



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

Galway County Council
Monthly Management Report
July 2021

Local Improvement Schemes 2021

On Wednesday 14th July last, the Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, announced an increased investment for upgrade works on non-public roads in rural communities. The announcement doubles the original budget which had been allocated for investment under the 2021 Local Improvement Scheme (LIS).

Due to the high level of applications on hand and the demand of this scheme and the importance of it for County Galway, The Council would certainly be in a position to accept additional funding and have informed the Dept of this position.

I can confirm that the initial allocation for LIS for Galway County in the amount of €876,959 will be fully utilised in 2021. All of the applicants have been contacted with all local contributions received. So, The Council is ready to proceed with the 28 projects on the initial priority list.

Athenry to Milltown Greenway

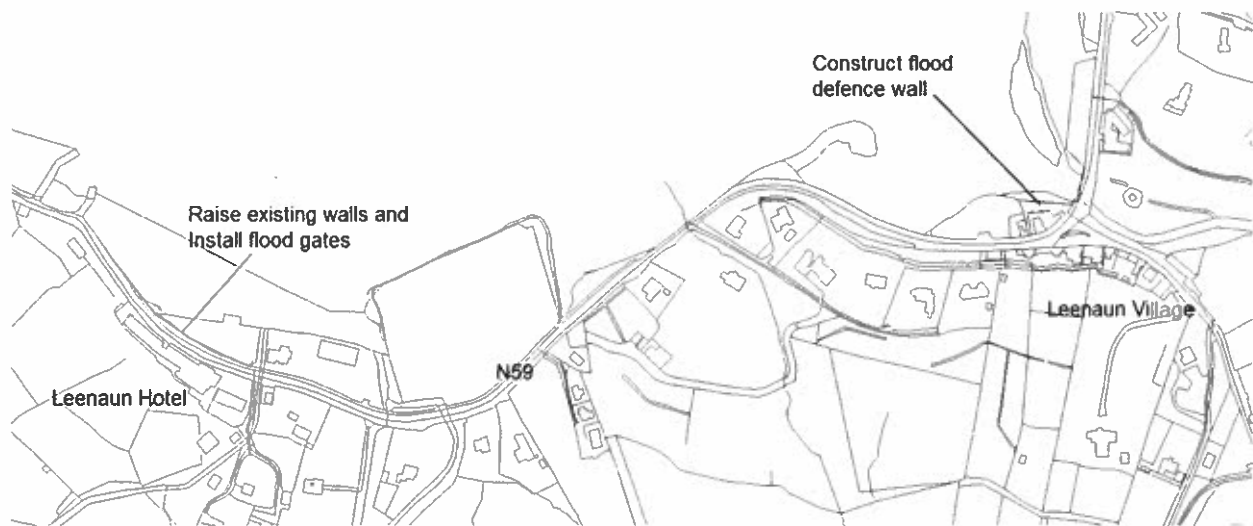
I wish to confirm that Galway County Council issued the Letter of Intent to the Most Economically Advantageous Tenderer. Letters of Regret also issued to the unsuccessful tenderers.

We are now in a 2-week standstill period in which time the unsuccessful tenderers may challenge the outcome. Once the 2-week period is up, and Galway County Council is satisfied with the insurances and other documents submitted (which have been requested in the Letter of Intent), a Letter of Acceptance will follow. Once a Letter of Acceptance is issued the formal contract is activated.

The first exercise will be requesting the consultant to provide a robust and realistic programme.

Leenaun Village - Minor Flood Mitigation Works & Coastal Protection Scheme

The Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland have completed a review of the application on the basis of the information supplied by Galway County Council and have offered funding of €198,000 for the coastal project – flood defense walls and flood gates at the locations shown on the map below.



Clifden Flood Relief Scheme – Procurement of Design Consultants

I can confirm OPW's approval to progress the Clifden Flood Relief Scheme to Tender Award Stage. The Council will now appoint Jacobs Consultant Engineers, as the Most Economically Advantageous Tenderer to the role Design and Environmental Consultants. The Clifden Flood Relief Scheme project will involve the assessment and development of a flood relief scheme and other measures to manage the existing flood risk in Clifden, and also the potential for significant increase in the risk due to climate change, ongoing development and other pressures that may arise in the future.

Community Involvement Schemes

I wish to advise that The Council received notification from the Department of Transport that it proposes to continue the Community Involvement Scheme (CIS) in 2022 and 2023. There are a number of changes to the CIS in 2022/2023 with regard the minimum community contribution of either 10% or 20% based on the criteria below.

- Where the local community contribution is monetary a minimum contribution rate of 10% will apply
- Where the local community contribution comprises works the minimum contribution rate will be 20%

No other grants allocated under Department of Transport grant programme can be used for the Community Contribution.

Eligible works under the CIS are as follows:

General: providing hard stands at field entrances; removal of grass verges or banks; site preparation works including the removal of grass from the centre of the road (where required).

