



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

Draft Budget 2022 dated 18th November 2021



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe Galway County Council

CUNTAS BUISÉADACHTA 2022

DRAFT BUDGET 2022

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT

CHUIG GACH BALL DEN CHOMHAIRLE

DRAFT BUDGET FOR FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2022

To: The Cathaoirleach and each Member of Galway County Council

Introduction:

In accordance with the provision of Section 102 and 103 of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended) I enclose, for your consideration the Draft Budget for 2022 together with a report on functional activities from each Director of Service which is submitted as an annual progress report on the Corporate Plan.

In the course of preparing the Draft Budget I have consulted with the Corporate Policy Group at meetings held on 13th October 2021 and 16th November 2021.

Section 102 (4A) (a) of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended) requires the preparation of a draft budgetary plan for each Municipal District and the Municipal District members must meet to consider it no later than 21 days prior to the Local Authority budget meeting. In this regard, Municipal District meetings were held between 1st and 5th November 2021 for each of the 5 Municipal Districts. None approved the Draft Budgetary Plan for their area.

In considering the draft budget it is open to the council by resolution to amend the draft, but the budget must be adopted with or without amendment and it must determine 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 scheduled for 29th November 2021, but the process must be completed by 13th December 2021.

The Local Property Tax:

The local property tax is one of the very few sources where it is open to the council to realise locally determined income of significance. On 26th July 2021, the Council considered the Local Property Tax and whether to apply a Local Adjustment Factor for 2022. In my report and recommendation to the Council, to adjust the total property tax by 15% potentially yielding €2.2m in additional revenue, I provided an estimation of expenditure and income which indicated an excess of expenditure over income of €4.5M.

Ultimately it was decided not to adjust the Rate of Local Property Tax. Obviously, that decision has a significant bearing on the draft budget limiting the available revenue to meet expenditure commitments. Therefore, the funding from Local Property Tax in 2022 will be the same as 2021 and the details are set out as follows;

	€
LPT 100%	14,737,000
LPT 20% towards equalisation	2,947,400
2022 Baseline	14,517,890
LPT Retained locally 80%	<u>11,789,600</u>
2022 Shortfall	-2,728,290
Distribution of Equalisation funding	2,728,290
Total LPT funding to be provided 2022	14,517,890

Despite year-on-year cost increases and increased service demands in all areas of Council activity the funding available to the Council in 2022 for Local Property Tax is virtually unchanged since 2014 when it was first introduced. In framing the budget for 2022 we are faced with an array of expenditures on one side and a generally static revenue base on the other. In effect, the amount available to spend on public services in 2022 is constrained by the income available rather than the amount that is needed in any service area. By declining the opportunity to realise the potential from locally determined income sources, then it is inevitable that public services suffer as a consequence.

Commercial Rates:

The other main source where it is open to the council to realise additional locally determined income of significance is the commercial rates. The Commercial Rate in County Galway stands at 66.59 and this hasn't changed since 2009. It isn't sustainable to leave the commercial rate unchanged while the real costs of providing public services increase. I have drafted the budget based on a 6% increase to the annual rate of valuation which will yield an income of €1.073m. At the same time, I am bringing forward a complimentary Rates Payment Incentive Scheme as an assistance to smaller businesses and ameliorate the impact of the proposed increase

The incentive scheme is targeted at small businesses whose rate demand in 2022 after application of the proposed increase, is no greater than €10,000. It would be a condition of the scheme that all arrears are cleared. Therefore, for a business with a rate demand of €7,000 they would see their demand increase to €7,420 in 2022 but upon application under the scheme the rated occupier would qualify for a 6% discount on the 2022 demand resulting in a net charge of €6,975. It is estimated that 88% of ratepayers will qualify for the Incentive Scheme.

I am very conscious of the impact the pandemic has had in society, generally, and on businesses. That impact was not evenly spread with some faring poorly while others did better. It is important to acknowledge the relief provided by Government departments through Galway County Council to businesses under the commercial rates waiver scheme in 2020 and 2021 and also the other wage subsidy supports and restart grants put in place to support businesses through the pandemic. To date, a total of €17M has been paid to 3,433 businesses under the restart grant scheme and a further €601,000 to 267 businesses under the Small Businesses Assistance Scheme for COVID-19.

Main Budget Adjustments

You will see from the budget tables that the Draft Budget for 2022 is €143,295,409 compared to €136,485,759 in 2021. While there are many adjustments across both income and expenditure, the following is a list of some of the significant changes feeding in the draft budget for 2022.

Increase in Housing rent	300,000
Increase in road grants	2,400,000
Reduction in Special €1M grant for 2021	1,000,000
Increase in payroll costs	2,359,000
Increase in FEMPI recoupment	865,500
Increase in payroll costs Councillors	370,000
Recoupment of payroll costs Councillors	370,000
Increase in Pensions and Gratuities	762,152
Reduction in IPB Dividend	380,000
Increase in Rates income	1,743,528
Increase in provision for Vacant properties	250,000
Increase provision for rebate scheme	420,000
Increase funding local roads	100,000
Increase funding Street Cleaning	70,000
Reduction in Notice of Motion	721,500

This is not an exhaustive list but merely the larger changes. It is important to refer to the statutory tables for the expenditures and incomes under all service headings

Staffing:

Galway County Council's staffing complement is one of the lowest in the country per head of population. This is having an ongoing negative impact on our capacity to deliver services. Over the last number of months, I have carried out a review of the staff resources across all units to identify pinch points in service delivery in the organisation. As signalled previously we have begun to address the critical staffing deficit and have actively been targeting Planning and Waste Enforcement, strengthening of the Municipal Districts structure, responding to the demands of Climate Change & Energy Efficiency, supporting the Traveller Accommodation & Housing Capital Programme and other areas such Active travel, Greenways, Urban and Rural regeneration fund programme.

As indicated in the table above there will be additional payroll cost to be provided for but I am satisfied that we must recruit staff simply to maintain current services and meet our statutory obligations. Payroll costs are distributed across all the service areas in the budget tables and account for the majority of increases over last year's provision. Even with this limited recruitment we are still well below the staffing levels needed to deliver the desired level of service in many areas.

Work Programme:

Although much less than what I feel is needed for a county of such size and scale, the draft budget of €143.29 M is still a significant contributor to the economy of County Galway and will enable key public services to be delivered over a range of programmes.

In the area of Housing the Council has been approved funding for the delivery of 244 social housing units and a further 158 are being prepared for Department consideration. The Council will continue to maximise the various schemes available to meet the ambitious targets for social housing delivery under the Housing for All Programme. To date in 2021 we have facilitated 401 new tenancies in social housing and through our housing maintenance and estate management we continue to support our existing 2,771 tenants. The provision for housing maintenance is unchanged from 2021.

Our Infrastructure and Operations Unity will continue to deliver key projects to improve road safety and support the economic development of the County. It is hoped to receive a favourable decision from An Bord Pleanála on 19th November for the Galway City Ring Road which is critical to resolving the transport issues in the City and County. Works are about to commence on the Moycullen bypass and when complete this will complement the major upgrade already carried out between Maam Cross and Bunakill.

We will continue to support active travel measures throughout the County with continuing progress on the Connemara Greenway and the publication of an emerging preferred route for the Athlone to Galway Cycleway shortly.

The level of resources available for road maintenance and improvement is heavily dependent on grant funding. Fortunately, the grants have increased year on year, and we have budgeted in 2022

for the same as received in 2021. Unfortunately, though, the Councils own resource contribution to road maintenance is very limited and while I have provided an additional €100,000 to local road maintenance and €70,000 to town & Village maintenance, I have not been able to make any provision for Councillors Notice of Motion in 2022.

It is intended to continue to modernise the ageing fleet and additional lorries will be purchased in 2022 to replace costly and inefficient vehicles. It is intended also to purchase an additional velocity patching unit so that one will be available in each of the municipal district areas. It is proposed also to commence the modernisation of the paid parking system commencing in Tuam and Loughrea with newer machines that will facilitate cashless payment. It is planned that the procurement for the public lighting energy retrofit programme will happen in the first quarter of 2022.

Our Economic and Rural and Community Development Unit continues to support economic, social, cultural and environment initiatives throughout the County. In 2021 the Council provided supports to the food businesses and hospitality sector through the outdoor seating and accessories scheme with 324 successful applications.

Despite the limited resources available it is essential that we continue to support economic and community development with funding for festivals, tidy towns, social inclusion, Youth, Sports, Arts, Heritage Tourism and the Irish Language. The council has been successful in securing funding under Town and Village Renewal, Street Enhancement, Clár and the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme. To maintain our support towards the valuable work of local communities I am proposing in the draft budget that the grants and assistance to these groups under a range of headings is retained at last year's level.

Members will be aware that the draft County Development Plan is currently being reviewed. Over a series of Council meetings in December 2021 and Jan 2022 the 2,877 submissions will be considered and the material alterations to the draft will then go on public display leading to the adoption of the Plan in 2022. The Development Plan process, together with increases in the number of planning applications which have reached 1,996 to date in 2021, and increased enforcements complaints is placing a considerable strain on the staff resources. As indicated earlier in the report, it is imperative to provide additional staff to the planning unit and that is underway.

As a response to the ongoing management of illegal dumping in the County, and in response to concerns raised by the members, the staffing complement to deal with waste enforcement was strengthened in 2021. There are now dedicated waste enforcement officers managed by the waste enforcement lead and supported by dedicated administrative support. We can already see the impact that this team is having on the ground with successful court proceedings in recent weeks. This approach will continue in 2022 and beyond, and when partnered with the impending legislation to support the use of CCTV for environmental enforcement will make significant inroads in dealing with the scourge of illegal dumping.

A new National Waste Management Plan for the Circular Economy is being developed in 2022 through the regional waste management structures. Galway County is part of the Connacht Ulster Region and all local authorities are contributing financially to the development of the plan in 2022. Galway County Council's contribution is €33, 504 in 2022.

Work will continue on the burial ground management and development programme in 2022 to progress projects at Quansboro, Brookodge, Creagh, Claregalway, Annaghdown, Abbey, Ballyconnelly, Kilbannon and Lettermore, subject to site acquisition at certain locations.

Provision of €50,000 has been made for the appointment of an Energy Bureau Officer for the Council in 2022 as part of the Regional Energy Bureau model. The model has been developed in partnership with the Climate Action Regional Office and the SEAI. It is expected that the officer will be in place in Q1 2022.

The library service for the City and County is operated by the County Council on a shared services basis. The spend per capita on library services is the lowest in the country yet the service provided by the staff is of the highest quality despite being under resourced. Additional provision of €80,000 has had to be included for on-line resources, distribution services and library management system and €40,000 towards our commitment to the My Open Library Programme in Ballinasloe and Oranmore. Unfortunately, it hasn't been possible to provide any additional funding to the book fund.

I am pleased to report that the leisure centres in Tuam and Ballinasloe are operational and in common with other business were supported by government wage subsidies. In the likelihood that

the operating environment will continue to recover in 2022 I have reduced the financial support to the leisure centres in the draft budget.

In 2021, in response to the changed vacationing pattern, the Council developed a Summer Ready Programme including extended lifeguard hours and additional welfare facilities at popular beach locations. In response to requests from the members provision has been made to facilitate the continued extended hours for the beach lifeguards in 2022 with a provision of €35,000 and for the beach facilities at €64,000.

As part of an ongoing of ICT development and modernisation we will be investing further in cyber security measures to protect the systems that support all council operations. I have not been able to make provision in the draft budget for live streaming of Council meetings, but the matter will remain under consideration. Priority will be given in 2022 to the roll-out of e-Planning project in which the Council is one of the pilot site locations. This will facilitate much greater use of online services for making planning applications.

Members will be aware of the plans for the development of a new pier at Inis Óir and the planning for this is progressing. Due to a significant increase in visitor numbers and for the safety of all users of the pier bylaws will be introduced in 2022 for the management and operation of the pier. Provision of €50,000 has been included in the budget for this and for the employment of a harbour master. A provision of €100,000 has also been included as a matching contribution towards possible grant support for our piers and harbour programme but this is a €50,000 reduction on the 2021 provision.

Expenditure proposals

The following tables summarise the proposed spending across the various programme groups and the sources of income.



Expenditure by Programme Group	2021	2021	2022
	Budget	Est. Outturns	Draft Estimated Budget
	€	€	€
Housing and Building	16,838,751	16,176,239	17,169,147
Road Transportation and Safety	48,326,205	52,654,144	50,660,920
Water Services	13,199,669	14,669,651	15,520,745
Development Management	13,518,641	15,319,196	12,991,922
Environmental Services	19,754,542	19,741,242	20,649,048
Recreation and Amenity	9,301,593	9,167,354	9,595,544
Agriculture, Education Health and Welfare	2,781,631	2,748,889	2,667,814
Miscellaneous Services	12,834,727	19,109,118	14,040,269
Total	136,555,759	149,585,833	143,295,409

Estimated Revenue Income	2021		2022	
	€	%	€	%
Local Property Tax / Pension Related Deduction	14,517,890	11	14,517,890	10
NPPR	300,000	0	300,000	0
State Grants and Subsidies	55,646,649	41	60,115,945	42
Irish Water Income	9,213,000	7	9,564,500	7
Local Determined Income	39,955,900	29	42,019,428	29
Other Income	16,922,320	12	16,777,646	12
	136,555,759	100	143,295,409	100

Conclusion and Recommendation

The funding system for local government is complex and we derive income from a variety of sources including commercial rates, charges for goods and services, the local property tax and grants from Central Government. Galway County Council is particularly reliant on grant funding, the majority of which is either project or programme specific, such as roads or housing, rather than discretionary in nature. In 2022 42% of our revenue budget will be supported by grants and subsidies totalling €60.11 M.

It is a matter for Galway County Council to consider how it can maximise local income sources such as varying the rate of Local Property Tax and the annual rate on valuation for commercial rates. These sources, which account for 29% of our revenue budget are critical in supplying the financial resources needed to meet the day-to-day cost of public services provision. The Council decided not to vary the rate on local property tax for 2022 thereby declining the opportunity of €2.2 M of discretionary funding.

The income from rates on commercial properties has always been a fundamental source of funding for the local government system. Since 2009 the rate on valuation in County Galway hasn't increased and this is not sustainable especially as the cost of providing public services has risen year on year. It is not possible to pretend that public services won't suffer when service costs increase but the available revenue remains static. Therefore, it is necessary, in my view, to begin addressing this with the rate increase proposed and the accompanying relief measure.

Members will be aware that the council has had an underlying structural weakness in its funding baseline for some time. Across a broad range of indicators, we compare unfavourably to local authorities with similar characteristics but who enjoy much higher levels of equalisation funding. Council members, Oireachtas members and the Executive have been making the case forcefully at every opportunity for a baseline correction and we must continue to do so until a result is achieved. This case has not been helped, of course, by the council's own reluctance to realise locally derived income from local property tax and commercial rates. However, while I have no expectation of additional equalisation funding in 2022 I remain hopeful that as part of the review of the local property tax and equalisation model, relief may come in 2023.

The preparation of the draft budget for 2022 has been particularly challenging. Nonetheless, the proposed revenue budget of €143M, together with a capital spend in the order of €65M represents a very considerable investment in the development of the county and the delivery of public services.

I wish to thank all of the members for their support in 2021 and in particular the Cathaoirleach Cllr. Peter Keaveney and former Cathaoirleach James Charity for their commitment to the special office Cathaoirleach. I wish to thank also the Corporate Policy Group and the leaders of the various groupings on the council who have engaged with me in this budgetary process.

I also wish to thank the Head of Finance and his staff and Directors of Services not just for their work in helping prepare this budget but more so for their ongoing effort and commitment to public service provision throughout the year. To the wider staff group at all levels and grades, I would like to express my deepest appreciation for their efforts and commitment, often in the most trying of circumstances.

The year ahead will bring its own challenges but hopefully none as great as those we have faced and overcome in the recent past. I am confident that with the support of the members and staff colleagues we will continue to provide vital public services that will benefit all the citizens of County Galway.

I recommend the Draft Budget for 2022 for adoption.

Mise, Le Meas,

Mr. Jim Cullen

Chief Executive

Galway County Council

18th November 2021

DIVISIONAL REPORTS INCLUDING ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT ON THE GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN 2020 - 2024

The Galway County Council Corporate Plan 2020 – 2024 as adopted by the Elected Members of Galway County Council, provides the framework to enable Galway County Council to guide the strategic direction and development of the County of Galway for the period 2020 - 2024.

The strategic goals and supporting strategies identified in the Plan support Galway County Council in carrying out its functions, prioritising its actions, and assessing its progress.

The Divisional Reports that follow detail the progress achieved during 2021 in relation to the strategic goals and supporting strategies. In addition, the Divisional Reports outline the main proposals to be advanced in 2022 to further progress the achievement of the strategic goals of the Council.

STRATEGIC GOALS

Community Participation & Social

“To facilitate the broadest possible participation by citizens in local decision making and the sustainable development of their communities and their county.”

Economic & Enterprise Development

“To maximise the continued and sustainable economic and enterprise development of our county.”

Infrastructural Capacity

“To ensure that our physical and social infrastructure is sufficiently developed to support economic development, and to enhance our quality of life.”



**Organisational
Capacity**

“To maximise organisational capacity through the continuous review of operational efficiency, financial and risk management and the development of our Staff and Elected Members.”

**Protection of
Environment &
Heritage**

“To improve, protect and promote our environment, culture, heritage and language in the interests of present and future generations.”

**Quality
Customer
Service**

“To ensure that quality customer service is at the centre of everything we do.”

HOUSING AND ECONOMIC RURAL & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

HOUSING SERVICES UNIT - DELIVERING HOMES ∞ BUILDING COMMUNITIES

REBUILDING IRELAND – ACTION PLAN FOR HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS & HOUSING FOR ALL

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

Housing for All – a new Housing Plan for Ireland was launched in September 2021. Housing for All is the government’s plan to increase the supply of housing to an average of 33,000 per year over the next decade. The plan provides for an optimal mix of social, affordable and private housing for sale and rent. The plan is based on four pathways, leading to a more sustainable housing system:

- support home ownership and increase affordability
- eradicate homelessness, increase social housing delivery and support social inclusion
- increase new housing supply
- address vacancy and make efficient use of existing stock

The Housing Unit during 2021 continued 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 €40m has been approved by Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government for the advancement of 244 direct-build social housing units. In addition, proposals for a further 158 units are being prepared or are with the Department for approval. A level of disruption was caused to the construction industry by Covid19 and the construction industry nationally remains in a challenging position nationally with contractors experiencing delays in obtaining materials and general labour shortages. The Housing Unit, together with the assistance of the Housing Delivery Coordination Office and the Department, has been working hard to manage these issues at a local level and a strong level of build delivery is expected for 2022. The following projects were progressed through various stages to date:



Location	# Social Housing Units	DHPLG Stage
Single Rural Dwellings	6	Planning
Barrack Street, Loughrea	5	Works complete
Cnoc na Carraige, Roundstone	14	Works complete
Cartron, Kinvara	10	Construction
Caislean Raithlín, Ardrahan	10	Planning
Gort Ui Lochlainn, Maigh Cuilinn	31	Part 8 refused
Gort na gCloch, Clifden	26	Construction
Bridge Court, Ahascragh	18	Tender
Fána Bhui, Tuam	49	Construction underway
Weir Road Tuam	30	Works for Tender
Droim na Gaoithe, Claregalway	45	Design Team appointed
Total	244	

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

- 5 No. units Barrack Street, Loughrea
- 8 No. units at Roundstone

Additionally, a new Housing Delivery Action (HDAP) plan is being prepared by Galway County Council to be ready by end Dec 2021, as required under the Housing For All programme. The HDAP provides for Plan-led sustainable delivery of housing in the right locations. It will chart the pathway forward for Galway County Council to deliver on its social and affordable housing targets from 2022-2026, identifying where and how those targets will be met. Strong delivery by AHBs of build units will be a key requirement for this period.

HOUSING ACQUISITIONS IN 2021:

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 2021:**

Galway County Council reviews the market continuously 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 9 units have been acquired by Galway County Council at a cost of €1.6 m with a further 6 Units at the final stages of acquisition with an estimated cost of €1.04m. The numbers of second-hand units acquired on this basis will remain at a low number for the foreseeable future as the build programme increases. Acquisitions of this nature will therefore be focused on cases of specific need.

- **Turnkey Process:**

During 2021, the Housing Unit acquired the final social housing units in the Kylebroughlan estate in Maigh Cuilinn and expects to be in a position to close the acquisition of 27 social housing units on the Tubber Road in Gort.

An advertisement calling for expressions of interest for turnkey developments (social and affordable housing) was published in September and 11 no. expressions of interest were received for proposals across the county. Eight of the developments have planning permission. The expressions of interest are under assessment presently and some initial engagement has taken place with developers.

- **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 2021, Galway County Council is acquiring 10 units under the Part V obligations. A further 41 units currently in the process of being agreed for delivery. The number of housing units acquired by the Council under this stream of delivery will increase in future years due to recent amendments to the legislation, providing for the acquisition of up to 20% of a development by the local authority; at least half of which units must be for social housing applicants.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- 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. The direct build programme targets increase significantly after 2022 and land acquisition/acquisition of infill and brownfield sites will become increasingly more critical to provide for the upscaling of build delivery. The build target for 2022 is 230 units.

- The Council will continue to engage with builders with a view to advancing the delivery of units under Part V and the numbers of units under this stream is expected to begin to increase – based on the new Part V requirements.
- 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

The active management of the housing land bank is part of a range of actions being taken under Housing for All designed to accelerate and increase housing output.

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- Continue 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.
- Complete the Housing Delivery Action Plan (required under the new Housing for All Programme) – this will assist in aligning demand with location and chart a pathway forward for delivery of the build programme by Galway County Council and AHBs of both social and affordable housing for the period 2022-2026.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- 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 sites under the Affordable Housing Fund subject to approval by the Department and alignment with their guidelines. Further sites will be identified, and proposals advanced for affordable housing.
- 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 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 under the Housing For All programme. This will be aligned with the Housing Delivery Action plan – to be completed by end 2021.

VOLUNTARY HOUSING

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

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 2021:

The Old Post Office, Inverin 4 units completed

OTHER CAS PROJECTS PROGRESSING:

- Tuath, Mountbellew – 5 units (Construction)
- Tearmann Eanna Teo, Rossaveal Cottages – 8 units (Acquisition)
- Tearmann Eanna Teo , Eanach Mheain, Carraroe- 13 units (Construction)
- 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 2021:

- Clúid Housing, Riveroaks, Claregalway, 24 units
- 4 units were completed in 2021 under the Mortgage to Rent Scheme (MTR) with a further 22 units in progress which enables homeowners in mortgage difficulty switch from owning their home to renting their home as social housing tenants

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- 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 2021:

- Engaged with Landlords and Property owners and provide documentation and advice.
- In 2021 Galway County Council had 58 Applications for Long Term Lease
- Engaged with Peter Mc Verry Trust in supporting them to provide 53 Long Term Lease properties through a Payment and Availability Agreement.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- Follow through on the properties already approved in 2021 for delivery in 2022.
- Continue to engage with Peter McVerry Trust to bring further approved properties into use in 2022, and additional properties thereafter.

Leasing under the Government Programme Housing for All

The Government will phase out the use of current leasing models by 2025 through phasing out new entrants to the current leasing arrangements for long term delivery and enhanced leasing, in favour of delivery models which ensure long-term ownership of social housing homes. The DHLGH will retain flexibility for Local Authorities to use short term rental availability agreements (RAS-Type) in order to accommodate people on the waiting list in the most appropriate way possible, an annual projection of 200 homes over the course of the Plan

VACANT HOMES

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

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 2022:

- 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 2021:

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.

- Continued engagement with property owners, estate agents and solicitors in an effort to attract expressions of interest to the scheme.
- In 2021, 1 unit was delivered with a private owner and some 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 4 Repair and Lease projects with our support.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- 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.

HOUSING GRANTS

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- To date the number of applications for Housing Aid for Older People paid in 2021 is 144 with the number of Mobility Aids Grants and Housing Aid Grants totalling 102(31 HAGs and 71 MAGs).
- Department funding was made available in the sum of €2,920,479 for 2021. Co-funding of €325,000 was sanctioned from the Council's own resources.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- 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 2021:

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 at the end of June 2021 have 13 Rebuilding Ireland Home Loans approvals in principle on hand to the value of €2.05million.
- 3 home loans to a value of €593,700 and 1 tenant purchase loan to a value of €66,360 have been paid out to date this year.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- 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 2021:

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 2021 was 1,584 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 October 2021, the number of Residential Standards Inspections carried out was 413. An additional number of inspections will be completed in 2021 depending on the Covid 19 restrictions in operation.
- Due to the Covid19 restrictions experienced in 2021 it is unlikely that the annual target will be met.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- The inspection target for Galway County Council in 2022 is 1,584 Inspections but Covid 19 restrictions may continue to impact upon inspection numbers into 2022.
- 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 2021:

- There are currently approximately 4,000 applicants on the record of qualified households. 436 of this total are City Applicants with Area of choices in the County Area.
- During the period January – October 2021, a total of 242 offers were made to applicants on the record of qualified households for social housing of which 145 were accepted 66 were refused and 31 area currently in the allocation process. 74 nominations were made to Approved Housing Bodies for the provision of housing.
- Development of Housing Customer Relations Manager (CRM) system for housing.
- During 2021 the Housing Unit advertised an available house on the Choice Based Letting system.
- An online system was introduced for the Summary of Social Housing Assessment returns.
- Areas of Choice were amended with the previous area of Athenry/Oranmore divided into Athenry and environs and Oranmore/Baile Cláir.
- An online form was developed and circulated to clients to enable them to update their Areas of Choice to reflect their change.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- 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.
- Online Social Housing Application form to be developed and launched.
- Further development of CRM system to facilitate other housing services.

