



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

Galway County Council
Monthly Management Report
June 2021

Local Improvements Scheme (LIS) Roads 2021

Notification was received from the Department of Rural & Community Development on 14th May 2021 outlining that the allocation for Galway County Council for 2021 is € 876,959, a 5% increase on 2020 allocation. In addition to this grant, there will be a local contribution of €115,536 totaling €989,377.

The Scheme outline was slightly amended, and the Council had to reconsider some applications that were deemed invalid under our initial call made earlier in the year as we were working on the scheme outline that was issued for 2020. It is no longer a requirement that roads accessing agricultural holdings must be open to the public. i.e. they can be gated

A total of 237 valid applications was received under the scheme, with a total estimated cost of €10.8m

A priority list and supplementary list was submitted to the Department on 15th June 2021 and I wish to advise that on Wednesday 16th June 2021, the Department of Rural & Community Development issued approved by email of our priority list. Official Letter of Offer from DRCD is still pending. The funding allocation for 2021 of €876,959 will allow for 28 of the projects to proceed for 2021. Letters of Offer have issued to the approved projects. The remaining valid applications on our supplementary list is on file with the Department and should additional funding become available or if there is any scheme from the priority list that doesn't proceed, we will work down the supplementary list accordingly, in order of priority.

I would like to thank the members for their assistance in liaising with the public for completion & submission of the forms, the Technical & Administration Staff who were involved in getting this turned over so quickly.

Correspondence has issued to all applicants.

Safe Routes to School Programme - Round 1 School List - Galway County

The Council has received notification from An Taisce Environmental Education Unit of the inclusion of six schools in round 1 of Safe Routes to School programme. These schools are Athenry Boys National School, Calasactius College, Oranmore, Gaelscoil de hÍde, Oranmore, Scoil Bhaile Nua, Moycullen, Scoil Chroí Naofa Athenry, Scoil Iósaif Naofa, Oranmore and St. Paul's Secondary School, Oughterard.

It is the intention of the NTA and Green-Schools to continue to work with the Council and all schools that applied over the coming years, subject to funding. Given that some interventions may require planning permission, this programme will take a number of years to complete. A provisional multi-annual programme has been created which can allow for a rolling programme to facilitate all schools that applied so that when work is completed at one school, a new school from the list can be added to the programme in your area. There are an additional 58 schools on the programme in the county.

Climate Adaptation and Resilience Works 2021

The Council received funding of €1,177,500 from the Department of Transport for 40 roads across the county. The type of works involved are varied and will include the raising of certain discrete sections of roads, installation of new drainage systems, upgrade of existing drainage systems, flood relief works, installation of new and replacement culverts under roads. The full list of approved

schemes and works involved are listed below. These works will be done as part of the annual roadworks programme.

