care
 - Autism talks
 - Childhood disability
 - Motor Neuron Disease
 - Speech & Language Therapy
 - Parkinson’s Disease
 - Diabetes

- **Art Exhibitions-** Several art exhibitions took place during 2022, Artist Deirdre Crowley spoke to a group at Galway City Library about the design processes involved in creating her textile art.

In Clifden library a photographic exhibition titled Connemara Crossroad: Killary to Carna took place.

- **Music events:**

Soundbites- free lunchtime concerts at Tuam Library

Welcome Notes- Music Therapy Sessions at Westside Library

Music Alive- Age Friendly music sessions for Older People at Ballinasloe & Oughterard Libraries

- **Outreach:** Older Person’s Information Morning, Loughrea library
Ukrainian information sessions, Stay & Play sessions for children throughout the branch library network.
Irish Deaf Society- Irish Sign Language story for deaf children was held online.
Library Drop In Sessions in Headfrod Library demonstrating using your own device to access library online resources.
- **Westside Arts Festival** at Westside Library, some of the activities that took place included- Stories, song & rhyme, Origami, Bingo bonanza, Crafts, Print Making, Technic Robotics, VR experiences, Drama workshop, Fairy Door workshop, LEGO workshops.
- **Inishbofin Arts Festival**-Poet Emily Cullen gave readings and workshops to adults and children.
- **Culture night** took place on 23rd Sept 2022, a range of events were held in multiple libraries:
 - Westside & Galway City – story time with Dolores Keaveney.
 - Ballybane – Arias al Fresco with Soprano Justyna Ilnicka.
 - Oranmore – Drumadore, a demonstration of drumming.
 - Ballinasloe – A celebration of the artist Úna Watters.
 - Galway City Library – Readings of poetry and fiction.
 - Loughrea – Loughrea Arts Recreation and Culture presented ‘A Night of Culture’.
- **My Little Library Book Bags**- All children starting school in 2022 were invited to collect a bag of books just for them at their local library. In excess of 3,000 bags were distributed to children throughout the county. Each My Little Library Book Bag contained:
 - Three books on starting school, making friends and being comfortable to be yourself.
 - A story card on going to the library.
 - A postcard the child could write or draw on and send to their new teacher, or bring to give to the teacher on their first day at school.
 - Their very own library card and special ‘My Little Library’ cardholder.
 - Book bags are available in both Irish and English.
- **Galway Libraries mobile service** travels throughout the county providing a library service to remote locations.
- **Age Friendly Libraries:** As part of the initiative to enhance our public services for older people in our county we have achieved Age Friendly status in 6 of our library branches with more to follow.
- **Postal service** for visually impaired in conjunction with An Post continued throughout 2022.
- **Leabharlann an Spidéil** hosted the launch of a children’s book by author Fearghas Mac Lochlainn- An Slipéar Gloine
- **Ballinasloe Library** recently launched its new outdoor musical instruments which are situated in the library courtyard and are currently accessible to groups and classes by booking in advance. The instruments were acquired through the Dormant Accounts Fund.

- **Home Energy Saving Kits-** Extra home energy saving kits were acquired for libraries, it is possible for library members to borrow these kits. There were also online tutorials provided and a kids energy saving experiment workshop.
- **International Federation of Library Associations:** IFLA delegates visited Ballinasloe Library.

Three staff members were successful in having their posters which highlighted 3 Galway Library initiatives presented at the IFLA conference for Westside Arts Festival, Galway's Great Read and Eilís Dillon: One Author, Five Islands.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Work will continue, based on available funding, to maintain and improve, where possible, the Library Services in Galway as per the new Galway Library Interim Development plan 2022- 2023.
- The Healthy Ireland, and Right to Read campaigns will continue to be rolled out across the library branch network, availing of national funding streams, with the aim of ensuring a range of service in both urban and rural branches.
- Efforts to enhance the use of technology will continue, including self-service technologies, while further promotion of the online resource package will be delivered.
- The computerisation of branch libraries in the Galway Service will continue, subject to staffing levels and financial resources.
- Clifden Library will be developed as a My Open Library in 2023.
- To continue to maintain the library vehicle fleet and explore upgrade options.
- Efforts will continue to increase the bookfund available for the purchase of Library Stock.
- Galway Libraries will continue to develop our events programme, engaging with individuals and communities through our branches, availing of national funding opportunities where possible, including Creative Ireland, while operating within the constraints of local funding.
- To continue to identify the needs of new and established communities and aspire to respond accordingly
- To ensure that all local communities are aware of their local library service and what each library has to offer.
- To ensure where possible that all branch libraries organise/host a range of activities including exhibitions, readings, book-clubs, lectures, and music for their community.
- The Europe Direct Centre at Ballinasloe Library will continue to provide information on the EU and access to publications and brochures from EU institutions

WATER SAFETY PROGRAMME:

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- The Water Safety Programme 2022 involved the recruitment of a panel of 45 trained Beach guards to provide services at 10 locations in the County [including six Blue Flag Beaches] and at 6 locations in the City as part of a Shared Service Agreement with Galway City Council.
- The Service commenced on the 28th May and continued until the 11th September 2022.
- Installation of new hut and manage new Blue Flag Beach location at Inis Oirr
- Upgrading of equipment was undertaken as well as a hut preparation and repairs- maintenance schedule, which was agreed and delivered.
- Following approval by Council, funding of €6,000 was advanced to the Irish Water Safety Council.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Recruitment of Full Time Water Safety Development Officer
- Implement Water Safety Programme, subject to funding being available, on a seasonal basis including induction training.
- Promotion of the Beachguard Programme using websites, social and local media.
- Continue, subject to funding and the approval of Council, provision of a financial contribution to Irish Water Safety.
- Implement and manage Water Safety Ireland Guidance Notes

RECREATION AND AMENITY - PARKS, PITCHES, RUNNING TRACKS, OPEN SPACES AND PLAYGROUNDS

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- Rinville Park, Maree, Oranmore, managed by Galway County Council is owned jointly by Galway County Council and Galway City Council. It is a designated location on the 'Wild Atlantic Way'. It is used extensively by local residents, visitors and local organisations such as Scouting Groups. The maintenance programme continues to be delivered in partnership with local groups and is co-funded by Galway City Council. A Concession for the provision of refreshments at Rinville Park from March to October was continued.
- Palace Grounds, Tuam - Maintenance Programme for Palace Grounds Park, Tuam was implemented in association with a Council sponsored Community Employment Scheme. The Palace Grounds have been awarded both the Green Flag Award and Green Heritage Site from An Taisce
- Ballinasloe – Maintenance Programme was continued in Ballinasloe town for parks and open spaces in 2022
- Successful applications were granted for Local Authority owned playgrounds in Ballinasloe and Portumna to access available funding under programmes from both CLÁR and the Department of Children & Youth Affairs (DCYA).
- A Licence Agreement is in place with Tuam Celtic Football Club, to operate Galway County Council's All-Weather Pitches in Tuam.

- Dunlo Recreational Park, Ballinasloe Running Track was temporarily closed at the start of the year due to COVID-19 restrictions. However, it is now re-opened and a schedule is available on www.galway.ie indicating public times.
- In accordance with commitments previously given under the Play Policy, assistance was provided to playgrounds through direct funding and provision of insurance. To-date, a total of 71 playgrounds have been developed in the County, under this policy.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- To run the An Choill Bheag Initiative for the Palace Grounds, Tuam in association with EEU of An Taisce and LEAF Ireland which involves planting small, dense, biodiverse native woodland habitats providing a space for people and wildlife.
- To continue the maintenance and upgrade of Council owned and operated playgrounds subject to funding being available and to apply for available funding under CLÁR and the Department of Children & Youth Affairs (DCYA)
- The Parks maintenance programmes, including grass cutting, will be developed and implemented in line with available resources for Rinville Park, Oranmore, the Palace Grounds, Tuam, Dunlo Park, Ballinasloe with the addition of the Cowpark in Clarenbridge and other amenity and open spaces, with priority afforded, within available resources, to public parks and amenity areas.
- Continue maintenance required in Rinville Park under the Woodlands Plan.
- Endeavour to continue to provide administrative and advisory support to community groups wishing to advance proposals for recreation and to access available funding insofar as staff resources allow.

LEISURE CENTRES – TUAM AND BALLINASLOE

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022

- The management and operation of Leisure Centres at Tuam and Ballinasloe was continued by Coral Leisure Ltd. following an extension of the Licence Agreement for 2022. A Liaison Committee continues to be chaired by senior staff in Corporate Services with Coral Leisure to review the ongoing implementation of the Licence Agreement.
- The management of the leisure centres and associated costs were kept under review in line with increasing energy costs and increased usage after the pandemic and the liaison committee played a key role in monitoring same including the additional financial support required of the Council.
- Corporate Services continue to have oversight of essential maintenance and health and safety related improvement works at both centres.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- The management of the leisure centres and associated costs will continue to be kept under close and ongoing review during 2023 and the liaison committee will continue to play a key role in monitoring and oversight.

- Work on the Sports Capital Grant approved in 2020 for both the Tuam and Ballinasloe Leisure Centre for upgrade of dressing room facilities will progress

COUNCIL FACILITIES FOR LOCAL ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY BENEFIT /HERITAGE/INTERPRETATIVE FACILITIES OPERATIONS

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- Funding was provided for the operation of Athenry Heritage Centre located in St. Mary's Church in Athenry Town Centre, which is in ownership of Galway County Council and subleased to the Development Association who oversee the management of the Centre. The Centre employs a Centre Manager and staff through various schemes.
- The 1691 Battle of Aughrim Visitor Centre is owned and operated by Galway County Council. The Centre re-opened after Covid-19 from the 1st June to 3rd September 2022. Events held in the Visitor Centre over the summer included the Visitor Centre Launch Night, the Martin Joyce Summer Lecture Series with 8 lectures held on Friday afternoons over the summer, and the Annual Walk About and Talk About of the Battle of Aughrim for Heritage Week.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Subject to funding, financial support will continue to be provided to support the operation of the Athenry Heritage Centre and Battle of Aughrim Visitor Centre to build their number of visitors and promote these areas as part of overall Council investments in tourism and support of the local economy.

COMMUNITY WARDEN SERVICE

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- Corporate Services supported the co-ordination of the Warden Service which delivers a range of services on behalf of the Council. Monthly workplans are compiled based on service needs.
- Litter Pollution and Derelict Sites Surveys were carried out, whilst regular inspections of Playgrounds, Parks, Local Authority Estates, Halting Sites, Piers, Ringbuoys, Beaches, Bring Banks etc. continued to be undertaken by the Wardens.
- The Wardens continued to assist with the operation of pay parking and the implementation of traffic management plans in a number of towns across the County.
- Environmental Enforcement including the issuing of Litter fines and notices under the Waste Management and Water Pollution Acts continued to be undertaken by the Warden Service.
- Dog Licensing inspection campaigns continued throughout the year.
- The Wardens continued to implement the provisions of the Roads Act 1993, in relation to abandoned vehicles, with vehicles identified, reported and removed as necessary throughout the year.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- The Infrastructure and Operations Directorate will co-ordinate the allocation of functions to the Community Warden Service and review the impact of functions based on agreed service indicators in 2023.
- Phased replacement of the Community Wardens vans will be implemented insofar as resources may allow.

DISABILITY ACTION

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES 2022:

- As part of the Council's Recreation & Amenity Programme, a number of items of outdoor gym and fitness equipment for use by wheelchair users, was maintained in Dunlo Park Ballinasloe, Palace Grounds, Tuam and Castle Avenue, Portumna.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Support implementation of the Customer Service Action Plan to continually improve access to services for persons with a disability.
- Support improved Access for Persons with a Disability to Recreation and Amenity Facilities, subject to finance being available.

PROMOTION OF THE IRISH LANGUAGE

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- Irish language classes (beginner and intermediate levels) continued to be made available for staff of the local authority and classes were also available for Councillors who expressed an interest in same. These classes were made available online.
- Community Support Grants – The Irish language was specifically included as a category in the Community Support Scheme in 2022. Small scale grants totalling €5,000.00 were approved for projects by Community & Voluntary Organisations to support the promotion and increased use of the Irish language.
- Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe continued its support of the promotion of Irish in communities throughout the County through sponsorship of a Glór na nGael Award, which was presented to Craobh Mhaigh Cuilinn, Co. na Gaillimhe, in March 2022.
- Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe continued to work in partnership with other organisations, informing them of our Language Scheme and ensure that the measures of the Scheme were implemented where such was within the Council's control. Support and advice were provided, along with proofing services.

- Information and consultation continue to be provided to staff of Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe regarding language duties, obligations and legislation, including ensuring bilingualism on www.galway.ie / www.gaillimh.ie, in line with our language scheme.
- The Council continued to co-operate with An Coimisinéir Teanga, in dealing with issues raised by members of the public, regarding Irish language services and legislation.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Continue to provide information to all staff of Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe regarding language duties, obligations and legislation, including information to ensure bilingualism on www.galway.ie / www.gaillimh.ie, in line with our language scheme.
- Continue to provide appropriate language awareness and language support material to staff of Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe, to enhance the provision of services through Irish.
- Continue to provide and build on the number of Irish classes/courses provided throughout the year for staff and Members of Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe, focusing in particular on conversational Irish and possible immersion courses in the Gaeltacht, based on available funding.
- Aim to re-establish the awarding of Scoláireachtaí Gaeltachta Phádraig Mhic Phiarais / Pádraig Pearse Scholarships in partnership with Irish Colleges in the county.
- Continue to promote the Irish language category for community support grants and Gradaim an Chathaoirligh, on a priority basis.
- Lead participation of Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe in activities and events during Seachtain na Gaeilge in March 2023.

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT – COUNCIL PROPERTIES / HEALTH & SAFETY

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- Corporate Services continued to provide caretaking and facilities management services for the Council's network of offices, libraries, and civic functions.
- The Unit continued to deliver on its requirements under the Safety Management Programme in areas such as PAT testing, periodic testing of electrical installations, VDU assessments, fire safety systems, Static Risk Assessments.
- Energy efficiency monitoring and management continues to be a priority focus in the facilities unit. A new Energy Bureau called Atlantic Energy has recently been established with joint funding from LAs in the region and SEAI. Galway County Council has been assigned an Energy Bureau Office to support the organisation in reducing our overall internal energy consumption.
- Ongoing review of refurbishment requirement to Council office buildings to facilitate the provision of additional office and meeting room accommodation.
- The Unit continues to undertake procurement processes for a range of facilities management related contracts to ensure value for money and quality of service are maintained.
- Plans to install a new back-up electrical generator are underway in partnership with the Fire Service Department who are taking the lead role on this project, in conjunction with the IT Section.

- Plans to install EV Chargers to the upper carpark at County Hall.
- Ongoing Legionella Risk Assessments & monitoring programme in place in relation to office and library accommodation.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Maintenance contracts will continue to be the subject of ongoing review with the aim of maintaining costs reductions achieved in recent years and we will seek to achieve further cost reductions.
- In order to operate within available budgets, it may be necessary to limit the maintenance of office and library facilities to focus on priority health and safety requirements and critical operating systems. In relation to Áras an Chontae, a significant number of management and maintenance systems are at or near end of life with an increased potential for systems failure and related response maintenance costs.
- The provision of adequate accommodation at Áras an Chontae is proving to be an ever- increasing challenge. Occupancy demands in a number of areas in HQ are exceeding the available capacity giving rise to the change of use into office space in some locations of the building including the old laboratory space, meeting rooms, training rooms, etc. A review of the organisation's business & customer requirements for the medium to long term has to be undertaken to allow for adequate office space capacity to be available to deliver these services.
- The Unit will aim to further reduce energy consumption across its offices and libraries. In conjunction with the newly appointed Energy Bureau Officer.

MANAGEMENT OF RECORDS & ARCHIVES

The Archives Section works to ensure the care, preservation, management of and access to the Council's archives. Archives are an important asset to Galway County Council assisting it meet its objective to be transparent and accountable. They are also important resources and tools for research, education and cultural tourism. They are valuable cultural heritage assets which require specific care. The Section also provides policy advice to the Council on the care and management of its records.

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

Continued to provide core archival services, in terms of access and preservation. Such as maintaining and updating information on Galway County Council's archival holdings through its descriptive lists and its on-line catalogue, and through various archival portals; monitored the environmental conditions of the archives and endeavoured to ensure their continued protection, preservation and management, despite storage facilities not meeting internationally acceptable preservation standards.

- Continued the programme of processing archive material and collections^{[11](#)}. This activity is the lynchpin between access and use; charged with providing an effective and efficient connection to our holdings, first and foremost our descriptive lists and on-line catalogue provide this connection as do our website, together with entries on various archive portals.

- Provided reader services, such as answering research queries and providing advice and guidance to researchers.
- Continued the programme of providing security backup and reference surrogates to collections^[2]. The availability of a significant quantity and variety of Archives collection on the [Digital Archives](#) has been an invaluable asset and benefit to the researching public throughout the year, especially when access to physical collections had been severely impacted by the coronavirus pandemic early in the year.
- Commenced process to upgrade the Archives database system (i.e. transfer from Adlib to Axiell Collections).
- Facilitated the conservation of several newly acquired volumes from the Tuam Poor Law Union collection.
- Completed survey for National Centre for Research and Remembrance (NCRR).
- Input into the draft Galway County Council Culture & Creativity Strategy 2023-2027.
- County Development Plan process by assessing proposed Architectural Conservation Areas and reporting on submissions.
- To highlight an important photographic collection (GP9/), centred on islands along the west coast, from Kerry to Donegal, including the Aran Islands, produced *Island Images: From the Chambers Archive, 1929-1938*, part funded by Creative Ireland.
- Provided advice on records management best practice and assistance to Galway County Council units as required, working with various units to update in-house Retention Schedules, and compile and action Disposal Certificates.
- Continued the management of non-current record transfers to storage and record retrievals and returns: 790 requests were processed from January to-date (08/10/2022). There are now 135,328 entries on the ArLink records management database.