Drainage: opening, deepening and generally maintaining drains alongside roadway and adjoining land including the laying of drainage pipes, where appropriate; providing gully traps at suitable locations and piping to drains; opening inlets; opening backshores; unblocking of shores/surface water drains.

Pavement Works: repair of potholes, surface dressing works, road strengthening works.

Footpaths: repair of footpaths, construction of new footpaths.

Please note The Council is still awaiting information from the Department with regard procedure for submission of applications as this is now to be submitted via MapRoad system.

Athlone to Galway Greenway

The second Public Consultation on the 5 route corridor options for the Galway to Athlone Cycleway took place over the 5 weeks from 25th January until 1st March 2021. A virtual consultation room was created linked to the project website, which contained the same material on boards that would feature at a face-to-face consultation, but with much better access to mapping, as it is possible to zoom into maps and flick between them.

The consultation was promoted on the Council website, through the PPN, in newspaper advertisements, on local radio, and by direct mail to people on the 5 route corridor options resulting in over 8,000 letters posted out.

A significant feature of the consultation was the involvement of community groups in promoting the project and particular routes, mainly by way of social media. This resulted in a very large response, approximately 11,600 submissions were received.

Over 95% of the submissions received were positive. There was good support for 4 of the 5 corridors, with very little support for the railway corridor.

However, there was a limited response from landowners, and Covid-19 restrictions at the time meant that the project team could not meet landowners, either in the Project Office or on the lands. This is now being addressed and a major effort is now underway to consult with landowners, in the areas between sections of publicly owned lands.

There are currently 7 people working full time on land liaison with landowners on their lands. Contact is being made with landowners through submissions made or facilitated by Councillors.

Over 250 meetings have taken place with landowners to date. While there are some pockets of opposition, good progress is being made on all corridors, and it appears that the concept of running the greenway along farm boundaries is gaining some acceptance.

Landowner liaison will continue over the coming months, and on completion, a preferred corridor will be selected. Selection of a preferred corridor will be generally based on the five "S" in the National Greenway Strategy - Scenic, Sustainable, Strategic, Segregated, Lots to See and Do.

Fishery, Harbour and Coastal Infrastructure Development Programme

Set out in the table below is an update in relation to the minor works under the harbour and development scheme:

Project	Update
<i>Inishbofin</i> Harbour minor works	Contractor appointed. Works to commence in August
<i>Cleggan</i> minor works and repair of crane	Contractor appointed. Works to commence in August

Safety Bundle 1 Aughrusmor, Árd Mór, Kilkieran, Aibhnin, Maumeen, Caladh Feenish, Trawbaun	Contractor appointed. Works to commence in August
Derryinver minor works	Contractor appointed. Works to commence in August
An t-Oileán Mór minor works	Procurement process ongoing with an appointment expected in August
Safety Bundle 2 Rinville, Blackweir, Killeenaran, Tarrea, Kinvara, Parkmore, Newtown Lynch	Procurement process ongoing with an appointment expected in August
Garafin minor works	Area office scheduling these works by direct labour

**H O U S I N G & E C O N O M I C R U R A L & C O M M U N I T Y
D E V E L O P M E N T D I R E C T O R A T E**

Affordable Housing Fund Scheme

The new scheme has been announced to replace previous schemes. The approach will be a rolling call for funding and will allow the council to 'bundle' a number of projects across a number of sites. Applications to the scheme (Dept) will be assessed using a matrix that will look at location demand/density levels/unit cost v market/discount & risk.

Galway County Council have several sites and locations that we are progressing; but these must be accepted into the scheme by the Department before we can develop.

The ability for first time buyers to purchase affordable homes outside of Council designated locations will also be covered under the shared equity scheme. Further details on this and the rest of the Affordable scheme options are to be confirmed by the Department.

Maintenance

Within the industry there is a significant shortage of timber, electrical cabling, 1st fix plumbing supplies, insulation and any item made of plastic. This is causing an overall percentage increase of about 30% for all items above and it is envisaged that there will be another 2 price increases before the end of the year.

Price increases and supply issues of this nature will affect the number of and type of maintenance requests that can be dealt with.

Windows have a 2 to 4 month wait from suppliers due to backlog in supplies and built up orders during lockdown.

PV panels and heat pumps have not been affected by supply issues as much as general construction material but most of the companies we deal would have placed their orders well in advance of delivery.

Inspectorate:

Rental Standard Inspections in all aspects (private rental/HAP/Rent allowance etc.) have recommenced as of the 14th July 2021.

Virtual inspections will also continue in several categories.

Housing Applications & Offers

To Date:

174 offers made:

88 Accepted & processed to full tenancies

34 Refused

52 No decision – includes ‘live’ offers, nominations to AHBs and other offers where applicants haven’t got back to us to close the offer formally.