Circular RW 06/2021 - Climate Adaptation and Resilience Works 2021			
Galway County Council			
Road Number	Scheme Title	Scheme Description	LA Allocation
LP4506	Owenbristy Road Raising	Raise 315m of road by average of 800mm	€120,000
LS8550	Cahermore Channel	430m flood relief channel providing benefit to adjacent roads	€20,000
L8528 L8596 L8543 L4512 L85914 L4509 L8529	South Galway Roads Raising Projects	7 road raising schemes (2020m total) identified under the joint GCC / OPW South Galway FRS. Requires design & land acquisition in advance of road raising works.	€50,000
L3105	Carheenlea, Turloughmore Groundwater Flooding Remediation Measures	Design and install drainage system to divert excessive groundwater flooding (turlough overflow) away from public road and surrounding area where houses are at risk of flooding	€50,000
R339	Menlough Village	Install new surface drain storm water collection system on road (50m) with pipeline through lands (200m) to outfall open drain. Allow for repair of damage to adjoining footway & parking area in front of Community Hall due to persistent flooding.	€30,000
L-4214	Earls Park /Grange Road Raising	Localised Flooding adjacent to an SAC/SPA. Preliminary Design and AA Screening completed in 2020.Funding sought in 2021 for Topographical Survey, Hydrological Survey, NIS and Detailed Design. Construction in 2022.	€35,000
R-328	Gorteen Cross	Flooding of Local Regional Road	€40,000
L6162	Cloonacauneen, Claregalway - Drainage works to mitigate severe and frequent road flooding	Design and install surface water drainage system to divert excessive rainwaters away from public road and surrounding houses at risk of flooding	€15,000
N67/L8108	Deerpark, Oranmore - Drainage works to mitigate severe and frequent road flooding	Design and install drainage system to divert excessive floodwaters away from the public road and surrounding businesses	€75,000
LS3721-0	Tumnasrah Road	Raise Road level to mitigate flooding	€25,000
R363	Killine, Newbridge	Install new surface drain storm water collection system on road & verge (200m) with outfall open drain.	€35,000
L3410	Liscune, Ballymacward	Install new surface drain storm water collection system on road (50m) with pipeline through lands (300m) to outfall open drain. Allow for raising & full resurfacing of section of roadway	€65,000
L7140	Killaclougher, Monivea - Drainage works to mitigate severe and frequent road flooding	Design and upgrade existing road culvert system to divert excessive floodwaters away from the public road and houses at risk of flooding	€20,000
L7252	Tycooley , Caltra	Raise road over a distance of 300m by over 1m & resurface. Make good any damaged to roadside boundaries & raise field entrances.	€40,000
L6318	Newcastle, Kilkerrin	Upgrade existing road culvert under road & raise & resurface roadway over a distance of 150m.	€30,000
R341	Errisbeg East, Roundstone	road crossing replacement	€15,000
LS372-0	Clooniffe	Raise Road level to mitigate flooding	€7,500
L1313-73	Moycullen Nursing Home	Drainage works to mitigate road flooding @ difficult location	€30,000
L-2226-71	Cottage Flooding	Flooding of Local Road during rainfall events	€35,000
L7415	Lissyegan, Ahascragh	Raise, reprofile & resurface existing roadway & enhance surface water drainage.	€105,000
R362	Barna Glenamaddy	Upgrade existing storm water collection system on road (50m) & replace existing storm water culvert & clean & regrade inlet & outlet open drains	€20,000
LS132	Derryeigher, low rd Errislannin	rock armour	€35,000
L-8182	Abberanville, Bullaun	Repair and stabilisation of existing road retaining riverbank	€15,000
L22345	Cloonaghlasa	Surface-water sewer and gullies required to drain surface-water that is standing on road causing major issues to residents	€30,000
R327	Kildaree, Williamstown	Install new surface drain storm water collection system on road (50m) with road crossing & outfall pipeline through lands to open drain.	€15,000
L3409	Doon Upper Fohenagh	Extend existing surface drain storm water collection system on road by 250m	€40,000
R353	Ballynakill	Increasing capacity of existing stone culvert system to mitigate road flooding	€20,000
L21162	Balroebuckbeg	Flooding of Local Road during rainfall events	€20,000
R328	Castlestreeet Flooding	During Heavy rainfall events flooding occurs on Castlestreeet in Dunmore on the R328.	€70,000
R358	Kilglass Ahascragh	Extend existing surface drain storm water collection system on road & verge by 200m.	€30,000
R339	Kilbeg, Monivea	Upgrade existing road drainage system to facilitate floodwaters away from public road and 2 adjoining houses	€7,500
R362	MountKelly Glenamaddy	Provide Surface Water Culvert Under R362 to alleviate road flooding at Cemetery	€10,000
LS102	Letterettrin	Drainage	€7,500
LS118	Fahy	sea wall	€15,000
Total	34		€ 1,177,500

Additional Outdoor Infrastructure Fund

The Council has received €501,000 from The Department of Transport under an Additional Outdoor Infrastructure Fund, which is designed to support Local Authorities in quickly implementing traffic management and roads and streets public realm improvements in areas which enhance the ability of people to walk, cycle and meet each other outdoors in a safe way as COVID-19 restrictions ease.

A list of the schemes for which funding has been received are listed below:

Gaiway County Council - Additional Outdoor Infrastructure Fund			
No.	Project Name	Description	Allocation
1	Palace Grounds	Upgrade picnic and bench areas, upgrade bins, wheelchair accessible areas, repairs to paths and handrails, drainage works, park entrance signage	€108,500
2	Lough Corrib Pier Facilities	Upgrade of public facilities - solar powered bins, picnic tables, seating, benches, signage, cycle stands, resurfacing of area next to pier	€50,000
3	Public Parks Portumna	Provision of bins, picnic tables, seating and benches	€25,000
4	Loughrea Park	Provision of bins, picnic tables, seating and benches	€45,000
5	Public Beach and Car Park Traught Beach	upgrade car park surfacing, provision of bins, picnic tables, seating, benches, and cycle parking	€125,000
6	Fairgreen Ballinasloe	bins, and picnic sets including wheelchair accessible picnic bench with concrete base	€45,000
7	Public Realm Improvements Leenane	Traffic management bollards in leenane village along with demarcation lining	€15,000
8	Public Realm Improvements Spiddal	Safety bollards along footpaths to prevent parking	€25,000
9	An Tra Mor, Coill Rua, An Spiddal	passing bays to be widened and improved, speed ramps to be extended, seating to be provided	€20,000
10	Public Realm Improvements Clifden	Traffic management bollards in leenane village along with demarcation lining	€12,500
11	Oranmore Village Centre – Public Realm	Development of an existing public space into an outdoor recreational and dining space for people to sit and socialize in an open green space which will in turn, support local businesses and create a vibrant village-centre atmosphere. Provide the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outdoor seating and dining units x 10 • solar powered, compacting litter bins x 4 • a solar powered lighting scheme • bollards and screens to provide for safe segregated spaces • a cycle parking stand • a pollinator-friendly planting area • signage to indicate that this is a public recreational area 	€100,00
12	Annaghdown Pier Public Amenity Space	Transform the public area at Annaghdown Pier into an outdoor recreational and picnicking area. Provide as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outdoor seating area and picnic tables x 5 • Solar Powered Compacting Bin x 3 • Cycle Stand • Signage 	€30,000
		Total	€501,000

Litter Infrastructure Support Grant Scheme 2021.