HOUSING ASSISTANCE PAYMENT (HAP)

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- 2099 applicants transferred to the HAP scheme by the end of October 2021.
- 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 2022:

- 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 2021:

- There are 391 households accommodated currently through the RAS Scheme and short-term leasing Scheme. (this figure is inclusive of RAS Voluntary)

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- 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 2021:

- A further increase in the demand for homeless services was noted in 2021 including the number of families presenting together with a more recent notable increase in the number of single people presenting as homeless during 2021.
- 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.
- Both families and singles have had difficulty in sourcing homes in the private rented sector due to lack of availability.
- 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 joined the Homeless Unit and both posts are being funded under S10 Homeless Funding by the Department. These posts are providing an essential support in our overall plan to assist people who are homeless, at risk of homelessness or who have difficulties in sustaining tenancies.
- The Homeless Action Team was successfully established during 2021 resulting in 6 Homeless applicants being allocated Housing First Tenancies, which include wrap around support services provided by Galway Simon.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- It is anticipated that the increased demand for homeless services experienced in the past 4 years may continue in 2022 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 ensure the Housing First Model in County Galway continues.
- 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 2021:

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.

- 195 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 2022:

- 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 2021:

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 683 people with disabilities on the Housing list - with 269 of these having a Mental Health condition, 225 having a Physical Disability, 141 having an Intellectual Disability, 15 having Sensory Disabilities and 33 having an Unspecified

Disability. People with severe and enduring mental health conditions have a very clear requirement for security of tenure and easy access to services.

- The review of the Disability Strategy has been completed and is currently in the final stages of approval. This includes an updated Action Plan.
- The Housing Disability Steering Group has been re-established in addition to a specific subgroup for Mental Health which includes representatives from Galway County Council and HSE Mental Health services.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- 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.
- Commence implementation of the Strategic Plan for Housing People with a Disability 2021-2026.

TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION PROGRAMME

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- 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.
- Works have been completed on the construction of 6 houses and 2 bays at Cluain Órtha, Craughwell. These properties were tenanted in April 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 were completed on 4 Traveller Group Scheme houses at Canal Drive, Ballinasloe. The occupants of 3 of the houses who were temporarily rehoused in an alternative Council property whilst works were ongoing returned to their refurbished homes in February 2021.
- Major refurbishment works were completed on 3 Traveller Group Scheme houses at Sandymount, Killimor. The occupants of the 3 houses who were temporarily rehoused in an alternative Council property whilst works were going returned to their refurbished homes in April 2021.
- Refurbishment works were completed on a property at a Traveller Group Scheme house in Moyne Park, Abbeyknockmoy and it was tenanted in February 2021.
- Consultants were appointed to progress the major refurbishment of the Traveller Group Scheme at Cloonlyon, Ballygar, a scheme which consists of 14 houses.
- A proposal for the refurbishment of a Traveller Group Scheme at Clontuskert, consisting of 3 houses, was submitted to the Traveller Accommodation Unit requesting funding.

- Following on from submissions made, funding was allocated for the extension and refurbishment of 3 properties, for families with specific needs at Carnmore; Cosmona, Loughrea and Dublin Road, Tuam.
- The Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee met on 3 occasions, to date, in 2021 with a 4th meeting to be take place before the end of the year.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- The extension and refurbishment of 3 properties at Carnmore, Cosmona, Loughrea and Dublin Road, Tuam is to be completed.
- Fire safety training will continue to be delivered at all halting sites.
- Refurbishment works will be progressed at the following Traveller Specific accommodation, subject to Departmental approval of funding:
 - Clontuskert, Ballinasloe
 - Ballygurrane, Athenry
 - Ballydavid, Athenry
- The reconstruction and major refurbishment proposals for the Traveller Specific accommodation at Cloonlyon, Ballygar is to be progressed, all proposals are subject to the availability of funding.
- Refurbishment works will be progressed at the Traveller Specific Group Scheme in Creggane. Consideration will be given to extending the scheme.
- 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 2021:

- 104 units were made available for re-letting to local authority tenants. Funding was received from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage of €966,000 for 63 voids, 7 of which were long term voids.
- Funding of €50,000 per unit was allocated for 6 properties which required major refurbishment under the Voids Programme. It is anticipated that work will be complete on 4 of these houses by the end of 2021 and available for re-letting in 2022.
- Housing maintenance was delivered on a priority basis with the necessity to focus on essential maintenance, including plumbing and electrical, with a requirement to operate within the constraints of Covid-19 guidelines and available funding.

- As part of the Planned Maintenance Programme upgrade works commenced on electrical certification and fire safety installations in 450 houses in the Connemara and Oranmore Areas. Works were delayed due to Covid-19 restrictions but will be substantially complete by the end of 2021. A further contract was signed and works commenced on an additional 700 houses in the Loughrea area.
- Remediation works were completed on the septic tanks and wastewater treatment systems of 12 houses in the Connemara area. This work was funded under the Planned Maintenance Programme.
- A Deep Retrofit Energy Efficiency Upgrade was successfully completed on 21 houses in Shannon Park, Portumna and 19 houses in St Joseph's Place, Ballinasloe. Works are ongoing on further properties in Killimor, Tynagh and Eyrecourt. The works include replacement windows and doors, external insulation and the installation of heat pumps and solar PV panels. These works are part of the pilot Midlands Energy Retrofit Project.
- The design and tender for the deep energy retrofit of 54 houses has been completed, with works substantially complete on houses in Tuam and Roundstone. The retrofit of houses in Athenry will be completed in 2022. These works are funded under the 2021 Energy Retrofit Programme.
- An allocation of €1,066,000 was received from the Department of Housing for adaptation works to 82 houses and 6 extensions under the DPGs/IWILS/ Extensions Programme of Works 2021. DPG works were completed on 45 properties to the end of October with funding totalling €291,514 drawn down. Designs were also completed on the extension of 4 properties with a view to commencing the works in 2022.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- 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 2 derelict houses subject to funding being made available 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
- Progress a contract for deep energy retrofit of a further 89 houses in Ballinasloe, Headford, Ballygar, An Cheathrú Rua, Gort and Clifden. The works include replacement windows and doors, external insulation and the installation of heat pumps. These works will be funded under the 2022 Energy Retrofit Programme.
- The provision of adaptation works to 10 houses and extensions to 4 houses under the IWILS/DPG's/Extensions Programme of Works 2022 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.
- Under the Planned Maintenance Programme, progress the installation of fire detection systems/smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, fire blankets, electrical repairs and certification as required.
- Under the Planned Maintenance Programme carry out remediation works to septic tanks and wastewater treatment systems in 10 houses across the County as identified by the maintenance team.

TENANCY AND ESTATE MANAGEMENT

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- The Housing Unit continued to work with vulnerable families in assisting them in sustaining their tenancies.
- The Tenancy Enforcement Officer continued to work intensively in a number of areas across the County, this is done in conjunction with the Gardai, other Departments of the Council and other relevant stakeholders from outside agencies.
- The Council's Tenancy and Estate Management Strategy involves active community engagement and participation at local level on an ongoing basis with an emphasis on the early identification of Anti-Social Behaviour and breaches of Tenancy Agreements. 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.
- A successful pilot project took place in two Council estates in Ballinasloe, in collaboration with the Environment Section, Residents Association and estate residents which involved clean-up and improvements of the public areas in the estates. An environmental awareness campaign also took place, with plans to develop biodiversity areas within the estates.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- As part of the interdepartmental and inter-agency strategic approach, the Housing Unit will identify and target housing estates which will be the focus of extensive estate management activity over 2022.
- Estate management staff will continue to assist tenants with the sustainment of their tenancies as per the Tenancy Sustainment Strategy.
- Enforcement action will be carried out if required in accordance with the Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy.
- Tenants in estates, particularly in newly developed estates will be encouraged and assisted in setting up Resident Associations to take responsibility for their public spaces.

TENANT PURCHASE SCHEME

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

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 2021 the Housing Unit has completed the sale of 11 houses under the tenant purchase scheme. The sale value of these properties is €654,992.00

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- 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 2021:

- 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 2021. These reviews are continually being revisited as people's circumstances continue to change. The weekly rent accrual payable for Galway County Council properties currently stands at €158,143

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- The Differential Rent Scheme is to be reviewed in 2022.

CONTROL OF HORSES

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- The Council continued to implement its protocol in conjunction with the Gardaí on the Control of Horses.

- A total of 5 horses have been seized this year as of October 2021.
- 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 2021.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- 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 2021:

- The Housing, Culture and Recreation SPC has met on 4 occasions in 2021. Areas covered relating to Housing included Housing for All, Control of Horses Byelaws, Tenancy Handbook, Housing Applications, Homelessness, Strategic Plan for Housing People with a Disability.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- In 2022, it is anticipated that the Housing Strategic Policy Committee will examine a range of policy areas relating to Housing including Control of Horses Byelaws, Differential Rents Scheme, Tenancy Agreements and Housing First.

ECONOMIC, RURAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Economic, Rural & Community Development unit continued to guide and facilitate the sustainable development of the County supporting economic, social, cultural and environmental initiatives at both macro and micro levels. While resources are tight significant activity took place and there was a continued focus on working in partnership with a broad range of stakeholders to achieve the maximum impact. The focus of the work continues to be on the key sectors such as food, tourism, creative sector, supporting indigenous firms and facilitating FDI as well as focussing on regenerating our towns and villages including the retail and hospitality sectors.

FOOD SECTOR

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES 2021:

- Continued to play an active role in the construction phase and with planning of the BIA Innovator Campus CLG with the provision of staff on the Board and various sub-committees. While the project has faced significant challenges due to Covid and lockdowns, it is significantly progressed while also pivoting during the lockdowns to address future challenges presented by Covid and Brexit. The project secured additional funding from the Enterprise Ireland Regional Enterprise Transition Fund and staff in ERCD and LEO played a critical role in this.
- Supports were provided to the food service businesses and the hospitality sector through the Outdoor Seating & Accessories Scheme. In total 427 applications were received with 324 of these meeting the criteria and timeline for full assessment. Funding for the scheme was provided through government and Failte Ireland and it was administered within existing staffing resources
- Online promotional work to encourage economic activity including through the Made in Galway and tourism marketing on Discover Galway platforms as well as facilitating food writers and media in promoting the County
- Participated in a number of successful EU funding applications in association with the BIA Innovator Campus
- Secured funding from the Department of Food, Agriculture and the Marine to commence work on a Food and Agri-tourism Strategy which is underway in association with the BIA Innovator Campus.
- In association with the BIA Innovator Campus and the LEO, provided supports direct to businesses and entrepreneurs
- Worked closely with the Regional Enterprise Plan Coordinator to ensure that food and related sectors were included in the new West Region Enterprise Plan and that the BIA Innovator Campus plays a central role in maximising opportunities and growth of the sectors for the wider west region

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- Work with the BIA Innovator Campus to complete the capital/construction phase and to ensure that it meets the needs of the Council, community and wider stakeholders to support economic/enterprise activity
- Progress the Food & Agri-tourism Strategy with a focus on the key priorities and objectives identified
- Work with the other local authorities to drive regional growth of the sector and to realise the objectives of the WREP
- Work with Enterprise Ireland who have responsibility for FDI for the food sector to attract FDI to Galway, including exploring the opportunities provided by the development of the former airport site

CREATIVE & CULTURAL SECTORS

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES 2021:

- Continued to support the Audio Visual and Film Sector through a number of initiatives including partnering with the Galway Film Centre and other relevant partners on the UNESCO City of Film 2020 programme
- Following a review of the original WRAP fund and the economic benefits which are accruing from investment, the Council continued its support for WRAP II which is a larger fund developed with investment from the WDC and other partners which will continue to support the development of the sector.
- The SPC for Economic & Enterprise Development as well as the Plenary Council received presentations on the opportunities for the audio visual and film sectors encompassing UNESCO, WRAP, location services and future opportunities including the potential to develop a studio of scale
- Progressed the process for the potential development of a film studio at the former Galway Airport site in Carnmore. A preliminary section 183 has been passed by both Galway County Council and Galway City Council to enable a planning application to be submitted by the project applicant.
- While Covid-19 had a significant impact on the Capital of Culture and the impact in the year of designation, there were some opportunities to benefit from the programme. The Mirrored Pavilion was set up in Derrygimlagh Bog as part of a collaboration between the Council and Galway Arts Festival and this drew a good number of visitors to the area

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- Continue to work with the Galway Film Centre and wider stakeholders to realise opportunities under the WRAP II fund
- Support the UNESCO, Creative City (which includes the County) designation and to explore opportunities for economic and enterprise growth through the network for the Creative Sector and opportunities for working with other Creative City designations such as Gastronomy
- Progress the process for the establishment of the AV/Film Studio at Carnmore in line with process and subject to planning and other regulatory/legislative requirements

- Continue to work with the wide range of stakeholders to support the sector

TOURISM

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES 2021:

- A suite of tender documents has been published for an ambitious and sustainable tourism strategy for County Galway; project initiation Q4 2021 and to continue throughout 2022
- The Tourism Office provided information of publicly available business supports throughout 2021; including those rolled out at National level, and those administered by Failte Ireland and the local authorities.
- Developed a number of webinars for trade and elected representatives to inform stakeholders about the workings of various supports schemes and liaised with specific tourism businesses that required additional supports including site visits and advisory clinics.

TOURISM PROMOTION:

- A busy campaign of Tourism promotion has continued throughout 2021 with the Council leading on the 'Discover Galway' brand and 'Conamara agus na h'Oilean' brand as well as supporting the 'Discover Lough Derg' brand.
- Curated content and invested in advertising in the Connacht Tribune supplement '**Where in the West**'. Galway County Council's strategic tourism and outdoor recreation projects were promoted through this channel in summer 2021.
- **Discover Galway Social Media campaign:** A strategic social media marketing campaign was initiated from July 2021 for 'Discover Galway' with an investment in promoting county wide tourism attractions, and visitor experiences by highlighting all areas around the County.
- **Connemara and the Islands** - Engaged extensively with industry bodies and representative agencies from Connemara and the Aran Islands to build momentum around the Connemara Destination brand.
- **Photography:** A large bank of tourism photography for County Galway has been developed throughout 2021 for publication and will be made available to the trade in late 2021 to promote the rich visitor experience throughout the County including many less know areas and local treasures
- **New Tourism App for Lough Derg; Adventure Lough Derg:** A new visitor experience which ran through 2021.
- **Galway Brand** Galway City and County have jointly published a tender for a destination brand, supported by Failte Ireland.

DIASPORA:

- Arranged for the Alcock and Brown monument and Marconi site to be illuminated for Canada Day, on July 1st.
- Invested a media partnership with Galway City Council and Tourism Ireland to develop a programme that secured significant airtime on 239 stations in the United States with transmission of a television series. This commenced in January 2021- 'Ireland: County by County'

TOURISM NETWORKS:

- Worked with Fáilte Ireland, Údarás na Gaeltachta and industry partners in a review process of the Connemara and Aran Islands Visitor Experience Development Plan. This engagement occurred in Q3 and 4 2021.
- Launched the Connemara and the Islands Town & Village project with Minister Humphreys in Q3 2021.
- Progressed investment in website development project for Connemara.ie; this Council owned website is the landing page for Splash4U site (collaboration with Broadband Officer).
- Participated in a film to launch The Lough Derg Visitor Experience Plan in April 2021 and also to support the launch of the Shannon Tourism Masterplan in March 2021.
- Continued to implement actions in all VEDPs and regional tourism plans.

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

CLIFDEN DESTINATION TOWN:

- Worked on the redevelopment of the proposal for the Clifden Destination Town project to audit the wayfinding and orientation strategy, and reworking of public realm plans in context of Town Centre Enhancement Plans with a view to maximising value for money, impact and tourism development

RRDF PROJECTS:

- Worked on a number of development projects including Portumna Vision 2030; Athenry wayfinding and orientation and Clifden RRDF project to ensure the tourism development potential was enhanced
-

LOUGH DERG:

- Lough Derg Discovery sites project in progress with Portumna identified and Coose North now registered in GCC ownership. This project will create a loop of six visitor 'discovery points' around Lough Derg with two each in Galway, Clare and Tipperary.
- Worked on the accreditation of the Lough Derg Blueway in conjunction with Tipperary and Clare County Councils as well as Waterways Ireland.

CORRIB BLUEWAY:

- Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland have been appointed to deliver a feasibility study for the 'Great Western Blueway' between Galway City, County and Mayo local authorities. Project to commence in November 21 and conclude with report in April 22.

DISCOVER GALWAY FOOD EXPERIENCES:

- A brochure for visitor experiences has been developed for when the food producers are ready to deliver (2022.) A programme of mentoring supports has been offered to food producers to support development of visitor experiences. 12 of the 'Discover Galway Food Experiences' group were offered targeted supports with six providers up-taking mentoring appointments. All suppliers are based in the eastern part of the County.

CREATIVE IRELAND:

- Developed a Creative Ireland poetry and photography book 'This Place' / 'An Ait Seo'; will be launched in November.
- Supported the 'Wandering Kite Festival' which was launched in October '21 to strong attendance and interest.

FESTIVALS AND EVENTS:

- CSS festivals and events have taken place in Q3 and 4; with Crinniu na MBad, Clifden Arts Festival, Connemara Walking Festival, The Galway Film Fleadh and Baboro just some events that were supported. Also supported The Burren Lowlands website development project; Meelick River Festival, book launches to support tourism promotion at Maam Cross and in Ballinasloe.

Galway County Council is working in close partnership with Failte Ireland Wild Atlantic Way and Ireland's Hidden Heartlands teams to deliver the following projects:

- WAW Burren loop experience;
- Feasibility of coach tour routes on the Wild Atlantic Way
- WAW signage delivery and management
- Ireland's Hidden Heartlands Shannon on the Shannon
- Ireland's Hidden Heartlands 50 things to do for kids
- Ireland's Hidden Heartlands Signage strategy
- Ireland's Hidden Heartlands flipbook

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- Progress the development of the Galway County Tourism Strategy and bring to SPC and Council for adoption
- Progress a number of elements under the Clifden Destination Town project including wayfinding and interpretation
- Progress the development of the Galway destination brand, in conjunction with Galway City Council and Failte Ireland
- Deliver the Corrib Blueway Feasibility project in conjunction with Mayo County and Galway City
- Continue to development the Discover Galway social media implementation and promotion
- Progress and implement Lough Derg VEDP actions and network
- Continue to work with the Connemara and Islands actions and network and build on the successes to day
- Assess and manage the Community Support Scheme: Tourism projects and festivals and events
- Support Failte Ireland projects as required

ATLANTIC ECONOMIC CORRIDOR

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES 2021:

- Worked with the Broadband Officer and other stakeholders in the preparation and delivery of the Digital Strategy for County Galway and assisted in identification of locations for Broadband Connection Points.
- Worked with the WDC and Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC) network on regional projects, including the development of hubs along the AEC.
- Participated in AEC Strategy and AEC Hub Strategy processes

- A Hub location feasibility study was undertaken on behalf of the AEC through a procurement process. This is due for close out by the year end.
- Assisted new hubs with funding options and advice in relation to the Hub Outreach Scheme.
- An image bank was prepared for Galway County including images related to enterprise.
- Participated in the Departmental Connected Hubs call by assisting applications from individual hubs in addition to supporting LA projects such as the one concerning Broadband Connection Points (BCPs)

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- Work within any revised arrangements for the AEC following the review by the Department
- Support the development of Creative Clusters in the region
- Work with the WDC and other AEC counties to promote the West as an attractive place to live and work
- Work with projects to support the regeneration of town centres including the development of hubs and addressing vacancy/dereliction in towns and villages
- Continue to work with the Broadband Officer to identify and realise opportunities for communities
- Progress AEC Smart Towns and Villages Initiative
- Work with the WDC, AEC network and other local authorities in the delivery of regional initiatives including under the West Region Enterprise Plan as appropriate
- Support the development of the Food Sector and linking of hubs with a particular emphasis on the BIA Innovator Campus as an engine for growth and innovation in the region

DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORTS FOR WORKING HUBS

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES 2021:

- The ERCD Unit acted as an information and advisory point of contact, to facilitate Community based Hubs in County to avail of the national www.connectedhubs.ie funding Scheme.
- Invested with Corporate Services in essential upgrades to the Ballinasloe Business Centre, Office Suites in the renovated Ballinasloe Library Complex, Society Street, including remote access controls allowing flexibility for clients. Meetings Rooms and Suites on Floor Two available for hire and leasing in 2022.
- Progressed the development of working hubs as part of the existing approved RRDF projects in Loughrea, Portumna, Tuam and Athenry (BIA Innovator) as well as including as part of the proposal for the Category 2 application for Gort
- Supported a number of community based hubs through the Town & Village Scheme and worked with Údarás na Gaeltachta in the promotion and development of the G-teic hubs

PROPOSALS 2022:

- Progress existing proposals for working hubs as part of RRDF projects
- Identify new opportunities for hubs in the county and to work with the relevant stakeholders to deliver on same
- Secure clients to maximise use of the Ballinasloe Business Centre Office Suites at Ballinasloe Library Complex.
- Provide ongoing advisory services on www.connectedhubs.ie and target supports under for set up of additional remote work centres in County and work with Údarás na Gaeltachta who are leading on Ga-teic Hub Network in Gaeltacht.

GENERAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES AND STRATEGY

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES 2021:

- Fed into the development of the review of the National Development Plan, the national Guidelines for the Local Economic & Community Development Plan, Our Rural Future Policy, national tourism policy, the National Outdoor Recreation Strategy, the Lough Derg VEDP and the West Region Enterprise Plan to 2024
- Assisted the Planning Department in the development of the Draft County Development Plan, particularly in relation to Town & Village Regeneration, Tourism Development, Economic & Rural Development and the future use of former Galway airport site
- Led the development and adoption of the Tuam Masterplan with funding provided through RRDF
- Developed and progressed strategic proposals for RRDF projects to drive regeneration in Athenry, Clifden, Gort, Loughrea, Portumna and Tuam
- Worked with EI to support job creation, indigenous firms and to progress the potential for investment in FDI for the food sector
- Worked with the IDA to promote County Galway as a location for Foreign Direct Investment

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- Lead the development of the 6 year Local Economic and Community Plan in line with the national guidelines working with the Economic Development & Enterprise SPC
- Continue to take a strategic approach to regeneration of our towns
- Feed into the development of the Masterplan for the former Galway Airport site at Carnmore
- Continue to work with EI and IDA to support economic development and job creation

MADE IN GALWAY - SUPPORTS TO LOCAL FOOD, CRAFT & RETAIL BUSINESSES

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES 2021:

- Further developed the Made In Galway initiative so assist local food and craft producers in the county. This included an investment in the www.MadeinGalway.ie website and various platforms to build momentum for the On-line Directory of Craft Food and with print, social media promotional campaign, promoting shop local in Co Galway co-funded under the Town and Village Renewal Programme.
- Developed a series of Craft-Maker Videos with the LEO shared to 18,000 plus employees in multi-national companies in Galway and with the general public. Roll-out was in response to retail lockdowns as a result of Government COVID19 Public Health Measures.
- Works are progressed on an 8-week Pre-Christmas 2021 promotional campaign for *Made in Galway* profiling makers and retail business that offer unique materials and items sourced or grown locally and contribute to sustainability underling a key *Shop Local* message with a focus on the distinctiveness of the retail and shopping mix in Galway towns and villages.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- Review the Made in Galway initiative to determine the role going forward including how it fits best with LEO and general supports provided by the Council. As part of the review assess the impact for the businesses supported, value for money, opportunities for network(s), potential for impact as part of the economic recovery including at festival and events
- Consider the most appropriate way to encourage Shop Local initiatives while achieving best value for money and impact.
- 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.

RURAL FUNDING SCHEME

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES 2021:

TOWN AND VILLAGE RENEWAL SCHEME

- In 2021 the Department of Community and Rural Development sought seven projects per Authority under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme, facilitating for the first time one proposal of scale up to €500,000, two up to €250,000, four up to €100,000 and under and one Project Development proposal up to €50,000. Under the scheme the Department set out clear Priority Categories A, B including Priority A1 seeking applications for Remote Work facilities as part of re-use of Town Centre vacant properties.
- The Scheme was designed to meet objectives of the Our Rural Future Strategy launched in 2021. Staff reviewed 20 Expression of Interest which resulted in applications being put forward for Tuam (€400k), Clifden (€250k), Athenry (€100k), Leenane (€250k), Barnadearg (€100k), Kilconnell (€28k), Town Health Checks (€50k) and Project Development of Woodford Courthouse (50k).
- Support continued in 2020 for Town and Village Projects valued at €1.7m (Main Scheme, 2019 and 2020 and Accelerated Measures that are ongoing). Investment under the approved applications range from rural infrastructure, re-use of community properties for hubs (Baile Chláir and Creggs), public realm (Gort) and promotional funding was made available as part of a COVID response Accelerated Measure, invested in www.connemara.ie to support a challenging year for Tourism. The following is the overview of the position as at end of October 2021.