^[1] Such as Ffrench Estate (Monivea) Accounts 1875 and Rent Ledger 1874-1904 (GS22/01); Irish Tourist Association (ITA) Topographical and General Survey, 1944-46 (ITA/); Galway Co. Co. Loughrea Municipal District Minutes (GC/MDL/), 2014-2021. Tuam MD Minutes, 2014-2021; Ballinasloe Urban Council, Town Development Plan supporting documents (BUC/PD/DP/); also additional accruals to Galway Co. Co. Fairs & Marts collection (GC/CC/151/), Planning / Development Policy & Planning (GC/P1/1/), Roads CE Orders 2009-2014 (GC/RT1/14/); and to Galway Poor Law Union Board of Guardians collection (GPL6/); newly acquired additions to the Kelly of Castlekelly collection (G00/04/)

^[2] GPL6/41-86 and accession 2018/16

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Concentrate on processing archive collections, whilst continuing to provide access and advice to researchers.
- Continue the programme of providing security backup and reference surrogates to collections.
- Continue to promote awareness of Galway County Council Archives' collections.
- Galway County Council will continue to avail of commercial storage for its non-current records and manage the retrieval and return of records held in off-site storage.
- Continue to liaise with and support the various Units within Galway County Council to develop, maintain and implement file classification and record retention schedules and to provide advice on records management best practice. Each Unit will be encouraged to review and update their schedules on a regular basis.

- Liaise with Corporate Services and Library Services in the quest for alternative and improved accommodation for the Archive repository and for a Record Store.

REGISTER OF ELECTORS

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- The Register of Electors for 2022/2023 was published on the 1st February 2022 and came into force on 15th February 2022. The Register was sent to all Garda Stations, Libraries and Post Offices and Council Offices in the County.
- Phase 1 of the Electoral Reform Act 2022 went live for all Local Authorities on the 13th October 2022 and a Rolling Register of Electors is now in place.
- A public awareness campaign, through TV, Radio, social media and local print media was introduced from the 7th November to inform the public of the Electoral Modernisation Project and for members of the public to update their details on the Register

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Work will continue on the Electoral Modernisation Project with local campaigns for people in Galway to update their details on the Electoral Register through www.checktheregister.ie

CORPORATE PLANNING & SUPPORT / LOCAL REPRESENTATION/ CIVIC LEADERSHIP

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- Administrative services are provided for the Chief Executive, Cathaoirleach of the Council, Elected Members, Corporate Policy Group and Council Meetings.

SERVICES DELIVERED FOR PLENARY COUNCIL MEETINGS AND MEMBERS

- Preparation of Agendas for Ordinary, Special and Annual Meetings of the Plenary Council, co-ordination of Agenda Items with all Sections, facilitating the Meetings and recording the Minutes.
- Publication of the Agendas, Minutes and Agenda documentation to the Extranet.
- Facilitating meetings of the Corporate Policy Group.
- Facilitation of Expressions of Interest for attendance at Training Events and Conferences.
- Compilation of Reports to Council in accordance with the Local Government Act for Authorisation of Attendance by Members at Training Events & Conferences.

- Arranging in-house Training in line with the agreed Galway County Council Training & Development Plan for the Members.
- Processing Members Travel & Subsistence Claims for attendance at Training & Conferences.
- Facilitate the submission of Summaries of Conferences attended by the Members, preparation of Report for Agenda and publishing Summaries on the Website.
- Maintaining Database of Attendances of the Members at all Meetings of the Council, including Plenary, SPC, Municipal District, JPC, Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee, Local Community Development Committee, Road Safety Together Committee.
- Facilitate the compilation of the Public Register of all Attendances and Payments of the Councillors.
- Maintenance of Ethics Register for Councillors.
- Facilitating the Members in the return of Donations Declarations.
- Facilitation of Civic Receptions is supported by the Corporate Team in response to proposals of the Plenary Council
- Progressed the use of technology to facilitate meetings

FACILITATING THE JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE

- Galway County Council operates a Joint Policing Committee (JPC) in conjunction with local Garda Síochána management. The operation of this Committee is an assigned statutory function, in accordance with Section 35(4) and 36(1) of the Garda Síochána Act 2005 and in accordance with Revised JPC Guidelines issued in 2014.
- The function of a Joint Policing Committee is set out in section 36(2) of the Garda Síochána Act, which states: *“The joint policing committee’s function is to serve as a forum for consultations, discussions and recommendations on matters affecting the policing of the local authority’s administrative area”*.
- Meetings of the JPC were held on 7th February, 9th May, 12th September and the 14th November 2022.

SERVICES PROVIDED BY CORPORATE SERVICES FOR THE ORGANISATION

- Maintenance of Ethics Register for Relevant Staff.
- Support provided by Corporate Services for Receiving, Registering and Opening of Tenders for the organisation through the eTenders system.
- Register of Chief Executive’s Orders maintained, Orders Numbered by Corporate Services for each Section.
- Corporate Services continued to serve as liaison for the Office of the Ombudsman in relation to queries raised by the Office in relation to service delivery by Galway County Council. All correspondence is co-ordinated via Corporate Services, with a tracking system in place.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Corporate Services will continue to support the Cathaoirleach, elected members and the organisation of Plenary Council Meetings.

- The Council will maintain Staff & Members Ethics Register and facilitate the Members in the return of Donations Statements.
 - The Unit will publish details of all Payments to Elected Members, including in respect of Outside Bodies to which the Members are nominated.
 - The Unit will actively support the role of the Corporate Policy Group.
 - The Unit will continue to facilitate the Joint Policing Committee and other meetings as necessary
 - The Council will continue to comply with its statutory requirements regarding Data Protection, Freedom of Information and Access to Information on the Environment legislation and will continue to facilitate the organisation in relation to Ombudsman queries.
 - Corporate Services will continue to facilitate the reception, opening and recording of Tenders received by the Council.
 - A Corporate Governance Risk Compliance Software Solution will be procured. The system will be custom built to streamline existing manual processes in respect of risk activities across the organisation and provide direct access to risk information, data and instant reporting on a real time basis.
-

DATA PROTECTION

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into effect on 25th May 2018 with the purpose of maintaining a uniform approach to Data Protection across all EU member states. The GDPR is binding in its entirety and requires the use of new privacy principles within all aspects of business operations: such as Privacy by Default, Privacy by Design, Accountability and Transparency. All staff have been afforded the opportunity to attend training sessions and briefings on the changes that the new legislation brings to Galway County Council.

The Data Protection Officer (DPO) is assigned to Corporate Services and is the contact point for all Subject Access Requests received by Galway County Council. The DPO is also the Council's contact point with the Office of the Data Protection Commission.

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- Implementation of the Data Protection Compliance Plan continued to be prioritised during 2022. This Compliance Plan focuses on the 7 Data Management Principles, Data Controller Obligations, and Data Subject Rights. In order to progress the Plan, the focus on increased Staff Awareness and Training and the implementation of Policies and Procedures that create a more transparent, secure and trusted environment for all personal data in our control, continued in 2022.
- The Data Management Platform (PrivacyEngine) was launched across the organisation in 2021 as an effective tool to manage and ensure compliance with the GDPR. Improvements to the Platform were implemented during 2022 with new functionality added, including functionality to conduct a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA). Each Unit of the Council has a designated Data Champion responsible for co-ordinating the Data Protection requirements of the Unit.
- Each business unit continued to develop Privacy Notices in respect of all processing activities and implement the required Data Processing Agreements governing the processing of personal data where a Processor is engaged to process personal data on the instruction of the Council.

- PrivacyEngine includes a built-in online training module that allowed the Council to create and manage training courses for all employees to ensure increased awareness and understanding while reducing risks. The following Data Protection/GDPR training courses were delivered to approx. 780 employees in Quarter 1 & Quarter 4 of 2022:
 - Quarter 1: Maintaining a Record of Processing Activities; Policies/Procedures to Implement; Designing a Privacy Notice; Data Breach Training
 - Quarter 4: Phishing Email Training; Internet Acceptable Use; Data Management Principles of GDPR; Overview of General Data Protection Regulation
 - Online GDPR training is delivered to all new employees of Galway County Council as part of their induction to the Council.
- The DPO provided a Data Protection/GDPR Training Workshop to the Beach Lifeguards in advance of the summer season
- 13 no. Data Subject Rights requests were received up to the end of October 2022; 9 were granted, 2 were refused and 2 were withdrawn.
- The Staff Data Protection Newsletter which is designed to raise awareness of Data Protection issues across the organisation, continued to be published in 2022 with an issue released at the end of each quarter.
- The Data Protection Staff Intranet Resources is updated on an ongoing basis and continues to provide useful links and reference points for ensuring Data Protection related compliance for all business units.
- Review of existing local data sharing arrangements between public service bodies was finalised in 2022 to inform a Return to the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform (DPER) identifying any arrangements that rely on a lawful basis for sharing under Section 38 of the Data Protection Act 2018 in advance of the enactment of Sections 6(2)(3) of the Data Sharing & Governance Act 2019 which will be enacted on 19th December 2022.
- Galway County Council has received no further correspondence to date from the Data Protection Commissioners (DPC) in relation to the DPC's Data Protection Audit of CCTV carried out in 2018.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- The Compliance Project Plan will continue to be a priority for 2022, focusing on Data Management Principles, Data Controller Obligations, Data Subject Rights, supported by increased Awareness and Training, Policies and Procedures that creates a more transparent, secure and trusted environment for all personal data in our control.
- The DPO will continue to act as the contact point for the public in relation to Data Subject Access Requests and any other information sought and also for the Office of the Data Protection Commission.
- The PrivacyEngine Data Management Platform will continue to facilitate the management of all aspects of data protection within the organisation to demonstrate compliance and deliver real business value, turning data protection and privacy into a key priority.
- Online GDPR training will continue to be delivered to Galway County Council employees via PrivacyEngine to ensure increased awareness and understanding while reducing risks.
- Finalisation of the CCTV Audit by the Data Protection Commissioners will be facilitated

- The Record of Processing Activities will be reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis by each Unit.
- Work will continue to develop Privacy Notices and ensure all Data Processing Agreements are in place in each business unit.
- The DPO will continue to provide support and advice to business units in the conducting of Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA) in respect of any new processing likely to result in a high risk to personal data.
- The DPO will continue to provide guidance on Data Protection & GDPR to business units within Galway County Council while supporting and facilitating the work of the Data Protection contacts in each business unit.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON THE ENVIRONMENT

The Freedom of Information Officer/Access to Information on the Environment Officer is assigned to Corporate Services and is the contact point for Freedom of Information (FOI) and Access to Information on the Environment (AIE) Decision Makers & Appeals Officers in the organisation and also the Local Government Management Agency and the Office of the Information Commissioner/Office of the Commissioner for Environmental Information.

All FOI & AIE Requests received are processed and tracked through Corporate Services and a Disclosure Log of FOI requests maintained.

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

109 requests were received up to the end of October 2022. Decisions were issued as follows:

- 38 granted, 19 part-granted, 35 refused, 3 transferred, 3 withdrawn, 4 withdrawn and dealt with outside of FOI, 7 pending decision.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON THE ENVIRONMENT INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

27 requests were received to end October 2022. Decisions were issued as follows:

- 8 granted, 7 part-granted, 9 refused, 1 deemed refusal, 2 pending decision.

CUSTOMER SERVICE, COMMUNICATIONS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Corporate Services continued to coordinate customer services activities in the Council, with Customer Services Team the first point of contact for the public. The Customer Services Desk continues to be operated to provide efficient referral/query handling for customers as they enter Áras an Chontae. The

phone service continues to be operated from here, with back up from the Customer Services Communications Centre on the second floor of Áras an Chontae as well.

- A Communications Graduate is based in Corporate Services and continues to work with department to publicise and promote Galway County Council and events on social media
- Further increased use of Social Media (Twitter & Facebook) is continuing to grow and develop.
- Social Media has been integrated with Advertising and other Promotional Campaigns of the Council and specific attention given to the use of Social Media during severe weather events. There has been an increase in the posting of events on behalf of staff with a focus on Road Works, Water Disruptions and any other day to day events happening throughout the County.
- Communications Section developed the programme for ‘Your Council Day’ national Twitter campaign as coordinated by the LGMA.

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- The email addresses, customerservices@galwaycoco.ie and gaeilge@cocogaillimh.ie remain a central point of access to information for Staff and Customers alike. Staff are asked to submit information on projects, campaigns, events, works etc. so that the Customer Services Team are aware what events are taking place across the Council and are better informed to handle queries. The general public can also email these addresses with general queries, which are acknowledged and directed to the relevant sections as required for their attention and direct reply.
- Provided information on Council services and operations and advised how the public could engage with staff and services.
- Customer Services is the central point of contact on behalf of Galway County Council for the new Government portal for Public Consultations.
- Door and car park access system continue to be maintained by Customer Services on behalf of the Building and Facilities Unit.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Continue to co-ordinate implementation of the Customer Service Action Plan in line with agreed targets and goals in the Quality Customer Services Strategy.
- Develop branding and standard report templates for use by all staff in Galway County Council
- Re-start the Customer Services Officers Group meetings, information sharing and joint actions across all sections.
- Continue to focus on the development of the County Council’s use of Social Media as a source of information and an efficient communication channel for our customers.

OPERATION OF MARKETS & CASUAL TRADING AND REQUESTS FOR FILMING IN COUNTY

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- Casual Trading Licenses were issued for trading in a number of towns and villages throughout the County including: Athenry (5), Ballinasloe (6), Clifden (8), Gort (10), Loughrea (2), Mountbellew (7), Dunmore (1), Headford (1), Portumna (5), Tuam (8); in line with Casual Trading Byelaws.
- Other Casual Trading Licences issued were for Ballygar Festival, (17), Dunmore (28), Clifden Show (10), Clifden Arts Festival (2), St Patricks Day Festival Clifden (1)
- Continue to promote trading where bays are vacant by contacting those on the waiting lists and continued to monitor data on Casual Trading through Community Wardens Work Plans returns.
- 27 Requests from film makers etc. to use public property for filming were also processed.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Continue to issue Casual Trading Licenses.
- Continue to facilitate queries and issue permissions as required to Media and Production Companies wishing to film in the County.

INTERNAL AUDIT ACTIVITY

Internal auditing is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve the organisations operations. It helps an organisation accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance process.

The Internal Audit Unit is responsible for providing assurance to the Chief Executive of the Council on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's internal control and risk management systems.

The Internal Audit work programme is driven by the annual Internal Audit plan which is drawn up in conjunction with the Executive Team and the Audit Committee.

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- Completion of six Audit reports in line with the Internal Audit Plan 2022
- Quarterly checking of the cash office receipts, and lodgements and cancelled receipts was carried out.
- Periodic checking is carried out in the Motor Tax Office headquarters in Áras an Chontae.
- Quarterly checking is carried out on both Low Value Purchase Cards and Fuel Card transactions to establish compliance with the terms of use of the cards.
- Periodic checking of prompt payment internal penalties.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Drafting of the 2023 Internal Audit plan for approval by the Audit Committee & Chief Executive
- Reviews of recommendations made on the 2022 Audit Reports.
- Facilitate the work of the Audit Committee /administration of meetings
- Completion of audits as per the 2023 Audit Plan.

- Compliance with the Quality Assurance requirements of the Public Spending Code.
- Continued work on policy compliance and value for money testing.
- Quarterly monitoring of purchases made using Low Value Purchase Cards and Fuel cards.
- Periodic checking in the Motor Tax and Cash Office/Prompt Payment Interest Penalties.

LEGAL ADVISORY SERVICES

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- The Department continued to provide legal and advisory services for all programme areas and Directorates. These services included the acquisition and sale of properties, the conduct of litigation to include District Court enforcement prosecutions, Circuit and High Court, including Judicial Review, all of which resumed to normal levels as the year progressed. The completion of land acquisitions, CPOs on inter-urban routes and road widening schemes, were also substantial areas of work for the Law Agent Unit.
- The Case Management System, which facilitates the use of templates to create workflows for the efficient and cost-effective delivery of legal services, continues to be updated on an ongoing basis.
- Work has continued on the Council Register of Lands, in co-operation with our partners in other units such as IS, Finance and Housing. Significant progress has been achieved in terms of the Register, and indeed on the Archiving of old files, through the use of Remote Working helping to ensure high staff productivity during this challenging period.
- We continued in our significant efforts to meet our requirements in terms of the new Data Protection Regulations to include Data Mapping and Risk Control.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Focus on and continue in our efforts to provide efficient legal advisory services for all programme areas throughout the organisation.
- Workflows for the Case Management System will continue to be created, further enhancing work delivery and capacity.
- We will ensure that our team members will, through the appropriate training, continue to keep up to date with developments in Local Government Law and Office Management.
- The ongoing work on the Register of Lands will remain a priority area of work with the ultimate aim of bringing the council's record of property ownership up to date.

ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE, FIRE & MAJOR EMERGENCY SERVICES, HUMAN RESOURCES, INFORMATION & COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

WASTE MANAGEMENT INFRASTRUCTURE

ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- The landfill in Kilconnell is operating in the aftercare period of the EPA Waste License. No complaints have been received this year. Environmental monitoring is being performed to the license schedule. Steel perimeter security fencing has been installed around the entire site, c. 4km, and a new CCTV system was commissioned.
- A multi-disciplinary design team comprising Fehily Timoney and Brady Shipman Martin have been procured to design an amenity facility within the Kilconnell landfill site. Part funding from ORIS was secured for the project.
- Remedial works to the leachate and gas management systems have been completed at Pollboy Landfill.
- Requests for further information (RFI's) have been processed in respect to the Certification of Authorisation (CoA) applications for the Gort & Tuam Historic Landfills. A draft CoA for the historic landfill at Clifden (Tullyvogheen) was issued by the EPA and representations were lodged in respect to the decision/conditions within the statutory timeframe. A CoA application is currently being prepared for the historic landfill on Inis Moir.
- Improvement works at our Tuam and Clifden Civic Amenity Sites (CAS) are complete and a new three-year service contract with Barna Recycling is underway which offers an extended range of acceptable wastes to the public.
- Planning permission was granted by An Bord Pleanala for a new CAS in Gort. A sewer and water connection offer were secured from Irish Water and Fehily Timony were procured to provide construction design and project management services.
- A full inspection of our bottle bank sites was completed, and a register developed to track stock inspection, maintenance, and replacements. A new bottle bank site will be provided in Creggs and the Bottle banks in Tubber have been removed at the request of the new owner of the site.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Progress amenity design project at Kilconnell Landfill.
- Upgrade SCADA system at Pollboy Landfill and review and update safety documentation for the facility.
- Procure landscape design consultant to carry out an assessment of options for an amenity development at Pollboy Landfill.
- Progress CoA applications, RFI's, monitoring, funding applications and draft license representations in respect to all high risk (Category A) historic landfill sites.
- Progress Gort CAS development to construction stage.
- Renew bottle bank service contract.

ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING AND ENFORCEMENT MEASURES

The work programme set out in the RMCEI Plan 2022 was completed.

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- Details of enforcement notices and warning letters which were issued and prosecutions which were initiated under environmental legislation in 2022 will be set out in the 2022 RMCEI (Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections) returns which are due for issue by the 16th of February 2022.
- The 2022 RMCEI returns will detail planned inspections carried out on regulated facilities and unplanned inspections carried out in relation to complaints received and incidents of environmental pollution. Inspections were carried out in relation to complaints, permitted waste facilities, permitted collectors, quarries, garages, various waste producer categories, discharge licences, sewage sludge facilities, farms, private wastewater treatment systems, air pollution licences, deco paints facilities and solvent registered sites and bathing waters
- Joint enforcement inspections were carried out with the Gardai, NWTFS office, CU WERLA, Galway City Council.
- A few littered 'black spots' were cleaned up and barriers and signage were erected with funding provided by DCCAE under the Anti-Dumping Initiative 2022. A substantial amount of waste was removed as part of the initiative which was publicised locally on Council's social media and in local newspapers.
- Bulky Goods Collections were organised in conjunction with Galway City Council and additional Bulky Goods collection was organised at Maam Cross.
- The Environment Enforcement Team carried out Awareness Campaigns in relation to the proper use of bring bank facilities and the facilities available at Civic Amenity Sites. An electronic signage and billboard campaign was rolled out across the county highlighting issues associated with illegal collectors.

- An awareness campaign was launched on the 9^h of June in conjunction with the Gardai, Galway City Council. Radio interviews were held on Galway Bay FM in conjunction with the day and checkpoints were in place throughout the county.
- Monitoring was carried out in relation to drinking water, bathing water, rivers, lakes, and landfills in accordance with legislative requirements both directly and via contracts with external laboratories. Follow-up actions were taken in response to non-compliances.
- Inspections were carried out in relation to approximately 130 discharge licences, 88 domestic wastewater treatment systems and 15 farms. Enforcement actions were carried out where necessary.

ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING AND ENFORCEMENT MEASURES

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- Public notices were issued, and investigative monitoring was carried out as required in response to drinking water and bathing water non-compliances. Six Blue Flags and Six Green Coast plaques were awarded to bathing areas in County Galway.
- Activities which have the potential to cause air pollution such as dry cleaning, vehicle refinishing, and quarries were regulated.
- The Environment Section reviewed all significant planning applications for developments other than applications for single houses. These included industrial, housing estate, energy, waste management and quarry developments. Comprehensive reviews are carried out to ensure that the proposals comply with a myriad of relevant environmental legislation and guidance documents.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- The Council will set out all planned pro-active inspections of authorised facilities under various environmental legislation in the 2023 RMCEI Plan which is due for issue by February 16th, 2023. The scale of enforcement activity in 2023 will reflect the resources available for inspections and will be on a prioritised basis taking into consideration of Departmental, EPA, LAWPRO and WERLA guidance.
- The Council will continue to carry out investigations and monitoring under environmental legislation, in accordance with government policy and EPA directions, and take enforcement measures as required for non-compliance with environmental legislation.
- There will be continued review of the most successful ways to deal with illegal dumping. The Waste Presentation Byelaws will be enforced, and fixed penalty notices will be issued as required.
- The Council will work with the public and other agencies, including the WFD Office, on the improvement of water quality in identified priority catchments, through public awareness and a concentrated

programme of inspections of potentially polluting sources including large scale private wastewater treatment systems, farms, and domestic wastewater treatment systems.

DERELICT SITES AND DANGEROUS STRUCTURES

ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- Pursuant to authorisation by the Courts under Section 3(5) of the Local Government Act 1964 a property on the corner of Abbey Row & Bridge Street, Athenry was demolished by the Council.
- The Council continued to exercise its powers under the Derelict Sites Act 1990 and the Local Government (Sanitary Services) Act 1964, to work with the owners of neglected, ruinous, and unsightly buildings and land to take remedial action. Enforcement action continued to take place where required.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Sites in the county will continue to be reviewed in accordance with the Derelict Sites policy and the Dangerous Structures policy.

BURIAL GROUNDS

ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- There are currently 233 burial grounds listed on The Council's burial ground register. The Council, with the participation of the many local burial ground committees, carries out maintenance and improvement work as resources permit.
- The burial ground capital works programme continued throughout 2022. A new burial ground was constructed at Brooklodge and the extension of the Quansboro burial ground completed. Works have commenced on an extension to Creagh (Ballinasloe) burial ground, and the columbarium wall sections have been completed in Moycullen. Part 8 planning for the development of a new cemetery at Ballyconneely has been approved and a Part 8 submission for an extension at Duniry was lodged.
- Reports and surveys have been undertaken in respect to burial ground developments for Claregalway and Kilbannon.
- An annual grant is provided to committees who maintain the burial grounds in their area. A 3-tier grant will be awarded to 190 Committees in 2022 - €600, €450 or €300.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Complete projects at construction stage, procure contractors for permitted projects and advance projects at planning stage to application submission.
- Work with communities where capacity deficits exist to find solutions / identify suitable sites.
- Draft new Burial Ground Bye Laws for consideration by the Council.

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS AND EDUCATION

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- Assistant Environmental Awareness Officer is involved in promoting environmental awareness through ongoing engagement with the domestic and commercial sectors. Covid restrictions still prevented full activities in early 2022.
- Social media, direct email contact, and networks such as the PPN network, Tidy Towns network and school network have been used to deliver information on litter, waste management, waste prevention, food waste, home composting, household hazardous waste, energy conservation and water conservation and promotion of waste management services.
- Ongoing involvement with Tidy Towns groups.
- Rolled out of reuse coffee cup campaign “Conscious Cup Campaign” through Tidy Towns network.
- Environmental Awareness Information stand held at 3 public events and 3 group meetings.
- Supported WEEE Ireland to deliver 22 waste electrical goods collections at local community level.
- Ongoing involvement in the Green Schools programme with over 90% of county schools involved. 38 schools renewed their flag in 2022.
- Information on other events, such as WEEE Battery Collection competition, An Taisce Clean air programme, SPAR National Tree Day, was delivered to schools.
- Picker Pals programme was rolled out to 56 classes in national schools.
- Support of National Spring Clean with over 190 events and over 600 trees were distributed during National Tree Week.
- 13 Christmas tree recycling sites were provided in communities.
- Anti-Litter campaigns continue to be rolled out in the communities. The “Green Dog Walkers” was launched as an addition to the Dog Fouling campaign “Remember, if they Poop, You Scoop”. Anti-Litter Awareness Audio devices were installed at litter black spots. The Gum litter Task Force campaign was supported. Anti-litter adverts were run on local radio and social media. Followed up on IBAL (Irish Business Against Litter) reports.
- An Anti - Litter Advertisement was run in cinemas in conjunction with Galway City Council with guaranteed 192,000 admissions to see it.
- Continued to liaise and work with Connacht Ulster Regional Waste Management Office.
- Promoted mywaste.ie and supported October Reuse Month 2022.
- Supported GAA Green Club Campaign and we await final environmental awareness tool kit to be delivered to all clubs.
- Promotion of environmental awareness with Waste Enforcement, Community and Enterprise Unit, Housing, facilities, PPN Co- Ordinator and Heritage Officer.
- Car disc holders with Anti-Litter message promoted.
- Ongoing implementation of the LAPN / Waste Prevention Programme with continued rollout of “water fonts in schools” project.
- Supported Climate Adaptation Strategy rollout.

- Supported An Taisce Blue Flag, Green Coast, and Clean Coast programme. 6 Blue Flag beaches, 6 Green Coast areas and supported clean coast areas. Promote art competition for schools in relation to Blue Flags.
- Supported national social media campaigns from WEEE Ireland, Leave No Trace, and Stopfoodwaste.ie, etc.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- The Awareness campaign will continue to further enhance partnerships with community, schools and voluntary groups and continued the dissemination of information to all sectors.
- Review and publish new Litter Management Plan.
- Continue to support rollout of Climate Adaptation Strategy.
- Continue to liaise with Regional Waste Management Office.
- Ongoing implementation of the Litter Management, Waste Management and Waste Prevention Programme.
- Continue to support campaigns such National Spring Clean, National Tree Week, Gum Litter Taskforce campaign, Blue Flag beaches, Green Coasts, Clean Coasts, Community Environment Action Fund, Reuse Month, Green schools, Picker Pals, GAA Green Clubs, LAPN, etc.
- Targeted Anti-Litter Awareness campaign through communities, schools, social media etc.
- Continue promotion of Anti - Dog Fouling programme.

ENERGY & CLIMATE

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- The mission of local authorities, as set out in Delivering Effective Climate Action, 2030 is to deliver transformative change and measurable climate action across our counties and within our own organisations, through leadership, example, and mobilising action at a local level. In order to detail the steps, we will take to achieve this, we are required to prepare and adopt a Climate Action Plan. Draft guidelines have been issued and we have commenced the preparation work including the development of a greenhouse gas emission baseline and risk assessment.
- As part of this work, we have established the necessary organisation support and governance structures. This includes a Climate Action Steering Group whose membership consists of the senior member of staff in each Section. We have also established an Energy Team whose role is to reduce internal GCC energy use and we are in the process of setting up a Climate Action Team with staff across the organisation who have a role in relation to climate action.
- Work is also ongoing across the organisation in relation to climate change including the retrofit of social housing, reduction in the internal energy use in buildings and lighting, development of an EV strategy, just transition, climate proofing our plans, raising awareness, developing stakeholder networks including support of existing projects, training of staff, biodiversity protection, environmental education and many other related areas. As part of our role, the Environment Section supports, reports on, and highlights this work to varying degrees.



- We supported the development of 5 community Energy Master Plans with bridging loans of €75,000 in total. Three of these plans have now been fully completed and we have started the process of supporting the development of 3 further plans.
- Galway County Council fulfilled their statutory obligations in respect of energy consumption monitoring and reporting in 2022. Galway County Council met the target of a 33% improvement in energy efficiency by 2020 and is now working on our new targets of a 50% improvement in energy efficiency and a 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.
- A Climate Change Coordinator was appointed in Q2 2022. We also have a member of staff who is moving into a role as an internal Energy Manager. An Energy Bureau Officer from the newly established Regional Energy Bureau has been allocated to Galway County Council to gather data on our internal energy use with a view to developing a Register of Opportunities that can be put forward for funding.
- Galway County Council continues to implement the County's Climate Adaptation Strategy.
- We administered the funding applied for under the Climate Action Opportunity Fund 2021.
- We participated in the CCMA Climate Action Training Plan.

PROJECTIONS FOR 2023:

- Develop the Climate Action Plan including stakeholder engagement, development of the draft plan, and implementation of a consultation and communication programme. Review the Climate Adaptation Strategy and incorporate relevant actions into the Climate Action Plan. Continue to cultivate and actively participate in partnerships with enterprise, community, voluntary, 3rd level institutions and the research community to deliver on initiatives that reduce climate impact.
- Appoint additional staff required to prepare and implement the Climate Action Plan and administer the Community Climate Action Fund. It is expected that a Climate Action Community Officer and Climate Action Officer will be appointed.
- Manage the Climate Action Steering Group and Climate Action Team and report progress to the Management Team. Continue to support and report on work ongoing across the organisation in relation to climate change. Run internal engagement and education campaigns.
- Manage the Energy Team and work on our new targets of a 50% improvement in energy efficiency and a 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. Work with the regional Energy Bureau to develop a Register of Opportunities, apply for funding and implement projects to assist in meeting these targets.
- Continue to engage with the CCMA Local Authority Climate Action Training.
- Continue to support Sustainable Energy Communities throughout the county to develop and implement their Energy Master Plans.

ANIMAL CONTROL AND WELFARE

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:



- Under the Control of Dogs Act, 2 fulltime dog wardens provide a dog control service in the county utilising 2 leased dog pound facilities (one in the west of the county and one in the east of the county). These are under veterinary supervision and operate as laid out in the councils Dog Control Policy. In April 2022, a new dog warden was appointed to cover the east of the county arising from the retirement of the previous dog warden in August 2021. Training was given on internal procedures, operation of equipment and dog behaviours and best practices on handling as well as legal training on Control of Dogs Act and Dog Breeding Establishment Act.
- Galway County Council Dog Warden Service has seen a considerable increase in the volume of dogs coming into our care over the course of the year which is indicative of national trends at present and is placing considerable pressure on resources and the ability of Rescue groups to rehome on whom we rely heavily on, as, without a local authority owned pound we do not perform direct rehoming.
- During 2022 The Council entered into an agreement with a contractor for the provision of dog shelter and related services following expressions of interest sought in December 2021. This arose from the end of the lease of one of our two facilities in September 2021.
- All complaints received by the dog warden service continue to be logged on our database, investigated and actioned. With the lifting of Covid restrictions and with the filling of the position of dog warden for the east of the County, door to door dog licencing campaigns have recommenced resulting in an increase in dog licencing compliance in comparison to that of 2021. The National Dog Licencing Database (NRDS), which was rolled out in 2018, continues to be an important factor in maintaining licencing compliance in the county.
- In September 2022 Galway County Council supported a Microchipping Fundraising event run by dog rescue charity MADRA, promoting the importance of microchipping compliance amongst dog owners in line with the requirements of the Microchipping of Dogs Regulations 2015.
- 30 enforcement actions have been brought under the Control of Dogs Act (as of 26.10.2022).
- The council were represented at national level on the CCMA Control of Dogs Working Group at director level and veterinary officer level.
- The dog warden service continues to support Galway County Council's Environment Section Anti-Dog Fouling Initiatives such as the 'If They Poop, You Scoop!' and Green Dog Walkers campaigns while also continuing to promote responsible dog ownership across the community. Council social media platforms continue to be utilised as required to maximise engagement with the wider community regarding responsible dog ownership.
- Dog Waste Bag dispenser units are now installed in many of our towns, villages, and amenity areas. Additional Dog Fouling signage has also been procured in 2022 for distribution to affected areas throughout the county.
- The Council continued to implement the Dog Breeding Establishment Act 2010 which requires the registration, and compliance with standards, of all premises coming under the definition of a 'dog breeding establishment'.
- The Council continued to be active in providing shelter facilities for impounding of horses, sheep, cattle and goats at the Large Animal Pound which operates under the Pounds Act Legislation.
- Where possible, dog wardens were involved in liaising with members of the public and Gardaí in assisting with dog thefts and missing dogs and dangerous dogs

- Animal welfare cases involving dogs, cattle, sheep and horses were reviewed and referred where appropriate to the relevant Gardaí, Dept. of Agriculture and welfare groups. In January 2022 a cross agency operation involving GCC dog warden service resulted in the removal of 22 dogs from a site in an animal welfare situation.
- The Dog Warden service continue to investigate sheep kills in line with policy and liaise with An Garda Síochána where required.
- The Dog Warden service continues to operate the agreed Protocol with the An Garda Síochána when required to assist with search and arrest operations in a variety of situations.
- The Dog Warden service attended the National Dog Control Service Training and Networking Day in Tullamore during the month of September 2022.
- The Council veterinary service continues to liaise with Housing in the implementation of the Control of Horses Act.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Ongoing improvements to the efficiency and effectiveness of the Dog Control service regarding the effective resourcing of the service including staffing and facilities available and responding to the post pandemic challenges to the service.
- The Council will continue to be represented at National Level on the CCMA control of Dogs Working Group.
- The Council will continue to engage and support Galway's animal charities in their work in response to the high volumes of dogs that are entering the system at present, and which is likely to be ongoing concern throughout 2023.
- Review of training requirements and of standard operation procedures for dog wardens in line with existing legislation, and in keeping with best practice.
- Continue to look at methods of increasing compliance with dog licensing with targeted licence checks to be carried out across the county in conjunction with the community warden service.
- Microchipping Awareness campaign to be conducted to ensure compliance with the Microchipping of Dogs Regulations and assist in promoting responsible ownership.
- Devise new campaigns and continue to highlight importance of neutering pets and preventing unwanted litters, particularly amongst the rural and farming community, as large numbers of collie type dogs enter our system and are very difficult to rehome.
- In conjunction with Dogs Trust Ireland, Responsible Dog Ownership workshops will continue to be promoted in County Libraries and Primary Schools throughout the county.
- The Council will continue to support anti Dog Fouling Campaigns and the introduction of new measures to target Dog Fouling in the County.
- The Council will continue to review reported cases of animal welfare breaches, and refer to Dept. of Agriculture, Gardaí and welfare groups as required, within the capabilities of the allocated resources.
- Dog Breeding Establishments on the register will be inspected and all reports of unregistered breeding establishments will be followed up. It is a legal requirement that all establishments apply for registration.

