



# Galway City Council Scrutiny Report

NOAC Report No. 53 – December 2022




## Chair's Opening remarks

The Local Government Reform Act 2014 introduced significant changes to a wide range of aspects of the local government system, including in relation to matters of accountability and oversight. In that regard, the Act provided for the establishment of the National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC) as the statutory body overseeing the local government sector. NOAC was established in July 2014 under the 2014 Act to provide independent oversight of the local government sector. NOAC's functions are wide ranging, involving the scrutiny of performance generally and financial performance specifically, supporting best practice, overseeing implementation of national local government policy and monitoring and evaluating implementation of corporate plans, adherence to service level agreements and public service reform by local government bodies.

Since I became Chair of NOAC in September 2018, I have continued the good work that had been started by the previous NOAC Chair in meeting with the Chief Executives of the local authorities and their Management teams. As outlined below, this process has evolved over time and continues to evolve.

The preparation of the profile report also identifies the performance of local authorities in relevant NOAC reports and provides for further examination of the results of these reports. The Scrutiny Process requires time and resources from NOAC and the local authorities in preparation of the profile report and for the Stage 1 and Stage 2 meetings. NOAC considers to date that the investment of time and resources has been worthwhile and necessary.

I have been struck by the welcome and sharing of information that has taken place at the meetings. It has provided an opportunity to learn, to listen to how the particular local authority operates, the challenges they face, the plans and ideas that have been developed and gives an opportunity to reflect on what is working well and areas that need to be addressed. It has identified areas of good practice and many of these ideas have been showcased at the NOAC Good Practice Seminars over the years. I look forward to continuing to work closely and collaboratively with all the local authorities and want to use this opportunity to thank all the Chief Executives and their teams for the time and courtesy and welcome extended to NOAC in this process.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael McCarthy', written over a horizontal line.

**Michael McCarthy, Chair**  
**22nd December 2022**

## Background to Profiles and Scrutiny Programme

In February 2017, NOAC, in accordance with its statutory functions, began to review the performance of individual local authorities. The starting point was getting an overall picture derived from the performance indicator report results, the Local Government Audit Service (LGAS) audit reports, the financial position and revenue collection performance. Information on private rented sector inspections, housing stock management and maintenance data and Customer Satisfaction was all considered by using the relevant data contained in the NOAC reports published to date.

At the outset, the importance of the meetings was emphasised over and above the data which NOAC had regarding local authorities. There was also an objective to broaden the NOAC members' understanding of the work of the local authorities and the individual priorities and pressures they faced and to put the information in context. Therefore, NOAC wanted to get the background perspective from the authorities and any other datasets that the Councils consider should be taken into account. Significant work is required to bring this part together and the work of the NOAC Secretariat and the local authority NOAC Coordinators must be acknowledged.

Following an initial face to face meeting, which is called a Stage 1 meeting, local authorities were invited to a Stage 2 meeting where more detailed questions would be carried out in the areas of interest to NOAC, including customer service and IT investment, collection rates, the quality of information provision to the public, etc. These meetings would take place after or latterly before the main NOAC board meeting with all the board members present.

## The purpose

The process gives NOAC the opportunity to have oversight of all the local authorities and considers the factors that facilitates them in performing well, along with the barriers that may exist relevant to the individual local authority. The meetings enable the local authorities to outline their strong and weak performing areas. It allows for further examination of the results of the performance indicators and shows the results in context. It must be emphasised that these meetings differ from the Performance Indicator (PI) Validation meetings which are carried out by the Performance Indicator Working Group to interrogate the results reported in relation to selected performance indicators. These meetings, while very informative, are specific to the performance indicator process and do not consider other areas of performance that NOAC have oversight of, including Customer Service, Internal Audit, Corporate Plans, etc.

During the meeting NOAC can see areas where consistent under-performance is highlighted and which can be examined further. It also allows for exemplars of best practice to be identified and used to share with other local authorities. The process as outlined, is not a follow up to the PI reports, but does enable consideration of issues that may warrant further clarification or investigation in the PI process. Local authorities have all indicated in the meetings thus far that they compare their performance and results in relation to what they deem as similar local authorities. This grouping could be reviewed further by NOAC and adopted for the results of some of its reports. Groupings are not only on size but, on levels of finances, urban and rural, staff numbers and other factors.



# The Scrutiny Process

The process has evolved over time, allowing it to become more structured, formal and documented. Given the importance of the work, it is led by the Chair of NOAC (or a delegated alternate, if required) with support from NOAC members and the Executive. The formal process agreed by the Board is termed as a constructive dialogue and is laid out below.

**1**

## Stage 1 (NOAC Scrutiny Visit)

Meeting held with NOAC Chair (or alternate) and/or one additional NOAC member and member(s) of the NOAC Executive. The Chief Executive and members of the management team, as invited by the Chief Executive shall attend.

- Stage 1 notice issued to Chief Executive of the local authority.
- Profile report prepared by NOAC Executive with input from the local authority. This is circulated along with an agenda to the local authority and NOAC attendees in advance of the visit. The report is based on general and specific information from NOAC reports relating to the local authority in question.
- Local authority to present on issues arising and take questions from attending NOAC members.
- Meeting minutes prepared and issued for comment.

**2**

## Stage 2 (NOAC Scrutiny Meeting)

Appearance at full NOAC meeting. The Chief Executive and members of the management team, as invited by the Chief Executive shall attend.

- Stage 2 notice to attend NOAC meeting issued to Chief Executive of local authority.
- Profile report updated as required and circulated along with an agenda to local authority and NOAC members in advance of the meeting.
- Local authority to present on issues arising and take questions from the NOAC board.
- Meeting minutes prepared for circulation to local authority for its comment.

**3**

## Stage 3 (NOAC Sign off and Publication)

Following completion of Stages 1 and 2 the Executive shall collate the material and present it to the NOAC Board as follows:

- Final sign off on minutes / documents / reports.
- Comments / Findings / Recommendations to be made as required.
- Approval for completed records to be published.

# Progress to date

## 2017

To commence the process, profiles were prepared in respect of Cork City Council, Louth and Offaly County Councils and these were forwarded to the Chief Executives of the authorities concerned. The then NOAC Chair, Pat McLoughlin, began this process with a meeting with the Chief Executive of Louth County Council for a general discussion on the profile in August 2017. This Stage 1 meeting was followed by a similar meeting with the Chief Executive of Cork City Council in September 2017. The final Stage 1 meeting to take place in 2017 was held with the Chief Executive of Offaly County Council in October 2017. In December 2017, Louth County Council attended a meeting with NOAC after the main NOAC Board meeting. This was the first Stage 2 meeting, which formed an important part of the overall process. These meetings served a particularly important function which allowed the Council to give an overview of their work and also gave an opportunity to the NOAC Board to put questions to the Council and understand their situation in more depth.

## 2018

In 2018, the schedule consisted of eight meetings with local authorities, four each for Stage 1 and Stage 2. A Stage 2 meeting was held with Offaly County Council in January 2018. This was followed by another Stage 2 meeting with Cork City Council in March 2018.

A new Chair, Michael McCarthy, was appointed on 24 September 2018. The process continued with Westmeath County Council in October 2018 and Kerry County Council in December 2018. These were Stage 2 meetings with the NOAC board as in these cases, the 2018 Performance Indicator validation meetings for these authorities were deemed sufficient as Stage 1 meetings. Further Stage 1 meetings were held with Roscommon County Council and Tipperary County Council.

## 2019

The format continued with 8 meetings with local authorities during the year. Five Stage 1 meetings and three Stage 2 meetings. The Stage 1 meetings were with Donegal County Council, Laois County Council, Clare County Council, Waterford City and County Council and Carlow County Council. Stage 2 meetings took place with Roscommon County Council, Tipperary County Council and Donegal County Council.

## 2020

A meetings list was scheduled for 2020 to cover 6 additional local authorities. The year commenced with a Stage 1 meeting with Monaghan County Council in February, along with two Stage 2 meetings with Laois County Council and Waterford City and County Council. Further meetings were scheduled for April, however, due to the COVID crisis these meetings were deferred.

The COVID restrictions presented challenges to the meetings but it was decided to continue the Stage 2 meetings virtually and meetings were held with Clare, Monaghan, Waterford City and County, Carlow and Sligo. These were carried out via the WebEx platform.

A socially distanced Stage 1 meeting was held in person with Limerick City and County Council in August and with Sligo County Council in September 2020.

## 2021

COVID had a significant impact on local authorities, and in particular, for NOAC on the Scrutiny process. The Stage 1 meetings were all held in person, but restrictions curtailed their activities in 2021. Stage 1 meetings were held with Meath and South Dublin in July 2021 and Fingal in October 2021. The Stage 2 meetings progressed, as these were capable of being held remotely, with one held in January 2021 with Limerick City and County Council, another with Meath in September 2021 and a further meeting with South Dublin in December 2021.