Grants

As of Thursday 15th July – 217 outstanding applications were assessed. 97 were progressed to the workflow across HAG/MAG/HAOP. A further 120 require further information with letters issued last week. There are 54 appeals with 39 in the workflow and 15 requiring further information.

Incomplete forms are the main cause of backlogs at present with lack of income details the main issue, followed by lack of reports from plumbers or certified electricians to confirm works are required.

Capital:

- 10 units in Kinvara commence on the 27th of July with Custy Construction.





- Appointment of Vincent Hannon Architects to **Droim na Gaoithe, Baile Chláir**, to commence design options for social and affordable delivery of 90 units approx.:
 - *The development of the 7-acre site will comprise approx. 90 units at 50/50 social & affordable.*
 - *Stage 1 application was approved by the Dept on 20th of July 2021 for €10.8m estimated costs for 45 social housing units.*
 - *A further €11.25m estimated cost is outlined for 45 affordable housing units, a portion of which (approx. €1.8m) will be recouped under a 'Serviced Site Fund', details tbc.*
 - *The total estimated cost for the 90-units is €22.25m with €12.8m of this (11m+1.8m above) being directly recoupable from the Dept.*
 - *Stage 1 approval is anticipated by 16th July. This will permit immediate appointment of the Design Team, led by Vincent Hannon Architects.*
 - *It is expected that a planning application will be prepared by November 2021, Part 8 or Part 10 route having a bearing on the timeline thereafter.*
 - *Construction is expected to commence by Q3 2022.*

- Appointment of Hassett Leyden & Associates to Ballymoe for the delivery of 10 social units.

Traveler Accommodation

Galway County Council has recently appointed a second Traveller Liaison Officer (Dept co-funded position). The two TLO's will be presenting a full work plan to the LTACC at the September meeting. Work is ongoing with upgrades planned at Creagaun, Gortbride, Tuam and Ballygar.

The IHREC report https://www.ihrec.ie/app/uploads/2021/07/Galway-County-Equality-Review-IHREC_Final.pdf was issued on the 14th July. This includes a number of recommendations which will be worked on by the TLO's and the LTACC.

Queries were raised at an earlier meeting of the council in relation to voids and I advise as follows;

	Athenry-Oranmore-Claregalway	Tuam	Loughrea	Ballinasloe	Connemara
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Voids List	4	15	12	11	8 (2 Islands)
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- List includes: 52 void units returned to Housing by tenants in 2021 of which, 5 insurance claims from fire damage, 8 acquisitions & other deep retro fits including 3 derelicts and 2 on Islands.
- A further 35 units have been turned over by maintenance this year and are being allocated.
- Does not include new estates currently being constructed or finished but on i-house as existing properties. Estates at this stage and currently being tenanted and shortlisted for various phases include:
An Garrai Gabhainn, Moycullen (nearing completion)
Tullahill, Loughrea (nearing completion)
Tubber rd, Gort (starting)
Roundstone, Clifden & Letterfrack being shortlisted together
Fana Bhui, Tuam (starting)
An Fuaran, Oranmore & Gort an Ghabhann, Cluid in Claregalway (nearing completion)

AHB units not included in voids but are being shortlisted for Clifden & Tuam

Economic, Rural & Community Development

Dunguaire Castle, Kinvara

A Meeting was held at request of Shannon Group to discuss Galway County Council role in future of Dunguaire Castle, Kinvara. Discussions are at a very early stage with financial information, maintenance/conservation and staffing structures to be shared and due diligence processes to be developed.

This process is part of an ongoing restructuring of Shannon Group including discussions on Bunratty, St John's Castle and Dunguaire Castle with the relevant local authorities.

Outdoor Seating and Accessories for Tourism and Hospitality

The focus of this scheme is to provide a level of financial support to tourism and hospitality businesses, in our town centres, to purchase or upgrade equipment to provide additional outdoor seating and, therefore, increase their outdoor dining capacity for the summer of 2021. This scheme will financially assist and support independent tourism and hospitality business owners to create outdoor dining experiences in a regulated and accessible manner.

Expenditure must be incurred between 1st April 2020 and 30th September 2021 and payment will be made by Local Authorities to approved applicants on submission of receipts and photography of furniture in situ.

Applicants can apply to the Local Authority for a grant of up to €4,000 (for up to 75% of the ex-VAT cost of equipment purchased/installed).

From a Galway County perspective in total there are 272 outdoor seating and accessories scheme applications in the system as of July 19th, 2021. Of this 129 are completed with 85 of these being approved an allocation. The total approved allocation as of July 19th, 2021 is €290,068 with €102,746

of this drawn down by approved applicants. Most applications in the system have a food offering but with the recent addition to the scheme to include public houses with no food offering more applicants of this nature are applying for support.

Regeneration Projects

Tuam: RRDF Cat 2 application being prepared for Public Realm Design together with potentially a Vacancy/Dereliction assessment and initiative scheme.