The council has also secured €150,000 under this grant scheme. This allocation is provided in order to assist with the provision of new litter infrastructure, the replacement of existing litter infrastructure and the servicing of this infrastructure across the county.

N59 Maam Cross to Bunnakill Scheme

This scheme is now open to two-way traffic with the final wearing course pavement works completed last week (w/e 25th June). The development of this section of the N59 included 5.2km of online/offline improvements and realignments with tie-in works at either end of the scheme, widening of the existing Ardderry causeway, replacement of the causeway culvert, culvert replacements, retaining walls and soft ground excavation and replacement. Auxiliary works included demolition, site clearance, boundary fencing, diversions to existing services, earthworks, waste material disposal, structures, drainage, road studs, road markings and signage.

N67 Ballinderreen to Kinvara Scheme

This scheme is now also open to two-way traffic with the final wearing course pavement works completed in last couple of weeks. The development of this section of the N67 included 2.92km. of online/offline improvements and realignments with tie-in works at either end of the scheme. It also included a cycleway along its entire length. There was also realignment of 7no. side road junctions. Auxiliary works included demolition, site clearance, boundary fencing, diversions to existing services, earthworks, waste material disposal, structures, drainage, road studs, road markings and signage. Minor landscaping and erection of signage is ongoing.

Galway to Athlone Cycleway – Landowner Engagement

Good progress is being made in terms of landowner engagement on the Galway to Athlone Cycleway Project since the easing of Covid-19 restrictions allowed face to face meetings to recommence. Over 700 phone calls were made to the project office in response to the focused period of public consultations earlier in the year in respect of the five route corridor options and the letters issued to landowners in the consultation areas. To date, approximately 150 landowner meetings have taken place, with six liaison officers now working on the project. Meetings have also taken place with State Agencies. Landowner engagement will continue over the next three to four months, following which a preferred corridor will be selected, where the Project Team can be confident that a route can be delivered with the consent and agreement of the large majority of landowners. Other factors which will determine the preferred route corridor will be the “Five S” criteria, i.e. to be Scenic, Sustainable, Strategic, Segregated and have lots to See and do, in conjunction with environmental, engineering and financial considerations.

N59 Moycullen By-Pass

On the 30th April Galway County Council invited the five shortlisted tenderers to participate in Stage 2 of the tendering process for the N59 Moycullen Bypass. The return date for the tender submission was originally set at the 15th of June 2021 but following requests by all tenderers via tender bulletins a one-week extension was granted the closing date for the receipt of tenders was Friday last, June 25th.

The tender assessment and award process timelines will not be affected by the additional week and is still expected to be completed before the end of July with construction commencing in October or November.

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

Housing

On the 31st of May the Minister for Housing, Darragh O’Brien, held an online meeting with Chief Executives and Directors of Housing across western region. The focus of the meeting included:

- Social Housing Build Programme – getting back on track after Covid, progress on SHIP build programme
- Voids, buy and renew and regeneration – returning old stock (council and purchases) to use
- Land – purchase, reimbursement and use of same
- Affordable Scheme – priority for first time buyers, cost, unsold affordable units
- Build programme for social housing to remain the priority

The Galway Housing Taskforce met on 23rd June. Progress on build programme, site acquisitions and homelessness were on the agenda.

