



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

Economic Development & Enterprise Strategic Policy Committee (SPC)

Online via Microsoft Teams

Dé Céadaoin 13 Nollaig @ 9:30 am via Microsoft Teams

Wednesday 13th December @ 9:30 am via Microsoft Teams

Members Present:

Cllr. Stephen McHugh	Galway County Council (Chair)
Cllr. Gerry Finnerty	Galway County Council
Cllr Declan Geraghty	Galway County Council
Cllr David Collins	Galway County Council
Dan Dowling	Community Representative
Marian Spellman	Trade Union Representative
Paul Carey	Construction/Business Representative

Apologies:

Dave Hickey	Business Representative
Cllr. Shane Curley	Galway County Council
Cllr Tim Broderick	Galway County Council

Present:

Liam Hanrahan	Galway County Council
Alan Farrell	Galway County Council
Kieran Coyne	Galway County Council
John Neary	Galway County Council

Cllr Stephen McHugh welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The minutes of the meeting held on the 21st November were proposed by Dan Dowling and seconded by Cllr Declan Geraghty.

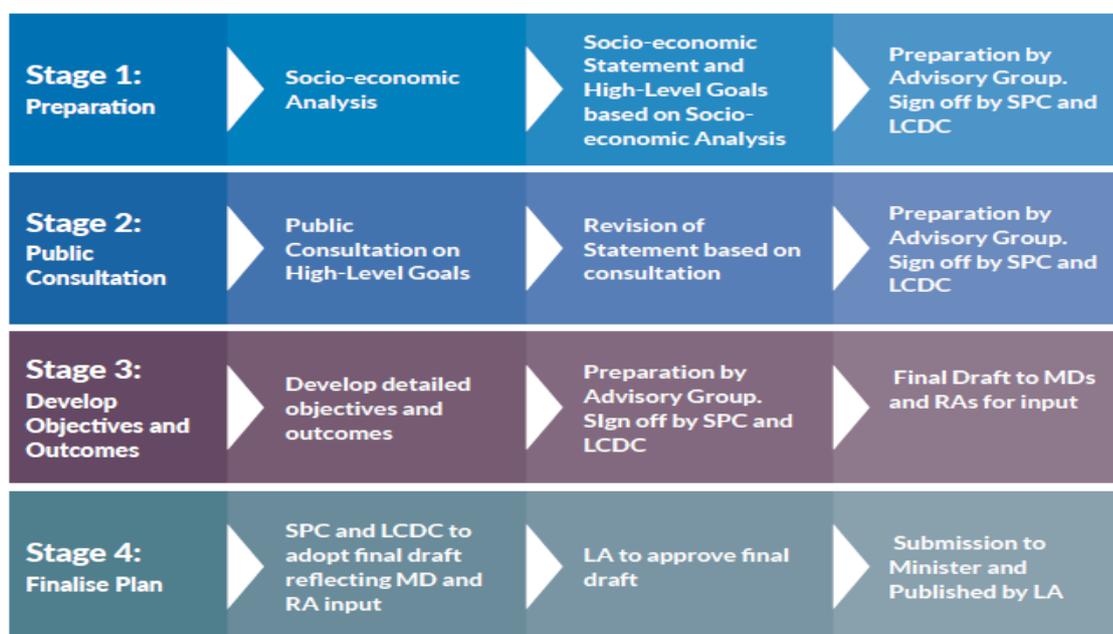
There were no matters arising.

Local Economic Community Plan (LECP)

Cllr McHugh introduced Kieran Coyne to give an update on the Local Economic Community Plan.

Mr Coyne gave a brief update on the progress of the LECP to date.

Mr Coyne outlined the LECP process and gave an overview of the proposed Socio-Economic Statement and High-Level Goals.



Cllr McHugh thanked Mr Coyne for the update and opened the floor to members for questions/observations.

Cllr Geraghty queried whether the LECP would have any effect on future rural planning or if it will affect economic issues in the County Development Plan.

Liam Hanrahan stated that the LECP would not have any adverse effect on the County Development Plan.

Mr Coyne stated that the LECP would not introduce anything additional or prohibitive to the County Development Plan.

Alan Farrell stated that the LECP would look at all areas and that there will be public consultation at a later stage in the process. Mr Farrell advised that planning under the LECP would be guided by the County Development Plan and by national policy and legislation.

Dan Dowling stated that water quality should be taken into consideration as a factor under the LECP.

Mr Hanrahan advised that water quality is an issue for discussion under the Climate and Environmental SPC and that there is a Climate Action Strategy now in place which would cover this issue.

Cllr David Collins proposed the adoption of the High-Level Goals, this was seconded by Cllr Declan Geraghty.

Mr Coyne advised the members that a Request for Quotation has gone out to a number of relevant contractors and that the deadline for final submissions is mid-January 2024.

Cllr Geraghty thanked Mr Coyne and all involved for getting the LECP to this stage.

Cllr McHugh thanked Mr Coyne for the update and for his presentation, this concluded the LECP update.

Tourism Strategy

Cllr McHugh introduced John Neary, Tourism Office to give an update on the Tourism Strategy.

Mr Neary thanked the members for inviting him to speak at the SPC. Mr Neary stated that as the Tourism Strategy has now been formally adopted this gives a baseline for him to work from and bring the Strategy to life. Mr Neary advised that he is now working on implementation planning and that work is ongoing. Mr Neary advised that he hopes to continue working with CHL Consultants on the creation of a work stream that would bring the focus of tourism to areas outside of the current tourism hotspots around the County. Mr Neary informed the members that there will be an official launch of the Tourism Strategy in early 2024.

Cllr McHugh thanked Mr Neary for the update and opened the floor to members for questions/observations.

Cllr Geraghty thanked Mr Neary for the update and queried what issues he foresees in 2024, for example does he see the issue of accommodation shortage has having a negative impact on tourism growth in the County.

Mr Neary stated that current indicators suggest that the US market is buoyant and is growing. Mr Neary advised that there is a built-up demand for travel to Ireland from the US and also from areas in the EU such as Great Britain. Mr Neary stated that Great Britain remains one of Irelands largest markets and that the outlook is good looking forward to 2024. Mr Neary acknowledged that there will be a difficult time right across the EU but that we will go back to pre-covid levels.

Mr Hanrahan concurred with Cllr Geraghty that there will be some issues regarding accommodation shortages but he advised that the way forward will be quality and not quantity. Mr Hanrahan stated that there needs to be encouragement for higher spending from the tourists that are coming here. Mr Hanrahan stated that North County Galway is currently at an infrastructure development stage. Mr

Hanrahan stated that infrastructure development is the first step in developing tourism in North Galway and after that it is about getting tourists into the area.

Cllr Geraghty stated that he sees the biggest growth opportunity coming from the US market as tourists from the US have a great interest in heritage. Cllr Geraghty stated that this is an area that County Galway should be promoting as the County is full of heritage and local knowledge.

This concluded the Tourism Strategy update.

AOB

Cllr McHugh asked if there were any items to be discussed under AOB.

Mr Hanrahan advised the members that dates for the 2024 meetings would be discussed at the CPG in the new year.

Mr Hanrahan wished Alan Farrell all the best in his new role with Clare County Council and thanked him for all his work with Galway County Council over the years.

The members concurred with Mr Hanrahan and wished Mr Farrell well in his new role.

This concluded the meeting.

