



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

CUNTAS BUISÉADACHTA 2021

DRAFT BUDGET 2021

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**CHUIG GACH BALL DEN CHOMHAIRLE
DRAFT BUDGET FOR FINANCIAL YEAR
ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2021**

To: The Cathaoirleach and each Member of Galway County Council
Re: Draft Budget for financial year ending 31st December 2021

Submitted in accordance with Section 103, Local Government Act 2001 (as amended)

Dear Member,

I enclose, for your consideration, the Draft Budget for 2021, together with a report detailing the main provisions outlined therein and a summary report from the Directors of Service in respect of activities in their respective functional areas which is submitted as an annual progress report in respect of the Corporate Plan.

In accordance with the statutory requirement, issues relating to the preparation of the Draft Budget were considered at meetings of the Corporate Policy Group held on 2nd September 2020, 18th September 2020, 6th October 2020, 9th November 2020 and 16th November 2020.

The Council considered and made its determination on the Local Property Tax adjustment at its meeting held on 24th September 2020 and each of the Municipal Districts considered the Budgetary Plan for each Municipal District at a series of meetings held between the 20th October 2020 and the 23rd October 2020.

The Council may by resolution amend the Draft Budget but shall adopt the Draft Budget, with or without amendment, and determine, in accordance with the Budget so adopted, the annual rate on valuation to be levied.

The Council is required to complete the statutory process within a period of 14 days. This allows, for the adjournment, if necessary, of the statutory meeting which is scheduled for 27th November 2020, provided the process is completed by 11th December 2020.

General

The Members will know that much of the budget in any year is comprised of non-discretionary costs such as loan charges, payroll, statutory demands, insurances, pensions etc. or is comprised of expenditure that is, received on the basis of being assigned to the delivery of particular services.

The Members are aware from discussions over the past few months of the particular pressures that have arisen in preparing the budget for 2021. Given the funding available, and the extent of demands, additional funding could be utilised effectively under almost every budget heading but the allocation of additional resources has only occurred where unavoidable and some areas have experienced a reduction in budget provision while every effort has been made to keep this to a minimum.

There are a number of aspects of budget 2021 which are similar to those which arose in previous years and include

- Additional costs arising from the National Pay Agreements
- Part recoupment of additional pay costs
- Increased provision for gratuities/pensions
- Increased Government Grants for Roads
- Increased income from housing rents
- Receipt of IPB Dividend

Overall while the total gross expenditure budget shows an increase of €8.36M the net increase over the estimated outturn for 2020 as outlined in Table A is €152k (page 1 of the Statutory Tables). Additional expenditure in respect of roads recorded in the 2021 budget is largely a contra item arising from increased grants.

Local authorities have received confirmation that the balance of the Government funding provision in respect of commercial rates on properties impacted by Covid 19 for 9 months of 2020 is being made available to meet costs and income losses that have arisen in local authorities as a direct consequence of the pandemic. It is stated that while it is not possible to make open ended commitments that if necessary further supports will be available in 2021 although they may be more targeted. The draft budget has therefore been prepared on the basis of a similar approach being taken by Government in 2021 with the expectation that income levels will either be sustained through normal activity or will be the subject of ongoing Government support while the pandemic persists.

The current financial position of the Council has been discussed in detail by the Corporate Policy Group and by the full Council and the revenue funding available to Galway County Council remains a critical issue. There is a requirement for additional funding in almost every area of Council activity including housing, property maintenance, road maintenance, fleet replacement, street cleaning, verge trimming, public lighting, economic and tourism development, ICT Development as well as the requirement for additional staffing in key areas and for new programmes. While the absence of funding in some areas may mean that activity will simply not take place in other instances such as maintenance the lack of spend may lead to increased cost at a later time.

Keeping within budget in 2021 will require continued careful monitoring by all units throughout the year and no contingencies have been provided for in the budget for 2021.

Local Property Tax

The funding previously derived from the Local Government Fund has been replaced by the proceeds from the Local Property Tax / Pension Related Deductions. The base funding from this source in 2021 is estimated to be largely the same as the amount received each year since 2014.

The funding from the Local Property Tax/Pension Related Deduction has been estimated to produce income of €14.5m in 2021.

	2015	2021
LPT Raised in County Galway	14,967,018	14,675,590
20% to Equalisation Fund	2,993,404	2,935,118
80% Retained	11,973,614	11,740,472
Received from Equalisation Fund	532,767	2,777,418
Total LPT received	12,506,381	14,517,890
PRD as per AFS	1,985,695	
Total LPT plus PRD	14,492,076	14,517,890

(PRD included as part of LPT 2021 based on Actual PRD received in 2014).

Commercial Rates

The County rate currently stands at €66.59 which is unchanged since 2009 for all areas other than Ballinasloe Town. The following table shows a comparison of the rate on valuation with the other Local Authorities in the region and our current rate is reflected in lower income from commercial rates in County Galway.

Galway County (2020)	€66.59
Roscommon (2018)	€71.44
Mayo (2019)	€76.88
Clare (2018)	€72.99

The discussions with the Corporate Policy Group and indeed views expressed by Members in the discussion on the Local Property Tax signalled a clear intent by the Members not to increase commercial rates in 2021 particularly having regard to the continuing Covid pandemic. Given the Members rejection of proposed rates increases in 2019 and 2020, the Members opposition to any rates increase in 2021 and of course being cognisant of the impact of the pandemic on business I have prepared the draft budget with no proposed rates increase even though such would have been required to keep all budgets at their 2020 level. I have also not included any provision for the continuation of the requirement to pay a portion of commercial rates on vacant properties while being cognisant that this is a reserved function of the Members.

Budget Adjustments

While there are many adjustments across both income and expenditure codes the following are a list of some of the main changes and specific provisions in the draft budget for 2021

Increase in Housing Rents	€350,000
Additional rateable valuations	€ 341,500
National Pay Agreement/Payroll Cost	€1,362,500
National Pay Agreement Recoupment	€596,350
Increased Road Grants	€4,300,000
Increased Income Planning/Fire/Burials	€180,000
Removal of Capital Account Transfer	€ 500,000
Rural Regeneration Team	€300,000
Additional Pensions and Gratuities	€1,700,000
Ministers Allocation	€1,000,000
Travel and Subsistence Reduction	€150,000
Increased cost Leisure Centres	€ 150,000
IPB Dividend	€ 433,000

Municipal District Funding

The Minister recently confirmed the allocation of €1,000,000 to Galway County Council on a once off basis and I have included the funding allocation in the budget as a contra item. It has been agreed that the distribution of the funding will be considered in the first instance by the Corporate Policy Group before being considered by the Municipal Districts and that the utilisation of the funding would be considered in the period before the completion of the Schedule of Municipal District Works in February 2021.

The Minister has indicated the intention that the funds would be used to help strengthen the municipal districts and their budgetary process, in line with objectives in the Programme for Government to ensure that local government funding, structure and responsibilities strengthen local democracy.

The Minister included a number of requirements in respect of the allocation including

That each Municipal District would receive an equal amount

The allocation must form part of the discretionary expenditure / budget of each Municipal District in 2021 either as part of the GMA or as a contribution to the Schedule of Municipal District Works

The funding must be used to deliver, in whole or in part, something additional for each Municipal District

Galway County Council should consider whether a participatory budgeting initiative is feasible

Galway County Council is required to report to the Department on the allocation of the funding, and separately, on the use and impact of the funding when the relevant projects are complete.

Work Programme

In addition to routine service delivery there are many projects that Galway County Council is currently leading, will lead, or is otherwise engaged in. These include the resolution of flooding problems in South Galway, Ballinasloe and elsewhere, the development of the harbour at Inis Oirr and similar projects, collaboration on the rollout of Broadband, implementing Government Policy and initiatives in respect of Housing delivery and maintenance, the advancement of RRDF proposals, the delivery of the Galway City Ring Road, the completion of the Ballinasloe Town Enhancement Scheme, the remediation of the East Galway Landfill, the construction of the Bia Innovator Food Hub in Athenry, the improvement of the N59, the advancement of Greenway proposals, the advancement of Masterplans for the former Galway Airport Site, lands adjacent to the railway station at Garraun and at Briarhill, the development and implementation of Climate Change initiatives, the advancement of initiatives in respect of Tourism, the development of a Digital Strategy, and many other initiatives across the organisation such as the public lighting retrofit programme and the planned maintenance programme for housing .

Funding under National Grants Schemes

Galway County Council has continued to compete strongly in respect of national funding streams with considerable success to date amounting to €29M in the past 3 years alone under the following schemes which are some of the main grant funding opportunities.

Bia Innovator (REDF / RRDF)	€2.46M
Athenry / Bia Innovator (RRDF)	€3.55M
Dunmore / Tuam / Kinvara (RRDF)	€1.27M
Loughrea (RRDF)	€1.6M
Clifden (RRDF)	€792,000
Clifden (Destination Towns)	€500,000
Portumna (RRDF)	€1,200,000
Town and Village Renewal 2018	€900,000
Town and Village Renewal 2019	€750,000
Town and Village Renewal 2020	€415,000 (To date)
Local Improvement Scheme 2018	€1,942,000
Local Improvement Scheme 2019	€857,000
Local Improvement Scheme 2020	€857,000
Community Involvement Roads 2018	€631,000
Community Involvement Roads 2019	€546,000
Community Involvement Roads 2020	€953,000
CLAR 2018	€454,000
CLAR 2019	€325,000
CLAR 2020	€261,000
Community Enhancement Scheme 2018	€379,000
Community Enhancement Scheme 2019	€165,000
Community Enhancement Scheme 2020	€223,000
Greenways	€4.6M
Climate Change Adaptation	€1.1M
Active Travel	€2.7M

As previously advised we have made an application under URDF in partnership with Iarnród Éireann for a passing loop and other developments at Garraun, Oranmore and a decision is expected shortly.

Other applications such as RRDF proposals in respect of Ballinasloe and Gort have not been successful but these are being reviewed with other locations for further consideration in future funding rounds.

While all of these grants and initiatives are very welcome, they bring with them expectations and requirements which are challenging to meet with current resources.

Staffing

Galway County Council has a staffing Whole Time Equivalent of 780 which is the third lowest in the country per head of population. This has an ongoing negative impact on our capacity to deliver services to the desired level and standard. Employment opportunities continued across the sector during 2020 and the resultant staff movement combined with twenty retirements up to the end of Quarter 3 of 2020 saw the Council run 38 recruitment competitions resulting in 163 appointments being made. Many of these appointments, to fill both newly created posts and vacant positions, were in priority areas with many of the positions attracting external funding either in full or in part. The recruitment and deployment of staff within the Council has as previously indicated been targeted at priority areas with key positions filled in Emergency Services, Housing, Economic, Rural & Community Development including Director of Services, Chief Fire Officer, Senior Social Worker, Sports Partnership Co-Ordinator, Tenancy Sustainment Officer and Homeless Support Worker. The Members have previously been advised of the establishment of the Urban and Rural Regeneration Team and technical staff at the grades of Senior Executive Engineer, Executive Architect, Executive Engineer, Executive Planner and (2) x Technician Grade 1 have been assigned to same.

Housing

Galway County Council has responded to the priority of housing delivery and is implementing the various initiatives of Government introduced to address this issue. In addition to delivering new housing units there are other initiatives and responsibilities including the introduction of minimum standards and planned maintenance programmes as well as earlier turnover of vacant units.

While the Covid lockdown earlier this year has had some impact on the delivery of housing the Council has made significant progress in housing delivery and the achievement of the nationally assigned targets.

Galway County Councils social housing delivery (Build/Acquisition/Leasing) in 2018 was 90% of the target set nationally and we delivered 106 out of the target 118 units. Our target

for 2019 was increased by 119% to 259 units and we delivered 99% of the target which was 253 out of the 259 units required.

Our Rebuilding Ireland target to 2021 is 926 units and a total of 359 units were delivered over 2018 & 2019 with the balance of 567 to be delivered over the two years 2020 & 2021. The current planned building programme will account for approx. 88% of this to be delivered through projects already being progressed while the final 12% will be achieved through in-fill developments, turnkeys, long term leasing and acquisitions. From 2022 onwards a further 329 units will be progressed through Local Authority and AHB building programmes already underway.

We have also begun planning ahead for the future provision of housing by proactively adding to our housing land bank. The Affordable Homes scheme is to begin its roll out in 2021 and the Department are expected to confirm the details of the Scheme in the coming months.

Economic and Community Development

Notwithstanding the limited resources available in recent times the Council has continued to support communities and advance the economic development of the County. The financial support element of some of these projects is more significant than others but it is essential that we continue to play the role envisaged for us in both economic and community development. Notwithstanding the challenging financial position Galway County Council will continue to provide funding and support to various groups and bodies. This includes funding under the headings of Festivals, Economic Development, Community Facilities, Tidy Towns, Social Inclusion, Youth, Sport, Arts, Heritage and the Irish Language. This support from Galway County Council, while more limited in 2021, makes a significant contribution to the efforts of many communities and organisations to deliver initiatives and improvement in their areas.

Roads funding

The level of resources available for road maintenance and improvement has increased in recent years from €28.6M in 2015 to €43.45M in 2021. The Roads Grant funding in 2021 is expected to be €4.26M greater than that budgeted for in 2020.

Budgetary Trend

The following table shows the budgetary trend for Galway County Council in recent years.

2008 - Adopted Budget	€160 M
2014 - Adopted Budget	€122 M
2015 – Adopted Budget	€105.2 M
2017 – Adopted Budget	€105.3 M
2018 – Adopted Budget	€112 M
2019 – Adopted Budget	€121.2 M
2020 – Adopted Budget	€128 M
2021 – Draft Budget	€136.5M

Expenditure proposals

The following tables set out the expenditure and income breakdown proposed for 2021:

Expenditure by Programme Group	2020 Budget	2020 Est. Outturns	2021 Draft Estimated Budget
	€	€	€
Housing and Building	16,096,622	16,372,710	16,838,751
Road Transportation and Safety	43,589,461	49,969,408	48,315,405
Water Services	12,947,744	12,774,212	13,199,669
Development Management	12,192,303	11,558,262	13,466,641
Environmental Services	18,755,742	18,811,876	19,754,542
Recreation and Amenity	8,840,883	8,640,066	9,193,943
Agriculture, Education Health and Welfare	2,477,791	2,280,087	2,781,631
Miscellaneous Services	13,224,386	13,142,378	12,935,177
Total	128,124,932	133,548,999	136,485,759

In the Draft Budget, the estimated Revenue Income anticipated is as follows: -

Estimated Revenue Income	2020		2021	
	€	%	€	%
Local Property Tax / Pension Related Deduction	14,517,890	11	14,517,890	11
NPPR	300,000	0	300,000,	0
State Grants and Subsidies	48,500,620	38	55,646,649	41
Irish Water Income	8,842,000	7	9,213,000	7
Local Determined Income	39,265,186	31	40,085,900	29
Other Income	16,699,236	13	16,722,320	12
	128,124,932	100	136,485,759	100

Conclusion

The preparation of the Draft Annual Budget in recent years has been extremely challenging. The proposed expenditure of €136 M together with the capital programme spend estimated at €70m represents a very considerable investment of monies in the development of the County and the delivery of services throughout the County.

I wish to thank the elected members for their co-operation and support during 2020. I wish to record my appreciation to the Cathaoirleach Cllr. James Charity and the former Cathaoirleach Cllr. Jimmy McClearn for their commitment to the special responsibilities of their office and their courtesy and co-operation in doing the business of the Council. I wish to acknowledge the assistance of the Corporate Policy Group in the discussion on the draft budget and the overall finances of Galway County Council.

I also want to thank the staff of the Council for their continued dedication and flexibility in recent years and particularly in 2020 which has been even more challenging. Their support has ensured the continued delivery of services in difficult circumstances.

I wish to thank the Council's Directors of Service and their staff for their rigorous examination of budget items for 2021. In particular, I want to acknowledge the work of Mr. Ger Mullarkey, Mr. Michael McGovern, Ms Alison Ruane, Ms. Sara McDermott and the staff in the Finance Unit and to thank all involved in delivering the draft budget.

The year 2021 will undoubtedly bring further challenges and change for Galway County Council, but I am confident that with the support of the Members, Management team, and colleagues we will continue to provide valuable services in 2021 to meet the critical needs of the people of Galway.

I recommend the Draft Budget to you for adoption.

Yours sincerely,

Kevin Kelly,
Chief Executive (Interim)

Divisional Reports including Annual Progress
Report on the Galway County Council Corporate
Plan 2020 - 2024

HOUSING SERVICES UNIT

Delivering Homes ∞ Building Communities

Rebuilding Ireland – Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness

Indicative Activities in 2020

The Housing Unit, under the Rebuilding Ireland Action Plan, continues to progress a range of direct-build housing projects through the 4 stage approvals process for design, planning, tendering and construction. To date, funding in the order of €59m has been approved by Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government for the advancement of 269 direct-build units. In addition, proposals for a further 111 units at an estimated cost of €27m are being prepared or are with the Department for approval. A level of disruption was caused to the construction industry by Covid19, but the Housing Unit has been working hard with its contractors to minimise the impact on housing delivery. The following projects were progressed through various stages to date:

Location	# Units	DHPLG Stage
Garbally Drive, Ballinasloe	10	Stage 5 – Complete
Esker Fields, Ballinasloe	2	Stage 5 – Complete
Single Rural Dwellings	6	Stage 5 – Complete
Gilmartin Rd., Tuam	61	Stage 5 – Complete
An Cheathrú Rua	4	Stage 5 – Complete
Fairgreen, Roundstone	14	Stage 4 – Construction
Cartron, Kinvarra	6	Stage 3 – Tender
Caislean Raithlín, Ardrahan	12	Stage 2 – Planning
Barrack St., Loughrea	5	Stage 4 – Construction
Claremount, Oughterard	(13) 0	Stage 2 – Planning (Refused)
Gort Ui Lochlainn, Moycullen	31	Stage 2 – Planning
St. Josephs, Clifden	26	Stage 4 – Construction
Bridge Court, Ahascragh	18	Stage 2 – Planning
Fána Bhui, Tuam	49	Stage 4 – Construction
Weir Road Tuam	25	Stage 2 - Planning
Total	269	

Following Stage 4 approval from the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government contracts were awarded in 2020 for the construction of:

- 5 units at Barrack St, Loughrea
- 26 units at Hospital Road, Clifden
- 49 units at Cloontooa Road, Tuam

The above schemes will be substantially delivered in 2021 and form an important part of the Housing Units proposals for achieving our build target under Rebuilding Ireland.

Despite delays caused to the construction industry by Covid19, the following project advanced through construction phase to completion or substantial completion:

- 8 No. units at Roundstone

Housing Acquisitions in 2020:

There are three main mechanisms available for the acquisition of housing and these are Direct Acquisition, Developers Obligation under Part V and Turnkey processes

- **Direct Acquisition for 2020:**

Galway County Council reviews the market continuously in an effort to meet the housing need within its functional area. Private units are assessed based on the housing need in the locality prior to completion of engineering reports and legal assessment. A total of 7 units have been acquired by Galway County Council with a further 7 Units at the final stages of acquisition with an estimated cost of €1.6m in 2020

- **Turnkey Process:**

To date, agreement has been reached for the acquisition of 68 Units located in Tullahill, Loughrea, 49 units in Kylebroughlan, Moycullen, 2 units in Cois na hAbhainn in Tuam, and 31 units on the Tubber Road in Gort. These developments are being delivered on a phased basis with units becoming available in 2020 and 2021.

A competition was run recently for turnkey units across the county which resulted in 37 expressions of interest from developers with 43 schemes in total being presented to the Housing Unit for consideration. The next stage of the process of evaluation has begun.

Developers Obligations under Part V:

In accordance with Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2001 and amendments, the Housing Department continues to acquire units as part of Developers obligations under this act. In 2020, Galway County Council is acquiring 17 units under the Part V obligations with Department Funding of €3.5m. A further 25 units at an estimated cost of €5.5m are currently in the process of being agreed and are expected to be delivered in 2021.

Proposals for 2021:

- The Local Authority build construction stream will remain a key priority in 2021 with a clear focus being maintained on progressing local authority direct-build projects through design, planning, tendering and construction stages.
- Identifying further potential sites for development, in line with the housing needs for various areas, will also remain a priority in order to enhance the potential for a direct build programme post 2021. In 2020 Galway County Council closed the acquisition of 7.2 acres of zoned land in Claregalway and this will form an important part of future delivery for the Housing Unit.
- The Council will continue to engage with builders with a view to advancing the delivery of units under Part V.
- A targeted acquisition programme will facilitate the local authority in acquiring properties in response to specific housing needs and to support the achievement of a social mix that underpins sustainable communities.

Strategic Development and Management Plan for Housing Lands
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The active management of the housing land bank is part of a range of actions being taken under Rebuilding Ireland designed to accelerate and increase housing output.

Indicative Activities in 2020

- Continue to drive the implementation of the Strategic Development and Management Plans in order to advance sites to development stage at the earliest date possible.
- Continue to expand the bank of lands available to the Council for public housing; affordable and social.

Proposals for 2021:

- The Housing Unit will continue to progress high quality sustainable social housing schemes, subject to planning approval, on various suitable portions of its remaining landbank, in areas with high social housing demand. These schemes will be advanced in conjunction with the Department of Housing Planning and Local Government and will provide sustainable communities into the future.
- The Council will advance the development of a site at Raheen, Athenry under the Serviced Sites Fund, subject to the provision of wastewater infrastructure by Irish Water. Further sites will be identified and proposals advanced when any further call for affordable schemes arises. The design of a new affordable housing scheme is awaited from government.
- The Council is committed to maximizing the potential of the land bank to support housing need, including affordable housing and rental options, subject to the introduction of appropriate schemes and funding streams by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.

- The Housing Unit will explore options on its landbank in relation to the provision of affordable housing, subject to a call for proposals from government, planning permission, and the approval of the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.
- The Housing Unit will seek new opportunities to acquire strategic lands suitable for the provision of high-quality social housing and/or affordable housing, in locations with strong social housing demand, in order to deliver on its housing targets into the future (beyond the Rebuilding Ireland Programme).

Voluntary Housing

Indicative Activities in 2020:

The Council is continuing to engage with the Voluntary sector to maximise the number of units being made available through the funding schemes CAS (Capital Assistance Scheme) and CALF (Capital Advance and Leasing Facility).

Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS)

The Capital Assistance Scheme funding is provided by the Department through the Local Authority for the provision of housing.

Projects with CAS funding completed in 2020:

- Baile an Ri, Dunlo Hill, Ballinasloe, 18 units, Clúid Housing
- Parkview Drive, Tuam – 1 unit (Acquisition), Galway Simon

Other CAS Projects Progressing:

- Tearmann Eanna Teo, Old Post Office, Inverin – 4 units (Acquisition)
- Mountbellew Housing Association, Mountbellew – 5 units (Construction)
- Tearmann Eanna Teo, Rossaveal Cottages – 8 units (Acquisition)
- Peter Triest Housing Association, Springfield, Ballinasloe – 1 unit (Construction)
- Clúid Housing, Letterfrack (Phase 2) – 11 units (Construction)
- Carrig Dubh Housing, Shannon Road, Portumna – 5 units, (Construction)
- Inis Housing, Tubber Road, Gort – 11 Units (Construction)

Capital Advance and Leasing Facility (CALF) and Mortgage to Rent (MTR)

The Capital Advance and Leasing Facility and Mortgage to Rent Scheme provide social housing through off-balance sheet current expenditure.

The following units were delivered in 2020:

- Clúid Housing, Riveroaks, Claregalway, 11 units
- Tuath, The Mews, Tullindaly Road, Tuam, 6 units
- 26 units are currently in progress under the Mortgage to Rent Scheme (MTR) which enables homeowners in mortgage difficulty switch from owning their home to renting their home as social housing tenants

Proposals for 2021:

- It is proposed that the Council will continue to engage pro-actively with the Approved Housing Bodies (AHB) in order to facilitate the sourcing of further units for the provision of housing under this funding model.
- The Housing Unit will examine the potential for AHBs to deliver additional housing units on Council held lands.

Long Term Leasing Initiative

Long Term Leasing was introduced to facilitate the delivery of Social Housing under Pillar 2 of Rebuilding Ireland. The Local Authority or AHB is the landlord to tenant and the property owner does not have a direct relationship with the tenant. The rent paid to the landlord is discounted monthly by 15-20% of the Open Market Rent Valuation.

- The Lease term is between 10 and 25 years, during this timeframe the Local Authority tenant the property, The Landlord will have a guaranteed rent even when the property is vacant
- The Landlord will have no day-to-day maintenance responsibilities under long term lease arrangements

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- Advertise the Long-Term Scheme regularly through the local print media and on social media.
- Engage with Landlords and Property owners and provide documentation and advice.
- In 2020 Galway County Council had 75 Applications for Long Term Lease – of which 30 are approved and 15 currently proceeding in 2020.
- Engaged with Peter McVerry Trust in supporting them to provide 2 Long Term Lease properties through a Payment and Availability Agreement.

Proposals for 2021:

- Continue to advertise the scheme bi-monthly.
- Actively engage with Investors, Developers, landlords and provide information and documentation as required.
- Follow through on the properties already approved in 2020 for delivery in 2021.
- Continue to engage with Peter McVerry Trust to bring a further 6 approved properties into use in Q1 2021, and additional properties thereafter.

Enhanced Leasing Scheme

This Scheme will operate in tandem with a range of other measures under the Government's Rebuilding Ireland: Action plan for Housing and the Homeless. The main objective of this Scheme is to target Developers and Investors who are in a position to deliver Housing on a reasonable scale as well as fulfilling management and maintenance responsibilities.

The Lease Term is 25 Years. Applications for the Scheme must be in respect of at least 20 Units. The Scheme is targeted at newly built – or yet to be built properties.

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- 37 Units were delivered under this scheme in early 2020.

Proposals for 2021:

- Continue to engage with Investors and Developers to provide Social Housing under this Scheme.
- Continue to work closely with the Housing Agency to promote this Scheme.

Vacant Homes

Indicative Activities in 2020:

A Vacant Homes Officer was appointed in Galway County Council in 2018. The role of the Vacant Homes Officer is to drive and co-ordinate actions at a local level, to attain the objective of the National Vacant Housing Reuse Strategy including data collection and analysis. The 2016 Census had identified 8,532 properties as being vacant in the County of Galway.

A Vacant Homes Pilot survey was undertaken on a number of small areas (CSO and Geo Directory determined) in Tuam, Ballinasloe, Loughrea. The purpose of this survey is to consolidate the findings of the census.

- A total of 1,629 properties were surveyed in 2019 by the Community Wardens.
- Only 85 Properties were found to be vacant.
- These properties need to be further examined to see if they remain vacant and are suitable for Social Housing.

Proposals for 2021:

- Investigate the potential to bring the vacant properties identified in the survey back into use for Social Housing.
- Investigate the vacant properties uploaded to www.vacanthomes.ie to determine if any are suitable to bring back into use.
- Implement actions identified in the Reuse Strategy at local level and bring forward measures to ensure, to the greatest degree possible that vacant and underused privately owned properties are brought back into use.
- Continue to advertise all relevant schemes in the local media and on social media.
- Secure accurate and up to date levels of vacancy in Galway County particularly in urban areas where housing demand is most acute.

Repair and Leasing Scheme

Indicative Activities in 2020:

The Repair and Lease Scheme has been developed under Action 5.7 of Rebuilding Ireland to assist private property owners and AHB's in utilising existing vacant housing stock throughout the county.

RLS allows the property owner to sign-up to a lease arrangement for a length that is linked to the value of the repairs, subject to a minimum of 5 years. The value of the Repairs will then be off set incrementally against the agreed rental value over a defined period within the lease.

- The Schemes are advertised bi-monthly in local papers and on alternate weeks on Facebook.
- Continued engagement with property owners, estate agents and solicitors in an effort to attract expressions of interest to the scheme.
- In 2020, all expressions of interest under this Scheme were offered to Peter McVerry Trust, who have the capacity to move the Scheme forward. They are currently engaged in 10 Repair and Lease projects with our support.

Proposals for 2021:

- The Repair and Lease Scheme will continue to be advertised on a regular basis in the local media and on social media.
- Property owners who make enquiries will be engaged with and given all necessary information on the Scheme as quickly as possible.
- Galway County Council will continue to engage with AHBs where appropriate in implementing this scheme. There are currently 6 potential units' deliverable in 2021.

Housing Grants

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- To date the number of applications for Housing Aid for Older People paid in 2020 is 145 with the number of Mobility Aids Grants and Housing Aid Grants totalling 118(46 HAGs and 72 MAGs).
- Department funding was made available in the sum of €2,844,276, for 2020. Galway County Council must provide co-funding of 20%, €568,855 was sanctioned from the Council's own resources.

Proposals for 2021:

- The Council will continue to administer the Housing Aid for Older People, Mobility Aids Grants and Housing Aid Grants availing of grant funding from the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government to the extent that that co-funding provided by the Council allows.

House Purchase Loans (Private and Tenant Purchase Loans)

Indicative Activities in 2020:

Galway County Council provide financial assistance to enable first time buyers to purchase a home either through the tenant purchase scheme or on the private market.

- The Housing Unit currently have 17 Rebuilding Ireland Home Loans approvals in principle on hand to the value of €2.99 million.
- 7 home loans to a value of €1,145,400 and 8 tenant purchase loans to a value of €401,380 have been paid out to date this year.

Proposals for 2021:

- Galway County Council will continue to assess and process all housing loan applications in a timely manner in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan.

Rental Standards

Indicative Activities in 2020:

The Housing Standards for Rented Houses Regulations - Statutory Instrument 137 of 2019 came into effect on 1st May 2019 that superseded Statutory Instrument 17 of 2017.

The Inspectorate is responsible for all Statutory Inspections of Rented Residential Dwellings within the functional area of Galway County Council.

- The Inspection Target for Galway County Council for end of Q4 2020 was 1267 inspections.
- Due to the Covid19 lockdown in March, April and May, inspections of private rental tenancies ceased. After the lockdown ended, inspections resumed but ceased again with the imposition of Level 5 restrictions. Under the CCMA Local Authority Services Framework for Covid19 Pandemic Response rental inspections of the private rental sector are not to proceed under Level 4 or Level 5.
- As of mid-September 2020, the number of Residential Standards Inspections carried out was 803 no. The Inspectorate was on-course to meet its 2020 target at that stage. It may be possible to complete an additional number of inspections in 2020 but this will be very much dependent on the Covid19 restrictions in operation.
- Due to the Covid19 restrictions experienced in 2020 it is unlikely that the annual target will be met.

Proposals for 2021:

- The inspection target for Galway County Council in 2021 is 1,584 Inspections but Covid19 restrictions may continue to impact upon inspection numbers into 2021.
- Priority will be given to rental inspections where the occupier has made a complaint in relation to the condition of the premises.

Social Housing Need

Applications Unit

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- There are currently approximately 3988 applicants on the record of qualified households. 527 of this total are City Applicants with Area of choices in the County Area
- During the period January – October 2020, a total of 189 offers were made to applicants on the record of qualified households for social housing 43 refused 93 accepted 53 awaiting decisions or properties not ready 39 nominations were made for voluntary housing provided by Approved Housing Bodies with the support of the Council.
- During 2020 the Housing Unit also advertised 4 houses on the Choice Based Letting system.
- The Housing Allocation Scheme was reviewed and revised to respond to emerging needs.

Proposals for 2021:

- The Council will continue its' progress in the provision of social housing supports for persons on the record of qualified households.
- The Council will continue to work in partnership with Approved Housing Bodies in nominating applicants for voluntary housing.
- The Council will continue to operate Choice Based Letting (CBL) as a means to facilitate participation by housing applicants. It is intended to extend the CBL process to include nominations for voluntary housing.

Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- 1812 applicants transferred to the HAP scheme by the end of October 2020.
- Lack of supply of available properties remains a significant issue for HAP applicants.
- The increase in rents across county Galway has also been a huge factor for applicants as the local authority can only pay a maximum rent rate depending on the household size.

Proposals for 2021

- To continue transferring long term rent supplement recipients from the Department of Social Protection over to the HAP scheme, within the limits of available resources.
- Process all new housing applications for the HAP scheme.
- Continuation of inspection process for all properties under the HAP Scheme.

Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) and Leasing

Funding has been allocated for local authorities and Approved Housing Bodies to lease or rent private residential properties for applicants on the housing list. RAS is aimed at persons who are in receipt of rent supplement for a period in excess of 18 months. Since the 1st April 2011, any housing applicants that are in RAS type accommodation are deemed to have their housing needs met.

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- There are 341 households accommodated currently through the RAS Scheme and short-term leasing Scheme. (this figure is inclusive of RAS Voluntary)

Proposals for 2021:

- The Council will continue to administer the RAS Scheme as well as working to progress supply options under the Rebuilding Ireland Action Plan.

Homelessness

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- A further increase in the demand for homeless services was noted in 2020 including the number of families presenting together with a more recent notable increase in the number of single people presenting as homeless during 2020.
- The limited availability of private emergency accommodation presented many challenges in responding to homelessness and placed significant demands on the limited resources of the Housing Unit.
- Larger families in particular have great difficulty in sourcing homes in the private sector. Council Housing stock has a limited amount of 4/5 bedroom houses.
- A Tenancy Sustainment Officer and a Homeless Outreach Worker have recently joined the Homeless Unit and both posts are being funded under S10 Homeless Funding by the Department. These posts will provide an essential support in our overall plan to assist people who are homeless, at risk of homelessness or who have difficulties in sustaining tenancies.