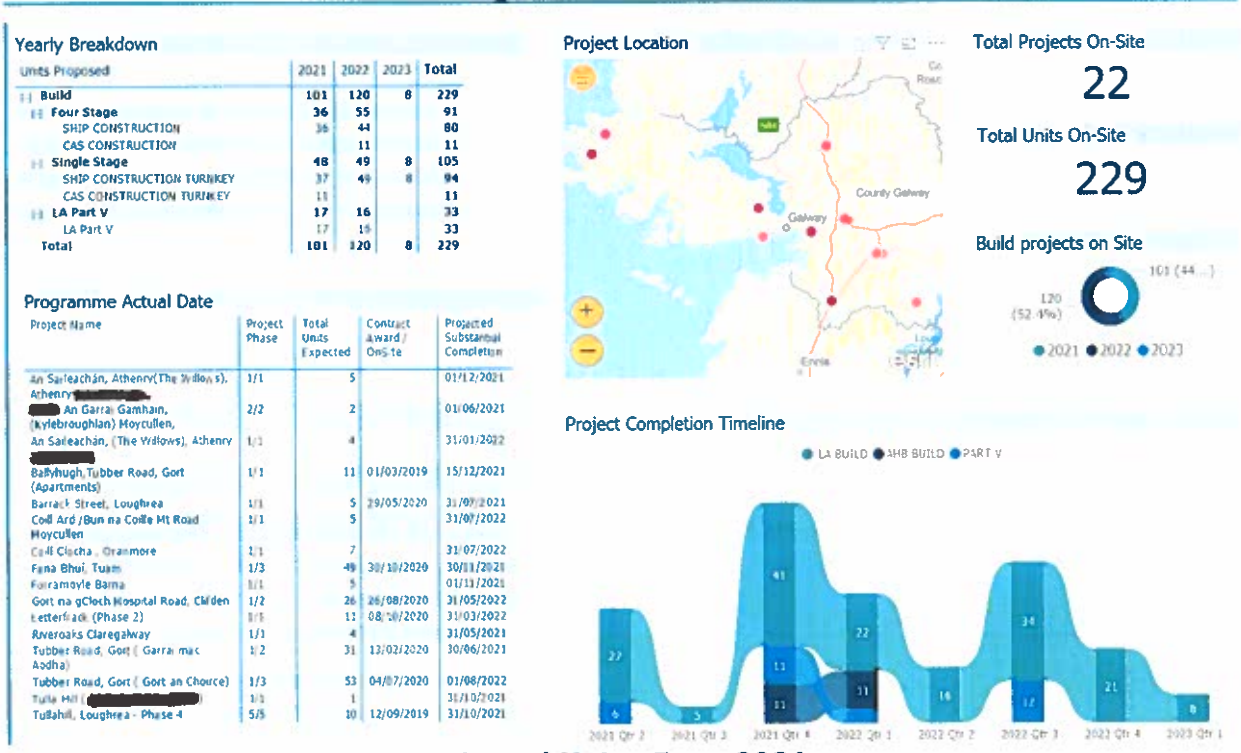
We are currently at approx. 300 valid housing applications for 2021, which would give an estimate of over 600 for the full year – a year on year increase of 50 households per year since 2018.

The first 6 months of the year has been extremely busy on all sides of the housing department.

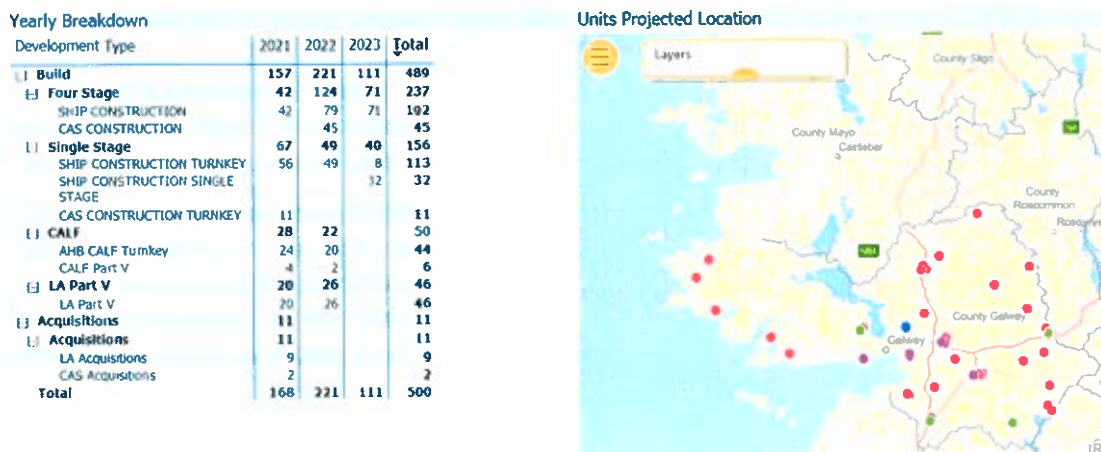
The build programme, Inspections (including grants) and estate management (home visits/social work etc.) were slowed down due to Covid at various stages earlier this year.

In the last few months the build programme has progressed significantly and 242 units are under construction in 2021 – spread throughout the County. The energy retrofit and maintenance programme has also been funded and is being rolled out. Each MD will be invited to view an energy retrofit property and to discuss maintenance plans in the MD in the next few weeks – Tuam done.

Build Projects On-Site From 2021



Projected Units From 2021



The contract for construction of 10 houses in Kinvara was signed on Monday 21st of June 21 by the new Cathaoirleach Cllr P Keaveney and Custy Construction.

Stage 1 to 4 approval has been granted for 32 Social homes at Dunlo Hill, Ballinasloe via turnkey. The Grant schemes have received significant financial resourcing in 2021; both for council and private properties. The roll out is ongoing and all applicants are being dealt with in order of application.