GRANT APPROVED	TOWN / VILLAGE MAIN SCHEME	
€ 200,000.00	Oranmore	Ongoing
€ 100,000.00	Craughwell	Complete
€ 80,000.00	An Cheathrú Rua	Complete
€ 100,000.00	Corofin	Complete
€ 100,000.00	Killimor	Complete
€ 72,000.00	Tir An Fhia, Leitir Móir	Complete
€ 100,000.00	Ballygluinin	Ongoing



€	200,000.00	Claregalway Báile Chlair	Ongoing
€	100,000.00	Portumna	Ongoing
€	100,000.00	Belclare	Final Phase
€	100,000.00	Castleblakeney	Ongoing
€	90,000.00	Creggs	Ongoing
€	100,000.00	Leitir Móir	Ongoing

TOWN AND VILLAGE ACCELERATED MEASURE 2020 WHICH CONTINUED INTO 2021.	GRANT AMOUNT TVAC	
Ballinasloe	€40,000.00	Complete
Gort	€24,750.00	Complete
Clonbur An Fhairce	€19,800.00	Complete
Athenry	€24,887.00	Complete
County-wide Initiative	€24,750.00	Complete
Connemara	€36,000.00	Complete
Mountbellew	€21,618.00	Final Phase
Clifden	€25,000.00	Complete
Milltown Hub	€25,000.00	Complete



Killimor Hub	€25,000.00	Complete
Broadband Connection Points (5 locations)	€39,118.00	In final Phase (4 project completed)
Tuam	€39,600.00	Complete
Glenamaddy	€25,000.00	Complete
Loughrea	€25,000.00	Final Phase
Mullagh	€19,800.00	Final Phase
	€415,323.00	

CLÁR PROGRAMME

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES 2021:

- Staff continued to support the projects which were approved in 2020 and to work closely with colleagues in Operations and Infrastructure to identify project under Measure One, which supports infrastructure at Schools and Community Facilities.
- In 2021, CLÁR Measure Two in Community Recreation was expanded to include Skateboard Parks and Playgrounds. €284,000 in grant funding was secured under the CLÁR 2021 programme including two new community playgrounds.
 - Clonberne - School Parking
 - Woodford – Section of Path to Derrycraig Wood
 - Lurga – MUGA facility
 - Skehana - Playground
 - Glinsk - Playground
 - Abbey- MUGA facility
 - Inis Mór - Community Garden
- Three proposals were submitted under a new stream in 2021 – CLÁR Innovation Measure with decision due in Q4 2021.

TOWN & VILLAGE - NATIONAL STREETScape SCHEME

- In August 2021, DRCD introduced the National Streetscape Scheme – Town and Village Renewal Programme as an action emerging from Our Rural Future Strategy launched in 2021. The Council put forward the maximum of six locations allowed with Ballygar, Glenamaddy, Headford, Loughrea, Oranmore and Oughterard selected for inclusion.
- While the timeframes for the scheme were very demanding the ERCD Unit worked closely with the selected towns in order to maximise the impact of the funding, taking learnings from the pilot schemes which were undertaken in Athenry and Ballinasloe. The initial allocation was up to €320,000 but a case was made for extra funding and an additional allocation of approximately €72,000 was received. Following contact with the Department a more realistic timeframe within which works could be completed was secured.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- Continue to identify funding opportunities under Our Rural Future Strategy to help deliver rural development objectives bearing in mind the County Development Plan and in its settlement strategy and for dispersed rural areas.
- Submit Applications under the 2022 Town and Village Renewal Scheme aligned with its priority objectives to maximise investment in the County. Commence 2021 approved projects in QT 1 2022 (Decision due on T&V 2021 application in November 2021) Support Community Groups to close out on 2019 and 2020 projects. (23 projects).
- Roll-out agreed actions under the Regional Hub Strategy
- Submit Applications for the 2022 CLÁR programme and close out on 2020 and 2021 Programme.

OUTDOOR RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE SCHEME (ORIS)

The Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) contributes to the strategic objective of strengthened rural economies and communities as set out in the Project Ireland 2040 strategy. The objective of the Scheme is to provide funding for the development of new outdoor recreational infrastructure and for the necessary repair, enhancement or promotion of existing outdoor recreation infrastructure in countryside areas across Ireland.

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES 2021:

- Work continued to ensure the delivery of a number of projects approved in previous years. These included Clonbur Cycle Trail, Kilcornan Trail, Portumna Way Loop, The Walks Project Loughrea, Lúibin Leitir Móir, Knockdoemore - Lackagh Walking Trail (all Measure 2) and the Connemara Trails and Eurovelo Route (Measure 3) as well as a number of measure 1 projects.

ORIS 2021 provided for several measures as follows:

- Measure 1: Small Scale Repair/Development/Promotion and Marketing Grant Amounts: Up to seven projects per LA to the value of €20,000.
- Measure 2: Medium Scale Repair/Upgrade and New Trail/Amenity Development Grant Amounts: Up to three projects per LA to the value of €200,000.
- Measure 3: Strategic Large Scale Repair/Upgrade and New Strategic Trail/Amenity Development Grant amounts: Up to one project per LA to the value of €500,000.
- Project Development Measure: Development Costs for Strategic Large Scale Projects – One project up to the value of €50,000.
- Six projects were submitted under Measure 1 and were funded as follows:

MEASURE 1 FUNDING RECEIVED FOR THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS -2021

Connemara Greenway Maintenance	Upgrades to the completed 15kms of the Connemara Greenway	Connemara, Co. Galway	€17,000.00
The Wheels of Athenry Cycle Trail	The installation of cycle trail markers and bike repair stations along the "The Duck route", The Esker Pilgrim Peddle and "Moonbaun Petal Path" and the design and printing of brochures.	Athenry, Co. Galway	€19,800.00
Cill Mhuirbhígh Beach Maintenance	Provision of additional outdoor showering and upgraded toilet facilities at Cill Mhuirbhígh Blue Flag Beach, Inis Mór, Oiléain Árann.	Inis Mór, Oiléain Árann	€19,800.00



Sandybanks Lane Walkway	To reopen, repair and enhance Sandybanks Lane Walkway.	Gortnamona, Headford, Co. Galway	€17,910.00
Annaghdown Pier	Maintenance of shallow swimming area, pier structure and bank wall, lifebuoy provision and maintenance, provision of lifebuoys.	Annaghdown, Co. Galway	€20,000.00
Lúibín Gharumna Trail	Development and enhancement of trail to include trail furniture, signage and interpretation panels including Blueway panels.	Leitir Móir, Co. na Gaillimh	€19,637.64

SUBMITTED UNDER MEASURES 2 & 3

- The following applications were submitted under Measures 2 & 3 with expected announcement on successful projects prior to year-end.

Measure	Project Name	Outline	Grant Sought
M2	The Walks Loughrea	Continuation of work on regeneration of the walks	€200,000
M2	Woodford Millennium Oak Forest	Forest paths; trails and recreational area to make the project accessible for local; national and international ecotourism	€200,000



M2	Atlantic Waterfall Walk Letterfrack	Upgrade an existing loop trail through an old woodland with a stream with a series of small waterfalls	€200,000
M3	Portumna Blueway, Wayfinding, Sculpture Park	The project consists of Portumna Blueway (Phases 2 & 3), a Sculpture Trail (Phase 1) and the Outdoor Recreation Wayfinding project, part of the overall plan for the development of Portumna as a tourism destination	€499,585

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- Continue to support the delivery of already approved schemes
- Work with the various stakeholders to ensure a strategic approach is taken in relation to ORIS
- Submit applications under ORIS 2022

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (LCDC)

The core functions of the LCDC are to implement the community elements of the Local Economic & Community Plan, and co-ordinate, manage and oversee the implementation of local and community programmes on behalf of the Department of Rural and Community Development. The LCDC has held 4 online meetings to date this year in addition to meetings of sub-committees dealing with SICAP, Health and Wellbeing, and Funding Evaluations, which are tasked with detailed assessment of programmes and making recommendations to the LCDC. All funding applications are assessed to ensure they are in line with the objectives of the LECP to ensure that the project proposals are addressing disadvantage as set out in the LECP. A further two meetings of the LCDC are due to take place in November and December as well as additional meetings of the various sub-committees. Key activities in the year to date include:



- A second round of the COVID-19 Emergency Fund totalling €53,203 was allocated to 45 applicants targeting support for frontline services, running costs, and a range of wellbeing activities, to ensure the sustainability of these services during the ongoing pandemic.
- An allocation of €143,401 was received under the Community Enhancement Programme 2021 to target the development and sustainability of Community Facilities and 72 applications were funded with amounts awarded from €250 - €10,000.
- An allocation of €30,533.17 was received for the Social Enterprises Capital Grants Scheme 2021, to be allocated in small-scale capital grants to Social Enterprises under Dormant Accounts Funding which requires prior approval by the Department prior to notifying applicants.
- In line with the co-ordination role of the LCDC, presentations were received from GRETB Youth Services, Comhairle na nÓg, Planet Youth and Galway Rural Development Youth Officer on the topic of youth services provision and funding to identify gaps in services.
- Following a 1-year extension to the SICAP Programme nationally, each LCDC was required to undertake a Mid-Programme Review to determine priority areas for the remaining 2 years of the Programme and the following 3 areas were selected as priorities by the LCDC: Mental Health, Older People and Isolation, New Communities, and will receive particular focus in the Annual Plans for 2022 and 2023.
- The LCDC and Health & Wellbeing Sub-Committee continued to monitor implementation of Round 3 of the Healthy Ireland Fund which amounts to €246,050 across several key actions which must be completed by 31st March 2022. In addition, an allocation of €67,225 was received under the Community Resilience Fund (Keep Well Campaign) with initiatives aimed at keeping people active and connected throughout the pandemic.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- A key area of work for 2022 is the development of the community elements for a new 6-year Local Economic & Community Plan 2022-2028 through targeted discussions with the LCDC and other interagency structures, and a comprehensive public consultation process. The initial stage of this process will incorporate a review of the outcomes from the LECP 2016-2022 to identify key achievements, gaps and priorities moving forward.

AGE FRIENDLY PROGRAMME

The joint Age Friendly Alliance for Galway City and County is made up of key agencies who are tasked with delivering elements of an Age Friendly Strategy with the ultimate goal of making Galway “a great place in which to grow old”. Pending review and development of the LECP, the Alliance are implementing an agreed Work Plan for the Age Friendly Programme and some of the key achievements in 2021 are:

- A continued emphasis in all grant schemes on improving accessibility and safety of community facilities.
- Updates on the Pilot Healthy Homes project and associated processes for referrals to ensure that all Age Friendly Alliance members are aware of potential collaborations with the project.



- Continued focus under SICAP on the establishment of initiatives to combat social isolation and loneliness through Befriending Initiatives, and improve safety through initiatives such as Message in a Bottle, Trusted Tradesmen Registers, etc.
- A focus on small-scale grants schemes to enable events to take place at local level to celebrate Bealtaine, Positive Ageing Week, Social Inclusion Week, etc., in addition to flagship projects such as the Local Heroes exhibition in the Eyre Square Centre during Positive Ageing Week showcasing bio's of 27 active Older People from the City and County.
- Agreement was reached to restructure the Older Persons Council into separate structures for the City and County, in order to extend the numbers and reach of representation from all parts of the County, and this process will be completed by year end.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- A key area of work for 2022 is the establishment of an Inter-Departmental Committee to oversee all aspects of an age-friendly County including public realm works, active travel, housing, age friendly libraries and activities and small-scale grant schemes to promote social participation.
- Following the establishment and training of the Older Persons Council, work will commence on agreeing a structure for the provision of information on Services and Activities through the restructuring of the Directory of Services for Older People, and this will be done through a Working Group comprising other members of the Alliance who have a central role in providing information on services, volunteering opportunities, etc.

COMHAIRLE NA NÓG

Comhairle na nÓg are Youth Councils for young people under 18 years of age to give them an opportunity to be involved in the development of local services and policies and 'have a voice' in matters which affect them. Comhairle na nÓg is co-ordinated by Youth Work Ireland with Galway County Council overseeing a Steering Group and providing a link to decision-makers and consultations which affect young people. Some of the key activities in 2021 were:

- Comhairle na nÓg were shortlisted for a Cathaoirleach Award in the Health & Wellbeing Category for their work on their 2020 topic of Mental Health, by carrying out a countywide survey on youth mental health and creating a Top Tips Booklet to help young people through the challenges of the pandemic.
- Comhairle na nÓg then went on to record radio adverts highlighting the importance of normalising discussions around mental health and these will be aired on local radio stations from Mental Health Week onwards to target adults, and animation will be developed to produce TikTok videos to target youth.

- Two of the Comhairle Committee Members presented to the LCDC on the findings of their survey highlighting gaps in youth mental health services and recreation facilities for young people across the County.
- Comhairle Members have worked on their 2021 topic of “Body Positivity and Self-Confidence” by engaging with relevant agencies with a view to running a promotional social media campaign.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- Comhairle na nÓg is funded through an allocation of €20,000 from the DCEDIY (Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth) and following the publication of a 5-Year Development Plan for Comhairle na nÓg in 2021, an additional €5,000 p.a. is being allocated to increase engagement with decision-makers, and with seldom-heard youth, through the development of a Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

TRAVELLER INTERAGENCY GROUP

The purpose of this Interagency Group is to improve the delivery of services to Travellers at County Level. It is comprised of statutory & community organisations, Traveller representative bodies, and is chaired independently by Mr. Niall Crowley. The Group has held 4 meetings in 2021 to discuss local implementation of the National Traveller & Roma Integration Strategy (NTRIS) and develop local initiatives such as:

- An application for funding towards Traveller Pride Week was successful which included the provision of a multi-agency pilot Foundation Training on cultural competency and the public sector duty, which will be further rolled out in 2022.
- A Good Practice Framework for Public Bodies responding to Traveller Ethnicity was also launched during Traveller Pride Week by all agencies on the TIG and will form the basis of initiatives to be developed within each Agency.
- A submission was made on the draft County Development Plan on behalf of the TIG.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- Terms of Reference have been agreed for an Education Sub-Group to address the poor education completion rates of Travellers and assess and address learnings from local initiatives such as the STAR and Education to Empower projects being undertaken by Western Traveller and Intercultural Development and Galway Traveller Movement respectively.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK (PPN)

There are now 1,081 groups registered to the PPN who receive regular updates on funding opportunities, consultations and training and events via e-mail and monthly newsletters.

KEY ACTIVITIES THROUGHOUT 2021 INCLUDE:

- Consultation sessions were held on the County Development Plan and the Structural Review of PPN's by the Department of Rural and Community Development. The Disability Forum made a submission to the Joint Committee on Disability Matters regarding the implementation of the UNCRPD (United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities).
- Election processes were undertaken for the PPN Representative Posts on the LCDC and Housing SPC.
- The newly formed Intercultural Forum continued to meet to agree its Constitution and initiatives to build on its role as a representative, collective voice for intercultural interests in the County.
- A series of training courses were held throughout the year including Five Ways to Wellbeing, Migrant Political Participation, Land-Use Management, Sustainable Gardening, and general training for all groups on GDPR, fundraising, Annual Reports, Board Roles & Responsibilities, etc.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- Training on the development of Community Wellbeing Statements was postponed by the Department of Rural and Community Development due to the pandemic, but it is hoped that this will recommence in 2022 with the development of a Countywide Vision for the PPN Members.
- The PPN will also continue to act as an information forum for its Member Groups, facilitating information sessions on funding schemes and acting as a consultative forum for policy such as the new LECP.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT SCHEMES AND SOCIAL INCLUSION FUNDING

The Community Support Schemes continue to provide almost quarter of a million euro in funding annually towards a wide range of events and projects which support volunteer activity in community, cultural and economic development and provide benefits to the wider community. Despite the impact of COVID-19 on events, there was still a high level of applications for the 2021 Support Schemes as demonstrated below:

	Community	Cultural	Economic	Total
No. of Applications received	155	100	52	307
No. of Applications funded	88	90	47	225

In addition to the Community Support Schemes, the Council rolled out a series of small-scale funding schemes for social inclusion activities related to National Play Day & Recreation Week, Bealtaine, Positive Ageing Week and Social Inclusion Week. These small-scale grants up to €400 have a straightforward application process and are aimed at spreading the benefit of social inclusion initiatives and activities right across the County.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- In order to spread the benefit of social inclusion activities right throughout the year, it is proposed to roll-out Social Inclusion Activity Grants as a separate small-scale funding scheme with the Community Support Schemes annually, which will enable the Community Support Scheme for Community Development to focus on the improvement of community and social infrastructure.

COMMUNITY AWARDS

- The Cathaoirleach Awards are an annual initiative to acknowledge the commitment of individuals and groups who participate in unpaid community and voluntary activities, and the significant impact which this has on quality of life in their communities. The Cathaoirleach Awards for 2020 were held online in June 2021 and recognised the significant input of community volunteers in the Community Call and other initiatives which enabled people to stay safe and well in their homes and communities during lockdowns. The Annual Awards are a joint initiative with the PPN and overall, 13 Awards were made across a range of categories.
- Galway County Council submitted 2 entrants to the National Pride of Place Awards 2021 – the purpose of this competition is to acknowledge the work being done by communities all across the island of Ireland over a range of categories. Killannan and Headford, entered into the Pride of Place Competition in 2021 with the Support of the Unit. Killannin Development Committee presented under the Theme of Community Resilience, highlighting Killannin's co-ordinated response to the Covid 19 Pandemic. Members of the "The Headford Lace" Project presented under the Theme of Creative Place, highlighting their work in reviving and re-imagining the lacemaking heritage of Headford.
- Although the Tidy Towns Competition was cancelled for the first time in 60 years in 2020, it returned in an online format in 2021, and our local Groups were supported to apply online and provide all information necessary to support the online judging process. Despite these changes, and the difficulties in carrying out works during restrictions, 42 Groups from the County entered the National Competition in 2021 and results are expected in mid-November. The budget for Tidy Towns was utilised to support Groups to target derelict abandoned properties in the Streetscape Enhancement Scheme, and to carry out pilot projects such as the Street Art project in Glenamaddy and other initiatives to add value to existing funding projects.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- Work will continue to streamline the timing of local Awards to tie in with national Awards processes.
- Targeted supports and training will continue to be provided to Tidy Towns Groups to enable them to continue to improve their marks in the National Competition, in addition to carrying out pilot projects particularly aimed at sustainable planting initiatives in town centre.

PROMOTING AND DEVELOPING ARTS ACTIVITY & CULTURE

INDICATIVE ACTIONS FOR 2021:

- Arts Grants: Arts Office administered, adjudicated and supported arts grants for voluntary groups and organisation to pursue the development of the Arts in the County through the Community Support Scheme (Culture) 2021.
- Advice and Advocacy: Provided ongoing professional arts information and advice to community groups, artists and organisations in the county. Provided continued professional development opportunities are planned in collaboration with ITI, VAI, Tulca, ISACS and Create.
- Public Art: Set up of Public Art Management group to oversee Public Art programme.
- Artists Bursaries: Offered bursaries to Artists to develop work and ensure excellence and rigour on peer assessment panels for all awards.
- Agents of Change: Continued to work with this network of festivals and producers to build capacity and resource sharing. Commissioning Performances
- Artists Residencies supported in 2021 included: Áras Éanna, Tyrone Guthrie Centre and Cultural Centre Irlandais Paris and local arts residencies and venues to include Interface Inagh Valley and Brigid's Garden.
- Platform 31: -Galway County Arts Office supported one County Galway based artist on this nationwide artist development scheme led by the 31 Local individual artists, festivals in the county and advisory service to adapt to Covid-19 restrictions. Alannah Robbins was selected as Galway County Artist by a national panel and received an €8,000 bursary to invest in her practice, combined with participation in an advisory and developmental framework and a national peer network.
- Children's Book Festival Book It: Programmed the Children's Book festival in collaboration with the library service.
- Artists in Schools: Created several school's projects with artists to deliver in depth programmes post lockdown in schools.

- Youth Creative Programme with Macnas & Galway Community Circus in 2021 with workshops taking place in Autumn 2021 with potential to perform live in 2022 in the outdoors.
- Work in partnership with Music Generation Galway County to support Music Education Programme in collaboration with GRET.B.
- Youth Arts Programmes: 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     do Ph    , Tulca, Galway Music Residency, Galway Junior Film Fleadh and Galway Film Centre who present and tour in the county.
- 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.
- Arts in Disability Review and Consultation: Working with our partners, Blue Teapot Theatre Company on a theatre and film project in the County with several their ID members. Began 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. Currently researching opportunities for an integrated approach for ID Artists and non-ID artists to work collaboratively.
- Creative Places Tuam: Arts Office continued to support this project and develop programmes in conjunction with Create in Tuam.
- Culture Night 2021: Delivered a successful Culture Night 2021 programme of events to include many new commissions and events took place both online and offline.
- Cultural Diversity Programme Commission: Worked in partnership with the newly formed Galway County Intercultural Forum to 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.
- Supported Aras      (Arts Centre on Inis O   ).
- Galway County Council's Creative Ireland Programme. Led, managed and administered the Creative Ireland Programme 2021 and directly curated and programmed Cruinni   na n  g 2021(national creative day for children) in Galway county.
- Local Live Performance Scheme: Designed, produced and delivered Ceol an tSamhraidh; a series of live music events to support the live entertainment sector in county Galway from August- October 2021 in collaboration with the Tourism Officer.
- Erasmus+: Galway County Council Arts Office took part in Erasmus + project Culture UP programme. This capacity building programme with Cultural Institutions and Local Authorities in non-urban and peripheral areas 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. This will continue into 2022.

- Specialist Staffing Scheme: Recruited an Assistant Arts Officer with the support of the Arts Council's Specialist Staffing Scheme on a three-year contract to support the Arts Office in the delivery of youth arts, festivals and community arts programmes.

PROPOSED ACTIONS FOR 2022:

- Arts Grants: Arts Office to administer, adjudicate and support arts grants for voluntary groups and organisation to pursue the development of the Arts in the County through the Community Support Scheme (Culture) 2022.
- Provide ongoing professional arts information and advice service to community groups, Develop a programme of Public Artwork through the Public Art Management group.
- Create a new database of artists & artists networking opportunity project will have been established to collect & communicate opportunities to practitioners living and working in county Galway.
- Platform 31: Following on from the successful pilot, we will support the 2nd Platform 31 which will offer a bursary and national network opportunity to one Galway County based artist in 2022.
- Virtual Production Bursary: Arts Office in collaboration with Galway Film Centre will support the Virtual Production Bursary which offers a huge opportunity for artists who specialise in other media to be trained in filmmaking. Virtual Production is a new production method which requires participation from artists with skills in 3D modelling, digital photography and photogrammetry
- Artists Bursaries: Offer bursaries to Artists to develop work and ensure excellence and rigour on peer assessment panels for all awards.
- Artists Residencies which will be supported in 2022 include: Áras Éanna, Tyrone Guthrie Centre and Cultural Centre Irlandais Paris and Interface Inagh Valley.

- Book It Festival 2022; continue to programme throughout October 2022, bringing writers and reading events to schools and libraries across the county.
- Artists in Schools- opportunity to offer six schools' artists in school's residencies in 2022.
- Creative Youth Programme - working with Galway Community Circus, Macnas and Live Music performance leaders to support performance opportunities for young Artists Galway County Council's Creative Ireland Programme 2022: Lead, manage and administer the Creative Ireland Programme, Creative Ireland Bursaries 2022 and directly curated and programmed Cruinniú na nÓg 2022 (national creative day for children) in Galway county.
- Erasmus+ Culture Up: Galway County Council Arts Office and Áras Eanna will take part in exchange visits to partners and will host a visit of the partners in county Galway in October 2022.
- Provide a programme fund to support creative priorities in the Arts & Disability area; working with organisations and individuals with expertise to ensure a more extensive and inclusive programme in county Galway for artists and people with intellectual and physical disabilities.
- Arts and Disability Projects: Whistleblast Orchestra; support the Galway based performance. The WhistleBlast Quartet propose leading a project wherein an opera will be composed by young people with disabilities and performed by them in conjunction with the Quartet, Electric Orchestra a four-piece group with disabilities from Galway county and students from the Royal Irish Academy of Music.
- Arts in Older Years: Capture the creativity and contribution of older people in county Galway through artists' commissions across a wide range of artforms and engage with local and national organisations such as Age & Opportunity, Age Action and Galway Older People's Council.
- Festivals: We take the lead on delivering and supporting festivals and events to programme & commission quality arts experiences to enhance and animate their community and festivals. Directly support a capacity building programme to allow for a pilot festival administrator for 2 main volunteer led festivals - Traidphicnic and Shorelines Arts Festival and Clifden Arts Festival.
- Support East Galway Fit up Festival (Three Rings Festival Team) in 2022 for a 3 week programme, expanding on its 1 week in inaugural festival in 2021.
- Support Invitation to Collaboration Project with Clare County Council to support a four-week community residency and performance of House with Fidget Feet in collaboration with Oranmore Arts Festival in May 2022.
- Work directly with Creative Places Tuam to fund community led arts projects in Tuam.
- Continue to work with Cuirt to develop a programme in the county with members of the intercultural forum to programme work in the festival for 2022.
- Work directly with Galway Film Centre/UNESCO city of Film on the Misleór Bursary: A new initiative to directly support diverse voices in Galway.

- Support Aras Éanna (Arts Centre on Inis Oírr).
- Public Art: Continue to develop a programme of Public Artwork through the Public Art Management group.
- Culture Night 2022. Continue to invest in the Culture Night Programmes with opportunities to commission new work and work with new communities.

