



Galway City Community Network CLG

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Autumn Plenary

September 28th, 2022

Minutes

Attendance

Please see below.

Apologies

Aimee McGee, Eleanor Hough, James Coyne, Karen Golden, Margaret O’Riada, Martin O’Connor

Welcome & Introductions

The meeting was held in the Menlo Park Hotel. Tommy Flaherty chaired and opened the Plenary meeting by welcoming all. He invited those in attendance to share their names and organisations.

Minutes of Previous Plenary and Matters Arising

The minutes were circulated to all members ahead of the meeting. There were no changes to the minutes. These were proposed by Arun Asan, seconded Nicole McGuigan and approved.

Community Discussions

The GCCN Representative Reports were circulated ahead of the meeting and the GCCN members were invited to read them before attending.

Updates from the GCCN Representatives

Planning SPC: Two meetings were held in June, one joint meeting of the county and city SPCs and one regular Galway City Planning SPC meeting. The feedback around the joint SPCs meeting included information on the Irish Water and Northern and Regional Western Assembly and some concerns regarding the development of Galway including the West and Northwest Regions. EU downgraded the status of these regions due to lagging behind.

In regards to Galway City Planning SPC meeting, the Plenary attendees discussed issues around outstanding action for short term lettings, vacant sites, the lack of opportunity to talk about the City Development Plan within the SPC. Frustration was expressed because there are no updates, no work plan, no use of funds to employ staff, no response from the Chair of the Committee for concerns, no progress for social housing, etc.

Points from attendees: A complaint will be submitted through formal channels. If this is not successful, then further action will be discussed.

Economic SPC: The most recent meeting was held in May, and it discussed refugees and accommodation at the University of Galway. It also discussed the lack of social enterprise in the City Development Plan, the port development consultation - which is now open, the development status of leisure and art facilities in the city. Access and healthy homes have been discussed as well as the challenges in providing housing for Ukrainian refugees. It was mentioned that the Local Economic and Community Plan, which is primarily economic in focus, is now deferred until October. Also, it was mentioned that there is no Arts Officer in place.

Points from Attendees: There was a change of personnel within the SPC. This will be provided to GCCN this week. It was noted that the representatives are rarely familiar with the staff present at meetings, there are frequent changes and no communication. There seems to also be a resistance to projects due to staffing concerns. GCCN will support Galway City Partnership to address this issue relating to the DISC model.

Transportation SPC: The quality of service for people on foot is a regular focus for this SPC, with transport issues being regularly discussed. There are no changes to aspects of the Bus Connect Programme based on concerns and no option to discuss transport issues in the City Development Plan. Flyovers were discussed including a lack of regard for access issues and concerns over the pedestrian impact on traffic. GCCN asked for plans to be provided beforehand so that a submission can be made on behalf of GCCN and affected communities. Deadlines for the Bus Connects submissions were also discussed.

Points from Attendees: It was suggested to ask for accessible documents from the City Council and to make sure that documents are shared in time, and in a suitable format in future. The lack of engagement will be dealt with via a complaint in formal channels. Alternative action may be taken. Other groups are making complaints based on access, and safety to Bord Pleanala. The relevant GCCN Linkage Group will follow up on this issue. It was also noted that local authorities have no say on local transport, however this is a national transport issue. GCCN will send a letter to Bus Direct relating to accessibility on the bus routes in Galway.

Climate SPC: The energy action plan for Galway was discussed, including establishing an energy baseline to move to decarbonisation. Ball walls are being built, but no one requested them. The All-Ireland Pollinator plan is working well, but the green spaces are under threat for rezoning. Work is progressing on the waste management policy and the circular economy. The lack of access to recreation and the issue of the kissing gates were also discussed. Galway City Council will look at Terryland and the Swamp, but it is a widespread problem.

Points from Attendees: It was highlighted that kissing gates run contra to universal access.

Member Groups' Presentations

For this Plenary meeting, Amach! Galway and Galway Samaritans shared two presentations as follows:

- **Amach! Galway** introduced the work they are leading in the city as well as the two upcoming training opportunities for community groups and service providers to learn more on how to support the LGBT+ community.
- **Galway Samaritans** gave a brief intro to the services offered, as well as more info on the recruitment and care of volunteers. The organisation was commended for their important work.

Elections for GCCN Representatives

Elections were held for the GCCN representative vacancy on the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) – Community Seat. Only one nomination was received for this vacancy from Joanne Laffey – SCCUL Enterprises. Given that there were no multiple nominations per vacancy, the ratification for this nominee was approved and Joanne was appointed as a representative of GCCN on the LCDC.

GCCN continues to have open vacancies for the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) – Environment Seat, the Planning SPC – Environment Seat, Comhairle na nÓg and the GCCN Secretariat. A meeting will be held with the Environmental Linkage group to discuss the vacant LCDC Environment Seat.

GCCN Update

The Progress Report was presented by the GCCN Staff. Updates were given on the core GCCN work, with mentions regarding the Linkage Group meetings, the submissions, initiatives, remote workshops, training, and activities GCCN has led since the previous Plenary in April 2022. You can view the presentation [here](#).

AOB

Make Way Day: Disability Federation Ireland have information about the campaign for access and physical barriers in the environment. Members were advised to follow up on this. It was mentioned that the JPC have discussed the illegal parking issue and the GCCN representatives will bring this issue up at the next meeting also.

The City Development Plan: The Material Alterations are open until the 6th October. The main issue with the meetings held so far is that these are not being webcast. This makes it difficult to follow what is discussed. It was suggested that GCCN work to getting City Council meetings webcast and have addressed the issues of inaccurate minutes, items being dropped from minutes, and general administration. It was recommended to create a rota of GCCN members that attend council meetings and look at creating a public petition and press release on the need for transparency and accountability on public decision making in Galway City.

Racist Comments by City Councillor: The recent racist Galway Bay FM interview with Cllr. Crowe was discussed. Galway Traveller Movement requested support on this. The Plenary agreed that GCCN can make a statement and we stand in solidarity with the Traveller community.

Attendees

Name	Organisation
Arun Asan	Access for All
Brendan Mulligan	Engineers Ireland West Region
Brendan Smith	Terryland Forest Park Alliance
Derrick HAMBLETON	An Taisce
dette mc loughlin	AAC West
Dominick Whelan	JCI Galway
Islammiyah Saudique	AMDAF
John Rabbitte	Woodhaven Residents
Kevin Jennings	Galway Cycling Campaign
Liam Coyne	Samaritans Galway
Lisa Fenwick	Disability Federation Ireland
Lorraine Lally	Access for All and Epilepsy Ireland
Mairéad Conroy	Brothers of Charity Services Ireland – Galway Region
Nicole McGuigan	Sexual health west
Paul O' Donnell	An Mheitheal Comhshaol Cooperative Limited
Paula Healy	Flirt FM 101.3
Roselyn Carroll	Galway Cycling Campaign
Tommy Flaherty	Ballybane Community Resource Centre
Tiernan Arnup	Amach! LGBT Galway
Fiona McDonagh-Delaney	Amach! LGBT Galway
Caroline Stanley	Friends of Merlin Woods
Maggie Woods	Galway City Partnership
Brian Doherty	GCCN
Rebecca Jackson	GCCN
Oana Nicoara	GCCN