

**Minutes of Meeting of Joint Galway City & County Planning Strategic Policy Committees held
on 8th November 2022 via MS Teams & Connacht Hotel**

Presiding: Cllr. Peter Keane, Galway City Council

Present: Cllr. Frank Fahy, Galway City Council
Cllr. Donagh Killilea, Galway County Council
Cllr. Michael Maher, Galway County Council
Mr. Brendan Mulligan (Galway City Community Network)
Mr. Derrick Hambleton (Galway City Community Network)
Mr Aodán Mac Donnacha, PPN, Galway County Council
Mr Mark Green, PPN, Galway County Council
Mr. David Minton, NWRA
Mr. Frank Flanagan, NWRA
Dr Seán Ó'Riordáin, Consultant

Ms. Patricia Philbin, Director of Services, Galway City Council
Mr. Michael Owens, Director of Services, Galway County Council
Ms. Valerie Loughnane Senior Planner, Galway County Council
Ms. Caroline Phelan, Senior Planner, Galway City Council
Mr. Brendan Dunne, Senior Executive Planner, Galway County
Ms. Helen Coleman, Senior Executive Planner, Galway City Council
Ms. Simone Watson, Senior Staff Officer, Galway City Council
Ms. Marcella Kilgarriff, Assistant Staff Officer, Galway City Council

Present Online: Cllr. Owen Hanley, Galway City Council
Cllr. Clodagh Higgins, Galway City Council
Cllr. Shane Curley, Galway County Council
Cllr. Michael Connolly, Galway County Council
An. Comh. Dáithi Ó Cualáin, Galway County Council
Ms. Betsy Boland, Galway Chamber
Mr. Colm Ryan, MKO
Ms. Laurena Mitchell, Senior Executive Officer, Galway City Council
Ms. Maura Harrington, Executive Planner, Galway City Council
Ms. Kate Moloney, A/Executive Planner, Galway City Council
Ms. Eileen Keaveney, Administrative Officer, Galway County Council
Ms. Mary Hughes, Assistant Staff Officer, Galway County Council

Apologies: Cllr. Noel Larkin, Galway City Council
Cllr. Imelda Byrne, Galway City Council
Ms. Marian Spelman, ICTU

Cllr. Peter Keane, Chairperson, welcomed members and officials to the meeting which was being held virtually via MS Teams & from the Connacht Hotel.

1. Minutes & Matters Arising

Mr. B. Mulligan noted that Mr. Frank Flanagan's name is listed incorrectly in the minutes and Cllr. M. Maher stated that Ms. Anne Mitchell is not a Councillor with Galway County Council, but was a representative from the Agriculture Sector. It was agreed to correct these errors.

The minutes of meeting dated 26th May 2022 were proposed by Cllr. M. Maher, seconded by Mr. D. Hambleton and agreed by all.

2. MASP Governance Update

Mr. D. Minton advised that Dr Seán Ó'Riordáin has been procured as an external consultant to bring the stakeholders together and to look at examples of best practice in cities such as Freiberg and Bilbao. Dr Ó'Riordáin will engage with senior management in both Galway City and Galway County Council. It is hoped that a draft report should be ready for Q1 2023.

Dr S. Ó'Riordáin gave a short presentation. He advised that the Government has committed to regional planning and Galway is an example of this. There is benefit to Local Authorities working together and having a common purpose. There needs to be a long term strategic vision and balance between the outer suburbs and the core city region.

The significant amount of time that it has taken to advance discussions on the MASP and for the City and County Councils to meet on the matter was noted.

The need for meaningful public participation was emphasised and Mr. D. Minton advised that the governance review will be sent to the SPC for discussion in the first instance. Following this, a discussion can take place in relation to the best way to allow for public consultation.

Mr. M. Owens noted the commitment on behalf of the Executive and acknowledged the key role of the Joint SPC.

The designation of Galway as an NWRA 'region in decline' and a 'region in transmission' was discussed, and the impact of this designation on infrastructure, economy and education in the area. Mr. Minton advised that co-operation with regions such as Limerick and Cork will be necessary to counter balance the growth in Dublin and the East. Galway is the main economic driver of the RSES.

Cities such as Liverpool and Cambridge where positive, sustainable development has occurred in recent decades were cited as further examples of how progress could be achieved. The change in the retail environment and the role of local retailers should also be considered.

It was agreed that a meeting of the Joint SPC should take place early in 2023 to discuss the report. Cllr. P. Keane advised that the report should be circulated in advance of the next meeting to allow consideration.

3. Galway Airport Site

Mr. M. Owens gave an update on the plans for the Galway Airport site. He advised that the recently adopted Galway County Development Plan sets out a specific objective for a masterplan to be completed for the site. The County Council will lead out on the plan with significant engagement with the City Council. It is expected to take approximately 18 months to complete the masterplan. Mr. Owens confirmed that the site has been in the joint ownership of the City and County Councils since 2014. Galway Flying Club have had a license to fly there which is renewed annually. This is a reserved function of the Elected Members and will come for renewal again in December. It was requested that positive consideration be given to continuation of aviation at the site. It was also noted that could be a key innovative hub for the metropolitan area.

The Joint Planning SPC will have a role in the discussions as to the best use of the site.

It was noted that the site is of significant strategic value and that time should be spent deciding its best use.

4. AOB

As there were no items raised under AOB, the meeting then concluded.