Estate Management and tenancy engagement has increased dramatically with Covid issues, Anti-social Behaviour and other issues on the increase. A number of initiatives have been taken in 2021 including –

- Tuam Taskforce: Has met, subgroups met & actions agreed. CCTV ordered by STEER for their estate.
- Joint approaches in estates with Environment/Community Wardens – Loughrea/Gort & Ballinasloe.
- The number of Housing Allocations has increased with 70 over the line and offers going out to tenants on an ongoing basis. Refusal rates remain significantly high: people who are in HAP properties may choose to stay renting from the private landlord and as we see build programmes develop we are seeing people refuse older houses as they hope to get offered a newly built home.

The Social Housing list continues to increase. A valid application for social housing can take up to a number of weeks to validate. In 2021 we intend to move to an online application process where applicants can upload their own information and update it at any time.

The Housing First Model of Homeless intervention has begun to be rolled out. This targets individuals who require significant wrap around services when moving from homeless hostel accommodation to social housing units. The wrap around service includes HSE services, mental health nurse visits and daily contact. Galway SIMON and Galway County Council lead out on this. Galway County Council and Galway City Council have jointly been approved for inclusion in an Age Friendly Housing Initiative. This Sláintecare funding initiative includes the recent appointment of the Healthy Age Friendly Homes coordinator who will work with older people (private and Council) who need support to remain in their homes or to consider downsizing.

Rents	
No of Accounts total	• 2471
New Accounts 2021	• 46
Income to date	• Rent Accrued €3.643.226 • Rent Paid €3,450,751
Social Housing Applications	• Total – 3554 - Breakdown on website • Year to Date – 292 valid/205 incomplete.
Allocations in 2021	• 70
Refusals 2021	• 29
Offers 2021	• 150

<p>Vacant units: Acquisitions New units Older units for turnaround</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval for acquisition of 20 properties – all second-hand units • 3 completed • 2 contracts signed • 4 conveyancing in progress
<p>Void turnarounds 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 63 voids in 2021 of which • 30 turnarounds completed
<p>Energy retrofits 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contracts awarded for 70 houses • Work commenced on 21 houses • 43 additional houses at tender preparation stage
<p>Building Inspectorate</p>	<p>Rental Standards Inspections: H.A.P. x 16 Inspections. R.A.S. x 6 Inspections. A.H.B. x 1 inspection. Complaints x 3 Inspections.</p> <p>Housing Grants: 274 Inspections (Virtual Inspections with a small number of necessary Actual Inspections) 28 Completed Private Housing Grants Appeals.</p> <p>Leasing Inspections: Long Term Leasing x 6 Inspections.</p> <p>Housing Loans: Home loans x 4 Inspections.</p> <p>Acquisitions: Pt. V Inspections x 6. L.A. Acquisition Inspections x 3</p> <p>Turnkey Projects: Three Turnkey Projects - Loughrea, Moycullen & Gort. Oversight & 24 Completion Inspections.</p>
<p>Anti-Social Behaviour - complaints to date 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 71 tracked complaints, ongoing daily calls dealt with by HLOs in addition to this
<p>No of Grants 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 381 grants awaiting processing • 181 grants approved • 133 grants paid
<p>No of Tenant Purchases 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 valid applications received • 5 sale of houses completed
<p>No of Rebuilding Ireland Home loans approved</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 approved

No of HAP accounts & new HAP 2021		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,486 normal HAP, active tenancies including • 132 new normal Hap tenancies in 2021 • 169 homeless HAP, active tenancies 		
Homeless 2021		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 59 households currently registered as homeless – 14 families & 45 singles (including 26 Housing First clients) • 11 homeless households allocated tenancies in 2021 • 6 homeless households housed in private rented, via homeless HAP in 2021 		
No of new Social Work cases opened 2021 (and total)				
Open cases January 2020	Cases Closed	Open cases as of June 2021	New Referrals	Total
226	-61	<u>165</u>	27	192

Priorities for Q3 2021:

Build programme – number of Part 8 planning permissions will come to Municipal Districts, Affordable scheme begins to roll out, Buy and renew regeneration projects will also be developed.

Maintenance – planned maintenance work is ongoing - electrical works contract has restarted & Loughrea new tender contract assigned. Voids and energy fit will have significant delivery over the next number of months and tenant issues will be dealt with on a continual basis

Estate Liaison work – ongoing work with Environment on issues in estates, Tuam taskforce will continue and home visits will continue to increase as we come out of covid scenario.