- The Council will continue to provide and maintain our shelter services ensuring animal well-being for all animals that come into our care.

FOOD SAFETY

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- The council has a service contract with the FSAI under which it regulates EC approved abattoirs and meat processing plants located in the county and city of Galway, through the veterinary service. Service contract had a duration of 3 months in January 2022, and this was rolled over 4 times. Service contract is fulfilled by two whole time veterinary officers. One veterinary officer retired in September 2022.
- This service contract requires that all animals are inspected before and after slaughter, animal residue sampling and welfare checks are carried out, with detailed audits performed, thus ensuring the integrity and traceability of the farm to fork food chain in the eleven local EC approved abattoirs in the county. These premises slaughter cattle, sheep, goats, pigs and poultry and process wild game.
- The abattoir inspection requires the supervision also of the TVI service within the county.
- The service contract also requires the supervision and regulation of fourteen EC approved meat processing plants in the city and county. This involves sampling of meat products for microbiological contamination, food additives, allergens, residues, disease surveillance, labelling compliance, traceability, and food fraud. There is also a regular schedule of unannounced inspections and pre-planned audits in the premises, which themselves provide employment to more than 200 employees.
- GCC has one veterinary officer on the National Standardisation of Documents working group which reviews legislation and writes standard operating procedures for Local Authority Vets nationally.
- GCC veterinary service facilitated the approval of additional activities for multiple meat businesses as these small businesses continue to pivot to survive amidst the pandemic.
- GCC Veterinary Officers participated alongside FSAI in a major ongoing alleged food fraud investigation in the county.
- One GCC Veterinary Officer participated in 2 National working groups on Food Fraud.
- The council provided ongoing training and an advisory service to existing Food Business Operators in the implementation of changing EC food legislation and the challenges posed by Brexit & Covid 19 as well as meeting, carrying out site visits and advising start-up food businesses across the city and county. Two training workshops were run for Small Food Business Operators in May and June 2022 at the Bia Innovator Campus in Athenry with training course for held for Abattoir Operators in July 2022 and in October 2022.



PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- The Council will continue to fulfil official food safety controls in the county and city of Galway pending agreement between the CCMA and the FSAI on the terms of a service level agreement (current expiry date 31st December 2022).
- Regular Training for Food Business Operators and temporary veterinary inspectors will continue during 2023, targeting new Food Safety Management Systems launched by FSAI, as resourcing allows.
- Advisory service and approval of start-up new businesses which fall under Local Authority Veterinary Supervision as necessary.
- The Council will continue to liaise with the FSAI to ensure that there is sufficient budget allocation to ensure we are able to fulfil our statutory obligations in the context of public health requirements and due diligence.
- Continued sampling programs as in 2022 directed by both the Department of Agriculture and the Marine and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland.
- Continued involvement and liaising with the steering committee and statutory agencies DAFM, Teagasc, SFPA and HSE in the ongoing development of the multicentre Teagasc / GCC Food Innovation and Incubation centre proposed for Athenry. The Food Hub comprises of 3 blocks, consisting of a learning centre and timeshare kitchen production unit, a block of 8 starter units and a block of 3 larger growth units.
- Continued mentoring of existing businesses to approve new activities and allowing them to avail of new business opportunities arising.
- Continued participation in National working groups on Food Fraud and Standardisation of Documentation
- Support National Local Authority Systems Implementation.

MAJOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (MEM)

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- The Major Emergency Development Committee (MEDC) which was established by the Council as part of the New National Framework for MEM is ongoing and continues to be chaired by Ms Eileen Ruane (Director of Services) as part of the Council's Planning, Environment & Emergency Services Directorate.
- The ME Plan and Severe Weather and Flood Response Sub-Plans were reviewed. A severe weather event management system (SWEMS) was introduced. This initiative has been nominated for a Public Service Excellence Award. GCC also commenced work on an inter-county trial with two other Local Authorities.
- The MEM West Regional Steering Group (RSG) under chair of An Garda Síochána continues to meet in its role of co-ordinating Major Emergency Management between the eight Principal Response agencies (PRA's) -i.e. 3 Local Garda Divisions, 4 Local Authorities and HSE West, in the Galway, Mayo and Roscommon areas.



- The MEM West Regional Working Group (RWG) involving members of the Principal Emergency Services (PES's) in the West Region, i.e. Local Authority Fire Services, Local Garda Divisions and HSE National Ambulance Service, continues to operate, under the auspices of MEM West Regional Steering Group and is currently chaired by An Garda Síochána.
- Work on the Major Emergency Regional Co-ordination Plan including the Regional Media Plan and the Regional Evacuation Plan was ongoing in 2022 based on available National guidance.
- Work was ongoing during 2022 on the Galway County Mortality Management Plan in response to the potential effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- Galway County Council Headquarters continues as the location of the Local Co-Ordination Centre (LCC) for the three Principal Response Agencies (PRA's) – Galway County Council, HSE West and Galway Garda Division - for Major Emergencies in the Galway County area. The information management (IM) facilities at LCC in County Hall were upgraded in 2018 and continues in use with the installation of video conferencing facilities now complete. An electronic information management system was also introduced in both the Local Coordination Centre and on the Mobile On-Site Coordination unit based in Gort Fire Station.
- In 2019, funding from the NDFEM was approved for the purchase and installation of a stand-by (back-up) generator for County Hall to provide a redundant power source for the LCC, IS Section and other critical areas. The generator was purchased and will be installed by the end of 2022 to provide back-up power for the GCC critical infrastructure and the Galway County MEM Local Co-ordination Centre.
- It should be noted that the City Council may use City Hall as the LCC for severe weather events.
- The County/City MEM integration group was established between the PRA's in Galway City and County under the chair of a Director of Services from Galway City Council to deal with issues in the City/County area and large crowd events and continues to operate. The development of site-specific plans in the city and county continues.
- Regional training is ongoing for relevant personnel in the eight PRA'S in the West region.
- In 2020 GCC purchased two temporary mobile multiple fatality units for Galway County to supplement the regional capability and an activation and mobilisation protocol was developed in conjunction with the other PRA's in the County. Agreement was reached with the other 2 MEM regions (Northwest and Midlands) that the regional multiple fatality facility being stored, maintained and mobilised by an external contractor, will now be stored and maintained by Galway County Council. Work continued in 2022 to implement this decision, however access to the storage area was restricted in order to facilitate a HSE COVID test centre.
- GFRS led the review of the Circle K External Emergency Plan in early 2022 including public consultation. The review of the External Emergency Plan culminated in an inter-agency exercise on the 31st March 2022. A blind mobilisation exercise is scheduled for the end of November 2022.
- An inter-agency exercise in conjunction with Aer Arann is scheduled to test the Inter-Agency Island Response Plan. During this exercise GFRS will practice and rehearse the airlift of emergency services personnel and equipment to the islands in conjunction with the IRCG. The exercise is scheduled to be conducted on the 15th November 2022.
- GFRS/GCC personnel attended a number of MEM seminars and severe weather debriefs. MEDC members also attended the MEM National Conference on the 20th October 2022.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Both local and regional personnel will receive further training and testing in their various new roles as allocated in their PRA Major Emergency Plans.
- The Major Emergency Development Committee (MEDC), established by the Council as part of the New National Framework for MEM, will continue to meet on a bi-monthly basis and will continue to be chaired by Ms Eileen Ruane (Director of Services). The emphasis will be on the implementation of a new system for managing and mapping requests for assistance during severe weather events and the improvement of staff communications, including the full integration of TETRA.
- Validation and updating of the existing County Council Major Emergency Plan is envisaged to continue in 2023.
- Council personnel and GFRS personnel will continue to support Regional Steering and Regional Working Groups, local MEDC and the Galway County/City Integration Group.
- Work on the Major Emergency Regional Co-ordination Plan will continue including the Regional Media Plan and the Regional Evacuation Plan.
- Work will continue in 2023 in relation to testing of the new stand-by generator at County Hall.
- The review (as per the COMAH Regulations) of the Tynagh Power Station site External Emergency Plan will commence in 2023. The plan will be tested in late 2023.
- GCC in conjunction with the City Council will commence work on the external emergency plan for the proposed Green Hydrogen Hub at Galway Port.
- GCC Local Coordination Group and On-Site Coordination Group table-top/practical exercises will be conducted in 2023.
- GCC will continue work in 2023 on an inter-county trial with two other Local Authorities in relation to the SWEMS project.

COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- GFRS continue to lead nationally on the development of the National Unified Risk Operating Platform (NUROP). The platform allows the sharing of risk information in real-time in order to improve decision making in all GFRS sections. This includes a system to identify and map domestic risk in the community.
- Self-contained smoke alarms with long life batteries were procured by GFRS for, and continue to be issued to, households in Galway City and County for installation by community groups as in previous years. This project was conducted with the assistance of the Community and Enterprise Units in both Galway City and Galway County Councils as part of the ongoing National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management (NDFEM) Programme. GFRS have also implemented a home fire safety visit programme with a particular emphasis on rural areas and social housing.

- Fire safety awareness media campaigns were conducted in 2022 for National Fire Safety Week, wildfire safety, Halloween safety and a further campaign is planned for Christmas time. A number of officers conducted radio interviews.
- In 2022 the Vulnerable Persons Programme continued including a Home Fire Safety Check Booklet which was originally launched by Sean Canney, Minister of State Community Development, Natural Resources & Digital Development on the 7th of October 2019 at Tuam Fire Station. The Home Fire Safety initiative has been expanded now with an on-line home fire safety checklist available to all members of the public. The link is available on the front page of the Galway County Council website and a link is also included under the email signature block of all fire service personnel. To date almost 1000 on-line home fire safety checks have been completed.
- In 2022 the new fire safety advertisement campaign of the fire safety messages ‘Stop Fire’ and ‘Check You Detector’ continued with a programme to show the message on all first responding fire appliances
- In 2022 work continued on a new GFRS website to promote fire safety awareness.
- An Islands Community Fire Safety initiative, which commenced in 2021, aims to ensure that all homes on the Islands have at least 2 smoke alarms installed. This initiative continued in 2022 on all larger islands. In addition, the inter-agency island incident response plan was also updated and practiced.
- Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, many fire service face to face activities were curtailed. The Schools Fire Safety Program was postponed; however, it is hoped that the schools program will resume again in primary schools in County Station Areas. GFRS have also commenced preparations for the NDFEM ‘Be Fire Safe’ programme for secondary schools.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- GFRS will continue to lead nationally on the development of the National Unified Risk Operating Platform (NUROP). The platform allows the sharing of risk information in real-time in order to improve decision making in all GFRS sections. This includes a system to identify and map non-domestic and domestic risk in the community. GFRS will lead an inter-county trial in five other fire authorities in 2023.
- Self-contained smoke alarms will continue to be issued in 2023 in both the city and county from allocations received in 2022 and further alarms will be purchased in mid-2023. This will be used to complete the Islands Community Fire Safety Initiative and to continue the targeted Home Fire Safety Visit Programme.
- A program will be run locally again in 2023 as part of National Fire Safety Week as in previous years including opening of all Fire Stations to the public. This year we hope to include a number of fire safety seminars and demonstrations in towns.
- Fire safety awareness media campaigns will be conducted again in 2023 for National Fire Safety Week, wildfire safety, Halloween safety and Christmas safety. It is hoped that the number of officers conducting radio and TV interviews will increase in 2023.
- In 2023 the Vulnerable Persons Programme will be continued in all stations including the City and the Home Fire Safety Check Booklet will continue to be promoted extensively. The programme will be linked with the pre-incident planning and home fire safety visit programmes. GFRS will continue to develop links with other agencies to further improve these programmes.

- In 2023 the fire safety advertisement campaign of the fire safety messages ‘Stop Fire’ and ‘Check Your Detector’ will continue. It is hoped, subject to the availability of finance, that the messages will be installed on the fire station appliance bay doors in all stations.
- In 2023 GFRS hope to launch their new website to promote fire safety awareness.
- The Schools Fire Safety Programme involving local fire officers visiting 4th class in primary schools in Galway will resume in 2023 subject to the availability of financial resources. All visits will be mapped on the NUROP system. GFRS also intend to commence the roll out of the ‘Be Fire Safe’ programme in secondary schools.

FIRE OPERATIONS – KEEPING COMMUNITIES SAFE (KCS)

A FRAMEWORK FOR FIRE SAFETY IN IRELAND

The Fire Service is subject to the same financial constraints and consequent scrutiny of expenditure as all other Local Authority services. Additional investment in Fire Services beyond that already programmed will be challenging, given the impairment of public and local government finances. The challenge, as reflected in the document “Keeping Communities Safe”, is to manage the available resources to achieve an optimal outcome for the public in terms of their individual safety, and to minimize loss and disruption to society.

Achieving the successful implementation of the main provisions in KCS will require ongoing commitment from the Fire Service, the City and County Management Teams along with the City and County Elected Representatives. Following from the report of the NDFEM External Validation Group (EVG) visits to all Fire Services in 2014 entitled “Fire Services in Ireland – Local Delivery – National Consistency”, a second round of External Validation Group visits were scheduled for the end of 2019 and throughout 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic stalled the roll-out of that External Validation Group visit, however an NDFEM Capacity Review online meeting and assessment was conducted in Sept 2020 in lieu of the EVG visit. A new draft Service Delivery Plan 2019 – 2024, a new Draft Section 26 Plan have been prepared by Fire Service Management and submitted to the Directorate of Planning, Environment and Emergency Services. It is envisaged that these plans will be presented to the Council Executive Management Team in Q1 of 2023 and to the SPC Planning, Environment and Emergency Services and the Plenary Council in Q2 2023. Work is also ongoing in relation to new Statutory and Community Fire Safety Plans.

During the NDFEM on-line Capacity Review meeting, a Galway Fire and Rescue Service Operational Intelligence project based on the ArcGIS platform caught the attention of the review group. This project is proving to be very valuable from an analysis perspective and is now being utilised to plan and target future fire service activities. 2 fire service senior officers and a member of GCC IT section are working with members of the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management (NDFEM) to develop and roll out this project nationally.

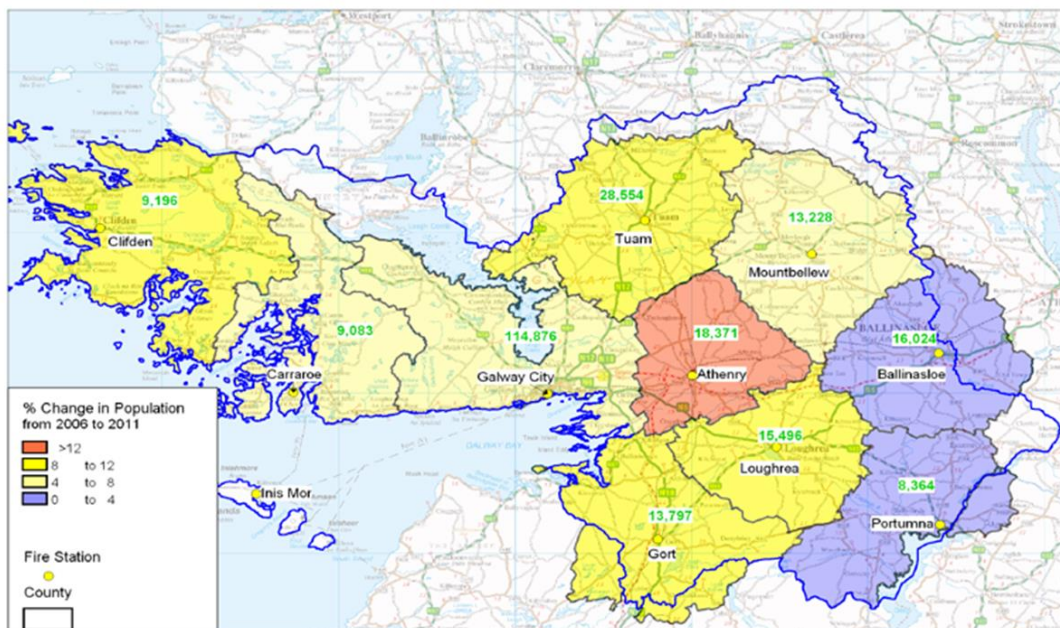


FIRE OPERATIONS – KEEPING COMMUNITIES SAFE (KCS)

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022 (BASED ON 2021 DATA):

- There are 11 Fire Stations in the City and County (see Figure 1) located at Athenry, Ballinasloe, Clifden, Galway City, Gort, Loughrea, Mountbellew, Portumna, Tuam, Inis Mór and An Cheathru Rua. All stations are resourced with retained personnel except Galway City, which is a mix of full-time personnel on shift and retained personnel on call.
- The Council employs approximately 156 fire-fighting personnel at full complement directly in Galway Fire & Rescue Service including full time and retained fire-fighters in the City and County. This figure includes an agreement negotiated in 2021 to increase the number of retained firefighters in the City by two additional fire-fighters.
- There are also 11 supervisory and fire prevention senior fire officers, including the Chief Fire Officer (CFO) and 4 civilian support personnel, a Brigade Mechanic and a Civil Defence Officer (CDO) working in the Headquarters at Galway City Fire station.
- During 2021, the Galway Fire and Rescue Service responded to a total of 1,412 emergency call outs, 845 by the County Fire Brigades and 567 by Galway City Fire Brigade in its City and County fire grounds. This represented a decrease of 119 callouts compared to 2021. There was a decrease of 6.5% in the City and a decrease of approximately 10% in the County. Figure 2 below shows the level of callouts from 2011. It can be seen that from a peak in 2011, callouts had reduced and flatlined from 2013 to 2017. There was a significant increase in callouts in 2018 with 2021 having the lowest number of call outs for the last 11 years. All indications are that the callouts for 2022 will remain similar to 2021. Callouts per station are shown in Figure 3 below.