Proposals for 2021:

- It is anticipated that the increased demand for homeless services experienced in the past 3 years may continue in 2021 due to the limited supply of housing and in particular the limited availability of housing in the private rented sector.
- It is expected that the HAP Place Finder, the Tenancy Sustainment Officer and the Homeless Outreach Worker posts will continue to positively impact firstly by assisting in preventing people becoming homeless by early intervention and by reducing the length of time people spend in Homeless services.
- Galway County Council will continue to progress cooperation with City Council with all Homeless services, including the Cold Weather Response, for a coordinated inter-agency approach to homelessness.
- Continue to work in conjunction with all Local Authorities in the Western Region, Simon, Cope and the HSE to develop and roll out a Housing First Model in County Galway.
- Work in partnership with the Voluntary Sector and in particular Cope, Galway Simon, Peter Mc Very Trust, AHB's and other agencies in providing own door accommodation for both families and single housing applicants who require a tailored housing solution to meet their housing needs
- Progress a Housing led approach with all forms of social housing including transition accommodation for families in cooperation with Galway Simon, COPE Galway and Approved Housing Bodies with supports tailored to needs.
- Progress step down/ transition accommodation for single people needing some supports in cooperation with Approved Housing Bodies and with supports tailored to needs.
- Work with Voluntary and Statutory bodies to prevent Homelessness (e.g. Threshold, Tusla etc.) with a focus on tenancy protection and sustainment.
- Continue with case management with an emphasis on move on to appropriate accommodation.
- To continue to provide long term accommodation with all the necessary supports for both families and single homeless applicants.

Homeless HAP Place Finder Service

Indicative Activities in 2020:

The Homeless HAP Place Finder Service was introduced in Galway County Council in November 2018. The Service has been rolled out to Local Authorities to assist homeless households find accommodation where the high demand and low levels of supply make the rental market very challenging.

- 125 homeless households have been assisted by the HAP Homeless Place Finder between November 2018 to date.
- Ongoing engagement with property owners, estate agents in an effort to source accommodation units.

Proposals for 2021:

- Review of the priority homeless cases and the properties available to rent in County Galway.
- Continued engagement with property owners, estate agents in an effort to source all available accommodation units
-

Housing Strategy for People with a Disability

Indicative Activities in 2020:

The main aim of this Strategy is to promote and mainstream equality of access for people with a disability to the full range of housing options available, suited to individual and households need.

- Housing applications database indicates that there are 731 people with disabilities on the Housing list - with 312 of these having a Mental Health condition, 246 having a Physical Disability, 155 having an Intellectual Disability and 18 having Sensory Disabilities. People with severe and enduring mental health conditions have a very clear requirement for security of tenure and easy access to services.

Proposals for 2021:

- Review the Disability Strategy & update the Disability Action Plan in line the structures of Galway County Council Housing Department and reengage with the Housing Disability Subgroup
- Continue to work with Approved Housing Bodies and disability service providers to provide suitable accommodation in individual tenancies or in shared accommodation.

- The CAS Call remains open and the Council welcomes all applications from Approved Housing Bodies.
- Investigate “Lifetime Adaptable Housing” and consider that a % of all new Council housing to be designed to be wheelchair accessible and linked with the existing
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Traveller Accommodation Programme
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Indicative Activities in 2020:

- The delivery of the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019 -2024, as adopted in September 2019 was progressed, with targets exceeded for the housing of members of the travelling community.
- Severe weather response – works ongoing on a phased basis at two halting sites to provide mechanisms for securing caravans and mobile homes.
- Major refurbishment works were completed at the halting site at Capira, 4 bays are ready for occupation.
- Works have been substantially completed on the construction of 6 houses and 2 bays at Cluain Órtha, Craughwell. It is anticipated that these will be ready for occupation in early 2021.
- Fire safety improvement works are continuing at all halting sites in the County – Tuam, Craughwell and Capira. There is ongoing monitoring of the fire safety equipment.
- Major refurbishment works have been substantially completed on 4 traveller specific groups houses at Canal Drive, Ballinasloe. It is anticipated that these will be ready for re-occupation in December 2020. The 15 occupants of 3 of the houses were temporarily relocated to an alternative Council property whilst works were ongoing.
- Major refurbishment works have been substantially on 3 traveller specific groups houses at Sandymount, Killimor. It is anticipated that these will be ready for re-occupation in December 2020. The 16 occupants of the 3 houses were temporarily relocated to an alternative Council property whilst were going.
- Refurbishment works have been substantially completed on 2 properties at Moyne Park, Abbeyknockmoy.
- An application for funding for refurbishment works at traveller specific accommodation at Cloonlyon, Ballygar was successful. This is a major project which involve the recruitment of consultants and is progressing.
- Applications for funding for refurbishment works at traveller specific accommodation at Clontuskert, Ballygurrane and Gort Bride are being prepared for submission to the Department of Housing for consideration for funding. Applications are also being prepared for submission in relation to the renovation and extension of 2 Council owned traveller properties at Carnmore and Williamstown.
- The Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee met on 3 occasions, to date, in 2020 with a 4th meeting to be take place before the end of the year.

Proposals for 2021:

- The construction of 6 houses and 2 bays at Cluain Órtha, Craughwell is to be completed in 2021.
- Fire safety training will continue to be delivered at all halting sites.
- Refurbishment works are to be completed at the following traveller specific accommodation, subject to Departmental approval of funding:
 - Clontuskert, Ballinasloe
 - Ballygurrane, Athenry
 - Gort Bride, Loughrea
 - Williamstown – extension and refurbishment
 - Carnmore – extension and refurbishment
- The reconstruction and major refurbishment proposals for the traveller specific accommodation at Cloonlyon, Ballygar is to be brought to design and tender stage, subject to the availability of funding.
- Refurbishment works will be progressed at the traveller specific accommodation in Creggane.
- The Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee will continue to play a lead role in overseeing the implementation of the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019 – 2024.

Local Authority Housing Stock Management

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- 132 units were made available for re-letting to local authority tenants. Funding was received from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage of €494,500 for 32 of these voids, 6 of which were long term voids.
- In addition to the above, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage provided funding of €251,963 for 30 vacant units to be made available under Covid-19 funding.
- Approval was received from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage for funding towards the cost of returning 9 derelict units back to productive use. Planning issues were identified with 2 of the units so it was proposed to proceed with Part 8 applications and procurement with 7 units and these should be available for re-letting in 2021.
- In addition to the above derelict properties, 5 additional derelict houses were identified that required major refurbishment works. Works were tendered for these in 2020 and are expected to be available for re-letting in 2021.
- The response maintenance programme was delivered on a priority basis with the necessity to focus on essential maintenance, including plumbing and electrical, in order to operate within the constraints of available funding. New framework for plumbing and electrical contractors was established in 2020 for a 3 year

- A programme for the retrofit of windows and doors to 94 dwellings in Connemara was completed in Q1 2020.
- A stock survey programme was commenced in 2019 under the Planned Maintenance Programme in order to comply with statutory requirements and minimum standards in the housing stock. This survey was 90% completed but had to be suspended due to the Covid-19 pandemic in early 2020. It is hoped that the survey can be completed in 2021 subject to Public Health guidelines.
- A very successful pilot programme was carried out to address the electrical and fire safety deficiencies in 54 houses identified in the stock survey. The works included the installation of fire detection systems/smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, fire blankets, electrical repairs and certification and service of boiler systems.
- After the above pilot programme, it was decided to roll this programme out across the county with some minor alterations. A contract was signed to upgrade the electrical and fire safety issues identified in 450 houses in the Connemara and Oranmore Areas. It is envisaged that contracts for the remainder of the stock requiring electrical and fire safety upgrades will be awarded in 2021.
- A contract was awarded in 2020 for Radon Remediation in 31 houses across the county that were identified as requiring remediation works.
- A contract was awarded in 2020 for remediation works to septic tanks and wastewater treatment systems of 12 houses in the Connemara area. This work was funded under the Planned Maintenance Budget.
- A contract was awarded for Deep Retrofit Energy Efficiency Upgrade Lot 1 that consisted of 21 houses in Shannon Park, Portumna. The works include replacement windows and doors, external insulation and the installation of heat pumps. These works are part of the pilot Midlands Energy Retrofit Project.
- Adaptation works to 14 houses and the completion of 2 extensions was carried out under the IWILS/DPGs/Extensions Programme of Works 2020 with the help of funding provided by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in the amount of €246,594.

Proposals for 2021:

- The ability of the housing unit to continue to return void housing units to occupation will be dependent on continuation of funding from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage under the Voids Programme.
- Progress to completion the refurbishment of the 12 derelict units approved by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage subject to funding being adequate to complete the works.
- The survey of all remaining houses for Radon in the low Radon areas i.e. less than 5% category and commence remediation works to any houses identified with Radon levels above the Reference Level of 200 Bq/m³
- It is proposed to fully refurbish a total of 5 houses that were fire damaged in the past year.
- Progress a contract for Deep Retrofit Energy Efficiency Upgrade Lot 2 that consists of 51 houses in Ballinasloe, Eyrecourt, Tynagh and Killimor. The works include replacement windows and doors, external insulation and the installation of heat pumps. These works are part of the pilot Midlands Energy Retrofit Project.
- The provision of adaptation works to 20 houses under the IWILS/DPG's/ Extensions Programme of Works 2021 subject to approved funding from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.
- Deliver a response maintenance programme on a priority basis within the constraints of available funding.
- Completion of the stock survey under the Planned Maintenance Programme.
- Under the Planned Maintenance Programme, progress the installation of fire detection systems/smoke alarms, Carbon monoxide alarms, fire blankets, Electrical repairs and certification as identified in the stock survey. It is envisaged that contracts will be progressed in 3 further lots in 2021.
- Under the Planned Maintenance Programme carry out remediation works to chimneys in 16 houses across the county as identified by the maintenance team.
- Under the Planned Maintenance Programme carry out remediation works to septic tanks and wastewater treatment systems in 20 houses across the county as identified by the maintenance team.

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- The Housing Unit continued to work with vulnerable families in assisting them in sustaining their tenancies. The Councils Tenancy Sustainment Strategy was reviewed in consultation with the Housing Strategic Policy Committee. It was adopted by the Council in September 2020.
- The Anti-Social Behaviour Policy was reviewed, and submissions invited from relevant stakeholders. The draft policy is being considered by the Housing Strategic Policy Committee in early November 2020 with the final agreed draft to be brought to the Council for consideration for adoption in late November 2020.
- The Tenancy Enforcement Officer continued to work intensively in a number of areas across the County, this is done in conjunction with the Gardaí and other relevant stakeholders and other Council Departments.
- The Council's Tenancy and Estate Management Strategy involves active community engagement/participation at local level on an ongoing basis with an emphasis on the early identification of anti-social behaviour and breaches of tenancy agreement. The Council continued to engage with the Gardaí and the unit meets regularly to discuss problem areas and how both organisations can work together to address anti-social behaviour.
- CCTV is in operation in seven sites at various locations across the County.
- The Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy 2018-2020 will be revised with a new strategy in consultation with the SPC and relevant stakeholders to allow for consideration and adoption by Council.

Proposals for 2021:

- As part of the interdepartmental and inter-agency strategic approach, the Housing Unit will identify target housing estates which will be the focus of extensive estate management activity over 2021.
- Estate management staff will continue to assist tenants with the sustainment of their tenancies as per the Tenancy Sustainment Strategy.
- A Review of the existing CCTV locations is planned for 2021. Enforcement action will be carried out if required in accordance with the Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy.

Tenant Purchase Scheme

Indicative Activities in 2020:

The introduction of the Incremental Tenant Purchase Scheme in 2016 afforded eligible Local Authority Tenants the opportunity to purchase their Local Authority homes.

- To date in 2020 the Housing Unit has completed the sale of 14 houses under the tenant purchase scheme. The sale value of these properties is €872,615.

Proposals for 2021:

- Galway County Council will continue to process all tenant purchase applications in a timely manner in accordance with the Incremental Tenant Purchase Scheme 2016.

Housing Rents

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- Due to impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the changes in people's financial circumstances, there has been a substantial number of rent reviews undertaken in 2020. These reviews are continually being revisited as people's circumstances continue to change.

Proposals for 2021:

- It was intended to review the Differential Rent Scheme in 2020 but the advancement of this has been deferred to 2021.

Control of Horses

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- The Council continued to implement its protocol in conjunction with the Gardaí on the Control of Horses.
- A total of 30 horses have been seized as of October 2020.
- The Council is currently reviewing the Control of Horses Byelaws for County Galway and expect to have a draft for consideration by the Housing Strategic Policy Committee in Q4 2020.

Proposals for 2021:

- Galway County Council will continue to work with the Gardaí in tackling the issue of stray and abandoned horses on public roads and Council owned land.

Strategic Policy Committee

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- The Housing, Culture and Recreation SPC has met on 3 occasions in 2020. It is intended to hold one further meeting by year end. Areas covered relating to Housing included Housing Allocations Scheme, Tenancy Sustainment Strategy, Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy, Rebuilding Ireland Scheme, Control of Horses Byelaws, Homelessness.

Proposals for 2021:

- In 2021, it is anticipated that the Housing Strategic Policy Committee will examine a range of additional policy areas relating to Housing including Control of Horses Byelaws, Differential Rents Scheme, Tenancy Agreements, Housing First.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND OPERATIONS UNIT
Division B Roads, Transportation and Safety

- B01 NP Road – Maintenance and Improvement**
- B02 NS Road – Maintenance and Improvement**
- B03 Regional Road – Maintenance and Improvement**
- B04 Local Road – Maintenance and Improvement**

Notification has not yet been received of grants for 2021 from Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (DTTS). The figures included in the budget for 2021 are therefore in line with the 2020 grant allocation. Road Grant allocations are distributed amongst the Municipal District based on the KM of road within the district and in line with the 3-year Road Works Programme.

Road Lengths per MD					
Municipal District	Motorway	National Primary	National Secondary	Regional	Local
Athenry/Oranmore	31.82	2.17	29.86	86.15	555.40
Ballinasloe	16.85	0.00	30.13	218.37	1350.98
Conamara	0.00	0.00	109.60	229.40	1142.68
Loughrea	51.26	0.00	60.34	271.68	1626.50
Tuam	14.15	20.95	61.41	94.06	937.44
Total	114.08	23.12	291.34	899.66	5613.00

B01 – B02 National Roads Maintenance and Improvement Works

National Roads - Indicative activities in 2020

Funding was provided in 2020 to facilitate the continued advancement and delivery of the Major Routes. The following projects are managed by the National Roads Project Office and the costs associated with this programme are recouped, in full, from Transport Infrastructure Ireland.

National Road No.	Route Section
M6	Galway City Ring Road
N59	Clifden to Oughterard
N59	Maigh Cuilinn Bypass
N67	Ballinderreen to Kinvara Realignment
N59	Maam Cross/Oughterard
N84	Luimnagh
N17	Carrownurlaur/Ballindine
N63	Abbeyknockmoy to Annagh
B63	Liss to Abbey Realignment

- N6 Galway City Ring Road – An Bord Pleanála commenced an Oral Hearing on the 18th February 2020 which was halted due to Covid19 restriction in mid-March. The hearing re-commenced with remote access for participants on the 12th October 2020 to conclude on the 4th November 2020.
- N67 Ballinderreen to Kinvara Realignment – Construction works on the N67 Ballinderreen to Kinvara Road Realignment continued throughout the course of 2020 and are well advanced.
- Maam Cross to Oughterard has been granted planning permission and is being advanced in two phases. Phase 1 is from Maam Cross to Bunnakill. Following the tender process, a contractor was selected on this 5km section and works commenced in January 2020. Phase 2 from Bunnakill to Claremount is the subject of ongoing discussions and communications with NPWS. A method statement has been agreed with the NPWS for an advance fencing contract from Bunnakill to Claremount. Tenders were sought in relation to fencing works for the Bunnakill to Claremount section and a preferred tender was nominated in Q1 2020. It is intended to commence fencing works in Q4 2020. Progression of land acquisition on the scheme as a whole Maam Cross - Claremount continues.
- Contract Documents have been prepared by consultants for the N59 Maigh Cuilinn ByPass. Land acquisition is ongoing. The two-stage tender process for the main works contract will commence in 2020.
- N63 Abbeyknockmoy to Annagh Hill - Snag items and Land Settlements continued to be addressed during 2020.
- N63 Liss to Abbey Realignment Scheme – Scheme progressed through Phases 2 and 3 of TII Project Management Guidelines.
- The annual resurfacing and maintenance programme for National routes was undertaken in accordance with the budget for maintenance works notified by Transport Infrastructure Ireland.
- A full programme of Pavement Overlay works was undertaken on the National Primary and National Secondary Road Network in the context of the 2020 grant allocations from Transport Infrastructure Ireland.

National Roads - Proposals for 2021

- N59 Maigh Cuilinn Bypass – It is intended to progress to Contract Award and commence construction in 2021.
- N67 Ballindereen to Kinvara Realignment – Construction works on the N67 Ballindereen to Kinvara Road Realignment is expected to be completed in Q2 2021.
- Maam Cross to Bunnakill - It is anticipated that the works will be substantially complete in Q2 2021.
Bunnakill to Claremont - the fencing of the lands will be completed in Q1 2021. Completion of land acquisition on the whole Maam Cross to Oughterard Scheme is expected during 2021. Possible progression of method statements for other aspects of the Bunnakill to Claremont section with NPWS & IFI such as advance contracts for GI works and topographic surveys in 2021. It is hoped to progress to detail design for the remaining section from Bunnakill to Claremont in 2021. Discussions will continue with NPWS & IFI in relation to construction stage method statements for the remaining section Bunnakill to Claremont.
- N63 Liss to Abbey Realignment - Scheme will continue to be advanced through Phases 3 and 4 of TII Project Management Guidelines
- N63 Abbeyknockmoy to Annagh - Land settlements will continue to be progressed through 2021.
- The annual resurfacing and maintenance programme incorporating ordinary maintenance, annual resurfacing, winter maintenance, bridge maintenance and traffic route lighting maintenance will be undertaken within the limits of available funding from Transport Infrastructure Ireland.
- In addition, the programme of Pavement Overlay works will continue the National Primary and National Secondary Road Network in the context of the 2021 grant allocations from Transport Infrastructure Ireland.

B03 – B04 Regional and Local Roads Maintenance and Improvement Works

The 2020 total grant allocation of **€33,778,558** for Regional and Local Roads divides as follows:

Restoration Improvement (RI) Works	€28,944,058
Restoration Maintenance (RM) Works	€ 4,834,500

The grant allocation can be classified under the following broad headings:

<i>Grant Category</i>	2020 Allocation
Restoration Improvement Grant	€16,817,000
Restoration Maintenance Grant	€2,986,000
Supplementary Restoration Maintenance	€1,848,500
Discretionary Maintenance Grant	€5,699,500
Specific Improvement Grants – Bridge Rehabilitation Programme	€530,000
Low Cost Safety Improvement Grants	€409,000
Specific Improvement Grants	€750,000
Strategic Regional and Local Roads	€1,200,000
Speed Limits – Housing Estates	€7,875
Training	€128,000
Drainage Works	€1,397,683
Community Involvement Scheme	€953,000
Former National Roads	€1,000,000
PSCI: Survey Support	€ 52,000
OVERALL TOTAL	€33,778,558

Restoration Improvement (RI) - Indicative Activities in 2020

Funding of €16,817,000 was allocated by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport for road reconstruction works on Non-National roads in 2020. Provision was made to transfer €652,558 from the Supplementary Restoration Maintenance allocation to the Restoration Improvement grant giving a grand total of €17,469,558 being spent on road reconstruction during 2020. This funding was allocated as follows and facilitated improvement works at 209 locations throughout the County:

<i>Restoration Improvement 2020</i>		
Municipal District	No. of locations	Allocation
Athenry/Oranmore	22	€1,684,611
Ballinasloe	26	€4,052,378
Conamara	87	€3,840,133
Loughrea	41	€ 5,228,895
Tuam	33	€2,663,541
Total	209	€17,469,558

Restoration Improvement (RI) - Proposals for 2021

A programme of restoration improvement works will be compiled when notification of the 2021 funding is received and will be detailed in the Roads Programme 2021.

Restoration Maintenance (RM) - Indicative Activities in 2020

Funding of €4,834,500 was allocated for Restoration Maintenance (surface dressing) by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport. It was decided to transfer €652,558 of the Supplementary Restoration Maintenance allocation to restoration improvement works, which resulted in a grand total of €4,181,942 being spend on surface dressing works for 2020. It was allocated as follows and facilitated surface dressing works at 138 locations around the County:

<i>Restoration Maintenance 2019</i>		
Municipal District	No. of locations	Allocation
Athenry/Oranmore	12	€448,238
Ballinasloe	29	€1,164,965
Conamara	28	€721,381
Loughrea	37	€1,081,651
Tuam	32	€765,707
Total	134	€4,181,942

Restoration Maintenance (RM) - Proposals for 2021

A programme of restoration maintenance works will be compiled when notification of the 2021 funding is received will be detailed in the Roads Programme 2021.

Community Involvement Schemes

Under circular RW08/2019 a submission was made to the Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport for proposed project under the Community Involvement Scheme 2020/2021. A total of 85 project was submitted with an estimated cost of €2.6m.

As part of the 2020 Regional & Local Road allocation, DTTS approved funding in the amount of €953,000, which allowed the progression of 49 projects from the priority list.

It is anticipated that a further funding allocation will be approved under the Regional & Local Road allocation in 2021 which will allow for completion of the remaining projects.

Tertiary Road Repairs (DG)

Investment in Local Tertiary roads repairs continued in 2020 with a specific allocation from Discretionary Grant (DG) to be set aside for such roads. A total of €900,000 was allocated specifically which enabled restoration improvement works on 45 Local Tertiary roads in County Galway.

It is intended to continue allocating a specific portion of the Discretionary Grant towards improvement works on tertiary roads. A programme of restoration maintenance works will be compiled when notification of the 2021 funding is received.

Bridges Rehabilitation and Repairs

9 bridges were allocated funding, totalling €530,000, under the Bridge Rehabilitation Programme in 2020 for which works are ongoing and is to be completed in 2021. Works were completed on a further 18 bridges, which were allocated funding of €395,500 from the Discretionary Grant allocation. Contracts are in place and works on going and will be completed on a further 8 bridges in 2021.

Circular RW11 of 2020 allowed for a 30% increase on 2020 allocation in respect of Bridge Rehabilitation Programme for 2021. A proposal was submitted to DTTS to include the following bridges in the rehabilitation programme, which is subject to approval from DTTS.

Proposed Bridge Rehabilitation Programme 2021			
<i>*Subject to Departmental approval</i>			
Priority	Road Number	Bridge Name and Location	2021 Proposed Expenditure €
1	L-2115	Garra, Abbeyknockmoy	50,000
2	L-51251	Dooneen Rd., Clifden	30,000
3	R462	Knocklawrence, Gort	25,000
4	L-8510	Beagh, Gort	50,000
5	R347	Aggard, Craughwell	40,000
6	R328	Addergoole, Dunmore	40,000
7	L-6187	Culliagh North, Abbeyknockmoy	100,000
8	L-852652	Ballingarry, Kilchreest	100,000
9	L-85232	Knockoura, Peterswell	40,000
10	L-51251	Ballycorssaun, Portumna	25,000
11	L-61603	Derreen, Abbeyknockmoy	40,000
12	L-5351	Aughanure, Oughterard	20,000
13	L-3114	Clogharevaun, Kiltullagh	30,000
14	R328	Kilavoher, Clonbern	30,000
Total			€620,000.00

Provision has been made within the budget to set aside €395,000 for bridge repairs from the Discretionary Grant for 2021. This is dependent on the level of funding allocated by DTTS. Full details of approved works will be detailed in the Roads Programme 2021.

Specific Improvement Grants (SIG)

A specific improvement grant allocation, totalling €750,000, was received for 2 projects in 2020:

- Derrartha Road **Conamara MD**
- R332 Kilbannon **Tuam MD**

Submissions have been made by Galway County Council to the Department for funding for suitable schemes, including balance of funding to complete works already commenced in R332 Kilbannon. Notification will be received from DTTAS, in February 2021, of the schemes which are to proceed, with the relevant funding also being advised.

Strategic Regional and Local Road Grants

Submissions have been made by Galway County Council to the Department for funding for suitable schemes. Notification will be received from DTTS, in February 2021, of the schemes which are to proceed, with the relevant funding also being advised.

Local Improvement Schemes

30 projects were completed under the Local Improvement Scheme from the €856,959 allocation for 2020 from the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD).

It is intended to re-advertise the scheme, seeking submissions, in early 2021, with a view to carrying out works at further locations, subject to funding being made available by DRCD.

Non-National Roads - Own Resources

The shortfall in the budgetary allocation for the maintenance of local roads over time has resulted in a significant reduction in the level of maintenance. Some essential elements of maintenance including drainage, verge trimming and the renewal of signs and markings have been inadequately funded. Local road maintenance is funded from both the Council's own resources and the Discretionary Grant.

The sum provided from the Council's own resources in 2020 was €6,329,586 which included provision of €1,290,000 for public lighting.

The distribution of the Local Roads Budget 2021 will be presented to Council for approval in the context of the Roads Programme 2021. The level of discretion that will be available to the Council in the allocation of funding in 2021 for Regional and Local Roads will be restricted by the requirements of the Memorandum on Grants for Regional and Local Roads as issued by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (DTTS).

B05 Public Lighting

A sum of €1,290,000 was provided, from Council's own funds, in the 2020 budget to fund the cost of the public lighting programme in County Galway, including the maintenance, energy and upgrade costs, while funding of €118,974.00 was provided by the TII to cover the cost of the operation & maintenance of public light on the National Road Network.

Successful application to TII under the Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Retrofit Programme on National Roads secured €269,000 in funding which facilitated the retrofit of 350 inefficient public lights on the National Road Network with energy efficient LED units, while a further 388 inefficient public lights on Non-National Roads were retrofitted with energy efficient LED units from the Council's own resources.

To achieve compliance with National Energy Efficiency statutory targets set by Central Government Galway County Council is committed to the retrofit of all of its inefficient public lights with energy efficient LED units & in this regard has committed to the delivery of this project as part of the National Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project. This project is being progressed on a regionalised basis with Galway County Council forming part of 10 Local Authorities participants within the North West Region with Mayo County Council acting as the lead authority for the region. All necessary agreements to participate in the project are in place & it is envisaged that the Contract for the North West Region will go to tender in 2021.

B06 Traffic Management

B0601 – Traffic Management

Progress was made during 2020 with regard upgrading of management software to an In-house system. Testing is ongoing at the time of this report, with the intention of full implementation by 2021.

Traffic Management Plans

Due to financial constraints, savings need to be made in the budget and as a result there is no provision for traffic management plans in the 2021 budget.

B0603 – Traffic Improvement Measures

A sum of €40,000 exclusive of service support costs has been provided in the budget to progress Smarter Travel Initiatives and 'Bike Week' in the County of Galway.

B07 Road Safety Engineering Improvement

B0701 – Low Cost Remedial Measures

The Council, as with headings B01 – B04, has not yet received notification of the level of grant that will be available for Low Cost Safety Improvement works. An allocation of €409,000 from DTTS in 2020 enabled works to be carried out in various locations across the County. Provision has been made for €500,000 exclusive of service support costs under the Low-Cost Safety Improvement works. The level of works to be undertaken in this area will depend upon the amount of grant funding made available by TII/DTTS.

A submission was made by Galway County Council in accordance with Circular RW 12 of 2020 outlining proposal for 2021 in order of priority as set out below with a total estimate cost of €500,000 which is subject to approval by DTTS.

Proposed Safety Improvement Works 2020

**Subject to funding approval from Department*

LA Rank	Road Number	Description of Location of Safety Improvement Works	Description of Proposed Scheme	Cost €
1	L-1320	Moycullen	Zebra Crossing & Speed Table to be installed	€50,000
2	L-4102	Junction of N18 and L4102	Install new PCC Kerb, 200m concrete footpath, drainage and road markings	€40,000
3	R347	Bridge St., Athenry	Install controlled pedestrian crossing	€50,000
4	L-3412/R446	Cahar Cross Junction	Provision of Advance warning signs and road marking on approach roads to junction	€10,000
5	L-2116	Junction visibility	Regrade junction and set back	€15,000
6	R333	Re-align bend on R333 at Castlehackett	Removal of tress and verge to improve sightlines	€15,000
7	R360/L-6520	Ballyroe, Williamstown	Highlight dangerous corner with junction by installing kerbing, chevrons, signage & lining etc	€30,000
8	L-2129	Tonnagarraun	Remove existing stone wall, trees and vegetation both sides of junction., replace fence & Eir pole	€25,000
9	R446	Kilreekil Village	Removal of existing dilapidated timber post & rail fence, restoration of roadside boundary fence to a max height of 800mm above adjoining road level.	€40,000
10	L-5102	Letterettrin	Safety Barrier	€50,000
11	L1320-124	90° Bend on Road (Cooneys)	Driver feedback signs	€10,000
12	L-3402 & L-7122	Ballymacreg	Set back existing wall at junction to improve sightlines	€15,000
13	R347	Ardrahan Village	Propose to extend the existing footpath for approx. 150m	€40,000
14	L-7415	Eglis	Increase road width at 2 locations eliminating pinch points	€20,000
15	R332	Junction visibility	Improvement to junction layout and sightlines	€30,000
16	R360 / L-2201	Kilnalag Cross, Williamstown	Highlight crossroads, advanced signage, lining, anti-skid surfacing etc	€30,000
17	R360	Curragh West – Sightlines	Set back fence and verge	€30,000
				€500,000

B0702 – Other Engineering Improvements

A provision has been made in the budget for replacement of speed limit signage under B0702.

The programme of the installation of SLOW ZONE speed limit signage in housing estates is expected to continue in 2020, depending on funding being made available by the Department of Transport.

The Unit will continue to implement Road Works Speed Limits; in consultation with the Gardaí and Transport Infrastructure Ireland, as deemed necessary to facilitate the delivery of the Council's various work programmes.

B08 Road Safety Promotion and Education

There are a number of costs incurred under this heading including the Junior School Wardens Scheme, publicity campaigns including Road Safety Week, European Mobility Week, Drive for Life Course, Cycle Training for National School and promote awareness of road safety issues for the benefit of the general public with a focus on vulnerable road users.

Galway County Council's Road Safety Together Committee consists of representatives from the County Council, Galway City Council, the Road Safety Authority, An Garda Síochána, Transport Infrastructure Ireland, and An Taisce. The Committee meet four times during the year and jointly examines options available to improve road safety for pedestrians, motorists and road users, in general.

B09 Car Parking

A budget provision under B09 inclusive of service support costs, is for the operation and maintenance of both On-street (6 locations) and Off-street (6 locations) parking facilities provided throughout the County along with parking enforcement costs.

B10 Support to Roads Capital Programme

The administration costs (i.e. indirect costs) in relation to supporting the Roads Capital Programme are met from the revenue budget. This budget contains the staff costs associated with providing support to the programme, as well as a proportion of the service support costs.

B11 Agency and Recoupable Services

The Council is allowed to charge an agreed overhead rate for all jobs undertaken by its staff. The income derived from the overhead charge meets the costs of holiday pay, sick pay and insurance costs. All applications for licenses to open the public road are lodged through the national MRL system, managed by the Road Management Office. The Council's Roads department processes the licenses for County Galway and from the MRL system and attaches conditions and fees to the license. Income from Road Opening Licenses and works undertaken for other bodies are accounted for within this budget heading

D07 Unfinished Housing Estates

Covid 19 and staff changes within the Taking in Charge section have impacted on the number of estates for Taking in Charge and/or for Bond Release in 2020. To date 2 estates have been taken in charge with an additional 4 estates bought to taking in charge standard for Bond Release.

The Council is currently engaged with over 50 developments at various stages in the Taking in Charge process. The work on these estates may be carried out directly by Developer(s) for Bond Release/Taking in Charge or by the Taking in Charge Section following receipt of the bond monies.

The Taking in Charge Section actively engages with Bond Holders for the release of monies to complete works on estates and with Developers and/or other interested parties to ensure estates are completed to the required standard for the benefit of all, especially the residents.

The financial resources available to the Taking in Charge Section is by way of Bonds, specifically assigned to developments and/or funding received through Site Resolution with Irish Water.

The progress of works on estates is governed by the funding available, engagement with third parties and the complexity of the work involved which may include wayleave agreements.

Going forward into 2021, the Taking in Charge section will continue to assess and process taking in charge applications. Having regard to the resources available, every effort will be made to ensure developments are completed in compliance with grant of planning and to a required standard for taking in charge.

The Taking in Charge section, following submission, received notification of funding for two estates under the Frameworks for Multi-Annual Developer Provided (DPI) Water Services Infrastructure Resolution Programme 2019 – 2021. Contact will be made with the relevant parties and Irish Water to progress work on the connection of the estates to the public system and de-commissioning of private wastewater treatment plant on these estates.