Homeless – Housing First should see 9 units/tenants supported and delivered by end of 2021

Applications – ongoing work on the delivery of an online portal for all application processes. This will resolve significant issues of incomplete forms being returned to clients etc

Healthy Age Friendly Homes – roll out of programme including referral process

Economic & Rural Community Development

Galway County Council – Summer Ready Plan

The Summer Ready plan was presented to the CPG on the 21st June 2021 and approved. It will evolve further over the coming months and weeks as we see how the public and businesses respond to the easing of Covid restrictions. Some of the key provisions included are:

Beaches – Blue Flag/testing	Location of Green & Blue Flag Beaches
Lifeguards – where/when	Workplan of times/dates
Traffic Management – Updates	Weekly updates on routes via social media and website
Community Warden Service	Extended availability and communication
Litter Management	Weekend support in tourism areas, new bins & porta loos
Public Facilities/Conveniences	Extended services and new locations
Funding Opportunities	New schemes applied for and available
S.254 & other relevant licenses	Applications validated; others being worked on
Fire Service	Particular supports to gorse fires and to water safety at this time of year
Social Media & other tourism campaigns	Support from all sections of Council

Tourism:

Tourism Networks and Implementation of Tourism Plans:

A series of actions are being progressed on tourism plans across Galway:

Tourism Product Development:

- Work is underway to develop Clifden as a visitor destination and a great place to live; Clifden was selected as Galway’s **‘Destination Town’** in 2019 and granted €500k from Fáilte Ireland with Galway County Council adding €166k to the overall project value as well as resourcing and leading the project. Some elements of the work in relation to the Destination Towns are impacted by the overall RRDF award of funding for the public realm and this will be considered in the delivery of the project.
- Galway County Council has partnered with Mayo County Council and Galway City Council to develop a feasibility project for the **‘Great Western Blueway.’** This system of waterways from Mayo, through Co. Galway and into the City has huge potential from the perspective of visitor development. The feasibility tender is valued at €30k with a contribution of €10k by each local authority. The tendered via eTenders.
- The Lough Derg Discovery Points projects will be delivered in 2021; the project incorporates 6 sites around the perimeter of Lough Derg; (two in each county) with creative solution to visitor amenity, parking, discovery points and seating.
- The Tourism Office will launch the Wild at Heart signage strategy for Connemara for later on in the season of 2021.

Discover Galway Food Experiences:

- €20k has been invested so far in 2021 in a series of supports for the agritourism sector with mentoring and ongoing development of ‘onsite’ authentic visitor experiences to be piloted later in the season 2021.
- A social media campaign was implemented in Q1 2021 with videos and photography developed in 2020 being rolled out on Instagram and Facebook.

Marketing Tourism Co. Galway:

There are a significant level of marketing supports for the tourism brands being supported by the Tourism Office in 2021; these are Discover Galway; Discover Galway Food Experiences; Conamara agus na hOileáin (Connemara and the Islands) and Discover Lough Derg.

- Tourism has developed a visitor facing brand 'Discover Galway' with a growing social media following; we are investing in print media; social media and development of brand for the County with significant image bank development.
- Galway County Council led the 2021 **Connemara and the Islands Marketing Campaign** on behalf of CAITN and CGCA, sourcing €40k through Town and Village Accelerated Measures and have appointed a digital agency to support delivery of a suite of projects including branding, PR and social media.

Galway County Council Arts and Tourism Offices presents

- Summer Series of indoor/outdoor & live streamed musical events featuring a host of county Galway professional live music talent.
- A Creative Ireland poetry and photography book to shine a light on the experience in all corners of Galway; 'This Place' will be launched during the summer.

Festivals and Events:

- 26 Festivals; to take place in the second half of 2021 have been granted €40,170
- With 15 Economic Initiatives awarded €21,873 through the Community Support Scheme.

CLÁR

CLÁR Programme 20/21	12 Applications Submitted for 2021 Scheme on May 7 th CLAR Sensory Garden Measure 1 - 5 applications submitted. Measure 2 - 5 applications submitted. Measure 3 (a) – 1 application submitted CLAR Innovation Measure – 3 applications submitted by GCC. CLAR 2020 – 7 projects approved and ongoing. Further Information Martin Kenny clar@galwaycoco.ie
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Town & Village Renewal Scheme

Programme	Figures
Town & Village Renewal Programme – Summary	20 EOI Received for 2021 – Submission Deadline for 8 projects is July 16 th , 2021. TV 2020 – 6 projects approved – all ongoing. TV 2019 – 7 projects approved - 1 complete. TV Accelerated Measures 2020 – 15 Projects Approved: 7 complete. Further Information: tandv@galwaycoco.ie Eímear Dolan, ERCD 091-509334

Town & Village 2020 Accelerated Measures Project Summary

Accelerated Measure (e.g. Round 1, 2, 3 or Large Towns)	Town / Village	Grant Approved	% of the project completed to date	Expected Completion Date
Round 1	Ballinasloe	€ 40,000.00	100	
Round 1	Gort	€ 24,750.00	75	31/08/2021
Round 1	Clonbur	€ 19,800.00	100	
Round 1	Athenry	€ 24,887.00	100	
Round 1	County-wide Initiative	€ 24,750.00	100	
Round 2	Connemara	€ 36,000.00	85	31/08/2021
Round 2	Mountbellew	€ 21,618.00	50	31/08/2021
Round 2	Clifden	€ 25,000.00	100	
Round 2	Milltown	€ 25,000.00	100	
Round 2	Killimor	€ 25,000.00	100	
Round 3	Broadband Connection Points	€ 39,118.00	70	30/07/2021
Round 3	Tuam	€ 39,600.00	100%	
Round 3	Glenamaddy	€ 25,000.00	75	31/08/2021
Round 3	Loughrea	€ 25,000.00	50	31/08/2021
Round 3	Mullagh	€ 19,800.00	25	31/08/2021

