Strategic Policy Committees Scheme
2014-2019
Introduction

Pursuant to the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended by Section 41 of the Local Government Reform Act, 2014 the establishment of the Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs) is undertaken in accordance with guidelines issued by the Minister for Environment, Community, and Local Government, and the Department of the Environment, Community, and Local Government has confirmed that the relevant guidelines are those issued in June, 2014, as accompanied by circular letter LG 07/2014.

The provisions of the 2014 Act provide that at least one of the SPCs which is established is to consider matters relating to Economic Development and Enterprise Support. Having regard to this requirement, and to the decision of Galway City Council to appoint five SPC Chairs at its Annual Meeting in June, 2014, it is recommended that a draft scheme, as set out hereunder, should be published and circulated to key stakeholders and community representatives so that their views on the draft can be obtained and considered by the CPG in advance of submitting a final recommendation to the Council.

The Strategic Policy Committee Scheme 2014-2019 was considered, agreed and adopted by the Elected Members of Galway City Council on 8th September 2014.

Role of the Strategic Policy Committees

The role of the SPC's is to consider matters connected with the formulation, development, monitoring and review of policy which relate to the functions of the local authority and to advise the local authority on those matters (Section 48(1) of the 2001 Act, as amended). The SPC's will be comprised of City Councillors and local sectoral interests, and will be chaired by a member of the City Council. It will be the responsibility of the SPC's to provide advice and make recommendations on policy matters through the Chairperson of the SPC to the full Council. The Strategic Policy Committees afford both the elected member and local sectoral interests the opportunity to be more involved in policy development at local level. They will build on the knowledge of people working with social, economic, cultural and environmental bodies in the city and allow persons with relevant expertise to work alongside the elected representatives in a spirit of partnership.

The SPC's policy making and strategic role is fundamental to the SPC concept. The SPC's will not be involved in the day to day operation of the Council, or other non-policy matters.

The final decision on policy matters rests with Galway City Council.

Corporate Policy Group (CPG)

The Corporate Policy Group will consist of the Mayor and the Chairs of each of the Strategic Policy Committees. This Group will act as a sort of Cabinet and will provide a forum for policy issues, which transcend the remit of individual Strategic Policy Committees. The CPG will link the work of
the different SPC's and provide a mechanism where policy positions affecting the whole Council can be agreed for submission to the full Council. The Mayor represents the CPG at meetings of City Council.

Configuration of Strategic Policy Committees

Galway City Council will establish five Strategic Policy Committees to cover its areas of activity. These Strategic Policy Committees will be:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPC 1: Housing</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPC 2: Planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPC 3: Economic Development, Enterprise Support and Culture</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPC 4: Transportation</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPC 5: Environment, Recreation, Amenity</td>
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</tbody>
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The areas of policy which are appropriate to these SPC's are as follows:

SPC 1: Housing

Proposed functional remit:

- Provision of Local Authority Housing
- Management of housing stock
- Voluntary housing schemes
- Traveller accommodation plans
- Accommodation for Homeless people
- Private rented dwellings, housing standards and building control
- Tenant Participation
- Housing loans and grants
- Anti Social Behaviour

SPC 2: Planning

Proposed functional remit:

- Development Plan
- Integrated Area Plans
- Action Area Plans
- Development Control
- Urban Renewal
- Heritage
SPC 3: Economic Development, Enterprise Support and Culture

Proposed functional remit

- Economic Development
- Promotion of the city
- Enterprise Development
- Community Development
- Cursaí Gaeilge
- The Arts
- Theatre
- Museum

SPC 4: Transportation

Proposed functional remit:

- Road transportation
- Public transport
- Public lighting
- Taxis and Hackneys
- Traffic Management
- Parking
- Pedestrianisation
- Road safety
- Cycling facilities

SPC 5: Environment, Recreation, Amenity

Proposed functional remit:

- Waste Management
- Litter Management
- Pollution control
- Agenda 21
- Burial Grounds
- Fire protection
- Derelict sites
- Casual Trading
- Dog Control
• Veterinary services
• Parks
• Recreation centres and facilities
• Playing fields
• Libraries