Where non-compliance issues are identified, the relevant Departments will be notified to initiate appropriate proceedings.

F06 Agency and Recoupable Services

Community Employment Scheme

During 2020, 5 Community Employment Schemes continued to operate. Villages and towns benefitted from such works as village maintenance; landscaping; grass cutting and stone wall building. The CE Schemes are as follows: Clifden/ Roundstone; Maigh Cuilinn/Oughterard; Gort and Environs; Laurencetown/ Abbey and Tuam and Environs. The 5 Community Employment Schemes will continue to operate and provide such works as village maintenance; landscaping; grass cutting and stone wall building.

G01 Land Drainage Costs

G0101 Maintenance of Land Drainage Areas

Arterial Drainage

The Council discharged its statutory responsibility for the maintenance of certain drainage works in the County through the Roads and Transportation Unit and the Council's Municipal District Offices. The Council has charge of twelve Drainage Districts and there are two Drainage Districts in County Galway which extend into Roscommon and Clare County Councils. The budget provided for this work in 2021 is €175,000.

Flood Mitigation Works and Studies

Galway County Council continues working in partnership with the OPW during 2020 to identify and progress works aimed at reducing the risk of future flooding. Works at 12 locations were completed under the minor works scheme during 2020, with a further 18 applications currently under consideration by the OPW for projects into 2021.

Proposals for 2021 include completion of outstanding works on all existing minor flood mitigation projects and Galway County Council to liaise with the OPW about future minor works schemes that are under consideration with the aim of securing funding for these schemes.

A provision of €450,000 has been made under this heading for carrying out these works.

The OPW have provisionally provided a grant of €40,500 for the provision of flood gates at Kinvara, subject to terms and conditions being agreed with the local committee. This project should be complete in Q2 2021.

Coastal Protection

Galway County Council completed works at 2 locations, working in partnership with the OPW during 2020. Funding of €200,000 has also been approved for works at the Leenaun Graveyard and Parochial house which will be completed in 2021.

G0201 - G0203 – Operations of Piers and Harbours

An allocation of €150,000 was provided from the Council's own resources in 2020 for the ongoing marine maintenance programme in relation to approximately 100 landing places in County Galway which have been identified as in the charge of/responsibility of Galway County Council. This involves varied works including safety repairs to access steps, rails and repairs to slipways. It also includes the removal of algae growth as the budget allows on piers in County Galway.

Improvement works to piers completed in 2020 will include Renville, Inis Oirr, Inis Boffin and Baile na hAbhainn. As per the maintenance and repair programme, repairs were carried out on navigation lights in several locations including Bearna, Inis Mór, Inis Oirr, Inis Meán and Inisboffin. Removal of silt and other obstructions has been carried out near the slipways of An Spidéal and Renville.

Currently a system of maintenance is being developed which will require additional maintenance funding to implement in 2022. This increase of €58,000 is a realistic first step in the aim to provide a less restrictive budget.

There are circa 60 visitor moorings located in various areas such as Cill Ronán, Killary Harbour, Clifden Bay, Srutháin, Roundstone, Cill Chiarán and Maumeen, which require chains and shackle replacement every 2 years. Maintenance was carried out this year on approximately 34 moorings. Provision of €20,000 for 2021 has also been made under this heading to continue the maintenance on yacht moorings.

A budget of €200,000 was provided in 2020 for the Maintenance of Kilronan Harbour. This was required for ongoing maintenance of the harbour and for the payment of legal fees regarding the Warehouse Building on the pier.

This budget of €200,000 will be required again in 2021 for the maintenance of Kilronan Harbour to cover the recurring items such as wages, minor works etc with the balance to cover remaining legal fees and works to the warehouse on the pier. There will also be a requirement to implement any findings of the safety system of operation plan for the pier.

Water Services

Capital Investment Programme

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- Since 1st January 2014 the Council continues to implement the Capital programme as an agent of Irish Water. The investment decisions and timing of investment are decided by Irish Water based on business case and need the approval of the Commission for Energy Regulation. The Water Services Investment Programme as we knew it has been replaced by Irish Water's Capital Investment Programme. In 2020, under the Infrastructure Programme, work continued on the Tuam Regional Water Supply extension to Loughrea and will be substantially completed by year end. Planning and design continued on the Athenry Sewerage Scheme Network project and the Roundstone, Carraroe, Spiddal, Ahascragh, Ballygar and Mountbellew waste-water treatment plant projects. Contracts for Spiddal and Ahascragh waste-water treatment plants will issue to the market before year end.

Proposals for 2021:

- The Commission for the Regulation of Utilities (CRU) is currently considering Irish Waters expenditure as part of Irish Water Revenue Control 3 (2020 – 2024). The outcome of this process will inform the levels of expenditure for Irish Water in both Opex and Capex. Irish Water has published its Capital investment Plan for this period for the consideration of the CRU and some of the planned investment is set out hereafter. In 2021, under the Infrastructure Programme, it is envisaged that new WWTPs will commence construction at Spiddal and Ahascragh. Planning and design for new wastewater treatment plants at Roundstone and Carraroe will continue. Further progress of the Mountbellew and Ballygar wastewater treatment plant projects will be pushed out to the 2025-2029 Investment Programme. The sewer network upgrade for Athenry, will progress, with a view to commencing construction in early 2022.

Management and maintenance of Water and Wastewater Schemes

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- The Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the Council and Irish Water continued to operate in 2020. Under the SLA the Council continues to operate the water and wastewater schemes as agent of Irish Water under the terms set out in the agreement and the annual service plan. Irish Water is now operating within a regulated environment under the Commission for the Regulation of Utilities and the practical effect of this has been a much greater emphasis on reporting of activities and measurement of performance based on that reporting. This has resulted in the adoption of new practices and new technology along with more time and resources spent on gathering data within an environment where resources available to undertake these extra duties remains unchanged. Emphasis continues to be placed on Health and Safety and quality compliance. The operation of new technology and processes is challenging in a regulated environment where constant efficiencies in input resources are demanded while demand for outputs and standards increase.

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Proposals for 2021:

- The Council will continue to operate the Service Level Agreement and perform within the parameters set out in the Annual Service Plan within available resources. It is expected that further transformation initiatives will be rolled out as well as progress in relation to the Water Industry Operating Framework (WIOF) which should clarify the road ahead for the industry as a whole. It is clear however that the aim of IW is that of a single public utility model and the ending of the SLA at the earliest possible opportunity and it is expected that negotiations in relation to same will gather pace in 2021.

Water Conservation

Indicative Activities in 2020:

Leakage reduction works continued throughout the county under planned and reactive leaks in conjunction with the Water Network Program (WNP). The works were carried out by both direct labour, Local Authority crews and Contractors crews working across different activities of the WNP.

These included the following: Find & Fix, Lead Replacement, DMA Establishment, Metering Pressure Management, Mains Rehabilitation and First Fix. To date 26.5km of mains rehabilitation have been completed in areas of high leakage and where water quality issue dictated the works. The works included fitting all pipeline fittings and connections and installation of meter boundary boxes at every connection.

In addition, 26 Pressure Reducing Valves (PRV's) have been commissioned (some with day night controllers) throughout the county and are now operational yielding considerable water savings. Customer side leakage continues to be targeted under the First Fix Program.

Proposals for 2021:

Continuation of the reduction of unaccounted for water will progress throughout the county with resources targeted at public and private side leakage in the network. Additional areas for rehabilitation have been selected and are waiting for approval. Works on metering and pressure reduction will progress in tandem with leakage reduction.

Rural Water Programme

Indicative Activities in 2020:

The Multi Annual Rural Water Programme (2019 -2021) is proceeding but has lost some momentum due in no small part to the Covid pandemic which has made progress difficult to achieve and staff resources in Rural Water were below normal numbers throughout the year to date. The Council would hope to make up any slack in 2020 and make sure all projects at least get to construction stage. In accordance with the policy direction of the Department the usual emphasis on the identification and implementation of the most economically feasible and sustainable options to ensure compliant drinking water drove the approach along with the RAL list published by the Department. The Council continued to assist schemes in their day to day operations by implementing the approved Subsidy scheme and substantial funds were paid out.

Proposals for 2021:

As already mentioned, it is hoped to secure extra staff resources in 2021 and add impetus to ensure the objectives of the MARWP 2019 to 2021 are achieved.

FINANCE AND ICT UNIT

Finance

Value for Money, Shared Services and Public Procurement:

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- Galway County Council utilises the procurement platform www.supplygov.ie offered by the Local Government Operational Procurement Centre (LGOPC) in relation to the procurement of goods, works and services from suppliers (incl. contractors and service providers). The website www.supplygov.ie has been developed by the Local Government Operational Procurement Centre (LGOPC) to streamline the procurement process. The website operates two modules for procuring goods, works and services through Requests for Tenders (RFTs) and Requests for Quotations (RFQs). During 2020 Galway County Council generated 148 Requests for Tender (RFT) and 39 Requests for Quotation (RFQ) on www.supplygov.ie.
- The Government's electronic tendering platform administered by the Office of Government Procurement is www.etenders.gov.ie. This platform is a central facility for all public sector contracting authorities to advertise procurement opportunities and award notices. This year to date Galway County Council processed 33 tenders on this platform.
- Purchase Cards: The Council uses the Lighthouse Portal (Ascendas) to process transactions to Agresso and currently has 187 active cards with spend of €1,077,897 and has processed 6,936 transactions to date.
- Fuel Debit Cards: The Council currently has 234 active fuel cards with a 2020 spend of €459,993.
- The Procurement Officer will monitor requisition compliance through switching on product codes for procurement approval after they are raised, utilising the procurement checker tool in MS4 Agresso. The number of product codes switched on for checking will continue to increase as the role of compliance increases.
- The first wave of the Spend Tracker System rollout has been completed on time and in conjunction with the LGMA.
- The website has been updated to include more information for suppliers and to enable businesses to access links to national procurement agencies.
- A Corporate Procurement Plan 2020 -2022 has been developed, approved and published on the Council's website.

Proposals for 2021:

- Further develop the use of the platforms www.supplygov.ie and www.etenders.gov.ie across the organisation by;
 - increasing procurement awareness and addressing training needs,
 - utilising frameworks established by LGOPC and the OGP across the organisation,
 - monitoring www.etenders.gov.ie and www.supplygov.ie to ensure competition processes are completed in line with EU Directives and guidelines.
 - analysing the 2020 spend profile with a view to identifying possible cost saving initiatives in line with LGOPC and the OGP frameworks and contracts.
 - engaging with the LGOPC and the OGP and ensure that all relevant Circulars, Guides and instructions are circulated and implemented.
- Increase the profile of procurement through the Council's website and training.
- Encourage greater access to Small Medium Enterprise (SME) participation in procurement in relation to Circular 10/14.
- Collate details of all new national frameworks and contracts on Contract Management System and to introduce a simplified Contract Logging/Monitoring system.
- To continue to implement Spend Data Analysis System and expand the Procurement function through Agresso MS4.
- Implement Green Procurement as criteria in tender documentation where possible.
- Continue to monitor and review the Purchase Card and Fuel Card systems.

Discharge of Payments

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- Continued implementation of electronic payment methods/upgrades to ensure compliance with e-Invoicing. Final testing with the LGMA & AP is now complaint to receive e-Invoices
- Review and continue application of best practice within both the Accounts Payable and Payroll functions with continuous improvement
- Continued implementation of Directives issued by the Revenue Commissioners
- Ensure Accounts function meets BPI requirements.

Proposals for 2021:

- Co-operation with the Live implementation of E-Invoicing for key suppliers as identified by the LGMA.
- Continued implementation of electronic initiatives such as e-TAX Clearance
- Continues compliance with the requirements of "Real-time" payroll; ePSWT when rolled out.

Financial Management Systems

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- Additional efficiencies achieved re: Budget drafting system (Budgeting / Forecasting /Reporting) and full engagement with the software provider for increased functionality.
- Additional efficiencies achieved re: claims system for travel and subsistence and reduction of late claims/utility accounts + control over arrears.
- Policy and procedure notes developed for Accounts Payable including supplier statements /fraud prevention.

Proposals for 2021:

- Continued review of procedure/best practice for the full Accounts payable function and documentation of same.
- Investigation of enhances/alternative automated methods to achieve aspects of the BUDGET cycle. Continued review of CCAS Budgetary Modules and full implementation of functionality including Budgeting for Pensions.
- Review Taxation expertise within Finance unit and skill-up for identified knowledge and expertise gaps.

Revenue Collection

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- Continued review of the Revenue collection function – to ensure best practice is achieved and any new income stream is incorporated efficiently.
- Continued utilisation of the ASCENDAS system in regard to the management of income streams such as rates, rents and development levies.
- Continued utilisation of the MARPS process in regard to housing loans.
- Utilisation of the Tenancy Warning system as required in regard to rent arrears under the terms of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2014.
- Continued implementation of electronic payment methods e.g. Billpay, Household Budget, EFT, online payment facility etc to facilitate customers.

- Provision of ongoing assistance to the Valuation Office in regard to REVAL 2021 - which will provide for a complete revaluation of all commercial and industrial property in regard to commercial rates in County Galway -to reflect the contemporary business environment. The Valuation Order was signed by the Commissioner of Valuation on the 1-11-2019.
- Administration in conjunction with the LGMA of the Restart Grants process in line with Government Directives in regard to grant payments to businesses affected by the Covid-19 restrictions. A new targeted support scheme for businesses impacted by Covid-19 restrictions was announced in the budget. This is the CRSS (Covid Restrictions Support Scheme) scheme which is being administered by the Revenue Commissioners from the 13-10-2020 to the 31-3-2021 as outlined in the Finance Act 2020. Details are listed at www.crss.gov.ie
- Implementation of the Waiver Scheme for commercial rates in accordance with Government Directives for businesses affected by the Covid-19 restrictions. The current waiver has been extended to the 31-12-2020.

Proposals for 2021:

- Continued implementation of REVAL 2021 in conjunction with the Valuation Office which will provide for a complete revaluation of all commercial and industrial property in County Galway to reflect the contemporary business environment. The purpose of the revaluation is to bring increased transparency and equity to the rating system and provide a much closer and uniform relationship between the current annual rental values of commercial property and their commercial rates liability. This is part of the National Revaluation Programme and the deadline for the production of the new Valuation List is the 15-9-2021. The new valuations will become effective on the 1-1-2022.
- Monitor and update the Revenue collection function as regards best practice
- Continue to review debt collection procedures.
- The unit will continue to offer the Bill Pay option to Rents, Loans, RAS and Rates customers to assist household budgetary requirements.
- Provide appropriate training to staff on debt collection procedures.
- Continued implementation of any extension of the Waiver Scheme for commercial rates in accordance with Government Directives for businesses affected by the COVID-19 restrictions.

Motor Tax and Driver Licensing Systems

Indicative Activities in 2020:

The number of **motor tax** transactions carried out by the Galway County Council motor tax offices to the end of September 2020 was 44,000. Over €7.2M was taken in by Galway Motor Tax Offices for this period.

- Approximately 80% of total motor tax transactions for the Galway area were carried out online to the end of September 2020. The motor tax office continues to deal with phone queries in relation to the on-line taxing of vehicles.
- The motor tax offices issue tax discs for private and commercial vehicles, tractors, hackneys, taxis and large public service vehicles. Trade plates, trailer licences, replacement documents are also issued and Garda queries and other Local authority queries i.e. S103s and CT53s are also processed.

Proposals for 2021:

- Work will continue on retrieving and digitizing motor tax records in long-term storage with a view to creating an accessible index of all vintage vehicle registration records.
- The Motor Tax Offices in An Cheathru Rua, Ballinasloe, and Galway, will continue to implement all motor tax policies and procedures, and provide support and advice to members of the public, including customers of the motor tax online service.

Information Technology Systems

Indicative Activities 2020

Introduction

The commencement of the Covid-19 restrictions challenged the Information Systems function to provide a rapid response to provide continuing support to public services and support the Government's Business and Community Support Program. This additional workload and resource demand delayed some of the planned 2020 programs.

- Completed full Government WIFI roll out to offices covering 400 staff which facilitated flexible office space and mobile device use.
- Additional security measures to protect and facilitate remote working and operations
- Services and hardware deployed to 650 Staff and Members to facilitate use and access to Microsoft Teams.
- Additional procurement and redeployment of Laptops and PCs enabling 350 staff to work remotely and in the office.
- Expansion of capacity and services to facilitate remote access with Government Networks
- Greenway Office Ballinasloe connected to Government networks, expanded to facilitate improved WIFI in Library and services to proposed co-working location.
- Completion of new Data Storage facility with full off load capability to move all Council Compute and data operations to Cloud Service for business continuity
- Rental Tenancy Board Cloud Application for rental accommodation inspection with full digital experience from property input, inspection and compliance implementation and re-inspection.
- Full support and applications build for digital application process for Government Restart Grants during all the phases and iterations.
- Covid Community Support Cloud Case Management with full GIS mapping and integration with direct data collection facilitating input of local community support functions by sports clubs and other voluntary groups.
- Galway Fire Service Test and Implementation of a full GIS Mobile application for Mortality Management Operations.
- Burial Ground GIS dataset enhancements
- Severe Weather Management GIS System Development

Proposals 2021

COVID-19 has had a major effect for ICT delivery and will require a much more agile and effective way of delivering services to our service users. Considering the very low budgetary resources in comparative terms nationally

- Complete and expand Government WIFI to additional offices as capacity allows
- Complete pilot with Library Services /LGMA/HEANET/OGCIO to provide the availability of the 3rd Level Education WIFI eduroam access for Galway City and County Libraries.
- Improvement program for better broadband access to libraries, co-working locations and other locations used by the public by ensuring best available service.
- Complete replacement of PC's to Windows 10 by purchasing and upgrades.
- Enhance Centrepont Council Office's location to provide Business Continuity Services
- Increase social distancing and reduce risk with enhanced Remote Access control software and trial Augmented Reality systems to assist remote technical installation and troubleshooting.
- Implement LGMA Cyber Security Policy Framework with formation of Council Sub-committee
- Feasibility study of multi-use Video Conferencing for training and meeting facilities.
- Review and plan to move Council Telephony System to full cloud functionality to promote flexible working and greater customer response.
- Services additions to Cloud Compute to drive Data Security.
- Security services by physical and virtual keys for remote access working security
- Completion of installation new generation low maintenance and long-life lithium power battery systems to all 7 large office locations
- Support as part of national pilot E-Planning online submission portal
- Introduction of inhouse Parking Ticket System to replace current contracted service
- Program for continuing deployment and deployment of mobile device applications for use in Housing, Planning and Environment Service delivery field operations
- Robotic Process Automation Project Selection and Implementation.
- Public Consolutions Portal for Planning, Community /Economic Development and Corporate Services.
- Website Improvement Project
- Open Data portal expansion with capability and services development

ECONOMIC, RURAL and COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT and CORPORATE SERVICES UNIT

Economic Rural and Community Development Unit

Promoting Co-ordination of Agencies

Indicative Activities 2020:

- The Galway County Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) held 5 meetings to date in 2020 and in addition to the SICAP Sub-Committee to examine in detail various programmes of the LCDC.
- Facilitated the County Galway LCDC in the implementation of the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) to the value of €1,649,629 in County Galway and monitored the financial and non-financial reporting of the programme in line with the Funding Agreement.
- Healthy Ireland Coordinator commenced employment to manage the initiatives approved for funding from the Healthy Ireland Fund.
- Supported community groups where it was possible given the COVID-19 pandemic situation in the development of their festival and events.
- Promotion of the Transport Co-ordinating Unit (TCU) service and brand name of Bealach na Gaillimhe.
- Partnered with Galway Film Centre and other relevant partners on the UNESCO City of Film 2020 programme and the rollout of the WRAP Fund. Currently engaging with partners in the development of a multi annual plan to maximise the opportunities presented by the designation and to further develop the audio visual and film sector.
- Partnered and supported Galway 2020 in the development and delivery of the programme for the European Capital of Culture 2020 which unfortunately has been impacted by COVID-19.
- Continue to develop and foster strong partnerships with LEO and Galway City Council in the areas of Economic and Enterprise Development, ensuring that the County benefits from the range of supports available and that services are tailored to meet the needs of the County, supporting jobs and communities.
- Participated and continued to support the work of CYPSC and facilitate a coordinated approach with the LCDC.

Proposals for 2021:

- Implement the recommendations of the Departmental Review of LCDC's, ensuring appropriate use of Sub-Committee structures, and linkages with other operational structures and committees.
- Agree a schedule of meetings of Galway County LCDC and focus on the review of the Local Economic and Community Plan. This will take into account the guidelines which are to be developed, public health and guidelines and available resources.
- Implement all Galway County LCDC Programmes within target deadlines and in line with all programme and reporting requirements.
- Support community groups in the development of their offering. Support festivals and events in sustainability & long-term growth and as part of a recovery programme from the Covid 19 pandemic.
- Promotion of the Transport Co-ordinating Unit (TCU) service and brand name of Bealach na Gaillimhe.
- Partner with Galway Film Centre and other partners on the UNESCO City of Film 2021 programme and the further development of opportunities which can support the development of the audio-visual and film sector up to the end of 2022. Continue to support the rollout of the WRAP Fund and its successor with a view to maximising opportunities.
- Continue to develop and foster strong partnerships with LEO and Galway City Council in the areas of Economic Development ensuring that the County benefits from the range of supports available and that services are tailored to meet the needs of the County, supporting jobs and communities.
- Continue to work with all relevant partners to assist economic, social and community development in County Galway through a coordinated approach and development of projects delivered through shared resources and securing funding from competitive bids.
- Participate and continue to support the work of CYPSC and facilitate a coordinated approach with the LCDC.
- Continue to collaborate with the Western Development Commission through projects associated with the Atlantic Economic Corridor. For example, the development of remote working hubs.

Promoting Enterprise and Supporting Economic Development

Indicative activities in 2020:

- Worked with the Broadband Officer and other stakeholders in the preparation of the Digital Strategy for County Galway and assisted in identification of locations for Broadband Connection Points.
- Progressed relevant actions under the Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020 West and participated at Committee level.
- Worked with the WDC and Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC) network on regional projects, including the development of hubs along the AEC.
- Administered Hub Outreach Scheme. And assisted new hubs in progressing via funding and advice.
- Progressed the development (currently at construction stage) of the BIA Innovator Campus, Ireland West Food and Rural Development Innovation Hub in association with the CLG and partners. Continued to provide strategic leadership in an advisory capacity and at Director level on the Board and provided financial support including assistance with grant applications and administration.
- Progressed the work done previously on the Tourism Strategy for Galway and completed additional audit for Ireland's Hidden Heartlands which will inform future works.
- Supported the development of tourism in the county including a range of festival and events, the development of visitor experience including the Connemara Greenway, participation on the Connemara and Aran Islands Tourism Network (CAITN) in the rollout of the Connemara Visitor Experience Development Plan, participated on and contributed to the Lough Derg Marketing group and commenced discussions with a number of key national and local partners for the development of destination experiences and investment in product development and business support.
- Continued to development strong working relationships with Fáilte Ireland to support the development and rollout of Ireland's Hidden Heartlands and the Wild Atlantic Way destination brands including scoping out key opportunities for the east of the County.
- Developed opportunities for the Agri-Tourism Sector, building on the funding secured through the Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine which supported local producers in Galway County through the Discover Galway series.
- Continued to work with GRD on monies and supports available through the three-year Artisan Fund.
- Development of ERG legacy projects such as the Discover Galway series to be continued beyond 2020.
- Continued scoping work on the potential for a Galway Food Strategy to be developed in association with the BIA Innovator Campus and the LEO.
- Ongoing role in the management of the Airport site including the management of a number of short-term leases/licences such as the Galway Flying Club. Worked with the Planning

Department and engaged with a number of stakeholders in relation to the longer-term development options for the Former Galway Airport Site at Carnmore to secure optimum economic benefit for the Galway region.

- Facilitated agreement with the Health Services Executive for use of part of the Property at the airport site as a testing facility in connection with the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic.
- Facilitated Galway 2020 Flagship Commission by Branar at the airport site “Sruth Na Teanga” Teatár de Pháisti.
- Facilitated Royal Visit landing at the Airport Site, Liaised with Department of Foreign Affairs, British Embassy, RAF, An Garda Síochána, Army, Air Corps and Armed Response Unit.
- Supported Communities to secure funding under the Outdoor Recreation fund (ORIS) 2020
- Facilitated the BOI Begin Again Awards competition in County Galway.

Proposals for 2021:

- Assist the continued development and implementation of Galway County Digital Strategy.
- Feed into and progress relevant actions under the National Economic Plan.
- Work with the WDC and Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC) to progress the overall AEC project.
- Work with AEC/WDC to provide support for hubs in the form of networking and funding assistance.
- Progress the AEC Smart Towns and Villages projects.
- Work with WDC to progress the AEC image bank.
- Submit application for calls under RRDF (categories 1 and 2).
- Progress relevant actions under the Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020 West.
- Continue to support communities and develop projects to secure funding under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) 2021.
- Continue to Support Bank of Ireland’s Begin Again Awards, by supporting the nomination of towns which showcase and promote the spirit of enterprise in their local Area.
- Continue to work in partnership with Fáilte Ireland, facilitating and enhancing the tourism product across Galway County, including Discover Galway Food Series and development of Business Tourism.
- Continue to work with lead partners, tourism networks and state agencies in supporting brand Wild Atlantic Way and supporting the Connemara Coast & Aran Islands Visitor Experience Development Plan, ensuring a strategic and planned approach to address the needs of the region.
- Support tourism networks for brand “IHH” Irelands Hidden Heartlands
- Continue to work in partnership with the Lough Derg Marketing Group partners, Tipperary and Clare County Council’s, Fáilte Ireland, Waterways Ireland and Tourism Trade to promote the Lough Derg Area.

Supporting Sustainable Communities

Indicative Activities 2020:

- Progressed the 2019 Town & Village Renewal Schemes and submitted applications under the 2020 Town & Villages Renewal Accelerator Programmes and Main Scheme Programme.
- Supported Tidy Towns groups in the County to participate in the Virtual Tidy Towns National Competition in 2020.
- Continued to support and develop the Public Participation Network (PPN) including rolling out County and Municipal District plenaries and providing assistance to the voluntary Secretariat of the network.
- Delivered the Community Support Scheme in 2020 and held a funding workshop in each Municipal District in late 2019 to offer advice and assistance to Community & Voluntary Groups on the Council's funding schemes, in addition to input from other agencies.
- Supported communities to secure funding under a number of the national and local funding.
- Facilitation of the Community Call Helpline which has dealt with over 800 calls to date, referring them to practical supports in their area or to other services and supports. Phase 1 of the Community Call involved the establishment of a Community Call Helpline to enable older or vulnerable individuals who were required to cocoon during the COVID-19 restrictions to request assistance with practical supports such as collection and delivery of shopping, prescriptions, pensions and other essential household items. Other services offered by the helpline were signposting to other health, social welfare, and various services required by individuals during this time. The delivery of these supports was facilitated through the establishment of a Countywide Forum consisting of over 20 different bodies including Public Agencies, Community & Sporting Bodies, and Voluntary Organisations, who collaborated to share information and resources to assist individuals during the COVID-19 restrictions. The Forum met regularly to share information on their individual efforts and initiatives and to address efforts to sustain frontline and care services.
- As part of the response to Covid a call was put out to all Community, Sporting & Voluntary Groups to assist their local communities by delivering these supports on the ground and over 110 different Groups signed up or were created through the amalgamation of various groups at local level. The Community Call Helpline assisted in a very challenging time and has been a success in terms of facilitating information-sharing, working in partnership with public and private agencies, and the creation of local structures to support vulnerable individuals in communities.

- Progressed Phase 2 of the Community Call was the local implementation of the “In This Together” national campaign which was focused around 3 main themes;
 - **Stay Fit and Active** – a leaflet on “Simple Stretches” was devised based on HSE Physio Services materials and circulated to over 2,000 older people who were cocooning. In addition, 1,000 pedometers and 1,000 stress balls were circulated to promote physical activity and basic mobility during the lockdown. Galway Sports Partnership also delivered and promoted a number of free sporting programmes, dance classes, and family friendly physical activity challenges.
 - **Stay Connected** – as one of the issues widely discussed by the Forum was the impact of the lockdown on individuals who were not online, a Galway “In This Together” booklet was put together comprising a range of information, activities and challenges, and over 2,000 copies were distributed throughout the County to those who were cocooning through An Garda Síochána and the Community Groups who were delivering services and supports to these individuals. In addition, the library staff, on behalf of the Housing Department, reached out to our older housing tenants and made over 1,500 telephone calls to keep in contact with them and link them in with the Community Call Helpline if required. A range of other initiatives were put in place such as Virtual Tidy Towns and Galway Beo to engage people with our heritage and environment during the lockdown.
 - **Look After Your Mental Health** -- as anxiety, loneliness, social isolation and mental health concerns were issues which were raised by Forum Members, funding was prioritised for online technology or PPE Equipment which would enable care services to maintain contact with vulnerable individuals. In addition, there was a focus on information-sharing of HSE guides and resources for coping during COVID-19, as well as signposting to helplines and mental health services.

- An allocation of €85,789 was received under the COVID-19 Emergency Fund which was allocated in accordance with priorities identified by the COVID-19 Community Call Forum. The amount allocated per type of funding is as follows:

Description:	Amount:
Food Vouchers for distribution to disadvantaged families	€12,100
Meals on Wheels additional expenditure due to demand	€16,650
Online Technology to deliver frontline services	€9,300
PPE Equipment/Adaptations to deliver frontline services	€37,648
Volunteer Expenses	€2,291
Resource/Care Packs for vulnerable individuals	€7,000

- The Galway County Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) held 5 meetings to date in 2019 and in addition, meetings of the Funding Co-Ordination Sub-Committee, Health & Wellbeing Sub-Committee, and SICAP Sub-Committee were held to examine in detail various programmes of the LCDC. Adaptation of the funding programmes of the LCDC was vital in meeting local and community needs throughout the COVID-19 pandemic to date as follows:
 - A Local Response Plan was devised under SICAP (Social Inclusion & Community Activation Programme) to assist the most disadvantaged and vulnerable individuals and groups in society throughout the pandemic, through linking them with services and practical supports such as FoodCloud, and distributing grants to Groups and Services to assist them in continuing to provide care services.
 - Round 3 of the Healthy Ireland Programme commenced which comprised a range of projects covering physical activity, healthy eating, sexual health, mental health, and the creation of places and spaces for wellbeing, and these are being managed by a Healthy Ireland Co-ordinator who was appointed in early 2020. Many of the projects were curtailed due to COVID-19 restrictions and a range of adaptations were submitted to Pobal for approval which has now been received. The Healthy Ireland Programme was central to the wellbeing initiatives delivered to vulnerable individuals, in addition to awareness raising through use of local media.
 - A total of €63,249 was received in the Community Enhancement Programme with the priority of enabling re-opening of community-owned facilities through the provision of PPE and carrying out necessary health & safety adaptations to premises. A second round of the Community Enhancement Programme was then announced with an allocation of €159,940 to County Galway, and the priority in this round was to facilitate maintenance, improvement and adaptations to Community Centres and other community-owned buildings.

- Developed a Streetscape Enhancement Scheme (Pilot) for Athenry and Ballinasloe and received 60 Applications for Athenry and 88 for Ballinasloe.
- Roll out funding approvals under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) for Athenry, Tuam, Loughrea and Dunmore
- Secured Funding from RRDF for Portumna:
 - Public Realm Portumna.
 - Streetscape Portumna.
 - Sculpture Park and Public Art.
 - Urban Design Framework (Burgage Plots).
 - Abbey Street development.
 - Prepared a preliminary design and Part 8 for Portumna Courthouse.
- Secured Funding from RRDF for Clifden:
 - Clifden Public Realm
 - Clifden Harbour Park
 - Clifden co-working hub.

Proposals for 2021:

- Having regard to the Departmental 5-year Strategy to support the Community & Voluntary Sector in Ireland 2019-2024, continue to work with communities to empower them to identify needs and develop community-led projects, and build their capacity through the Public Participation Network (PPN).
- Deliver Funding Workshops across the County, incorporating information on new programmes and funding options for voluntary activity.
- Under the Government Resilience and Recovery Plan 2020-2021, an accelerated process will be devised by the Department for review of Local Economic and Community Plans (LECP's) to respond to economic and community needs arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Community Call Helpline will continue to operate in line with guidelines and practical supports will continue to be delivered at local level through important connections made with the Community Call Groups since March 2020.
- The Community Response Forum will continue to collaborate to meet the needs and challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. National Government has now introduced a further phase of the Community Call which sees an expansion of the Forum's role into dealing with issues which have arisen from the pandemic such as loneliness and social isolation, in addition to barriers due to lack of online technology. These will be addressed through projects such as befriending initiatives and addressing online capacity through training and initiatives aimed at priority groups such as older people.
- Additional funding has been awarded under the Healthy Ireland Fund to implement a local "Keep Well" Campaign which is aimed at improving individual resilience through keeping active, keeping connecting, eating well, switching off and becoming creative, and managing your mood. A range of awareness-raising activities and promotion of initiatives will take place locally to implement this campaign.
- Provide targeted support to Tidy Towns Groups across the County.