Loughrea Town Hall: Asbestos removal and Environmental works completed to allow exploratory structural investigations which will inform Detailed design process. Updated Construction Costs being determined for discussion with Department.

Portumna: Courthouse -safety enabling works including roof repairs being carried out to allow environmental assessments to be carried out. Public Realm Tender Documents being prepared.

Clifden: Tender assessment complete on Public Realm, standstill period observed, and LUC appointed.

CLÁR Programme

The CLÁR programme (Ceantair Laga Árd-Riachtanais) provides funding for small scale infrastructural projects in designated rural areas that have suffered significant levels of population decline (Measure 1 – Safety Measures at Schools or Community Facilities/Measure 2 – Outdoor Community Recreation Facilities Outdoor Community Recreation Facilities /Measure 3A – Community Gardens, Allotments & Sensory Gardens)

The Department are due to make a decision on CLÁR 2021 are due before the end of July.

<p>CLÁR Programme 2021</p>	<p>12 Applications Submitted for 2021 Scheme on May 7th CLAR Sensory Garden Measure 1 - 5 applications submitted.</p> <p>Measure 2 - 5 applications submitted.</p> <p>Measure 3 (a) – 1 application submitted</p> <p>CLAR Innovation Measure – 3 applications submitted by GCC.</p> <p>CLAR 2020 – 7 projects approved and ongoing.</p> <p>Further Information Martin Kenny clar@galwaycoco.ie</p>
<p>CLÁR Programme 2020 (Main Scheme)</p>	<p>Final Drawdown of funding submitted for 2 projects in Attymon and Chorr na Móna following completion of works by GCC Operations & Infrastructure teams.</p> <p>5 x other projects continuing and approaching completion with final drawdown of funding pending same.</p>

Town & Village Renewal Scheme

Programme	Figures
Town & Village Renewal Programme – Summary	<p>20 EOI Received for 2021 – Submission Deadline for 8 projects was Friday July 16th, 2021 and a decision is due in early November 2021.</p> <p>TV 2021 – Project Shortlisted and Submitted to the Department for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tuam (street and shopfront enhancement scheme in line with Tuam Regeneration Master Plan and community infrastructure) 2. Clifden (car and bike parking) 3. Leenane (community park) 4. Athenry (street and front façade enhancement scheme) 5. Kilconnell (community amenity) 6. Barnaderg (rural infrastructure-village enhancements) 7. Village Checks (Areas proposed: Caherlistrane, Ardrahan, Kilcolgan, Moylough & Mountbellow – Multi-village application but DRCD may choose a limited number or one to proceed approved) 8. Woodford – Project Development Measure– examine feasibility of re-development of courthouse and other buildings for community use. <p>TV 2020 – 6 projects approved – all ongoing.</p> <p>TV 2019 – 7 projects approved – 3 Complete (drawdown requested)</p> <p>TV Accelerated Measures 2020 – 15 Projects Approved: 8 completed.</p>

Galway Sports Partnership (GSP):

- Confirmed funding of €28,500 for Bike week to be held during September
- Club Development fund will be open to clubs during August to apply for funding for programmes supporting key target groups into physical activity
- 209 candidates qualified in Safeguarding 1, 2 & 3 courses as well as 3 First Aid courses (all delivered online successfully)
- Race around Galway launch which promotes physical activity, places of interest to visit in Galway and challenges people to complete circumference of Galway in under 6 months (573m) to receive a specially commissioned medal and t-shirt <https://bit.ly/3x8cWbw>
 - Other counties are following the template programme and it will be delivered throughout the country based on GSP's approach
- Communication presence online and offline increased significantly with newspaper articles, appearances on local and community radio programmes as well as social media having an average increase of 1084% in comparison with same period last year
- Upcoming focus: Disability swimming, #heroutdoors campaign with Sport Ireland, delivering programmes in Gaeltacht region, direct provisions, traveller communities

Tourism

- **Tourism promotion:** A busy campaign of Tourism promotion is underway; the Tourism Officer developed content and invested in advertising in the Connacht Tribune supplement 'Where in the West' (currently retailing). A number of the Council's strategic tourism and outdoor recreation projects have been promoted.
- **Social Media campaign:** A strategic social media marketing campaign will commence from 20 July again; the new campaign will focus on promoting county wide tourism attractions, and visitor experiences by highlighting all areas around the County, including traditional tourism destination as well as highlighting all the things visitors can do in Galway to enjoy a summer outdoors. 'Discover Galway' is platformed on Instagram and Facebook, and Twitter.
- **Diaspora:** The Alcock and Brown monument and Marconi site was illuminated for Canada Day, on July 1st. Similar to Tourism Ireland's Global Greening campaign for St Patrick's Day, they wished to illuminate landmarks in Ireland, especially those with Canadian heritage connections.