## 2022

2022 saw an increase in the number of scrutiny meetings held with local authorities. Stage 1 meetings were held with Galway City Council in March 2022, with Cavan and Leitrim County Councils and Dublin City Council in June 2022. Further Stage 1 meetings took place later in the year, with Wexford and Galway County Councils, in September 2022. Several stage two meetings were also progressed, with Wexford and Leitrim County Councils and Galway City Council, in October 2022.

## Future meetings and reports

This report outlines the purpose and the procedures of such reports and, while the process may continue to evolve, it is not currently expected to produce another master report, similar to the master report produced in [May 2021](#). It is intended that once all stages in the scrutiny process have been completed with the relevant other local authorities that the report would be published on that basis and would form part of the suite of reports under the umbrella of the Scrutiny Report Process. It is anticipated that progress will continue to be made with further Stage 1 and Stage 2 meetings so that each local authority will have participated in the process. It must be outlined that significant changes and delays have been experienced due to the restrictions imposed by COVID in 2020 and 2021. In 2022 and as noted above, 3 Stage 2 and 6 Stage 1 meetings were held with Scrutiny reports being prepared for the completed Stage 2 meetings.

## Conclusion

The process thus far allowed for the NOAC Chair and members to get a greater understanding and insight into the challenges that face each of the local authorities. Also, issues such as collection rates, staff numbers, inspection rates, finances that are included in reports in some cases benefit from the explanation and discussion as to the reason behind these figures. The meetings also enabled NOAC to see the various priorities that each local authority considered relevant to their citizens and how they overcame various challenges and how they work collaboratively with other local authorities, state bodies and stakeholders. Areas of Good Practice have been identified along the way and these have contributed to presentations of these projects at the NOAC Good Practice Seminars in 2017, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022.

Galway City Council had their Stage 1 meeting in March 2022 and their Stage 2 meeting in October 2022. It is important to note that the material in this report is reflective of the position at that time. Therefore, any changes to the profile from later NOAC reports are not included in this report. In addition, it should be noted that the relevant information from Performance Indicator Report 2020 is included in this report, as is information from the Review of Local Authority and Regional Assembly Corporate Plans 2019–2024. The NOAC highlights the following points arising out of these meetings with Galway City Council:

- NOAC was interested to hear of the Council's climate action agenda and in particular, about the project of Coirib go Cósta, which looks to scope and deliver an environmentally sustainable flood relief scheme for Galway city.
- NOAC understands the importance of the harbour development and extension, for which it is hoped that approval will be granted in 2023. Permission will enable the building of what is effectively a new port for Galway City.
- NOAC noted the expected population increase of 40,000 people in Galway over the next twenty years and the subsequent increase in housing needs. As outlined, the Council has a good pipeline in train for social housing units and is seeking to significantly increase its supply.



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# NOAC Profile

## Galway City Council

January 2022

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# Galway City Council General Information

<b>Local authority</b>	Comhairle Cathrach na Gaillimhe/Galway City Council
<b>Population:</b>	79,934
<b>Area:</b>	50 sq km / 50,000,000 sq m
<b>Municipal Districts:</b>	Galway City
<b>2021 and 2022 Budgets</b>	<b>2021</b> €102,540,409
	<b>2022</b> €103,640,761

	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
<b>Number employed @ 31/12/2021</b>	536	554
<b>WTE Staff per 1,000 population</b>	6.29 per 1,000 population	6.48 per 1,000 population
<b>% of paid working days lost to medically certified sick leave</b>	1.96%	1.25%

## **Housing Information @ 31/12/21**

<b>Local Authority Stock number</b>	2,387
<b>Number currently on waiting list</b>	4,187 (total including RAS / HAP)
<b>HAP Tenancies</b>	347 total for 2021
<b>Homeless presentations</b>	342 adults and 195 dependents in services

## **Short Information Paragraph**

<b>Council Mission Statement</b>	To work in partnership as Elected Members and Staff of Galway City Council in the development and enhancement of the City and to provide efficient services to the people we serve, and in so doing, to continue to make Galway an attractive, vibrant and proud city in which to live, work and visit.
<b>Economic Forum (CEF)</b>	At present, there is no Economic Forum facilitated by Galway City Council.
<b>The Local Enterprise Office</b>	Galway Local Enterprise Office provides direct financial supports to businesses with 10 or less employees. They also offer business information, advisory services and enterprise support, including high-quality training to meet the needs of business including Start Your Own Business, Managing Your Business e.g. Marketing, Sales, Financial Management, Strategy and Business Planning. This is a shared service with Galway County Council. There is a team of 5 in place in the LEO office who provide direct support to start-up businesses in the City.

<b>Retail Incentives</b>	Since January 2018, landlords in Galway were liable for 60% of the total commercial rates due in respect of their vacant commercial premises.
<b>The Corporate Plan</b>	<p><b>CORE VALUES</b></p> <p>Our core values are derived from the principles of good local government and provide the basis for our objectives and actions as an organisation.</p> <p><b>Democratic leadership</b></p> <p>To represent all people of the city in an open and transparent fashion and to maintain and develop the City Council's lead role in meeting the challenges facing the city as we strive for a better quality of life for the people we serve.</p> <p><b>Corporate Governance</b></p> <p>To sustain a commitment to openness, accountability and a high standard of corporate governance, the maintenance of high standards of conduct and integrity by Members and staff, thereby promoting a culture of trust.</p> <p><b>Public Service to the Highest Standards</b></p> <p>To deliver high quality public services to the people of the city through a committed, dedicated and innovative staff.</p> <p><b>Efficiency</b></p> <p>To provide all services in an efficient and cost-effective manner is of critical importance. The City Council is committed to the optimum use of its resources and to sound financial management, having regard to prevailing economic circumstances and the necessity to prioritise core services.</p> <p><b>Partnership</b></p> <p>To foster and develop partnership with public and private organisations and communities in the development and advancement of initiatives and to maximise resources and investments for the city.</p> <p><b>Inclusiveness</b></p> <p>To reach out to all of the people of the city, to respect all members of the community and to promote an inclusive and accessible city.</p> <p><b>Sustainability</b></p> <p>To lead the way in the sustainable development of the city, to enhance the unique character and environment of the city and to continually improve the quality of life of its citizens, having regard to the challenges that exist including climate change, and the requirements of future generations.</p> <p><b>Accountability</b></p> <p>To accept that, in making and implementing public policy, we, the members and staff of the City Council, are accountable for our decisions and actions.</p> <p><b>Equality</b></p> <p>To strive for equal treatment of all with whom we come into contact, except where otherwise provided for by law, and to foster equality of opportunity through our policies and programmes.</p> <p><b>Valuing our staff</b></p> <p>To encourage and recognise a culture of performance, commitment and loyalty among our staff, to support our workforce during this time of change through training, development and assistance programmes and at all times to maintain a workplace environment that encourages and supports the right of dignity at work.</p>

<b>Shared services</b>	<p>The library service is provided by Galway County Council on behalf of Galway City Council as a shared service, to which the City Council contributes on an annual basis.</p> <p>Galway County Council also deliver the Fire Services for Galway City and County on the basis of an agreement between Galway City Council and Galway County Council.</p> <p>The Local Enterprise Office is also a shared service with Galway County Council.</p>
<b>Regional Issues including new developments and initiatives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Galway's designation as European Capital of Culture 2020.</li><li>■ Proposed ring road around Galway City.</li><li>■ Future investment in the water infrastructure of Galway City.</li><li>■ Implementation of the RSES and MASP, in conjunction with the NWRA.</li></ul>

### Collection Rates

	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
Rate collection rates	61%	83%	81%	78%	75%	72%	66%
Rent collection rates	79%	80%	79%	80%	76%	79%	78%
Housing loan collection rates	86%	86%	84%	82%	80%	77%	81%

From records, it is clear that there have been improvements in rate collections over the years. Rate collections have gone from 66% in 2014 to 83% in 2019. However, rates collection have dropped hugely from 2019 to 2020, where it now stands at 61%. This compares very unfavourably to the national average of 76% in 2020 across all local authorities. The 61% collection rate is actually the joint lowest among all local authorities.

Rent collection rates have remained steady over the years, at 78% in 2014, and at 79% in 2020. This is a low collection level when compared to the average collection rate of 88.3% in 2020 across all local authorities.

The collection rate for housing loans has improved steadily over the years. It was at a low of 77% in 2015 but is now at 86% in 2020, which is significantly higher than the 79.4% average of all other local authorities.