- Continue to support voluntary activity throughout the County in a targeted manner through the Community Support Schemes and assist Groups in drawing down funding on an annual basis.
- Focus on inter-agency collaboration in the delivery of LCDC funding programmes to ensure the best use of resources across all funding agencies and maximise opportunities for leveraging of funding.
- Assist communities in implementing Town and Village Renewal projects which have been approved. Accept expressions of interest and submit final applications for Town and Village Renewal 2021.
- Progress Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) projects in Athenry, (including the BIA Innovator Campus, Kinvara, Tuam, Loughrea, Portumna and Clifden.
- Submit application for calls under RRDF (categories 1 and 2).

Supporting Social Inclusion

Indicative activities for 2020:

- Co-ordinated 3 meetings of the Traveller Interagency Group in association with Housing Unit, to discuss implementation of the National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy
- Supported and facilitated meetings of the Galway Older Persons Council and the Galway Age Friendly Alliance, which oversee the implementation of the Galway Age Friendly City and County Programme.
- A Migrant Integration Forum was set up within the structures of the PPN, and consultations commenced with new communities throughout the County to review the previous Integration and Diversity Strategy and provide learnings to feed into a new local Migrant Integration Strategy.
- Due to COVID-19 restrictions, Bealtaine and Social Inclusion Week were held online with applications invited for projects and activities which would enable people to stay connected while staying apart – the approved projects under Social Inclusion Week will take place across October and November in local communities. National Play Day was also celebrated differently through Play Packs being collated and distributed across the County to disadvantaged families.
- Following an event in 2019 to invite individuals, groups and representatives of older people to hear about the Age Friendly Programme, work has commenced on the setting up of an Older Persons Forum specifically for County Galway, within the structures of the PPN. This will allow the voice of older people in the County to feed directly into policies and plans which affect them and provide a more effective consultative forum to and from the Council.
- Comhairle na nÓg is a forum to enable the voice of young people to engage with the local authority and have their voice heard regarding local policies and services in their County. A Co-ordinator from Youth Work Ireland Galway works with an appointed Comhairle Committee to develop initiatives and liaise with the Council. Throughout 2020, the County Comhairle has worked on developing mental health tips for young people to get through COVID-19 restrictions, which will be developed into formats suitable for young people and distributed across the County.

- Produced a booklet called “Galway County - In This Together” which included activities and challenges and was distributed to over 2,000 older people who were cocooning during lockdown
- Healthy Ireland Co-ordinator position filled to oversee the implementation of the Healthy Ireland Programme for County Galway
- Through Healthy Ireland Funding we trained 22 individuals to deliver Healthy Food Made Easy (HFME) across Galway County and City
- To celebrate National Play Day, in conjunction with the Housing Department, we distributed Play Packs to vulnerable & disadvantaged families, to encourage children and young people to remain active during the summer months
- Galway County Public Participation Network organised an information webinar for Community & Voluntary Groups which provided information on the technical & procedural aspects of re-opening Community Venues in line with public health requirements, and this was supplemented by information on available funding sources.
- In addition to the existing post of PPN Resource Worker, a new post of PPN Support Worker was approved by the Department of Rural and Community Development and an appointment to the post was made during the year. The PPN Secretariat continued to meet online during the year to direct activities and a lot of work took place during the year to date on strengthening the role of the PPN across its primary functions:
 - Information: a monthly Newsletter was devised to keep communities informed of all COVID-19 public health advice, funding opportunities, and information on all local authority activities and programmes. The PPN also organised Webinars to provide information on various funding schemes to its Member Groups and these were all well attended and received.
 - Participation: the PPN has nominating rights to various Committees and Bodies throughout the local authority and during the year, has set up various Linkage Groups to enable Member Groups to ‘meet’ on areas of common interest and strengthen their participative role on the Committee by creating a direct link to and from the Committee for the relevant Representative. A Disability Forum, Older Persons Forum, Intercultural Forum, and Green Recovery Group are among the Groups established to date. In addition, consultations took place with Member Groups and a comprehensive submission was made to the Issues Paper on the County Development Plan setting out the priorities of Member Community Groups.
 - Capacity-Building: following a survey of all Member Groups, a Tuesday Training series was implemented to meet the priorities identified by Member Groups in areas such as developing an online presence, writing funding applications, and complying with GDPR requirements. A further series of training titled “Wednesday Workshops” has commenced in November to give expert advice on establishing community groups and governance issues, in addition to developing capacity to use Zoom and other online communication tools.

- Social Inclusion Initiatives ‘Staying Connected while Staying Apart’ were supported for the months of October and November in lieu of events not being able to take place for Social Inclusion Week
- County Galway Disability Forum was set up with the Galway County Public Participation Network and had its first meeting in October
- Make Way Day was held virtually on the 25th September in conjunction with Disability Federation Ireland
- Continued to expand delivery of the Community Smoke Alarm Scheme targeting vulnerable people with no alarm
- Commenced the Government Resilience ‘Keep Well’ Campaign
- Through COVID-19 Emergency Fund, financial support was provided to projects such as befriending initiatives, technology supports to enable Care Organisations continue to counsel and keep in contact with their clients, and Care Packs and Food Vouchers for vulnerable and older people.
- Established an online map and directory of Community Call supports

Proposals for 2021:

- Organise and support event days for various social inclusion activities.
- Commence consultations on a new Age Friendly Strategy.
- Agree a programme of funding for Comhairle na nÓg and support their key topics through the Council’s funding schemes.
- Continue progress on Strategy documents in the areas of Healthy Ireland and Migrant Integration for Galway County.
- Continue to support and progress locally the Government’s ‘Keep Well’ Campaign through programmes and initiatives to help everyone in communities to keep well and active.
- Continue to target disadvantaged individuals, groups and communities through programmes such as SICAP, Community Enhancement Programme, Community Support Schemes and Healthy Ireland Fund.
- To support a network of Community Gardens throughout the County so that communities can stay active outdoors with the added benefit of improved wellbeing through social contact and growing nutritious food.
- Under Healthy Ireland, support Community Kitchens throughout the County, in community-owned venues and deliver our Healthy Food Made Easy courses while ensuring compliance with all public health requirements, in addition to revising the course to enable its delivery online to reach a wider audience
- Establish our Older Persons Forum as a specific group within our Public Participation Network

- Develop facilities such as a Calendar of Events and Message Board, to enable social contacts and linkages to be established across all Older Persons Groups and Individuals in the County.
- Put in place a network of befriending initiatives across the County, in co-operation with our partner organisations in the Community Call
- Establish an Intercultural Forum within our Public Participation Network
- The PPN will continue to work on behalf of its Member Groups to strengthen their representative role and build capacity to avail of all funding opportunities and build resilience of Community Groups throughout the COVID-19 pandemic which has created particular difficulties for Member Groups. It will hold countywide information sessions to update all Voluntary Groups and Organisations regarding funding sources. and organise Workshops to build capacity of targeted groups and identify needs to feed into funding programmes and activities.

Promoting and Developing Arts Activity

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- *Galway County Council Arts Grants:* delivered the Arts Grants through the Community Support Scheme 2020.
- *Agents of Change Programme:* Galway County Arts Office continue to lead and advance delivery of this large-scale regional Arts Council Project, an action research capacity building programme with Galway County, City and Roscommon’s leading festivals and producers in collaboration with Irish Theatre Institute, Drama at NUIG, Galway City Council and Roscommon County Council. Festivals/Organisations supported include: Shorelines Festival, Clifden Arts Festival, Traidphicnic, Headford Lace Project, Interface Inagh and Áras Éanna.
- Provided ongoing professional arts information and advice service to community groups, individual artists, festivals in the county and advisory service to adapt to Covid-19 restrictions.
- Progressed the draft *Galway County Council Arts Plan 2020 -2024*
- Artist Database: Progressed work on a new database/artist portal to connect artists in the county and share work opportunities.
- Artists Bursaries: Continued to offer bursaries to artists and ensured excellence and rigour on peer assessment panels for all awards. Committed to developing a policy statement that supports fair remuneration for artists.
- Progressed plans for a series of CPD training with artists on creating work in context to include Schools, communities and older years setting.
- Developed ongoing professional development opportunities in collaboration with ITI, VAI, Tulca, ISACS. In 2020 we worked directly with TULCA and Galway Dance Project on CPD programmes for artists.
- Artists Residencies 2020: Supported residencies in Áras Éanna, Tyrone Guthrie Centre and Cultural Centre Irlandais Paris. Focused on supporting local arts residencies and venues to include Interface Inagh and Brigid’s Garden. Supported existing residency partners to offer actual Residencies where safely possible but also an “in absentia” residency on Aras Éanna during lockdown.

- Progressed a new **Galway County Council Public Art Policy 2020-2024** for approval by Council in December 2020. Convened a Public Art Management Group to oversee programme.
- **NEW NATIONAL COMMISSION:** -Galway County Arts Office supported and took project lead on PLATFORM 31; a nationwide artist development scheme led by the 31 Local Authority Arts Offices with the Arts Council. PLATFORM 31 - a national opportunity for artists to develop their practice and test new ideas of collaboration, research, audience development, place-making and sharing their work. Designed to support and offer career development for 31 emerging or mid-career artists (one artist in each of the 31 local authorities around Ireland), participating artists receive an €8,000 bursary to invest in themselves and their practice, combined with participation in an advisory and developmental framework and a national peer network.
- **Artists in Educational Settings:** Offered 6 schools the opportunity to take part in artists in schools programme and created a number of other arts programmes for schools, working with GRETB early school leavers programmes, Youthreach services and the creative School networks. School programme was postponed in March but have begun to work with schools again in Autumn 2020. Created a new training programme for artists working in schools with Covid precautions and offer online/zoom workshops as an additional support.
- Continued to expand the **Children’s Book Festival “Book It”** in conjunction with the Library Service. Plan to offer an online version in 2020 and hybrid version for 2021.
- **Youth Arts Programme:** Continued to work the Galway Community Circus to deepen engagement the engagement with the group of young people in Gort. Collaborated and extended the programme for street art performance with Macnas in Athenry. Supported Athenry Group Gliondair, who work with teenagers, training and performing in site specific theatre. Supported Muintereas Óg, on a performance exchange with Pontio University in Bangor, Wales, this has currently been postponed but will continue as soon as is practical, otherwise and alternative arrangement to complete online will take place.
- Continued to offer other programme supports for children and young people in partnership with our professional partners: Baboró International Arts Festival for Children, Branar T  atre do Ph  ist  , Tulca, Galway Music Residency, Galway Junior Film Fleadh and Galway Film Centre who present and tour in the county.
- Worked in partnership with **Music Generation Galway County** to support Music Education Programme in collaboration with GRETB.
- **Arts in Disability:** Supported Blue Teapot Theatre Company on a theatre and film project in the County with a few their ID members. Blue Teapot have committed to doing action research in a few locations in the county over the next 6-12 months alongside Galway company Speckled Egg in partnership with the Arts Office. We have supported film and animation workshops with Blue Teapot in two locations in Ballinasloe and Tuam in 2020 which were to culminate in the BIG DAY OUT as part of Crossing the Line Festival which was due to be held in May 2020 but was cancelled due to COVID-19.
- **Focus on Arts in Older years for 2020:** Worked with Dance Artist Bernadette Divilly in Ballinasloe on a dance project with older women which took place prior to lockdown and continues in an outdoor space in early in Ballinasloe once when public health advise allows
- Begun research into the feasibility of the creation of cultural hubs in the county

- Embraced environmental sustainability by building in environmental impacts into funding for creative organisations and provide environmental awareness and sustainability training for festivals and community events.
- **Creative Places Tuam:** This initiative is congruent with the Arts Plan and the Galway County Arts Office plays a key supporting role. The legacy of this programme will feature greatly increased cultural capacity in Tuam during the life of this pilot, which will in turn provide benefits beyond the Tuam area. Initiatives were created through this programme in 2020 and it has created other opportunities for the Arts Office to develop relationships with artists and communities in the area beyond the project.
- **Culture Night 2020:** Delivered a successful Culture Night 2020 programme of 34 events which included many new commissions and events took place both online and offline.
- **Key Community projects supported:** We have supported key projects/creative communities this year through our arts programme and in some cases where applicable in partnership with Creative Ireland to include: **Inishbofin Lockdown** by documentary maker Kieran Concannon with the community on Inishbofin. **Headford Lace Project, The Space Between;** A visual art trail of artists response and the publication of the work created. **Carrying the Songs:** Interface Inagh and **Creative Places Tuam** Seed projects.
- Supported Screen Commission West, UNESCO City of Film and Wrap Fund.
- Supported Aras Éanna (Arts Centre on Inis Oírr).
- Worked collaboratively with Galway 2020 to support delivery of programmes within the county.
- Arts Office holds the Coordinator role for **Galway County Council's Creative Ireland Programme.** Arts Office led, managed and administered the Creative Ireland Programme 2020 and directly curated and programmed Cruinniú na nÓg 2020 (national creative day for children) in Galway county. In 2020 we directly supported Branar to develop new rhymes for children which were animated and featured on RTE as part of national programme.
- **Erasmus+:** Galway County Council Arts Office is one of 6 partners in the successful Erasmus + application Culture UP 2020-2022. "CULTURE UP" Capacity building of Cultural Institutions and Local Authorities in non-urban and peripheral areas" project sets out to share and exchange knowledge and practices of cultural development across the public, private and civil sector in five European non-urban and peripheral areas. The goal is to facilitate learning opportunities to upskill, inspire and motivate cultural institutions and local authorities in rural areas to strengthen their capacity development to the benefit of their local communities. The project will focus on the ordinary and everyday governance of culture in rural areas. Galway County Council Arts Office and Áras Éanna will take part in this professional exchange programme beginning early 2021.

Proposals for 2021

- **Galway County Council Arts Grants:** to support, adjudicate and administer through the Community Support Scheme 2021.
- Provide ongoing professional arts information and advice service to community groups, individual artists, festivals in the county and advisory service to adapt to Covid-19 restrictions.

- Develop a programme of Public Artwork through the Public Art Management group.
- Artists Bursaries: Offer bursaries to Artists to develop work and ensure excellence and rigour on peer assessment panels for all awards.
- *Agents of Change Programme*: Continue to work with this network of festivals and producers to build capacity and resource sharing. **Commissioning Performances**: - *“We will have supported and invested further into festivals which support communities to experience the arts and animate their community” (Framework Agreement)*. We will create 2 x commissions in partnership with our festivals through the Agents of Change Programme to develop 2 pieces of work open to all artforms which can be performed live where possible at festivals in a socially distanced manner.
- Provide continued professional development opportunities are planned in collaboration with ITI, VAI, Tulca, ISACS and Create.
- Artists Residencies which will be supported in 2021 include: Áras Éanna, Tyrone Guthrie Centre and Cultural Centre Irlandais Paris and local arts residencies and venues to include Interface and Brigid’s Garden.
- Platform 31: -Galway County Arts Office will support one county Galway based artist on this nationwide artist development scheme led by the 31 Local Authority Arts Offices with the Arts Council and participating artists will receive an €8,000 bursary to invest in themselves and their practice, combined with participation in an advisory and developmental framework and a national peer network.
- **Children’s Book Festival Book It**: Seek to create a writer in residency option for children/young people, perhaps in absentia Residency option for 2021 focusing on work through the medium of the Irish language. Looking to young writers/poets in collaboration with Poetry Ireland. Continue to present live and online work as part of Book it Festival 2021.
- **Artists in Schools**: This continues to be a much sought-after programme. Our partnership with Creative Schools and GRETB school programme. For 2021 we will extend this programme to Artist in youth group setting, working directly with Youthwork Ireland in a few bases in the county.
- **Youth Creative Programme with Macnas & Galway Community Circus** in 2021 will feature presentations of work by young people from both groups together as part of the series of arts festivals potentially taking place in 2021. As this work will be presented in the outdoors.
- **Electronic Music and Spoken Work Residency** 2021. This youth-led initiative borne from an idea for Culture Night in Loughrea with Youthwork Ireland as they work with music technology experts and spoken word artists to create new work by young people from the area.
- Work in partnership with **Music Generation Galway County** to support Music Education Programme in collaboration with GRETB.
- Continue to offer other programme supports for children and young people in partnership with our professional partners: Baboró International Arts Festival for Children, Branar T  atre do Ph  aist  , Tulca, Galway Music Residency, Galway Junior Film Fleadh and Galway Film Centre who present and tour in the county.
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- **Commission of New Work for Older Audiences in rural or isolated settings:** Capture the creativity and contribution of older people in county Galway through two artists' commissions open to all artforms. This commission will focus on creating work that can be performed in socially distant manner in possibly a more intimate performance. Taking into consideration the fact that many older people have not left their homes in some time.
- **Arts in Disability Review and Consultation:** As outlined in 2020 this requires significant review to ensure other agencies have opportunity to get involved. Will work with our partner, Blue Teapot Theatre Company on a theatre and film project in the County with several their ID members. We plan to run a consultation process facilitated by Blue Teapot in the county to look at arts provisions and opportunities for artists with disabilities and those living outside of care and supported sectors. We also plan to research opportunities for an integrated approach for ID Artists and non-ID artists to work collaboratively.
- Embrace environmental sustainability by building in environmental impacts into funding for creative organisations and provide environmental awareness and sustainability training for festivals and community events.
- **Creative Places Tuam:** Arts Office to continue to support this project.
- **Culture Night 2021:** Deliver a successful Culture Night 2021 programme of events to include many new commissions and events took place both online and offline.
- **Film Documentary/Audio Training for Communities/Festivals.** This will be delivered mainly online where possible by experts from the Audio Visual and Film Sector in Galway. We will collaborate with Galway Film Centre to deliver this project.
- **Cultural Diversity Programme Commission:** *"Operate a policy of equality, access and inclusion in all programmes and initiatives it offers, working with partner agencies on community led, quality arts engagement for our established and new communities (Draft Galway County Arts Plan)"* - working in partnership with the newly formed Galway County Intercultural Forum we will engage specialist arts expertise to work with groups and individuals who have yet to access arts programmes and encourage submissions from artists with diverse backgrounds and cultural experiences to deliver projects in their own communities.
- Support Screen Commission West, UNESCO City of Film and Wrap Fund.
- Support Aras Éanna (Arts Centre on Inis Oírr).
- **Galway County Council's Creative Ireland Programme.** Lead, manage and administer the Creative Ireland Programme and directly curated and programmed Cruinniú na nÓg 2021(national creative day for children) in Galway county.
- **Erasmus+:** Galway County Council Arts Office is one of 6 partners in the successful **Erasmus +** application Culture UP 2020-2022. In 2021 Galway County Arts Office will lead out on the first visit/virtual visit to the County for our European Partners. Galway County Council Arts Office and Áras Éanna will take part in this professional exchange programme beginning early 2021.

Local Sports Partnership

Indicative Activities 2020:

- Sourced and secured sufficient funding from available sources – Sport Ireland, Dormant Accounts, Local Authorities, HSE and Government Departments to fund the Operations of Galway Sports Partnership in 2020. Funding from Sport Ireland, HSE Dormant Accounts Funds and Dept. of Transport, Tourism and Sport secured to run all programmes in 2020.
- Sports Hub-Ballinasloe hub equipment - secured funding from Dormant Accounts Fund.
- Secured funding for and oversaw the implementation of Sport Ireland Programmes and other programmes in our five-year Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020, with particular emphasis on the GSP main target groups. Programmes included Outdoor Adventure, Women on the Water, Youth at Risk Programme, Walking Football for Older Adults, Senior Circuits, Buggy Buddies, Midnight Soccer, Meet & Train.
Funding secured and programmes implemented. Some complete, others in progress to end of year.
- Established Sports Linkage Groups in consultation with the County PPN. This is ongoing.
- Organised community walks as part of Operation Transformation in association with local communities across Galway. – 14 walks organised, 2052 people took part altogether across Galway.
- Increased participation in sport and physical activities, through GSP Programme Funding. Activity programmes –Women on the Water, Youth @ Risk, Senior circuits – all organised, some completed and others still in progress to end of year. See also below under HSE funded programmes, schools programmes and Disability programmes.
- Delivered Training Programmes – Safeguarding 1, 2 and 3, Activity leader, First Aid, Walking leader, Cycle Training, Disability Inclusion Training, Disability Awareness Training, Coaching Children Workshops,
- Most of our training and education programmes are now being run online due to Covid-19 restrictions.
- Delivered Disability specific programmes – boccia, walking football, learn 2 cycle, Boccia ongoing, learn to cycle programme being delivered in Presentation National school.
- Delivered walking programmes, swimming programmes, Men on the Move programmes and Couch 2 5K programmes across Galway. HSE funded programmes, - 3 Men on the Move, 4 Couch 2 5K , 8 Buggy Buddies programmes, Disability Swimming programme completed.
- Delivered the Be Active After Schools and Mile Walk programme to primary schools across Galway. All these programmes delivered and finalised.
- Arranged and facilitated meetings of GSP Steering group and relevant workgroups throughout 2020. One online meeting held, and workshops planned for remainder of the year.
- Applied to and secured funding from the DTT&S towards the delivery of events and programmes for Bike Week 2020. A total of 25 events, 11 in the county took place as part of Bike Week celebrations involving a total of 702 persons, adults and children.

- Organised and delivered physical activity programmes for older adults as part of the Bealtaine festival 2020. Printed and distributed older adults exercise leaflets around the county.

Proposals for 2021:

- Apply for and secure CORE funding from Sport Ireland to fund general operations of Galway Sports Partnership for 2021.
- Funding received from Dormant Accounts funds to deliver our Urban Outdoor Adventure Initiatives in Ballinasloe and funding for three other programmes across Galway in 2021- Youth Leadership, Volunteer training and Disability activity.
- SIDO Position will be filled and funding secured from Dormant Accounts for Sports Inclusion Disability Projects.
- Apply for, secure funding from HSE and deliver walking programmes, swimming programmes, Men on the Move programmes and Couch 2 5K programmes across Galway.
- Continue to work with the Galway Sports Partnership key stakeholders including Galway City Council and Sports Ireland to maximise the opportunities and strategic development of the Galway Sports Partnership.
- Secure funding for and oversee the implementation of Sport Ireland Programmes and other programmes in our five-year Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020, with particular emphasis on the GSP main target groups. Programmes will include, Active Leadership Workshops, Go For Life, Get Ireland Walking, Healthy Ireland Programmes, HSE Programmes, Cara Centre, Bike Week, Galway Walking Week, Men Only Rowing, Learn to Cycle, Balance Bike Programme and Visual Impairment Soccer.
- Review exiting Strategic Plan and revise as appropriate working in close collaboration with Sports Ireland
- Complete Establishment of Sports Linkage Groups through the County PPN.
- Deliver Training Programmes – Safeguarding 1, 2 and 3, Activity leader, First Aid, SAQ, Walking leader, Cycle Training, Disability Inclusion Training, Disability Awareness Training, Coaching Children Workshops, Sports Leader Award for TY students.
- Deliver revised Community Coaching programme in North Connemara and Galway city.
- Apply to and secure funding from the DTT&S towards the delivery of events and programmes for Bike Week 2021.
- Organise and deliver physical activity programmes for older adults as part of the Bealtaine festival 2021.
- Community Coaching programmes course will now be open to any participants in 2021.

Customer Service - ERCD

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- Continued to review Unit's section on website to provide up to date useful information for communities, businesses and citizens as well as support the Made in Galway and Galway Gastronomy websites.
- Implemented agreed actions in Customer Service Action Plan and Irish Language Guidelines.
- Increased engagement with the community and business sector across Social Media platforms.
- Held community consultation and engagement events in conjunction with the Public Participation Network in regard to funding schemes and programmes operated by the unit.
- Used available networks and platforms to distribute information regarding Covid-19 including the Community Response and messages regarding key services provided by the unit and wider organisation

Proposals for 2021:

- Continue to issue information to all Community & Voluntary Groups through the PPN and collate information on all available grant sources for easy access.
- Continue to update our website and provide a dedicated page for Healthy Ireland Fund to promote the countywide activities.
- Continually review engagement with stakeholders to see how services can be improved and to take into account the impact of Covid-19 on services

Library Development Programme

Indicative Activities in 2020:

2020 was a particularly challenging year for Galway Libraries, as it was for all sections of Galway County Council. While the physical library remained closed or there was limited access for much of the year, library staff engaged with the public and delivered services in new and innovative ways. 'Contact and collect' proved very successful with library patrons contacting their local library by phone or email with their requirements and collecting their items at an appointed time. Patrons who use the Mobile Library were facilitated with a book drop off service when it was not possible due to Government Restrictions for the Mobile Library to travel. Galway libraries worked with Facilities Department of Galway County Council to ensure that all buildings were fitted out in an appropriate manner and with regular cleaning regimes in place to ensure the safety of the public and staff.

- Library footfall was severely curtailed due to Covid 19. Library buildings remained closed from March to June due to Government restrictions and again from 23rd October to 1st December 2020. Galway Libraries continued to provide online services during this time and the online library use grew enormously e.g. in March 2019, 28 new users signed up for BorrowBox while in March 2020 this figure rose to 1466. In the months Jan to Aug 2020,

3,639 registered online to use our Library Services as compared to 333 online joiners for the same period last year.

- Galway Libraries mobile service delivered bags of books to those living in rural and isolated areas. This was very much welcomed by those communities and customers were very appreciative of the service.
- The City libraries worked in co-operation with Galway City partnership and COPE to deliver books to those who were cocooning.
- A call for proposals to support the provision of Sensory facilities and equipment in Public Libraries was made by the Department of Rural and Community Development in January 2020. Galway Libraries submitted a proposal and received funding of €28,698 to upgrade Sensory facilities in Galway. The proposal includes a Sensory Room based at Westside library. Ten portable sensory dens to be installed in Athenry, Ballinasloe, Ballybane, Carraroe, Clifden, Galway City, Loughrea, Oranmore, Portumna and Tuam Libraries. Collections of sensory books to be available based in a library in each Municipal District but will be available to patrons across the county to borrow. Selections of sensory toys will be available for use to individuals or groups in all branches. While COVID-19 has hampered these developments to some degree, work is progressing and it is hoped that early in 2021 all will be in place.
- Galway Libraries acquired €5,000 through a proposal to Healthy Ireland DRCD Funding 2020: Local Authority Resources Funding. This funding was used to purchase Occupancy software to control numbers entering our libraries at one time. Note: Due to Social Distancing numbers entering libraries were restricted so as to ensure the safety of patrons and staff. Digital recording material was also purchased in order to record and make social media content e.g. storytimes, craft sessions for the public to access and enjoy.
- A funding call for Library Supports for Marginalised, Socially Excluded and Disadvantaged Communities was made in July 2020. Galway Libraries applied for funding for a total of €18,081 for four projects. The projects include Touch Type Read and Spell (TTRS) a multi-sensory program for children with dyslexia. This program will be available free of charge to children across the County and City. The second project involves library brochures being translated into numerous languages and distributed to the Direct Provision Centres. The other projects included sensory supports for parents and digital innovation workshops for children.
- DRCD funding of €111,101.01 has also been secured which will see improvements made to Clifden, Spiddal and Westside Libraries.
- ISO45001 accreditation was achieved for the Library Service as part of overall accreditation process.

Library Initiatives:

Healthy Ireland @ your library:

The Department of Health has seen the potential to work with Public Libraries across Ireland, to deliver the Healthy Ireland at Your Library Programme which aims to establish libraries as a valuable source within the community for health information. The Healthy Ireland at your Library Programme addresses 6 key areas: **Healthy Childhood, Healthy Eating and Active Living, Wellbeing and Mental Health, Positive Ageing, Alcohol and Tobacco.**

- The Programme enhances current health information in Galway Libraries by providing a comprehensive collection of new books, e-books, e-audiobooks, e-magazines and online courses on health and wellbeing. The Healthy Ireland Book Stock and online resources have been complimented by a series of talks, discussions and workshops with a focus on physical health, mental health and health literacy, these are ongoing. All HI events are taking place virtually and upcoming events will include John Connell, John Sharry, Joanna Fortune, Alzheimer Society of Ireland and Pius Murray on the Benefits of Walking.
- Diabetes Ireland's online talks alone had 2581 views.
- Healthy Islands Initiative in collaboration with Croí and Galway Rural Development took place on Inishbofin in March 3rd prior to lockdown.

Work Matters:

Work Matters is a service to support (together with local partners) people seeking employment, up-skilling or developing small businesses.

- It includes dedicated, branded spaces with computers, broadband and wi-fi, printing and scanning facilities.
- Book-stock and online resources to support employment and business activities
- Expertise of library staff providing support through the relevant resources
- Events and programming on business and work-related topics.

Work Matters areas have been developed in Clifden, Portumna, Oranmore, Loughrea, Tuam, Ballinasloe and Galway City.

Right to Read:

- **Children's events** – *Spring into Storytime* was delivered online throughout the month of April.
- **Children's Book Festival** became a series of virtual events due to level 5 restrictions. A variety of author talks and readings were offered to schools for their classes to enjoy in their own time.

Creative Ireland projects in 2020 have included:

- Cruinniú na nÓg was celebrated on June 13th, facilitated by Creative Ireland. All events were online.
- Continued expansion of Galway's Great Read programme funded by Creative Ireland. 2020 featured *Eilís Dillon: Language, Landscape and Legacy* which celebrates the life and works of Galway author Eilís Dillon.
- ComicCon @ Home – a virtual Comiccon due to level 5 restrictions.
- Active participation in Galway City and Galway County Council's Creative Ireland Programmes, a five-year initiative from 2017 -2022, with direct emphasis on delivering Pillar 2 of the national programme – Enabling Creativity in Every Community.
- Events were curtailed from March onwards. All events moved to an online platform.

Improvement works:

- Building improvement works were carried out in several Branch Libraries including Clifden, Spiddal, Killimor, Galway City, Westside, Gort and Ballinasloe.
- Work progressed on the My Open Library (MOL) project which will see Ballinasloe and Oranmore operate initially.
- Leenane and Letterfrack libraries were computerised.

Proposals for 2021:

- Work will continue, based on available funding, to maintain and improve, where possible, the Library Services in Galway as per the Galway Library Development Programme 2016-2021.
- Work will continue progressing the new Galway Community/Cultural Library.
- The Healthy Ireland, Work Matters and Right to Read campaigns will continue to be rolled out across the library branch network, availing of national funding streams, with the aim of ensuring a range of service in both urban and rural branches if possible and as government restrictions allow. We will deliver on an online platform if physical events are not possible.
- Efforts to enhance the use of technology will continue, including self-service technologies, while further promotion of the online resource package will be delivered.
- The computerisation of branch libraries in the Galway service will continue, subject to staffing levels and financial resources. It is hoped that Killimor and Eyrecourt Libraries will be computerised in 2021.
- The roll out of the first 2 My Open Libraries in County Galway in Oranmore and Ballinasloe will take place in 2021. During the current pandemic MOL'S are not operational in any County but hopefully as COVID-19 is brought under control this will change.

Galway Libraries will continue to develop our events programme, engaging with individuals and communities through our branches, availing of national funding opportunities where possible, including Creative Ireland, while operating within the constraints of local funding.

Recreation, Amenity & Play Facilities/ Outdoor Leisure Operations & Water Safety

Water Safety Programme - Indicative Activities in 2020:

- The Water Safety Programme 2020 involved the recruitment of a panel of 45 trained Beachguards to provide services at 10 locations in the County [including six Blue Flag Beaches] and at 6 locations in the City as part of a Shared Service Agreement with Galway City Council.
- Induction Training for the Beachguards was held in Leisureland.
- The Service commenced on the 30th May and continued until the 13th September 2020.
- Upgrading of some equipment was undertaken as well as a hut preparation and repairs-maintenance schedule, which was agreed and delivered. A new hut was installed in Kinvara, Portumna and Loughrea, for the 2020 season.
- Following approval by Council, funding of €6,150 was advanced to the Irish Water Safety Council.

Proposals for 2021:

- Implement Water Safety Programme, subject to funding being available, on a seasonal basis including induction training.
- Promotion of the Beachguard Programme using websites, social and local media.
- Continue, subject to funding and the approval of Council, provision of a financial contribution to Irish Water Safety.
- Continue to monitor and replace the Ringbuoys.
- New hut for Spiddal Pier.

Parks, Pitches, Open Spaces and Playgrounds:

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- Rinville Park, Maree, Oranmore, managed by Galway County Council is owned jointly by Galway County Council and Galway City Council. It is a designated location on the 'Wild Atlantic Way'. It is used extensively by local residents, visitors and local organisations such as Scouting Groups.
- The Parks' Maintenance Programme continued to be delivered in partnership with local groups. The maintenance programme is co-funded by Galway City Council.
- A Concession for the provision of refreshments at Rinville Park from March to October was continued.
- Palace Grounds, Tuam - Maintenance Programme for Palace Grounds Park, Tuam was implemented in association with a Council sponsored Community Employment Scheme. In 2020, a unique identity/brand/logo was designed for the Palace Grounds Park and incorporated into interpretative signage content, in line with the Parks Strategic Landscape Management Plan. The signage will assist users' orientation within the park and enhance the identity and interpretation of the park.
- Ballinasloe – Maintenance Programme was continued in Ballinasloe town for parks and open spaces in 2020.
- The Unit provided administrative and advisory support to community groups to advance proposals for recreational facilities in their respective areas and to access available funding under programmes such as CLÁR and the Department of Children & Youth Affairs (DCYA).