- **Photography:** A suite of new photography has also been commissioned to particularly capture less known parts of the County and the islands.
- **New Tourism App for Lough Derg; Adventure Lough Derg:** A flagship project for the Lough Derg Marketing Group in 2021 is 'Adventure Lough Derg'; a new visitor experience which will run throughout the Summer and Autumn of 2021. Visitors can explore Lough Derg like never before using the new Adventure Lough Derg tracking app. The Tourism Officers from the three local authorities Clare, Galway and Tipperary worked in consultation with Fáilte

Ireland, Waterways Ireland and Elite Event Management to support development of the app and content.

- **Conamara T&V Campaign:** The Tourism Officer continues to manage the roll out of the Town and Village campaign to promote Conamara with an emphasis now on promotion for the shoulder season. A photography tender has also been awarded and is managed by GCC in relation to this project.
- **Corrib Blueway:** tenders have been assessed and appointment is due on the Corrib Blueway project. The GCC Tourism Officer took part in the evaluation process on Friday 16th July. Galway County Council are supporting this in partnership with Mayo and Galway City.

ARTS:

Culture Night Friday 17th Sep 2021: Expressions of Interest open for groups/individuals/artists to take part in programme 2021. Financial supports available. Budget €25K

Local Live Performance Scheme: *Ceol an tSamhraidh* : Programme currently under development by Arts & Tourism Officers to support the local commercial performance sector. Proposal is a series of live outdoor and indoor/streamed events by local music artists during August and Sept in the county. Budget €143K

Specialist Staffing Scheme: The Arts Council have approved the Arts Office's application to the Specialist Staffing Scheme to commence in 2021. Funding has been awarded for a three year period on a sliding scale for an Arts Engagement Officer (Grade 5 post) to support the Arts Office. Post must be filled in 2021 to guarantee the 75% funding allocated in 2021.

Arts Programme 2021 update: *New* East Galway Fit Up Theatre Festival to be announced for September 2021 in collaboration with the Arts Office and Three Rings Festival. Featuring three professional one act plays touring small halls and venues in East Galway over a three week period in September. Based on the West Cork Fit up Festival model, see <http://www.fit-uptheatrefestival.com/>

Creative Places Tuam: Closing date for new ***Cooperative Commission*** is the end of July. This is a brand-new commission opportunity for collaborative and socially engaged artists and/or arts collective, to work in Tuam for 15 months beginning in September 2021. Project fee €60k, the Arts Office is directly supporting this project and it is being managed directly by CREATE. See <https://creativeplacestuam.ie/programme/commission/>

Galway County LCDC & Community Development

Community Enhancement Programme 2021:

A total of 72 projects have been awarded funding under the Community Enhancement Programme 2021 and range in scale from a few hundred euro up to €10,000. Grants for re-opening facilities include support for projects from safety upgrades, repair and renovation of community facilities such as Community Centres, Men's Sheds and Youth Centres, to contributions towards the payment of utility bills to ensure the sustainability of facilities who have suffered loss of income and

fundraising over the past year. Grants for improving facilities include purchase of equipment or carrying out improvement works to community amenities or facilities through refurbishment or upgrade works.

Healthy Ireland Fund:

Expenditure Returns have been submitted to Pobal for the Keep Well Campaign which concluded at end June 2021. Mid-year Expenditure Returns are required to be submitted to Pobal for Healthy Ireland Round 3 by the end of July 2021.

SICAP (Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme):

The mid-term review of the SICAP Annual Plan was submitted to Pobal for review and was approved, noting that all KPI's are either achieved or on target to be achieved by year end.

Tidy Towns

A webinar was held for Tidy Towns Groups on 28th June to assist them with the process of entering the National Tidy Towns Competition, as the process has been adapted to online entry and online judging due to COVID-19 restrictions. Despite the challenges this represents, 39 groups from County Galway have entered the national competition, and many are also entering categories for Special Awards which close on 23rd July.

Public Participation Network:

- A meeting of the Intercultural Forum took place on 8th July to discuss several ideas for projects targeting the migrant community
- Nominations for 5 no. representative posts on the LCDC have opened and a webinar for PPN Member Groups will be held on 21st July to explain the work of the LCDC and the role of PPN Representatives on the LCDC

Social Inclusion:

- A meeting of the Traveller Interagency Group took place on 30th June and arising from the meeting, an application was submitted by Galway County Council on behalf of the Group for Traveller Pride Week 2021 which will take place in October 2021. In addition, a submission was made to the Planning Department on behalf of the TIG regarding elements of the draft County Development Plan which affect the Traveller Community.
- A consultation session was held with Comhairle na nÓg to discuss the draft County Development Plan and commence the process of a submission being made on the draft Plan from the perspective of youth.