## NOAC Reports Overview

NOAC was established in July 2014 as an independent statutory body to provide oversight of the local government sector in Ireland. NOAC's functions are wide ranging, involving the scrutiny of performance generally and financial performance specifically. NOAC also supports best practice, oversees the implementation of national local government policy, monitors and evaluates implementation of corporate plans, adherence to service level agreements and public service reform by local government bodies.

### NOAC REPORT NO 46

## Review of Local Authority and Regional Assembly

### Corporate Plans 2019–2024 – November 2021

In November 2021, NOAC published its review of the corporate plans of local authorities and regional assemblies for the period 2019 - 2024. The purpose of the report is to review the adequacy of the plans and to assist with the further development of good practice in corporate planning.

Under the process, areas considered for review included:

- The pre-plan consultation, which looks at how local authorities formulated the Corporate Plan and consulted with stakeholders and engaged with elected members.
- Review of the Corporate Plans. This investigated how local authorities proposed to review the progress of their Corporate Plans.
- Integration of the Corporate Plan with other policies and strategies, which examined the extent to which local authorities consulted other policy reports and strategies when devising their Corporate Plans.
- Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty. Under this heading, it was examined as to how local authorities engaged with the issue of human rights.

Examining the contents of the Corporate Plans, the following were among the areas reviewed:

- Vision and Mission: Strategies and Objectives. This detailed local authorities' visions, mission statements and broad goals during the life of the plan. It focused on the setting of actions and goals to deliver these broad objectives and visions.
- Financial resourcing of the Corporate Plan and how risks to the delivery of the Corporate Plan can be examined, taking into account how local authorities are dependent on voted capital funds from central government.
- Measuring and mitigating risk. This examines where local authorities depend on other external providers and other public bodies to successfully deliver certain services. This involves risk which can be mitigated through appropriate oversight, including service level agreements.

Galway City Council is alluded to specifically in the section of the report outlined below:

- Evidence of pre-plan consultation: In Appendix 4 of its corporate plan, Galway City Council states: "An extensive consultation process took place with both internal and external stakeholders. Galway City Council wishes to thank all that took part in the process." This includes an extensive list of both Council staff and external stakeholders – including the Galway City Community Network (PPN for Galway City).

Galway City Council has also highlighted some themes of importance to its Council within its Corporate Plan, including the following areas:

- Culture - Everybody Matters is a 10 year Cultural Strategy Framework for Galway for the period 2016- 2025. It identifies the pivotal role of culture in Galway and the potential growth of this sector into the future.
- Climate - Implementing the Galway City Council Climate Adaptation Strategy 2019- 2024 to prepare for the effects of climate change effecting the city and to seek to mitigate negative impacts.
- The Irish language – this plays an important role in creating Galway's vibrant atmosphere and its 'bilingual city' status will futureproof the Irish language in the city. The City Council and Gaillimh le Gaeilge are collaborating to develop a seven year Irish Language Plan for the city.



## Performance Indicator Reports

The annual Performance Indicator Report published by NOAC is one of its key reports every year. NOAC has the function of scrutinising local authority performance against relevant indicators. NOAC believes that monitoring performance over time and against comparable authorities has the potential to encourage continuous improvement in local authority service provision. From the reports published to date matters relevant to Galway City Council are outlined in the points below.

### NOAC REPORT NO 44

## Performance Indicator Report 2020 – September 2021

- **Housing.** Galway City Council owned 2,306 social housing dwellings at the end of 2020 with 2.08% vacant. The average time for rehousing in vacant properties was 44.47 weeks, which compares unfavourably with the national average of 32.69 weeks. This is a small improvement on the 46.79 weeks back in 2017.
- **New House building inspections** have decreased over the years, from 22.22% in 2014 to 15.76% in 2019, to 10.28% in 2020. This compares to 21.71% across the local authority sector in 2020.
- **Cost per capita of the planning service** was €32.16 in 2020, compared to €36.69 in 2014. Across all local authorities the figure for 2020 was €31.47.
- **Environment.** 5% of the City was unpolluted or litter-free in 2020, which compares with a median of 22% across all local authorities.
- **Brown bins.** 99.22% of households within the local authority area are covered by a licensed operator providing a 3 bin service. This compares very favourably to 89.73% across all local authorities.
- **Green Flag status.** At the end of 2020, 51% of schools in the county held a Green Flag. This compares to 45% in 2019 and 58.97% in 2018. The national average for green flags has also fallen over the years, from 51.41% in 2018 to 41.83% in 2020.
- **Fire service.** Galway County Council provides the fire service for Galway City. It took an average of 2:06 minutes to mobilise full time fire brigades and 5:09 minutes to mobilise part time fire brigades for calls to fires. The median across all local authorities was 1:28 minutes and 5:24 minutes respectively. It took 2:06 minutes to mobilise full time fire brigades and 5:21 minutes to mobilise part time fire brigades in respect of non-fire emergencies. The median across all local authorities was 1:27 minutes and 5:36 minutes.
- **Libraries.** To note, Galway County Council collects library statistics for Galway City Council and these are presented as combined statistics. There was an average of 0.64 visits per head of population and 435,010 items issued to library borrowers in 2020. Library visits were significantly lower than 2019 (2.47 visits) due to the restrictions due to Covid. Similarly, items borrowed were significantly higher in 2019 (649,827).
- **Staff total.** Whole-time equivalent staff employed by Galway City Council at the end of 2020 was 503.49. The mean within the local authority sector was 958.64. In 2014, Galway City Council employed 410.10 whole-time equivalent staff.
- **Sick leave.** Galway City Council's medically certified sick leave rate is 1.82%, the lowest among all local authorities. The national average was 3.01%. Galway City Council's self-certified sick leave was 0.14%. The national average is 0.20%. Galway City Council's figures have improved strongly over the years in this area. In 2014 the certified sick leave rate was 4.47% and its self-certified paid sick leave was 0.34%.
- **Technology & Social media.** In the 2020 Performance indicators this heading was amended to represent the results as per capita. Previously this indicator was represented as the total visitors to the local authority website and followers on social media. The per capita total page views of Galway City's websites in 2020 was 12.01, which compares to an average of 15.56 across all local authorities. The per capita total number of followers at the end 2020 of its social media accounts was 0.36, as opposed to an average of 0.81 across all local authorities.

## NOAC REPORT NO 21

## Customer Satisfaction Survey July 2019

- In 2018, Ipsos MRBI was commissioned by NOAC to conduct a survey among the general public to establish their satisfaction with their local authority. A face-to-face in-home CAPI (Computer Aided Personal Interviewing) methodology is utilised and quota controls ensured that participants are representative of the Local Authority population by age, gender and social class.
- The second survey, completed in 2019, surveyed the 10 medium sized local authorities, including Galway City Council.
- 59% of respondents were satisfied with Galway City Council Council, slightly above the average level of satisfaction with Councils, which was 56%.
- Galway City Council's satisfaction rating was highest in the area of promoting economic activity at 71% satisfaction compared to the average satisfaction rate of 52% among all Councils.
- 29% of people felt that Galway City Council provides good value for money, just over the average of 28% for all Councils.
- 52% of people believe that Galway City Council is doing a good job, compared to the overall satisfaction rating of 51%.

## NOAC REPORT NO 17

## Internal Audit in Local Authorities - July 2018

- All 31 local authorities have an internal audit function, with 22 authorities operating this function in-house. Six local authorities, including Galway City Council, use a combination of in-house and outsourcing.
- Local authorities were asked whether the audit committee had conducted an assessment of the adequacy of Internal Audit resources, including staff skills, within the last 2 years. 17 authorities including Galway City Council had done so.
- The Head of Internal Audit reports to the Chief Executive and Director of Finance in Galway City Council.

## NOAC REPORT NO 12

## A Review of the Management and Maintenance of Local Authority Housing - May 2017

### New Management Systems and Structures

Local authorities all reported a very active management process for managing the duration of vacancies or voids. It was of note how many had recently put in place new systems or management structures to deal with this issue. Examples of some of these management structures are:

Galway City Council conducts a critical path analysis that has streamlined and fast tracked change of tenancy works.

Galway City Council manages the fewest housing estates of all local authorities at just 23.

### Assigned Staff Resources

The proportion of total local authority staff assigned to the functions of managing and maintaining their own housing stock ranged from 2.26% in Galway County to 18.78% in Galway City, with 22 authorities allocating between 3% and 10% of their staff to this work.