LOCAL SPORTS PARTNERSHIP

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES 2021:

- Sourced and secured funding from Sport Ireland, Dormant Accounts, HSE, Local Authorities, National Transport Agency, Healthy Galway amongst others to deliver programmes in sport and physical activity for all target groups within Galway.
- Initiatives for the majority of 2021 were virtually delivered either through online or hand delivered documents to encourage and support physical activity and staying active.
- Secured three additional staff members – two community sports development officers and one social inclusion disability officer who work closely with clubs, community groups and general public on participation and engagement programmes.
- Secured funding for Covid-19 Resilience funding (€180,000) for clubs and groups across Galway from Sport Ireland which supported the impact of covid-19 on sport and physical activity.
- Community Sports Hub- Islands - secured funding from Dormant Accounts Fund to deliver a new community sports hub. This 5-year project will include employment for local Island resident. This project was delayed due to the pandemic and will be commencing in 2022.
- Urban Outdoor – secured funding from Dormant Accounts Fund to support a new initiative in Tuam whereby a focus on outdoor activity will commence in 2022. This 2-year project will include employment for local resident.
 - Older adults – chair yoga, chair exercise, booklets for exercise, nursing home visits, swimming, mobility, S&C for Masters Basketball
 - General Online programmes included yoga every Saturday morning, pilates, exercise classes, tai chi, dance

- Wellness programmes included meditation, mindfulness, guided meditation, mental health webinars
- 5 x Dr Eddie Webinars which focussed on supporting people mental health with over 3000 people registered to attend
- Delivered Training Programmes – Safeguarding 1, 2 and 3, First Aid, Cycle Training, Disability Inclusion Training, Disability Awareness Training, Coaching Children Workshops
- Delivered Disability specific programmes – boccia, walking football, learn 2 cycle, Boccia ongoing, learn to cycle programme being delivered in Presentation National school.
- Introduced over 1500 children to Marathon Kids Ireland where they will complete a marathon over 8 weeks, learn about health, wellbeing and nutrition. Galway is the first Local Authority outside of Dublin to deliver this programme
- Arranged and facilitated meetings of GSP Steering group and relevant workgroups throughout 2021
- Applied to and secured funding from the National Transport Agency towards the delivery of events and programmes for Bike Week 2021. A total of 8 events in the county took place as part of Bike Week celebrations involving a total of 569 adults and children.
- Organised and delivered physical activity programmes for older adults as part of the Bealtaine festival 2021. Printed and distributed older adults exercise leaflets around the county.
- Secured additional investment for disability equipment like power chairs, tandem bikes
- Adopted the Governance Code for Sport and the 5th Local Sports Partnership in the country to do so. Galway's documents are used as examples of best practice

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- Apply for and secure CORE funding from Sport Ireland to fund general operations of Galway Sports Partnership for 2022.



- Funding received from Dormant Accounts funds to deliver our Community Sport Hub in Ballinasloe and one additional location, Urban Outdoor Adventure Initiatives in Tuam and funding for three other programmes across Galway in 2022- Youth Leadership, Volunteer training and Disability activity.
- Deliver Operation Transformation Walk on Wednesday Challenge to more residents than ever before and kick start 2022 with health and wellbeing focus
- Deliver pilot of Girls' panel which focuses on understanding the barriers to participation for teenage girls from all different backgrounds
- Develop Schools of Sport to impact DEIS schools and introduce more physical activities to the region
- Deliver pilot project in Ballinasloe to support integration of sport and physical activity into the region and support building the capacity of clubs and groups
- Apply for, secure funding from HSE and deliver walking programmes, swimming programmes, Men on the Move programmes and Couch 2 5K programmes across Galway, social isolation programmes, community connection programmes and educational and training programmes for Traveller community
- Introduce a variety of programmes that target women and girls, older adults, people with disability, members of traveller community, men 45+ amongst many others
- 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.
- Apply to and secure funding from the National Transport Agency towards the delivery of events and programmes for Bike Week 2022.
- Organise and deliver physical activity programmes for older adults as part of the Bealtaine festival 2022.
- Maintain compliance with Governance Code for Sport
- Deliver participation plan as set out in early 2021 for the period 2021 to 2022 which focuses on positive outcomes in the most disadvantaged groups and rural areas. Significant more delivery of programmes through Irish language in Gaeltacht regions

Continue to represent, support, advocate on alliances such as Older Adult groups, Disability Groups, National Policy groups, working groups, Galway Traveller movement.

LOCAL ENTERPRISE UNIT (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 2021:

- Provide an excellent and effective First Stop Shop for businesses in Galway County & City
- Delivery of Covid -19 supports as directed by Government. These included Business Continuity Vouchers, Trading On-line Vouchers, Microfinance loan funding support, Mentoring and advisory support.
- Delivery of Green for Micro and Lean for Micro Initiatives.
- 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 2022:

- 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)
- Delivery of Green for Micro and Lean for Micro Initiatives.
- 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 in 2022.



INFRASTRUCTURE AND OPERATIONS UNIT

DIVISION B – ROADS, TRANSPORTATION AND SAFETY

Notification has not yet been received of grants for 2022 from Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (DTTS). The figures included in the budget for 2022 are therefore in line with the 2021 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

NATIONAL ROADS MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT WORKS

NATIONAL ROADS - INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021

Funding was provided in 2021 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
N6	Galway City Ring Road
N59	Clifden to Maam Cross
N59	Maigh Cuilinn Bypass
N67	Ballinderreen to Kinvara Realignment
N59	Maam Cross/Oughterard
N63	Liss to Abbey Realignment
N17	Milltown to Gortnagunnad Realignment
N84	City Boundary to Clonboo
NCN	Galway to Athlone Cycleway
	Galway to Clifden Greenway

- N6 Galway City Ring Road - An Bord Pleanála closed the Oral Hearing on the 4th November 2020. The decision is due from An Bord Pleanála by the 19th November 2021 (HA07.302848)
- N67 Ballinderreen to Kinvara Realignment – Construction works were successfully concluded on the N67 Ballinderreen to Kinvara Road Realignment with substantial completion being achieved in July 2021. Snagging will continue during the remainder of 2021 and into early 2022.
- 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 and the section was certified as substantially complete on the 30th July 2021. Phase 2 Bunnakill to Claremount - is the subject of ongoing discussions and communications with National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) and Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI). A method statement has been agreed with the NPWS & IFI for an advance

fencing contract from Bunnakill to Claremount and a contractor was appointed for the works. Fencing works and some small site clearance works to facilitate same were completed in Q2 2021. Progression of land acquisition on the scheme from Maam Cross - Claremount is ongoing.

- NCN Galway to Athlone cycleway - Route Corridor Options & public consultation was held in January and February 2021. Liaison with landowners on preferred route corridor to proceed, with preferred route to be selected Q3, 2022. Design and Environmental Evaluation to be carried out Q3 & Q4.
- N59 Maigh Cuillinn Bypass – tender process was completed, and a contractor has been appointed to carry out the main construction for the N59 Maigh Cuillinn Bypass. The scheme will consist of 4.6km of single carriageway cross-section. The contractor is to establish their presence on site in Q4 2021 and first tasks to be undertaken will be to commence site clearance and provision of access to bridge structures.
- N63 Abbeyknockmoy to Annagh Hill - snagging and land settlements continued to be addressed during 2021.
- N63 Liss to Abbey Realignment Scheme – Scheme progressed through Phases 2 and 3 of the TII Project Management Guidelines with an emerging preferred route selected.
- Galway to Clifden (Conamara Greenway) – construction is ongoing on sections between Clifden and Recess.
- Galway to Oughterard (Conamara Greenway) – consultants have been appointed to progress this scheme through phases 0-4 of the 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 2021 grant allocations from Transport Infrastructure Ireland.

NATIONAL ROADS - PROPOSALS FOR 2022 :

- N59 Maigh Cuillinn Bypass – It is anticipated that construction work will be underway in early 2022, with a 24-month construction programme. The main elements of the proposed scheme include 4.6km of type 1 single carriageway, realignment of the Knockferry roads over 850m, 1.7km of farm/accommodation roads, 2 no. at-grade roundabouts and 8 structures consisting of 5 bridges, 2 underpasses and 1 culvert.



- N6 Galway City Ring Road - Subject to ABP decision, legal challenges and available funding, the project can progress to the next stages - land and property acquisition, detailed design and enabling works. The procurement of a contractor and the main construction phase to follow in subsequent years.
- NCN Galway to Athlone cycleway - Liaison with landowners on preferred route corridor to proceed, with preferred route to be selected Q3, 2022. Design and environmental evaluation to be carried out Q3 & Q4.
- N67 Ballindereen to Kinvara Realignment – It is proposed that the defects liability period will conclude in July 2022, with all snag items having been addressed and final account agreed.
- Maam Cross to Bunnakill - It is proposed that the defects liability period will conclude in July 2022 with all snag items having been addressed and final account agreed.
- Bunnakill to Claremont - Progression of method statements for other aspects of the Bunnakill to Claremont section with National Parks & Wildlife Services (NPWS) & Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) such as advance contracts for ground investigation works and topographic surveys and archaeology investigations in 2022. It is hoped to progress to the detailed design for Bunnakill to Claremont in 2022 based on the outcome of the initial surveys and investigations. Discussions will continue with NPWS & IFI in relation to construction stage method statements for the remaining section Bunnakill to Claremont pending development of the detailed design.
- 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 2022.
- Galway to Clifden Greenway - complete remaining 6km from Clifden to Recess. Land acquisition on going.
- The annual resurfacing and maintenance programme incorporating ordinary maintenance, 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 2022 grant allocations from Transport Infrastructure Ireland.



REGIONAL AND LOCAL ROADS MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT WORKS

The 2021 total grant allocation of **€35,514,808** for Regional and Local Roads divides as follows:

Restoration Improvement (RI) Works €30,395,308

Restoration Maintenance (RM) Works € 5,119,500

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

Grant Category	2021 Allocation
Restoration Improvement Grant	€17,847,000
Restoration Maintenance Grant	€2,986,000
Supplementary Restoration Maintenance	€2,133,000
Discretionary Maintenance Grant	€5,711,000
Specific Improvement Grants – Bridge Rehabilitation Programme	€620,000
Low Cost Safety Improvement Grants	€400,000
Specific Improvement Grants	€1,900,000
Strategic Regional and Local Roads	€1,000,000
Speed Limits – Housing Estates	€13,125
Training	€128,000
Drainage Works	€1,397,683
Community Involvement Scheme	€953,000
Former National Roads	€373,500
PSCI: Survey Support	€ 52,000
OVERALL TOTAL	€35,514,808



RESTORATION IMPROVEMENT (RI) - Indicative Activities in 2021

Funding of €17,847,000 was allocated by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport for road reconstruction works on Non-National roads in 2021. Provision was made to transfer €1,008,176 from the Supplementary Restoration Maintenance allocation to the Restoration Improvement grant giving a grand total of €18,855,176 being spent on road reconstruction during 2021. This funding was allocated as follows and facilitated improvement works at 257 locations throughout the County:

<i>Restoration Improvement 2021</i>		
Municipal District	No. of locations	Allocation
Athenry/Oranmore	25	€1,810,239
Ballinasloe	34	€ 4,300,576
Conamara	100	€ 4,303,923
Loughrea	55	€ 5,613,762
Tuam	43	€ 2,826,676
Total	257	€ 18,855,176

2021 was the last year of the 2018-2021 Multi-Annual (RI) roads programme. In accordance with RW11/2021 a submission for the 2022-2024 Multi-Annual Restoration Improvement Programme was submitted to the Department of Transport in the end of October 2021. This programme was collated in conjunction with the elected members and approved by the Municipal District Councils during October 2021. This programme forms the basis of planned works under Restoration Improvement works for the next three years.

RESTORATION IMPROVEMENT (RI) - PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

A programme of restoration improvement works will be compiled when notification of the 2022 funding is received and will be detailed in the Annual Roads Programme 2022.

Restoration Maintenance (RM) - Indicative Activities in 2021:

Funding of €5,119,500 was allocated for Restoration Maintenance (surface dressing) by the Department of Transport. It was decided to transfer €1,008,176 of the Supplementary Restoration Maintenance allocation to restoration improvement works, which resulted in a grand total of €4,111,324 being spent on surface dressing works for 2021. It was allocated as follows and facilitated surface dressing works at 151 locations around the County:

Restoration Maintenance 2021		
Municipal District	No. of locations	Allocation
Athenry/Oranmore	13	€ 452,150
Ballinasloe	37	€1,233,639
Conamara	32	€534,634
Loughrea	32	€1,080,055
Tuam	37	€810,846
Total	151	€ 4,111,324

RESTORATION MAINTENANCE (RM) - PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

A programme of restoration maintenance works will be compiled when notification of the 2022 funding is received and will be detailed in the Annual Roads Programme 2022.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT SCHEMES

As part of the 2021 Regional & Local Road allocation, the Department of Transport approved funding in the amount of €953,000, which allowed the progression of 42 projects from the priority list that was submitted in 2019. Work is still in progress for these schemes, with the intention of completion by funding allocation deadline of 30th November 2021.

In accordance with RW09/2021 a priority list of 75 projects for 2022-2023 programme was submitted to the Department in September 2021. It is intended to progress 37 projects in 2022, however this is subject to funding approval under the Regional & Local Road allocation which is expected to be announced in Q1, 2022.

TERTIARY ROAD REPAIRS (DG)

Investment in Local Tertiary roads repairs continued in 2021 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 44 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 2022 funding is received.

BRIDGES REHABILITATION AND REPAIRS

14 bridges were allocated funding, totalling €620,000, under the Bridge Rehabilitation Programme in 2021 for which works are ongoing and is expected to be completed by the end of November deadline. Bridge repair works were completed on a further 20 bridges, which were allocated funding of €395,000 from the Discretionary Grant.

In accordance with circular RW15/2021, each local authority was invited to submit applications for bridge rehabilitation and repair works, of which the total should not exceed 130% of 2021 allocation. Based on this and available resources to carry out the works in 2022, a submission for 15 no. projects was submitted to the Department for approval, totalling €745,000. Details of proposed bridge rehabilitation projects for 2022 is set out in the table below.

Proposed Bridge Rehabilitation Programme 2022			
<i>*Subject to Departmental approval</i>			
Priority	Road Number	Bridge Name and Location	2022 Proposed Expenditure €
1	R364	Fiddaun, Moylough	35,000
2	R363	Carrmore, Ballybaun	15,000
3	L6354	Cloonshivna, Ballygar	20,000
4	L5229	Sruthan Buí, Leitir Mór	70,000



5	L5231	Coonawilleen, Leitir Mór	70,000
6	L7403	Ballintleva, Caltra	15,000
7	R336	Doirriu, Ros a'Mhíl	80,000
8	L12010	Formaoil, Seanadh Phéistín	120,000
9	L2212	Ballymary, Milltown	15,000
10	R359	Woodlawn, Killaan	20,000
11	L53211	Baile Dhulocha, Corr na Móna	20,000
12	L4322	Oxgrove, Killimor	70,000
13	R348	Suck Bridge, Ballinasloe	150,000
14	TBC	Tirneevin, Gort	25,000
15	L2314	Timacat, Glenamaddy	20,000
Total			€ 745,000

It is intended to continue to make provision from the Discretionary Grant allocation for bridge repairs in the amount of €395,000 for 2022. This is dependent on the level of funding allocated by the Department. Full details of approved works will be detailed in the Roads Programme 2022.

SPECIFIC IMPROVEMENT GRANTS (SIG)

A specific improvement grant allocation, totalling € 1,900,000, was received for 2 projects in 2021:

- R374 Causeways & Bridges
- R332 Kilbannon

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 and R374 Causeways & Bridges. An application for funding under this category was also made for the R339 Belville Athenry. Notification will be received from the Department of Transport, in February 2022, of the schemes which are to proceed, with the relevant funding also being advised.

STRATEGIC REGIONAL AND LOCAL ROAD GRANTS

In 2021, an allocation of €1m was received for the Athenry Relief Road, this project is still ongoing. It is not expected to have this full allocation by November 2021 and a request has been sent to the Department for any unspent allocation to be used on alternative projects by 2021 deadline.

Submissions have been made by Galway County Council to the Department for funding for suitable schemes, including the Athenry Relief Road. Notification will be received from Department of Transport, in February 2022, of the schemes which are to proceed, with the relevant funding also being advised.

LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES

The Local Improvement Scheme was re-advertised in January 2021. 237 valid applications with an estimated value of €10.8 million was received. In July 2021 the Department of Rural & Community Development approved an initial allocation of €876,959. In early August 2021, an additional €703,912 was allocated to Galway County for this scheme.

49 projects were completed under the Local Improvement Scheme from a total allocation of €1,580,871 for 2021 from the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD).

Due to the popularity of the scheme, it is anticipated that the LIS funding will continue in 2022. The amount of funding available will be dependent on funding allocation from Department of Rural & Community Development. An estimate for Budget 2022 included under SubServ B0406 is based on the initial allocation received in 2021.

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 works the Council has been able to carry out. 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 2021 was €6,357,772 which included provision of €1,350,000 for public lighting.

The distribution of the Local Roads Budget 2022 will be presented to Council for approval in the context of the Roads Programme 2022. The level of discretion that will be available to the Council in the allocation of funding in 2022 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.

CLIMATE CHANGE

During 2021, a national allocation was made available to local authorities under the Department's regional and local road maintenance and renewal grant programmes for Climate Adaptation and Resilience scheme. The eligible projects could include but are not limited to the following –

- (i) preventative measures such as drainage works to mitigate flooding
- (ii) works at bridges to take account of increased hydraulic loads due to flash floods
- (iii) protection measures for roads which would be vulnerable to severe weather events such as embankment stability measures to protect the road and prevent slippage
- (iv) altering the level or the road to mitigate flooding, road edge protection measures
- (v) replacement/repair of seawalls or retaining walls.

Galway County Council made a submission in accordance with circular RW6/2021 which was circulated in March 2021 and was approved €1,177,500 to carry out works at 34 locations.

Provision for just over €1m approx. has been made in the budget 2022 in anticipation of funding being available for such projects. A submission was made to the Department in October 2021. It is anticipated that any approved funding under this category will form part of the Regional & Local Road Allocation, which is expected to be announced in February 2022.

PUBLIC LIGHTING

A sum of €1,350,000 was provided, from Council's own funds, in the 2021 budget to fund the cost of the public lighting programme in County Galway, including the maintenance, energy and upgrade costs, while funding of €128,536.00 was provided by the TII to cover the cost of the operation & maintenance of public light on the National Road Network. It is proposed to maintain same budget level for 2022

To achieve compliance with National Energy Efficiency statutory targets set by Central Government Galway County Council is committed to the retrofit of all 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 2022.

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

The Traffic fine system was upgraded in 2021 to an inhouse system, which went live in July 2021. After dealing with some minor technical issues, the system is fully operational at year end. The provision of €30,000 under B0601 is for implementation and ongoing maintenance of our Traffic fine system.

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 2022 budget.

TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENT MEASURES

A sum of €10,000 exclusive of service support costs has been provided in the budget to progress 'Bike Week' in the County of Galway.

ROAD SAFETY ENGINEERING IMPROVEMENT

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 €400,000 from Department of Transport in 2021 enabled works to be carried out in various locations across the County. Provision has been made for €400,000 exclusive of service support costs under the Low-Cost Safety Improvement works in budget 2022. The level of works to be undertaken in this area will be dependent upon the amount of grant funding made available by TII/DOT.

A submission was made by Galway County Council in accordance with Circular RW 16 of 2021 outlining proposals for 2022 in order of priority as set out below with a total estimate cost of €642,500 which is subject to approval by the Department of Transport. If all projects as per submission are approved, it will be 100% recoupable from the Department.



Proposed Safety Improvement Works 2022

**Subject to funding approval from Department*

LA Rank	Road Number	Description of Location of Safety Improvement Works	Description of Proposed Scheme	Cost €
1	L8401/R446	Cahar Cross Junction	Advance warning signs & improve sight line by removal of hedge growth & tree	€30,000
2	R374	Eanach Mheáin, Beal an Dangan	Set back of walls to improve sight lines	€55,000
3	R328	Bridge at Knockatee East	Reduce bridge carriageway width to one lane, appropriate signage & anti-skid to new layout	€35,000
4	L2132/L6186	Junction at Knockdoe	Set back wall, rebuild existing wall & lower wall 2, remove trees and vegetation	€40,000
5	R351/L82241	Grallagh	Set back existing wall to improve visibility	€17,500
6	L3102	Cregmore Bridge	Provide traffic lights to operate a stop/go system at bridge, one lane operation at a time	€50,000
7	L2220	Ratesh Junction between L6447 & L2220	Removal of ditch on eastern side for L2220 to increase sight lines and provide passing bay along new fencing	€35,000
8	L5102	Letterettrin	Realign existing approach road to provide staggered junction	€30,000



9	R362/L2201/L2233	Cashel Cross, Glenamaddy	Realign existing approach road to provide staggered junction	€75,000
10	R348	Kilconnell Village	Provide anti-skid coating before Zebra crossing, renew markings and upgrade lighting to LED	€20,000
11	L1320	Cooney's bend – An Spidéal to Maigh Cuillinn road	Provide advance warning signs, chevrons and lining	€30,000
12	R360	Curragh West – sightlines	Set back fence and verge	€35,000
13	R339/L3101	Carnmore	Setback existing junction to improve visibility a	€40,000
14	R336	Scoil Sailerna, na hAille, Indreabhán	Install a controlled crossing for safe crossing of the road, additional signage and road markings	€50,000
15	L7119/L3105	Burma Rd	Set back wall to extend junction to improve sight lines	€30,000
16	R332	Grange	Set back ditch and removal of trees to improve sight lines	€25,000
17	L5248	Ard Thoir, Carna	Safety Barriers	€15,000
18	R446	Portiuncula Hospital at Dunlo	Upgrade signalised pedestrian crossing outside hospital	€30,000
				€642,500

OTHER ENGINEERING IMPROVEMENTS

A provision of €15,000 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 2022, depending on funding being made available by the Department of Transport. A provision of €7,500 has been made under B0702 in respect of same.

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.

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 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.

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.

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.

AGENCY AND RECOUPABLE SERVICES

The Council can 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.

UNFINISHED HOUSING ESTATES

Covid 19 and staff changes within the Taking in Charge section impacted on the number of estates completed for Taking in Charge and/or for Bond Release in 2021. To date, 5 estates are taken in charge, with an additional 3 estates deemed to taking in charge standard for Bond Release.

The Council is currently engaged with over 40 developments at various stages of 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.

In 2021, a Budget allocation of €200,000 was made by the Council, which is being used to fund works on several historical estates across the County, bringing these older estates to required standard for taking in charge.

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.

PROPOSALS 2022:

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.

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

AGENCY AND RECOUPABLE SERVICES

COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT SCHEME

During 2021, 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 in 2022.

LAND DRAINAGE COSTS

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 2022 is €175,000.

FLOOD MITIGATION WORKS AND STUDIES

Galway County Council continued working in partnership with the OPW during 2021 to identify and progress works aimed at reducing the risk of future flooding. Works at 9 locations are in progress under the minor works scheme for 2021, with 6 no. projects substantially complete by year end and the balance of 3 projects to be carried forward into 2022. A further 14 applications is due for submission mid-November for consideration by the OPW for approval.

Proposals for 2022 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, which is 90% recoupable from the OPW.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF PIERS AND HARBOURS

OPERATIONS OF PIERS AND HARBOURS

An allocation of €150,000 was provided from the Council's own resources in 2021 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. In addition, there was a need to commission various reports for piers and harbours under this allocation to inform works required under the Department of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine. DAFM provide funding of 75% of construction costs.

Improvement works to piers, part funded by the Department of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine, were completed in 2021 include Inishboffin, Aghrusmore, Árd Mór, Kilkieran, Aibhnin, Maumeen, Caladh Feenish, Trawbaun, Derryinver, An t-Oilean Mór and Garafin. There was a bundle of safety works carried out in South Galway area. As per the maintenance and repair programme, repairs were carried out on navigation lights and removal of silt and other obstruction at slipways has been carried out at a small number of locations, as financial resources allowed. Minor works part-funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development were carried out in Inis Mór, Inis Meáin and Inis Oírr.

An increase in budget to €200,000 for Operation and Maintenance of Piers and harbours is required in 2022. This is required to improve a seriously restricted system of maintenance, giving a total increase of €50,000 on 2021 budget allocation. €50,000 is proposed to cover the provision of a harbour master principally to cover Inis Oírr. March to October for the last number of years has proven very difficult to manage the increase in the numbers of passenger boats and consequently passenger numbers on an already limited pier resource on Inis Oírr. With the proposed introduction of Byelaws in early 2022 to manage the situation it is essential to provide a harbour master to manage the pier effectively. It is proposed to use any residual funding to cover the costs various initial consultants' reports including security assessment, safe system of work for island piers that are served by passenger ferries and commissioning of relevant environmental and engineering reports to progress projects to the planning phase to avail of DAFM funding into the future.

A first phase system of maintenance has been developed which will require additional maintenance funding to implement in 2023. This increase of €50,000 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 20 moorings. Provision of €20,000 for 2022 has also been made under this heading to continue the maintenance on yacht moorings.

A budget of €200,000 was provided in 2021 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 2022 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 2021:

- The Council continues to implement Irish Water's Capital Investment Programme, as an agent of Irish Water. Projects are prioritised by Irish Water to provide critical infrastructure which will help to achieve compliance with the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive and the Water Framework Directive. Investment priorities are set out in Irish Water's Capital Investment Plan which is prepared at least every five years and submitted to the Commission for Regulation of Utilities for approval of funding. In 2021, under the Infrastructure Programme works, substantial completion, including full road reinstatement, has been achieved on the Tuam Regional Water Supply extension to Loughrea and commissioning and handover of the scheme is expected to be completed by year end.
- Planning and design have progressed on the Athenry Sewerage Scheme Network project and it is expected that the project will go to tender before the end of the year.
- The result of the oral hearing for the Compulsory Purchase Order for the Roundstone Wastewater Treatment Plant proposed sites and wayleaves is expected to issue from An Bord Pleanála by the end of 2021.
- A decision on the CPO for the acquisition of the site for the Carraroe Wastewater Treatment Plant is awaited pending the outcome of two judicial reviews.
- Contracts were signed with Coffey Water Ltd to construct the wastewater treatment plants at Spiddal and Ahascragh on 23rd August 2021 and both projects have commenced construction.
- Under Irish Water's Treated Water Storage Programme, a contract was signed with Cleantech Civils Ltd to construct a new 1,500 m³ capacity reservoir at Gort. Work has commenced on site and it is expected to be substantially complete before the end of 2021.
- Planning and design will resume on three projects which have been pushed out to phase 2 of the Infrastructure Programme. These projects are Mountbellew, Ballygar and Eyrecourt wastewater treatment plants.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- It is expected that the Tuam RWSS extension to Loughrea will be fully operational early in 2022. The existing water treatment plants at Lake Road and Knockanimma will be decommissioned and Loughrea, Craughwell and environs will be supplied with treated water from Lough Corrib.
- Under the Infrastructure Programme, it is envisaged that new wastewater treatment plants at Spiddal and Ahascragh should be substantially complete by year end. Planning and design for new wastewater treatment plants at Roundstone and Carraroe will proceed to planning once the CPO processes are completed for both.
- Planning and design of new wastewater treatment plants for Mountbellew, Ballygar and Eyrecourt will progress with a view to going to tender on some, if not all, by year end.

MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF WATER AND WASTEWATER SCHEMES

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- The Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the Council and Irish Water continued to operate in 2021. 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.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- 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 2022.

WATER CONSERVATION

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- 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 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, Mains Decommissioning and First Fix. To date 29.7km of mains rehabilitation have been completed in areas of high leakage or where water quality issues required works to be undertaken. 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 2022:

- 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. Areas for rehabilitation have been identified and are currently at design stage with works planned to begin on site in 2022. Pressure management and metering works will continue to progress in tandem with leakage reduction.

RURAL WATER PROGRAMME

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- The Multi Annual Rural Water Programme (2019 -2021) is coming to a close but was significantly hampered due to the Covid pandemic which has made progress difficult to achieve. In addition, staff resources in Rural Water were below normal numbers throughout the year to date with the recruitment and retention of staff proving challenging. The Council will be engaging with the sector to compile the next Multi Annual Rural Water Programme 2022-2024. In the next programme the investment in the sector will be driven by looking at whole life costs when considering options for investment with sustainable and compliant water quality remaining the central objective. 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 2022:

- The main objective for 2022 is to compile an ambitious and focused Multi Annual Rural Water Programme and recruit the necessary staff to make sure it is implemented and delivered.

PLANNING & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND CORPORATE SERVICES

PLANNING FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021

- 1,996 Planning Applications have been received to date (27th October 2021).
- 5 Pre-application consultations have been attended with An Bord Pleanála under the new regulations for housing developments over 100 units.
- 28 preplanning meetings for major developments have taken place to date (27th October 2021).
- 89 Exempted Development applications have been processed to date (22nd October 2020).
- 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 (LARES),
 - Transportation Planning Strategy,
 - Housing Need Demand Assessment/Housing Strategy,
 - Urban Design Frameworks (Garraun/Briarhill),
 - SEA/AA/SFRA reports.
- Preparation of Tenders for the various plans and strategies for the Local Area Plans.
- Prepared the Draft County Development Plan 2022-2028 and placed on public display.
- Preparation of the CE report on the submissions made to the Draft County Development Plan 2022-2028 (2,887 submissions).
- Commenced Preparation and Developed a number of settlement plans for inclusion in the County Development Plan 2022-2028.
- Awarded funding under URDF with Irish Rail as our partners for the project at Garraun Oranmore.
- 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 An Scéim Teanga
- Participate in the National e-Planning initiative.
- Participate in the Town Team Initiative as a pilot local authority.
- 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 2022

CONTINUE THE PROCESS FOR THE PREPARATION/ ADOPTION 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/Housing strategy,
 - Urban Design Frameworks,
 - SEA/AA/SFRA reports.
- Preparation of the Material Alterations and Eventual Adoption of Draft County Development Plan 2022-2028.
 - Preparation of a Draft Local Area Plans for Tuam, Loughrea, Gort and Athenry.
 - Preparation of the SEA/SFRA/AA Reports for the LAPs for Tuam, Loughrea, Gort and Athenry.
 - Continue with the preparation/ amendments of a number of settlement plans for inclusion in the County Development Plan 2022-2028.
 - Provide Planning inputs into various Steering groups relevant to the County.
 - Participate in the National e-Planning initiative as a pilot local authority.
 - Participate in the Town Team Initiative/ RRDF Teams
 - Preparation of Public Realm strategies for identified Local Area Plan towns, where resources allow.
 - Participate 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.
 - Commence preparation of a masterplan for the former Galway Airport site.
 - Prepare Tenders for the Design of the local centre, carpark and open space provisions outlined in the Draft County Development Plan & URDF project for Garraun.
 - Prepare Tenders for a Topology Study for Garraun, Oranmore.
-

BUILDING CONTROL

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- 687 commencement notices have been received to 26th October 2021, which represents a 18% increase on this time last year.
- 115 completion certificates have been submitted and validated to 26th October 2020, which represents a 22% increase on this time last year.
- 109 inspections have been carried out by the Building Control Officer to ensure compliance with the Building Regulations to 26th October 2021.
- 850 new buildings and 136 new extensions commenced to 26th October 2021.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- 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 2021:

- 63 Warning Notices/Letters served to 27th October 2021.
- 10 Enforcement Notices served to 20th October 2021.
- 7 Files have been referred for legal action to 20th October 2021.
- 200 Unauthorised development complaints received to 27th October 2021.
- 73 approx. Enforcement Files have been resolved/closed as of the 20th October 2021.

PROPOSALS:

- 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.



HERITAGE

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- Athenry Virtual Walled Towns Day – This family fun day was held on Sunday 15 August 2020 and the theme was ‘Learning from our Heritage’. The videos, podcasts and documents showcased the wealth of the built and cultural heritage in medieval Athenry. TikTok Training for this year’s Athenry Virtual Medieval Walled Town Day also took place. This was delivered online on Galway Beo Facebook page and <https://heritage.galwaycommunityheritage.org/content/category/topics/athenry-virtual-walled-town-day>
- Athenry Town Walls Conservation Works - Applied for funding to the Heritage Council and undertaking works on the walls.
- Athenry Town Walls, Feasibility Study for a walkway around the walls - Applied to Heritage Council for funding. Report being completed.
- Loughrea Virtual Medieval Festival –This online event was premiered on Galway Beo Facebook page on 22nd 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. The videos, films, podcasts and documents uploaded on the website for all to enjoy and gain a greater awareness of the medieval heritage of Loughrea. TikTok Training for this year’s Loughrea Virtual Medieval Walled Town Day also took place.
- “Galway: Yours to Discover” On Galway Talks Keith Finnegan had an in depth look at the wealth of culture and heritage around Galway City and County. He highlighted some of our niche artisan food producers and talks with local people who are passionate about their local community and environment. This was a partnership initiative between Galway Bay FM, Healthy Ireland (Community and Enterprise) and Heritage Office.



- Heritage Grant Scheme as part of Community Grants: Assessed grants, assigned conditions to same and in the process of paying out grants. 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 and also preparing some invasive species management plans .Digital Skills for Heritage - Developed and ran a 4-week Digital Skills training course for Heritage Groups and Heritage Practitioners working in the county of Galway.Held 2 events for *Bealtaine* namely: Farmstead or Fairy Fort – what do you call yours? And Trace your Galway Genealogy
- Battle of Aughrim Visitor Centre - Working with Corporate Services Section on the development of education resources and an online lecture series.
- Creative Ireland: Part of Creative Ireland Team, working specifically on ‘The Galway Forged Gates Project’ as well as assisting with some bursary projects and *Imagine a Castle* project with Kilemore Abbey.
- Ran a 6-week Oral Heritage Training Course for Heritage Groups and Heritage Practitioners working in the county of Galway.
- 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. Applied for funding from NPWS under the National Biodiversity Action Plan to fund a number of initiatives including biodiversity and pollinator awareness and training for staff and communities, the Galway Buzz, Pots for Pollinators initiative, Yellowhammer survey, Barn Owl project. Ran two online sustainable gardening 5-week training courses, produced a hedgerow management tool. Also ran Rodenticide awareness and best practice rodent control training for Galway County Council Staff. An audit of Wetlands in North East Galway is also taking place.
- Decade of Commemoration - Further development and updating of the bi-lingual website for the Decade of Commemoration with additional information and podcasts. Undertook a virtual conference: *The War of Independence comes to North Connemara: March 1921 and virtual lecture “The truce of 11 July 1921: A natural end to the War of Independence or sowing the seeds of Civil War?”* Have taken on a Historian in Residence and working on a documentary of this time period and insert for the *Tuam Herald* newspaper.
- Working on a bi-lingual publication entitled: “The Independence Struggle in County Galway, 1916–1923: A Research Guide”. Working on a virtual Loughrea Memorial Conference for November 2021.
- 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. A joint project between Heritage Office, Museum and Communities took place called *Daoine agus Áit: Connecting Our Communities*.

- 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 2nd October 2021. 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

<https://heritage.galwaycommunityheritage.org/content/category/topics/feile-na-gcloch>

- *Digital Mapping of Graveyards in the County* – Continued to work with Galway Rural Development on mapped and memorial inscriptions will be recorded and uploaded to www.galway.ie . Also working on a new mapping system with GIS Department to incorporate the use of drones and Survey 123.
- 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.
- 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*.
- Community Monument Fund - Applied for funding in relation to conservation management plans and works for a number of recorded monuments in the county.
- Holy Wells Audit Phase 2 - Working in the Loughrea and Ballinasloe MDs on this phase of the project.
- 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 - In process of producing a bi-lingual publication and ran a reading the landscape course in Dunmore.
- 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 2021 in partnership with Galway Rural Development - StoryMaps have been produced in partnership with the GIS Section, Geological Survey Ireland, Community Groups, BirdWatch and Galway Rural Development.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- Work in partnership with a number of local community groups, LEADER Companies and GIS Department of Galway County Council to provide free access to the wealth of heritage and local history information

contained within the graveyards of County Galway in the form of a graveyard map, memorial inscriptions, exact location of burial plot and photographs of the memorials as resources allow.

- Produce further resources relating to the Geological Heritage Audit of County Galway in partnership with the Geological Survey of Ireland and the Heritage Council.
- Continue to work on the Invasive Species Strategy.
- Develop more StoryMaps.
- 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. Also apply for Community Monument Funding.
- Continue with the 'Sound Map' of the County of Galway Project.
- 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 3 of an audit of the holy wells in the county.
- Reading the Landscape Course - To continue to work with community groups to learn field skills and use same to upload content onto the new community heritage website.
- 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 2022.
- 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 2022.
- 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.
- 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 Audits
- Hold meetings and progress heritage initiatives with Galway County Heritage & Biodiversity Forum.
- Develop a new Heritage and *Biodiversity Plan for the County of Galway 2023- 2030*
- Continue to develop the town heritage booklets.
- Undertake the Féile na gCloch festival in Inis Óírr.
- Develop and deliver heritage training.
- Continue with Galway Beo Project.
- Support and undertake events for Heritage Week and National Biodiversity Week.

CONSERVATION

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- 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.
- Maintained Architectural Inventory database.
- 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, including Headford pilot project in association with *Reimagine* Irish Architectural Foundation.
- Liaised with ICOMOS Ireland *Baile* town and village working group to promote sustainable development in pilot project in Gort- Creative Ireland funded pilot survey on energy efficiency in traditional buildings in association with Burren Lowlands and residents.

- 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. Consulted with Regeneration Team on repurposing and refurbishment of several local authority owned properties.
- Promote and administer *The Walks, Loughrea*; conservation project to boundary walls and bridges in historic public realm.
- Liaised with GRETB, CIF and Departmental Built Heritage Advisory service re traditional building skills training courses.
- Participation in *Architecture at the Edge* festival of architecture with *Alternative Futures* theme- Events attracted participation at Kylemore, Gort, Monivea and Loughrea as well as hybrid events online and in Galway.
- Administered the Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS) and Historic Structures Fund (HSF) made available through Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and Community Monuments Fund scheme from National Monuments Service in the same department.
- Input into County Development Plan process by assessing proposed Architectural Conservation Areas and reporting on submissions.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- Continue to carry out the statutory duties of Architectural Conservation Officer as set out in Circular 5/99 or as amended.
- Review record of Protected Structures by proposing additions to the RPS and research and propose Architectural Conservation Areas and liaise with owners and occupiers.
- Maintain Architectural Inventory System.
- 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. Liaise with Housing re energy efficiency in traditionally built houses.

LIBRARY SERVICES

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- Online Library Services continued 24/7 throughout 2021. These include access to ebooks, eaudiobooks, emagazines, enewspapers, online courses and language learning. All free for the public once a registered library member.
- Postal service for visually impaired in conjunction with An Post continued throughout 2021
- Ireland Reads Day on 25th February was the culmination of a month-long campaign encouraging everyone to read for enjoyment and wellbeing, combatting lockdown by encouraging everyone, young and old, to get back into the habit of reading and regularly setting aside time to sit and read a book, a poem, a comic, a newspaper or whatever works for them.
- Through Grow It Forward 1,000 vegetable seed packs were distributed by Library Staff to members of the public throughout the City and County. This Initiative brought communities and individuals together with a common goal of growing, perhaps for the first time, some delicious homegrown vegetables.
- 3 Trained Library Digital Ambassadors worked with Seniors in accessing Library Services Online. 35 Seniors took part in this pilot during the earlier part of the year and worked with a trained staff member on a one to one basis to learn how to access and use Library Online Resources.
- As Government Guidelines allowed all libraries opened for lending services, pc access, printing, scanning, Request Service, study spaces, newspapers and magazines when it was safe to do so with enhanced cleaning regimes, face/mask wearing mandatory, increased ventilation and a maximum number allowed entry at any one time.
- Galway Libraries mobile service delivered bags of books to those living in rural and isolated areas during the first 4 months of the year as the country was in lockdown. This was very much welcomed by those communities and customers were very appreciative of the service.
- Mobile Library Service resumed its full schedule of stops from 10/05/2021.
- Newly refurbished Local History Section reopened on 20/09/2021.
- Outdoor Summer Events took place in a number of libraries as events could not be held indoors as per Government Guidelines.
- Healthy Ireland at your Library events continued online with numerous talks and lectures.



- Storytime for adults and children, craft sessions, book clubs for adults and children, readings by Library Staff continued regularly throughout the year on online platforms.
- Funding of €35,180.10 was secured from Dormant Accounts Fund to run 6 Programmes for Marginalised, Socially Excluded and Disadvantaged Communities. These Programmes will be rolled out in various branch libraries over the coming months.
- Galway Library Service is now JAM Card Friendly as all staff have been trained in their use and JAM cards are available in all Library Branches. JAM=Just a Minute allows customers with communication difficulties indicate to library staff that they need just a minute longer to transact their business.
- Home Energy Saving Kits have been issued to 5 Libraries for Home use. These kits contain 6 tools to help householders understand their energy use and identify possible problem areas e.g. poor insulation. They can be borrowed the same way you borrow a book.
- Improvement works were carried in a number of Libraries. These included lighting improvements, roof repairs, painting and provision of bookdrops.
- A number of online exhibitions took place during the year as in branch exhibitions were not possible.
- Over 500 “Little Library” Book Bags were distributed to Early Learning and Care Centres as part of the National “First 5 Little Library” Initiative. Each bag contained 5 picture books, advice on reading and literacy and information on Galway Public Library’s services for families and children.
- Galway Public Libraries celebrated Cruinniú na nÓg on Saturday 12th June, the National Day of Creativity for Young People. The County and City was alive with the creative talents and imaginations of young people as they engaged with the many free events happening in conjunction with our Libraries. These events incorporated elements of sustainability, recycling, utilizing the natural and built environment, storytelling, art exhibitions as well as encouraging creative solutions to climate change.
- In collaboration with colleagues in a number of Galway County Council Departments “Lockdown Diaries Galway” was published. The stories contained in the anthology were the result of a Creative Writing Competition during which older residents were asked to reflect on their experiences during the Pandemic. Copies available in all Library Branches.
- *April is Poetry Month* was a collaboration between Poets and our community of older Reciters who shared their favourite poem in celebration of April is Poetry Month
- Bealtaine event: *Remember Record & Recite*. ... was an intergenerational project which involved the younger generation being the ‘recorders’ of their grannies/granddads, nanas, pops....to record and listen to the wonderful voices of our older community reciting beautiful words.
- County Libraries Committee minutes were added to the Digital Archive. A fantastic resource charting the evolution of the Library Service over the years.

- New generation Europe Direct Centre at Ballinasloe Library was launched by the Cathaoirleach on 27th Sept.
- Culture Night on Sept 17th was celebrated with an online Programme of events and readings.
- National Heritage Week, Mobility Week, Positive Ageing Week, Earth Week, Space Week, Seachtain na Gaeilge were all celebrated in various ways within the Library Service.
- Childrens Book Festival in October had as its theme “Climate of Hope: Protect, Preserve, Participate”. Events took place in both Library Branches and Schools.
- New Online Resource Medici TV has been made available to registered Galway library members. This is the world’s leading classical music channel which offers access to the best of classical music worldwide. Over 150 live events broadcast each year and the largest on demand library of classical music available for viewing on all devices.
- New Online Resource Comics Plus has been made available to registered Galway library members. Comics plus offers unlimited, simultaneous access to thousands of digital comics, graphic novels and manga from over 100+ publishers.
- On March 20th, World Storytelling Day, Galway Public Libraries in association with FEST, and Storytellers of Ireland organised Scéalaíocht, Stória and Contes, a feast of storytelling and storytellers, musicians and singers from across Europe and Ireland. The sessions included stories for families and for adults and storytellers: Monique Burg from Perigord (Southwest France), Paola Balbi and Davide Bardi, from Italy and from Ireland, Órla McGovern of Spontaneous Theatre and Máirín Mhic Lochlainn, as Ros a’ Mhíl i gConamara.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- 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 in pursuing a new Library for Galway City as present space is inadequate for a City the size of Galway.
- 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.
- 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.

- The opening of the first 2 My Open Libraries in County Galway in Oranmore and Ballinasloe will take place in 2022.
- 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 2021:

- The Water Safety Programme 2021 involved the recruitment of a panel of 54 trained Beach guards 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 Beach guards was held in Leisureland.
- The Service commenced on the 29th May and continued until the 17th September 2021.
- Upgrading of equipment was undertaken as well as a hut preparation and repairs- maintenance schedule, which was agreed and delivered. A new hut was installed at Spiddal Road and Roundstone, for the 2021 season.
- Galway County beaches benefitted from an additional two hours beach guard service during the 2021 season. The previous hours were 12.00pm to 6.00pm and during 2021 changed to 11.00am to 7.00 pm.
- During the heatwave in July the beaches at Roundstone and Inis Óirr (weekend only) were provided with beach guards for the full week due to increased usage.
- Following approval by Council, funding of €6,150 was advanced to the Irish Water Safety Council.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- 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 Ringbuoys.
-

PARKS, PITCHES, OPEN SPACES AND PLAYGROUNDS:

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- 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 for Rinville Park 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.
- An application for Green Flag status was made for Palace Grounds and a decision is awaited.
- Ballinasloe – Maintenance Programme was continued in Ballinasloe town for parks and open spaces in 2021.
- 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).

PITCHES / RUNNING TRACK / LEISURE CENTRES AND SWIMMING AREAS

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- A Licence Agreement is in place with Tuam Celtic Football Club, to operate Galway County Council's All-Weather Pitches in Tuam.
- Dunlo Recreational Park, Ballinasloe Running Track was temporarily closed at the start of the year due to COVID-19 restrictions. However, it is now re-opened and 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 2021. Information on all sites is available to download in the Council's Guide to Playgrounds – 'Let's Play' available on www.galway.ie and an interactive map on the Mapzone section of the website.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- The 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.
- Update the details of facilities which are available at 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.

LEISURE CENTRES – TUAM AND BALLINASLOE

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021

- 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 2021. 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 management of the leisure centres and associated costs were kept under review as the management of the pandemic evolved in 2021 and the liaison committee played a key role in monitoring same including the additional financial support required of the Council.
- Corporate Services continue to have oversight of essential maintenance and health and safety related improvement works at both centres.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- The management of the leisure centres and associated costs will continue to be kept under close and ongoing review during 2022 and the liaison committee will continue to play a key role in monitoring and oversight.
- It is anticipated that in the context of the cessation of a range of Covid related financial supports from Government it will be necessary to review the level of additional financial support provided by the Council to ensure the continued operation of both centres during 2022.

COUNCIL FACILITIES FOR LOCAL ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY BENEFIT /HERITAGE/INTERPRETATIVE FACILITIES OPERATIONS

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- 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 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 2021 summer season.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- 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 2021:

- 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 and Derelict Sites Surveys were carried out, whilst regular inspections of Playgrounds, Parks, Local Authority Estates, Halting Sites, Piers, Lifebuoys, Beaches, Bring 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.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- 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 may allow.

DISABILITY ACTION

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES 2021:

- As part of the Council's Recreation & Amenity Programme, a number of items of outdoor gym and fitness equipment for use by wheelchair users, was maintained in Dunlo Park Ballinasloe, Palace Grounds, Tuam and Castle Avenue, Portumna.
- An application for grant funding to provide Communication Boards at a number of playgrounds on a pilot basis was also successful.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- 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 2021:

- In early March, a series of online videos were organised during Seachtain na Gaeilge (1-17 March 2021) for the promotion of Gaeilge across our Social Media channels. These videos included storytime as Gaeilge with a number of local and national authors, crafts as Gaeilge and traditional music and dance with narration as Gaeilge by a local County Galway group.
- Irish language classes (beginner and intermediate levels) continued to be made available for staff of the local authority and classes were also available for Councillors who expressed an interest in same. These classes were available online only due to continuing Covid-19 restrictions.
- Community Support Grants – The Irish language was specifically included as a category in the Community Support Scheme in 2021. Small scale grants totalling €4,890.00 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 Comharchumann Mhic Dara, An Cheathrú Rua, Co. na Gaillimhe, in February 2021.
- 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 were provided, along with proofing services.
- Information and consultation continue 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.
- 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 2022:

- 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 re-establish the awarding of Scoláireachtaí Gaeltachta Phádraig Mhic Phiarais / Pádraig Pearse Scholarships in partnership with Irish Colleges in the county. The Scholarship Scheme could not be held in 2021 due to the cancellation of Courses as a result of continued Covid-19 restrictions.
- 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 during Seachtain na Gaeilge and where possible, expand on these events for March 2022.

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT – COUNCIL PROPERTIES / HEALTH & SAFETY

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- 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, Static Risk 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 partnership with the Fire Service Department who are taking the lead role on this project, in conjunction with the IT Section.
- Development of Facilities Section Covid 19 Action Plan.
- A Legionella Risk Assessments & testing and where required a monitoring programme was undertaken for office and library accommodation.
- 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 2022:

- 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 2021:

- 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.
- 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, and renovation works in Island House.



- Continued the programme of providing security backup and reference surrogates to collections¹. 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.
- Conducted a detailed survey of a collection of outsize 1836 OS Barony Maps and facilitated conservation of several of these items (Phase 1).
- Continued the programme of processing several small archive collections, and / or adding to existing collections².
- Outreach activities included *History Ireland* article on an 18th century Whaley Rent Book, liaising with the Local Government Archivists and Records Manager's (LGARM) group and the Beyond 2022 project on [Local people, power, place: Grand Jury records and local history](#) and working with Library colleagues on *Galway's Great Read* Creative Ireland funded 'Westward Ho! A Ramble Through Galway, 1840-1950' programme.
- Provided advice on records management best practice and assistance to Galway County Council Units as required, working with various units to update in-house Retention Schedules, and compile and action Disposal Certificates.
- Continued the management of non-current record transfers to storage and record retrievals and returns: 591 requests were processed from January to-date (04/11/2021). There are now 131,962 entries on the ArcLink records management database.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- Concentrate on processing archive collections, whilst continuing to provide access and advice to researchers.
- Continue the programme of providing security backup and reference surrogates to collections.
- Commence process to upgrade the Archives database system (i.e. transfer from Adlib to Axiell 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.

¹ GPL6/1-40 and GPL2/13-33 and BTC1/4-11

² Such as Coláiste Iognáid ('The Jes) school publications (GS21/03); Letter from Blake. Michael (Frenchfort, and of Kiltulla), to Blake, Edward, 1826 (GS21/05) ; Rental and Accounts of Michael Power (Receiver) in Matter of George Holme Sumner (son and heir of William Brightwell Sumner) v Thomas Wilton & Others (GS21/07); Galway PLU (GPL6/01-40) and Loughrea PLU (GPL2/13-33) ; GCC, Provision of local authority housing / Rural One-off housing, 1997 (GC/HSG3/8/002); also additional accruals to drainage district files (GC/CSO3/37-41), Registers of Electors collection (GC/CSO4), and MO collection (GC/CSO/2/).



- 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 2021:

- The Register of Electors for 2021/2022 was published on the 1st February 2021 and came into force on 15th February 2021. The Register was sent to all Garda Stations, Libraries and Post Offices and Council Offices in the County.
- The Draft Register of Electors for 2022/2023 was published on 1st November 2021. 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, through social media and local print media, 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 are invited to submit a claim to Galway County Council no later than 25th November 2021.
- Significant updates were carried out on the Register in 2021 to remove entries for deceased individuals and to update entries with Eircode information.
- Claims are considered by the County Registrar at Revision Courts held in December each year.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- The Council will publish the Register of Electors for 2022/2023 by 1st February 2022.
- A Supplementary Register of Electors will be compiled and published within the relevant timeframes in the event of any further Election or Referendum.

CORPORATE PLANNING & SUPPORT / LOCAL REPRESENTATION/ CIVIC LEADERSHIP

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- Administrative services are provided for the Chief Executive, Cathaoirleach of the Council, Elected Members, Corporate Policy Group and Council Meetings.

