



**COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE**

**Minutes of the Climate Action, Biodiversity and Heritage Strategic Policy Committee Meeting held  
on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> November at 10:00 am in Room G01**

**I LÁTHAIR:**

**Baill:**

Cllr. Martina Kinane, Chairperson  
Cllr. Tomás Grealish  
Cllr. Paul Killilea  
Mr. Peter Butler  
Ms. Hazel Morrison

**Oifigigh:**

Mr. Liam Hanrahan, Director of Services, Planning  
Ms. Marie Mannion, Heritage Officer, Planning  
Ms. Rosina Joyce, Biodiversity Officer, Planning  
Ms. Tina Ryan, Climate Change Co-Ordinator, Climate Change  
Ms. Helen Hallinan, Assistant Staff Officer, Environment  
Ms. Anne Power, Senior Staff Officer, Planning  
Ms. Gina O'Shaughnessy, Assistant Staff Officer, Planning

**Apologies:**

Mr Uisinn Finn, Director of Services, Physical Dev, Fire Emergency, Climate Change  
Ms. Justine Delaney  
Mr. Stephen Canavan  
Mr. Vincent Lyons  
Cllr. Ollie Turner  
Cllr. Ivan Canning

**Item No. 1 - Introductions**

Cllr. Martina Kinnane welcomed everyone to the first Climate Action, Biodiversity and Heritage Strategic Policy Committee meeting of the term.

**Item No. 2. – Strategic Policy Committee Standing Orders**

All attendees received a copy of the standing orders prior to the meeting and these were noted by the members.

**Item No. 3 - Heritage & Biodiversity Plan 2024 - 2030**

Cllr. Kinnane thanked everybody involved for the massive amount of work that was undertaken in the preparation of the Draft Heritage & Biodiversity Plan 2024 -2030.

Ms. Mannion welcomed everyone to the meeting and started by giving a background history of the Heritage & Biodiversity Plan.

Ms. Mannion outlined that the Heritage and Biodiversity Forum was established in 2004 to provide advice and guidance regarding the development and implementation of the Galway County Heritage & Biodiversity Plans and develop and review annual programmes of work.

Ms. Mannion informed the members that previously there was a separate Heritage & Biodiversity Plan but in 2017 it was decided by the Forum to have a joint Heritage & Biodiversity Plan and they welcomed the joint Plan going forward.

Ms. Mannion noted that the Galway Heritage & Biodiversity Forum comprises sectoral interests including local government, state agencies, non-government organisations, farmers and landowners, local and regional development agencies, the education and heritage sector, and the community and voluntary sector.

Ms. Mannion outlined that as with the development of the previous Galway County Heritage and Biodiversity Plans the Forum established three working groups to assist in the development of the 2024 -2030 Plan. The membership of each working group was drawn from the Forum membership. Each working group considered the existing Heritage and Biodiversity Plan, all submissions received and feedback from the public consultation process and brought their insights and experience to the discussions and negotiations.

Ms Mannion noted that the Forum approved the final draft actions and adopted the plan on the 25<sup>th</sup> October 2024 and that it was presented to Galway County Council Management Team on the 11<sup>th</sup> of November 2024.

Ms. Mannion gave a brief guideline of the timeline for the development of the Plan.

- Forum Meetings initiating the development of the New Plan took place between May 2022 – July 2023.
- Online Pre-draft Consultation in partnership with the Climate Action Plan July 2023.
- Six Art Workshops targeted at groups not traditionally heard of in the consultation process May 2024.
- Review of previous Plan, new polices and legislation April 2023 – December 2023.
- Six in-person pre-draft consultation workshops April 2024.
- Drafting of Actions, Objectives & KPS's by the Forum July – August 2024.
- Environmental screening process completed September – October 2024.
- Review of Public Consultation by the Forum June – July 2024.
- Main body text drafted and approved by Forum August – October 2024.