## NOAC REPORT NO 10

## Rented Houses Inspections - Rented Houses Inspections - A Review of Local Authority Performance of Private Rented Houses Regulations Functions October 2016

	2014	2020
<b>Number of Registered Tenancies</b>	12,123	11,853
<b>% Units inspected</b>	1.3	3.26
<b>Inspected Failed %</b>	73.9	100

Data from report relates to 2014, data for 2020 taken from Performance Indicator Report



# GALWAY CITY

Performance Indicators	2020		2019		2018		2017		2016		2015		2014	
	Data	Median/Average	Data	Median/Average	Data	Median/Average	Data	Median/Average	Data	Median/Average	Data	Median/Average	Data	Median/Average
H1 Social Housing provided in year per 1,000 population	0.59	0.64	1.01	1.15	0.39	0.84	0.14	0.53	n/a	3.43	0.03	1.91	0.21	0.80
H2 % of directly provided dwellings vacant at 31/12	2.08	3.18	2.24	3.15	2.57	2.77	2.90	2.73	1.91	3.02	2.60	3.5	2.92	3.8
H3a Average time from vacation date to PI year re-letting date (weeks)	44.47	32.69	46	28.17	44	27.75	46.79	28.9	45.53	32.99	33.49	28.43	36.00	31.43
H3b Average cost expended on getting re-tenanted units ready for re-letting	€18,130.72	€19,065.30	€7,648.49	€18,336.85	€14,692.04	€18,590.28	€25,499.44	€17,160.60	18,281.77	€15,877	13,500.00	€13,378.40	14,000.00	€11,534.91
H4 Average repair and maintenance cost per unit	€976.10	€1,119.82	€917.98	€1,168.99	€955.76	€841.83	€1,027.19	€1,311.82	1,603.66	€1,500.23	433.46	€1,292.57	576.54	€1,272.30
H5 Inspections (Dwellings inspected in 2018) carried out in year as % of registrations	3.26	6.73	2.84	9.93	1.82	7.39	1.73	4.96	0.79	4.36	1.35	5.64	1.14	6.51
R1a % Regional Road KM that ever received a PSCI rating	7.5	77	93.55	99	99	99.36	92	96	96.00	99	100.00	68	0.00	47.9
R1b % Total Regional Road KM with a PSCI rating of 9-10	47.7	31.19	47.4	38.28	52	37.58	7	28	21.00	30	31.00	20	46.00	11.15
R1c % Total Primary Road KM with a PSCI rating of 9-10	22.9	24.00	22.92	23.08	1	23.39	0	20	4.00	13	10.00	11	9.30	6.4
R1d % Total Secondary Road KM with a PSCI rating of 9-10	19.3	17.66	19.17	17.67	3	15.19	7	14	7.00	10	18.00	8	0.26	4.61
R1e % Total Tertiary Road KM with a PSCI rating of 9-10	18.5	13.93	18.56	14.23	3	12.42	2	8	2.00	7	15.00	5	0.00	3.63

Performance Indicators	2020		2019		2018		2017		2016	2015	2014	
R2a	0.8	14.7	4.1	13.17	1.7	13.4	1.60	10.3	1.30	2.80	10.2	
R2b	0	19.4	0	14.27	0	15.3	0.00	11.9	n/a	0.00	8.3	
R3	0	81.52	0	70.21	0	69.15	N/A	65.95	n/a	N/A	56.6	54.7
W1	No data available	No data available	N/A	97.50	N/A	97.1	N/A	98.46		N/A	99.07	97.9
E1	95.88	89.73	94.28	48.36	79.98	43.91	78.97	39.53	77.24	73.23	34.87	31.66
E2	1.65	10.38	1.03	9.28	1.92	11.00	4.33	9.79	15.99	10.87	8.49	
E3	5	22	5	15.00	16	19.00	5	10	7.00	6.00	14	9.5
P1	10.28	15.28	15.76	23.90	10.5	16.75	12.00	17	13.60	15.58	24	17.71
P2	86.67	73.13	85.29	73.07	76.32	75.92	95.45	79	67.74	83.33	71.88	71.7
P3	0.82	3.74	0.20	2.74	1.56	3.03	0.94	2.41	0.46	0.14	2.61	2.88
P4	32.16	31.47	30.02	€30.27	26.02	29.24	€37.86	28.31	36.24	32.45	€26.76	€25.27
F1	52.48	79.93	50.11	€60.79	N/A	53.85	N/A	57.74	n/a	N/A	€57.88	€55.9



Performance Indicators	2020		2019		2018		2017		2016	2015	2014	
F2	2.06	1:28	2.15	1:24	N/A	1.42	N/A	1.45	n/a	1.5	N/A	1.66
F3	42.16	55.30	35.08	55.14	N/A	52.92	N/A	40.45	n/a	57.79	N/A	58.6
L1a	0.64	1.05	2.47	3.57	N/A	3.50	N/A	3.56	n/a	3.61	N/A	3.71
L1b	5.44	2.19	8.13	3.14	N/A	3.00	N/A	2.92		3.82		
L2	19.33	35.95	19.89	€34.94	N/A	30.52	N/A	31.00	n/a	€30.05	N/A	€29.41
Y1	90.00	63.29	100	68.30	80.00	80.00	90.00	69.04	100.00	68.07	100.00	51.86
C1	6.30	6.06	6.14	5.95	5.52	5.99	5.33	5.75	5.36	5.64	5.58	5.63
C2a	1.82	3.01	4.67	3.71	4.22	3.74	4.07	3.74	3.40	3.76	3.52	3.34
C2b	0.14	0.20	0.30	0.36	0.28	0.35	0.29	0.33	0.38	0.38	0.34	0.4
C3	N/A	N/A	13.824.59	16,572	13,407.07	16,210.00	11,572	14,632	10,328.27	12,422	8,357.61	9,651
C4	€4,203.59	€3,457.02	€3,795.61	€3,060.84	€4,012.08	2894.57	€3,852.40	€3,048.41	3,602.98	€2,675.69	3,348.11	€2,646.8
M2a	61	76	83	87	81.00	86.00	78.0	83	75.00	82.3	66.00	77
M2b	79	88.3	80	89.80	79.00	89.00	80.0	89	76.00	88.0	78.00	84
M2c	86	79.4	86	78	84.00	75.00	82.0	74	80.00	70	81.00	67
J1	0	-0.30	0	0.64	0.00	0.77	0.00	0.68	0.00	0.7	0.66	0.73





# Stage 1 meeting

## National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC) Scrutiny Meeting Galway City Council

Date:	8th March 2022, WebEx online meeting	
In attendance:	<b>Galway City Council</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Brendan McGrath, Chief Executive</li> <li>■ Ruth McNally, Director of Services for Corporate Governance, Audit, Waste, HR, ICT and Community</li> </ul>	<b>NOAC</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Michael McCarthy, NOAC Chair</li> <li>■ Ciaran Hayes, NOAC Board</li> <li>■ John Goldrick, NOAC Executive</li> <li>■ Darren Browne, NOAC Executive</li> </ul>

NOAC's profile for Galway City Council was issued in advance of the meeting and formed the basis for the discussion on the day. The Chair explained that these meetings are normally held in-person in the local authority offices, but this is being held online due to the Covid circumstances. At a later stage, a second meeting between Galway City Council and the NOAC Board will take place. The NOAC Chair invited the CE to give an overview of the Council and the issues facing it. Matters discussed in detail were:

### Location and challenges

Geographically, at 41 square km, it is the smallest local authority in the country. The population is currently 80,000 and will grow by 50% to over 120,000 by 2040. Providing infrastructural support for this growth will be demanding. The revenue budget is approximately €104 million per year. The Council manages a land bank of 627 different pieces of land. It has 152 buildings under its control. It owns about 2,500 social housing units and over 2,000 other units through RAS, HAP and other housing supports. There are 306 km of roads, 680 km of footpaths. The main issues facing Galway City are similar to most Councils, those being Project Ireland 2040, the National Planning Framework, the climate agenda, Galway Transport Strategy and flood defences.

### Day to day issues

Within its ICT sector Galway City manages approximately 100 different systems in five different server locations. There are also fifteen remote networks, which include items such as CCTV and traffic management. There are three sets of civic offices. There were about 35,000 customer service queries received in 2021. Additionally there was 7,500 tenant housing repair requests in 2021 and the Council receives 3,000 - 4,000 telephone calls per week.

### Covid response

This was a particularly challenging situation for the local authority sector. There is an ongoing post Covid situation, with many businesses which haven't recovered. Galway City dealt with the small business grants and community response forum. This was undertaken while continuing to deliver over 95% of the usual services.

## Housing

There have been huge challenges in the housing area. This includes finding suitable accommodation for homeless people and providing suitable Traveller accommodation. Between now and 2026, under the Housing for All targets, the Council needs to provide just under 1,100 additional social homes. Currently a serious issue is the Ukrainian situation, with refugees beginning to arrive into Ireland. Galway City is endeavouring to find emergency accommodation for these people until other organisations become involved. The Council is working to lower the average time for rehousing in vacant properties, which was 44.47 weeks in 2020, significantly longer than the national average of 32.69 weeks. Part of the reason for these times was restructuring of work. Due to resourcing constraints, the Council has sought to outsource some of this work to the private sector.