SERVICES 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 County 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, no Civic Receptions were held in Áras an Chontae in 2021.
- 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 8th February, 17th May, 13th September and 8th November 2021.

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 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 2022:

- 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.
-

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.

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- Data Protection and GDPR Training was delivered online to the Elected Members in Quarter 1, 2021.
- Advice and support on managing Data Protection risks associated with remote working or working in an office environment was rolled out to staff on the 26th February 2021.
- Implementation of 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 was prioritised in 2021.
- PrivacyEngine was launched across Galway County Council on 23rd March 2021. PrivacyEngine, a Data Management Platform, facilitates the management of all aspects of data protection within the organisation. The platform not only demonstrates compliance but, in addition, delivers real business value, turning data protection and privacy into a key priority.
- Appointed Data Champions in all Units received onboarding training to PrivacyEngine and on progressing the development of their Record of Processing Activities (ROPA) via the Platform.
- Each business unit continued to develop Privacy Notices in respect of all processing activities and implement the required Data Processing Agreements governing the processing of personal data where a Processor is engaged to process personal data on the instruction of a Controller.
- PrivacyEngine includes a built-in online training module that allowed the Council to create and manage training courses for all employees to ensure increased awareness and understanding while reducing risks. This was particularly important in light of the ransomware attack on the HSE in May 2021. The following courses were delivered to approx. 750 employees in Quarter 2 of 2021:
- GDPR Awareness Training; GDPR overview, GDPR Principles, Data Subjects Rights, keeping personal data safe at work and how to report a Data Breach
- Introduction to Microsoft 365 - 6 simple steps - For Safe & Secure Sharing & Collaboration of data
- Cybersecurity Awareness Training – remotely & in the office; Importance of Cybersecurity, Safeguarding e-mails, Virtual Private Networks (VPN's), Phishing and phishing e-mail training
- Online GDPR training is delivered to all new employees of Galway County Council as part of their induction to the Council.
- 16 Data Subject Rights requests were received up to the end of October 2021; 12 granted, 1 denied, 3 withdrawn.
- The Staff Data Protection Newsletter developed and launched in 2020 to raise awareness of Data Protection issues across the organisation continued in 2021 with an issue released at the end of each quarter, 3 to date.
- The Data Protection Staff Intranet Resources page launched in 2020 is updated on an ongoing basis and continues to provide useful links and reference points for ensuring Data Protection related compliance for all business units.

- Quarter 4 2021, a review of existing local data sharing arrangements between public service bodies is being completed to inform a return to DPER identifying any arrangements that rely on a lawful basis for sharing under Section 38 of the Data Protection Act in advance of the enactment of Sections 6(2)(3) of the Data Sharing & Governance Act 2019 in Q 1 2022.
- Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA) training will be delivered to approx. 100 key staff during Quarter 4 2021. Data Protection Impact Assessments can be used to identify and mitigate against any data protection related risks arising from a new project, which may affect the organisation or the individuals it engages with.
- Galway County Council has received no further correspondence to date from the Data Protection Commissioners (DPC) in relation to the DPC's Data Protection Audit of CCTV carried out in 2018.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- The Compliance Project Plan will continue to be a priority for 2022, 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.
- PrivacyEngine will continue to facilitate the management of all aspects of data protection within the organisation to demonstrate compliance and deliver real business value, turning data protection and privacy into a key priority.
- Online GDPR training will continue to be delivered to Galway County Council employees via PrivacyEngine to ensure increased awareness and understanding while reducing risks.
- 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 Notices and ensure all Data Processing Agreements are in place 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

The 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.

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

128 requests were received up to the end of October 2021. Decisions were issued as follows:

- 44 granted, 32 part-granted, 31 refused, 9 transferred/withdrawn, 12 pending decision.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON THE ENVIRONMENT INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

21 requests were received to end October 2021. Decisions were issued as follows:

- 8 granted, 3 part-granted, 1 withdrawn, 5 refused, 4 pending decision.

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 2021:

- The email addresses, customerservices@galwaycoco.ie and gaeilge@cocogaillimh.ie remain 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.
- There was one meeting of the Customer Services Officers Group (CSOG) during 2021. The CSOG is comprised of staff representatives from all the main service areas.
- Provided information on Council services and operations which were impacted by Covid-19 and advised how the public could engage 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 2021 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 294 application forms, expressions of interest 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 2022:

- 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 2021:

- 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 Byelaws.
- 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.
- 15 Requests from film makers etc. to use public property for filming were also processed.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- 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.

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- 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 2022:

- Drafting of the 2022 Internal Audit plan for approval by the Audit Committee & Chief Executive
- Reviews of recommendations made on the 2021 Audit Reports.
- Facilitate the work of the Audit Committee /administration of meetings
- Completion of audits as per the 2022 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.

LEGAL ADVISORY SERVICES

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- The Department continued to provide legal and advisory services for all programme areas and Directorates during the second year of the Covid-19 Pandemic which also necessitated taking particular measures to ensure continued service to the Council whilst protecting the staff within the unit. These services included the acquisition and sale of properties, an area of practice which returned to usual levels in the latter half of 2021, the conduct of litigation to include District Court enforcement prosecutions, Circuit and High Court, including Judicial Review, all of which resumed to normal levels as the year progressed. The completion of land acquisitions, CPOs on inter-urban routes and road widening schemes, were also substantial areas of work for the Law Agent Unit despite the continued restrictions represented by Covid-19 in the initial months of 2021.
- 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 on an ongoing basis.
- Work has continued on the Council Register of Lands, in co-operation with our partners in other units such as IS, Finance and Housing. Significant progress has been achieved in terms of the Register, and indeed on the Archiving of old files, through the use of Remote Working helping to ensure high staff productivity during this challenging period.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- Focus on and continue in our efforts to provide efficient legal advisory services for all programme areas throughout the organisation, particularly as normal service returns and staff presence on site moves gradually and safely back to normal pre-Covid levels.
- We continue in our significant efforts to meet our requirements in terms of the new Data Protection Regulations to include Data Mapping and Risk Control. We have appointed a specific GDPR and FOI representative for the unit from our solicitor staff in this regard. Staff within the unit will receive updated training throughout the year.
- Workflows for the Case Management System will continue to be created, further enhancing work delivery and capacity. We will also look to maximise the benefits of this important system as the practice of Remote Working of council staff evolves going forward.
- We will ensure that our team members will, through the appropriate training, continue to keep up to date with developments in Local Government Law and Office Management.
- The ongoing work on the Register of Lands will remain a priority area of work with the ultimate aim of bringing the council's record of property ownership up to date.

ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE, FIRE & MAJOR EMERGENCY SERVICES, HUMAN RESOURCES, INFORMATION & COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

WASTE MANAGEMENT INFRASTRUCTURE

ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- Certificate of Substantial Completion was issued, and maintenance period has completed in respect to Site Resolution Plan works at Kilconnell. The landfill is now operating in the aftercare phase of the EPA license.
- Team has been organised to examine the development of amenity facilities on the 60ha Kilconnell site. The Department of Environment, Climate and Communications have been briefed.
- Remedial works have been undertaken at Pollboy to address health and safety, leachate management and landfill gas management matters.
- Improvement works at our Tuam and Clifden Civic Amenity Sites (CAS) are underway. It is intended that the new service contract along with new gate fee charges will be introduced upon completion.
- Submitted planning application to An Bord Pleanála for a new CAS in Gort. A further information request was issued, and a response issued which is now under consideration.
- Certification of Authorisation application has been submitted for historic landfill at Shore Road, Clifden and applications for New Inn, Gort, and Tuam and are ready for submission to the EPA.
- Glass collection contract renewed with Rehab Glassco. Additional bottle bank inspection service has been added.
- Upgrades to bottle bank facilities in Portumna, Kinvara, Tra Bhain and Carraroe.
- 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 2022:

- Progress amenity project at Kilconnell including tender for design consultancy.
- Complete remediation works at Pollboy including gas collection system improvement works and SCADA upgrade.
- Apply for funding for Tier 3 investigation for remaining Category A historic landfill sites and support COA application requests.
- Co-operate with Udaras on South Connemara CAS project.
- Education awareness to continue in area of waste prevention and good environmental practices.

ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING AND ENFORCEMENT MEASURES

The work programme set out in the RMCEI Plan 2021 was completed.

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- Details of enforcement notices and warning letters which were issued and prosecutions which were initiated under environmental legislation in 2021 will be set out in the 2021 RMCEI (Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections) returns which are due for issue by the 16th of February 2022.
- The 2021 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 of non-compliant businesses, under the CUWERLA pilot packaging programme.
- A number of littered 'black spots' were cleaned up and barriers and signage were erected with funding provided by DCCA under the Anti-Dumping Initiative 2021. A substantial amount of waste was removed as part of 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.
- The Environment Enforcement Team carried out Awareness Campaigns in relation to the proper use of bring bank facilities and the facilities available at Civic Amenity Sites. An electronic signage and billboard campaign was rolled out across the county highlighting issues associated with illegal collectors.
- 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.
- Inspections were carried out in relation to approximately 126 discharge licences, 101 domestic wastewater treatment systems and 20 farms. Enforcement actions were carried out where necessary.

ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING AND ENFORCEMENT MEASURES

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- 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 2022:

- The Council will set out all planned pro-active inspections of authorised facilities under various environmental legislation in the 2022 RMCEI Plan which is due for issue by February 16th, 2022. The scale of enforcement activity in 2022 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 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 2021:

- The Council continued to exercise its powers under the Derelict Sites Act 1990 and the Local Government (Sanitary Services) Act 1964, 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 2022:

- 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 2021:

- 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 maintenance and improvement work as resources permit.
- The burial ground capital works programme continued throughout 2021. New extensions have been completed at Clarinbridge and Killimordaly and work on an extension in Quansboro have been substantially completed. A Part 8 planning application for the development of a new cemetery at Brooklodge Church has also been approved.
- In conjunction with the Moycullen burial ground committee, an area and design for a columbarium wall (for internment of urns) has been agreed which Galway County Council and it will be built in phases. Ground works are underway.
- The Environment section has been actively engaged with communities to identify new burial sites in Claregalway, Inverin and 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 2021 - €600, €450 or €300 with grants made to over 190 committees in 2021.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- Outstanding works (landscaping) at Quansboro BG (extension) will be completed.
- Work to develop a burial ground in Brooklodge will commence.
- Subject to planning, work to develop burial ground extensions at Creagh Cemetery in Ballinasloe and Duniry will commence.
- Progress design and planning where suitable sites become available at Claregalway, Annaghdown, Abbey, Inverin, Ballyconnelly, Kilbannon and Lettermore.
- Progress Columbarium Wall development at Moycullen.
- Draft new Burial Ground Bye Laws for consideration by the Council.

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS AND EDUCATION

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- 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 (13,835 followers on Facebook, 15,600 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 litter, 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. Two new schools joined the programme. We had 29 renewals for the programme. Two schools won three awards in An Taisce Green Schools Water Awards 2021. An Anti-Litter poster competition was rolled out to all schools. A calendar was developed from posters for 2021 and will be circulated. Our Picker Pals programme was rolled out to 56 Classes in National schools.
- Support of National Spring Clean with 238 events. Over 500 trees were distributed from National Tree Week, and we had 14 Christmas tree recycling sites.
- We roll out Anti-Litter campaigns in the communities. Or Dog Fouling campaign “If they Poop, You Scoop” was launched throughout the county. Audio devices were installed at litter black spots, and anti-dumping signage were positioned in several graveyards.
- We continue to liaise with Connacht Ulster Regional Waste Management Office on delivering the Connacht-Ulster Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2021.
- We promote mywaste.ie, and myimpact App’s. We supported October Reuse Month 2021. We had a winner from Galway County in the Connacht Upcycling Competition.
- We Supported Green Club Campaign with GAA and regional waste offices. One club in Connacht is part of this pilot programme.
- Promotion of environmental awareness with Waste Enforcement, Community and Enterprise Unit, Housing, facilities, PPN Co- Ordinator and Heritage Officer.
- Rollout of litter awareness and waste management pilot programme for housing estates in conjunction with housing and area offices.
- Anti - Litter Advertisement developed for cinema in conjunction with Galway City Council (Covid -19 restrictions permitting it will be run in 2022)
- Car disc holders with Anti-Litter message promoted.
- Ongoing implementation of the LAPN / Waste Prevention Programme. We secured €10,000 grant to promote water fonts in secondary schools before end 2021. Events kit to be updated and to be available post Covid.
- Supported climate action opportunity fund rollout.

Supported An Taisce Blue Flag, Green Coast, and Clean Coast programme. 6 Blue Flag beaches, 7 Green Coast areas and supported clean coast areas. Promote art competition for schools in relation to Blue Flags.

- Developing the rollout of the Green Dog Walker programme.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- 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 Management and Waste Prevention Programme.
- Continue to support national campaigns such National Spring Clean, National Tree Week, Gum Litter Taskforce campaign, Blue Flag beaches, Green Coasts, Clean Coasts, Community Environment Action Fund, Reuse Month, etc.
- Anti-Litter Awareness campaign through communities, schools, social media etc. as per the Litter Management Plan 2019-2022.
- Continue promotion of Dog Fouling programme with the addition of Green Dog Walker programme.
- Support Climate Action Opportunity Fund.

ENERGY & CLIMATE

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- Galway County Council continues to implement the County's Climate Adaptation Strategy.
- The Climate Action Opportunity Fund 2021 was launched in Q1 2021.
- Galway County Council have identified the Aran Islands as their Decarbonising Zone.
- Under SEAI's Sustainable Energy Community Program, Galway County Council have appointed consultants to deliver Energy Master Plans for 5 No. Sustainable Energy Communities throughout the County. The Council's support for this program amounts to a commitment of €75K in Bridging Loans.
- Roll-out of 5 No. Home Energy Saving Kits and associated training to LA Libraries.
- Galway County Council fulfilled their statutory obligations in respect of energy consumption monitoring and reporting in 2021. All public bodies were required to improve their energy efficiency by 33% (from a 2009 baseline) by 2020. Provisional results indicate Galway County Council have surpassed this target achieving a 38% improvement in efficiency.
- The County and City Managers Association (CCMA) endorsed a Local Authority Climate Action Training Plan developed in response to Action 150 of the Climate Action Plan which calls for "the development of Local Authority climate action leadership and capacities". The Training Plan, an initial four-year programme, is supported by the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) and is centred around the core objectives of building capacity on climate action within the local

authority sector and influencing positive behavioural change at a community level. The LASNTG in conjunction with the Eastern & Midlands Climate Action Regional Office (EM CARO), is responsible for the coordination of the training programme. Galway County Council Staff have engaged with this training program accordingly

- Galway County Council have advertised for the position of Climate Action Coordinator.

PROJECTIONS FOR 2022:

- Local Energy Bureau Officer to be appointed by CARO.
- Continue to develop and update Action Implementation Plans for each adaptation action to be delivered in accordance with Climate Adaptation Strategy.
- Cultivate and actively participate in partnerships with enterprise, community, voluntary, 3rd level institutions and the research community to deliver on initiatives that reduce climate impact.
- Administer Climate Action Opportunity Fund 2021 to provide not for profit organisations the chance to access funding for local climate action projects.
- Review energy efficiency performance and identify projects to assist in delivering further energy efficiency in meeting new 2030 targets.
- Develop LA Climate Action Plan
- Continue to support Sustainable Energy Communities throughout the county develop their Energy Master Plans.

ANIMAL CONTROL AND WELFARE

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- 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. In 2021, 1 dog warden retired and a recruitment campaign for the filling of the vacant dog warden position is expected to begin by year end.
- During 2021, the leasing of one of the two dog pound facilities came to an end. Expression of interests will be sought for the provision of a second secure dog shelter facility and will be advertised by the end of the year.
- Despite the impact of Covid 19 and the reduced staffing complement within the dog warden service, all complaints received continued to be investigated and actioned. Income received from dog licencing has remained broadly in line with that of 2020. The National Dog Licencing Database, which was rolled out in 2018, has been important in maintaining licencing compliance in the county.

- 17 enforcement actions have been brought under the Control of Dogs Act (as of 28.10.21).
- The dog warden service supported Galway County Council's Anti-Dog Fouling Campaign 'If They Poop, You Scoop!', which was launched across the county in August 2021 and continued to promote responsible dog ownership within the community and through the Council's social media platforms. Dog Waste Bag dispenser units are now installed in many of our towns, villages and amenity areas.
- 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'.
- The Council continued to be active in providing shelter facilities for impounding of horses, sheep, cattle and goats.
- Where possible, dog wardens were involved in liaising with members of the public and Gardaí 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 June 2021 a cross council operation involving the dog warden service, GCC veterinary officers, Community Warden and local elected representatives resulted in the removal of 13 dogs from a temporary 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.
- The Dog Warden service continues to operate the agreed Protocol with the An Garda Síochána when required to assist with search and arrest operations in a variety of situations.
- The Council veterinary service continues to liaise with Housing in the implementation of the Control of Horses Act.



PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- Ongoing improvements to the efficiency of the Dog Control service regarding the effective resourcing of the service including staffing and facilities available.
- Review and respond to expression of interests received in respect of dog shelter facility for Galway East.
- Review of training requirements and of standard operation procedures for dog wardens in line with existing legislation, and in keeping with best practice.
- Continue to look at increasing 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 and Microchipping Awareness campaigns will be conducted 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 shelter services ensuring animal well-being for all animals that come into our care.

FOOD SAFETY

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- 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.
- 2 new registered businesses were added and attained the required EC standard for registration in 2021.
- GCC veterinary service facilitated the approval of additional activities for multiple meat businesses as these small businesses continue to pivot to survive amidst the pandemic.
- GCC veterinary officers participated in food fraud training in 2021, one of which obtained a level 6 Higher Diploma in Intelligence Operations.
- GCC Veterinary Officers triggered and participated alongside FSAI in a major ongoing alleged food fraud investigation in the county (investigation ongoing)
- 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.
- GCC veterinary officers underwent major training in BREXIT training and export certification in 2021.
- 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 2022:

- The Council will continue to fulfil official food safety controls in the county and city of Galway pending agreement between the CCMA and the FSAI on the terms of a service level agreement (current expiry date 31st December 2021).

- Regular Training for Food Business Operators and veterinary inspectors will continue during 2022, 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 to the United Kingdom.
- 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 2022, 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 2021 directed by both the Department of Agriculture and the Marine and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland.
- Continued involvement and liaising with the steering committee and statutory agencies DAFM, Teagasc, SFPA and HSE in the ongoing development of the multicentre Teagasc / GCC Food Innovation and Incubation centre proposed for Athenry. The Food Hub comprises 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 growthunits.
- 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.
- 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 growthunits.
- 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.
- Support National Local Authority Systems Implementation.

MAJOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (MEM)

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- Many of the planned activities for 2021 were curtailed and amended as a result of the COVID-10 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 Roscommon County Council (RCC) 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 Roscommon County Council until the end of 2021.
- Work on the Major Emergency Regional Co-ordination Plan including the Regional Media Plan and the Regional Evacuation Plan was ongoing in 2020 based on available National guidance.
- Work was completed on the 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 is awaiting installation to 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.
- In 2020 GCC purchased to temporary mobile body storage units for Galway County to supplement the regional capability and an activation and mobilisation protocol has been developed in conjunction with the other PRS's in the County. Agreement was reached with the other 2 MEM regions (Northwest and Midlands) that the regional body storage facility being stored, maintained and mobilised by an external contractor, will now be stored and maintained by Galway County Council.
- GFRS led the review of the COLAS External Emergency Plan in early 2021 including public consultation. The review of the External Emergency Plan culminated in an inter-agency exercise on the 12th March 2021.
- An inter-agency exercise in conjunction with Aer Arann was conducted to practice and rehearse the airlift of emergency services personnel and equipment to any of the Aran Islands in the event of a major emergency. The exercise was conducted on the 14th October 2021
- GFRS personnel attended a number of MEM seminars and severe weather debriefs. MEDC members also attended the MEM National Webinar on the 21st and 22nd October 2020.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- 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 2022.

- 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 2022 in relation to the installation of the new stand-by generator at County Hall.
- The review (as per the COMAH Regulations) of the Circle K site External Emergency Plan has commenced. The plan will be reviewed, go out for public consultation and once the plan is reviewed and tested by way of an inter-agency exercise, it will be signed off by the relevant authorities.

COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, many fire service face to face activities were curtailed. The Schools Fire Safety Program was postponed; however, it is hoped that the school's program will resume once continued again in primary schools in County Station Areas.
- Self-contained smoke alarms with long life batteries were procured by GFRS for and continue to be issued to households in Galway City and County for installation by community groups as in previous years. This project was conducted 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.
- Fire safety awareness media campaigns were conducted in 2021 for National Fire Safety Week, wildfire safety, Halloween safety and a further campaign is planned for Christmas time. A number of officers conducted radio interviews.
- In 2021 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. The Home Fire Safety initiative has been expanded now with an on-line home fire safety checklist available to all members of the public. The link is available on the fire services page of the Galway County Council website and a link is also included under the email signature block of all fire service personnel. To date (over a period of approximately 6 months) 736 on-line home fire safety checks have been completed.
- In the latter part of 2021, an online Non-domestic Fire Safety Check was developed and launched. It is hoped that this initiative will increase fire safety in non-domestic premises.

- An Islands Community Fire Safety initiative was rolled out in 2021 to ensure that all homes on the Islands had at least 2 smoke alarms installed. Inis Meáin and Inis Óírr are fully completed. Inis Mór is ongoing and by request, Inis Boffin has been delayed due to the pandemic.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- The Schools Fire Safety Programme involving local fire officers visiting 4th class in primary schools in Galway will hopefully resume (depending on the COVID-19 situation) in 2022 subject to the availability of financial resources.
- Self-contained smoke alarms will continue to be issued in 2022 in both the city and county from allocations received in 2021 and further alarms will be purchased in mid-2022. This will be used to complete the Islands Community Fire Safety Initiative.
- A program will be run locally again in 2022 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 2022 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 2022.
- In 2022 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 2022 the new fire safety advertisement campaign of the fire safety messages ‘Stop Fire’ and ‘Check You Detector’ will be installed on the fire station appliance bay doors in all stations.
- In 2022 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 were 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 in Q1 of 2022 and to the SPC Planning, Environment and Emergency Services and the Plenary Council in Q2 2022. Work is also ongoing in relation to new Statutory and Community Fire Safety Plans.

During the NDFEM on-line Capacity Review meeting, a Galway Fire and Rescue Service Operational Intelligence project based on the ArcGIS platform caught the attention of the review group. This project is proving to be very valuable from an analysis prospective and is now being utilised to plan and target future fire service activities. 2 fire service senior officers and a member of GCC IT section are working with members of the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management (NDFEM) to develop and roll out this project nationally.

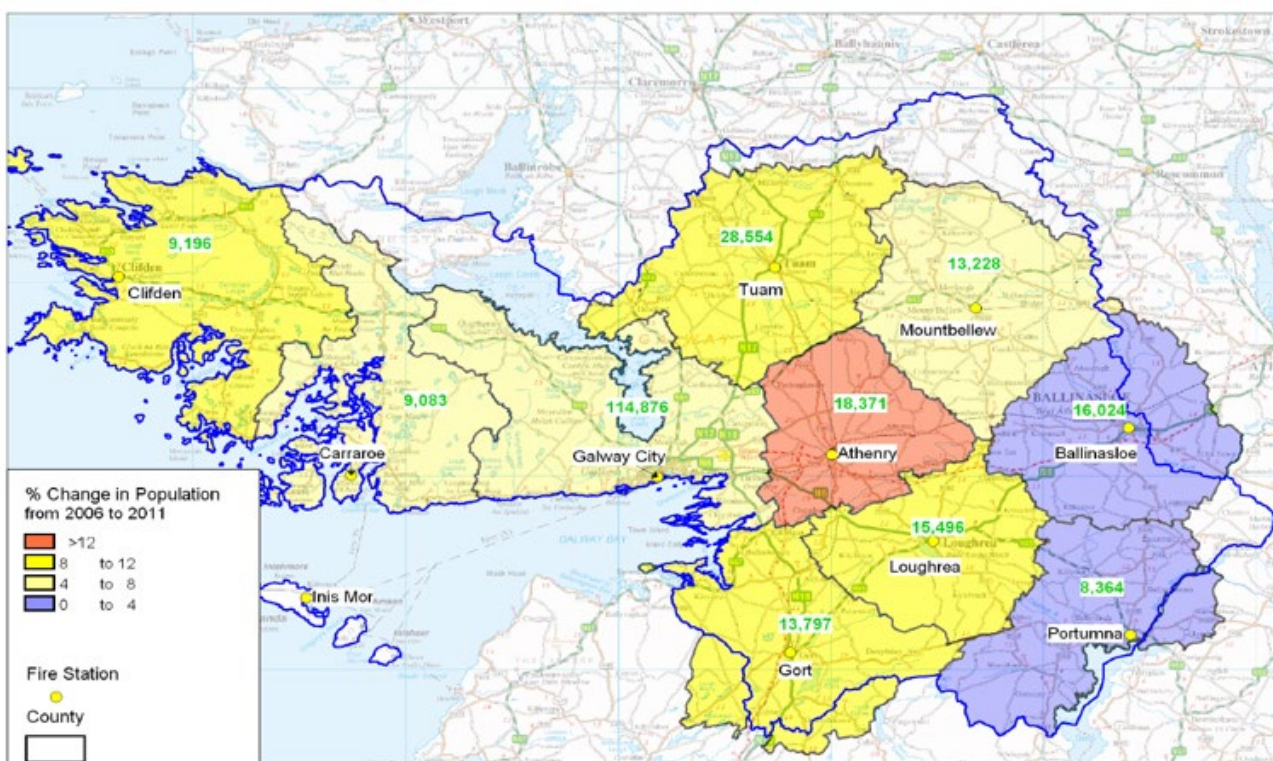
FIRE OPERATIONS – KEEPING COMMUNITIES SAFE (KCS)

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021 (BASED ON 2020 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 negotiated in 2021 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 2020, the Galway Fire and Rescue Service responded to a total of 1,531 emergency call outs, 927 by the County Fire Brigades and 604 by Galway City Fire Brigade in its City and County fire grounds. This represented a decrease of just 6 callouts compared to 2018. There was a decrease of 5% in the City and an increase of 7% in the County. Figure 2 below shows the level of call-outs from 2010. It can be seen that from a peak in 2010, call-outs had reduced and flatlined from 2013 to 2017. There was a significant increase in call-outs in 2018 and all indications are that the call-outs for 2021 will remain similar to 2019 and 2020. Call-outs per station are shown in Figure 3 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 2020 was €52.48. Average response times for all incidents for first attendance vehicles in the City full-time and County retained stations were 2.10 minutes and 5.15 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 was one fire fatality in 2020 and unfortunately there has been one fatality in 2020 up to the end of October.