Ms. Joyce gave the members an overview of the Public Consultation process, she informed the members that the public consultation presented a great opportunity to link in with local groups in each of the Municipal Districts around the county. She noted extensive public engagement was held to capture the inputs of a wide range of groups across the entire County. She noted an online pre-draft consultation was conducted in partnership with the Galway County Climate Action Plan 2024-2029, in-person workshops were held in partnership with community groups and art workshops were facilitated to capture the voices of those not often heard in the traditional public consultation setting. Ms. Joyce noted that input was received by 447 individuals and organisations, including 117 people

that participated in the art pre-draft public consultation workshops, 141 who attended the in-person pre-draft consultation, the 177 submissions through online questionnaires and 12 written submissions.

Ms. Joyce outlined that the feedback from the consultation process was reviewed and analysed. The points raised were considered by the working groups during meetings held from July to September 2024 and fed into the development of actions. The actions, objectives and key performance indicators were developed in a workshop setting, in person and online by the Heritage and Biodiversity Forum over the three months. She outlined that the Appropriate Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening formed an iterative part of this process.

Ms. Joyce noted that there are three working groups within the forum Biodiversity & Natural Heritage, Built and Archaeological Heritage and Cultural Heritage.

Ms. Joyce noted that the plan is a policy objective in Galway County Councils Development Plan 2022-2028 and noted it is also an action of the 4<sup>th</sup> National Biodiversity Plan.

Ms. Joyce outlined that the Heritage & Biodiversity Plan forms part of the Service Level Agreement with the Heritage Council.

Ms. Joyce outlined that within the plan there are 155 specific actions, there are objectives to each action and specific key performance indicators which shows that Galway County Council are committed to delivering on the actions.

Mr. Hanrahan outlined that when the Heritage and Biodiversity Plan is approved by the SPC it will go to the next Council Meeting which is the 16<sup>th</sup> of December 2024.

Mr. Hanrahan noted that the Council Members will have an opportunity to review the plan, comment on it and make suggested changes.

Ms. Kinnane looked for the approval of the adoption of the Draft Heritage and Biodiversity Plan 2024-2030.

**Proposed:** Cllr. Paul Killilea

**Seconded:** Cllr. Tomas Grealish

#### **Item No. 4 - Work Programme Development**

Mr. Hanrahan presented an indicative work programme for the Heritage, Biodiversity & Climate Action SPC.

Mr. Hanrahan outlined that the SPC will meet at least 4 times per calendar year and the proposal is that Heritage and Biodiversity and Climate Action Officers will attend all the meetings and that the lead items will follow Heritage and Biodiversity for two meetings and Climate Action for two meetings.

Ms. Ryan outlined that the SPC was heavily involved in the Climate Action Plan which was adopted at the beginning of 2024.

Ms. Ryan noted there are targets to meet over the next 5 years by 2030 in terms of Climate Action both from adaptation, to changes that are going to happen but also to mitigate both Galway County Councils emissions and the emissions from the public.

She noted that an important part of that will be the work that will be done with the community in rolling out the community climate action fund.

Ms. Ryan noted that Galway County Council will be developing a green public procurement policy and a wood public procurement policy and that will be brought to the SPC.

Ms. Ryan noted that there are numerous funding streams and opportunities, and Galway County Council need to ensure that the policies are in place to avail of all those opportunities.

Ms. Kinnane noted she had a personal interest in coastal erosion and would like to see it progressed and to see where the barriers are on same.

Mr. Butler queried if there was a possibility of getting a green flag for Rinville Park and queried would it be progressed through the SPC?

Mr. Hanrahan noted it could be proposed through the SPC and then brought to the MD in terms of delivery.

Mr. Harahan noted that he had recently received a report from the Regeneration Team outlining that there is a tender out for Rinville Park for the development of a Sustainable Development Plan for the park. He noted the details of which would be in the public domain in the near future.

Mr. Butler welcomed the update and noted he would engage through the public consultation process.

#### **Item No. 5 Schedule of dates for meetings**

**12<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

**11<sup>th</sup> June 2025**

**17<sup>th</sup> September 2025**

**26<sup>th</sup> November 2025**

#### **Item No. 6 Any Other Business**

Mr. Hanrahan shared that the Local Enterprise Office have their annual craft fair in The Black Box opening on the 27<sup>th</sup> of November 2024.

**Meeting Concluded.**