FIGURE 1 CURRENT FIRE STATION AREAS





- The average cost per head of population for providing the Fire Service in Galway City and County in 2020 was €52.48. Average response times for all incidents for first attendance vehicles in the City full-time and County retained stations were 2.10 minutes and 5.15 minutes respectively.
- The percentage attendance times at scene for fires and other incidents for City and County Fire Brigades are shown in Table 1 below. There was one fire fatality in 2021 and none thus fare in 2022.
- The Council endeavoured to ensure that all of its Fire and Emergency Services personnel received training as in previous years at local level. Senior and Junior Fire Officer training with the National Directorate for Fire & Emergency Management (NDFEM) also progressed. Training was carried out as per the Training Plan / Annual Training Programme for 2022 in so much as was reasonably practicable taking into the restrictions and risk associated with the pandemic. Training standards continued to convert to the QQI framework in 2021.

FIGURE 2 CALL-OUT HISTORY 2011 - 2021

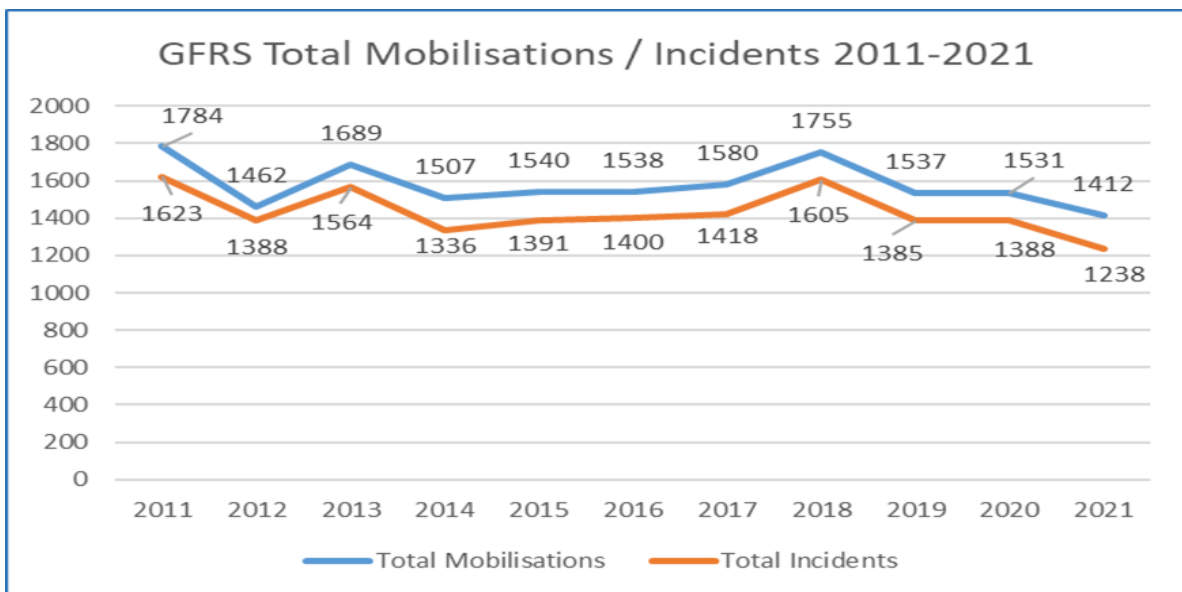


FIGURE 3 BREAKDOWN OF CALL-OUTS BY STATION IN 2021

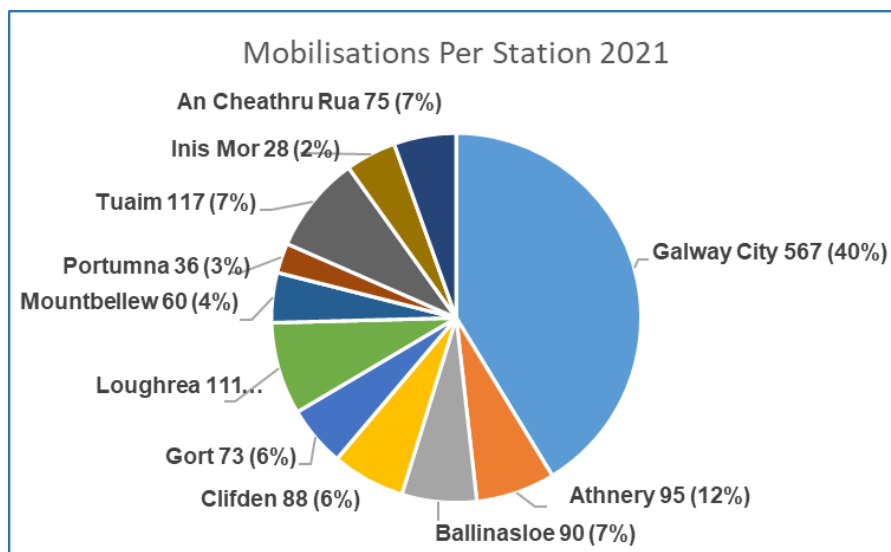


TABLE 1 PERCENTAGE ATTENDANCE TIMES GALWAY CITY AND COUNTY 2021

% Attendance Time	Fires %	Other Incidents %
Less than 10 minutes	41.5	49.32
10 to 20 minutes	40.48	37.41
Greater than 20 minutes	18.03	13.27

- The Fire Service intend to continue to prepare pre-incident plans for significant City and County risks, which is a statutory duty under the Fire Services Act 1981 & 2003. This work is closely allied to the new Vulnerable Persons and Community Fire Safety Programme which commenced in 2019.
- The Fire Service’s Health & Safety Steering Group continued to meet in 2022 with monthly meetings to manage and drive the Health & Safety Management Plan throughout the Fire Service and Civil Defence. The objective was to maintain its ISO 45001 accreditation achieved in October 2018 which followed the OHSAS 18001 accreditation previously achieved in December 2017. The Operational Safety Group meetings also continued monthly in 2022. The Fire Services were audited or compliance with ISO 45001 by the NSAI on 09th/10th June 2022.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

OPERATIONAL

- The Council will endeavour to ensure that all of its Fire and Emergency Services personnel continue to receive training as in previous years, at local level. Fire Officer / Instructor training with the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management will continue. Training will be carried out in accordance with the Annual Training Plan for 2023 subject to budgetary provisions. National SOGs will continue to form the backbone of the training plan throughout the City and County for all fire personnel in 2023. The next set of SOGs will be rolled out in 2023 and National Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs) continue to underpin generic and activity-based risk assessments as part of our Safety Management System.

- In 2023 we will continue the migration of training standards to the QQI framework in conjunction with the NDFEM.
- There was a steady rate of retirements/resignations from retained and full-time Fire Service in Galway in 2021 and 2022 and retirements/resignations should reduce significantly in 2022. Retained recruit induction will continue through LASNTG to the new QQI standard in 2023.
- The emphasis on pre-incident plans will continue in 2023 in conjunction with the Vulnerable Persons Programme which will be implemented in all stations. The emphasis will continue to extend to high and medium rise buildings and those with legacy issues.
- In 2023, with the improvement in our infra-structure we hope to be able to continue to improve our mobilisation and attendance times.
- Safety will continue as a priority through 2023 with our monthly Safety Steering and Operational Safety Group meetings. GFRS will again be audited for continued ISO 45001 accreditation on a six-monthly basis.

WEST REGIONAL COMMUNICATIONS CENTRE (WRCC)

The Fire Authorities of Connacht and Donegal are involved with this Central call-out and communications project through the Western Regional Communications Centre (WRCC) in Castlebar, which is run by Mayo County Council as Contracting Authority. All Local Authority partners contribute to the cost of this service and costs will increase slightly in 2023 while the existing systems are run in tandem with the old system. All three Regional Communications Centres are currently being reviewed by the NDFEM as part of the new CTRI project.

In 2019 GFRS, along with all other Local Authority Fire Services migrated to a new National Digital Radio Service platform known as TETRA. The installation of new mobilisation and radio equipment was completed in Fire Stations and all appliances in mid-2019 as part of the ongoing CTRI project.

The change over to the TETRA has had significant financial implications for all Local Authority Fire Services from 2020 as there will be an annual fee for each TETRA device in use, payable to TETRA Ireland who have won the national digital communications project for all Emergency Services in Ireland. The revenue cost for new TETRA devices for the first year of operation in 2019 was borne by NDFEM. The cost reverted to each Local Authority Fire Service in 2020 and this represents a significant increased cost in the region of €90 k per annum.

It is understood that as WRCC migrates from a Regional to a National model, a new National funding model will be established. This might have benign implications for Local Authority budgets from 2023 onwards, however there is no indication as to when the new national funding model will be introduced.

REGIONAL CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT (CISM) PROJECT

Galway County Council is the Contracting Authority for the CISM system for the six Fire Authorities of Connacht and Donegal. Provision is being made in 2023 budgets to continue this project, with Galway County Council again acting as the Contracting Authority. A contract for the period 2021-2024 in the West region was awarded to Inspire Wellbeing from Northern Ireland.



FIRE SAFETY / FIRE PREVENTION

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022 (BASED ON 2021 DATA):

- In 2021, the Fire Service Fire Prevention Section carried out 194 inspections of premises as part of its fire prevention function up from 126 in 2020, under the Fire Services Act (FSA) 1981 & 2003, Licensing Acts, Planning Acts and the Dangerous Substances Act. Inspections were also carried out in relation to the issue of Fire Safety Certificates (FSC's) under the Building Control Act 1990 (as amended). Thus far and to the end of October 2022 the Fire Prevention Section has conducted a total of 175 inspections. These reductions in inspections are in the backdrop of the 19 months of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Fire Prevention Section dealt with 264 Fire Safety Certificate (FSC) Applications of all types in 2021 under Building Control Regulations. The overall number of Fire Safety Certificate applications represents a decrease of 7.4% from 2020. Fire Safety Certificate activity from 2008 to 2021 is shown in Figure 4 below. The decreasing number of FSC applications received in 2021 reflects the effect of the continuing COVID-19 pandemic on society and the fact that many private sector businesses were closed for some time in 2021.
- Thus far to the end of October 2022, the Fire Prevention Section have received and dealt with 217 Fire Safety Certificate (FSC) Applications of all types, roughly on the same downward trend with 2021 and confirming the continuing effect of the pandemic and other international events.
- The Fire Prevention Section processed 94 Disability Access Certificate (DAC) applications in 2020 an increase of 10% from 2020. Disability Access Certificate activity from 2010 to 2020 is shown in Figure 5 below. Thus far and to the end of October 2020, the Fire Prevention Section have received and dealt with 71 Disability Access Certificate (DAC) Applications under Building Control Regulations.

FIGURE 4 FIRE SAFETY CERTIFICATE (FSC) ACTIVITY 2010- 2021

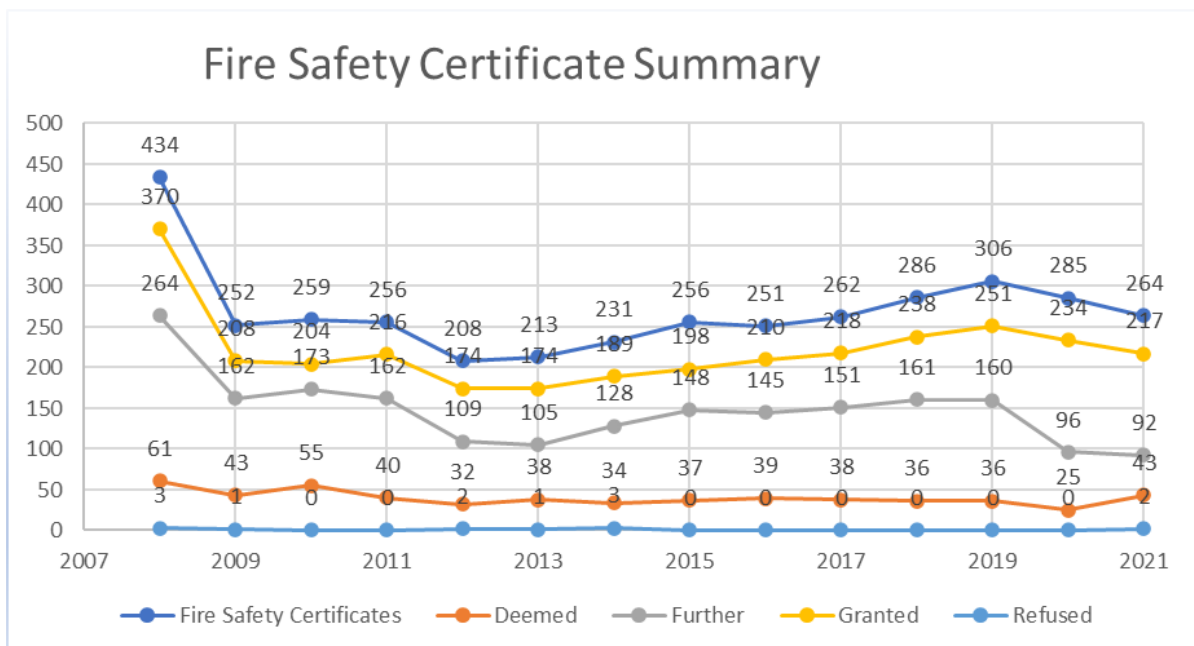
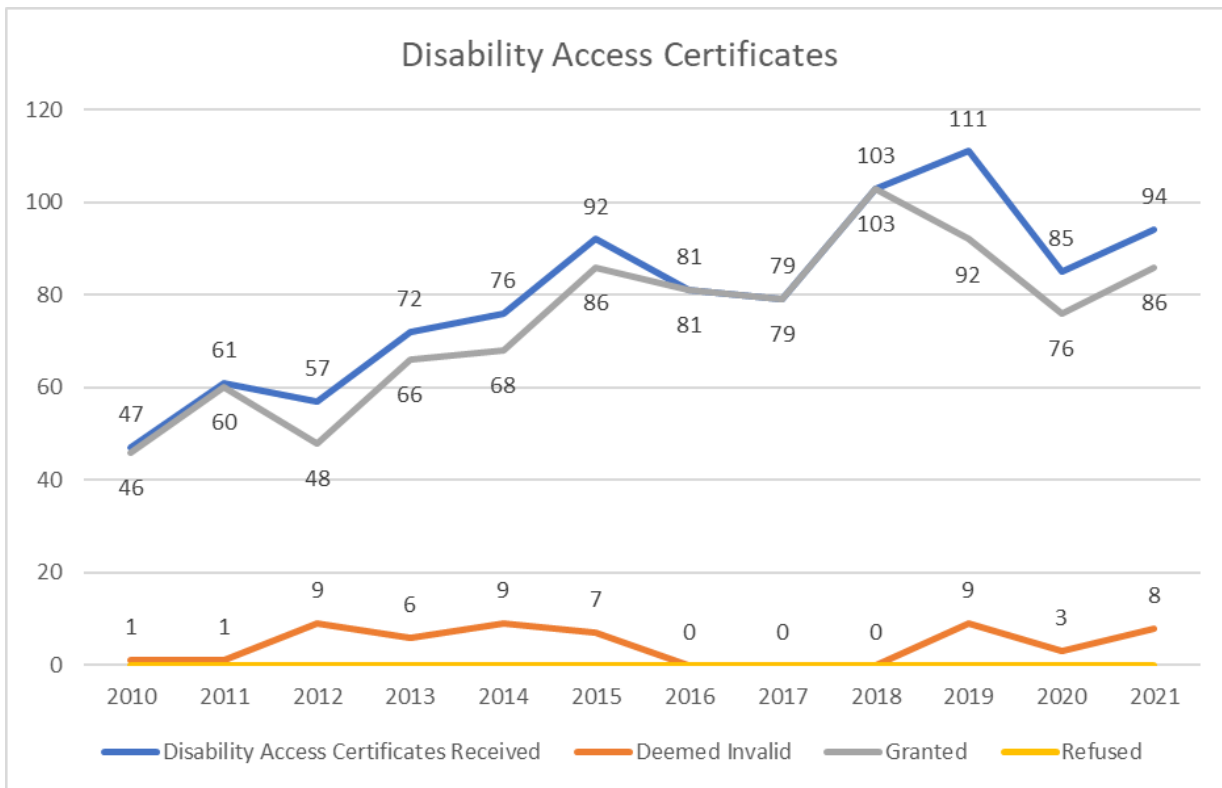




FIGURE 5 DISABILITY ACCESS CERTIFICATE ACTIVITY 2010-2021



PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- The Fire Prevention Section will continue to process all FSC type applications on behalf of the County and City Councils and DAC applications on behalf of the County Council.
- The Fire Prevention Section will continue to process licence applications and planning referrals as received.
- The Fire Prevention Section will continue their programme of inspections of retail petroleum stores in the City and County. They will also continue to process DSA licences of retail petroleum stores in the City and County as received. It should be noted that proposed new regulations in this area will significantly increase the workload of this Section and additional resources will be required going forward.
- The Fire Prevention Section will continue their programme of fire safety inspections with particular emphasis on nursing homes, care facilities, hostels and hotels in the City and County. Emphasis will also be placed on medium / high rise buildings and those with legacy issues.
- The Fire Prevention Section will continue to carry out inspections in the City and County on foot of complaints on a prioritized basis. Enforcement action will be taken as necessary and required.