- The Council endeavoured to ensure that all of 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 2021 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 2021.

FIGURE 2 CALL-OUT HISTORY 2010 - 2020

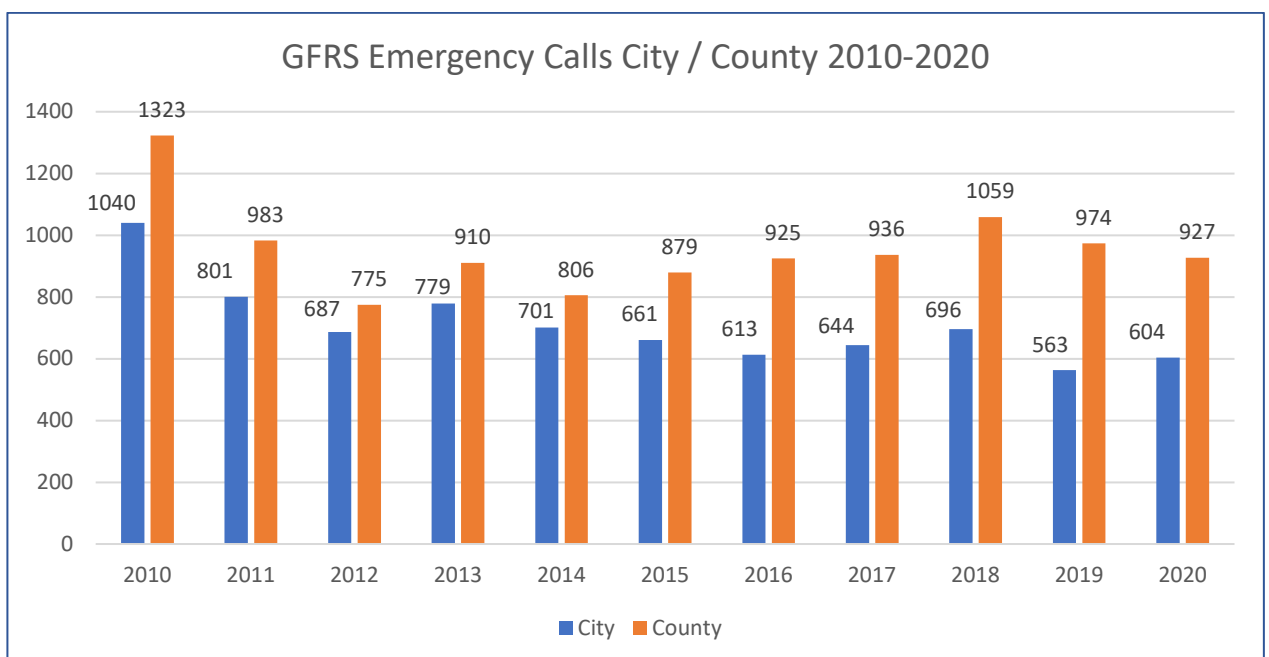
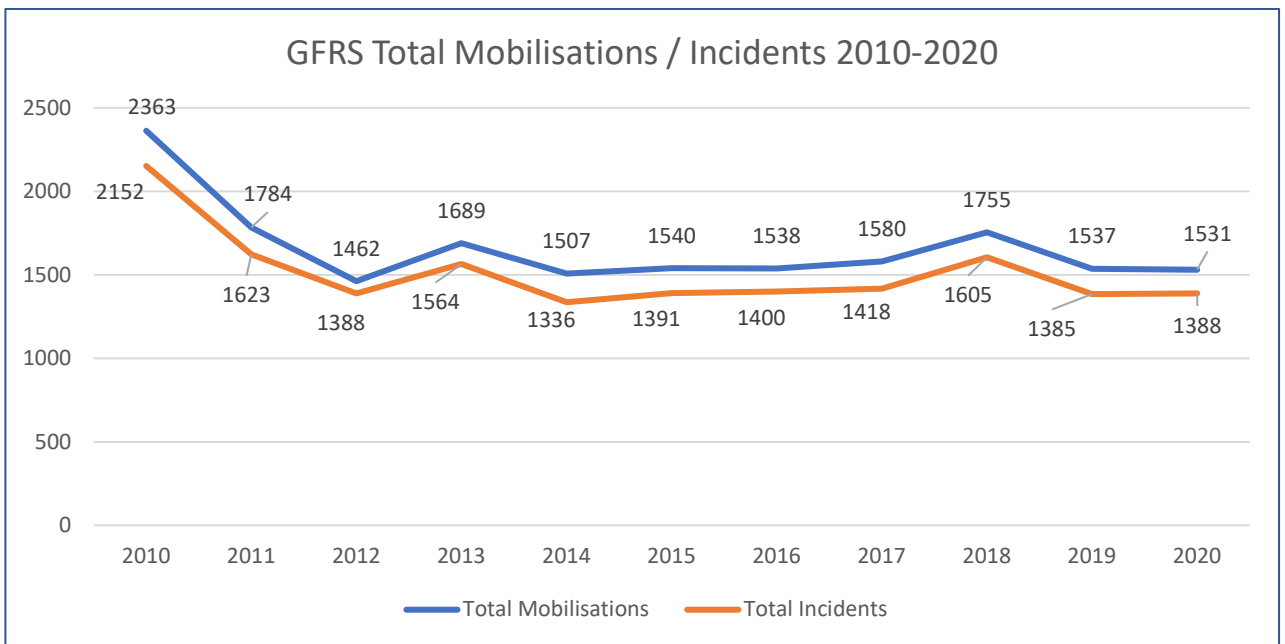




FIGURE 3 BREAKDOWN OF CALL-OUTS BY STATION IN 2020

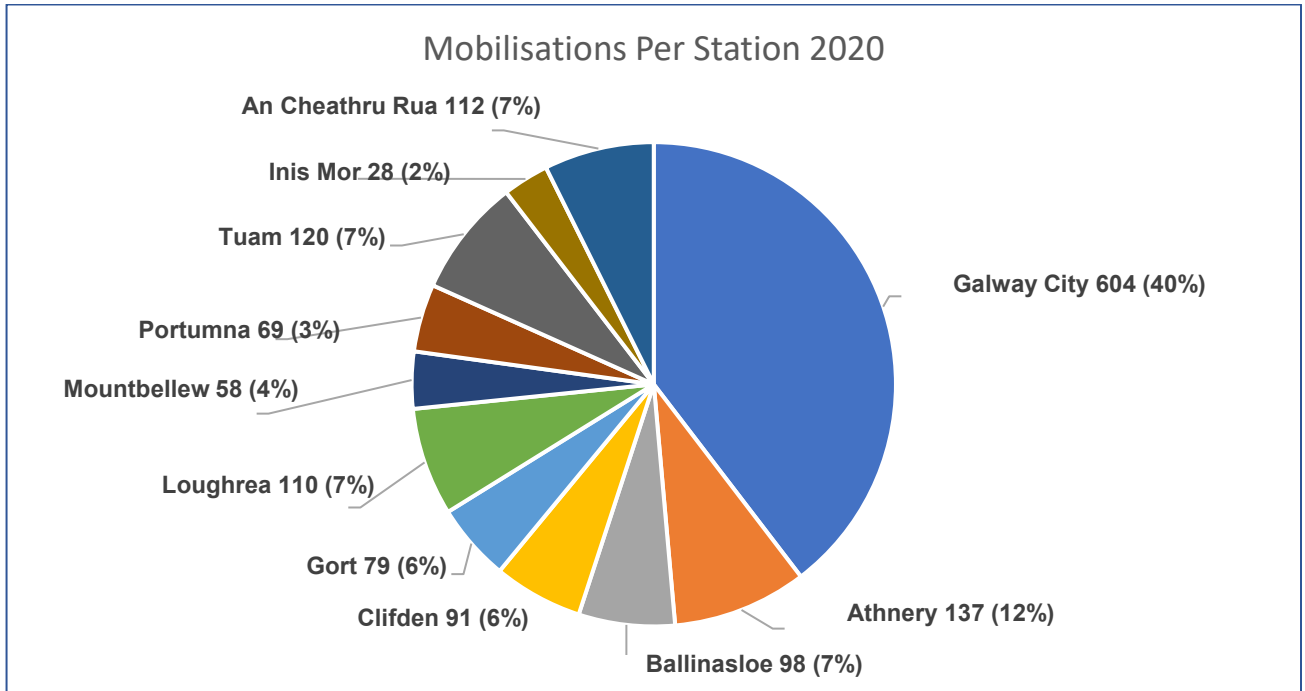


TABLE 1 PERCENTAGE ATTENDANCE TIMES GALWAY CITY AND COUNTY 2020

% Attendance Time	Fires %	Other Incidents %
Less than 10 minutes	42.16	45.69
11 to 20 minutes	36.34	39.19
Greater than 20 minutes	21.5	15.12

- The Fire Service 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 2020 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 2021. The Fire Services were audited or compliance with ISO 45001 by the NSAI on 10th/11th November 2021.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

OPERATIONAL

- The revised Fire and Operations (Section 26) Plan should be reviewed and adopted in early 2022.
- 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 2022 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 2022. The next set of SOGs will be rolled out in 2022 and National Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs) continue to underpin generic and activity based risk assessments as part of our Safety Management System.
- In 2022 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 2021 and retirements/resignations will reduce significantly in 2022. Retained recruit induction will continue through LASNTG to the new QQI standard in 2022.
- The emphasis on pre-incident plans will continue in 2022 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 2022, 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 2022 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 should remain steady in 2022 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 had 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 2022 onwards, however there is no indication as to when the new national funding model will be introduced.

REGIONAL CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT (CISM) PROJECT

Galway County Council is the Contracting Authority for the CISM system for the six Fire Authorities of Connacht and Donegal. Provision is being made in 2022 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. A new tender competition was conducted in 2021 for the period 2021-2024 and having received only one response, the successful tenderer was again Inspire Wellbeing.

FIRE SAFETY / FIRE PREVENTION

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021 (BASED ON 2020 DATA):

- In 2020, the Fire Service Fire Prevention Section carried out 126 inspections of premises as part of its fire prevention function down from 309 in 2019, 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 2021 the Fire Prevention Section has conducted a total of 104 inspections. These considerable reductions in inspections are in the backdrop of the first 9 months of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- The Fire Prevention Section dealt with 285 Fire Safety Certificate (FSC) Applications of all types in 2020 under Building Control Regulations. The overall number of Fire Safety Certificate applications represents a decrease of 7% from 2019. Fire Safety Certificate activity from 2008 to 2020 is shown in Figure 4 below. The decreasing number of FSC applications received in 2020 reflects the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on society and the fact that many private sector businesses were closed for a considerable time in 2020.
- Thus far to the end of October 2021, the Fire Prevention Section have received and dealt with 238 Fire Safety Certificate (FSC) Applications of all types, roughly on par with 2020 and confirming the continuing effect of the pandemic. 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 85 Disability Access Certificate (DAC) applications in 2020 a decrease of 23% from 2019. Disability Access Certificate activity from 2010 to 2020 is shown in Figure 5 below. Thus far and to the end of October 2020, the Fire Prevention Section have received and dealt with 82 Disability Access Certificate (DAC) Applications under Building Control Regulations.

FIGURE 4 FIRE SAFETY CERTIFICATE (FSC) ACTIVITY 2008- 2019

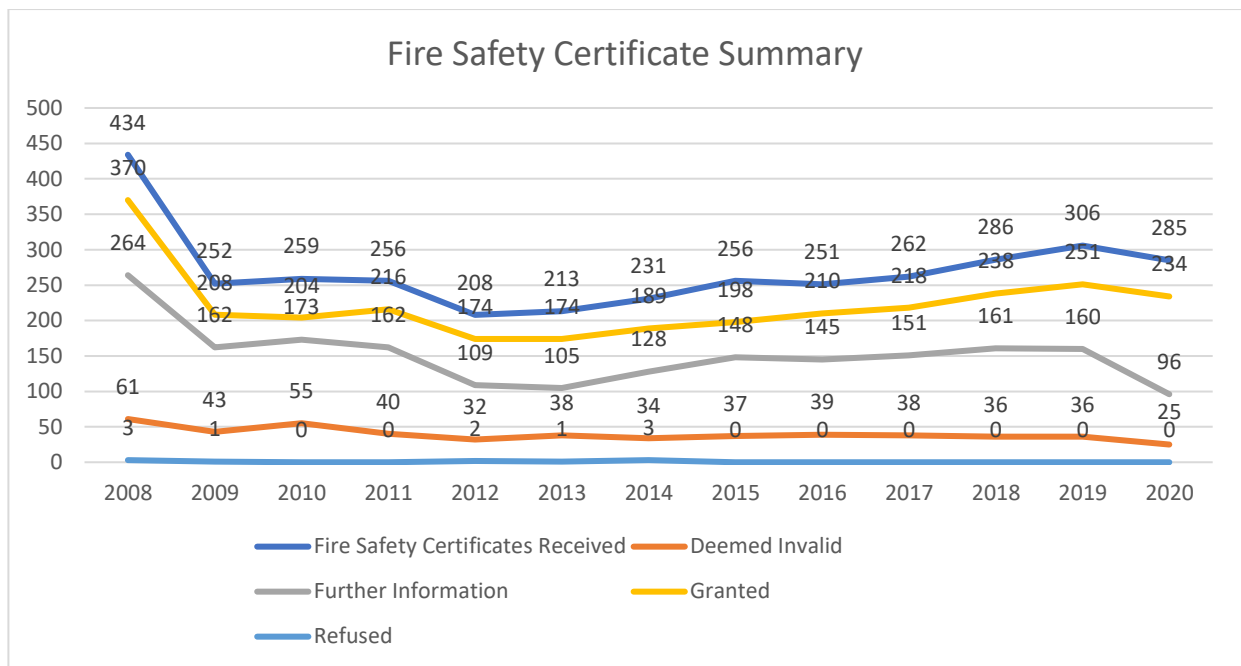
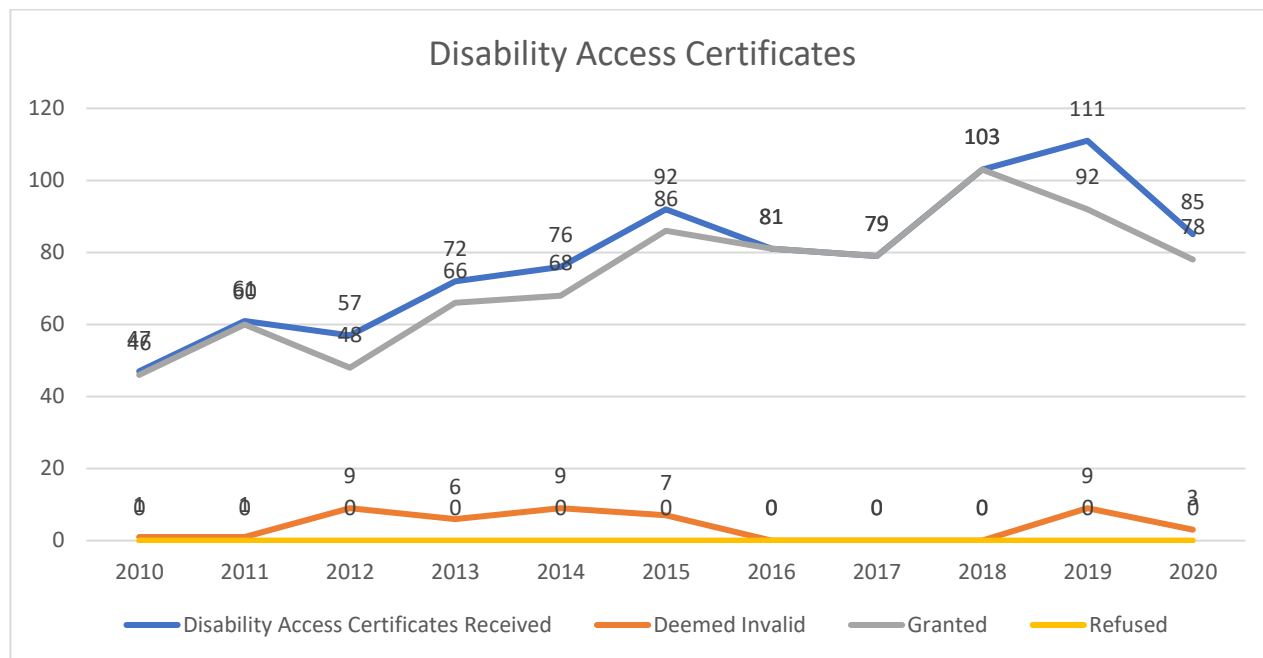


FIGURE 5 DISABILITY ACCESS CERTIFICATE ACTIVITY 2010-2019



PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- 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 2021:

- Galway Civil Defence operate from 5 training centres, Galway City, Oranmore, Loughrea, Ballinasloe and Clonberne. 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.
- 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 assisted in setting up mobile test centres with the county at the HSE's request
- Members assisted the Irish Blood Transfusion Service at their clinics held in the Galway city and county throughout the year.
- Galway Civil Defence volunteers provided assistance at the Galway Mass Vaccination Centre at Galway Racecourse 3 days each week from May through to the end of August 2021
- 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 2021.
- 1 additional Ford Transit was allocated in May 2021 to Galway by the Dept. of Defence, Civil Defence Branch with funding from the Dormant Accounts Fund.
- Galway Civil Defence also received €5903.86 from a National Equipment Grant for 2021 from the Dept. Of Defence
- A grant aid sanction of €9000. was received towards purchase of UAS Drone Equipment for Galway Civil Defence to enhance its response to the PRAs from the Dept. of Defence.
- A grant aid of €3000 was issued towards the Purchase of Portable Sonar Solution required for Civil Defence Missing Persons Search Operations from the Dept. of Defence.

- 2 Floodwater Responder Instructors were recertified by Rescue-3 UK in December 2021. Galway was selected as the venue for the 1st part of the recertification course 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.
- 1 additional Peer to Peer Support person was trained in 2021
- 12 Boat and Flood Responders completed their Personal Survival Training at the National Maritime College of Ireland in November 2021.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- Focus on training for 2022 will centre in developing the Search Management capability and Swift Water Rescue training with members partaking in recertification training and initial training in 2022 under the Rescue 3 programme.
- Further development of our e-learning site for members.
- Work in the West of the County in 2022 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 2022.
- All clinical levels of responders will continue to develop their skills throughout the training year.
- Continuous liaison with the PRAs 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 2022
- 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. It is hoped that new members will be able to join in late January 2022.
- Support the LA's with the 2022 programme where possible.



HUMAN RESOURCES ACTIVITY

RECRUITMENT AND WORKFORCE PLANNING:

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

Galway County Council's Staff Headcount at the end of Quarter 3, 2021 is as follows:

<i>Category</i>	<i>Headcount</i>
<i>Core Staff</i>	<i>845</i>
<i>Retained Fire Fighters</i>	<i>112</i>
<i>Non-Department of Housing, Planning & LG</i>	<i>79</i>

Recruitment Activity, up to Quarter 3, 2021:

The Human Resources Department ran 37 recruitment competitions up to the end of Quarter 3, 2021 which resulted in the following appointments

New Appointments/Joiners	Acting Appointments	Permanent Promotional Appointments
157	60	31

Staff recruitment and re-deployment has been targeted at the priority areas of Housing, Environmental Enforcement, Planning and Municipal Districts.

STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- The Training and Development Section provides a wide range of training programmes to enable staff and management carry out their duties in a confident and competent manner and in a safe working environment. Staff investment in training benefits the organisation through the up skilling of employees and it also facilitates continuous personal development. There have been approximately 2025 training days provided from January to October 2021.

- Health & Safety training formed a considerable part of 2021 Training Plan which included the following courses: Safe Pass, Manual Handling, Re-certification of Occupational First Aid, Chainsaw Training, Road Opening Reinstatement Training, Abrasive Wheels, Fire Evacuation Training.

STAFF WELFARE

Galway County Council offers a number of Family Friendly Schemes to employees and, up to the end of Quarter 3, 2021 staff have availed of the various schemes as follows;

- **Paternity Leave Scheme:** 9 staff members availed of the paternity leave scheme in 2021
- **Carer's Leave Scheme:** 4 staff members availed of Carer's Leave in 2021
- **Career Break:** 6 staff members availed of career breaks in 2021
- **Parent's Leave Scheme:** 13 staff members availed of parent leave scheme in 2021
- **Work Sharing Scheme:** 60 staff members availed of work sharing arrangements in 2021
- **Parental Leave Scheme:** 43 staff members availed of parental leave scheme in 2021
- **Shorter Working Year Scheme:** 32 staff members availed of unpaid leave under the Shorter Working Year Scheme in 2021

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. 32 applications for participation in the Cycle to Work Scheme have been processed to date in 2021 for Council employees.
- **Travel Pass Scheme:** There are currently 5 staff members availing of the Tax Saver Travel Pass Scheme.
- **VDU Assessments:** 45 VDU tests have been carried out as at the end of Quarter 3 of 2021, with a further 14 assessments pending to date.

RETIREMENTS

- According to service records, 4 full-time staff members are due to retire in 2022. 33 staff members to date have retired 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.
- 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 2022:

- 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 2022 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.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

The pandemic response has been ongoing with the dual challenges of supporting remote working and ensuring sufficient Information Systems Security, Protection and Availability. As in 2020 the restriction of movement and remote working support has slowed some activities and program implementation. Additionally, the capacity nationally for external contractor and vendor resources has hindered progress along with global electronic supply chain capacity difficulties.

- Commenced full internal compute capacity replacement to replace aging installation and provide improved business continuity and disaster recovery features.



- Completed move to new perimeter security appliances to compliment and integrate with cloud systems.
- Telephony calling moved to Government Gateway which will lower costs and provide future integration to cloud hosted calling systems.
- Provisioned all requirements to complete pilot program for national E-Planning Portal pilot to facilitate full electronic planning application process.
- Continuing support for remote working with 400 staff now fully capable.
- Completed Windows 7 and aging desktop PC replacement.
- Endpoint Threat Prevention capability increased with additional security features and staff training
- Transition from legacy Geographical Information Systems Software for staff to new integrated online systems
- Deployed full operational Traffic Fines Application for Community Wardens
- Completed Housing Cloud Application development and roll to fully automate the annual Housing Need Assessments and Disability Needs Assessment.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

The focus in 2022 will be on utilising more novel technical solutions that will reduce internal Information System support overhead and be an enabler for anytime public engagement for services and enhanced security management.

- Progress further (AI) Artificial Intelligence Security Software Systems to provide continuous protection and preventative measures to stop any attacks.
- Implement cloud-based telephony system to better facilitate blended working and improve service user experience and backend analytics on performance for staff management function
- Progress more public and client services from Housing, Roads, Law Agents and Community/Enterprise sections for new online portal.
- Recommence www.galway.ie website improvement project.
- Complete Procurement for Four municipal district office network upgrade
- Leverage where available National Broadband Plan other Carrier (Eir, SIRO) Network improvements to Council facilities with emphasis on public access internet services.
- Internal Councillor and Staff Cloud intranet portal for improved communications and process.

FINANCE & MOTOR TAX

FINANCE

VALUE FOR MONEY, SHARED SERVICES AND PUBLIC PROCUREMENT:

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

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 2021 Galway County Council generated 144 Requests for Tender (RFT) and 27 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 53 tenders on this platform.

Purchase Cards: The Council uses the Lighthouse Portal (Ascendas) to process transactions to Agresso and currently has 198 active cards with spend of € 1,024,818.22 and has processed 8,080 transactions to date.

Fuel Debit Cards: The Council currently has 225 active fuel cards with a 2021 spend of €633,797.99.

The second 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. Internal Financial Regulations have been reviewed and adopted as have the templates for Article 84 Reporting and Conflict of Interest Declarations.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

Further develop the use of the platforms www.supplygov.ie and www.etenders.gov.ie across the organisation with a view to maximising the digitalisation of the procurement process and increasing the use of frameworks established by LGOPC and the OGP across the organisation.

Increase the profile of procurement with an emphasis on Green and Social procurement through the Council's website and training, in conjunction with the development of a procurement manual.

Monitoring www.etenders.gov.ie and www.supplygov.ie to ensure competition processes are completed in line with EU Directives and guidelines.

Analysing the 2021 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.

Encourage greater access to Small Medium Enterprise (SME) participation in procurement in relation to Circular 10/14 by engaging with suppliers.

Collate details of all new national frameworks and contracts on a simplified tender logging system.

To continue to implement Spend Data Analysis System and expand the procurement function through Agresso MS4.

Continue to monitor and review the Purchase Card and Fuel Card systems.