### Specific housing projects

There is a planned new suburb in the East of the City at Ardaun. The National Planning Framework envisages 20,000 people there. At present, there isn't specific collaboration between Galway City and County Councils on this project. At Nuns Island there is a proposal to develop a regeneration proposal for the area to create vibrant space through the appropriate mix of public realm spaces and habitable development.

## Infrastructure

The infrastructure agenda for Galway City over the next ten years is between €4 and €5 billion. Galway City is either peripherally or directly involved in these projects. There are several large projects in the pipeline, which come under the Public Spending Code. Every government department has a different set of rules for dealing with this Code, making it hugely challenging to deliver projects. On the Water side, there is an extensive programme of water upgrades taking place across the City. One major project for the future will be the creation of a new sewage treatment plant for Galway City and County.

## Climate action agenda

This is an important area, with the main project being Coirib go Cósta, the Galway City Flood Relief Scheme, currently valued at €15 million but it could cost substantially more than that. There are 900 protection measures for 900 residential and commercial properties mostly in the city centre area. In general for Ireland difficult choices will need to be made as to what areas will be protected, which will be expensive to implement.

## Transport

The Council is involved in many difficult transport projects. It is directly leading projects like the Bus Connects. Some of the challenges in transport include the following: most junctions in Galway City are operating at between 120 and 150% of their design capacity. There are four bridges in the city, three of which are in the city centre. Pre-Covid they were carrying nearly 90,000 vehicles per day. Most of that traffic neither wanted nor needed to be in the city centre.

## Staffing

Local authorities have traditionally been categorised on a scale of 1 – 5. Dublin City is category 1, Galway City is 5, which is the same as smaller local authorities. The workforce numbers are strongly aligned to this categorisation, which leaves Galway City greatly understaffed. The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform has controlled public sector numbers. Galway City was not generally permitted to recruit staff on permanent contracts, but instead on contracts for three to five years. Some of those staff are moving on elsewhere, seeking permanent contracts. There is a hugely competitive labour market and recruiting people is difficult. At the senior level all the recruitments have to take place through PAS. It takes on average over a year to fill vacancies, which causes resourcing issues. The Council is currently at 2007 or 2008 levels with staffing and lacks the critical skills needed within many of the grades. Additionally, approximately 20% of the workforce is over 55 years old so there will be many retirements in the next decade. The Council has drawn up a Strategic Workforce Planning Framework 2021 – 2026, to outline the staffing issues, which will be forwarded to NOAC.

The NOAC Chair thanked the CE for the comprehensive discussion, thanking him also for Galway City's presentation at the Good Practice seminar in November 2021 and for the CE's closing remarks at the event. The NOAC Chair praised Galway City for its ongoing work, particularly in light of its staff resourcing issue, acknowledging also its good overall performance in the Customer Satisfaction Survey Report 2018.

In further discussion, the Chief Executive clarified issues regarding the growth of the City to the east and the status of Ardaun. He stated that the County Council was focussed on the development of Briarhill, Oranmore and other satellite areas on the periphery of the City rather than fully engaging in Ardaun.

With regard to Climate Change, he confirmed that the focus of the City will be on adaptation measures to ensure the protection of strategic infrastructure and residential areas in the City centre and Salthill.

The Chair also invited Galway City to attend the full NOAC meeting for a Stage 2 meeting with the Board, later in 2022. The minutes of this meeting and the future NOAC meeting will be circulated by the NOAC Executive to Galway City Council. Once approved, these, along with the Stage 2 minutes and any presentations will be published on the NOAC website.



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# Stage 2 meeting

## Minutes of the National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC) Meeting with Galway City Council

Date:	Tuesday 11th October 2022 at 9:30 a.m.	
Venue:	Virtual meeting using the WebEx platform	
Attended by:	<p><b>Chair</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Michael McCarthy</li></ul> <p><b>Members</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Niall Quinn</li><li>Ciarán Hayes</li><li>Brian Cawley</li><li>Margaret Lane</li><li>Noel Harrington</li><li>Fiona Quinn</li></ul> <p><b>Apologies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Philomena Poole</li><li>Declan Breathnach</li></ul> <p><b>Secretariat</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Claire Gavin</li><li>Alan McDermott</li><li>John Goldrick</li><li>Valerie Longmore</li></ul>	<p><b>By Invite:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Brendan McGrath, Chief Executive</li><li>Ruth McNally, Director of Services for Corporate Services, Corporate Governance, Audit, Waste, HR and ICT</li><li>Patricia Philbin, Director of Services for Planning, Infrastructure Development, Planning &amp; Climate Change</li><li>Patrick Greene, Director of Services for Roads &amp; Transport (Operations), Water Services (Operations), Recreation &amp; Amenity, Sports Capital, Environment</li><li>Brian Barrett, Acting Director of Housing (Excluding Capital), Ukraine Humanitarian Crisis, Community, Economic Development, Tourism, Culture</li><li>Helen Kilroy, Head of Finance</li></ul>

### Meeting with Galway City Council

NOAC’s profile for Galway City Council was issued in advance of the meeting. The Chair welcomed the officials from Galway City and invited the Chief Executive (CE) to give an overview of the Council and the issues facing it. Matters discussed in detail were:

### Overview

Within the western region, Galway is seen as a financial powerhouse. It has attracted significant foreign direct investment (FDI) in recent times, including from companies such as Poly, Genesys and Diligent. It has a growing population of approximately 83,000 as of the 2021 census and it has multiple plans and strategies being developed such as the Local Economic and Community Plan and the new county development plan, which will be rolled out from 2023.

The Council's work programme is underpinned by its housing strategy including the "Housing for All" programme, along with its tourism, arts and public realm strategies and green spaces. Sport and outdoor spaces and leisure are also extremely important to Galway and the City has numerous accolades such as a Purple Flag status and is a former EU Green Leaf winner.

## Challenges

Due to Covid, 2020 was an outlier year for Galway City, including the business sector. Over the next decade there is to be €5 billion worth of capital expenditure with the ability to deliver and provide the relevant services being seen as a significant challenge. Galway's population is set to double over the next twenty years, which will bring its own demands. The proposed amalgamation of the city and county has not taken place as of yet and it was noted that there was no formal governance structure with Galway County Council. It was highlighted that the situation succeeds due to good relations between both local authorities. As an example, it was highlighted that in the Ballybrit region, there are 12,000 people employed with this region being divided between the city and county. This is seen as problematic, with businesses needing to deal with two local authorities in areas, for example, such as transport.

There are also ongoing difficulties regarding recruitment with delays in filling many posts and there will be a large exodus of staff leaving the Council over the next few years, mainly due to the age profile of Council employees. Additionally, Galway City and County Councils swap staff on a regular basis, which can cause disruption to work. There are also difficulties in hiring due to issues such as better pay in the private sector, the length of time of the recruitment process with specialist areas such as IT and engineering being particularly difficult, obtaining accommodation in the city and commuting times into the city. The Council does use agencies, at times, for staff though these are only temporary solutions to those issues.

Housing, transport, climate action and flood relief are also hugely significant areas. It is seen as time consuming and difficult to undertake development in the region as much of it is a special area of conservation and natural protection with environmental studies required in advance of many developments which can take eighteen months to complete. Additionally, the regulation process was raised where appeals that go to An Bord Pleanála can take a long time to complete.

Furthermore, there are continuing issues with Covid, the Ukrainian situation, rising energy costs, inflation and supply chain delays. There continues to be issues in meeting the needs of homeless and traveller accommodation with separate standards between the City and County. With regards structures, a fifth divisional directorate was established, which has focused on capital delivery and hopes to bring in persons with specialist skills.

It was noted that the Council's office buildings are forty five years old and that it is difficult to control its heating systems. Plans are underway to move into a central location from the current three separate locations with support from elected members and it is hoped that this can be completed in 2023. This move is vital to meet recruitment challenges and the Council noted an over-dependence on consultants and contract staff. As it stands, there are particular challenges in recruiting ICT staff with some competitions receiving no applications. Cybersecurity is also an issue and the county has some ICT blackspots where there is no proper connectivity.

The City Council also has the twin role of being both a regulator and a regulated body, with high public expectations in terms of services delivered. Additionally, social media has changed the dynamic with councillors tweeting and using Facebook during Council meetings and the spotlight on public officials has also increased in terms of their delivery of services.