Leisure Centres – Tuam and Ballinasloe

- The management and operation of Leisure Centres at Tuam and Ballinasloe was continued by Coral Leisure Ltd. following an extension of the Licence Agreement for 2020. A Liaison Committee continues to be chaired by senior staff in Corporate Services with Coral Leisure to review the ongoing implementation of the Licence Agreement.
- The impact of Covid-19 was particularly felt by the leisure sector and the significant drop in usage and income impacted on the operators' ability to continue to manage the centres within the financial terms of the licence agreement. Significant engagement took place with the operators and the Elected Members to examine the options including the potential temporary closure of the facilities. Following a series of meetings involving the Executive, Members and the operators, a report was brought to Council at the October Plenary meeting

and the Members agreed to keep the centres open and to provide additional funding in 2020. It was also agreed that the Executive would engage with Coral Leisure Ltd with a view to keeping the Leisure Centres open in 2021 and the budget as proposed includes an additional €150,000 provision to enable this. The additional provision is based on varying level of restrictions as set out in the Governments Resilience and Recovery 2020-2021: Plan for Living with COVID-19. The budget estimate allows for a mixture of levels 2, 3 and 4 at various stages of the year and a number of different scenarios were considered to assist to determine the figure to be included. It should be noted that depending on what levels of restrictions are put in place by the Government throughout the year vis a vis the basis for the estimate, as well as the human response to the pandemic, this will impact on the actual income and expenditure. The management of the leisure centres and associated costs will be kept under review as the management of the pandemic evolves in 2021 and the liaison committee will play a key role in the monitoring of same, with update reports to be brought to Council as the year progresses

- Corporate Services continue to have oversight of essential maintenance and health and safety related improvement works at both centres.

Pitches / Running Track / Leisure Centres and Swimming Areas

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- A Licence Agreement is in place with Tuam Celtic Football Club, to operate Galway County Council's All-Weather Pitches in Tuam. A Liaison Committee is established to review operation of the facility.
- Dunlo Recreational Park, Ballinasloe Running Track had to temporarily close during the year due to COVID-19 restrictions. A schedule is available on www.galway.ie indicating public times and bookings by local clubs.
- In accordance with commitments previously given under the Play Policy, assistance was provided to playgrounds through direct funding and provision of insurance. To-date, a total of 71 playgrounds have been developed in the County, under this policy. The Smoke Free Playgrounds Policy launched in 2013 was ongoing in 2020. Information on all sites are available to download in the Council's Guide to Playgrounds – 'Lets Play' available on www.galway.ie and an interactive map on the Mapzone section of the website.

Proposals for 2021:

- Parks maintenance programmes, including grass cutting, will be developed and implemented in line with available resources for Rinville Park, Oranmore, the Palace Grounds, Tuam, Dunlo Park, Ballinasloe and other amenity and open spaces, with priority afforded, within available resources, to public parks and amenity areas.
- Continue maintenance required in Rinville Park under the Woodlands Plan.
- The maintenance of Council owned and operated Playgrounds, including the repair and/or replacement of play equipment, will be undertaken in line with resources. Annual ROSPA Inspections, required as a condition of insurance cover, will also be arranged for the 15 Council owned playgrounds.

- Update the facilities of each playground on our website.
- Endeavour to continue to provide administrative and advisory support to community groups wishing to advance proposals for recreation and to access available funding insofar as staff resources allow.

Council Facilities for Local Economic & Community Benefit /Heritage/Interpretative Facilities Operations

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- Funding was provided for the operation of Athenry Heritage Centre located in St. Mary's Church in Athenry Town Centre, which is the in ownership of Galway County Council and subleased to the Development Association who oversee the management of the Centre. The Centre employs a Centre Manager and staff through various schemes. The funding contributed to promotion, events and basic upkeep of this Historic Asset, which attracts over 3,000 visitors.
- The 1691 Battle of Aughrim Visitor Centre is owned and operated by Galway County Council. Due to COVID 19, the Centre did not open for the 2020 summer season.
- The Battle of Aughrim Visitor Centre was successful in the receipt of funding under the Fáilte Ireland's 'Hidden Heartlands Website Improvement Programme'. The core objective of this grant funding was to improve the quality of online content of the Battle of Aughrim Visitor Centre, among a range of tourism providers business in Ireland's Hidden Heartlands area in line with its brand proposition. The funding support approved allowed for the development /enhancement of the Centre's website presence to inform the visitor of the significance of the Battle of Aughrim and the adjoining Battlefield and to encourage visitors to the Centre and to the area.

Proposals for 2021:

- Subject to funding, financial support will continue to be provided to support the operation of the Athenry Heritage Centre and Battle of Aughrim Visitor Centre to build their number of visitors and promote these areas as part of overall Council investments in tourism and support of the local economy.

Community Warden Service

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- Corporate Services supports the co-ordination of the Warden Service which delivers a range of services on behalf of the Council. Monthly workplans are compiled based on service needs.
- Litter Pollution/Derelict Sites Surveys were carried out, whilst regular inspections of Playgrounds, Parks, Local Authority Estates, Halting Sites, Piers, Lifebuoys, Beaches, Bottle banks etc. continued to be undertaken by the Wardens.

- The Wardens continued to assist with the operation of pay parking and the implementation of traffic management plans in a number of towns across the County.
- Environmental Enforcement including the issuing of Litter fines and notices under the Waste Management and Water Pollution Acts continued to be undertaken by the Warden Service.
- Dog Licensing inspection campaigns continued throughout the year.
- The Wardens continued to implement the provisions of the Roads Act 1993, in relation to abandoned vehicles, with vehicles identified, reported and removed as necessary throughout the year.
- The Wardens assisted with the management of access and customer services in Co Hall as part to the measures put in place as a result of Covid-19

Proposals for 2021:

- This Unit will continue to co-ordinate the allocation of functions to the Community Warden Service and review the impact of functions based on agreed service indicators.
- Work will continue on assessing how the Service can best assist in meeting the objectives and business priorities of the organisation.
- Phased replacement of the Community Wardens vans will be implemented insofar as resources and may allow.

<p>Disability Action</p>

Indicative Activities 2020:

- Continued delivery of the Disability Action Plan.
- Supported the Accessible Ballinasloe initiative to develop Ballinasloe as an accessible, inclusive environment.
- As part of the Council's Recreation & Amenity Programme, outdoor gym and fitness equipment, which includes a number of items accessible for use by wheelchair users, was installed both in Dunlo Park Ballinasloe and Castle Avenue, Portumna. This project was co-funded by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sports – Local Authority Sports Capital Programme.

Proposals for 2021:

- Support implementation of the Customer Service Action Plan to continually improve access to services for persons with a disability.
- Support improved Access for Persons with a Disability to Recreation and Amenity Facilities, subject to finance being available.

Promotion of the Irish Language

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- In early March, our annual event, ‘Lá na Gaeilge’, was organised during Seachtain na Gaeilge (1-17 March 2020), in which an opportunity was given to local members of the public, businesses, community groups and so on, who conduct their business through Irish, to showcase their work to the general public in Áras an Chontae for the day. A musical showcase was also organized during this time, in which a primary school group from County Galway performed for staff and the general public.
- Irish language classes (beginner and intermediate levels) were organised for staff of the local authority and classes were also available for Councillors who expressed an interest in same. However, due to COVID-19, these classes had to be postponed. Options for possible immersion courses for Councillors and Staff were also sought.
- Scoláireachtaí Gaeltachta Phádraig Mhic Phiarais 2020 / Pádraig Pearse Scholarships 2020 were awarded again this year by Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe in collaboration with Summer Colleges in Conamara. 12 scholarships in total were awarded to second level students in the County of Galway to attend Gaeltacht Summer Courses. The courses themselves had to be postponed, however, until 2021 due to Covid-19.
- Community Support Grants – The Irish language was specifically included as a category in the Community Support Scheme in 2020. Small scale grants totalling €8,490.00 were approved for projects by Community & Voluntary Organisations to support the promotion and increased use of the Irish language.
- Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe continued its support of the promotion of Irish in communities throughout the County through sponsorship of a Glór na nGael Award, which was presented to Craobh Mhaigh Cuilinn, Co. na Gaillimhe, in February 2020, and also by co-funding and supporting the Irish language event ‘Ard-Fheis na nÓg’ which took place in Ros Muc, Conamara in February 2020. Secondary school students from various schools around the County and Country were in attendance at the event.
- Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe continued to work in partnership with other organisations, informing them of our Language Scheme and ensure that the measures of the Scheme were implemented where such was within the Council’s control. Support and advice was provided, along with proofing services.
- Information and consultation continues to be provided to staff of Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe regarding language duties, obligations and legislation, including ensuring bilingualism on www.galway.ie / www.gaillimh.ie, in line with our language scheme.
- Mobile Simultaneous translation equipment continued to be available for Council meetings or other meetings at which translation may have been required.
- The Council continued to co-operate with An Coimisinéir Teanga, in dealing with issues raised by members of the public, regarding Irish language services and legislation.

Proposals for 2021:

- Continue to provide information to all staff of Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe regarding language duties, obligations and legislation, including information to ensure bilingualism on www.galway.ie / www.gaillimh.ie, in line with our language scheme.
- Continue to provide appropriate language awareness and language support material to staff of Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe, to enhance the provision of services through Irish.
- Continue to provide and build on the number of Irish classes/courses provided throughout the year for staff and Members of Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe, focusing in particular on conversational Irish and possible immersion courses in the Gaeltacht, based on available funding.
- Aim to continue awarding Scoláireachtaí Gaeltachta Phádraig Mhic Phiarais / Pádraig Pearse Scholarships in partnership with Irish Colleges in the county.
- Continue to promote the Irish language category for community support grants and Gradaim an Chathaoirligh, on a priority basis.
- Lead participation of Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe in activities and events for Seachtain na Gaeilge and where possible, expand on these events for March 2021.

Facilities Management – Council Properties / Health & Safety

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- Corporate Services continued to provide caretaking and facilities management services for the Council's network of offices, libraries, and civic functions.
- The Unit continued to deliver on its requirements under the Safety Management Programme in areas such as PAT testing, periodic testing of electrical installations, VDU assessments.
- Energy efficiency monitoring and management continues to be a priority focus in the facilities unit. Display Energy Certificates were completed and put on display for 18 offices and libraries which are greater than 250 sqm.
- Ongoing review of refurbishment requirement to Council office buildings took place in order to facilitate the provision of additional office and meeting room accommodation.
- The Unit continues to undertake procurement processes for a range of facilities management related contracts to ensure value for money and quality of service are maintained.
- Plans to install a new back-up electrical generator are underway in conjunction with the Fire Service Department.
- Development of Facilities Section Covid 19 Action Plan.
- A Legionella testing and where required a monitoring programme undertaken for office and library accommodation.
- New Door Access control system rolled out to County Hall.
- The Facilities Team working in cooperation with the Health & Safety Team and the Covid-19 Response Team developed and implemented measure in Council facilities to comply with public health and government guidelines and to ensure the Health, Safety & Wellbeing of staff, Members and the public

Proposals for 2021:

- Maintenance contracts will continue to be the subject of ongoing review with the aim of maintaining costs reductions achieved in recent years and we will seek to achieve further cost reductions.
- In order to operate within available budgets, it may be necessary to limit the maintenance of office and library facilities to focus on priority health and safety requirements and critical operating systems. In relation to Áras an Chontae, a significant number of management and maintenance systems are at or near end of life with an increased potential for systems failure and related response maintenance costs. As indicated in the 3 Year Capital Programme there are elements which cannot be dealt with through the revenue budget and that will require capital funding
- The provision of adequate accommodation at Áras an Chontae is proving to be an ever-increasing challenge. Occupancy demands in a number of areas in HQ are exceeding the available capacity giving rise to areas such as laboratory space, meeting rooms, training rooms, etc. being converted into office accommodation for staff. A review of the organisation's business & customer requirements for the medium to long term has to be undertaken to allow for adequate office space capacity to be available to deliver these services.
- The Unit will aim to further reduce energy consumption across its offices and libraries. Display Energy Certs will continue to be displayed to the public in offices and libraries.
- Improvement works to a number of Council facilities.

Management of Records & Archives

The Archives Section works to ensure the care, preservation, management of and access to the Council's archives. Archives are an important asset to Galway County Council assisting it meet its objective to be transparent and accountable. They are also important resources and tools for research, education and cultural tourism. They are valuable cultural heritage assets which require specific care. The Section also provides policy advice to the Council on the care and management of its records.

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- Continued to provide core archival services, in terms of access and preservation such as maintaining and updating information on Galway County Council's archival holdings through its descriptive lists and its on-line catalogue, and through various archival portals; monitored the environmental conditions of the archives and endeavoured to ensure their continued protection, preservation and management, despite storage facilities not meeting internationally acceptable preservation standards (due to resource availability).
- Provided reader services, such as answering research queries and providing advice and guidance to researchers. Physical access to collections has been severely curtailed due to Covid19 restrictions.

- Continued the programme of providing security backup and reference surrogates to collections. The availability of a significant quantity and variety of Archives collection on the [Digital Archives](#) has been an invaluable asset and benefit to the researching public throughout the year, as access to physical collections has been severely impacted by the coronavirus pandemic.
- Continued the programme of processing several small archive collections, and / or adding to existing collections¹.
- Outreach activities included liaising with the Local Government Archivists and Records Manager's (LGARM) group to research and produce '[Democracy and Change: the 1920 Local Elections in Ireland](#)', funded by the Dept. of Housing, Local Government & Heritage, and giving a talk on Galway County Council Archives collections, as part of the NUIG Spring Town Hall Talks series.
- Provided advice on records management best practice and assistance to Galway County Council Units as required, worked with various units to update in-house Retention Schedules.
- Continued the management of non-current record transfers to storage and record retrievals and returns: 891 requests were processed from January to-date (27/10/2020). There are now 129,397 entries on the ArcLink records management database.

Proposals for 2021:

- Concentrate on processing archive collections, whilst continuing to provide access and advice to researchers (subject to CoVid19 restrictions).
- Continue the programme of providing security backup and reference surrogates to collections.
- Continue to promote awareness of Galway County Council Archives' collections.
- Galway County Council will continue to avail of commercial storage for its non-current records and manage the retrieval and return of records held in off-site storage.
- Continue to liaise with and support the various Units within Galway County Council to develop, maintain and implement file classification and record retention schedules and to provide advice on records management best practice. Each Unit will be encouraged to review and update their schedules on a regular basis.
- Liaise with Corporate Services and Library Services in the quest for alternative and improved accommodation for the Archive repository and for a Record Store.

Register of Electors

Indicative Activities in 2020:

¹ Such as Galway County Development Team, 1965-1975 (CDT); Galway City & County Enterprise Board 1992-1998 (CCEB); Mack / Warren Thompson Collection, 1825-1991 (GP11); Irish Red Cross, Water Safety Trophies 1964-1963 (GS20/01); Loughrea Town Court Register (Nuisance Offences) (GS20/2); O'Brien, Joseph (Builder, Loughrea), 1850-1864 (GS20/3); Allied Irish Bank (AIB), Title Documents and Maps, 1852-1994 (GS20/04); also additional accruals to Registers of Electors collection (GC/CSO4), Piers & Harbours collection (GC/CSO/002); and Fairs & Marts (GC/CC/151/), GCC Co. Secretary's offices, administration files GC/CSO/003/019-21; and GC/CSO/2/various additional volumes

- The Register of Electors for 2020/2021 was published on the 1st February 2020 and came into force on 15th February 2020. The Register was sent to all Garda Stations, Libraries and Post Offices and Council Offices in the County.
- Dáil Elections were held in February 2020. Polling day was Saturday 8th February 2020.
- In advance of the Dáil Elections, a Supplementary Register was produced. The closing date for inclusion on the Supplementary Register was 22nd January 2020.
- The 2020 Dáil Elections brought about significant Constituency Area changes in the County. Galway County Council issued written letters to all those on the Register transferring to new Constituencies.
- Both the Election and the boundary changes created a level of additional demand on Corporate Services for the January and February periods and into March to continue updating and deal with Register queries and reports.
- The Draft Register of Electors for 2021/2022 was published on 1st November 2020. It was made available for inspection at Post Offices, Garda Stations, Libraries and the offices of Galway County Council and online at www.galway.ie.
- A public awareness campaign coinciding with the publication of the Draft Register invited electors to check their details on the register to ensure accuracy and comprehensiveness of the Register. Any person who was not included, or whose details were incorrect on the Draft Register were invited to submit a claim to Galway County Council no later than 25th November 2020.
- Claims are considered by the County Registrar at Revision Courts held in December each year.

Proposals for 2021:

- The Council will publish the Register of Electors for 2021/2022 by 1st February 2021.
- The Draft Register of Electors for 2022/2023 will be published on 1st November 2021. Following publication, it will be made available for public inspection, electors will be invited to submit claims for corrections and Revision Courts will be held in December.
- A Supplementary Register of Electors will be compiled and published within the relevant timeframes in the event of any further Election or Referendum.

<p>Corporate Planning & Support / Local Representation/ Civic Leadership</p>

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- Administrative services are provided for the Chief Executive, Cathaoirleach of the Council, Elected Members, Corporate Policy Group and Council Meetings.
- Galway County Council's Corporate Plan 2020-2024, which was adopted at the November 2019 Plenary Meeting of the Council, came into effect.

Service Delivered for Plenary Council Meetings and Members

- Preparation of Agendas for Ordinary, Special and Annual Meetings of the Plenary Council, co-ordination of Agenda Items with all Sections, facilitating the Meetings and recording the Minutes.
- Publication of the Agendas, Minutes and Agenda documentation to the Extranet.
- Facilitating Meetings of the Corporate Policy Group.
- Facilitation of Expressions of Interest for attendance at Training Events and Conferences.
- Compilation of Reports to Council in accordance with the Local Government Act for Authorisation of Attendance by Members at Training Events & Conferences.
- Arranging in-house Training in line with the agreed Galway Co. Council Training & Development Plan for the Members.
- Processing Members Travel & Subsistence Claims for attendance at Training & Conferences.
- Facilitate the submission of Summaries of Conferences attended by the Members, preparation of Report for Agenda and publishing Summaries on the Website.
- Maintaining Database of Attendances of the Members at all Meetings of the Council, including Plenary, SPC, Municipal District, JPC, Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee, Local Community Development Committee, Road Safety Together Committee.
- Facilitate the compilation of the Public Register of all Attendances and Payments of the Councillors.
- Maintenance of Ethics Register for Councillors.
- Facilitating the Members in the return of Donations Declarations
- Facilitation of Civic Receptions is supported by the Corporate Team in response to proposals of the Plenary Council – due to COVID-19 restrictions and concerns, the Civic Reception due to be held in Áras an Chontae on 23rd March 2020 was postponed.
- Progressed the use of technology to facilitate meetings during public health restrictions
- Ensured compliance with public health guidelines for the operation of Plenary Council, Municipal District and the various committee meetings

Facilitating the Joint Policing Committee

- Galway County Council operates a Joint Policing Committee (JPC) in conjunction with local Garda Síochána management. The operation of this Committee is an assigned statutory function, in accordance with Section 35(4) and 36(1) of the Garda Síochána Act 2005 and in accordance with Revised JPC Guidelines issued in 2014.
- The function of a Joint Policing Committee is set out in section 36(2) of the Garda Síochána Act, which states: *“The joint policing committee’s function is to serve as a forum for consultations, discussions and recommendations on matters affecting the policing of the local authority’s administrative area”*.
- Meetings of the JPC were held on 11th February 15th June and 14th September.

Services provided by Corporate Services for the Organisation

- Maintenance of Ethics Register for Relevant Staff.
- Support provided by Corporate Services for Receiving, Registering and Opening of Tenders for the organisation.
- A new Policy was put in place in relation to the reception, opening and recording of Tenders received electronically through the eTenders system
- Register of Chief Executive's Orders maintained, Orders Numbered by Corporate Services for each Section.
- Corporate Services continued to serve as liaison for the Office of the Ombudsman in relation to queries raised by the Office in relation to service delivery by Galway County Council. All correspondence is co-ordinated via Corporate Services, with a tracking system in place.

Proposals for 2021:

- Corporate Services will continue to support the Cathaoirleach, elected members and the organisation of Plenary Council Meetings.
- The Council will maintain Staff & Members Ethics Register and facilitate the Members in the return of Donations Statements.
- The Unit will publish details of all Payments to Elected Members, including in respect of Outside Bodies to which the Members are nominated
- The Unit will actively support the role of the Corporate Policy Group.
- The Unit will continue to facilitate the Joint Policing Committee and other meetings as necessary
- The Council will continue to comply with its statutory requirements regarding Data Protection, Freedom of Information and Access to Information on the Environment legislation and will continue to facilitate the organisation in relation to Ombudsman queries.
- Corporate Services will continue to facilitate the reception, opening and recording of Tenders received by the Council

Galway Commemorative Strategy for the Decade of Commemorations 2013 – 2023

A range of events and initiatives continued, across various Units, under the Galway Commemorative Strategy for the Decade of Commemorations 2013 – 2023.

- Further development and updating of the bi-lingual website 'Galway: Decade of Commemoration' <http://www.galwaydecadeofcommemoration.org/> continued in 2020.
- Each year Galway Public Libraries celebrates a literary figure or historical event with its county and citywide 'Galway's Great Read'. Galway Libraries are proud to celebrate, in this her centenary year, one of Galway's most prolific and extraordinarily versatile writers, Eilís Dillon. She published some 50 titles between 1948 and 1992, writing for both children and adults. Her themes are wide-ranging, from Island life on the Atlantic coast to her knowledge and love of language and folk tradition. Some of the events in the virtual programme include: an online book club, which invites one into the descriptive imagination of Dillon's work; various seminars which explore her Galway roots and place in Irish history; two new

commissions which highlight her love of art and music - a visual art piece to celebrate her life and work and a music composition in response to one of her best known and highly regarded translated works, Caoineadh Airt Uí Laoghaire; and a magical tour for children in our 'One Author, 5 Islands' along the wild Atlantic way.

- The Heritage Section commenced work on a bi-lingual publication entitled: "*The Independence Struggle in County Galway, 1916–1923: A Research Guide*" – a booklet on Jeremiah Mee and a series of short booklets on various aspects of the War of Independence as it relates to County Galway.
- The Heritage Section is developing a virtual Loughrea Memorial Conference to be held in November 2020.

Data Protection, Freedom of Information, Access to Information on the Environment, Ombudsman Queries

Data Protection

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into effect on 25th May, 2018 with the purpose of maintaining a uniform approach to Data Protection across all EU member states. The GDPR is binding in its entirety and requires the use of new privacy principles within all aspects of business operations; such as Privacy by Default, Privacy by Design, Accountability and Transparency. All staff have been afforded the opportunity to attend training sessions and briefings on the changes that the new legislation brings to Galway County Council.

The Data Protection Officer is assigned to Corporate Services and is the contact point for all Subject Access Requests in the organisation and the Office of the Data Protection Commission. All Subject Access Requests received are processed and tracked through the Data Protection Officer.

Data Protection Indicative Activities in 2020:

- Data Protection designates were appointed within each Council Business Unit in Quarter 2, 2020.
- GDPR Primer Training was rolled out to 70 key staff during Quarter 3 and 4 2020, to enable them to develop and implement a plan to achieve GDPR compliance within their business unit and across the organisation.
- Galway County Council continued to engage in the Data Protection Audit of CCTV by the Data Protection Commissioners. Each of the relevant units have fed into the process to try and address the issues raised, some of which require national interventions e.g. litter/waste management. 11 senior staff members involved in this audit process received GDPR Overview training.
- The Data Protection Staff Intranet Resources page, was launched in Quarter 3, 2020. This contains useful links and contacts with reference points for Data Protection related compliance.
- A Staff Data Protection Newsletter was developed and launched in Quarter 3, 2020 to raise awareness of Data Protection issues and the achievement of compliance across the organisation.

Proposals for 2021:

- Our main priority for 2021 is to implement a Compliance Project Plan, focusing on Data Management Principles, Data Controller Obligations, Data Subject Rights, supported by increased Awareness and Training, Policies and Procedures that creates a more transparent, secure and trusted environment for all personal data in our control.
- Acquisition and Implementation of a Privacy Engine Platform, to facilitate the management of all aspects of data protection within the organisation. The platform will not only demonstrate compliance but, in addition, deliver real business value, turning data protection and privacy into a key priority. The Platform will provide built-in online training modules that will allow the Council to create and manage training courses for all employees to ensure increased awareness and understanding while reducing risks.
- Further training on GDPR, including 'Data Breach' and 'Subject Access Request' training, will be provided to staff in 2021, which will also incorporate e-learning training.
- Finalisation of the CCTV Audit by the Data Protection Commissioners.
- Work will continue to develop the Record of Processing Activities (ROPA) in each business unit. The ROPA will be reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis by each Unit.
- Work will continue to develop Privacy Statements/Privacy Notices in each business unit.
- Provide guidance on Data Protection to business units within Galway County Council while supporting and facilitating the work of the Data Protection contacts in each business unit.

Freedom of Information / Access to Information on the Environment

Freedom of Information Officer/Access to Information on the Environment Officer is assigned to Corporate Services and is the contact point for Freedom of Information (FOI) and Access to Information on the Environment (AIE) Decision Makers & Appeals Officers in the organisation and also the Local Government Management Agency and the Office of the Information Commissioner/Office of the Commissioner for Environmental Information. All FOI & AIE Requests received are processed and tracked through Corporate Services and a Disclosure Log of FOI requests maintained.

Freedom of Information Indicative Activities in 2020:

111 requests were received up to the end of October 2020. Decisions were issued as follows:

- 42 granted, 31 part-granted, 23 refused, 8 transferred/withdrawn, 7 pending decision.

Access to Information on the Environment Indicative Activities in 2020:

9 requests were received to end October 2020. Decisions were issued as follows:

- 5 granted, 2 refused, 2 pending decision.

Corporate Services continued to serve as liaison for the **Office of the Ombudsman** in relation to queries raised by the Office in relation to service delivery by Galway County Council. All correspondence is co-ordinated via Corporate Services, with a tracking system in place.

Customer Service

Corporate Services continued to coordinate customer services activities in the Council and to liaise with the service units to assist with communication of messages and service delivery. While we continue to be challenged from a resource perspective and with the impact of Covid-19, the unit

played a key role in ensuring that the challenges faced and the new way of doing business was communicated to the public, steering activity online, by telephone and through the use of ICT as most appropriate.

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- The email address, customerservices@galwaycoco.ie and gaeilge@cocogaillimh.ie remains a central point of access to information for Staff and Customers alike. Staff are asked to submit information on projects, campaigns, events, works etc. so that the Customer Services Team are aware what events are taking place across the Council and are better informed to handle queries. The general public can also email these addresses with general queries, which are acknowledged and directed to the relevant sections as required for their attention and direct reply.
- The Customer Services Officers Group (CSOG) continued to meet over 2020. The CSOG is comprised of staff representatives from all the main service areas.
- Provided information on Council services and operations impacted by Covid-19 and how the public could be engaging with staff and services
- Customer Services continued to moderate and process Fix Your Street cases and follow up on outstanding cases with relevant sections. Fix Your Street is a national programme and is an on-line public forum where issues can be submitted by location to the relevant local authority.
- The centralised system for Public Notices continued in 2020 to enhance our Corporate Image in the Print Media, to generate savings through shared advertising space and also meet our requirements under National Procurement Framework. Advance copies of public notices prior to notices appearing in the various newspapers appear on Social Media and are sent to Elected Members with relevant contact details included.
- Customer Services is the central point of contact on behalf of Galway County Council for the new Government portal for Public Consultations.
- Customer Services continues to assist and guide staff regarding the procedures and templates for re-formatting of new application forms and updating existing forms when requested. We now have over 228 forms and memorandums in total on our register/coding system, available via our website.
- Door and car park access system continue to be maintained by Customer Services on behalf of the Building and Facilities Unit.

Customer Services Desk and Communications Centre

- The Customer Services Desk continues to be operated to provide efficient referral/query handling for customers as they enter Áras an Chontae. The phone service continues to be operated from here, with back up from the Customer Services Communications Centre on the second floor of Áras an Chontae as well.
- Corporate Services staff based in Customer Services are assigned to support the Mobile Phone Policy of the organisation and day to day administration of the account.

Communications and Social Media

- Further increased use of Social Media (Twitter & Facebook) and this is continuing to grow on a daily basis.
- Social Media has been integrated with Advertising and other Promotional Campaigns of the Council and specific attention given to the use of Social Media during severe weather events. There has been an increase in the posting of events on behalf of staff with a focus on Road Works, Water Disruptions and any other day to day events happening throughout the County. The Customer Services team participate in the 'Your Council Day' national Twitter campaign as coordinated by the LGMA.

Proposals for 2021:

- Continue to co-ordinate implementation of the Customer Service Action Plan in line with agreed targets and goals in the Quality Customer Services Strategy.
- Continue to facilitate the Customer Services Officers Group meetings, information sharing and joint actions across all sections.
- Research Customer Service Models to apply to local needs and implement benchmarking process to further develop our standards as resources allow.
- Continue to implement 'Fix Your Street' to meet agreed targets.
- Continue to maintain a central deposit and coding system for all County Council Application Forms available via the website.
- Continue to focus on the development of the County Council's use of Social Media as a source of information and an efficient communication channel for our customers.

Operation of Markets & Casual Trading and Requests for Filming in County

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- Casual Trading Licenses were issued for trading in a number of towns and villages throughout the County including: Athenry (4), Ballinasloe (7), Clifden (5), Gort (9), Loughrea (2), Mountbellew (5), Dunmore (1), Headford (1), Tuam (7); in line with Casual Trading Bye-Laws.
- Continue to promote trading where bays are vacant by contacting those on the waiting lists and continued to monitor data on Casual Trading through Community Wardens Work Plans returns.
- In addition, special events licences were processed for the Galway 2020 launch and 2020 events.
- 15 Requests from film makers etc. to use public property for filming were also processed.

Proposals for 2021:

- Continue to issue Casual Trading Licenses.
- Continue to facilitate queries and issue permissions as required to Media and Production Companies wishing to film in the County.

- Continue to co-ordinate the operation of trading at the Ballinasloe Horse Fair in October in partnership with the Ballinasloe Municipal District Office. This is contingent on public health guidelines.
- Continue to facilitate and Chair Meetings of the Ballinasloe Fair & Festival Co-ordinating Committee.

Internal Audit Activity

Internal auditing is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve the organisations operations. It helps an organisation accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance process.

The Internal Audit Unit is responsible for providing assurance to the Chief Executive of the Council on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's internal control and risk management systems.

The Internal Audit work programme is driven by the annual Internal Audit plan which is drawn up in conjunction with the Executive Team and the Audit Committee and included 8 areas for audit during 2020.

Indicative Activities in 2020:

The following 2 audits from the 2019 audit plan were completed and the audit reports were presented to the Audit Committee at the September 2020 Audit Committee meeting.

- Audit review of 2018 Housing Grants
- Audit review of 2018 Heritage/ Conservation Grants

2020 Internal Audit Programme of Work

The 2020 Internal Audit Plan contained eight areas of audit.

Audit reports have been completed for the following and listed for presentation to the Audit Committee prior to yearend.

- Analysis of the 2019 Plant & Machinery Account
- Review of the 2019 Community Enhancement Scheme

The following audits are at draft report stage:

- Recoupment Claim Procedures & Controls
- GDPR Compliance
- Review of Risk Management

An Audit Review of the 2019 SICAP Programme has commenced.

2019 Public Spending Code Quality Assurance Report to NOAC

As part of the 2019 Public Spending Code Quality Assurance Report, in depth checks were carried out on both revenue and capital projects.

- ❖ The 2018 Housing Grants programme was selected for in depth examination as part of the revenue project in depth check.
- ❖ The Gilmartin Road Social Housing Development was selected for in depth examination as part of the capital project in depth check.

The findings of the in-depth checks of both projects were included in the overall 2019 Public Spending Code Quality Assurance Report which was forwarded to The National Oversight Audit Committee (NOAC) in early June 2020 for their comment and publication.

- ❖ Periodic reviews of progress were carried out on the Local Government Auditors recommendations that were made as part of the 2019 Statutory Auditor's Report.
- ❖ Quarterly checking of the cash office receipts, and lodgements and cancelled receipts was carried out.
- ❖ Periodic checking is carried out in the Motor Tax Office headquarters in Áras an Chontae.
- ❖ Quarterly checking is carried out on both Low Value Purchase Cards and Fuel Card transactions to establish compliance with the terms of use of the cards.
- ❖ Periodic checking of prompt payment internal penalties.

Proposals for 2021

- Drafting of the 2021 Internal Audit plan for approval by the Audit Committee & Chief Executive
- Reviews of recommendations made on the 2020 Audit Reports.
- Facilitate the work of the Audit Committee /administration of meetings
- Completion of audits as per the 2021 Audit Plan.
- Compliance with the Quality Assurance requirements of the Public Spending Code.
- Continued work on policy compliance and value for money testing.
- Quarterly monitoring of purchases made using Low Value Purchase Cards and Fuel cards.
- Periodic checking in the Motor Tax and Cash Office/Prompt Payment Interest Penalties.