GALWAY CIVIL DEFENCE

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- Galway Civil Defence operate from 5 training centres, Galway City, Oranmore, Loughrea, Ballinasloe and Clonberne. Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 pandemic meetings and training had to be suspended in line with public guidance. In 2022 all units reopened up for training in June and continued throughout the year.
- Galway Civil Defence were tasked by Galway County Council to assist the Housing Department with the Displaced persons from Ukraine that arrived in Ireland due to the outbreak of hostilities in their country. Volunteers assisted with setting up of temporary accommodation in Oranmore Community Centre and Calasanctius College, Oranmore.
- Members have continued assisting the Irish Blood Transfusion Service at their clinics held in the Galway city and county throughout the year.
- Galway Civil Defence have assisted in numerous Missing Person Searches within the city/county at the request of AGS and assisted Mayo and Sligo Civil Defence Units at their request during the year. Drone were primarily used in these searches and have proved a valuable asset to our search teams.
- Civil Defence have also trained 1 instructor in MapYX search technology in October 2022 which training will be rolled out to our Search Teams in early 2023.
- All Civil Defence CFR, FAR and EFR Instructors are recertifying as per the Civil Defence College Training Programme. Part of the training is online with part 2 taking place at the Civil Defence College.
- Civil Defence Search Instructors have recertified in 2022 in line with the Civil Defence College Programme.
- A new e-learning site has been developed for volunteers. All modules and training materials can be accessed on this site.
- A programme of training in Cardiac First Response, First Aid Responder, Emergency First Response and Manual Handling is currently ongoing for volunteers through 2022. As Covid –19 restrictions have been relaxed during the year, this training is in-person attendance at unit bases.
- Galway Civil Defence also received €18000.00 from the Dormant Fund Grant for 2022 from the Dept. Of Defence to complete the Communication/Control Vehicle.
- The Civil Defence Officer also recertified in Management of Flood and Water Incidents in the Civil Defence College, Roscrea. This course was hosted and certified by Rescue 3 Europe.
- Participated in Galway County Council and Galway City Council Community Forum and carried out tasks for vulnerable persons identified in the forum groups.
- Civil Defence volunteers were awarded Covid-19 Service medals for their support during the onset of the Covid –19 pandemic through to the end of 2021. These awards were presented in November 2022.



PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Focus on training for 2023 will centre in developing the Search Management capability and Flood Water Responder training with members partaking in recertification training and initial training in 2022/2023 under the Rescue 3 Europe programme.
- Further development of our e-learning site for members.
- Severe Weather driver training and recertification to be held in the first quarter of 2023
- To partake in Re-certification training in line with the Civil Defence College programme for 2023.
- All clinical levels of responders will continue to develop their skills throughout the training year
- Continuous liaison with the PRAs to develop and promote Civil Defence as a support organisation.
- Additional CISM Peer to Peer Support training to be availed from the Civil Defence Branch training programme in 2023
- Continuation for all members to complete the Tusla 'Children First' e-learning course.
- New members are always welcome from their community and training will be provided to all members of the highest standard by our instructor core. It is hoped that new members will be able to join in January 2023 to begin the training programme for the year.
- Support the LA's with the 2023 and participate in the programme where possible.



HUMAN RESOURCES ACTIVITY

The Human Resources department continues to support and develop an Organisational culture of positive employee engagement and personal and professional development through the implementation of relevant HR policies and legislation, leading to improved employee wellbeing, work-life balance, job satisfaction and productivity.

The HR department prioritises the recruitment of staff through Workforce Planning and strives to ensure the most effective use the skills and abilities of each employee to deliver the strategic goals of Galway County Council’s Corporate Plan.

RECRUITMENT AND WORKFORCE PLANNING:

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

Galway County Council’s Staff Headcount at the end of Quarter 3, 2022 is as follows:

<i>Category</i>	<i>Headcount</i>
<i>Core Staff</i>	<i>892</i>
<i>Retained Fire Fighters</i>	<i>106</i>
<i>Non-Department of Housing, Planning & LG</i>	<i>79</i>

Recruitment Activity, up to Quarter 3, 2022:

The Human Resources Department ran 55 recruitment competitions up to the end of Quarter 3, 2022 which resulted in the following appointments

New Appointments/Joiners	Acting Appointments	Permanent Promotional Appointments
133	27	47

Staff recruitment and re-deployment has been targeted at the priority areas of Housing, Environmental Enforcement, Climate Change, Planning and Municipal Districts.

STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- The Training and Development Section provides a wide range of training programmes to enable staff and management carry out their duties in a confident and competent manner, in a safe working environment.



- Investment in staff training benefits the organisation through the upskilling of employees and continuing personal and professional development.
- Employee Health & Safety training formed a considerable part of the Training Plan in 2022. This included the following courses: Safe Pass, Manual Handling, Re-certification of Occupational First Aid, Chainsaw Training, Road Opening Reinstatement Training, Abrasive Wheels, Fire Evacuation Training.
- Approximately 2589 training days were facilitated through the HR department Training team from January to October 2022.

STAFF WELFARE

Galway County Council offers a number of Family Friendly Schemes to employees. Staff have availed of the various schemes as follows up to the end of Quarter 3, 2022:

- **Paternity Leave Scheme:** 14 staff members availed of the paternity leave scheme in 2022
- **Carer's Leave Scheme:** 1 staff member availed of Carer's Leave in 2022
- **Career Break:** 8 staff members availed of career breaks in 2022
- **Parent's Leave Scheme:** 14 staff members availed of parent leave scheme in 2022
- **Work Sharing Scheme:** 62 staff members availed of work sharing arrangements in 2022
- **Parental Leave Scheme:** 56 staff members availed of parental leave scheme in 2022
- **Shorter Working Year Scheme:** 46 staff members availed of unpaid leave under the Shorter Working Year Scheme in 2022

OTHER SERVICES AVAILABLE FOR STAFF:

Employee Assistance Service: The Human Resources department reviewed Galway County Council's Employee Assistance Scheme (EAS) and in September this year, procured the services of a new EAS through Spectrum.Life.

Spectrum.Life provides confidential counselling and advisory services to all Galway County Council employees, their spouse, partner, and dependants over the age of 18, residing in the family home.

Cycle to Work Scheme: The Cycle to Work Scheme was revised as part of the Government's Jobs Stimulus Plan with an increased allowable expenditure from August 2020.

There are two limits, depending on the type of bicycle purchased: The limit is €1500 for pedelecs, ebikes and related safety equipment. The limit is €1,250 for other bicycles and related safety equipment.

21 applications for participation in the Cycle to Work Scheme were processed from 01 Jan 2022 – 30 Sept 2022 for Council employees.

Travel Pass Scheme: 5 staff members availed of the tax saver travel pass scheme between the period of 01 Jan 2022 – 30 Sept 2022

VDU Assessments: 23 VDU tests have been carried out between the period of 01 Jan 2022 – 30 Sept 2022 (38 appointments are pending or in the process of being arranged.)

RETIREMENTS

- Following the introduction of the Public Services Superannuation (Age of Retirement) Act 2018, the compulsory retirement age for most staff recruited before 1st April 2004, has increased from 65 to 70 years.
- Staff recruited after 1st January 2013 and who are members of the Single Pension Scheme also have a compulsory retirement age of 70.
- Galway County Council service records indicate that 7 full-time staff members will reach retirement age or full service in 2023.
- 30 staff members have retired to date, in 2022.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Continue to recruit and deploy staff in an efficient and professional manner, and in accordance with Government policy and service priorities.
- Continue to deliver mandatory Health and Safety training and support staff education and development programmes.
- Develop, implement and communicate appropriate human resource policies in line with existing and new legislation, and in keeping with best practice.
- Support and advise Line Managers on the implementation of workplace policies.
- Promote dignity at work, diversity and equality for all employees of the Council.
- Continue to promote a climate of good industrial relations and strengthen the partnership approach to joint problem-solving in the interest of employee and customer relations.
- Implement Galway County Council Blended Working Policy in line with National legislation.
- Strengthen the uptake of PMDS across the Organisation through the delivery of training and in line with the requirements of the Blended Working Policy.
- Implement efficiencies for the HR department through continuous Business Process Improvements.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

2022 was another year of continuing challenges with the global and local ICT sector experiencing capacity challenges in supply and service provision.

- Council Chamber enhanced function for hybrid meeting to facilitate remote attendees at meeting and statutory hearings.
- Provision of remote working capability to all required staff.
- Central managed print function expansion of devices for public libraries.
- Implementation of Monitored Information Systems Security Service.
- Ballybane, City, Oranmore and Westside Libraries Fibre Optic Grade Broadband Services Completion
- Cloud Enabled Telephony System completion
- Replacement of internal compute capacity with greater security and cloud integration
- Full operations of AI (Artificial Intelligence) Security Software to protect council central data store
- Security Operations Centre service engagement.
- Extensive engagement with National Cyber Security Centre and Local Government Cyber Security Sub Committee
- Support through collaborative software systems for Climate Action Change Program.
- Continuing installation Government Wifi services for offices and library locations
- Blended Working Application embedded for all current and future requirements.
- Completion of accounts and reporting application upgrade
- Database applications upgrades
- Supported full pilot program for National Online Planning Application Program
- Build and operation of Mobile Mapping application to enable Planning Department to field survey properties for Residential Zoned Land Taxation assessment with presentation of interactive mapping for public display.
- Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards 2022 shortlisting in the Local Authority Innovation for the Council's Severe Weather Event Management System which is based on full mobile driven data collection of incidents with live mapping of status for management and resolution.
- County Development Plan Online Mapping publication for internal and national mapping of zoning
- Drone Acquisition and associated mapping software systems integration
- Map based mobile inspection app for Ring Buoy and National Broadband Ireland civil works



PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Continuing progress and improvement of Cyber Security standards and policies within the Council.
- Progression of digitally enabling of processes and services to enhance delivery and ability of blended working.
- Leverage OGCIO Government Networks European Bank funded program for low latency network to improve costs and service delivery
- Support all National ICT Project Initiatives
- Work on full compliance of State National Cyber Security Standards and prepare for EU NIS2 regulatory framework as a Public Administration Body.
- Enhance greater mobile and field data collection
- Support Blended Working Program
- Further integration and replacement of security systems to leverage improved operations and response.
- Irish Water Master and Support Services Agreement for ICT Services

FINANCE & MOTOR TAX

FINANCE

VALUE FOR MONEY, SHARED SERVICES AND PUBLIC PROCUREMENT:

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

Galway County Council utilises the procurement platform www.supplygov.ie offered by the Local Government Operational Procurement Centre (LGOPC) in relation to the procurement of goods, works and services from suppliers (incl. contractors and service providers). The website www.supplygov.ie has been developed by the Local Government Operational Procurement Centre (LGOPC) to streamline the procurement process. The website operates two modules for procuring goods, works and services through Requests for Tenders (RFTs) and Requests for Quotations (RFQs). During 2022 Galway County Council generated 195 Requests for Tender (RFT) and 24 Requests for Quotation (RFQ) on www.supplygov.ie.

The Government's electronic tendering platform administered by the Office of Government Procurement is www.etenders.gov.ie. This platform is a central facility for all public sector contracting authorities to advertise procurement opportunities and award notices. This year-to-date Galway County Council processed 48 tenders on this platform.

Purchase Cards: The Council uses the Lighthouse Portal (Ascendas) to process transactions to Agresso and currently has 190 active cards with spend of €1,071,009.28 and has processed 8,622 transactions to date.

Fuel Debit Cards: The Council currently has 220 active fuel cards with a 2022 spend of €839,073.10.

The Spend Tracker System rollout has been completed on time and in conjunction with the LGMA.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

The Corporate Procurement Plan is due for renewal in 2023. A new plan will be drafted which will incorporate a new green procurement strategy.

Further develop the use of the platforms www.supplygov.ie and www.etenders.gov.ie across the organisation with a view to increasing the use of frameworks and DPS's established by LGOPC and the OGP across the organisation.

Monitoring www.etenders.gov.ie and www.supplygov.ie to ensure competition processes are completed in line with EU Directives and guidelines.

Analysing the 2022 spend profile with a view to identifying possible cost saving initiatives in line with LGOPC and the OGP frameworks and contracts.

Communicate new contracts and central arrangements to relevant staff to ensure the organisation is compliant with relevant circulars and ensuring maximum value for money.

Encourage greater SME participation by updating council website with relevant information regarding access to frameworks and DPS's.

Assist staff with roll out of a new etenders platform be in place from mid-2023.

Develop a Procurement procedure float chart and circulate to staff to highlight key points in procurement cycle and to encourage best practice in accordance with legislation.

Utilise existing facilitates on etenders website to develop a contract register.

Continue to monitor and review the Purchase Card and Fuel Card systems.

DISCHARGE OF PAYMENTS

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- Continued implementation of electronic payment methods/upgrades to ensure compliance with e-Invoicing. Final testing with the LGMA & AP is now complaint to receive e-Invoices & the roll out as led by the LGMA continues
- Review and continue application of best practice within both the Accounts Payable and Payroll functions with continuous improvement
- Continued implementation of Directives issued by the Revenue Commissioners
- Ensure Accounts function meets BPI requirements.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023

- Co-operation with the Live implementation of E-Invoicing for key suppliers as identified by the LGMA.
- Continued implementation of electronic initiatives such as e-TAX Clearance
- Continues compliance with the requirements of "Real-time" payroll & ePSWT which was rolled out in 2021.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- Additional efficiencies achieved re: Budget drafting system (Budgeting / Forecasting/Reporting) and full engagement with the software provider for increased functionality.
- Additional efficiencies achieved re: claims system for travel and subsistence and reduction of late claims/utility accounts + control over arrears.
- Policy and procedure notes developed for Accounts Payable including supplier statements /fraud prevention.
- Effective staff planning initiatives rolled out including a transparent Rota, staff cover for vital operations & AL planning.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Continued review of procedure/best practice for the full Accounts payable function and documentation of same.
- Investigation of enhances/alternative automated methods to achieve aspects of the BUDGET cycle. Continued review of CCAS Budgetary Modules and full implementation of functionality including Budgeting for Pensions.
- Investigate use of MAKODATA for Management information
- Review Taxation expertise within Finance unit and skill-up for identified knowledge and expertise gaps.

REVENUE COLLECTION

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- Continued review of the Revenue collection function – to ensure best practice is achieved and any new income stream is incorporated efficiently.
- Continued utilisation of the ASCENDAS system in regard to the management of income streams such as rates, rents and development levies.
- Continued utilisation of the MARPS process in regard to housing loans.
- Utilisation of the Tenancy Warning system as required in regard to rent arrears under the terms of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2014.
- Continued implementation of electronic payment methods e.g. Billpay, Household Budget, EFT, online payment facility etc to facilitate customers.



