



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

Coiste Polasaí Straitéiseach Gnóthaí Forbairt Eacnamaíochta & Fiontraíochta
Economic Development & Enterprise Strategic Policy Committee (SPC)
Cruinniú /Meeting

Wednesday 19th October 2016, 10.00am

Council Chamber, Galway County Council, Galway

Members in attendance

Cllr. Jimmy McClearn, Chairperson	Galway County Council
Cllr. Mary Hoade	Galway County Council
Cllr. Seán Ó Tuairisg	Galway County Council
Cllr. Peter Feeney	Galway County Council

Present

Catherine McConnell	A/Director of Services, Galway County Council
Alan Farrell	Galway County Council
Kieran Coyne	Galway County Council
Breda Mulrennan	Galway County Council

Apologies

Cllr. Michael Finnerty	Galway County Council
Cllr. Tom Healy	Galway County Council
Cllr. Karey McHugh	Galway County Council
Dan Dowling	Community representative
Paul Mannion	Scott Tallon Walker Architects
Michelle Murphy	Business / Commercial representative
Breda Fox	Galway County Council
Paul Quinn	Trade Union representative

Welcome & Introductions

Cllr. Jimmy McClearn welcomed those in attendance to the Fourth meeting of 2016 and read out the apologies.

1. Minutes of the meeting of the Economic Development & Enterprise SPC held on 20th July 2016 & matters arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 20th of July 2016 were approved on the proposal of Cllr. Mary Hoade and seconded by Cllr. Seán O' Tuairisg.

There were no matters arising.

2. Galway West of Ireland European Region of Gastronomy 2018 Update

Mr. Alan Farrell updated the committee on the status of the European Region of Gastronomy 2018. He said that Galway County Council and the key partners tasked with implementation of the programme are currently working on producing Governance Structures. He stated that it is proposed that an executive group who would oversee the entire project be created and that the current steering committee would be expanded to include the public, private, educational, business and community sectors. It is envisaged that each partner will take a theme from the bid book and will implement an action under same.

He also informed the group that discussions have taken place concerning the engagement of a co-ordinator to work on ERG exclusively. The first meeting of the new expanded steering committee will take place prior to Christmas. Mr Alan Farrell also told the committee that the European Region of Gastronomy will be designated an area of priority under the Community support Scheme 2017.

Kieran Coyne who attended a platform meeting in Romania informed the committee that nine regions were designated European Regions of Gastronomy and two more are currently in the bidding process. Each of the areas are engaging with the process in their own way.

Cllr. Jimmy Mc Clearn enquired as to whether the Council would have a European Region of Gastronomy budget. Catherine Mc Connell stated that the Council has no specific budget relating to the European Region of Gastronomy at this time but the Council and the key partners in the project are examining refocusing the funding that we currently have.

Cllr Mary Hoade asked whether the Council has designated personnel in place to work specifically on the European Region of Gastronomy designation. The director replied that we will be using the personnel we currently have.

Cllr. Jimmy Mc Clearn stated that the real challenge to the Council will be informing the public and increasing awareness. Ms. McConnell replied that the Council would hope that a legacy will be realised after the designation.

3. REDZ (Rural Economic Development Zones) Update

Mr. Kieran Coyne updated the committee on the status of REDZ (Information attached).

Cllr. Sean Ó Tuairisg enquired if the Council was underselling themselves by only applying for the smaller category.

Catherine McConnell replied that we are short on capacity and what resources we have available to us so we are hoping that this application will enable our communities to be ready for future funding calls.

Alan Farrell stated that it will be investment which will enable our communities to lever funding.

4. Town and Village Renewal 2016 Update

Kieran informed the meeting on the current status of the Town and Village Renewal Scheme (Information attached).

From a County Galway perspective eight applications were supported (two in the greater than 5,000 population range and six projects in areas with a population of less than 5,000). The projects are as follows;

1. **Loughrea** – Development of Town Plan and streetscape proposals to the tune of €25,000
2. **Gort** – Streetscape, landscaping, plaques on heritage buildings, enhancement, town park improvements to the tune of €50,000
3. **Portumna** – Upgrade Portumna Forest Park amenity to the tune of €25,000
4. **Ballinasloe** – Footpath construction to station road to provide for disability access to the tune of €63,000
5. **Oughterard** – Surface running and walking area to the tune of €20,000
6. **Rosmuc** – Footpath linking carpark at GAA to Teach na Phiarsaigh to the tune of €42,000
7. **Athenry** – Replace sections of footpath within the town centre with conservation Paving sets and kerbing to the tune of €70,000
8. **Tuam** - Restoration of Mill Wheel and landscaping of area to the tune of €85,000

Cllr. Sean Ó Tuairisg suggested that the scheme in its current state is very unsatisfactory owing to the short timeframe.

Cllr. Mary Hoade stated that most communities are on holiday over the application period.

Cllr Peter Roche enquired as to the total of the National allocation and Kieran informed him that €10 million euros was made available nationally.

Cllr. Jimmy McLearn stated that Galway County Council needs to make sure that Communities have projects ready in anticipation of a call for funding and that it is imperative that we inform the Department of the concerns we have regarding the short application time.

5. Business Incentive Scheme

The Director informed the meeting that Galway County Council is hoping to launch the Business Incentive Scheme. Currently there are six queries but the current scheme needs to be examined and we need to ascertain if it needs to be broadened. It is envisaged that the Launch will take place in November possibly in Ballinasloe.

Cllr. Peter Roche enquired as to whether an information sheet could be made available. Catherine informed him that the Council are currently working on the production of it and that she has met with all of the Revenue Collectors and briefed them on the scheme.

6. National Broadband Plan

Catherine McConnell briefed the committee on the National Broadband Plan. She stated that each Local Authority has been tasked with implementing a team and that the same amount of funding was allocated to each Local Authority for the recruitment of a Broadband Advisor.

Cllr. Ó Tuairisg stated that broadband is imperative to bring life to communities and that joined up thinking is needed.

The Director informed the meeting that the Local Authority is tasked with identifying hotspot areas so we examined what areas currently have broadband but are experiencing bad coverage so that those services would be upgraded first.

7. AOB

Alan Farrell informed the committee that the Tourism Strategy is going for Public Consultation there will be one event held in the West of the County and another held in the East and one in the City. It is hoped that we will be able to present the consultation results at the next meeting.

Cllr. Jimmy McClearn enquired about the Ardán Corridor and in terms of development should we be identifying our infrastructural needs. Ms. McConnell replied that the corridor acts as an engine for the County but the major problem is wastewater and Irish Waters priorities are not aligned with our economic aspirations. We need to engage with Irish Water in order to drive this

Cllr Sean Ó Tuairisg enquired as to the current status of the LEADER Programme. Catherine McConnell stated that the Department awarded the West of the County LAG to Forum. Comhar na nÓileain will have no involvement with the implementation of the scheme to the islands Forum will be taking care of this. The Department have issued a call for the East of the County the closing date for which is the 28th of October 2016. Cllr Jimmy McClearn added that it was unfortunate that this is how the Department chose to implement it but once the issue is finalised the two submission which were made by Co Galway LCDC needs to be made public. The Director informed the meeting that at all times it was the LCDC's intention to have three companies working on a common strategy for the entire County.

The meeting then concluded and Cllr. Jimmy McClearn thanked the committee for their attendance.