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- The Department provided legal services for all programme areas and Directorates, including the acquisition and sale of properties, the conduct of litigation to include District Court enforcement prosecutions, Circuit, High Court, Court of Appeal and Supreme Court Litigation, including Judicial Review. In particular, District Court Litigation (Rates, Planning Enforcement and Environmental Enforcement prosecutions) and Judicial Review were areas of significant workload in terms of overall litigation. The completion of land acquisitions and CPOs on inter-urban routes and acquisition of residential units, were also substantial areas of work for the Law Agent Unit.
- The Case Management System, which facilitates the use of templates to create workflows for the efficient and cost-effective delivery of legal services, continues to be updated and applied to existing and new work areas.
- Significant progress has been achieved in managing and updating our Register of Lands with the assistance of our partners in other units such as IS, Finance and Housing.
- A Data Protection Representative has been appointed specific to the Law Agent Department who is now working directly with the Council's Data Protection Officer.

Proposals for 2021:

- Continue in our efforts to provide efficient legal advisory services for all programme areas throughout the organisation.
- The continued completion of any residual work arising from Compulsory Acquisition on older inter-urban routes. This work is nearing completion with a number of registration applications due for completion.
- Implementation of measures to meet our requirements in terms of the new Data Protection Regulations to include Data Mapping and Risk Control. We will continue to liaise with and assist the council Data Protection Officer in this regard and a Data Protection Representative has been appointed within the Department.
- Workflows for the Case Management System will continue to be created, further enhancing work delivery and increasing overall office efficiency.
- Our aim this year is to finalise the updating of the Council's Register of Lands thus bringing an end to this specific body of work. The Register can, thereafter, be kept up to date in terms of future Council acquisitions and transfers.
- Ensure that staff attend CPD and training courses and modules, where appropriate, to keep up to date with continuing developments in Local Government Law and Office Management. This will also assist solicitor staff to achieve their annual Law Society CPD requirements.
- Implement our new systems internally for managing and dealing with GDPR and FOI requests that involve the Department.
- Continue to ensure that staff within the Law Agent Department maintain all Health & Safety requirements in our efforts to suppress the spread of Covid 19 and engage in best practices to help provide a safe working environment for all staff members

Human Resource Activity

Indicative Activities in 2020

➤ **Recruitment and Workforce Planning:**

Galway County Council's Staff Headcount at the end of Quarter 3, 2020 is as follows:

Category	Headcount
Core Staff	880
Retained Fire Fighters	113
Non-Department of Housing, LG & Heritage	73

Recruitment Activity, 2020:

The Human Resources Department ran 38 recruitment competitions up to the end of Quarter 3, 2020 which resulted in 163 appointments. Staff recruitment and re-deployment has been targeted at the priority areas of Emergency Services, Housing, Economic, Rural and Community Development with key positions including Director of Service, Chief Fire Officer, Senior Social Worker, Sports Partnership Co-Ordinator, Tenancy Sustainment Officer and Homeless Support Worker filled.

The multi-stage recruitment and selection process for the formation of a fulltime fire fighter panel was also completed in 2020.

A new Urban and Rural Regeneration Team has been established with technical staff at the grades of Senior Executive Engineer, Executive Architect, Executive Engineer, Executive Planner and 2 x Technician Grade 1 assigned.

No of Recruitment Competitions run up to the 31st of October, 2020	38
No of Staff Appointments in 2020 to date (Including Appointments, promotional appointments and Backfilling of Consequential Vacancies)	163

Staff Training and Development

Comprehensive training for staff was carried out in 2020 with the main focus on Statutory and Health & Safety Training. National Training Grants in the areas of Water Services, Environmental and Non-National Roads supported the Council in the provision of this training. Other essential training was determined in conjunction with the utilisation of the Performance Management Development System. The Council continued to support further education, IPA Local Government Programmes and the attendance of staff at Seminars and Conferences in 2020.

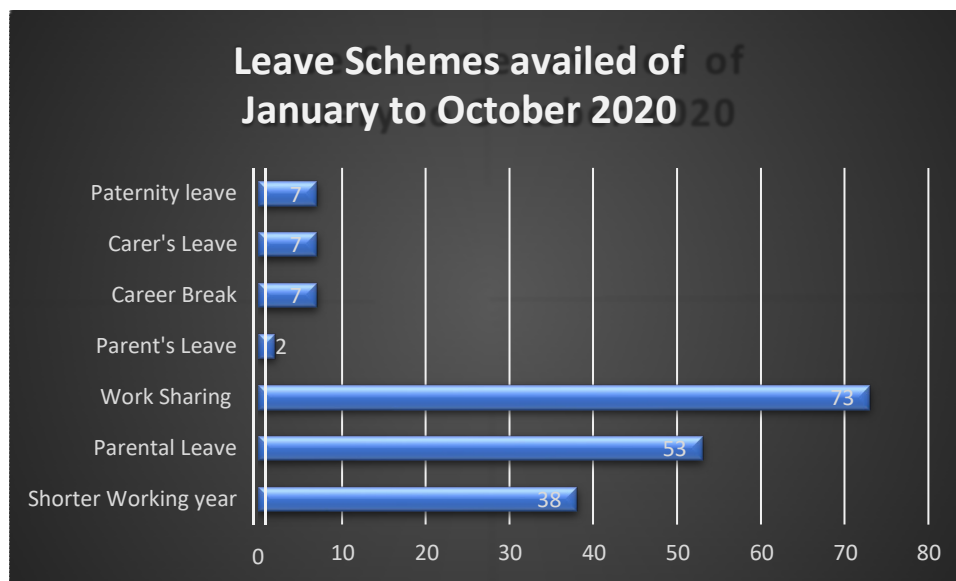
The total number of Training Days in 2020 was 1268 as set out hereunder:



Staff Welfare

Galway County Council offers a number of Family Friendly Schemes to employees and, up to the end of Quarter 3, 2020 the following number of staff have availed of the various schemes;

- Paternity Leave Scheme: 7
- Carer's Leave Scheme: 7
- Career Break: 7
- Parent's Leave Scheme: 2
- Work Sharing Scheme: 73
- Parental Leave Scheme: 53
- Shorter Working Year Scheme: 38



➤ Other services available for staff:

- **Employee Assistance Programme:** A confidential counselling and advisory service, the “Employee Assistance Programme” or “EAP” is available to all Galway County Council employees. The Employee Assistance Programme has now been extended to Elected Members of Galway County Council. Health Assured Ltd provide this service on behalf of Galway County Council.
- **Cycle to Work Scheme:** As part of the Government’s Jobs Stimulus Plan, revised conditions became effective from the 1st August 2020, this increased the allowable expenditure under the Cycle to Work Scheme. There are now two limits, depending on the type of bicycle purchased. For pedelecs or ebikes and related safety equipment the limit is €1,500. For other bicycles and related safety equipment the limit is now €1,250. Prior to the 1st August 2020 the limit for all bicycles and associated safety equipment was €1,000. 27 applications for participation in the Cycle to Work Scheme have been processed to date in 2020 for Council employees.

- **Travel Pass Scheme:** There are currently 4 staff members availing of the Tax Saver Travel Pass Scheme.
- **VDU Assessments:** 43 VDU tests have been carried out as at the end of Quarter 3 of 2020, with a further 42 assessments planned.

➤ **Retirement**

Twenty employees retired to date in 2020 and according to service records, three full-time and four part-time Fire-Fighters are due to retire in 2021.

Following the introduction of the Public Services Superannuation (Age of Retirement) Act 2018, the compulsory retirement age for most staff recruited before 1st April 2004, has increased from 65 to 70 years of age.

Staff recruited after 1st January 2013 and who are members of the Single Pension Scheme also have a compulsory retirement age of 70.

❖ **Proposals for 2021:**

- Recruit and deploy staff in an efficient and professional manner, and in accordance with Government policy and service priorities.
- Continue within the available resources to deliver training and development programmes. The 2021 Training Plan will focus on the delivery of mandatory health & safety training and certification requirements taking into account individual and organisational requirements.
- Develop, implement and communicate appropriate human resource policies in line with existing and new legislation, and in keeping with best practice.
- Support and advise Line Managers on the implementation of workplace policies.
- Promote dignity at work, diversity and equality for all employees of the Council.
- Continue to promote a climate of good industrial relations and strengthen the partnership approach to joint problem-solving in the interest of employee and customer relations.

LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE (LEO)

The County Enterprise Boards Dissolution Bill 2013 was enacted, and the County Enterprise Boards were dissolved on 14th April 2014 and replaced by Local Enterprise Offices (LEO's). On the 15th of April 2014, the LEO Galway commenced operations within the Galway County Local Authority (as lead Authority for Galway County & City) structure under a Service Level Agreement (see summary Appendix A) between the Local Authority and Enterprise Ireland.

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- Provide an excellent and effective First Stop Shop for businesses in Galway County & City
- Deliver Covid -19 supports as directed by Government. These included Business Continuity Vouchers, Trading On-line Vouchers, Microfinance loan funding support, Mentoring and advisory support and the conversion of advisory and training services to virtual to support clients during lockdown.
- Provide Brexit supports for clients (customs training, mentoring cost reduction, new market development etc.) and manage awareness events
- Increase awareness of LEO services available to businesses locally and nationally and help develop relationships between businesses and these service providers.
- Provide a suite of capability building supports and services that add value and bring benefits to business.
- Support employment creation in the county through investment in eligible businesses.
- Support economic development aimed at job creation in the county and region.
- Engage with partners at local and national level to design and deliver enterprise creation and support initiatives.

Proposals for 2021:

- Support for Brexit impacts for clients (training, mentoring, cost reduction programmes, new market development etc.)
- Continued Covid-19 business supports
- Information provision – First Stop Shop and outreach events (4)
- Business Advice, Mentoring & Networking
- Management development, Sectoral development programmes
- Training, workshops
- Funding (direct – limited eligibility, indirect – via Microfinance Ireland)
- Research and Development funding delivery to high potential sectors
- Client participation in National events
- Delivery of Bia Innovator Food hub and development of plan for client engagement on site mid 2021

Summary Targets 2021:

Jobs:	Output 2019	Target 2020
LEO Client Portfolio	280	280
Total Portfolio Employment (All Jobs, both FT & PT)	1182	1140
Gross Jobs Created (All Jobs both FT & PT)	207	175
Net Jobs Increase (All Jobs created minus all Job Losses)	119	90

Measure 1	Output 2019	Target 2020
Number of Applications Received:		
Feasibility/Priming/Business Expansion/TAME	25	29
Number of Clients Approved Funding:	25	
Feasibility: Number:	5	5
Priming: Number:	5	5
Business Expansion: Number:	2	4
TAME: Number	13	15
No. of projected potential new jobs associated with Approvals (Priming & Business Expansion)	52	67
Costs per job calculation associated with approvals (Average Cost calculated on new jobs over three years)	€10,160	€10,000

PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT and EMERGENCY SERVICES UNIT

Planning for Sustainable Development

Indicative Activities in 2020

- 1644 Planning Applications have been received to date (20th October 2020).
- 2 Pre-application consultations have been attended with An Bord Pleanála under the new regulations for housing developments over 100 units, Loughrea and Barna.
- 10 preplanning meetings for major developments have taken place to date (20th October 2020)
- 64 Exempted Development applications have been processed to date (20th October 2020)
- Commenced the process for the preparation of the County Development Plan 2022-2028 and supporting plans and strategies:
 -
 - Core Strategies,
 - Landscape Character Assessment,
 - Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy (LARS),
 - Transportation Planning Strategy,
 - Housing Need Demand Assessment,
 - Urban Design Frameworks (Garraun/ Briallhill)
 - SEA/AA/SFRA reports.
 -
- Preparation of Tenders for the various plans and strategies for the Review of the County Development Plan 2022-2028/ Ballinasloe Local Area Plan 2021-2027
- Issue paper/e book publication to commence the process of the Review of the County Development Plan 2022-2028
- Preparation of the CE report on the submission made to the Review of the county Development Plan 2022-2028
- Commenced Preparation of a number of settlement plans for inclusion in the County Development Plan 2022-2028
- Prepared and submitted a Funding application under URDF with Irish Rail as our partners for project at Garraun Oranmore
- Submissions made to National documents e.g. National Marine Planning Framework/ Draft Wind energy Guidelines
- Returns to Various Departments on various Performance Indicators/ Data relevant to the Forward Planning function.
- Provided Planning inputs into various Steering groups relevant to the County
- Arrange and manage the translation of all new policy (Draft CDP, relevant Local Area Plans) in accordance with the ScéimTeanga
- Participate in the National e-Planning initiative.
- Participate in the Town Team Initiative

- Preparation of Public Realm strategies for identified Local Area Plan towns, where resources allow
- Participated in the Planning Spatial Data Capture Pilot initiative with the Department of Planning, Housing and Local Government
- Engagement in statutory licensing events legislation with Officials in Relation to Galway 2020

Proposals 2021

- Continue the process for the preparation of the County Development Plan 2022-2028 and supporting plans and strategies:
 - Core Strategies,
 - Landscape Character Assessment,
 - Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy (LARS),
 - Transportation Planning Strategy,
 - Housing Need Demand Assessment,
 - Urban Design Frameworks
 - SEA/AA/SFRA reports.
- Preparation of the Draft County Development Plan 2022-2028
- Preparation of a Draft Local Area Plan for Ballinasloe 2021-2017
- Preparation of the SEA/SFRA/AA Reports for the Ballinasloe Local Area Plan 2021-2027
- Continue with the preparation of a number of settlement plans for inclusion in the County Development Plan 2022-2028
- Make submissions on behalf of the Council to National documents
- Make returns to Various Departments on various Performance Indicators/ Data relevant to the Forward Planning function.
- Provide Planning inputs into various Steering groups relevant to the County
- Arrange and manage the translation of all new policy (Draft CDP, relevant Local Area Plans) in accordance with the ScéimTeanga
- Participate in the National e-Planning initiative.
- Participate in the Town Team Initiative/ RRDF Teams
- Preparation of Public Realm strategies for identified Local Area Plan towns, where resources allow
- Participated in the Planning Spatial Data Capture Pilot initiative with the Department of Planning, Housing and Local Government
- Engagement in statutory licensing events legislation with Officials where appropriate
- To Implement a Vacant site register, to include a review of sites in local area plan areas.
- Preparation of a masterplan for the former Galway Airport site.

Building Control

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- 583 commencement notices have been received to 22nd October 2020, which represents a 15.3% decrease on this time last year.
- 94 completion certificates have been submitted and validated to 22nd October 2020.
- 114 inspections have been carried out by the Building Control Officer to ensure compliance with the Building Regulations to 22nd October 2020.
- 697 buildings commenced to 22nd October 2020.

Proposals for 2021:

- The Building Control Officer will continue to implement the statutory building regulations and to carry out at least the minimum level of inspections of new developments required.

Enforcement Measures

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- 290 Warning Notices/Letters served to 20th October 2020.
- 86 Enforcement Notices served to 20th October 2020.
- 26 Files have been referred for legal action to 20th October 2020.
- 283 Unauthorised development complaints received to 20th October 2020.
- 68 approx. Enforcement Files have been resolved/closed at 20th October 2020.

Proposals for 2021:

- It is proposed to continue to provide resources to the Enforcement Team to ensure the implementation of the Planning Regulations in 2020 and proactively follow up complaints and referrals in respect of unauthorised developments.
- To prioritise unfinished housing estates for enforcement action as necessary.
- Year to Date – Complaints received 2020

Heritage

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- **Geological Heritage Project:** Producing a County Geological resource for Junior Certificate students and a geological toolkit for Galway County Council staff. This project is being undertaken in partnership with the Geological Survey of Ireland and the Heritage Council. Projects to be completed by mid -November 2020.
- **Galway West of Ireland Region of Gastronomy Heritage Projects 2020** – continuing to work with local communities and organisations gathering information relating to the gastronomical heritage of the county and produce written, audio and video outputs for the website.
- **Alcock and Brown:** Have produced 2 bi-lingual workbooks for Junior and Senior Classes in Primary Schools. Workbooks to be launched virtually later in the year and to be distributed to schools in Connemara and Galway Education Centre.
- **Heritage Grant Scheme as part of Community Grants:** Assessed grants, assigned conditions to same and in the process of paying out grants.
- **Athenry Medieval Walled Town: Past and Present Booklet** – Funding sought and granted from Heritage Council to update and print this booklet. To be finalised by end of November 2020.
- **Athenry Virtual Walled Towns Day** – This family fun day was held on Sunday 16 August 2020 and the theme was ‘Learning from our Heritage’. The 39 videos, podcasts and documents showcased the wealth of the built and cultural heritage in medieval Athenry. This was delivered online on Galway Beo Facebook page and on our website <https://heritage.galwaycommunityheritage.org/content/category/topics/athenry-virtual-walled-town-day>
- **Loughrea Virtual Medieval Festival** – This online event was premiered on Galway Beo Facebook page on 23rd August and our website <https://heritage.galwaycommunityheritage.org/content/category/topics/loughrea-virtual-medieval-festival> It was developed in partnership with Loughrea Medieval Festival Committee and funded by Galway County Council and the Heritage Council. There are 41 videos, films, podcasts and documents uploaded on the website for all to enjoy and gain a greater awareness of the medieval heritage of Loughrea.
- **Loughrea Medieval Town: Past and Present Booklet** – Funding sought and granted from Heritage Council to update and print this booklet. To be finalised by end of November 2020.
- **Creative Ireland:** Part of Creative Ireland Team, working specifically on ‘The Barn Owl Project’ and “Reading the Landscape Project” as well as assisting with some bursary projects.
- **Battle of Aughrim Visitor Centre**
Working with Corporate Services Section on the development of education resources.

- **Biodiversity Project.**
 Providing advice and guidance on various aspects of biodiversity including tree planting, dealing with invasive species and pollinator plans to Tidy Towns, Community and Schools Groups throughout the county. Undertook ‘The Galway Buzz’ Project to celebrate National Biodiversity Week. Produced resources on Carrownagappul Bog. Applied for funding from NPSW to undertake produce a report on embedding best practice in Galway County Council re biodiversity and pollinators, undertook a data/resource audit of biodiversity and pollinator sources, producing decision support tools and the adoption of the All Ireland Pollinator Plan by Galway County Council.

Invasive Species Working Group.
 Working on an invasive species strategy with other sections of the Council in particular with the Roads Section, Community Wardens, Environment Section, Community Waters Office and IT. Produced an invasive species decision support tool for staff of Galway County Council.
- **Decade of Commemoration**
 Further development and updating of the bi-lingual website for the Decade of Commemoration with additional information and podcasts. Working on a bi-lingual publication entitled: “The Independence Struggle in County Galway, 1916–1923: A Research Guide”, Booklet on Jeremiah Mee and a series of short booklets on various aspects of the War of Independence as it relates to County Galway. Working on a virtual Loughrea Memorial Conference for November 2020.
- **Emigration and Diaspora Projects**
Tuke Emigration Scheme Project – continued to work with the Clifden 2012 Committee and Oughterard Heritage Group and Emigration Centre Carna on this project. Developed and produced online information relating to emigration and diaspora.
- **ICAN – Community Heritage website.**
 The Heritage Office continued to work in partnership with the Museum of County Life Castlebar and various communities throughout the county to further develop this website. Both technical and heritage training has been provided to the groups throughout the year.

Féile na gCloch Virtual 2020
 Working in partnership with Comhar Caomhain Teo and the Drystone Walling Association of Ireland, Tír Chonaill Stone Wall Fest, Stein und Wein (Austria) and Stone Carvers from USA a virtual festival was premiered on Galway Beo On Friday 18 and Saturday 19 September 2020. There are now 63 videos, films and articles relating to wall building, lettering, carving, paving, sketching and hot lime demo from all over the world included Ireland, Inis Oírr, Austria, USA, Korea, Switzerland, and Australia and are available to be seen on the website
<https://heritage.galwaycommunityheritage.org/content/category/topics/feile-na-gcloth>

The mini walling and sketching competitions were extremely successful and saw a large number of entrants from all over the world including Canada, USA, Australia and Austria

- **Galway Beo**

Established Galway Beo Project in March 2020 due to Covid19 restrictions. People were asked to send in a photograph, drawing, poem or story to help celebrate the wonderful heritage of the County of Galway. A Facebook page, interactive map, website and YouTube channel were set up. Videos were created for a number of weeks of selections of photos and paintings that were submitted. There is a huge response to this initiative. See

<https://heritage.galwaycommunityheritage.org/content/category/places/galway-beo-project> and Galway Beo Facebook page

Community Events, Conferences and Workshops

Assistance, advice, and support was also given to numerous Tidy Town, Community Heritage and schools groups in 2020 and included advice and guidance on heritage publications, development of heritage trails, oral heritage recordings, Heritage Week Events, heritage training and relevant local heritage conferences and seminars etc.

- **Digital Mapping of Graveyards in the County** – Continued to work with Galway Rural Development on mapped and memorial inscriptions will be recorded and up loaded to www.galway.ie . Also working on a new mapping system with GIS Department to incorporate the use of drones and Survey 123.

- **Ecclesiastical Heritage Publication**

Launched the Galway Ecclesiastical Heritage Publication in Loughrea Library in March.

- The **Beo Schools Project** with INSIGHT, NUIG and Galway Education Centre is ongoing. Had an online campaign seeking photos etc during the year which was/is very successful.
- Participation on Committees/teams such as the *Placenames Committee, Loughrea Heritage and Development Company*.

- **Holy Wells Audit Phase 1**

Commenced the desktop aspect of this audit in 2020.

- **Community Archaeologist Programme**

The Community Archaeologist has worked with numerous groups in the county with regards to the provision of advice and guidance with regards to their archaeological heritage and has produced several online resources. Also see <https://field-monuments.galwaycommunityheritage.org/>

- **Reading the Landscape**

Updating publication and running a 6-week online course in October and November 2020.

- **Townland Research**
Working with Galway Community Heritage, GRD, Forum Connemara, Carna Emigration Centre and Cornamona on recording and documenting townland historical research.
- The ***Golden Mile Calendar*** will be produced in December 2020 in partnership with Galway Rural Development.
- **Digital Skills Training for Heritage**
This 4 session online course is being run October and November 2020. Deals with using your phone to make a video, using YouTube, Zoom etc.

Heritage

Proposals for 2021:

- Produce further resources relating to the Geological Heritage Audit of County Galway in partnership with the Geological Survey of Ireland and the Heritage Council.
- Galway West of Ireland Region of Gastronomy Heritage Projects 2010 – continue to work with local communities and organisations gathering information relating to the gastronomical heritage of the county and produce written, audio and video outputs for the website.
- Continue to work on the Invasive Species Strategy.
- Continue with the Stories from the landscape initiative.
- The community archaeologist will work with various groups, schools and individuals in the county to increase awareness, knowledge and appreciation of the archaeological heritage of the county. He will also provide guidance and assistance on undertaking archaeological heritage-based projects to best heritage practice.
- Village/town Project to be developed in partnership with the Heritage Council.
- Hold a 6-week course that will be of benefit to those who are undertaking oral heritage projects under an Audio Recording and Interviewing Techniques Programme.
- Undertake phase 2 of an audit of the holy wells in the county.
- Undertake phase 1 of developing a suitable planting scheme in an urban area.
- Reading the Landscape Course Phase 2 - To continue to work with community groups to learn field skills and use same to upload content onto the new community heritage website. Translate and publish the updated text.
- Continue with the Biodiversity Project and continue to work in partnership with community groups, Tidy Towns Groups, Schools, NUIG, GRD etc.
- Athenry Walled Towns Day – Funding will be sought from the Walled Towns Funds of the Heritage Council and if successful a walled town Day will be held in August 2021.

- Athenry & Loughrea Walled Towns Educational Project – Funding to be sought to continue this worthwhile project.
- Athenry Town Walls Capital Works – Funding will be sought to undertake another programme of works for the Walls and an ensuing body of work will also take place if successful.
- Loughrea Medieval Festival – Seek to develop an event in partnership with Loughrea Medieval Festival Committee.
- Decade of Commemoration - Further development and updating of the bi-lingual website for the Decade of Commemoration with additional information and podcasts. Continue with the development of the Galway County Decade of Commemoration publication series. The Loughrea Remember Conference to be held in November 2020
- Print the bi-lingual publication on sources of study for the Revolutionary period for County Galway.
- ICAN – Community Heritage website. The Heritage Office will continue to work in partnership with the Museum of County Life Castlebar and various communities throughout the county to further develop this website.
- Community Events, Conferences and Workshops – Assistance, advice, and support will also be given to numerous Town and Community events in 2021 including Féile na gCloch, Heritage Week Events, heritage training and relevant local heritage conferences and seminars etc.
- Emigration and Diaspora Projects: Tuke Emigration Scheme Project – To continue to work with the Clifden 2012 Committee and Oughterard Heritage Group on this project. Further develop online information relating to emigration and diaspora.
- Digital Mapping of Graveyards in the County – To be continued with several graveyards to be mapped and memorial inscriptions will be recorded and uploaded to www.galway.ie
- The Beo Schools Project with INSIGHT, NUIG and Galway Education Centre will be ongoing.
- Participation on Committees/teams such as the Placenames Committee, Loughrea Heritage and Development Company, Creative Ireland and other such initiatives
- Roll out of the Heritage Grant Scheme as part of Community Grants.
- The Golden Mile Competition and Calendar and awards ceremony will also take place during the year.
- Continue with Townland Research and Parish/Local Area Heritage Audit
- Hold meetings and progress heritage initiatives with Galway County Heritage & Biodiversity Forum.
- Continue to develop town heritage booklets.
- Undertake the Féile na gCloch festival in Inis Oírr.
- Develop and deliver online heritage training.
- Continue with Galway Beo Project.

Conservation

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- Identified, evaluated and provided advice on structures, groups of structures areas and other features of architectural heritage significance. Provided advice to owners and occupiers of historic structures on good practice and on the availability of assistance, including financial assistance, for such conservation.
- Assessed structures on Record of Protected Structures (RPS) with a view to issuing Declarations as to works that require planning permission and provide pre-planning advice.
- Offered advice to owners /occupiers of traditionally built structures, in particular energy efficiency measures.
- Reported and advised on planning applications where architectural heritage issues arise both in Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) and with Protected Structures (individual buildings or groups of buildings) where development was proposed.
- Monitored the state of repair of structures on the Record of Protected Structures, and as necessary, made recommendations on the need for the planning authority to take enforcement action.
- Consulted with the relevant department, state agencies, voluntary and international organisations on matters of architectural conservation including Association of Architectural Conservation Officers, ICOMOS, Irish Georgian Society, and Construction Industry Federation.
- Liaised with local communities regarding Tidy Towns and community initiatives. *Paint the Town Headford* pilot project in association with Galway 2020.
- ICOMOS Ireland Baile town and village committee to promote sustainable development in pilot project in Gort. Creative Ireland funded short fil, webinar to introduce collaborative funding initiatives and energy efficiency in traditional buildings
- Historic Assets group – the internal inter disciplinary- inter departmental working group continued its work to maintain Protected Structures in the care of the local authority. The Architectural Conservation office funded professional reports and works for conservation works to Craughwell medieval bridge. (training element postponed due to restrictions) Consulted on Portumna Courthouse Part 8 application and tendering
- Participation in *Architecture at the Edge* festival of architecture with Boundaries theme- Events throughout the county
- Promote *The Walks, Loughrea*; conservation project with *Reimagine*, an initiative of Irish Architecture Foundation with funding from Creative Ireland and in association with Galway 2020 in September 2020.
- Presented Through Thinning Landscapes Loughrea in IAF webinar on Place Making

- Administered the Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS) and Historic Structures Fund (HSF) made available through Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht for Protected Structures, including the July Stimulus package funding.
- Application for Community Monuments Fund scheme from National Monuments Service
- Input into County Development Plan process re assessing Architectural Conservation Areas, and reporting on submissions.
- Processed proposals for inclusion and deletion on the Record of Protected Structures as part of annual review of the Record of Protected Structures.

Proposals for 2021:

- Continue to carry out the statutory duties of Architectural Conservation Officer as set out in Circular 5/99 or as amended.
- Propose additions to the RPS and research and propose Architectural Conservation Areas as part of County Development Plan. Liaise with owners and occupiers.
- Promote opportunities to raise awareness of the architectural heritage and its appropriate conservation and reuse through Creative Ireland, Irish Architectural Foundation, Arts Council and other funding opportunities as available.
- Promote the initiatives and funding made available by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
- Continue to promote traditional skills use and training initiatives in association with the Building Limes Forum Ireland, Construction Industry Federation and GRETB
- Continue to contribute to the Historic Assets working group and work with local communities to incorporate the historic built environment into the community life of towns and villages.
- Prepare costed project outlines and plans to be able to avail of capital funding in historic towns and ACAs and for Historic Assets in care of the local authority as it becomes available in association with Regeneration Team.
- Avail of and promote any funding initiatives available, including Built Heritage Investment Scheme Fund, Historic Structures Fund, Rural Towns and Village funding, Historic Towns Initiative, Community Monuments Fund & Creative Ireland.
- Provide advice to the local authority on architectural conservation matters; Liaise with roads re conservation of masonry stone arch bridges; Liaise with corporate services re historic assets in LA ownership; Liaise with Environment re graveyards; Liaise with local area engineers re public realm and issues arising.

Waste Management Infrastructure

Activities in 2020:

- Galway County Council ceased landfill operations at Kilconnell and completed the capping works.
- Retendered operation of Civic Amenity Sites (CAS). Incumbent operator will commence new 3-year contract at the end of the year.
- Progressed design and reports for planning application for new CAS site in South Galway. Discussions have been held with a landowner for a potential site in South Connemara.
- Tier 3 Site Investigations were carried out at historic landfill site at Shore Road – Clifden, New Inn, Gort, Tuam & Glenamaddy, funded directly by Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCA).
- Rehab Glasco continued to provide a collection service for glass and beverage cans at the County's 92 bring bank centres. The contract which will expire at the end of the year has been retendered.
- The waste collection and delivery services for Inishboffin were retendered and the incumbent operators will be awarded a new two-year term contract.
- The Council has a partnership arrangement with Athchursáil Arainn Cuideachta Gníomhaíochta Ainmnithe to operate an integrated waste management scheme for the Aran Islands.
- The Local Authority Prevention Network is ongoing. The Network is involved in identifying actions for prevention and capacity building within community, business and public sectors in relation to resource use efficiencies and areas covered include waste prevention, energy conservation, water conservation and capacity building, training and awareness.

Proposals for 2021:

- Commence aftercare operations at Kilconnell landfill. Complete snag works outstanding from capping contract.
- Apply for funding for Tier 3 investigation for another three historic landfill sites.
- Advance the development of the additional Civic Amenity Sites.
- Education awareness to continue in area of waste prevention and good environmental practices.

Environmental Monitoring and Enforcement Measures

The work programme for 2020 was carried out in accordance with government guidelines for managing Covid 19 risk. It was possible to carry out the majority of the programme as planned. The work programme for 2021 will take cognisance of the government guidelines and may be subject to change in response to changing restrictions.

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- Details of enforcement notices and warning letters which were issued and prosecutions which were initiated under environmental legislation in 2020 will be set out in the 2020 RMCEI (Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections) returns which are due for issue by the 16th of February 2021.
- The 2020 RMCEI returns will detail planned inspections carried out on regulated facilities and unplanned inspections carried out in relation to complaints received and incidents of environmental pollution. Inspections were carried out in relation to complaints, permitted waste facilities, permitted collectors, quarries, garages, various waste producer categories, discharge licences, sewage sludge facilities, farms, private wastewater treatment systems, air pollution licences, deco paints facilities and solvent registered sites.
- Joint inspections were carried out with REPAK on non-compliant businesses, under the CUWERLA pilot packaging programme.
- A number of litter 'black spots' were cleaned up, barriers and signage erected with funding provided by DCCAE under the Anti-Dumping Initiative 2020. A substantial amount of waste was removed during the Initiative which was publicised locally on Council's social media and in local newspapers.
- Bulky Goods Collections were organised in conjunction with Galway City Council and metal waste collection was organised from the Inisboffin.
- Environment Enforcement carried out Awareness Campaigns in relation to the proper use of bring bank facilities and the facilities available at Civic Amenity Sites.
- Monitoring was carried out in relation to drinking water, bathing water, rivers, lakes and landfills in accordance with legislative requirements both directly and via contracts with external laboratories. Follow-up actions were taken in response to non-compliances.
- Enforcement actions included the enforcement of 126 discharge licenses for large scale private wastewater treatment systems and the inspection of approximately 20 farms and 75 domestic wastewater treatment systems.

Environmental Monitoring And Enforcement Measures

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- Public notices were issued, and investigative monitoring was carried out as required in response to drinking water and bathing water non-compliances. Six Blue Flags and Six Green Coast plaques were awarded to bathing areas in County Galway.
- Activities which have the potential to cause air pollution such as dry cleaning, vehicle refinishing and quarries were regulated.
- The Environment Section reviewed all significant planning applications for developments other than applications for single houses. These included industrial, housing estate, energy, waste management and quarry developments. Comprehensive reviews are carried out to ensure that the proposals comply with a myriad of relevant environmental legislation and guidance documents.