- Provision of ongoing assistance to the Valuation Office in regard to REVAL 2023 - which will provide for a complete revaluation of all commercial and industrial property in regard to commercial rates in County Galway - to reflect the contemporary business environment. The Valuation Order was signed by the Commissioner of Valuation on the 06th September, 2022.
- Administration in conjunction with the LGMA of the Small Business Assistance Scheme for Covid process in line with Government Directives in regard to grant payments to businesses affected by the Covid-19 restrictions.
- Implementation of the Waiver Scheme for commercial rates in accordance with Government Directives for businesses affected by the Covid-19 restrictions.
-

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Continued implementation of REVAL 2023 in conjunction with the Valuation Office which will provide for a complete revaluation of all commercial and industrial property in County Galway to reflect the contemporary business environment. The purpose of the revaluation is to bring increased transparency and equity to the rating system and provide a much closer and uniform relationship between the current annual rental values of commercial property and their commercial rates liability. This is part of the National Revaluation Programme and the deadline for the production of the new Valuation List is September, 2023. The new valuations will become effective on the 1st January, 2024.
- Monitor and update the Revenue collection function as regards best practice
- Continue to review debt collection procedures.
- The unit will continue to offer the Bill Pay option to Rents, Loans, RAS and Rates customers to assist household budgetary requirements.
- Provide appropriate training to staff on debt collection procedures.
- Continued implementation of any extension of the Waiver Scheme for commercial rates in accordance with Government Directives for businesses affected by the COVID-19 restrictions



MOTOR TAX AND DRIVER LICENSING SYSTEMS

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- The number of motor tax transactions carried out by Galway County Council motor tax offices to the end of September 2022 was 44,628. Over €7.8M was taken in by Galway Motor Tax Offices for this period. Approximately 83.5% of total motor tax transactions for the Galway area were carried out online to the end of September 2022.
- The motor tax offices issue tax discs for private and commercial vehicles, tractors, hackneys, taxis and large public service vehicles. Trade plates, trailer license's, replacement documents are also issued and Garda queries and other Local authority queries i.e. S103s and CT53s are processed.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Work will continue on retrieving and digitizing motor tax records in long-term storage with a view to creating an accessible index of all vintage vehicle registration records.
- The Motor Tax Offices in An Cheathru Rua, Ballinasloe, and Galway, will continue to implement all motor tax policies and procedures, and provide support and advice to members of the public, including customers of the motor tax online service.

RISK CONTROL

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2022:

- Communicating with members of the public regarding claims submitted to Galway County Council.
- Liaising with IPB in relation to all aspects of insurance claims dealt with by Galway County Council including Employer's Liability, Public Liability, Housing, Motor and Material Damage.
- Corresponding with our legal team and other council departments in collating documents for use in the investigation of all claims.
- Providing information to council departments regarding insurance matters including all aspects of cover.

PROPOSALS FOR 2023:

- Provide insurance details to IPB in relation to all departments regarding renewal information and policy cover.
- Ensure insurance policy payments premia are made to IPB
- To provide for the planned coordination of statutory inspections in relation to lifting and pressure equipment between IPB's supplier IES and Galway County Council.
- Continued collaboration with all stakeholders in relation to any future claims received by the Risk Control office.

3 YEAR CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2023– 2025

ECONOMIC, RURAL & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING

ATHENRY RRDF

The funding approved under Cat 1 & Cat 2 RRDF for Athenry is €3,554,000, with a match funding requirement of €888,500, with a number of sources of match funding for the various elements. The allocation has been made to several projects in Athenry Town and towards the BIA Innovator Campus. These projects will provide and assist with the regeneration and development of Athenry Town with a number of improvements to be made in the Town Centre. Consultants have been appointed on both the Interpretative and Wayfinding and Market Square projects. The streetscape scheme is underway with 36 building being completed and payments made to applicants. The team are currently progressing the development of the Part 8 application for the Cross-Street Upgrade and this will be dependent on and linked to the Market Square design outcome. It is anticipated that a significant application will be made under a future Category 2 to bring the public realm enhancements in line with the proposals for other towns such as Clifden, Gort and Portumna, while also including other key elements which will have an economic and community impact with a whole of town approach.

BALLINASLOE STREETSCAPE SCHEME

Ballinasloe has benefitted from the Town Enhancement works which has advanced the public realm ahead of many other towns in the county that are being progressed with assistance under the RRDF Scheme. It has also benefitted from economic and community initiatives with significant investment by the Council. As agreed with the elected members and the community, a Pilot Streetscape Enhancement Scheme was announced for Ballinasloe in 2020 to assist enhance private property. The objective of the scheme is to improve the visual appearance of urban streetscapes, sustain existing and attract new footfall, support a reduction in commercial vacancies within town centres and build on the works completed under the Town Enhancement works. This in turn will support the towns reputation as an attractive place to live, work and invest in. The Streetscape Programme was rolled out in Ballinasloe in 2021 with 87 offers been made to Applicants. To date 70 buildings have been completed. It is hoped that by Spring 2023 all works will be completed. Further consideration will be given to additional works which will require a capital investment in Ballinasloe with much investment being made through the Infrastructure and Operations Directorate.

CLIFDEN RRDF

The funding approved under CAT 2 RRDF for Clifden is €792,029 with a match funding requirement of €198,007.25 The project comprises of enhancing and revitalising the Clifden Public Realm, redesigning the Clifden Harbour Park and public realm interventions along Beach Road Quay. Having completed a comprehensive procurement process LUC have been appointed and design options have been

identified. The first public consultation phase has taken place with follow on engagement, pursuant to the distillation of feedback, with all stakeholders imminent. Proposals for the 3 distinctive elements of the Regeneration proposals have been advanced and will be costed as the preferred options emerge for each.

GORT

Galway County Council Regeneration team has been successful with two of three elements of its application to the Department of Rural and Community Development under the Category 2 call in July 2021. The original application outlined 3 projects within the town. Project 1 relates to The Sisters of Mercy convent and primary school on Bridge Street in Gort, project 2 relates to the Market Square in Gort and the streets which radiate off it and finally project 3, Canon Quinn Park is on Queen Street which is directly in between the Convent site and Market Square. Funding of €798,584.00 (with a match funding requirement of €199,646) has been approved for project elements two and three listed above. BDP have been appointed as the design team for this project and are in the process of developing a Town Centre First Plan. The first task facing the design team will be engaging with the public and prepare the emerging proposals and supporting material as part of the public consultation.

KINVARA

The funding approved under CAT 2 RRDF for Kinvara is €122,790.20 with a match funding requirement of €40,930.06. The project has been developed to preliminary design stage and has recently been transferred to Infrastructure and Operations as part of a larger scheme being undertaken by the NRPO on behalf of TII. This scheme will develop detailed designs and bring to planning stage a boardwalk and walkway and provide safe pedestrian access from the village to this national heritage site and onto the tendered upgrade works on the N67.

LOUGHREA RRDF

The funding approved under CAT 1 RRDF for Loughrea is €1,628,879 with a match funding of €542,960. The project will assist revitalise Loughrea and in particular the Loughrea Town Hall and the Barrack Street Public Realm by bringing back into use this historic and important building. Architects were appointed in December 2020; a detailed design has been advanced and is under review with the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Regeneration Team.

PORTUMNA RRDF

The funding approved under RRDF for Portumna is €1,192,855 with a match funding requirement of €397,618. The project includes the renovation of the Old Courthouse, public realm interventions, the design of a sculpture/public art park & trail, wayfinding and interpretation as well as the regeneration of town centre historic sites. RPS consultants have been appointment for the provision of Design Team Consultancy Services.

PORTUMNA COURTHOUSE RRDF

The funding approved under RRDF CAT 1 for Portumna Courthouse is €2,552,309 with a match funding requirement of €283,589.90. This project will redevelop the historic courthouse building and courtyard in Portumna to deliver a state-of-the-art venue for the arts and culture, a remote working space for entrepreneurs and a new meeting and social space for the community.

The project encompasses the physical and social regeneration of a key local heritage asset that will be a valuable resource for the local community. The project will enhance day and evening time tourism and community activity, attracting visitors to the town and providing essential remote working space to support local workers and new enterprises. Part 8 planning has been approved and Consultants have been approved to take the project through the detailed design, tender and construction stages. OC&C and Mesh Architects, are engaging with key stakeholders, including the Regeneration Team, to finalise an initial design package.

TUAM

The funding approved under RRDF for Tuam was €175,000 with a match funding requirement of €43,750. The funding included the preparation of a Town Centre Regeneration Masterplan, which has now been environmentally assessed and was endorsed by Tuam M.D. on April 12th, 2021. Traffic Analysis (OSC) consultants have also been appointed; Consultants have also been appointed for the Shambles Business Case Analysis and a draft report has been drawn up with findings.

FORMER GALWAY AIRPORT SITE

Galway County Council and Galway City Council acquired the former Galway Airport site for the purposes of economic development. The site has been included in the County Development Plan with the vision of making it an Innovation, Business and Technology Campus that will attract and secure long-term investment in Galway and the Western Region and underpin the development of the Galway Metropolitan Area. The Council is now progressing plans for the development of the site and work are due to commence on the delivery of the overall masterplan as included as an objective of the County Development Plan. An investment in analysis of infrastructure, services and financial analysis will be progressed in the short term and this will inform the future development of the site which is a strategic asset with potential to create and sustain jobs and the economy. The initial capital investment in the development of the masterplan and roadmap for the site will inform the capital expenditure requirements.

HOUSING

Housing for All – a new Housing Plan for Ireland was launched in September 2021. Housing for All is the government’s plan to increase the supply of housing to an average of 33,000 per year over the next decade. The plan provides for an optimal mix of social, affordable and private housing for sale and rent. The plan is based on four pathways, leading to a more sustainable housing system:

- support home ownership and increase affordability
- eradicate homelessness, increase social housing delivery and support social inclusion
- increase new housing supply
- address vacancy and make efficient use of existing stock

The delivery of the largest ever social and affordable housing programme under Housing for All is the priority of Galway County Council with a primary focus on new builds to provide social homes. The provision of social and affordable housing of a high standard in the right locations will provide long-term sustainable housing for current and future generations.

The Housing Delivery Action (HDAP) plan was approved on the 1st July 2022 which provides details of the when and how Galway County Council plans to deliver sustainable housing in the right locations during the timeframe of the Housing for All programme.

The Council is committed to utilising all available capital funding streams to maximise the delivery of social and affordable housing including construction, turnkey developments, Part V and Buy and Renew Schemes. The Council continues to actively support Approved Housing Bodies in availing of the Capital Assistance Scheme to deliver social housing.

The Council is actively pursuing the purchase of additional land to add to its existing land bank to ensure the availability of land for the construction of housing units into the future.

All project proposals are subject to Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government funding and specific stage and statutory approvals by project and are dependent on the availability of co-funding where required.

Description	2023	2024	2025
MAIN CONSTRUCTION (including Traveller Accommodation Programme)	€70M	€105M	€105M



ACQUISITION PROGRAMME (including Part V's)	€3M	€3M	€3M
CAPITAL ASSISTANCE SCHEME	€3M	€2M	€2M

The Council will continue to actively engage with the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government in relation to additional proposals for construction projects to be delivered under Housing for All. The focus for 2023 is achieving the delivery of 351 social houses through the activities of the Council and Approved Housing Bodies.

A large construction/build programme will be delivered in 2023 and the expenditure profile reflects this. The focus will shift in 2023 away from leasing arrangements and acquisitions and towards construction (new build delivery). Part V acquisitions will continue and will increase to 20% on developments, to include a minimum 10% allocation for social housing.

The Housing Unit is progressing several other capital schemes through design and planning which have the capacity to deliver units from 2022 through to 2026.

SCHEMES ON SITE (2022)		
Location	Type	# Social Housing Units
Fana Bui, Tuam	LA Build	32
Gort na gCloch, Clifden	LA Build	26
Garrai Ghuaire, Kinvara	LA Build	10
An Saileachan, Athenry	Part V	5
Coill Ard, Moycullen	Part V	5
Cullair Bán, Athenry	Part V	12
Coill Ard, Oranmore	Part V	7



Gairdin Cul, Loughrea	Part V	1
Garrai Glas Drive, Athenry	Part V	5
Carraig Weir, Tuam	Part V	1
Cullairbaun, Athenry	Turnkey	42
Limehill Dunloe	Turnkey	17
Tubber Road, Gort	Turnkey	5
Ballyhugh, Gort	Turnkey	4
Lough Curra estate, Williamstown	Turnkey	7
Carraig Weir, Tuam	Turnkey	4
Garrai Glas Estate in Athenry	Turnkey	7
Total	All Build	186

Total expected build delivery across all build streams for 2022 is 186 units.

The Council's proposed developments to 2026 in line with Housing for All includes delivery on existing and new landbanks at Claregalway, Loughrea, Tuam amongst other locations. New turnkeys may be approved from time to time depending on suitability.

The extent of the direct build programme will be influenced by the availability of land for Council own-build projects. The Housing Unit will seek to maintain and increase the level of delivery of construction for 2023 and future years. A strong build programme will reduce the requirement for acquisitions other than through the Part V mechanism.

The targets for build delivery under Housing for All Plan are as follows:

2022 – 230 no. units

2023 – 351 no. units

2024 – 358 no. units

2025 – 385 no. units

2026 – 393 no. units.

Total – 1717 no. units.



The role of AHBs in delivering new build units will be a critical aspect of Galway County Council’s success in meeting its targets. Under the Housing for All Plan AHBs are expected to deliver 40% of units per annum up to 2026.

GCC – 1030 no. units

AHB’s – 687 no. units.

Total – 1717 no. units

The Council’s current priority is on the delivery of improvement works on current Traveller Accommodation Schemes and on Traveller Specific houses. Plans are at an early stage and will be developed further to provide additional Traveller Specific Accommodation by expanding current Schemes and by identifying additional suitable locations for such developments. Funding proposals will continue to be submitted to the Traveller Accommodation Unit in 2023 as development plans are progressed.

HOUSE PURCHASE LOANS:

House Purchase Loans will continue to be issued to eligible purchasers and will be expanded to include an increased income ceiling of €65,000 for single people or combined income of joint applicants of €75,000. Funding is sourced by way of Council borrowing, the debt servicing of which is met by repayments from loanees.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT IN LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING STOCK:

Description	2023	2024	2025
Energy Efficiency, Voids Retrofitting and Preventative Maintenance Programme	€6M	€5M	€5M
Derelict House Programme –	€2M	€2M	€1M

A significant capital investment programme is required for existing local authority housing stock to achieve compliance with minimum standards, co-fund energy efficiency works, the turnover of void housing units and to deliver a planned maintenance programme.



PLANNED MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME:

Funding has been provided via a loan facility for a Planned Maintenance Programme for existing housing stock to achieve compliance with statutory requirements, including minimum standards. The condition survey of the Council's Housing stock is substantially complete.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY RETROFIT PROGRAMME:

Provision has been made for works under the Energy Efficiency Retrofit Programme (EERP) to be carried out on Galway County Council occupied housing stock. The year to date we have completed 98 properties under the Energy Retrofit programme. In the 2nd half of the year we have completed 56 properties.

A contract will issue for 16 properties in Country Meadows, Tuam and Ard na Greine (12 units) in Carraroe will be the first contract of 2023.

From discussions with the Department our allocation for 2023 will be around 100 units.

Six derelict properties were identified as being suitable for major refurbishment works. These were advanced through an in-house design process.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSPORTATION

Capital projects relating, to Roads, Piers and Harbours, Flood Mitigation schemes, Plant Acquisition and Smarter Travel (Greenway) are detailed below.

The completion of the following projects is subject to the appropriate departmental sanctions, the availability of the necessary funding and compliance with all appropriate legislative and regulatory provisions.

NATIONAL ROADS

In addition to works on Major Inter Urban routes, a full programme of Pavement and Minor Improvements Works, Safety Measures and Bridge Improvement Works shall continue to be undertaken on the National Primary and National Secondary Road Network. This Programme is dependent on annual allocations from Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and as such the programme of works shall be presented to the Council on an annual basis in the context of the Annual Roads Programme.



Project:	Status:
N6 Galway City Ring Road	Subject to legal challenges the scheme could be remitted back to An Bord Pleanála. Subject to a remittal, a second ABP decision, further legal challenges and available funding, the project can progress to the next stages - land and property acquisition, detailed design and enabling works. The procurement of a contractor for the main construction phase to follow in subsequent years.
N59 Maigh Cuilinn Bypass	Construction works are well advanced, and it is anticipated that they will be substantially complete by Q3 2023 with the scheme being opened thereafter to traffic, bypassing the village of Maigh Cuilinn and removing traffic congestion through one of Galway's most congested villages. The main elements of the proposed scheme include 4.6km of type 1 single carriageway, realignment of the Knockferry roads over 850m, 1.7km of farm/accommodation roads, 2 no. at-grade roundabouts and 8 structures consisting of 5 bridges, 2 underpasses and 1 culvert.
N63 Liss to Abbey Realignment Scheme	It is anticipated that An Bord Pleanála will make a decision in the Q1 2023 and then the Scheme will advance through Phases 5 and 6 of TII Project Management Guidelines.
N59 Bunnakill to Claremount	Progression of method statements for other aspects of the Bunnakill to Claremount section with National Parks & Wildlife Services (NPWS) & Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) such as advance contracts for ground investigation works and topographic surveys and archaeology investigations in 2023. It is hoped to progress to the detailed design for Bunnakill to Claremount in 2023 based on the outcome of the initial surveys and investigations. Discussions will continue with NPWS & IFI in relation to construction stage method statements for the remaining section Bunnakill to Claremount pending development of the detailed design.
N17 Milltown to Gortnagunnad Realignment	Progress land acquisition and detailed design and then the Scheme will advance through Phases 5 and 6 of TII Project Management Guidelines.
Galway to Clifden Greenway	Complete remaining 6km from Clifden to Recess. Land acquisition on-going. Publish the Emerging Preferred Corridor in Q1 2023 for the Galway to Oughterard section and continue Liaison with landowners to proceed on potential routes for the cycleway within the emerging preferred route corridor. Design and environmental evaluation to be carried out



NCN Galway to Athlone cycleway	NCN Galway to Athlone cycleway - Liaison with landowners to proceed on potential routes for the cycleway within the emerging preferred route corridor. Design and environmental evaluation to be carried out.
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NON NATIONAL ROADS

Advance/commence the following Non-National Road Schemes

- Ballinasloe Inner Relief Road
- Athenry Ring Road
- R336
- R374 Causeways & Bridges
- R332 Kilbannon

The advancement of the above projects is dependent on the availability of funding and where required the availability of the necessary internal resources to advance the projects.

