

Minutes of Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee (LTACC) Meeting – Wednesday April 9th, 2025

In Attendance:

Mr. Niall Crowley, Independent Chairperson
Cllr. Eibhlín Seoighthe, Galway City Council
Cllr. Alan Curran, Galway City Council
Cllr. Aisling Burke, Galway City Council
Ms. Margaret O’Riada, Galway Traveller Movement
Ms. Nora Corcoran, Galway Traveller Movement
Mr. Edward McDonagh, Traveller Representative
Mr. John Ward, Traveller Representative
Ms. Angela Delaney, Galway Traveller Movement

Officials:

Ms. Lieze Fanning, A/Director of Services, Housing Department
Ms. Helena Martyn, A/Senior Executive Officer, Housing Department
Ms. Maria Fallon Ward, Administrative Officer, Housing Department
Mr. Aidan Falvey, Senior Executive Engineer, Housing Department
Mr. Micheál Cormican, Senior Engineer, Housing Department
Ms. Catherine Fahy, Senior Social Worker, Housing Department
Ms. Sharon Carroll, Senior Executive Officer, Galway City Council
Ms. Edel Killarney, Traveller Accommodation Officer, Galway City Council
Ms. Róisín Bourke, Traveller Liaison Officer, Galway City, Council
Mr. David Finan, Assistant Staff Officer, Galway City Council

Apologies:

Cllr. Helen Ogbu, Galway City Council
Cllr. John McDonagh, Galway City Council
Mr. Ian McDonagh, Traveller Representative
Mr. John Ward, Traveller Representative

1. Minutes of the Meeting of March 11th, 2025.

The adoption of the Minutes was proposed by Cllr. Eibhlín Seoighthe, seconded by Ms. Maria Fallon Ward and agreed by all present.

2. Matters Arising.

It was noted that the Cultural Competence training was not possible to deliver at this meeting but would be arranged with Maria Joyce as part of the September meeting.

Condolences were offered to Ian McDonagh, on the passing of a family member.

3. Redraft of Communication Protocol

The redrafted LTACC Protocol was discussed.

It was agreed to replace the wording “we will strive to” with the wording “we will work to” in the Values Statement section of the document.

GTM requested that GCC reconsider the use of the terminology ‘culturally appropriate’ in the LTACC Protocol, given the introduction of the terminology ‘Traveller Specific Accommodation’ in the draft. It was explained that the change to ‘Traveller Specific Accommodation’ was informed by guidance from the IHREC. It was agreed that this is open to further review by the LTACC, on receipt of the new design guidelines being developed by the DHLGH.

4. Traveller Accommodation Programme 2025 – 2029

Sharon Carroll outlined the Traveller Accommodation Programme which was adopted in December 2024. She presented a new template for review that will be used in reporting on programme delivery at LTACC meetings.

Dissatisfaction and frustration with lack of delivery under the previous programme was highlighted and in particular in relation to the situation in Carrowbrowne.

Concerns were expressed that the current programme targets fall short of what is required to respond to accommodation need. There are issues to be resolved in relation to the scale of culturally appropriate/Traveller specific provision in a context where true preferences are difficult to establish; the provision for transient sites; discrimination and lack of provision in the private rental market; responses to homelessness that are culturally appropriate; and the level of projected need. Delivery needs to be a core focus on the LTACC agenda. It would be important to strengthen processes and communication and consultation.

In response, it was emphasised that, even if projects are not in the Traveller Accommodation Programme, they can still be progressed and that there will be a particular focus on the landbank and site identification in this regard. The review template will assist in tracking progress and making visible where issues lie regarding both the level and range of provision.

The template approach was welcomed by the committee. It was agreed the template would be used for the next meeting and kept under review to maximise its value. It should enable a focus on the TAP targets and on acquisitions, allocations, the range of provision, private rental sector usage and landbank progress.

It was agreed that the LTACC and its subgroups would maintain a focus on

- Homelessness and the evolution of culturally appropriate responses to Traveller homelessness
- The issue of landbanks and site identification
- Processes and quality of communications
- Negative experiences in the private rental market.

5. Capital Programme Update

Micheál Cormican updated on the capital programme.

An architect is due to be appointed to the Doughiska site, a sketch plan is due within the next few months and removal of the knotweed is a priority.

In relation to the Keeraun site, GCC is working to try to establish a public transport hub, that may satisfy the planning regulations so that they can reapply for the same site. This approach was welcomed by the committee.

GCC is working to progress the Ballyburke site and the Seamus Quirke Homeless Day Centre.

6. Maintenance Update

Aidan Falvey updated on maintenance.

Condition surveys are ongoing and will lead to a planned approach to maintenance and upgrading with all issues to be resolved over a three-year period. A second contractor is being sought for work at Traveller specific accommodation. Energy upgrades and solar panels are planned for all sites. Residents are encouraged to keep logging maintenance requests.

This progress was welcomed by the committee and the importance of tracking and reporting on this progress was emphasised.

Renovations at Clos Na Cille are urgent and are estimated to be progressed in Quarter 2. Repair of sewers at the Cúl Trá site is planned for April 14th.

A health and safety issue at the entrance to the Tuam Road site was noted and the question raised as to whether a yellow box could be considered. Maintenance agreed to liaise with the Roads Department on this issue.

The issue of no footpaths to the Halting sites at Carrowbrowne was raised and the problem of being unable to do permanent works on the site was noted.

The importance of adequate and appropriate storm defences on sites was raised. A consultant is being considered for this work.

7. Sub Committee Updates

The Operational Sub Committee met on March 26th to review its Terms of Reference and membership.

A meeting of the Estate Management Sub Committee is due to take place on April 29th. The importance of progressing and finalising the culturally appropriate estate management strategy was emphasised.

Concerns with the Caravan Loan Scheme were raised, and while now on a firmer ongoing setting, issues remain with the inadequate scale of provision and with procedural requirements laid down at national level. The potential for further funding was also discussed and will be tracked and availed of if it becomes available.

8. Traveller Homelessness

The GTM Genio project was noted, with its potential to offer learning in relation to culturally appropriate responses. The potential in use of modular homes was raised and will continue to be a focus for the committee.

Issues of conflict and difficulties arising in relation to take-up of offers of accommodation were discussed. GCC will meet with the Traveller Mediation Service and schedule a time-limited LTACC Subgroup meeting in May to explore the issues and establish how best to resolve them.

9. Agenda for the NTACC meeting of LTACCs 2025

It was agreed to submit a letter to the NTACC to outline that the conference should focus not just on best practice but also issues requiring robust discussion and resolution.

10. Any Other Business

The issue of change in the modality of payments for electricity supply for residents in Carrowbrowne and the difficulties ensuing for them was raised and noted. It was agreed that this matter would be examined in the Operational Subgroup.

11. Next Meeting

The next LTACC meeting was set for Wednesday, 10th of September at 10:30 am. Members were thanked for attending, and the meeting concluded.