## Environment

With respect to climate action, the Council has virtually converted all public lighting to LED, with just a few outliers remaining to be completed. This has cost €4.1 million to roll out, but will ensure savings of over €300,000 per annum, along with a reduction of 1,000 tonnes of carbon per year. There has also been the proposal for implementation of carbon free zones and collaborations with the University of Galway & the Atlantic Technological University and the Climate Change Advisory Council. The Council feels that a lot has been achieved in the last three years on the recreation and amenity side and three public parks have achieved green flag status. The Council itself owns nearly fifty sports pitches and it highlighted the importance of the presentation of the City, particularly from a tourism perspective.

## Transport

On the transport front, once an ongoing project funded through the Urban Regeneration & Development Fund (URDF) with co-funding from the National Transport Authority, it will be possible from 2024 onwards to park up to 6 trains at Ceannt Station, with a significant increase in traffic between Athenry and Galway city. The Galway City Bus Connects Project is being currently implemented by the City Council. An application to An Bord Pleanala for phase 1 of the Cross City Link from University Hospital to the Dublin Road was lodged with An Bord Pleanala in September 2022. A second Bus Connect project along the old Dublin Road will be submitted to An Bord Pleanala in 2023. The NTA launched a park & ride strategy for the City in September 2022. The City Council is also directly leading a range of other projects from the Galway Transport Strategy, including active travel such as pedestrianisation, cycling, public realm etc.

## Housing

The population of Galway is set to grow by 40,000 over the next twenty years and this will mean an increase in housing needs. The City has a good pipeline in train for social housing units and is seeking to significantly increase its supply. However, some areas had an overconcentration of such units in particular areas as part of the planning process and this type of planning dates back to the 1970s. The City also has an ambitious traveller accommodation programme. With regard to future housing development, there is work/planning ongoing for the Ardaun area, around the harbour area, the Dyke road, Sandy road and Ceannt Station and the City wishes to avoid urban sprawl.

In particular, the Council's plan is to have compact growth, densification & a modest increase in building heights to 3 to 4 stories, except where higher buildings will be permitted in certain areas designated under the City Development Plan.

## Water

There is an extensive programme of water upgrades taking place across the City. The City has adequate water supply & waste water capacity for anticipated growth to 2040. A future major waste water facility will be required to enable future planned growth beyond the current NPF. This new facility will be to the east of Galway City, probably located in the Galway County area. It will benefit development in the City & parts of County Galway including Athenry, Oranmore, Barna etc.

## Tourism

In the sphere of tourism, culture and arts, pre-Covid Galway had two point one million tourist visits per annum. While there was a fall in numbers during Covid, this has now returned to pre-Covid levels with hotels approaching their highest occupancy rates for this year. It is expected that tourism numbers will soon reach 2.5 million visitors per annum. Due to a shortage of student accommodation, some tourist accommodation is being occupied by students. The overall presentation of the city forms an extremely important part of its tourism plan.

## Further information

Galway city has a large population diversity, with 20% coming from outside of Ireland. An interagency forum which is known as the Greater Galway Forum has been established. This enables key agencies like the City & County Councils to engage with other key organisations such as the IDA, Enterprise Ireland, University of Galway, The Atlantic Technological University, TG4, Udaras na Gaeltachta, Galway Chamber of Commerce, Failte Ireland & other organisations.

The Council is currently collaborating to develop a high level 2070 vision to be published in the first half of 2023. The Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) gave the Council a positive review of the plan though pointed out gaps while noting that many of the issues are national in nature.

The Council is aware that it needs to be more proactive on the value for money area. The local authority believes that it is difficult to judge its performance against other local authorities such as the Dublin and Cork authorities which are much larger while Limerick and Waterford have been amalgamated with their counties.

## Harbour development

The proposed expansion of Galway Port under the Strategic Infrastructure Act is currently with An Bord Pleanála for a decision with the expectation that approval might be granted in Quarter 2 of 2023. The new port will be a modern, sustainable facility and the development of the majority of land is dependent on a successful outcome to the current planning application for the new harbour extension. This permission will enable the building of what is effectively a new port, beyond the existing Harbour Enterprise Park, thereby freeing up the entire twenty acres of the inner harbour lands for redevelopment.

The harbour itself will play a role for flood defences of the city and will accommodate walkways and cycle ways. The Land Development Agency is working in conjunction with Galway city and Galway Harbour Company to develop housing and this will become part of a master plan which will be launched in 2023 and, as part of this, there will be a number of social and cost rental homes in the redevelopment.

## Rates

The Council relies heavily on the hospitality sector for the generation of its rates base. A lot of those businesses had begun payment plans due to the Covid upheavals and, up until 2019, the rates collections were approximately 83% but then plummeted during the Covid period to 61%. For the hospitality sector in 2020, businesses were shut and struggled to pay their rates levies and they received waivers for a significant timeframe.

In 2021, a marginal improvement in rates began due to a slight improvement in trading. In 2022, rates collections are approximately ten per cent ahead of this time last year, as businesses witness an improvement in their trading. The Council also has a robust debt management business, and if necessary, pursues debts through the courts system. In the region of 38% of the Council's income emanates from rates so it is imperative that those payments are collected. The Council also wishes that businesses remain open and continue to provide employment for the region. Additionally, the Council has begun a newsletter which includes information on rates in order to raise awareness of the services which are provided due to the charges.

## Conclusion

The Chair thanked the local authority officials for their attendance at the meeting and outlined that the minutes will be published on the NOAC website at a future date.



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## Stage 2 Presentation

### Strategic Challenges, Operations & Other Issues

Galway City Council Report to NOAC

11<sup>th</sup> October 2022



## Galway in Context

- » Regional Growth City & largest urban centre in the North West Regional Assembly area & only city on west coast
- » Galway punches above its weight economically
- » Major economic force in the European economy / Western seaboard
- » Leading in foreign and indigenous commercial investment, higher educational institutional achievement and workforce skills
- » Rich cultural and heritage environment.
- » Very strong pipeline of FDI & indigenous jobs; world class creative industries
- » Pop. > 83,000 (2022 Census) – one of lowest in the inter-censal period
- » UNESCO City of Film, European Greenleaf, EU Region of Gastronomy, ECOC, Academy of Urbanism, Purple Flag, Destination Location with a host of accolades

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# Galway City Council Corporate Plan 2020-2024



## Strategic Objectives

### 01 Our Services and Resources

- To provide support services and resources to elected members to fulfill their democratic mandate and to staff to effectively undertake their executive function so that we can deliver efficient and effective quality services to all
- To deliver economies and efficiencies through working with other local authorities and agencies on shared services initiatives

### 02 Transport

- To work in partnership with the Department of Tourism, Transport and Sport, key funding agencies and other stakeholders to implement the Galway Transport Strategy

### 03 Climate Action, Environment and Recreation & Amenity

- To protect, enhance and conserve the natural environment of our city, to provide leadership in climate action and to develop and promote high quality recreational, leisure and amenity facilities to improve quality of life

### 04 Economic Development, Community and Culture

- To facilitate a strong sustainable economic ecosystem in Galway which will support a good quality of life for its residents, and will ensure the sustainable development of the region
- To deliver a transformative strategy which makes Galway a working model of cultural sustainability, community participation, best practice and world class cultural and creative experiences
- To ensure all our communities can achieve their full potential and take an active formal role in policy making and oversight through targeted engagement and collaboration

### 05 Housing and Social Inclusion

- To accelerate the delivery of good quality social and affordable housing in an equitable manner and in appropriate locations in order to develop sustainable balanced communities

### 06 Planning

- To have in place a system of effective proper planning capable of meeting the sustainable economic, environmental and social development objectives of the city

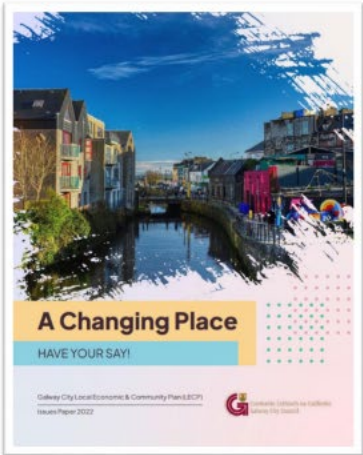
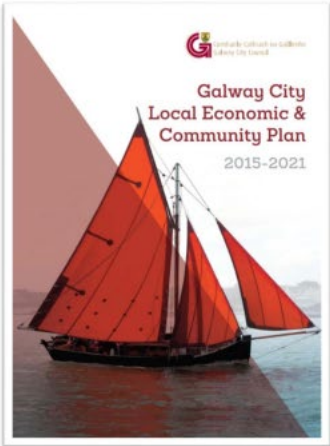
Galway City Council Corporate Plan 2020-2024