Proposals for 2021

- The Council will set out all planned pro-active inspections of authorised facilities under various Environmental Legislation in the 2021 RMCEI Plan which is due for issue by February 16th, 2021. The scale of enforcement activity in 2021 will reflect the resources available for inspections and will be on a prioritised basis taking consideration of Departmental, EPA, LAWPRO and WERLA guidance.
- The Council will continue to carry out investigations and monitoring under environmental legislation, in accordance with government policy and EPA directions, and take enforcement measures as required for non-compliance with environmental legislation.
- There will be continued review of the most successful ways to deal with illegal dumping. The Waste Presentation Byelaws will be enforced, and fixed penalty notices will be issued as required.
- The Council will work with the public and other agencies, including the WFD Office, on the improvement of water quality in identified priority catchments, through public awareness and through a concentrated programme of inspections of potentially polluting sources including large scale private wastewater treatment systems, farms and domestic wastewater treatment systems.

Derelict Sites and Dangerous Structures

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- The Council continued to exercise its powers under the Derelict Sites Act 1990 and the Local Government (Sanitary Services) Act 1964, in an effort to work with the owners of neglected, ruinous and unsightly buildings and land to take remedial action. Enforcement action continued to take place where required.

Proposals for 2021:

- Sites in the county will continue to be reviewed in accordance with the Derelict Sites policy and the Dangerous Structures policy.

Burial Grounds

Activities in 2020:

- There are currently 233 burial grounds listed on The Council's burial ground register. The Council, with the participation of the many local burial ground committees, carries out works of maintenance and improvements as resources permit.
- The burial ground capital works programme continued throughout 2020. A new extension at Clarinbridge was completed, a works contract has been signed for an extension to Killimordaly burial ground, Part 8 planning has been obtained for Quansboro and a Part 8 application has been submitted for a new cemetery at Brooklodge Church.
- In conjunction with the Moycullen burial ground committee, an area and design for a columbarium wall (for internment of urns) has been developed with potential for regional use.
- The Environment section has been actively engaged with communities to identify new burial sites in Claregalway, Inverin & Lettermore.
- An annual grant is provided to committees who maintain the burial grounds in their area. A 3-tier grant was awarded to Committees in 2019 - €600, €450 or €300 with grants made to over 160 committees in 2019.

Proposals for 2021:

- The Council will advance the projects that have commenced in Killimordaly, Quansboro and Brooklodge.
- Initiate extension projects at Creagh Cemetery in Ballinasloe and Duniry.
- Progress design and planning where suitable sites become available at Claregalway, Annaghdown, Abbey, Inverin and Lettermore.
- Co-operate on the development of the Columbarium Wall at Moycullen.
- Draft new Burial Ground Bye Laws for consideration by the Council.

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- Assistant Environmental Awareness Officer is involved in promoting environmental awareness through ongoing engagement with the domestic and commercial sectors.
- Due to Covid -19 restrictions, Community awareness events have been curtailed, but social media (12,617 followers on Facebook, 15,000 on twitter), direct email contact, and networks such as the PPN network, Tidy Towns network and school network have been used to deliver information on waste management, waste prevention, food waste, home composting, household hazardous waste, energy conservation and water conservation.
- Ongoing development and dissemination of information through local media, social media, libraries, schools, voluntary groups etc.
- Ongoing involvement with Tidy Towns groups.
- Ongoing involvement in the Green Schools programme with over 90% of county schools involved. 2 new schools joined programme with 48 renewals. 3 schools won awards in Green Schools Water Awards 2020.
- Participating with and funding community based Anti-Litter initiatives.
- Support of National Spring Clean with 315 events, 600 trees distributed during National Tree Week, 14 Christmas tree recycling sites, and Reuse Month 2020. Connacht winner from Galway County in 2019.
- Anti-Litter campaign through communities, schools etc.
- Liaise with Connacht Ulster Regional Waste Management Office on delivering the Connacht-Ulster Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2021.
- Promote mywaste.ie, and myimpact App's.
- Promote environmental awareness with Community and Enterprise Unit, PPN Co-Ordinator and Heritage Officer.
- Anti - Litter Advert in local cinemas (Covid -19 restrictions permitting)
- Ongoing implementation of the LAPN / Waste Prevention Programme.
- Installation of Anti -Litter audio devices at bringbanks.
- Purchase and installation of Anti-dog fouling signage for areas where dog fouling is an issue.
- Investigate support of CUSP App - Cease Using Single-use Plastic.
- Investigate support of Voice Ireland Picker Pals programme.

Proposals for 2021:

- The Awareness campaign will continue with particular emphasis on using technology to further enhance partnerships with community, schools and voluntary groups and the continued dissemination of information to all sectors.
- Ongoing implementation of the Waste Prevention Programme.

- Continue to support national campaigns such National Spring Clean, National Tree Week, Gum Litter Taskforce campaign, Reuse Month, etc.
- Anti-Litter Awareness campaign through communities, schools, social media etc. as per the Litter Management Plan 2019-2022.
- Installation of Anti -Litter audio devices at bringbanks and other sites.
- Anti - Litter Advert in local cinemas (Covid -19 restrictions permitting)
- Support Climate Action Opportunity Fund.
- Investigate support of CUSP App- Cease Using Single-use Plastic.
- Investigate support of Voice Ireland Picker Pals programme.

Energy & Climate

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- Series of presentations delivered to members of the Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategic Policy Committee on our national and international obligations in respect of Climate Change.
- Contributions to CCMA Local Authority EV Working Group tasked with identifying the role of local authorities in the provision of EV charging infrastructure including sites and siting for such infrastructure.
- Coordinated roll-out of 5no. Home Energy Saving Kits and associated training to LA Libraries. (Ongoing)
- Engagement with SEAI regarding progression of SEAI's Sustainable Energy Communities Program targeting the development of Energy Master Plans for Communities throughout County Galway.
- Fulfilled our statutory obligations in respect of energy consumption monitoring and reporting.
- Galway County Council Climate Action Steering Group appointed to oversee the development and implementation of adaptation actions in accordance with Climate Change Adaptation Strategy.

Projections for 2021:

- Continue to develop and update Action Implementation Plans for each adaptation action to be delivered in accordance with Climate Adaptation Strategy.
- Continue to support the Atlantic Seaboard North Climate Action Regional Office in establishing an energy bureau for the region to include a dedicated resource in Galway County Council.
- Cultivate and actively participate in partnerships with enterprise, community, voluntary, 3rd level institutions & the research community to deliver on initiatives that reduce climate impact.
- Deliver and operate a Climate Change Opportunity Fund to provide not for profit organisations the chance to access funding for local climate action projects.

- Continue to meet our statutory obligations in respect of display energy certificates.
- Review our 2020 energy efficiency performance and identify projects to assist in delivering further energy efficiency in meeting new 2030 targets.
- Continue delivering initiatives to improve energy efficiency across our range of services in line with our 2020 and 2030 national targets.
- Continue to support the CCMA Local Authority EV Working Group tasked with identifying the role of local authorities in the provision of EV charging infrastructure including sites and siting for such infrastructure.

Animal Control and Welfare

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- Under the Control of Dogs Act, 2 fulltime dog wardens provide a dog control service in the county utilising 2 leased dog pound facilities (one in the west of the county and one in the east of the county). These are under veterinary supervision and operate as laid out in the councils Dog Control Policy.
- Despite Covid 19, dog licencing compliance has remained broadly in line with that of 2019. The National Dog Licencing Database, which was rolled out in 2018, has been important in maintaining licencing compliance in the county.
- 32 enforcement actions have been brought under the Control of Dogs Act (as of 01.11.20).
- Dog Waste Bag dispenser units are now installed in many of our town's villages and amenity areas. Extra Dog Fouling signage has also been procured for distribution to affected areas throughout the county.
- The Council continued to implement the Dog Breeding Establishment Act 2010 which requires the registration, and compliance with standards, of all premises coming under the definition of a 'dog breeding establishment'. 1 new breeding establishment was approved in 2020.
- The council continued to promote responsible dog ownership through the dog wardens and the Council's social media platforms.
- The Council continued to be active in providing pound facilities for impounding of horses, sheep, cattle and goats.
- Where possible, dog wardens were involved in liaising with members of the public and Gardai in assisting with dog thefts and missing dogs.
- Animal welfare cases involving dogs, cattle, sheep and horses were reviewed and referred where appropriate to the relevant Gardaí, Dept. of Agriculture and welfare groups. In February 2020 a cross agency operation involving GCC dog warden service resulted in the removal of 44 dogs from a site in an animal welfare situation.
- The Dog Warden service continue to investigate sheep kills in line with policy and liaise with An Garda Síochána where required.

- A new Garda Protocol was introduced for the Local Authority Dog Warden service when they are required to assist the Gardaí with search and arrest operations in a variety of situations. A training workshop was held in January in Tullamore in regard to the new Protocol.
- The Council veterinary service liaises with Housing in the implementation of the Control of Horses Act.

Proposals for 2021:

- Ongoing improvements to the efficiency of the Dog Control service will be implemented during the year with a view to increased compliance with dog licensing as dictated by resources available. Targeted licence checks will be carried out across the county in conjunction with the community warden service.
- Licensing & Microchipping Awareness campaigns will be conducted in an effort to combat dog theft in the county.
- In conjunction with Dogs Trust Ireland, Responsible Dog Ownership workshops will continue to be promoted in County Libraries and Primary Schools throughout the county.
- The Council will continue to support anti Dog Fouling Campaigns and the introduction of new measures to target Dog Fouling in the County.
- The Council will continue to review reported cases of animal welfare breaches, and refer to Dept. of Agriculture, Gardaí and welfare groups as required, within the capabilities of the allocated resources.
- Dog Breeding Establishments on the register will be inspected and all reports of unregistered breeding establishments will be followed up. It is a legal requirement that all establishments apply for registration.
- The Council will continue to provide and improve our pound services ensuring animal well-being for all animals that come into our care.

Food Safety

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- The council has a service contract with the FSAI under which it regulates EC approved abattoirs and meat processing plants located in the county and city of Galway, through the veterinary service.
- This service contract requires that all animals are inspected before and after slaughter, animal residue sampling and welfare checks are carried out, with detailed audits performed, thus ensuring the integrity and traceability of the farm to fork food chain in the eleven local EC approved abattoirs in the county. These premises slaughter cattle, sheep, goats, pigs and poultry and process wild game.
- The service contract also requires the supervision and regulation of fourteen EC approved meat processing plants in the city and county. This involves sampling of meat products for microbiological contamination, food additives, allergens, residues, disease surveillance, labelling compliance, traceability and food fraud. There is also a regular schedule of unannounced inspections and pre-planned audits in the premises, which themselves provide employment to more than 200 employees.
- 1 new abattoir attained the required EC standard for approval in 2020. GCC veterinary service facilitated the approval of additional activities for multiple meat businesses.
- GCC veterinary officers participated in food fraud training in 2020.
- GCC veterinary officers underwent major training in new food safety control legislation (EU) 2017/625 (OCR) which came into effect in December 2019. The OCR addresses official controls and other official activities performed to ensure the application of food and feed law, rules on animal health and welfare, plant health and plant protection products.
- The council provided ongoing training and an advisory service to existing Food Business Operators in the implementation of changing EC food legislation and the challenges posed by Brexit as well as meeting, carrying out site visits and advising start-up food businesses across the city and county.

Proposals for 2021:

- The Council will continue to fulfil official food safety controls in the county and city of Galway pending extension of the FSAI service level agreement.
- The Council will continue to liaise with the FSAI to ensure that there is sufficient budget allocation to ensure we are able to fulfil our statutory obligations in the context of public health requirements and due diligence.
- Regular Training for Food Business Operators and veterinary inspectors will continue during 2021, targeting new EC regulations introduced. There will also be an enhanced training and advisory role to businesses to meet the challenges posed by Brexit with the need for enhanced certification amongst businesses in operation with food product coming from or two the United Kingdom.

- Continued sampling programs as in 2020 directed by both the Department of Agriculture and the Marine and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland.
- Continued involvement and liaising with the statutory agencies DAFM, Teagasc, SFPA and HSE in the ongoing development of the multicentre Teagasc / GCC Food Innovation and Incubation centre proposed for Athenry, with a view to opening in 2021. The Food Hub will comprise of 3 blocks, consisting of a learning centre and timeshare kitchen production unit, a block of 8 starter units and a block of 3 larger growth units.
- Continued mentoring of meat businesses through the ongoing Covid Pandemic in partnership with the Health Safety Authority.
- Continued mentoring of existing businesses to approve new activities and open up new business opportunities.

Major Emergency Management (MEM)

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- Many of the planned activities for 2020 were curtailed and amended as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Major Emergency Development Committee (MEDC) which was established by the Council as part of the New National Framework for MEM is ongoing and continues to be chaired by Ms Eileen Ruane (Director of Services) as part of the Council's Planning, Environment & Emergency Services Directorate.
- The ME Plan and Severe Weather Sub-Plan were reviewed, and work is continuing by the committee to review the Flood Response Sub-Plan. Plans to introduce a severe weather call management system are at an advanced stage.
- The MEM West Regional Steering Group (RSG), under chair of the Local Authority currently, continues to meet in its role of co-ordinating Major Emergency Management between the eight Principal Response agencies (PRA's) -i.e. 3 Local Garda Divisions, 4 Local Authorities and HSE West, in the Galway, Mayo and Roscommon areas.
- The MEM West Regional Working Group (RWG) involving members of the Principal Emergency Services (PES's) in the West Region, i.e. Local Authority Fire Services, Local Garda Divisions and HSE National Ambulance Service, continues to operate, under the auspices of MEM West Regional Steering Group and is chaired by the Roscommon County Council until the end of 2020.
- Work on the Major Emergency Regional Co-ordination Plan including the Regional Media Plan and the Regional Evacuation Plan was ongoing in 2019 based on available National guidance.
- Significant work was completed to develop a Galway County Mortality Management Plan in response to the potential effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic
- Galway County Council Headquarters continues as the location of the Local Co-Ordination Centre (LCC) for the three Principal Response Agencies (PRA's) – Galway County Council, HSE West and Galway Garda Division - for Major Emergencies in the Galway County area. The information management (IM) facilities at LCC in County hall were upgraded in 2018 and continues in use with the installation of video conferencing facilities now complete.
- In 2019, funding from the NDFEM was approved for the purchase and installation of a stand-by (back-up) generator for County Hall to provide a redundant power source for the LCC, IS Section and other critical areas. The generator was purchased and works for the installation of same are currently in train. The generator will provide back-up power for the GCC critical infrastructure and the Galway County MEM Local Co-ordination Centre.
- It should be noted that the City Council may use City Hall as the LCC for severe weather events.

- The County/City MEM integration group was established between the PRA's in Galway City and County under the chair of a Director of Services from Galway City Council to deal with issues in the City/County area and large crowd events and continues to operate.
- Regional training is ongoing for relevant personnel in the eight PRA'S in the West region.
- Galway County Council were responsible for the procurement of two temporary mobile body storage units for the seven Local Authorities in the West & North-West MEM regions to increase capacity in these regions respectively. This is in addition to the upgraded temporary body holding container on contract and which is deployed as part of planned MEM Exercises in the West region. An activation and mobilisation protocol have been developed in conjunction with the other PRA's in the County.
- GFRS led the review of the Circle K Terminal External Emergency Plan in early 2019 including public consultation. There is further consultation ongoing in relation to proposed changes in the operation of the facility.
- A Major emergency Mortality Management exercise, involving 3 local Principal Response Agencies, the Defence Forces and the Civil Defence was held at the Raheen Woods Hotel, Athenry and Galway Airport on the 03rd July 2020. The objective of the exercise was to test the newly developed Mortality Management Plan and Major Emergency procedures.
- GFRS personnel attended a number of MEM seminars and severe weather debriefs. MEDC members also attended the MEM National Webinar on the 14th and 21st October 2020.

Proposals for 2021:

- Both local and regional personnel will receive further training and testing in their various new roles as allocated in their PRA Major Emergency Plans.
- The Major Emergency Development Committee (MEDC) established by the Council as part of the New National Framework for MEM will continue to meet on a bi-monthly basis and will continue to be chaired by Ms Eileen Ruane (Director of Services). The emphasis will be on the implementation of a new system for managing and mapping requests for assistance during severe weather events and the improvement of staff communications, including the full integration of TETRA.
- Validation and updating of the existing County Council Major Emergency Plan is envisaged to continue in 2021.
- Council personnel and GFRS personnel will continue to support Regional Steering and Regional Working Groups, local MEDC and the Galway County/City Integration Group.
- Work on the Major Emergency Regional Co-ordination Plan will continue including the Regional Media Plan and the Regional Evacuation Plan.
- Work will continue in 2021 in relation to the installation of the new stand-by generator at County Hall.
- Additional media training for Galway County Council staff, including social media use, is planned for 2020.

Fire Prevention and Education Programs

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- The Schools Fire Safety Program was continued again in primary schools in County Station Areas.
- Self-contained smoke alarms with long life batteries were procured by GFRS for 350 households and continue to be issued to households in Galway City and County for installation by community groups as in previous years. This project was completed with the assistance of the Community and Enterprise Units in both Galway City and Galway County Councils as part of the ongoing National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management (NDFEM) Programme.
- A program was run locally as part of National Fire Safety Week as in previous years including opening all Fire Stations to the public during the week for lectures and demonstrations.
- Fire safety awareness media campaigns were conducted in 2020 for National Fire Safety Week, wildfire safety, Halloween safety and a further campaign is planned for Christmas time. A number of officers conducted radio and TV interviews.
- In 2020 the Vulnerable Persons Programme continued including a Home Fire Safety Check Booklet which was launched by Sean Canney, Minister of State Community Development, Natural Resources & Digital Development on the 7th of October 2019 at Tuam Fire Station.
- An Islands Community Fire Safety initiative was rolled out in 2020 to ensure that all homes on the Islands had at least 2 smoke alarms installed. Inis Meáin and Inis Oírr are fully completed. Inis Mór is ongoing and by request, Inis Boffin has been delayed due to the pandemic.

Proposals for 2021:

- The Schools Fire Safety Programme involving local fire officers visiting 4th class in primary schools in Galway will continue in 2021 subject to the availability of financial resources.
- Self-contained smoke alarms will continue to be issued in 2021 in both the city and county from allocations received in 2020 and further alarms will be purchased in mid-2021. This will be used to complete the Islands Community Fire Safety Initiative.
- A program will be run locally again in 2021 as part of National Fire Safety Week as in previous years including opening of all Fire Stations to the public. This year we hope to include a number of fire safety seminars and demonstrations in towns.
- Fire safety awareness media campaigns will be conducted in 2021 for National Fire Safety Week, wildfire safety, Halloween safety and Christmas safety. It is hoped that the number of officers conducting radio and TV interviews will increase in 2021.

- In 2021 the Vulnerable Persons Programme will be continued in all stations including the City and the Home Fire Safety Check Booklet will continue to be promoted extensively. The programme will be linked with the pre-incident planning programme.
- In 2021 the new fire safety advertisement campaign of the fire safety messages ‘Stop Fire’ and ‘Check Your Detector’ will be installed on the fire station appliance bay doors in all stations.
- In 202 work will continue on a new GFRS website to promote fire safety awareness.

Fire Operations – Keeping Communities Safe (KCS)

A Framework for Fire Safety in Ireland

The Fire Service is subject to the same financial constraints and consequent scrutiny of expenditure as all other Local Authority services. Additional investment in Fire Services beyond that already programmed will be challenging, given the impairment of public and local government finances. The challenge, as reflected in the document “Keeping Communities Safe”, is to manage the available resources to achieve an optimal outcome for the public in terms of their individual safety, and to minimize loss and disruption to society.

Achieving the successful implementation of the main provisions in KCS will require ongoing commitment from the Fire Service, the City and County Management Teams along with the City and County Elected Representatives. Following from the report of the NDFEM External Validation Group (EVG) visits to all Fire Services in 2014 entitled “Fire Services in Ireland – Local Delivery – National Consistency”, a second round of External Validation Group visits was scheduled for the end of 2019 and throughout 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic stalled the roll-out of that External Validation Group visit, however an NDFEM Capacity Review online meeting and assessment was conducted in Sept 2020 in lieu of the EVG visit. A new draft Service Delivery Plan 2019 – 2024, a new Draft Section 26 Plan have been prepared by Fire Service Management and submitted to the Directorate of Planning, Environment and Emergency Services. It is envisaged that these plans will be presented to the Council Executive Management Team by the end of 2020 and to the SPC Planning, Environment and Emergency Services and the Plenary Council in early 2021. Work is also ongoing in relation to new Statutory and Community Fire Safety Plans.

Fire Operations – Keeping Communities Safe (KCS)

Indicative Activities in 2020 (based on 2019 data):

- There are 11 Fire Stations in the City and County (see Figure 1) located at Athenry, Ballinasloe, Clifden, Galway City, Gort, Loughrea, Mountbellew, Portumna, Tuam, Inis Mór and An Cheathru Rua. All stations are resourced with retained personnel except Galway City, which is a mix of full-time personnel on shift and retained personnel on call.
- The Council employs approximately 156 fire-fighting personnel at full complement directly in Galway Fire & Rescue Service including full time and retained fire-fighters in the City and County. This figure includes an agreement under negotiation to increase the number of retained firefighters in the City by two additional fire-fighters.
- There are also 11 supervisory and fire prevention senior fire officers, including the Chief Fire Officer (CFO), 4 civilian support personnel, a Brigade Mechanic and a Civil Defence Officer (CDO) working in the Headquarters at Galway City Fire station.
- During 2019, the Galway Fire and Rescue Service responded to a total of 1,537 emergency call outs, 974 by the County Fire Brigades and 563 by Galway City Fire Brigade in its City and County fire grounds. This represented a decrease of 12% when compared to 2018. There was a decrease of 19% in the City and 8% in the County. Figure 2 below shows the level of callouts from 2009. It can be seen that from a peak in 2010, callouts had reduced and flatlined from 2013 to 2017. There was a significant decrease in callouts in 2018 and it is expected that there will be an increase in 2020 when society returns to normal functionality. Callouts per station are shown in Figure 2 below.

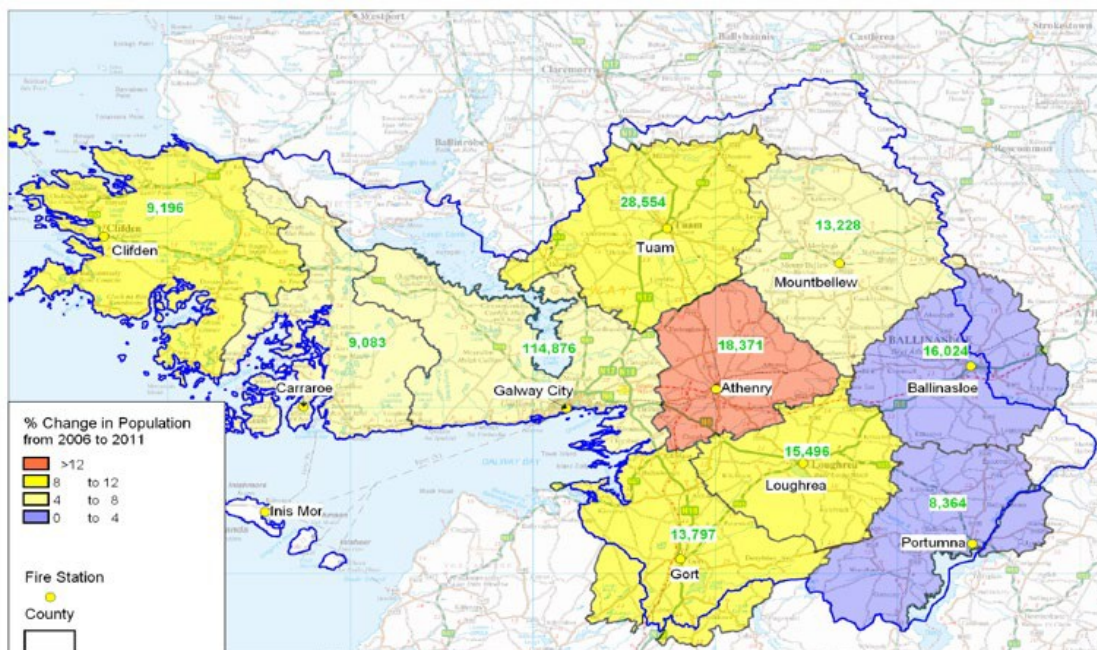


Figure 1 Current Fire Station Areas

- The average cost per head of population for providing the Fire Service in Galway City and County in 2019 was €49.40. Average response times for all incidents for first attendance vehicles in the City full-time and County retained stations were 2.16 minutes and 5.43 minutes respectively.
- The percentage attendance times at scene for fires and other incidents for City and County Fire Brigades are shown in Table 1 below. There were two fire fatalities in 2019 and unfortunately there has been one fatality in 2020 up to the end of October.
- The Council endeavoured to ensure that all its Fire and Emergency Services personnel received training as in previous years at local level. Senior and Junior Fire Officer training with the National Directorate for Fire & Emergency Management (NDFEM) also progressed. Training was carried out as per the Training Plan / Annual Training Programme for 2020 in so much as was reasonably practicable taking into the restrictions and risk associated with the pandemic. Training standards continued to convert to the QQI framework in 2020.

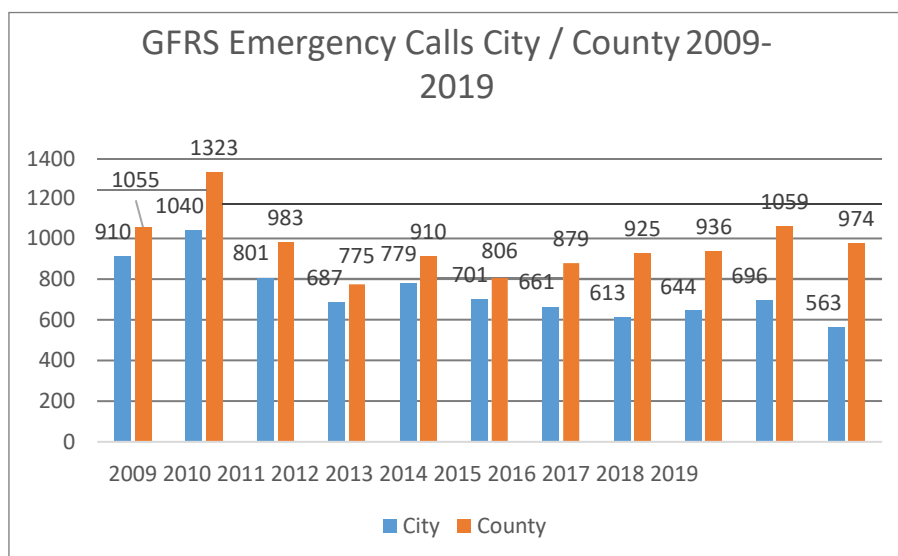
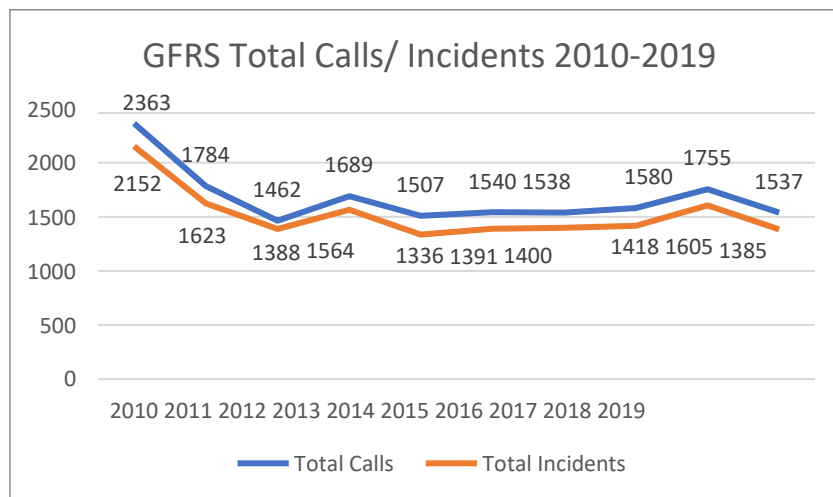


Figure 2 Call-out History 2009 - 2019

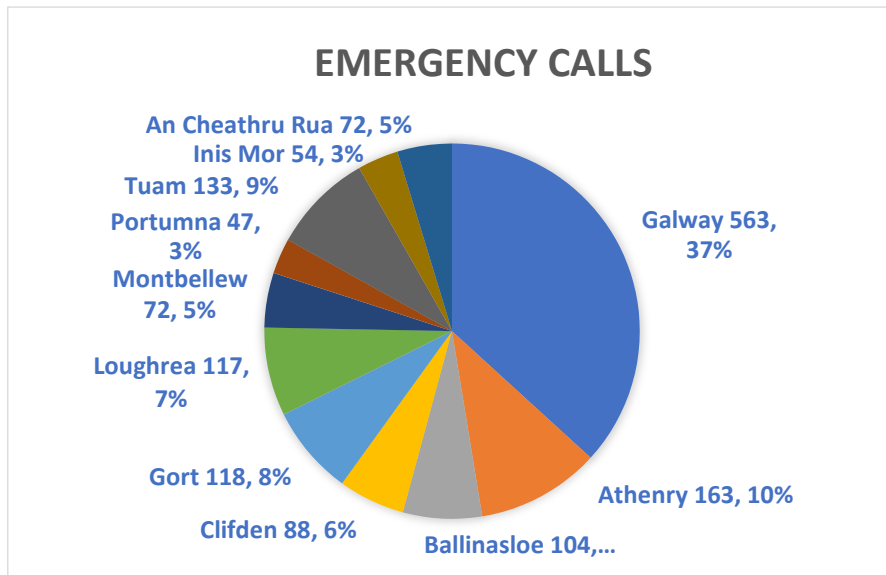


Figure 3 Breakdown of Call-outs by Station in 2019

% Attendance Time	Fires %	Other Incidents %
Less than 10 minutes	35.0	47.2
11 to 20 minutes	43.3	38.3
Greater than 20 minutes	21.7	14.5

Table 1 Percentage Attendance Times Galway City and County

- The Council intend to continue to prepare pre-incident plans for significant City and County risks, which is a statutory duty under the Fire Services Act 1981 & 2003. This work is closely allied to the new Vulnerable Persons and Community Fire Safety Programme which commenced in 2019.
- The Fire Service’s Health & Safety Steering Group continued to meet in 2019 with monthly meetings to manage and drive the Health & Safety Management Plan throughout the Fire Service and Civil Defence. The objective was to maintain its ISO 45001 accreditation achieved in October 2018 which followed the OHSAS 18001 accreditation previously achieved in December 2017. The Operational Safety Group meetings also continued monthly in 2020. The Fire Services were audited or compliance with ISO 45001 by the NSAI on 18th June 2020.

Proposals for 2021:

Operational

- The revised Fire Service Strategic Plan (2019 – 2024), the revised Fire and Operations (Section 26) Plan should be reviewed and adopted in early 2021.
- Work will continue in 2021 in preparation for the process of External Validation Group 2 by the NDFEM in order to assess the application of the National “Keeping Communities Safe” policy. This will include the finalising of additional plans including the Statutory and Community Fire Safety Plans.
- The Council will endeavour to ensure that all of its Fire and Emergency Services personnel continue to receive training as in previous years, at local level. Fire Officer / Instructor training with the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management will continue. Training will be carried out in accordance with the Annual Training Plan for 2021 subject to budgetary provisions. National SOGs will continue to form the backbone of the training plan throughout the City and County for all fire personnel in 2021. The next set of SOGs will be rolled out in 2021 and National Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs) continue to underpin generic and activity-based risk assessments as part of our Safety Management System.
- In 2021 we will continue the migration of training standards to the QQI framework in conjunction with the NDFEM.
- There was a steady rate of retirements/resignations from retained and full-time Fire Service in Galway in 2020 and there will be a significant increase in vacancies arising through 2021. Retained recruit induction will continue through LASNTG to the new QQI standard in 2020. A full-time firefighter recruitment completed in late 2020 will see a significant induction of full-time personnel in 2021. Increased recruit training will result in increased training costs in 2021.
- The emphasis on pre-incident plans will continue in 2021 in conjunction with the Vulnerable Persons Programme which will be implemented in all stations. The emphasis will continue to extend to high and medium rise buildings and those with legacy issues.
- In 2021, with the improvement in our infra-structure we hope to be able to continue to improve our mobilisation and attendance times.
- Safety will continue as a priority through 2021 with our monthly Safety Steering and Operational Safety Group meetings. GFRS will again be audited for continued ISO 45001 accreditation on a six-monthly basis.

West Regional Communications Centre (WRCC)

The Fire Authorities of Connacht and Donegal are involved with this Central call-out and communications project through the Western Regional Communications Centre (WRCC) in Castlebar, which is run by Mayo County Council as Contracting Authority. All Local Authority partners contribute to the cost of this service and costs will be increased in 2021 while the existing systems are run in tandem with the old system. All three Regional Communications Centres are currently being reviewed by the NDFEM as part of the new CTRI project.