DISCHARGE OF PAYMENTS

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- Continued implementation of electronic payment methods/upgrades to ensure compliance with e-Invoicing. Final testing with the LGMA & AP is now complete to receive e-Invoices & the roll out as led by the LGMA continues
- 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 2022:

- 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 which was rolled out in 2021.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- 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.
- Effective staff planning initiatives rolled out including a transparent Rota, staff cover for vital operations & AL planning.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- 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.
- Investigate use of MAKODATA for Management information
- Review Taxation expertise within Finance unit and skill-up for identified knowledge and expertise gaps.

REVENUE COLLECTION

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- 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 15-03-2021
- Administration in conjunction with the LGMA of the Small Business Assistance Scheme for Covid process in line with Government Directives in regard to grant payments to businesses affected by the Covid-19 restrictions.
- Implementation of the Waiver Scheme for commercial rates in accordance with Government Directives for businesses affected by the Covid-19 restrictions.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- 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 15-9-2022. The new valuations will become effective on the 1-1-2023.
- 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 2021:

The number of motor tax transactions carried out by Galway County Council motor tax offices to the end of September 2021 was 30,768. Over €5.4M was taken in by Galway Motor Tax Offices for this period. The public counter was closed to the public from January to July 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the service was fully provided by post and telephone throughout this period.

- Approximately 88% of total motor tax transactions for the Galway area were carried out online to the end of September 2021. The motor tax office continues to deal with phone queries in relation to the on-line taxing of vehicles and the volume of calls increased greatly during the pandemic.
- The motor tax offices issue tax discs for private and commercial vehicles, tractors, hackneys, taxis and large public service vehicles. Trade plates, trailer license's, replacement documents are also issued and Garda queries and other Local authority queries i.e. S103s and CT53s are processed.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- 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.

RISK CONTROL

INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN 2021:

- Communicating with members of the public regarding claims submitted to Galway County Council.
- Liaising with IPB in relation to all aspects of insurance claims dealt with by Galway County Council including Employer's Liability, Public Liability, Housing, Motor and Material Damage.
- Corresponding with our legal team and other council departments in collating documents for use in the investigation of all claims.
- Providing information to council departments regarding insurance matters including all aspects of cover.

PROPOSALS FOR 2022:

- Provide insurance details to IPB in relation to all departments regarding renewal information and policy cover.
- Ensure insurance policy payments premia are made to IPB
- To provide for the planned coordination of statutory inspections in relation to lifting and pressure equipment between IPB's supplier IES and Galway County Council.
- Continued collaboration with all stakeholders in relation to any future claims received by the Risk Control office.

3 YEAR CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2021 – 2023

ECONOMIC, RURAL & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING

ATHENRY RRDF

The funding approved under Cat 1 & Cat 2 RRDF for Athenry is €3,554,000. The Allocation has been made to a number of projects in Athenry Town and the BIA Innovator Campus. These projects will provide assist with the regeneration and development of Athenry Town with a number of improvements to be made in the Town Centre. Consultants have been appointed on both the Interpretative and Wayfinding and Market Square projects; The streetscape scheme is underway with 24 offers been made; Part 8 is under review for the Cross-Street Upgrade and will be dependent on the Market Square design outcome.

BALLINASLOE STREETSCAPE SCHEME

A Pilot Streetscape Enhancement Scheme was announced for Athenry and Ballinasloe in 2020. The objective of the scheme is to improve the visual appearance of urban streetscapes, sustain existing and attract new footfall and support a reduction in commercial vacancies within town centres. This in turn will support our towns reputation as an attractive place to live, work and invest in. The Streetscape Programme was rolled out in Ballinasloe in 2021 with 87 offers been made to Applicants.

CLIFDEN RRDF

The funding approved under CAT 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. Tender Analysis is now complete and standstill period has been observed. Consultants have been appointed with an initial site meeting having taken place in September 2021.

GORT

Galway County Council Regeneration team has submitted an application to the Department of Rural and Community Development under the Category 2 call in July 2021. The Application relates to 3 projects within the town. Project 1 relates to The Sisters of Mercy convent and primary school on Bridge Street in Gort, project 2 relates to the Market Square in Gort and the streets which radiate off it and finally project 3, Canon Quinn Park is on Queen Street which is directly in between the Convent site and Market Square. We are awaiting the Category 2 announcement to see if we are successful in our bid.

KINVARA

The funding approved under CAT 2 RRDF for Kinvara is €122,790.20 with a match funding requirement of €40,930.06. The project will develop detailed designs and bring to planning stage a boardwalk and walkway and provide safe pedestrian access from the village to this national heritage site and onto the tendered upgrade works on the N67.

LOUGHREA RRDF

The funding approved under CAT 1 RRDF for Loughrea is €1,628,879 with a match funding of €542,960. The project will assist revitalise Loughrea and in particular the Loughrea Town Hall and the Barrack Street Public Realm by bringing back into use this historic and important building. Architects were appointed in December 2020; a detailed design has been advanced and is in review with regeneration team. Revised Part 8 90% complete and almost ready for submission.

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 of town centre historic sites. The tender process for the Public Realm is pending with an appointment predicated for late October 2021. Sculpture Park/Public Art trail will be progressed under the % for Art Scheme and an application was submitted under ORIS also. The Interpretative and Wayfinding is currently at concept stage. Consultants have been appointed for the Urban Design Guidance Document with a review currently taking place of the draft document.



PORTUMNA COURTHOUSE RRDF

The funding approved under RRDF for Portumna Courthouse is €2,552,309 with a match funding requirement of €283,589.90. This project will redevelop the historic courthouse building and courtyard in Portumna to deliver a state-of-the-art venue for the arts and culture, a remote working space for entrepreneurs and a new meeting and social space for the community. The project encompasses the physical and social regeneration of a key local heritage asset that will be a valuable resource for the local community. The project will enhance day and evening time tourism and community activity, attracting visitors to the town and providing essential remote working space to support local workers and new enterprises.

TUAM

The funding approved under RRDF for Tuam was €175,000 with a match funding requirement of €43,750. The funding included the preparation of a Town Centre Regeneration Masterplan, which has now been environmentally assessed and was endorsed by Tuam M.D. on April 12th, 2021. Traffic Analysis (OSC) consultants have also been appointed; Consultants have also been appointed for the Shambles Business Case Analysis and a draft report has been drawn up with findings.

Galway County Council Regeneration team has submitted an application to the Department of Rural and Community Development under the Category 2 call in July 2021. The application was submitted for 2 projects within the town which were identified within the Tuam Regeneration Masterplan. Project 1 relates to market square and the main town centre streets which radiate off it and project 2 relates to vacant and derelict buildings in the town centre. We are awaiting the Cat 2 announcement to see if we are successful in our bid.

HOUSING

Housing for All – a new Housing Plan for Ireland was launched in September 2021. Housing for All is the government’s plan to increase the supply of housing to an average of 33,000 per year over the next decade. The plan provides for an optimal mix of social, affordable and private housing for sale and rent. The plan is based on four pathways, leading to a more sustainable housing system:

- support home ownership and increase affordability
- eradicate homelessness, increase social housing delivery and support social inclusion
- increase new housing supply
- address vacancy and make efficient use of existing stock

The delivery of the largest ever social and affordable housing programme under Housing for All is the priority of Galway County Council with a primary focus on new builds to provide social homes. The provision of social and affordable housing of a high standard in the right locations will provide long-term sustainable housing for current and future generations.

A Housing Delivery Action Plan is being prepared for completion by December 2021 which will provide details of the when and how Galway County Council plans to deliver sustainable housing in the right locations during the timeframe of the Housing for All programme.

The Council is committed to utilising all available capital funding streams to maximise the delivery of social and affordable housing including construction, turnkey developments, Part V and Buy and Renew Schemes. The Council continues to actively support Approved Housing Bodies in availing of the Capital Assistance Scheme to deliver social housing.

The Council is actively pursuing the purchase of additional land to add to its existing land bank to ensure the availability of land for 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)	€40M	€70M	€105M
Acquisition Programme (including Part V's)	€5M	€3M	€3M
Capital Assistance Scheme	€10M	€3M	€2M

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 Housing for All. The focus for 2022 is achieving the delivery of 230 social houses through the activities of the Council and Approved Housing Bodies.

A large construction/build programme will be delivered in 2022 and the expenditure profile reflects this. The focus will shift in 2022 away from leasing arrangements and acquisitions and towards construction (new build delivery). Part V acquisitions will continue and will increase to 20% on developments, to include a minimum 10% allocation for social housing.

The new planning arrangements for Large-Scale Residential Developments will reduce delays in the delivery of all forms of housing, including social and affordable.

The Housing Unit is progressing several other capital schemes through design and planning which have the capacity to deliver units in 2022 through to 2024.

SCHEMES ON SITE (2021)		
Roundstone	LA Build	14 units completed
Barrack St. Loughrea	LA Build	5 units completed
Fana Bhui Tuam	LA Build	49 units
Tubber Road	Turnkey	84 units
Cartron Kinvara	LA Build	10 units
Hospital Rd Clifden	LA Build	26 units
Letterfrack	AHB Build	11 units

Total expected build delivery across all build streams for 2021 is 116 units.

The Council's proposed developments to 2026 includes delivery on existing and new landbanks at Claregalway, Loughrea, Tuam amongst other locations. New turnkeys may be approved from time to time depending on suitability.

The extent of the direct build programme from 2022 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 2022 and future years. A strong build programme will reduce the requirement for acquisitions other than through the Part V mechanism.

The targets for build delivery under Housing For All Plan are as follows:

- 2022 – 230 no. units
- 2023 – 351 no. units
- 2024 – 358 no. units
- 2025 – 385 no. units
- 2026 – 393 no. units.

The role of AHBs in delivering new build units will be a critical aspect of Galway County Council’s success in meeting its targets. Under the Housing for All Plan AHBs are expected to deliver 40% of units per annum up to 2026.

Another critical aspect of new-build delivery will be the acquisition of land, infill sites, brownfield sites etc.

The Council sought additional funding at various stages during 2021 to complete additional traveller accommodation improvement works and was successful in obtaining same. The Council’s current priority is on the delivery of improvement works on current Traveller Accommodation Schemes and on Traveller Specific houses. Plans are at an early stage and will be developed further to provide additional Traveller Specific Accommodation by expanding current Schemes and by identifying additional suitable locations for such developments. Funding proposals will continue to be submitted to the Traveller Accommodation Unit in 2022 as development plans are progressed.

HOUSE PURCHASE LOANS:

House Purchase Loans will continue to be issued to eligible purchasers and will be expanded to include an increased income ceiling of €65,000 for single people. Funding is sourced by way of Council 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, the turnover of void housing units and to deliver a planned maintenance programme.

PLANNED MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME:

Funding has been provided via a loan facility for a Planned Maintenance Programme for existing housing stock to achieve compliance with statutory requirements, including minimum standards. The condition survey of the Council's Housing stock is substantially complete.

A pilot project was carried out on 54 houses in the Conamara Municipal District with the completion of electrical works and heating system repairs in them. Following the successful delivery of this pilot project, work commenced on rolling out electrical works and heating system repairs on Local Authority houses countywide with a project lot per Municipal District. The completion of electrical works and heating system repairs on the remaining 450 houses in the Conamara Area were severely delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic but are now nearing completion. A contract was awarded, and work has commenced on 700 houses in the Loughrea Municipal District. Further lots for the remaining Municipal Districts will be tendered in 2022.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY RETROFIT PROGRAMME:

Provision has been made for works under the Energy Efficiency Retrofit Programme (EERP) to be carried out on Galway County Council occupied housing stock. A pilot programme with the Deep Energy Retrofit of 72 houses under the Midland Energy Efficiency Retrofit programme in the East of the County is nearing completion.

Following this successful pilot project, the 2021 Retrofitting Programme saw the deep retrofit of an additional 54 houses at a cost of €1.3m.

The 2022 Retrofitting Programme proposes to deep retrofit an additional 90 Local Authority houses subject to Departmental approval.



It was decided to include the planned maintenance works with the Retrofitting Programme to improve efficiency, so an additional 126 houses have had planned maintenance electrical and fire alarm works carried out as part of the Energy Retrofitting Programme with the provision of funding from the Planned Maintenance Programme.

In 2020 five (5) derelict properties were identified as being suitable for major refurbishment works. These were advanced through an in-house design process. Following a successful tendering process, two houses have been completed in 2020 with the remaining three currently under construction and due to be completed by the end of 2021. Further properties which require significant reconstruction works will be identified for progression in 2022, depending on funding made available from the Department of Housing.

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	Subject to ABP decision, which is due in November 2021, - legal challenges and available funding, the project can progress to the next stages - land and property acquisition, detailed design and enabling works. The procurement of a contractor and the main construction phase to follow in subsequent years.



N59 Maigh Cuilinn Bypass	<p>A contractor has been appointed to carry out the main construction contract for the N59 Maigh Cuilinn Bypass. The scheme will consist of 4.6km of Single Carriageway cross-section. The contractor is to establish their presence on site in late 2021 and the first tasks undertaken will be to commence site clearance and then the provision of access to the bridge structures. It is anticipated that construction work will be well underway in early 2022, with a 2-year construction program.</p> <p>The main elements of the proposed road development include 4.6 km of National Secondary Road comprising a Type 1 Single Carriageway, Realignment of the Knockferry road over a distance of approx. 0.85km , 1.7km of farm/ accommodation roads, 2 no. at-grade roundabouts, 8 structures comprising 5 bridges, 2 underpasses and 1 Culvert.</p>
N63 Liss to Abbey Realignment Scheme	N63 Liss to Abbey Realignment - Scheme will continue to be advanced through Phases 3 and 4 of TII Project Management Guidelines
N59 Bunnakill to Claremount	Progression of method statements for other aspects of the Bunnakill to Claremount section with National Parks & Wildlife Services (NPWS) & Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) such as advance contracts for ground investigation works and topographic surveys and archaeology investigations in 2022. It is hoped to progress to the detailed design for Bunnakill to Claremount in 2022 based on the outcome of the initial surveys and investigations. Discussions will continue with NPWS & IFI in relation to construction stage method statements for the remaining section Bunnakill to Claremount pending development of the detailed design.

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	Significant investment is required to replace aging fleet. A draft of the Galway County Council Machinery yard review is complete and is expected to be finalised in November 2021 with a view to providing a phased replacement of vehicles.

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	All works were completed on the scheme in September 2021. It is now fully operational. Landowner compensation payments will be substantially complete by year end 2021.
South Galway (Gort Lowlands) Flood Relief Scheme	Base line surveys for the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) commenced in September 2021. Site Investigation works commenced in November 2021. The EIAR process is scheduled to be completed in June 2022 with exhibition scheduled for Q3 2022.



<p>Ballinasloe Flood Relief Scheme</p>	<p>Engineering Consultants (ARUP) were appointed in October 2019. Environmental Consultants (Ryan Hanley) appointed in Q4 2019.</p> <p>Second Public Consultation Day programmed for Q1 2022. Stage 1 envisaged to be completed in January 2023</p>
<p>Clifden Flood Relief Scheme</p>	<p>This project is being funded by the OPW – CFRAM funding from Tranche 1.</p> <p>JACOBS (Engineering & Environmental) Consultants were appointed in early November 2021 as the Project Supervisor Design Phase (PSDP) and Designer.</p> <p>The scheme is currently in Stage 1 - which involves scheme assessment, development & design</p> <p>It is anticipated that Stage 1 will be completed in Q2 2022</p>

STRATEGIC PIERS AND HARBOURS PROGRAMME

Funding for works on strategic piers on the islands is being provided through the Department of Rural & Community Development.

Project:	Status:
<p>Inis Oírr Pier Improvements – construct breakwater and pier extension, carry out dredging and provide additional berthage</p>	<p>Approval of business case was received in May 2021. Foreshore license pre-application lodged with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in July 2021. Galway County Council is to meet with Department to progress further.</p> <p>Land Acquisition/CPO process being progressed, and Ecological studies are being completed.</p> <p>Tender documents are almost complete and may be subject to amendments following receipt of the foreshore license conditions.</p> <p>Procurement timeline will be dependent on the approval of the foreshore license and completion of CPO. Subject to the foreshore license, the council hope to go to tender</p>



in early 2022 with a view to having a contractor appointed in Q2, 2022.

Caladh Mór Pier, Inis Meáin Improvements

Visit to the Maritime college took place on 07th July 2021. Attended by vessel operators, islanders and staff from Department & Galway County Council. The digital model developed at the National Maritime College of Ireland, was intended to simulate the pier and sea area around it and to outline what deficiencies/ problems exist at the pier. The Model requires further refinement to accurately reflect the pier and surrounding area.

Feedback was received from NMCI highlighted a number of issues which the Council are currently reviewing in order to progress further

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>The Natura Impact Statements for Crumpáin and Droim are complete. The design is complete. We are awaiting a meeting with NPWS to discuss any mitigation required before submission for planning. Potential works at Crumpáin will depend on the agreement of the adjacent landowner: discussions are ongoing</p>



Ard Thoir, Carna

AA screen reports for Ard Thoir and Aille an Eachrais to be completed late 2021/early 2022

Aille an Eachrais

SMARTER TRAVEL

Project:	Status:
Conamara Greenway -	<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.</p> <p>2022 will see the completion of the remaining 6km from Clifden to Recess. Land acquisition on going.</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.</p> <p>Maintenance will be required of the completed routes.</p>
Active Travel Project – National Transport Authority	<p>As part of the Programme for Government published in June 2020, €50 million has been made available to the National Transport Authority for the funding of walking and cycling projects in local authorities across the country during 2021. The aim of this funding is to support the development of high-quality urban cycling and walking infrastructure outside of our cities.</p> <p>Categories of projects include -</p>



- New or improved access to town centres, schools or other major destinations for walking and/or cycling;
- New or upgraded cycle facilities, providing segregation from motorised traffic on key routes in and approaching towns and villages;
- New footpaths for pedestrian connections or upgrading/renewal of existing footpaths;
- Filtered permeability schemes, conferring “short-cut” advantage to pedestrians and / or cyclists to access key local destinations;
- New or improved urban greenways, providing for commuter connectivity in addition to recreational /amenity use, with linkages to the town street network. *(Please be aware that rural / amenity greenways will continue to be funded through the Department of Transport. This NTA fund is intended for town-centre greenways, addressing utilitarian / commuter / local urban trips);*
- Conversion of temporary COVID interventions to permanent layouts;
- Improved access to public transport, including improved waiting facilities in town centres; and
- Development of focussed transport studies for larger towns, to identify networks and projects for implementation later in this programme.

In 2021 Galway County Council secured €6.193m under the Active Travel fund for works including; footpath improvements, cycle parking, light segregation cycle schemes, low cost junction tightening/pedestrian crossings, low cost permeability measures, safety interventions, bus stops and transport studies. Works are underway on all the projects approved and any unfinished works from the 2021 can be carried forward into 2022.

A dedicated Active Travel Team of three technical staff and 1 administration staff is in the process of being appointed who will be solely responsible for preparing applications for future funding, monitoring and delivering Active Travel projects.



The Active Travel Programme is a rolling capital programme and it anticipated that there will be opportunity in 2022 to apply for funding for additional projects.

NATIONAL BROADBAND PLAN & DIGITAL STRATEGY

Project:	Status:
National Broadband Plan	<p>The National Broadband Plan is set to deliver high-speed fibre broadband to over 38,000 premises of 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. By the end of 2021 over 6,000 properties in the state intervention area in County Galway are either “Ready to connect” or in “pre-order now” status for this new service. (NBI.ie – 8/11/21)</p> <p>In 2021 NBI where works in 4 out of the 5 Municipal Districts in County Galway.</p> <p>Galway county has 22 Broadband Connection Points (BCP) which are currently been enabled with wireless high-speed broadband as part of these works to support communities until fibre broadband is rolled out in their area.</p> <p>A key principle of the NBP is to support and stimulate commercial investment through policy and regulatory measures. This has acted as a catalyst for commercial investment by the telecommunications sector.</p> <p>Galway County Council will facilitate the roll out of telecommunications by both state and private investment in the County, in the last 4 years over 40,000 properties gained access to</p>



	<p>high speed broadband (FTTH) service in County Galway through commercial investment.</p> <p>Galway County Council employ a Broadband Officer and Broadband Support Officer to help facilitate these projects.</p>
Digital Strategy	<p>Galway County's Digital Strategy was published in Q1 2021, with the aim of identifying the County's strengths and weakness resulting from 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>In 2021 Galway Co rolled out the first 10 free public Wi-Fi Access points under the Wifi4eu scheme, over the course of 2022 an additional 30 wi-fi access points will be rolled out across the county. This will be in addition to the 21 Public Wi-fi access points from the BCP locations.</p> <p>Galway County Council is supporting the BCPs as they develop their service offering to the public, ranging from public wi-fi, spaces to get on-line & remote working spaces.</p> <p>Galway County Council will support 4 thematic programs from Dept. of Rural and Community Development, which will be promoted and delivered through the BCP network, the programs are in E-health, Skills, Remote working and Art.</p>

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 2022-2024.

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

FIRE APPLIANCES

- The DHLGH allocated a new class B Appliance to Galway County Council as part of a National Procurement Plan 2021-2025. This class B appliance was procured centrally as part of a National procurement process by OGP. The selected supplier was Emergency One in Scotland. Personnel from GFRS attended the Emergency One plant in Scotland in 2021 and outlined the detailed specification of the order. The appliance should be delivered in late 2022
- Efforts are ongoing to procure a number of pre-owned Class B appliances. This will help to lower the average age of appliances which is currently high. Currently there are very few suitable pre-owned Appliances on the market. Efforts are also ongoing to procure a pre-owned water tanker for Tuam Fire Station.

FIRE STATIONS

New fire station projects are outlined in DHLGH National Capital Programme 2021-2025.

TUAM FIRE STATION

- The new Fire Station in Tuam went operational in late September 2018 and was officially opened on the 15 April 2019 by Sean Canney T.D., Minister of State Community Development, Natural Resources & 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. A design team was appointed in 2020 and a detailed design completed in 2021. Permission has been sought from the Department to go to tender for a contractor to construct the station.

LOUGHREA FIRE STATION

- A number of suitable sites were identified, and an appropriate site was secured. Galway County Council made a case to Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage for approval to proceed to the design stage and the appointment of a Design Team. Approval has been received and GFRS has completed the tender competition to appoint a design team, which will be appointed before end Q4 2021

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.

GALWAY CITY FIRE STATION AND HEADQUARTERS

- Work is ongoing by Galway City Council in relation to the identification and procurement of an appropriate site. There has been an indication from the DHLGH 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 vital that a capital appraisal be submitted to the DHLGH for inclusion in the new National Capital Programme as soon as possible. Both Councils are aware of the urgency in relation to this project.

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 2022, a case will be made to DHLGH to construct a new dedicated workshop.

OTHER- SMALL PROJECTS CAPITAL

- Procurement of smoke alarms for 2022, as part of National Community Smoke Alarm Scheme as per previous years. A submission has been made to DHPLG to procure 650 smoke alarms in 2021 and continue distribution via Galway County and City Community Smoke Alarms Schemes in 2021 to vulnerable households with a particular focus on the off-shore islands



- Ongoing equipment replacement will continue in 2022. BA equipment that reached the end of its serviceable life was replaced at a cost of €100k approx. in 2020. A successful case was submitted to DHPLG to recoup this cost.
- In 2019 GFRS tendered for the replacement of firefighting personal protective equipment. This equipment was procured in 2020 at a cost of €320k approximately.
- 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 Local Government & Heritage for capital funding/support for the following items in 2021 and have received approval to procure the following to a value of approximately €300,000 which will come on stream in late 2021 and early 2022:
 - 1No. 4 x 4 vehicle to replace an end-of-life vehicle
 - Various pieces of Compartment firefighting equipment
 - Thermal Image Cameras
 - Smoke Curtains
 - Positive pressure ventilation fans
 - Hazardous Materials Gas Tight Suits
 - Assorted abrasive wheels for all stations
 - Compressors (for recharging breathing apparatus cylinders)
 - Working at heights training frame
 - Assorted items for the internal upgrade of stations.

PLANNING & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND CORPORATE SERVICES

GARRAUN (ORANMORE TRAIN STATION) URDF

There are three main elements to the funding allocation which is centred around the existing train station at Oranmore in County Galway's metropolitan area.

Funding has been awarded for:

1. Railway Infrastructure Upgrades to include a 1KM passing railway loop at the existing Oranmore Train Station; including additional platform and associated infrastructure (12 million).
2. Design of the local centre (see attached) and lands south of the train station to include a detailed design of the local centre, associated car park (existing), (architectural/structural engineering detail) and landscaping plan (for public use); (€300,000).
3. A study on the Design Development of Typologies to implement the Urban Framework Plan (€75,000).

The project will commence in 2021 in close collaboration with Iarnród Éireann.

CORPORATE SERVICES, FACILITIES MANAGEMENT & ENERGY EFFICIENCY INVESTMENTS

As Áras an Chontae has now been open for over 20 years it requires capital investment in the building which includes the provision of additional office accommodation, energy efficiency works including the repair and replacement of windows, improvements in disability access for both staff and visitors and Health and Safety works to the existing boundary wall at Bóthar na mBan.

Capital investment is also required throughout the County Council portfolio of buildings, including regional offices and our library network both to sustain these assets and to ensure a more energy efficient property folio in line with our current Climate Action Plan.

During the period of this 3-year Capital Programme 2022-2024, it is intended to progress a number of other projects, subject to Departmental funding, however some works required for Health & Safety and/or essential conservation purposes may need to be carried out with funding from the capital account.

RECREATION AND AMENITY

The Council will continue to support investment in recreation and amenity facilities in the county leveraging grant funding where available to support the upgrade of existing playgrounds and the development of new facilities including walking routes and amenities. The Council will approach same on a cross organisational basis to maximise available funding opportunities.