PLANT ACQUISITION / RENEWAL AND WINTER MAINTENANCE PROGRAMMES –

Project:	Status:
Review of Fleet and Machinery Yard Operations	Significant investment is required to replace aging fleet. A Galway County Council Machinery yard review has been undertaken and a phased replacement of vehicles has commenced in line with the recommendations arising from that exercise.
Replacement of Pay and Display Units	57 replacement units will be installed in Gort and Athenry. A final phase in 2024 will result in the replacement of a further 48 units in Ballinasloe, Clifden and Cleggan. The phasing of the installation is designed to cater for funding availability.

FLOOD RELIEF/MITIGATION SCHEMES

The Council will continue to work with the Office of Public Works (OPW) through the Joint Working Group and Steering Group and other stakeholders to advance appropriate flood relief/ mitigation schemes in compliance with all appropriate legislative and regulatory provisions and within the limits of available resources.



Project:	Status:
<p>Dunkellin/Aggard Flood Relief Scheme</p>	<p>All works were completed on the scheme in September 2021. It is now fully operational. Landowner compensation payments have been progressed through 2022 with almost all discharged.</p>
<p>South Galway (Gort Lowlands) Flood Relief Scheme</p>	<p>All base line surveys for the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) were completed in 2022. Site Investigation works were also completed in 2022.</p> <p>Development of the EIAR commence din 2022, public exhibition scheduled for Q2 2023.</p>
<p>Ballinasloe Flood Relief Scheme</p>	<p>The Emerging Options Public Consultation period concluded in March 2022.</p> <p>The ground investigation works are well progressed and environmental surveys are also continuing.</p> <p>The next steps involve further development of options taking public feedback into consideration.</p> <p>The scheme is currently in Stage 1 - which involves scheme assessment, development & design. It is anticipated that Stage 1 will be completed in Q1 2023.</p>
<p>Clifden Flood Relief Scheme</p>	<p>This project is being funded by the OPW – CFRAM funding from Tranche 1.</p> <p>Environmental base line surveys were completed in 2022.</p> <p>The ground investigation works commenced in Q3 2022.</p> <p>The Hydrological Method Statement and Hydraulic Modelling Assessment have also been completed.</p> <p>The scheme is currently in Stage 1 - which involves scheme assessment, development & design. It is anticipated that Stage 1 will be completed in Q1 2023.</p>



STRATEGIC PIERS AND HARBOURS PROGRAMME

Funding for works on strategic piers on the islands is being provided through the Department of Rural & Community Development.

Project:	Status:
<p>Inis Oírr Pier Improvements – construct breakwater and pier extension, carry out dredging and provide additional berthage</p>	<p>Business Case approval for the proposed works was attained in 2021. The Land Acquisition/CPO process has been progressed through 2022 with CPO publication in November.</p> <p>Pending An Bord Pleanála approval of the CPO, procurement of a main contractor will take place in mid 2023. Tender documents are at an advanced state of completion.</p> <p>It is projected that a contract will be awarded with contract commencement before year end 2023.</p>
<p>Caladh Mór Pier, Inis Meáin Improvements</p>	<p>The National Maritime College of Ireland have completed their study of An Caladh Mór in 2022 with a modelling exercise simulating the use of the pier by the cargo boat and the passenger ferries.</p> <p>The exercise highlighted the need to complete Phase 3 works to the pier. Engagement is ongoing between DRCD, Galway County Council and Island representatives with regard to the scale of works to be undertaken – more expansive works will be required to enable the larger cargo boat access the pier. A final decision in this regard will inform the direction the project takes in 2023.</p>
<p>Céibh an Chóra, Inis Meáin</p>	<p>Dredging works are required at this pier to dela with a sedimentation build up over recent years. A Foreshore Licence pre-application meeting has taken place with DHLGH. A Dumping at Sea licence will also be required. DRCD funding has been received to progress the project. The timeline to obtain the required statutory approvals is</p>



approximately one year. It is projected that the dredging works will be carried out in 2024.

FISHERIES HARBOUR AND COASTAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAMME

Project:	Status:
Crumpáin, Carna and Droim, Leitir Mór	<p>Subject to approval from the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine, it is intended to carry out improvement including new slipways at Crumpáin, Droim and Ard Thoir.</p> <p>The Natura Impact Statements for Crumpáin and Droim are complete. The design is complete. Publication of the planning documentation for Droim is projected before year end 2022. Potential works at Crumpáin will depend on the agreement of the adjacent landowner: discussions are ongoing</p>



SMARTER TRAVEL

Project:	Status:
<p>Active Travel Project – National Transport Authority</p>	<p>As part of the Programme for Government published in June 2020 the National Transport Authority has provided funding on a multi-annual basis for walking and cycling projects in local authorities. The aim of this funding is to support the development of high-quality urban cycling and walking infrastructure outside of our cities.</p> <p>Categories of projects include -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New or improved access to town centres, schools or other major destinations for walking and/or cycling; • New or upgraded cycle facilities, providing segregation from motorised traffic on key routes in and approaching towns and villages; • New footpaths for pedestrian connections or upgrading/renewal of existing footpaths; • Filtered permeability schemes, conferring “short-cut” advantage to pedestrians and / or cyclists to access key local destinations; • New or improved urban greenways, providing for commuter connectivity in addition to recreational /amenity use, with linkages to the town street network. <i>(Please be aware that rural / amenity greenways will continue to be funded through the Department of Transport. This NTA fund is intended for town-centre greenways, addressing utilitarian / commuter / local urban trips);</i> • Conversion of temporary COVID interventions to permanent layouts; • Improved access to public transport, including improved waiting facilities in town centres; and



- Development of focussed transport studies for larger towns, to identify networks and projects for implementation later in this programme.

In 2022 Galway County Council secured €7.875m under the Active Travel fund for works including; footpath improvements, cycle parking, light segregation cycle schemes, low cost junction tightening/pedestrian crossings, low cost permeability measures, safety interventions, bus stops and transport studies. Works are underway on the projects approved. In respect of any projects not fully completed by year end; applications for project-continuance into 2023 will be made to the NTA.

A significant development also took place in 2022 in respect of transportation modelling and studies when Galway County Council awarded a contract to Systra Ltd for a number of Local Transport Plans, transport modelling and transport studies. The outcome of this work will provide a strong evidential basis for future active travel applications.

The Active Travel Team expanded in 2022 to include a Senior Executive Engineer, an Assistant Engineer and a Staff Officer. The position of Executive Engineer is in the process of being filled. This team is responsible for preparing applications for future funding, monitoring and delivering Active Travel projects.

The Active Travel Programme is a rolling capital programme and applications for new projects will also continue to take place on an ongoing basis.



NATIONAL BROADBAND PLAN & DIGITAL STRATEGY

Project:	Status:
<p>National Broadband Plan</p>	<p>The National Broadband Plan (NBP) is set to deliver high-speed fibre broadband to 39,434 premises of in County Galway and the projected investment in Co. Galway over the life of the project is €153 Million.</p> <p>In 2020 NBI commenced network construction for their fibre roll out, with an expected program of 5-7 years for construction.</p> <p>By November '22 NBI has passed 9,886 premises with fibre broadband of which 2,649 properties have been connected.</p> <p>By the end of 2022 it is projected approximately 35% of NBI's roll out in Galway will be complete.</p> <p>NBI currently published build plan indicates they will have completed their network roll out in county Galway by December 2026.</p> <p>Source: https://nbi.ie/where-are-we-working/ Nov. '22</p> <p>In 2022 NBI are works in 4 out of the 5 Municipal Districts in County Galway.</p> <p>Galway county has 22 Broadband Connection Points (BCP) which are currently been enabled with high-speed broadband as part of the NPB to support communities until fibre broadband is rolled out in their area.</p> <p>At present 21 out of the 22 sites have been provided with high speed broadband, with the final site projected to be connected in Q4 '22.</p> <p>A key principle of the NBP is to support and stimulate commercial investment through policy and regulatory measures. This has acted as a catalyst for commercial investment by the telecommunications sector.</p> <p>Galway County Council will facilitate the roll out of telecommunications by both state and private investment in the County, in the last 5 years over 42,000 properties gained access to highspeed broadband (Fibre to the home - FTTH) service in County Galway through commercial investment.</p> <p>In 2022 a telecoms infrastructure provider announced fibre broadband network build projects in Loughrea and Ballinasloe towns in 2022-2023.</p> <p>The new Mobile Phone and Broadband taskforce was reconvened in December 2021.</p>



	<p>One of the issues to be prioritised by this taskforce is Improving outdoor mobile phone coverage.</p> <p>Galway County Council employs a full time Broadband Officer.</p>
<p>Digital Strategy</p>	<p>Galway County’s Digital Strategy was published in Q1 2021, with the aim of identifying the County’s strengths and weakness resulting from increased connectivity from both state and private investment in telecommunications within the County. It will encourage our communities to build on our strengths and to combat our perceived weaknesses.</p> <p>Galway County’s Digital Strategy is a statement of intent and support for the digital development of the county, in a period of increasing connectivity and higher use of digital service, digital technologies and infrastructure. Galway Counties digital strategy will support the population of County Galway to benefit from these changes.</p> <p>To support Connectivity for the public, in 2022 Galway Co increased its free public Wi-Fi Access points to 40 under the Wifi4eu scheme, this is in addition to the 21 Public Wi-fi access points from the BCP locations.</p> <p>Galway County Council is supporting the BCPs as they develop their service offering to the public, ranging from public wi-fi, spaces to get on-line & remote working spaces.</p> <p>In 2022 Galway County Council was awarded €127,779.33 by the Dept. Of Rural and Community Development under the Connected Hubs 2022 program on behalf of 5 BCP seeking to setup remote working spaces or improve existing facilities.</p> <p>Galway County Council will support 4 thematic programs from Dept. of Rural and Community Development, which will be promoted and delivered through the BCP network, the programs are in E-health, Skills, Remote working and Art.</p>

GALWAY FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE (GFRS)

GFRS is the Principal Emergency Service (PES) for Galway City and County Councils. The following sets out the indicative Capital programme for GFRS for 2022-2024.

Please note all projects are subject to Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage (DHLGH) funding and specific approval by project.

FIRE APPLIANCES

- The DHLGH allocated a new class B Appliance to Galway County Council as part of a National Procurement Plan 2021-2025. This class B appliance was procured centrally as part of a National procurement process by OGP. The selected supplier was Emergency One in Scotland. Personnel from GFRS attended the Emergency One plant in Scotland in 2021 and outlined the detailed specification of the order. There is a worldwide delay in the supply of chassis and the new appliance should be delivered in mid 2023
- Efforts are ongoing to procure a number of pre-owned Class B appliances. This will help to lower the average age of appliances which is currently high. Currently there are very few suitable pre-owned Appliances on the market. Efforts are also ongoing to procure a pre-owned water tanker for Tuam Fire Station.

FIRE STATIONS

New fire station projects are outlined in DHLGH National Capital Programme 2021-2025.

TUAM FIRE STATION

- The new Fire Station in Tuam went operational in late September 2018 and was officially opened on the 15 April 2019 by Sean Canney T.D., Minister of State Community Development, Natural Resources & Digital Development.
The four-bay retained Fire Station and Training Centre was constructed by Carey Construction Ltd.

ATHENRY FIRE STATION

- A site for a new Fire Station in Athenry has been identified in the Athenry town area. A design team was appointed in 2020 and a detailed design completed in 2021. Galway County Council went to tender for Project Supervisor Construction Stage in mid 2022. At the time of writing the CE's Order was signed to appoint the contractor and it is hoped that the project will commence before end 2022.

LOUGHREA FIRE STATION

- A number of suitable sites were identified, and an appropriate site was secured. Galway County Council made a case to Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage for approval to proceed to the design stage and the appointment of a Design Team. The process for delivering a new fire station in Loughrea is well underway with the design consultants appointed and the Part 8 Planning application submitted. It is hoped that a competition to appoint a Main Contractor will commence in early 2023.

BALLINASLOE FIRE STATION

- A revised capital appraisal was sent to the DHPLG in November 2019 in relation to the refurbishment of Ballinasloe Fire Station in its existing location. Once approval in principle is received, we will proceed to the design phase and the appointment of a Design Team.

GALWAY CITY FIRE STATION AND HEADQUARTERS

- Work is ongoing by Galway City Council in relation to the identification and procurement of an appropriate site. There has been an indication from the DHLGH that funds will be made available once a site has been procured.
- Given the scale of this project and estimated cost of between €7-9 million (depending on the future service delivery model selected (as per GFRS report prepared in 2017) it is vital that a capital appraisal be submitted to the DHLGH for inclusion in the new National Capital Programme as soon as possible. Both Councils are aware of the urgency in relation to this project.

BRIGADE MECHANICS WORKSHOP

- GFRS maintains a fleet of approximately sixty (60) vehicles. Currently there is no dedicated Brigade Mechanic's Workshop which is a requirement under the Council's Safety Management System. In 2022, a capital appraisal was sent to DHLGH to construct a new dedicated workshop on the same site as the New Fire Station in Athenry.

OTHER- SMALL PROJECTS CAPITAL

- Procurement of smoke alarms for 2022, as part of National Community Smoke Alarm Scheme as per previous years. A submission has been made to DHPLG to procure 650 smoke alarms in 2023 and continued distribution via Galway County and City Community Smoke Alarms Schemes in 2023 to vulnerable households with a particular focus on the off-shore islands.
- Ongoing equipment replacement will continue in 2023. BA equipment that reached the end of its serviceable life was replaced at a cost of €100k approx. in 2020. A successful case was submitted to DHPLG to recoup this cost.
- There is a very limited National capital budget for Fire Service appliances/equipment. Galway County Council have submitted a number of requests to the Department of Housing Local Government & Heritage for capital funding/grant aid for items of equipment in 2022 and have received approval to procure a number of small and larger items; including a 2nd hand Foam Truck to replace the original

vehicle which was beyond economic use. This vehicle strengthens the Fire Services ability to respond effectively to incidents on the 3 Seveso Sites in Galway City and County amongst other incident types.

ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

GORT CIVIC AMENITY SITE

We will have construction costing prepared in December 2022. It is estimated to be in the region of over €400,000.

KILCONNELL LANDFILL – PROPOSED ECO PARK

We have appointed a design consultant at a cost of €108,370 including VAT. €50,000 of this funding has been approved under the ORIS Scheme and we have also requested support from the Department (DECC). Galway County Council contribution will be in the region of €59,000.

POLLBOY

We will be tendering next year for a consultant for an options assessment on Pollboy. This will cost in the region of €30,000.

BURIAL GROUNDS

For capital expenditure on Burial Grounds in 2023 the projections are as follows:

In Development:

Kilbannon	€50,000
Claregalway	€250,000
Duniry	€60,000
Creagh	€130,000
Ballyconnelly	€100,000
Moycullen Columbarium	€15,000
Creggs/Annaghdown	€3,000
Inverin	€20,000

Total Spend **€628,000**

PLANNING & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND CORPORATE SERVICES

GARRAUN (ORANMORE TRAIN STATION) URDF

There are three main elements to the funding allocation which is centred around the existing train station at Oranmore in County Galway's metropolitan area.

Funding has been awarded for:

1. Railway Infrastructure Upgrades to include a 1KM passing railway loop at the existing Oranmore Train Station; including additional platform and associated infrastructure (12 million).
2. Design of the local centre (see attached) and lands south of the train station to include a detailed design of the local centre, associated car park (existing), (architectural/structural engineering detail) and landscaping plan (for public use); (€300,000).
3. A study on the Design Development of Typologies to implement the Urban Framework Plan (€75,000).

The project commenced in 2021 in close collaboration with Iarnród Éireann. Subject to planning being granted it is anticipated that the new enhancements at the station will come into operation in early to mid-2025.

It is intended that the lands surrounding the station will eventually deliver up to 1,100 residential units, as well as employment, commercial, educational and community spaces. Critical to the success of this plan is the provision of good quality public transport and the upgrade of Oranmore Station will significantly enhance services.

CORPORATE SERVICES, FACILITIES MANAGEMENT & ENERGY EFFICIENCY INVESTMENTS

As Áras an Chontae has now been open for over 20 years it requires capital investment in the building which includes the provision of additional office accommodation, energy efficiency works including the repair and replacement of windows, improvements in disability access for both staff and visitors and Health and Safety works to the existing boundary wall at Bóthar na mBan.

Capital investment is also required throughout the County Council portfolio of buildings, including regional offices and our library network both to sustain these assets and to ensure a more energy efficient property folio in line with our current Climate Action Plan.

During the period of this 3-year Capital Programme 2023-2025, it is intended to progress a number of other projects, subject to Departmental funding, however some works required for Health & Safety and/or essential conservation purposes may need to be carried out with funding from the capital account.



RECREATION AND AMENITY

The Council will continue to support investment in recreation and amenity facilities in the county leveraging grant funding where available to support the upgrade of existing playgrounds, the development of new facilities including walking routes and amenities and the preparation of a Recreation and Amenity Development Strategy for County Galway.