A national 5 year development plan for Comhairle na nÓg was launched by DCEDIY on 7th July and it was announced that an additional €5,000 will be allocated to local authorities under the Comhairle na nÓg Development Fund for the purpose of extending the reach and influence of local Comhairlí.

**PLANNING & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT &
CORPORATE SERVICES**

Library Supports for Marginalised, Socially Excluded and Disadvantaged Communities

An application by Galway County Council for Dormant Accounts funding to provide *Library Supports for Marginalised, Socially Excluded and Disadvantaged Communities* in line with the actions under *Our Public Libraries 2022 – Inspiring, Connecting and Empowering Communities* has been successful.

A Dormant Accounts Fund contribution of up to €35,180.10 has been approved for the provision of the following Programmes and Digital Equity and Social Inclusion supports

Project Title	Total Cost	DRCD Funding
Fierce Close	€6,360.00	€5,724.00
LEGO play Therapy Sessions & Supports	€12,000.00	€10,800.00
Personal Development for women	€1,470.00	€1,323.00
Music Therapy	€8,399.00	€7,559.10
Community Leadership Programme for Women	€3,450.00	€3,105.00
Outdoor musical instruments	€7,410.00	€6,669.00
Total	€39,089.00	€35,180.10

The grant is subject to Galway County Council meeting a minimum of 10% of total eligible costs and any additional funding required to ensure the completion of the project as set out in the proposal.

Brief description of each Project

1. Fierce Close

The aim of this programme is to create critical thinkers and activists on Climate Change. The project takes its title from an Irish idiom for a humid day, one where a storm is imminent. It engages with participants on the brink of adulthood i.e. teenagers who are faced with a climate on the brink of collapse, by opening up a space for them to explore the delicate balance of rights and responsibilities that inflect our conversations about climate change. Through sessions that build their philosophical skills and a creative outcome that can be shared with their communities, this project gives voice to young people’s perspectives on climate change while building their critical thinking skills and debating literacy. Project participants will express their ideas to one another with the support of professional philosophers. These young people will be engaged in philosophical dialogues, informed by Lipman’s Community of Inquiry method, to build an understanding of how and where perspectives need to shift in order to think and act productively in relation to Climate Change. These workshops will be led by community philosophers from Library partner Curo who will scaffold their acquisition of critical thinking skills. Through this process they will isolate the most important questions relating to climate action and climate justice that face Ireland today. At its close this project will allow young people to give voice to nature itself, through guided reflection, creative writing and performance workshops.

Loughrea and Portumna Libraries or online if COVID restrictions disallow in person events.

2. Lego Play Therapy

LEGO therapy is a relatively new field focused on helping children develop their communication and social skills through Lego play. Specifically, the sessions will be targeted at children with autism

spectrum disorders or communication difficulties. Early studies on the therapy have shown positive impacts for the children involved and it has grown in popularity among play therapists, speech pathologists, psychologists and more. This project nests well within existing sensory services in the Galway Library Service while also introducing a new and exciting element for participants with a focus on group work.

The project will run a series of these sessions for children ages 6 to 12, facilitated by professionals and typically in an hour-long block, in which they are given assigned roles as part of a 'building project'. In each role, participants will develop communication skills, take turns, share, and use problem-solving skills.

Westside (Galway City), Clifden and Dunmore Libraries will be the venues and/or the project can be delivered online.

3. Personal Development for Women

The aim of the programme is to empower and support women from disadvantaged communities take their place and let their voice be heard in society. It will encourage self-belief, build self-confidence and help with navigating challenges and change.

The course will support participants in planning for change and introduce them to group work and activities.

The 6-week programme will include modules on:

Life Balance

- Routines & Structure
- Know your values
- Managing your Inner Critic
- Life Vision
- Embracing Fear to make change
- Feedback session + graduation ceremony.

This course will be entirely online.

4. Music Therapy

This project would take the form of a series of music therapy sessions held in person in small group settings or online via Teams video services bookable through Eventbrite. These sessions are guided by trained facilitators who focus on four types of music interaction:

- Improvisation
- Recreating
- Composing
- Listening & Watching

Music therapy is used to lessen physical discomfort by improving respiration, lowering blood pressure, improving cardiac output, reducing heart rate and relaxing muscle tension. For mental health, this form of therapy is great for reducing stress' common negative side effects, such as emotional and behavioural problems. There is a wealth of proven scientific merit in the use of this therapy in cases of Alzheimer's.

Ballybane and Leenane Libraries may be the venues if COVID restrictions allow or else online.

5. Community Leadership for Women

The aim of this course is to identify women leaders from within underrepresented communities and to introduce them to the concept of community leadership. They will be empowered to invigorate civic engagement, to mobilize and guide others, and to facilitate solutions that enhance the wellbeing and health of the community.

The aim of this skill-building programme is to give women from under-represented communities the confidence and skills to engage in civic activities. It will aim to redress the imbalance of digital inequity and opportunities. It will also create a community of women who, it is hoped, will offer support and guidance to the group going forward.