Social Inclusion:

- A series of events to celebrate Bealtaine, the month of creativity for older people, concluded in June – these included a Pilot Digital Skills Training Programme over 6 sessions, as well as a range of other cultural, physical exercise and community engagement events.
- A meeting of the Age Friendly Alliance will take place on Wednesday 30th June to progress the Annual Work Plan and progress plans for upcoming events such as Positive Ageing Week
- Age Friendly Ireland launched a range of Age Friendly Housing Resources on 22nd June which are available at the dedicated www.agefriendlyhomes.ie website
- A Traveller Interagency Group Meeting will be held on 30th June to progress interagency initiatives and preparations for Traveller Week in October
- The quarterly meeting of the Comhairle na nOg committee was held on 21st June which progressed plans for a series of radio adverts by the Comhairle members, highlighting mental health for youth and their parents. This has been part of an ongoing campaign by the Comhairle Members since 2020 when they conducted a survey and launched a booklet entitled “Understanding the Mental Wellbeing of Young People in County Galway”.
- Staff of the Unit are undertaking Disability Awareness Training on 29th June which is being devised specifically for our staff by the Disability Federation of Ireland
- A stakeholder engagement session on the pilot Healthy Homes project was held by Age Friendly Ireland on 15th June to which all relevant stakeholder in the City and County were invited

Community Development:

The Cathaoirleach's Community Awards 2020

The Cathaoirleach Awards for 2020 took place online on Wednesday 16th June and were jointly hosted by the Cathaoirleach James Charity and Keith Finnegan, Galway Bay FM, who also hosted the event at their studios on Sandy Road. In recognition of the challenges encountered during 2020, the Award Categories were adapted to recognise the volunteerism and amazing community spirit and kindness shown by individuals and groups to look after the most vulnerable in their communities. The winners under the various Award categories were as follows:

COVID-19 Community Response:

- Accessibility Ballinasloe
- Athenry Music School
- Cairdeas, Forbairt Chonamara Láir
- Gort Cancer Support Group
- Killannin Parish Covid 19 Community Response Team
- Solas Family Resource Centre Headford

Culture and Creativity Award	Gliondar Community Arts Group Athenry
Environment & Natural Heritage	The Walks Project Group Loughrea
Health and Wellbeing Award	East Galway and Midlands Cancer Support
Gradam na Gaeilge	Biseach
Social Inclusion Award	Connemara Care
Individual Volunteer of the Year Award	Venetia McEllin, Headford
Cathaoirleach's Special Award	Athenry Community First Responders Group

Tidy Towns 2021

The closing date for submission of entries for the National Tidy Towns Competition is 2nd July and the Community Department are organising a Webinar to assist groups to complete the entry form for 2021, as the entry process and judging process has moved online.

PLANNING & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT & CORPORATE SERVICES

Draft Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 – Public Consultation Webinars

Galway County Council as part of the ongoing consultation process for the Draft Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 will host two Public Webinar Events on Wednesday, 30th June 2021 (11.00am – 12:00pm) and Thursday, 1st July 2021 (7.00pm – 8.00pm). These webinars, which are open to everyone, will give an overview of the Draft County Development Plan and guidance on how to make a submission. Registration for these consultation events is available via consult.galway.ie

Decade of Commemorations 2013–2023 - Historian-in-Residence for 2021

As part of the current programme of commemorative events connected with the ongoing Decade of Commemorations 2013–2023, Galway County Council has appointed Dr Conor McNamara to the position of Historian-in-Residence for 2021.

Galway people at home and abroad are encouraged to explore our shared local history and to reflect on the tumultuous events which shaped us a community. Of particular focus for the coming year will be the publication of a series of local studies of the period focusing on seminal events that occurred across the County; the publication of a landmark research guide to the period in Galway that will empower schools and heritage groups expand their knowledge of the period and a series of online lectures. Galway County Council are particularly keen to record the history of Galway families whose relatives played a role during the independence struggle and create an archive of oral history that will preserve and enhance our understanding of our shared heritage.