In 2019 GFRS, along with all other Local Authority Fire Services migrated to a new National Digital Radio Service platform known as TETRA. The installation of new mobilisation and radio equipment was completed in Fire Stations and all appliances in mid-2019 as part of the ongoing CTRI project.

The change over to the TETRA will have significant financial implications for all Local Authority Fire Services from 2020 as there will be an annual fee for each TETRA device in use, payable to TETRA Ireland who have won the national digital communications project for all Emergency Services in Ireland. The revenue cost for new TETRA devices for the first year of operation in 2019 was borne by NDFEM. The cost reverted to each Local Authority Fire Service in 2020 and this represents a significant increased cost in the region of €90 k per annum.

It is understood that as WRCC migrates from a Regional to a National model, a new National funding model will be established. This might have benign implications for Local Authority budgets from 2020 onwards.

Regional Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Project

Galway County Council is the Contracting Authority for the roll out of the CISM system to the six Fire Authorities of Connacht and Donegal. Provision is being made in 2020 budgets to continue this project, with Galway County Council again acting as the Contracting Authority. A contract for the period 2017-2020 in the West region was awarded to Inspire Wellbeing from Northern Ireland. The option of renewing the contract for another year was availed of by all contracting authorities with a new tender competition will be conducted in 2021 for the period 2021-2024.

Fire Safety / Fire Prevention

Indicative Activities - (based on 2019 data):

- In 2019, the Fire Service Fire Prevention Section carried out 309 inspections of premises as part of its fire prevention function up from 241 in 2018, under the Fire Services Act (FSA) 1981 & 2003, Licensing Acts, Planning Acts and the Dangerous Substances Act. Inspections were also carried out in relation to the issue of Fire Safety Certificates (FSC's) under the Building Control Act 1990 (as amended). Thus far and to the end of October 2019 the Fire Prevention Section has conducted a total of 325 inspections.
- In 2019 the Fire Prevention Section dealt with 204 public licence applications.
- The Fire Prevention Section dealt with 306 Fire Safety Certificate (FSC) Applications of all types in 2019 under Building Control Regulations, the overall number of Fire Safety Certificate applications represents an increase of 7% from 2018. Fire Safety Certificate

activity from 2008 to 2019 is shown in Figure 4 below. The increasing number of FSC applications received in 2019 reflects an increase in construction activity within the County and City and that levels are returning to boom year levels with increasing size and complexity of commercial construction being proposed for development.

- Thus far to the end of October 2020, the Fire Prevention Section have received and dealt with 242 Fire Safety Certificate (FSC) Applications of all types confirming the continuing increase in applications. There was one fire prevention officer vacancy for most of 2019 which has now been filled. Additional fire prevention officers will be required in the short-term to comply with our statutory requirements given the increasing workload.
- The Fire Prevention Section processed 111 Disability Access Certificate (DAC) applications in 2019 an increase of 8% from 2018. Disability Access Certificate activity from 2010 to 2019 is shown in Figure 5 below. Thus far and to the end of October 2020, the Fire Prevention Section have received and dealt with 71 Disability Access Certificate (DAC) Applications under Building Control Regulations.

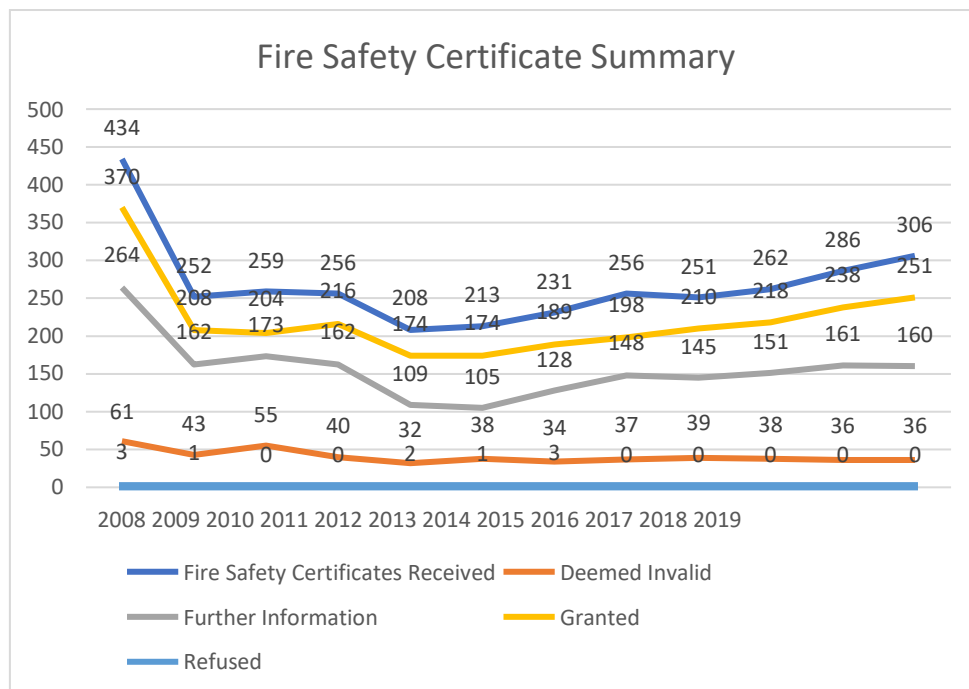


Figure 4 Fire Safety Certificate (FSC) Activity 2008- 2019

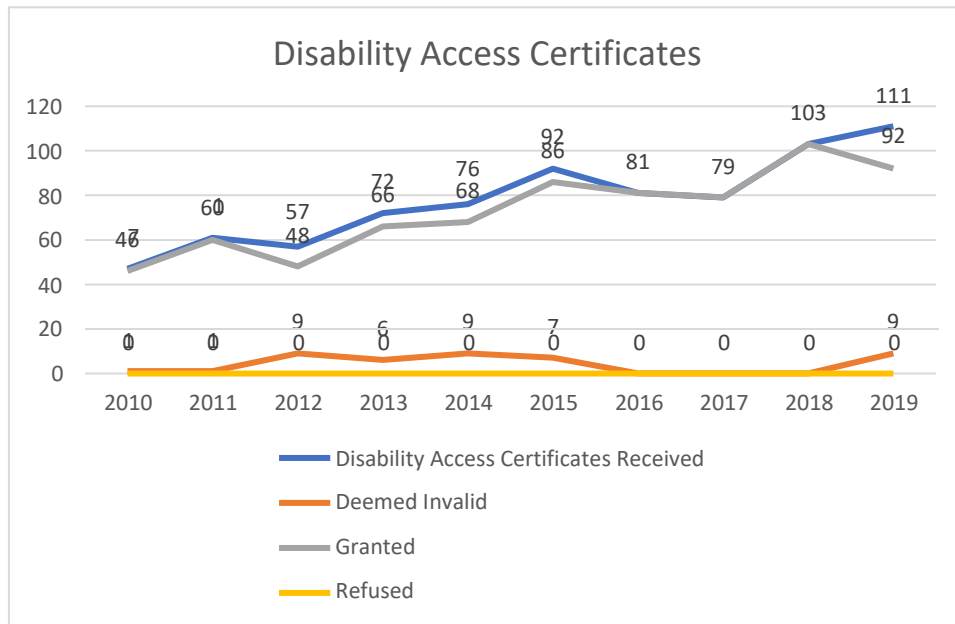


Figure 5 Disability Access Certificate Activity 2010-2019

Proposals for 2021:

- The Fire Prevention Section will continue to process all FSC type applications on behalf of the County and City Councils and DAC applications on behalf of the County Council.
- The Fire Prevention Section will continue to process licence applications and planning referrals as received.
- The Fire Prevention Section will continue their programme of inspections of retail petroleum stores in the City and County. They will also continue to process DSA licences of retail petroleum stores in the City and County as received. It should be noted that proposed new regulations in this area will significantly increase the workload of this Section and additional resources will be required going forward.
- The Fire Prevention Section will continue their programme of fire safety inspections with particular emphasis on nursing homes, care facilities, hostels and hotels in the City and County. Emphasis will also be placed on medium / high rise buildings and those with legacy issues.
- The Fire Prevention Section will continue to carry out inspections in the City and County on foot of complaints on a prioritized basis. Enforcement action will be taken as necessary and required.

Galway Civil Defence

Indicative Activities in 2020:

- Galway Civil Defence, through their 5 training centres, Galway City, Oranmore, Loughrea, Ballinasloe and Clonberne had a busy early part of 2020. Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 pandemic meetings and training had to be suspended in line with public guidance. Only essential recertification has taken place. Central training at the Civil Defence College was also suspended.
- Members provided ambulance and medical cover for the opening ceremonies for Galway 2020 in Clifden, Spiddal, Tuam, Ballinasloe, Portumna and Athenry. The main event in Galway City was cancelled due to Storm Ciara.
- Galway Civil Defence were tasked to the HSE to assist the National Ambulance Service and Community Healthcare West Depts. in the Covid-19 pandemic. Civil Defence members transported Covid-19 swab samples to the National Virus Reference Laboratory in Dublin and Enfer Laboratory in Nass for Community Healthcare West and for the National Ambulance Service. This task started in late March and continued until early June 2020.
- Members assisted the Irish Blood Transfusion Service at their clinics held in Galway city and county.
- A new e-learning site has been developed for volunteers. All modules and training materials can be accessed on this site.
- A programme of training in Cardiac First Response, First Aid Responder, Emergency First Response is currently ongoing via our new e-learning site through 2020 and 2021.
- All Cardiac First Responder, First Aid Responder and Emergency First Responder Instructors have recertified in 2020. Instructors are now valid until 2022.
- 1 additional MEM Information Manager was trained in 2020. This course was hosted by the Civil Defence College.
- 2 4x4 off road training courses were hosted by Terrafirma in February 2020, for our drivers to prepare for severe weather response. This increases our available pool of drivers.
- 1 additional 4x4 Ford Ranger was allocated in June 2020 to Galway by the Dept. of Defence, Civil Defence Branch with funding from the Dormant Accounts Fund.
- All units will again be responding to their community's requests for assistance at local community events, providing first aid cover and other assistance that may be requested where possible.
- 3 Floodwater Responder Instructors were recertified by Rescue-3 UK in February 2020. Galway was selected as the venue for recertification of the Instructors nationally.
- Participated in Galway County Council and Galway City Council Community Forum and carried out tasks for vulnerable persons identified in the forum groups.
- Covid -19 Induction training for all members as with County Council policy.

Proposals for 2021:

- Focus on training for 2021 will centre in developing the Search Management capability and Swift Water Rescue training with members partaking in recertification training and initial training in 2021 under the Rescue 3 programme.
- Further development of our e-learning site for members.
- Work in the West of the County in 2021 to expand the scope of operations and to provide a Civil Defence presence to the Connemara area.
- To partake in Re-certification training in line with the Civil Defence College programme for 2021.
- All clinical levels of responders will continue to develop their skills throughout the training year.
- Continuous liaison with the PRA's to develop and promote Civil Defence as a support organisation.
- Additional CISM Peer to Peer Support training to be availed from the Civil Defence Branch training programme in 2021
- Continuation for all members to complete the Tusla 'Children First' e-learning course.
- New members are always welcome from their community and training will be provided to all members of the highest standard by our instructor core.
- Support the LA's with the 2021 programme where possible.

3 YEAR CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2020 – 2022

ECONOMIC, RURAL & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CORPORATE SERVICES

Regeneration, Recreation and Amenity Development

The appointment of the Regeneration Team in 2020 has added capacity for the Council to engage in more ambitious projects to drive the regeneration of our main towns through the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) under Project Ireland 2040. RRDF seeks to provide funding to support rural renewal, strengthen and build resilience in rural communities and to assist the regeneration of towns and villages with a population of less than 10,000. The fund along with other funding interventions delivered through the Rural Development Investment Programme, such as Town & Village Renewal, CLÁR and the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme contribute to the sustainable development of the County and provide an opportunity to provide much needed investment while also supporting the development of key strategic pieces of works.

Galway County Council has been very successful securing funding from competitive calls as outlined in the Chief Executive's report with the budget. The Capital investments over the next three years will focus on completion of projects approved for funding under concurrent rounds of the Rural Regeneration & Development Fund and investment in recreation and amenity development including through support provided through the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme and other national sources. The budget noted below relates to projects and match funding requirements for current schemes approved to date. It is expected that the projects at various stages of progression will secure approval for national funding under Project Ireland 2040 as well as other sources and that the continued investment in our towns, villages and communities will require significant additional funding from the capital account.

Athenry RRDF

The funding approved under Cat 1 & Cat 2 RRDF for Athenry is €3,554,000. The Allocation has been made to Athenry Town and the BIA Innovator Campus. These projects will provide significant regeneration of Athenry Town and the wider region which will benefit from the BIA Innovator Campus which will support the Agri-Food, Hospitality and Food Sectors in particular. There are a number of elements which have been funded to assist regenerate and revitalise the town centre and these include:

- Cross Street Upgrade
- Conservation works to Athenry Town Walls/North Gate
- Wayfinding & Interpretation Plan
- Town Park Enhancement
- Shopfronts Enhancement
- Market Square redesign

Clifden RRDF

The funding approved under Category 2 RRDF for Clifden is €792,029 with a match funding requirement of €264,010. The project comprises of enhancing and revitalising the Clifden Public Realm, redesigning the Clifden Harbour Park and public realm interventions along Beach Road Quay as well as the development of a remote working hub. The works will build on existing projects such as the Greenway and other investments made by the Council and other bodies and will support the development of Clifden as a major tourism hub in Connemara and along the Wild Atlantic Way.

Loughrea RRDF

The funding approved under Category 1 RRDF for Loughrea is €1,628,879 with a match funding requirement of €542,960. The project will assist with the revitalisation of Loughrea by bringing back into use the Loughrea Town Hall which has been out of use and in bad condition for an extended period. Consultants have been appointed and working with the regeneration team they will oversee works to the Town Hall which will bring it back into use as multi-purpose space for culture, community and enterprise uses. The funding also enables some public realm works at Barracks Street.

Portumna RRDF

The funding approved under RRDF for Portumna is €1,192,855 with a match funding requirement of €397,618. The project includes the renovation of the Old Courthouse, public realm interventions, the design of a sculpture/public art park & trail, wayfinding and interpretation as well as the regeneration plans for the town centre. The projects sit within the Portumna 2030 vision working other state agencies who are stakeholders and significant landowners in the town. The coordinated interventions will help revitalise Portumna and to make it a major tourism hub in Irelands Hidden Heartlands.

Tuam

The funding approved under RRDF for Tuam is €175,000 with a match funding of €43,750 from Galway County Council. The funding includes the preparation of a Town Centre Regeneration Masterplan, with identified projects which will progressed in order to revitalise the town. The Masterplan will guide the rich streetscape of Tuam, potential areas for redevelopment including the Station Quarter and will guide future regeneration for the town and bringing a number of priority projects which will be progressed over the coming years. The preparation of a business plan for Tuam Town Hall as a multi-use space including potential for cultural/exhibition space and shared enterprise offices will also be completed under the funding approved.

Recreation & Amenity

The Council will continue to invest in recreation and amenity facilities in the county including the continued upgrade and development of playgrounds, walking routes and amenity development. Developments will be progressed on a cross organisational basis as well as in partnership with communities and other stakeholders with the support of local funding and national schemes such as ORIS and funding available through the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

Some of the projects currently being progressed include:

- Lough Derg/Portumna Walking and Cycling Facilities
- Clarinbridge Cowpark Amenity Development
- Cappaghhoosh Trail
- Playground upgrades

The Council will continue to develop major projects such as the Greenways and to develop projects of scale that support tourism as well as smaller projects that assist to build sustainable communities and add to quality of life.

Corporate Services, Facilities Management & Energy Efficiency Investments

In addition to Revenue Maintenance and Health and Safety Programme, the management of County Hall, the regional offices and library network and headquarters requires capital investment to sustain these assets and ensure conversation to a more energy efficient property portfolio over time.

County Hall which is now open over 20 years requires investment in the fabric of the building including works to provide additional office space, essential works to the windows, disability access, upgrading of access doors, energy efficiency works and health and safety works to the boundary wall at Bothar na mBan.

In addition to County Hall it is intended to progress a number of projects other projects over the period 2021-2023, subject to funding, including grant funding for energy efficiency works and funding under the Department of Rural and Community Development Public Libraries Small Scale Capital Works Programme. Works on historic assets will continue to be included under RRDF and other funding applications where possible, however some works required for Health & Safety and/or essential conservation purposes may need to be carried out with funding from the capital account.

Housing

The delivery of housing under Rebuilding Ireland 2016 – 2021 will remain a key priority for the Council with a focus on providing high quality homes and building sustainable communities. The Council remains committed to utilising all available capital funding streams to maximise the delivery of housing including construction, acquisitions, turnkey developments, Part V and Buy and Renew. The Council will also actively support Approved Housing Bodies in availing of the Capital Assistance Scheme to deliver housing. The Council will also seek to add to its existing land bank over the coming years in order to continue the construction of housing units into the future.

All project proposals are subject to Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government funding and specific stage and statutory approvals by project and are dependent on the availability of co-funding where required.

Description	2021	2022	2023
Main Construction (including Traveller Accommodation Programme)	€62M	€54M	€55M
Acquisition Programme (including Part V's)	€9M	€8.5M	€7 M
Capital Assistance Scheme	€10M	€3M	€1.5M

The Council will continue to actively engage with the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government in relation to additional proposals for construction projects to be delivered under Rebuilding Ireland. A large construction/build programme will be delivered in 2020 and the expenditure profile reflects this. The focus will shift in 2021 away from acquisitions and towards construction due to the Council's strong build programme, although Part V acquisitions are expected to continue, as a minimum, at present levels. As a result of increased activity in the construction sector the Housing Unit's engagement with developers in relation to Part V has increased. The grant of planning permission for Strategic Housing Developments in the county is expected to deliver Part V units on a larger scale than heretofore.

The Housing Unit is progressing several other capital schemes through design and planning which have the capacity to deliver units in 2021 and 2022.

The extent of the direct build programme from 2021 onwards will be influenced by the availability of land for Council own-build projects. The Housing Unit will seek to maintain and increase the level of delivery of construction for 2021 and future years. A strong build programme will reduce the requirement for acquisitions other than through the Part V mechanism.

The Council sought additional funding at various stages during 2020 to complete additional traveller accommodation improvement works and was successful in obtaining same. The Housing Unit will maintain focus on the delivery of traveller accommodation improvement works, including the completion of the Craughwell Group Housing Scheme – due to finish in early 2021. The Unit will continue to submit funding proposals in 2021 to complete improvement works to traveller accommodation.

House Purchase Loans:

Loans up to the approved limit of the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government will be issued to eligible purchasers under the various loan schemes operated by the Council. Funding is sourced by way of borrowing, the debt servicing of which is met by repayments from loanees.

Capital Investment in Local Authority Housing Stock

Description	2021	2022	2023
Energy Efficiency, Voids Retrofitting and Preventative Maintenance Programme	€6M	€5M	€5M
Derelict House Programme –	€2M	€2M	€1M

A significant capital investment programme is required for existing local authority housing stock to achieve compliance with minimum standards, co-fund energy efficiency works and the return of voids housing units and to deliver a preventative maintenance programme.

Provision has been made for works under the Energy Efficiency Retrofit Programme (EERP) to be carried out on our occupied stock. A pilot programme has commenced with the DEEP Energy Retrofit of 72 houses under the Midland Energy Efficiency Retrofit programme in the East of the County. This is particularly relevant in the context of the growing awareness of climate change, and reduction in dependency on fossil fuels. It is anticipated that co-funding will be available to expand this programme across the county for a number of years to come.

Funding has been provided via a loan facility for a Planned Maintenance Programme for existing stock to achieve compliance with statutory requirements, including minimum standards. The survey of the Council's Housing stock is almost complete. A pilot project has been completed on 54 houses in the Connemara Municipal District to complete electrical works and heating system repairs. Following the successful completion of this pilot project, works have commenced on rolling this out countywide with a project Lot per Municipal District. The remaining 450 houses in the Connemara Area have already been tendered in 2020 and the remaining district will be contracted in 2021.

Also, under the Planned Maintenance Programme remediation work have been carried out to 12 no. septic tanks and single dwelling wastewater treatment systems. This will be expanded in 2021 whereby it is anticipated that 30 more systems will be upgraded.

Another project under the Planned Maintenance Programme saw Radon remediation works carried out to 31 dwellings identified following Radon surveys. It is proposed to carry out the final Radon Survey to all dwellings in the Low incidence areas with a remediation programme to follow if necessary.

In addition, project proposals for the rebuilding/refurbishment of derelict housing stock will be advanced subject to approvals and funding from the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government. A contract was awarded in November 2019 for the design and planning work involved in bringing 9 no. derelict units back into operation under the Council's capital programme. This work will continue into 2021 with units expected to be delivered in 2021. In addition to this 5 no. derelict properties have been designed in-house for substantial refurbishment. Following a successful tender process, two have commenced works in 2020 with the remaining three to commence on site in early 2021. All 5 will be available for occupation in 2021.

Infrastructure and Transportation

Capital projects relating, to Roads, Piers and Harbours, Flood Mitigation schemes, Plant Acquisition and Smarter Travel (Greenway) are detailed below.

The completion of the following projects is subject to the appropriate departmental sanctions, the availability of the necessary funding and compliance with all appropriate legislative and regulatory provisions.

NATIONAL ROADS

In addition to works on Major Inter Urban routes, a full programme of Pavement and Minor Improvements Works, Safety Measures and Bridge Improvement Works shall continue to be undertaken on the National Primary and National Secondary Road Network. This Programme is dependent on annual allocations from Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and as such the programme of works shall be presented to the Council on an annual basis in the context of the Annual Roads Programme.

Project:	Status:
N6 Galway City Ring Road	N6 Galway City Ring Road – An Bord Pleanála commenced an Oral Hearing on the 18 th February 2020 which was halted due to Covid 19 restrictions in mid-March. The hearing re-commenced with remote access for participants on the 12 th October 2020 to conclude on the 4 th November 2020.
N59 Maam Cross to Oughterard	N59 Maam Cross to Oughterard has been granted planning permission and is being advanced in two phases. Phase 1 - Maam Cross to Bunnakill - Following the tender process, a contractor was selected on this 5km section and works commenced in January 2020. Phase 2 - Bunnakill to Claremount is the subject of ongoing discussions and communications with NPWS. A method statement has been agreed with the NPWS for an advance fencing contract from Bunnakill to Claremount. Tenders were sought in relation to fencing works for the Bunnakill to Claremount section and a preferred tender was nominated in Q1 2020. It is intended to commence fencing works in Q4 2020. Progression of land acquisition on the scheme as a whole Maam Cross - Claremount continues.
N59 Maigh Cuilinn Bypass	Contract Documents have been prepared by consultants for the N59 Maigh Cuilinn ByPass. Land acquisition is ongoing. The two-stage tender process for the main works contract will commence in 2020.
N63 Annagh Hill to Abbeyknockmoy	Substantially complete

N67 Kinvara to Ballinderreen	Phase 2 – Construction works on the N67 Ballinderreen to Kinvara Road Realignment continued throughout the course of 2020 and are well advanced.
N63 Liss to Abbey realignment	Scheme progressed through Phases 2 and 3 of TII Project Management Guidelines
N17 Milltown Gortnagunnard	Preliminary Design complete. It is intended to advance to Planning Statutory Processes in 2021.
N83 Claregalway Traffic Calming	Land acquisition is underway. Construction to commence in 2021
N83 Carrowmunniagh	Construction to commence in early 2021
N84 Shrulle to Headford	Project Design Stage completion 2019
Athenry Ring Road	Land acquisition is continuing, and topographical surveys are being undertaken. Subject to land acquisition it is hoped to commence construction in Q4 2021

The advancement of the above projects is dependent on the availability of funding and where required the availability of the necessary internal resources to advance the projects.

PLANT ACQUISITION / RENEWAL and WINTER MAINTENANCE PROGRAMMES –

Project:	Status:
Review of Fleet and Machinery Yard Operations	<p>Significant investment required to replace aging fleet, full comprehensive review required to determine course of action. A considerable amount of work was completed in 2020 on this project. However, it was suspended due to staff shortages. It is intended that this review will be completed Q1 2021. While the report is being completed it is intended that two trucks and a backhoe excavator will be purchased.</p> <p>Approximately 15 vehicles which are off the road will be auctioned in November 2020</p>

FLOOD RELIEF/MITIGATION SCHEMES –

The Council will continue to work with the Office of Public Works (OPW) through the Joint Working Group and Steering Group and other stakeholders to advance appropriate flood relief/mitigation schemes in compliance with all appropriate legislative and regulatory provisions and within the limits of available resources.

Project:	Status:
Dunkellin/Aggard Flood Relief Scheme	The scheme is now operational. Minor channel works on Aggard Stream and some accommodation works to be finalised Q1 2021.
South Galway (Gort Lowlands) Flood Relief Scheme	Feasibility and Options Reports for the South Galway/Gort Lowlands scheme will be published in 2020. Public consultation will be undertaken on the Options over the Christmas 2020 period. An EIAR will be undertaken in 2021 with Public Exhibition scheduled for Q3 2021.
Ballinasloe Flood Relief Scheme	Engineering Consultants (ARUP) were appointed in October 2019. Environmental Consultants (Ryan Hanley) appointed in Q4 2019. Scheme development and design is expected to take 15 months commencing Q1 2020. Emerging flood relief options envisaged by Q2 2021.
Clifden Flood Relief Scheme	Project brief for the appointment of Engineering and Environmental Consultants currently being reviewed and updated by the OPW and GCC. Appointment of Engineering and Environmental Consultants expected by end of Q1 2021.

STRATEGIC PIERS and HARBOURS PROGRAMME

Funding for works on strategic piers on the islands is being provided through An Roinn Cultúir, Oidhreacht agus Gaeltachta.

Project:	Status:
Inis Oírr Pier Improvements – construct breakwater and pier extension, carry out dredging and provide additional berthage	<p>A consultant has been appointed to progress the scheme and various required surveys have been completed, including bathymetric and topographical surveys. Contract Documents and CPO documentation were advanced in 2019. Project reappraisal has been submitted to the Department and awaiting review and response. Total revised estimated cost €16M.</p> <p>Pending funding approval, Land acquisition for the scheme will be progressed in line with programme of work and Tender Process commenced.</p>
Caladh Mór Pier, Inis Meáin Improvements	<p>Feasibility study has been reviewed, a consultation process carried with Ferry and Cargo operators identified issues with approach to the Harbour. To address these, the National Maritime College of Ireland have been engaged by Galway County Council to model the facility which will inform the business case for Caladh Mór Phase 3.</p> <p>The Modelling creation works have been completed. Interaction by stakeholders with the model of proposed Phase 3 design options to take place as allowed under Public Health Guidelines.</p> <p>Business case for Phase 3 to be submitted for approval to the Roinn Cultúir, Oidhreachta agus Gaeltachta.</p>

FISHERIES HARBOUR and COASTAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAMME

Project:	Status:
Crumpáin, Carna Droim Leitir Mór Ard Thoir, Carna	<p>Subject to approval from the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine, it is intended to carry out improvement including new slipways at Crumpáin, Droim and Ard Thoir.</p> <p>AA Screening has been completed for Crumpáin and Droim by JBA Consulting. A screening report should be</p>

completed shortly for Ard Thoir Carna. These sites are located within Special Area of Conservations or SAC. An NIS is required for all and foreshore licences in advance of submission to the department, which is envisaged to be Q1 2021.

Potential works at Crumpáin will be dependent on agreement with owners of the adjoining site where access may be required during construction works. Some enabling works will be completed at Droim by end 2020.

SMARTER TRAVEL

Project:	Status:
<p>Conamara Greenway -</p>	<p>Clifden - Oughterard – full planning permission for 52kms. 4km from Clifden and 9.5km at Ballinahinch has been completed. 2000m section from Clifden to Ballinahinch is under Construction. €2.6m funding was secured in 2019 to advance the greenway from Clifden to Recess. 2km section from Clifden to Ballinahinch is under Construction. Landowner liaison ongoing for outstanding sections.</p> <p>Oughterard – Galway section - planning stage. Agronomists have been employed by GCC to engage with landowners ascertaining the impact of the Greenway on land holdings. This will inform the planning process for this section of the scheme. Ecology ongoing.</p> <p>Maintenance will be required of the completed routes.</p>

NATIONAL BROADBAND PLAN & DIGITAL STRATEGY

Project:	Status:
<p>National Broadband Plan</p>	<p>The National Broadband Plan is set to deliver high-speed fibre broadband to over 544,000 premises in the State, 38,000 of which are in county Galway and the projected investment in Co. Galway over the life of the project is €153 Million.</p> <p>In 2020 NBI commenced network construction for their fibre roll out, with an expected program of 5-7 years for construction.</p>

7 Broadband Connection Points (BCP) will be enabled with wireless high-speed broadband links as part of these works in 2020 to support communities until fibre is rolled out in their area. In 2021 it is envisaged that the number of BCPs will be increased.

Galway County Council will facilitate the roll out of telecommunications by both state and private investment in the county.

Galway County Council employ a Broadband Officer and Broadband Support Officer to help facilitate these projects.

Digital Strategy

Galway County's Digital Strategy will help identify the County's strengths and weakness as a result of increased connectivity from both state and private investment in telecommunications within the county. It will encourage our communities to build on our strengths and to combat our perceived weaknesses.

Galway County's Digital Strategy is a statement of intent and support for the digital development of the county, in a period of increasing connectivity and higher use of digital service, digital technologies and infrastructure. Galway Counties digital strategy will support the population of County Galway to benefit from these changes.

To be published in Q1/2021, with ongoing support.

Galway Fire & Rescue Service (GFRS)

GFRS is the Principal Emergency Service (PES) for Galway City and County Councils. The following sets out the indicative Capital Programme for GFRS for 2021-2023.

Please note all projects are subject to Department of Housing, Planning, Community & Local Government (DHPLG) funding and specific approval by project.

Fire Appliances

- There is a very limited National capital budget for Fire Service appliances/equipment. Galway County Council have submitted a number of requests to the Department of Housing Planning & Local Government (DHPLG) for capital funding/support for the following items in 2021 and have received approval for some to date:
 - Two 4 x 4 vehicles for emergency traffic management on motorways
 - Two Mobile Mortality Management Units
- The DHPLG allocated a new class B Appliance to Galway County Council as part of a National Procurement Plan 2018-2020. This class B appliance was procured centrally as part of a National procurement process by OGP. The selected supplier was Sidheain Teo in An Spideal County Galway and the appliance was delivered in November 2019.
- In 2021 a case will be made for a new Class B appliance and efforts will be made to procure a number of pre-owned Class B appliances. This will help to lower the average age of appliances which is currently high. Efforts will also be made to procure a pre-owned water tanker for Tuam Fire Station.

Fire Stations

New fire station projects are outlined in DECLG National Capital Programme 2016-2020.

Tuam Fire station

- The new Fire Station in Tuam went operational in late September 2018 and was officially opened on the 15th April 2019 by Sean Canney T.D. Minister of State Community Development, Natural Resources and Digital Development. The four-bay retained Fire Station and training centre was constructed by Carey Construction Ltd.

Athenry Fire Station

- A site for a new Fire Station in Athenry has been identified in the Athenry town area and negotiations for procurement are at an advanced stage. A design team was appointed in 2020. It is envisaged that the new station will be operational in early 2022.

Loughrea Fire Station

- A number of suitable sites have been identified and negotiations in relation to procurement are ongoing. Once a site is procured, subject to financial resources being made available by Galway County Council, a case will be made to Department of Housing Planning and Local Government for approval to proceed to the design stage and the appointment of a Design Team.

Ballinasloe Fire Station

- A revised capital appraisal was sent to the DHPLG in November 2019 in relation to the refurbishment of Ballinasloe Fire Station in its existing location. Once approval in principle is received, we will proceed to the design phase and the appointment of a Design Team.

Inis Mor Fire Station

- Work was ongoing in 2019 in relation to identifying the future needs of the Fire Station on Inis Mor. In early 2021 a capital appraisal will be submitted to the DHPLG in relation to refurbishment and extension of the existing station.

Galway City Fire Station and Headquarters

- Work is ongoing in relation to the identification and procurement of an appropriate site. There has been an indication from the DHPLG that funds will be made available once a site has been procured. Given the scale of this project and estimated cost of between €7-9 million (depending on the future service delivery model selected (as per GFRS report prepared in 2017) it is intended that a capital appraisal be submitted to the DHPLG for inclusion in the new National Capital Programme 2020 – 2024.

Brigade Mechanics Workshop

- GFRS maintains a fleet of approximately sixty (60) vehicles. Currently there is no dedicated Brigade Mechanic's Workshop which is a requirement under the Council's Safety Management System. In early 2021, a case will be made to DHPLG to construct a new dedicated workshop.

CERTIFICATE OF ADOPTION

I hereby certify that at the Budget meeting of Galway County Council held this 27th day of November 2020, the Council by Resolution adopted for the financial year ending on the 31st day of December 2021 the Budget set out in Tables A to F and by Resolution determined in accordance with the said Budget the Rate set out in Table A to be the Annual Rate on Valuation to be levied for that year for the purposes set.

Signed:

Cathaoirleach

Countersigned:

Chief Executive

Dated this 27th day of November 2020