6. Outdoor Musical Instruments

The installation of **outdoor musical instruments** in the courtyard of **Ballinasloe** Library.

The library boasts an outdoor courtyard with seating and a water feature to the rear of the building. It is proposed to add a selection of outdoor musical instruments which can be wall mounted and free standing in the courtyard.

The instruments could include a selection from:

- Congos
- ECO Chimes
- Mirror Chimes
- Wall Marimba
- Sambas
- Cajon

These musical instruments will greatly enhance the library experience for children and adults with intellectual and physical disabilities. Playing music gives members of this community a sense of accomplishment while toning cognitive areas. Studies show that early music education is beneficial to all children and especially to those with special needs.

Adults with intellectual disabilities can benefit in the areas of communication and physical and emotional development.

Planning Applications

Between the 1st January 2021 to the 22nd July 2021 (AM) a total of 1,330 planning applications have been lodged with Galway County Council. This represents an increase of 150 applications from the same period last year.

The following are the decision numbers for January - May 2021.

Month	Total Decisions Made	Grants (C3 Issued)	Further Information Requests	Refusals
January	166	87	63	16

		(59 housing units of which 30 were single rural houses)		
February	244	111 (98 housing units of which 39 were single rural houses)	99	34
March	225	155 (114 housing units of which 56 were single rural houses)	51	19
April	202	117 (91 housing units of which 43 were single rural houses)	65	20
May	240	154 (107 housing units of which 50 were single rural houses)	61	25
Total	1,077	624 (469 housing units of which 218 were single rural houses)	339	114

A weekly list of planning applications received, decisions made, and further information requested is published. These lists are available on our website including new applications, decisions to grant, decisions to refuse, further information, Invalid and appeals to An Bord Pleanala at the link:

www.galway.ie/en/services/planning/weeklylists/

The Members have also been registered on a free MapAlerter service to receive weekly notifications of Planning applications and decisions for their Municipal District:

<http://www.galway.ie/en/services/planning/online/>

Draft County Development Plan 2022 – 2028

The Draft Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 has been on public display since the 20th May 2021 and submissions have been invited from the public with the final date for submissions the 30th July 2021.

During this public consultation period to date the Council have advertised the Draft County Development Plan and invited submissions on newspapers, local radio stations, on our website and via our social media outlets. We have also prepared a video clip advertising this public consultation period. To date we have had in the region of 47,000 interactions with the public on our social media platforms and there have been in excess 4,250 views of the video clip. As of this afternoon we have received a total of 650 submissions on the Draft County Development Plan. Of these submissions 371 have been uploaded to our online platform with

the remaining 279 still being processed. To demonstrate the level of interaction with the public it is worth noting that a total of 75 submissions only were received during the entire public consultation period of the Draft Galway County Development Plan 2015 -2021. With over a week to go in the current public consultation period there are currently 562 more submissions received than during the entire consultation period of the previous Draft County Development Plan 2015-2021.

To supplement the level of interaction and engagement with the public the Council also held three Public Consultation Webinars to inform the public of the Draft County Development Plan and how to make a submission the first of which was with the Public Participation Network (35 attendees). This initial webinar with the PPN was followed up with two further Public Consultation Webinars for the wider public on the 30th June (11am) and the 1st July (7pm). These webinars were widely advertised on local newspapers, local radio stations, on our website and via our social media outlets. There has been in the region of 21,000 interactions with the public with respect to posts which were directly linked to the public consultation webinars. Both a morning and evening webinar was provided to ensure the widest possible number of people would get the opportunity to attend. These webinars were considered to be successful as they were attended by circa 90 individuals. It was further noted that those that attended for the most part stayed online for the duration of the presentation which would suggest the content was both informative and of interest to those in attendance. All three webinars included a 'Questions and Answers' session with the panel to try and answer all questions which came forward. The public were also given the option to email in questions to the forward planning email address if this was a method they preferred.

Further to these public consultation webinars the Council have made the presentation available on our website both in the Irish and English language. The second of the Public Consultation webinars held on the 1st July (7pm) was also recorded and put on our website to give members of the public an opportunity to view this webinar to further inform themselves on the process, the content of the Draft County Development Plan and also how to make a submissions.

Further to the above the planning staff within the Forward Planning and Policy Unit have undertaken a number of meetings over the phone, online and at the planning counter (within Covid guidelines) to ensure that everybody who has sought a meeting has been facilitated in the method which was suitable for them.

There is just over 1 weeks remaining in this public consultation period for the Draft Galway County Development Plan and the Council are continuing to advertise and invite submissions on newspapers, local radio stations, on our website and via our social media outlets. The Council would urge everybody to have their say and make a submission before the deadline date of the 30th July 2021 at 4:30pm.