Dr McNamara would like to hear from any individuals, community groups or families with a connection to the period and will be a resource to everyone with an interest in exploring our Galway heritage. Dr McNamara can be contacted by email at GalwayHistorian@gmail.com

Galway Women's Caucus

The Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage has allocated grant funding of €5,000 via Galway County Council to support the Galway Women's Caucus. The caucus is comprised of the women Councillors from Galway County Council and Galway City Council and provides a forum to strengthen cooperation between women in political life in Galway across local authority, party and ideological lines. The caucus will help promote women's equality in local government in Galway. It provides a forum to harness the institutional knowledge of long-established women councillors and combine it with new ideas and perspectives from more recently elected women councillors whilst also drawing on the various skills of all women councillors. The caucus operates in a spirit of partnership and will actively engaging with caucuses at local, regional and national level with the objective of learning from each other, strengthening ties and sharing information.

FINANCE & MOTOR TAX DIRECTORATE

Local Property Tax – Changes to the Process for Setting the Local Adjustment Factor for 2022

As Elected Members may be aware, on 01st June 2021, the Cabinet agreed to bring forward legislation that will propose changes to how Local Property Tax (LPT) currently operates. The main changes, as set out in the Heads of the Finance (Local Property Tax) (Amendment) Bill 2021, are:

1. A reduction in the rate charged from 0.18% to 0.1029%
2. A widening of the bands for calculating LPT liabilities by 175%
3. Property valuations to be reviewed every four years
4. New properties will be brought into the system each November, including properties built since 2013, which are currently exempt from the LPT.
5. All money collected locally will be retained within the county.
6. November 01st 2021 is set as the next Revaluation date

In addition, on 04th June 2021, we were informed by the Department of a change in the date in a Revaluation Year (from 30th September to 31st August) by which, we have to inform the Revenue Commissioners of any decision taken to vary the basic rate of LPT. We have been further informed

that the 31st August deadline will apply in a Revaluation Year i.e. every four years and for other years, the deadline is due to move to mid-October.

As a result of this change in timeline, the regulations have been amended with effect from 10th June 2021 to change the duration of the consultation period from a minimum of 30 days to a minimum of 14 days.

This requirement means that any decision which the Council wishes to make in relation to the basic rate of LPT for 2022 must be made and communicated to the Revenue Commissions by 31st August 2021. In previous years, a decision was required by 30th September each year.

In order to best meet the revised deadline, it is proposed to include the Local Property Tax item for consideration on the agenda for the July Council meeting. In that respect, the following indicative timeframe would apply.

Public Consultation Period	25 th June to 9 th July
LPT Report to Elected Members	20 th July (with Council agenda)
Council Meeting	26 th July
Notification to Revenue and Dept.	Prior to deadline of 31 st August

Subsequent to the above announcement we have been notified of our Provisional Local Property Tax allocation for 2022 in the amount of €14,517,890 which is the same figure as for 2021. We have also been advised that the local retention mechanism will continue in 2022, i.e. 80% of all LPT receipts will be retained within the local authority area where the Tax is raised.

The approach differs from previous years given that a revaluation of LPT is expected to take place later this year, which will lead to changes in both the overall LPT yield and to the yield in each local authority area. When detailed information on the 2022 yield is available, the matter will be reviewed.

Notwithstanding that, for the purpose of the provisional/pre-variation allocation, all other elements must also be based on the 2021 figures, including the LPT baselines, the equalisation contribution, and self-funding of housing and roads from surplus LPT.

Commercial Rates Waiver Scheme 2021

On 30 December 2020 the Government announced Level 5 restrictions including the closure of non-essential businesses from close of business on 31 December 2020 until 31 January 2021. Further restrictions were announced on 6 January 2021. In order to reflect these restrictions and to continue the supports available to rate payers, and in recognition of the impact of the ongoing trajectory of COVID 19, Government confirmed that a further waiver of commercial rates would apply to specified businesses in the first quarter of 2021. This 3-month waiver had modified criteria and accordingly is a separate, standalone waiver scheme to that administered in 2020.

The rates waiver scheme initially outlined that a three-month waiver would apply to eligible businesses and would take the form of a credit in lieu of rates. The value of the waiver is the equivalent value of 25% of the annual rate bill for 2021. The waiver would apply to businesses closed by, or badly impacted by, Level 5 restrictions.

The rates waiver scheme for 2021 adopted a more targeted approach than the scheme administered in 2020 and had a specific listing of eligible categories in addition to a listing of excluded categories. The scheme outlined the broad categories of businesses the credit in lieu of rates applies to as follows:

Hospitality; Leisure; Miscellaneous Entertainment; Non-Essential Retail (Shops and Warehouse); Airports; Essential Retail (excluding Large Supermarkets, greater than 500M2); Health; Service Stations; Personal Care; and Childcare.

Business in the excluded category had the right to appeal if they demonstrated severe financial loss due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The rates waiver scheme has subsequently been extended to cover the period to the end of September 2021 and effectively applies a credit of 75% to eligible businesses. If a business qualified in Q1 they were automatically entitled to the further waiver up to the end of September.

Galway County Council has applied the waiver to over 2,200 customers to the value of just over €6M.

M I S E , L E M E A S ,

Mr. Jim Cullen

Chief Executive

Galway County Council

25th June 2021