# Other Policies/ Influences



## Galway City Local Economic & Community Plan



-  1. A world-class, creative city region
-  2. An innovative city
-  3. An equal and inclusive city
-  4. A sustainable, resilient urban environment that is the regional capital of the West
-  5. A city that promotes the health and well-being of all its people

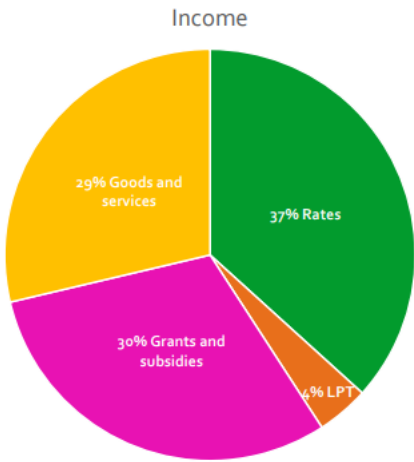




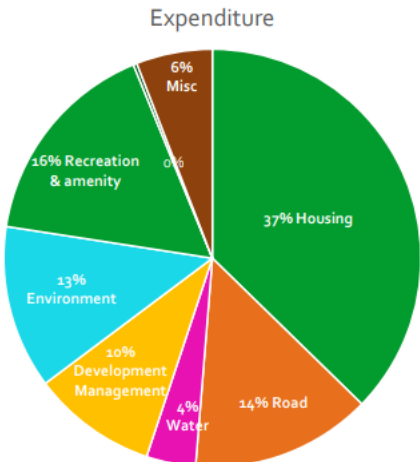
# Financial



## Analysis of income and expenditure based on budget 2022



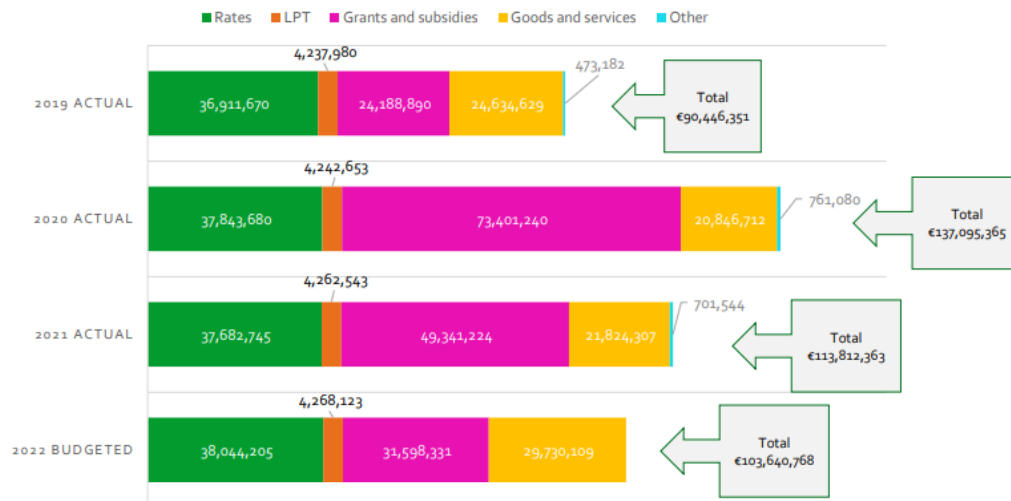
Total budgeted income 2022 = €103,640,768



Total budgeted expenditure 2022 = €103,640,768

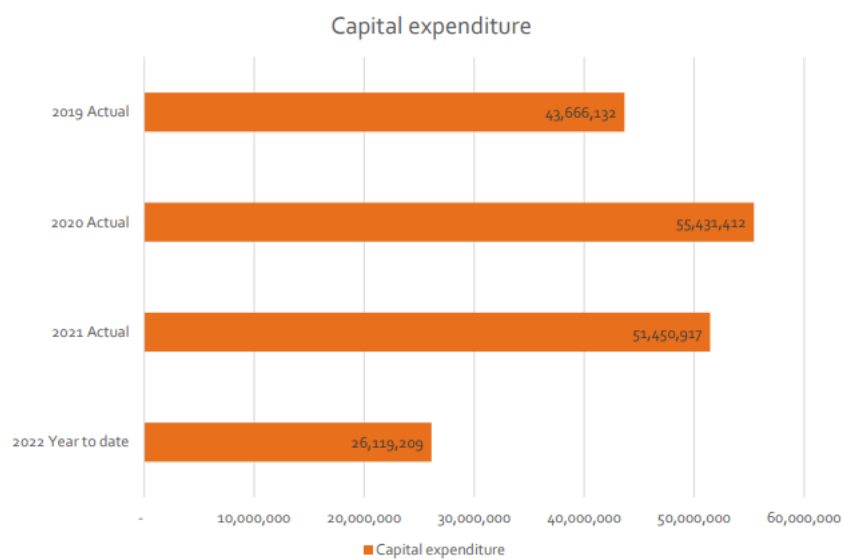
## Total income

### ANALYSIS OF INCOME BY SOURCE



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## Capital expenditure



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## Challenges for Galway City Council as a Regional Gateway

- » Regional City Designation – 50% population growth by 2040 (NPF & PI 2040)
- » Governance structures to oversee Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) under RSES straddling separate City/County boundaries – *LA amalgamation did not progress & Boundary issue*
- » MASP not co-terminus with Galway Transport Strategy
- » Delivery of almost €5 billion of key strategic infrastructure & sustainable, planned, employment-led growth
- » Addressing Corporate Challenges including Human Resources
- » Housing Supply, Sustainable Transport & Climate Action
- » Place making & infrastructure delivery adjacent to SAC, SPA, NHA in 41 sq. km
- » Adverse competition between city and county e.g., political, economic, planning, marketing
- » Embracing new and emerging challenges – e.g. Covid-19, Ukrainian humanitarian crisis, economic challenge e.g. energy costs, inflation, supply chain
- » Separate heritage, arts, tourism, CDP (e.g. development standards), LECP, retail strategy, housing strategy, development contribution schemes, TAP, HAP, Homeless strategy

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## Addressing the Corporate Challenges



## 2021 – Strategic Corporate Priorities Agreed

- » **Revitalisation** of Galway City Council through structured Change Management Programme

### Key elements of three-fold programme include:

- » **Organisational restructuring** - create a 5<sup>th</sup> Directorate; enhance support for Elected Members through resourcing a dedicated meetings unit; establishment of corporate governance unit; recruitment of professional Internal Auditor & fresh approach to risk management;
- » **Accommodation (outdoor & indoor)** - Extensive investment required in existing facilities sitting on opportunity sites: - source modern, A-rated, fit-for-purpose, consolidated office in 1 location from 3, to enhance services for elected members, customers & staff; relocation of outdoor workforce
- » Move to **Strategic Workforce Planning** – 5 year horizon & beyond to address recruitment and retention challenges being experienced by the public sector generally

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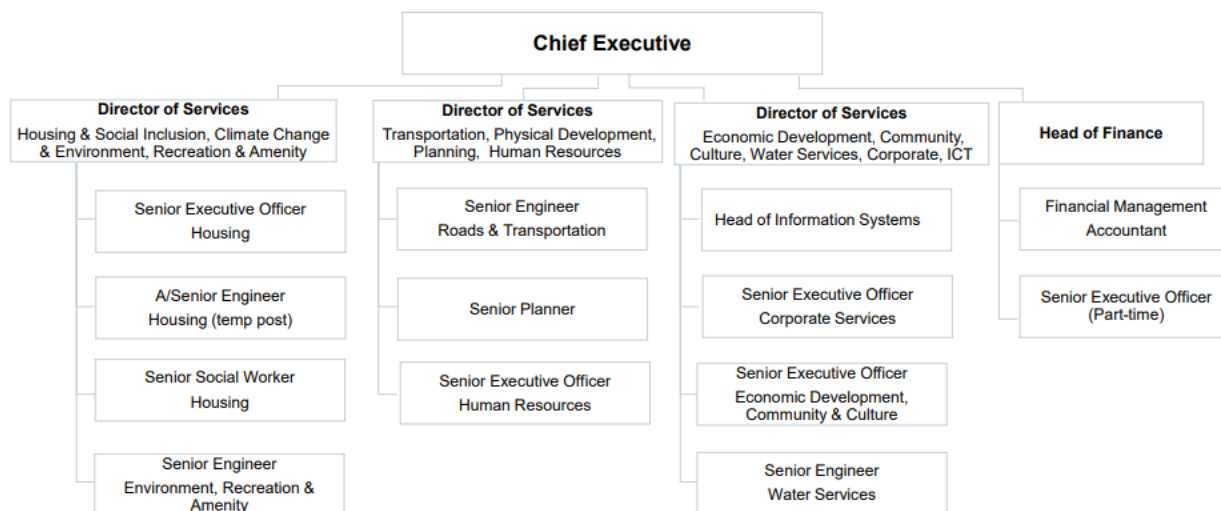
## Progress To Date