Extension of County Development Plan

By correspondence dated the 13th July 2021, the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage advised of the process in relation to the Extension of the Development Plan Review Process

There are several steps to the process. To complete the process, it is estimated that a minimum period of 14-16 weeks is required if SEA/AA can be screened out or an estimated minimum period of 28-30 weeks is required if the SEA/AA cannot be screened out.

During that time (14-16 weeks or 28-30 weeks) even when a decision has been made to initiate the process to extend the plan, the Minister has clearly advised that caution should be exercised with regard to extending any ongoing development plan review timescales until such time as a final Step 4 decision can be made. The final Step 4 decision can be made at the end of the 14-16 weeks or 28-30 weeks (whichever applies).

The timelines hereunder for the current Draft County Development Plan (DCDP) will assist in determining what stage the current DCDP will have reached while the steps detailed are being undertaken (should the Members decide to initiate the process).

Stage	Dates	Period
Public Display Period of Draft Galway Development Plan 2022-2028	20th May 2021-30th July 2021	10 weeks
Preparation of CE Report on submissions to the plan for submission to the Elected Members	30th July 2021 to 22nd October 2021	12 weeks
Consideration of the CE Report by the Elected Members	22nd October 2021 to 14th January 2022	12 weeks
Material Alterations Determination for Environmental Reportage * (see note below)	14th January 2022-04th February 2022	3 weeks
Determination of the Material Alterations	04th February 2022-18th February 2022	2 weeks
Material Alternations on Public Display	18th February 2022-18th March 2022	4 weeks on display
Preparation of CE report on submissions received to Material Alterations	18th March 2022-15th April 2022	4 weeks
Consideration of the CE Report by the Elected Members/Plan Adoption	15th April 2022 -27th May 2022	6 weeks
A development plan made under this section shall have effect 4 weeks from the day that it is made.	27th May 2022 to 24th June 2022	4 weeks

*Depending on the nature of the material alterations timelines may be slightly extended to allow for environmental assessment and reports.

To put the timelines into perspective, Stage 1-4 as per the circular, where the minimum timeframes are 14-16 weeks (having screened out the environmental considerations) and 28-30 weeks (where environmental considerations cannot be screen out) the following would apply:

With the 14-16 weeks that would leave us at early February 2022 and 28-30 weeks would leave us in early May 2022.

In the interim, it will be necessary to progress the DCDP in accordance with the existing statutory timeframes as detailed above.

Water Safety During the Weather Advisory & Warning:

In response to the Weather Advisory & Warning service delivery by the Lifeguard Service was reviewed on a daily basis resulting in full 7 day cover provided for both Roundstone and Inis Oirr with additional lifeguards provided in response to the numbers attending across the 16 designated bathing areas.

In addition, planned improvement works were undertaken at Trá Mhór in An Spidéal, including the provision of a new lifeguard hut, without any impact on the scheduled routine scheduled service.

The Council also availed of social media platforms and local media to encourage the public to exercise caution and stay safe while swimming and bathing in our waterways.



Climate Action Opportunity Fund:

Galway County Council launched its inaugural Climate Action Opportunity Fund in 2019. It was a great success with over 44 projects funded across the County. Galway County Council was the first Council to undertake a targeted community climate action scheme and it was launched again for 2021 earlier this year.

40 applications have been received under Galway County Council's Climate Action Opportunity Fund Scheme 2021. The objective of the scheme is to provide support for high impact projects which are aligned to the Council's Climate Adaptation goals and objectives.

Applications were invited from communities/groups with projects under the following categories:

Category 1	Energy Efficiency - Minor Works Grant
Category 2	Biodiversity
Category 3	Renewable Energy
Category 4	Cycling and Walking
Category 5	Resource Efficiency

The applications are currently being assessed by a cross departmental panel, having regard to the following criteria:

- Maximising the impact of Climate Action throughout the County

- Distribution of funding throughout the County
- Projected impact and sustainability of the project
- Timeline for project delivery.

Sustainable Energy Communities (SECs)

The Environment Department is working with the Sustainable Energy Agency of Ireland (SEAI) and community groups to facilitate the development of Energy Master Plans for community groups across the County. The Council supported the applications for the following areas:

- Headford SEC
- Athenry SEC
- Ballinasloe SEC
- Milltown SEC
- Dunmore SEC

All 5 applications have been successful in the grant award from the SEAI of €15,000 each.

Community Fire Safety:

As part of the Council's work on fire prevention and community fire safety the Council's Fire Service has just launched an **On-line Home Fire Safety Checklist** in both Irish and English. This is the first ever online home safety fire checks.

These can be accessed from the following links.

English Version: [Home Fire Safety Checklist](#)

Irish Version: [Seicliosta Sábháilteachta Dóiteáin Baile](#)

(Note you will need the premises Eircode and an e-mail address)

Mise, Le Meas,

Mr. Jim Cullen

Chief Executive

Galway County Council

23rd July 2021

