



**Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe**  
**Galway County Council**

**Coiste Polasaí Straitéiseach Gnóthaí Forbairt Eacnamaíochta & Fiontraíochta**

Economic Development & Enterprise Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) Cruinniú/Meeting

**Dé Máirt 8 Nollaig - Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020 @ 14:30**

**Meeting held online via Microsoft Teams**

**Members in attendance:**

Clr Karey McHugh (Chair)	Galway County Council
Clr Declan Geraghty	Galway County Council
Clr Thomas Welby	Galway County Council
Clr Mary Hoade	Galway County Council
Dave Hickey	Business Representative
Dan Dowling	Community Representative
Paul Carey	Business/Construction Sector Representative

**Present:**

Kieran Coyne	Galway County Council
Diane Gallagher	Galway County Council
Ciaran Wynne	Galway County Council
Sarah Hanley	Bia Innovator Campus

**Apologies:**

Alan Farrell	Galway County Council
Clr David Collins	Galway County Council
Clr Gerry Finnerty	Galway County Council
Marian Spellman	Trade Union Representative

## **Minutes of the meeting of the Economic Development & Enterprise SPC held on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

Cllr Karey McHugh welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The minutes of the meeting held on the 13<sup>th</sup> October 2020 were approved on the proposal of Cllr Mary Hoade, seconded by Cllr Declan Geraghty.

Cllr Karey McHugh expressed her delight that €100,000 had been made available in budget 2021 for Tourism and that this would enable the Tourism Officer Ruth Mulhern to carry out her vision for the County of Galway.

### **1. Regeneration**

Cllr McHugh introduced Ciaran Wynne to give an update on Regeneration.

Mr. Wynne gave a brief overview on the work of the Regeneration Team.

- Under Project Ireland 2040, funding has been provided for the Department of Rural and Community Development's Rural Development Investment Programme of which a key element is the RRDF
- The Rural Regeneration and Development fund. Established in 2019 seeks to provide investment to support urban renewal, strengthen and build resilience in rural communities and assist in the regeneration of towns and villages with a population of less than 10,000.
- To date there have been three funding calls for a mix of Category 1 (shovel ready projects) and Category 2 (detailed development of projects to enable achievement of Cat 1 readiness

### **Projects in Receipt of Funding:**

- Athenry Bia innovator and Town Centre renewal (1<sup>st</sup> call)
- Tuam Masterplan
- Dunmore
- Kinvara
- Loughrea Town Hall (Call 2)
- Clifden
- Portumna

This concluded the Regeneration presentation.

Cllr Karey McHugh thanked Ciaran Wynne for his presentation and asked the members if they had any questions or observations.

There were no questions from the members.

## **2. Bia Innovator Campus**

Cllr. McHugh introduced the next speaker Sarah Hanley, Bia Innovator Campus.

Ms Hanley introduced herself and gave a progress overview of the Bia Innovator Campus (presentation attached).

This concluded the Bia Innovator presentation.

Cllr McHugh thanked Sarah Hanley for her presentation and asked the members if they had any questions or observations.

Cllr Declan Geraghty thanked Ms. Hanley for her presentation and asked her what the process is to ensure that those using the campus can reach their intended markets.

Ms. Hanley advised that any companies at the product viability stage will benefit greatly from using the co working kitchens and that it is a great starting point for them. Ms. Hanley stated that the co working spaces will benefit both established and newly established businesses. Ms. Hanley advised that there will also be programmes on offer through the Local Enterprise Office such as Lean Launch and mentoring to help the companies get to market.

Kieran Coyne stated that the County Council are very heavily invested in the BIA Innovator Campus and that the Council will continue to offer administrative support where possible. Mr. Coyne stated that long term support is important from a County Council point of view.

Paul Carey thanked Sarah for her presentation. Mr Carey made the observation that food producers around Galway have great enthusiasm and that the BIA Innovator Campus will be a huge success. Mr. Carey stated that Athenry will benefit greatly and that it is now important for our electoral representatives to support any upgrades needed in Athenry such as Wastewater upgrade.

Cllr Declan Geraghty thanked Sarah for her presentation and stated that he agreed with Paul Careys observations.

Cllr Karey McHugh stated that she agreed with all the observations made and stated that it is great to see this opportunity for local food producers. Cllr McHugh thanked Sarah for her presentation.

## **AOB**

Cllr Karey McHugh asked if there was any other business.

Cllr Declan Geraghty stated that it is important for the Economic SPC to look at the issues surrounding rural housing in the County and the problems young people are having in getting mortgages. Cllr Geraghty stated that we need housing and need to talk about the issues surrounding housing when talking about enterprise.

Kieran Coyne stated that ideally there would be a banking representative on the Economic Development and Enterprise SPC committee and the he will look into the guidelines and try to get some input from the banking federation at a future meeting.

Cllr Karey McHugh agreed that rural housing in County Galway is an issue and advised that she would look to arranging a meeting between this SPC and the Planning SPC. Cllr McHugh stated that she worries local input may not be taken into consideration in the new County Development Plan.

Cllr Thomas Welby agreed with the comments made about rural housing in the County and stated that the Office of Public Regulator will have a major impact on the County Development Plan.

Cllr Mary Hoade stated that she agreed with all the points raised in relation to rural housing. Cllr Hoade stated that it is important that we upgrade our services in towns and villages across the County in order to attract development and enterprise.

Paul Carey stated that he was in agreement with trying to get a banking representative to speak with the Committee.

Dan Dowling agreed with all the observations made in relation to rural housing and the difficulties young people are having getting mortgages.

Cllr Declan Geraghty stated that there were a lot of important points raised today in relation to housing and mortgages. Cllr Geraghty stated that we need to try and keep young people in our small towns and villages and that it is important for all the elected members to now work together.

Kieran Coyne advised that he will collate a proposal to get a representative from the banking federation at a future meeting and will look into the matter.

Cllr Karey McHugh stated that it had been a very positive meeting and thanked all the members for attending. As there was no other business to be discussed Cllr McHugh wished all the members well over the Christmas period.

The meeting then concluded.