- » Organisational Restructuring commenced
  - 5<sup>th</sup> Directorate established,
  - Accelerated recruitment programme underway
- » New accommodation progressing –
  - Move scheduled for completion end 2023
- » Strategic Workforce Planning to commence in Q4 2022 – 12/15 month timeframe
- » Redevelopment of Sandy Road (outdoor headquarters) with LDA
- » Corporate Governance Unit
- » Corporate Communications



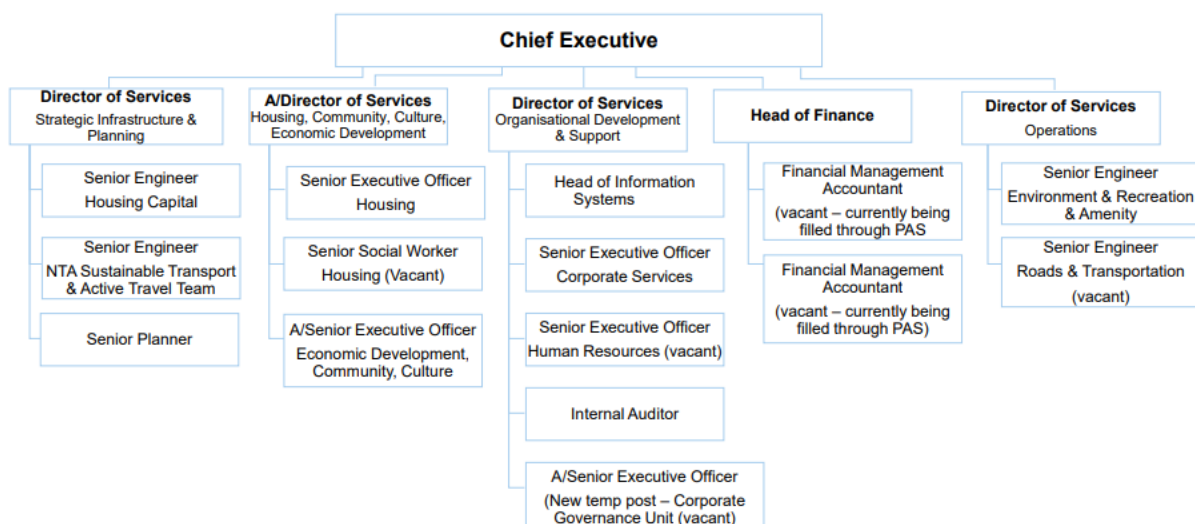
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## Former Directorate Structure



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## New Directorate Structure, July 2022 – In Transition



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## Infrastructure

### Delivery Results

- » URDF
- » Implementation of Housing Delivery Action Plan 2022 – 2026 & Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019 – 2024
- » Energy Efficiency Programme / planned maintenance programme
- » Water / Wastewater – new intake at Terryland underway, rising main, upgrade of city centre sewers & outfalls, servicing new suburb at Ardaun, Drainage Area Study & network condition survey
- » LED Public Lighting Programme
- » Key transport projects e.g. Kirwan Junction Upgrade complete, Ceannt Station, Bus Connects (Phases 1 & 2), active travel - cycling, greenways (x3)
- » Martin Junction Upgrade & Salmon Weir Pedestrian & Cycle Bridge - under construction
- » BusConnects Galway: Cross-City Link (University Road to Dublin Road) – submitted to An Bord Pleanála & Phase 2; GCRR
- » Museum redevelopment & other culture projects, LSSIF at Cappagh Park, recreation and sports capital projects,

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## Infrastructure

### Challenges

- » Insufficient 'shovel-ready' projects when funding arises – tight timeframes for approvals/ drawdowns with regulatory consents
- » Urgent 'operational' overtaking longer term strategic delivery
- » Complex legislative & regulatory requirement e.g. Public Spending Code, Environmental legislation, funding agency gateway approvals
- » Specialist skills deficits / recruitment challenges e.g. environmental specialists, projects management, QS, mechanical engineers, landscape architects
- » Dependence on consultants & temporary contract staff
- » Provision of Homeless Services in the context of severe shortage of homes, refugees - IP & Ukraine, traveller community, student accommodation
- » Waste water to east of city
- » Health, schools, cultural, sports and recreation, public realm (linked to Public Realm strategy)

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## Technological

### Delivery Results

- » Continued delivery of services throughout Covid-19 pandemic
- » Move to blended working
- » Provision of more online services e.g. book a facility, virtual public consultation, public broadband
- » EU vouchers

### Challenges:

- » LA Job Specs not fit for purpose in 2022 -1980s / 1990s vs current requirements
- » Cyber security - Risk of cyber attacks, system resilience, cloud based services
- » Risk of GDPR breaches – reputational damage
- » Work hubs/ blended working challenges
- » ICT blackspots

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## Legal & Regulatory

- » Dual role as regulator and regulated body
- » Volume & complexity of legislation/ regulation governing the sector – National/ EU
- » Changing political priorities; public expectation

## Reputational

- » New media/ technology facilitating instant spreading of news – both good and bad – impacts on damage limitation
- » Spotlight on public bodies, politicians and officials
- » Regulatory framework – ongoing challenges

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## Services/ Work Programmes



### Climate Action

- » Meeting 2030 Targets - net zero emissions

### Environment

- » Waste (management, enforcement, licencing, planning & prevention);
- » Environmental Monitoring (water, air, noise);
- » Planning;
- » Dog Control,
- » Public toilets e.g outdoor living
- » Derelict Sites, Dangerous Structures



Last test – 12/09/2022

#### Bathing Water Quality Results

- » Ballyloughane – Excellent
- » Grattan – Excellent
- » Salthill – Excellent
- » Silverstrand – Excellent

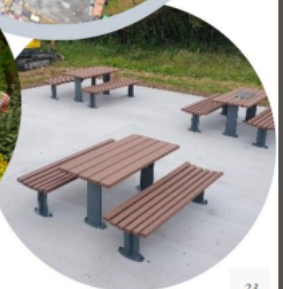
## Recreation & Amenity

- » Parks & Estate Maintenance, incl. pitches, playgrounds, beaches, waterways, biodiversity, tree management, cemeteries,
- » Planning & enforcement
- » Community centres, Sports Capital,
- » Lough Corrib Navigational Trust



## Transport

- » Capital Projects, BusConnects Galway
- » Operations & Maintenance, Traffic Control,
- » Licencing, Planning,
- » Sandy Road Depot,
- » EV Charging, LED Lighting



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## Housing

- » Housing Delivery,
- » Social and Affordable
- » Maintenance and Energy Efficiency programme
- » Housing Loan,
- » Grants,
- » Estate Management,
- » Homeless Services & Supports,
- » RAS and HAP Schemes,
- » Building Control
- » Ukraine humanitarian crisis



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## Community & Enterprise

- » LECP
- » Tourism
- » Atlantic Economic Corridor
- » Arts Office
- » Library & Fire Services – Shared Service with Galway CoCo
- » Museum, Leisureland, Town Hall Theatre
- » Covid and Ukraine response fora

## Other

- » HR, ICT, Facilities, Customer Services, Council Meetings
- » Water



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- |   |   |
|---|---|
| » 2.5m tourists   | » Political support for strategic development   |
| » 30,000 students   | » Audit Committee; Risk management  |
| » 25,000 commuters  | » Value for Money agenda  |
| » LDA – 3 strategic sites   | » Comparative SI's  |
| » 20 Regeneration sites; new suburb at Ardaun                           | » Service Indicators – divergence between city and county                               |
| » Recruitment – competitive, retention, corporate memory                | » Our Public Service Duty – cultural diversity e.g. travelling community, feuds / arson |
| » Category 5 LA & urban governance in 24/7 service delivery environment | » Establishment of Area Committees / MDs  |
| » Cultural Diversity  | » Inter-LA recruitment (churn)  |
| » Economic Forum – Greater Galway Forum                                 | » Investment in place making, economic base, match funding                              |
| » Historic shared services, Fire, Library & Veterinary c. €7m per annum | » Greater Galway Forum  |
| » OPR + National Planning Resource Business Case                        | » PTAG; Galway Chamber of Commerce  |
| » Annual Service Plan; Risk Register; Annual Report;                    | » Galway Culture Company  |
| » Rates Newsletters. CE reports   | » Galway Harbour Company  |

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National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC)  
An Coimisiún Náisiúnra Maoirseachta & Iniúchoóireachta

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