The guidelines on SPCs, issued by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in June, 2014, stipulate that SPCs have one third of their membership drawn from sectors relevant to the committees’ work. Having regard to the fact that there are now 18 members on the Council, and in order to provide opportunities for increased sectoral representation and for all Councillors to serve on more than one SPC, the composition of the Committees is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPC</th>
<th>Sectoral Interests</th>
<th>City Councillors</th>
<th>External Representatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1:</td>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:</td>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:</td>
<td>Economic Development, Enterprise Support and Culture</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:</td>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:</td>
<td>Environment Recreation, Amenity</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Membership of an SPC will be for the life of the Council. The SPC Chairs should hold office for a minimum of three years, which could be renewed by the Council. Subsequent chairs should be appointed from the existing Council members on the SPC.

Assignment of Sectoral Interests to SPC's

The assignment of Sectoral Representatives to Strategic Policy Committees will have regard to:

1. The need to foster economic and social development generally.
2. The need to get a spread of relevant interests.
3. The need to ensure a pro-active approach to having as many relevant sectors as possible across the SPC system.
4. The need for balance between divergent interests.
5. The range of groups within each sector.
6. The relationship between the number of SPC’s and the range of interests that can be represented.
7. The need to involve the Community/Voluntary/Disadvantaged Sector and to foster social inclusiveness and equality.
8. Gender balance, in particular the need to attract participation by women.

The Sectors which will be represented are as follows:

- Environment/Conservation/Culture
- Development/Construction
- Business/Commercial
- Trade Union
- Community/Voluntary
- Social Inclusion

The proposed representation of the sectors on the Strategic Policy Committees as follows:

| SPC 1: Housing | • Community/Voluntary  
|                | • Social Inclusion  
|                | • Development/Construction  
|                | • Trade Union  
| SPC 2: Planning | • Community/Voluntary  
|                | • Business/Commercial  
|                | • Environment/Conservation  
|                | • Trade Union  
| SPC 3: Economic Development, Enterprise Support and Culture | • Community/Voluntary  
|                | • Business/Commercial  
|                | • Trade Union  
|                | • Culture  
| SPC 4: Transportation | • Community/Voluntary  
|                | • Business/Commercial  
|                | • Environment/Conservation  
|                | • Trade Union  
| SPC 5: Environment, Recreation and Amenity | • Community/Voluntary  
|                | • Social Inclusion  
|                | • Environment/Conservation  
|                | • Business/Commercial  

Principles applying to the selection of Members of Strategic Policy Committees

The following principles apply to:

(a) **Appointment of Councillors:**

1. Every City Councillor will have the opportunity to serve on an SPC.
2. Councillors may not be nominated to represent sectoral interests.
3. SPC Membership for Councillors will be for the lifetime of the Council. A person ceasing to be a Councillor would automatically cease membership of the SPC.
4. A Councillor should not normally serve on more than two SPC's insofar as possible.
5. SPC Council membership should reflect the proportionality and the local distribution of elected representation on the full Council
6. SPC membership should, as far it is practicable, be representative of each electoral area in the city.

(b) Selection of Sectoral Interests:

1. Groups/associations should be active within the area of the local authority and have a Citywide impact or, at minimum, a relevance in a locality or number of localities in the city.
2. Groups/associations should be open to new members, hold AGMs and regular meetings, and should be broadly representative and accountable.
3. Single interest groups may be considered, e.g. groups focused on the disabled or elderly. Groups formed around specific single local issues should not be considered for inclusion in the sectors.
4. Local Development Agencies represented at Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) level will not be represented on an SPC.
5. Each sector will select its own nominee(s) via the Public Participation Network (PPN).
6. It is desirable that sectoral nominees would retain membership of the SPC for the life of the Council. It is open to each nominating sector to deselect its nominee, if felt necessary, and to notify the Council accordingly whereupon the person would cease to be a member. In such cases the relevant sector will nominate a new representative.
7. Galway City Council may recommend that nominees have broad knowledge or expertise of a particular nature.

Nomination Process for sectoral representatives

Following the adoption of the Strategic Policy Committee scheme by City Council, the nomination process will commence. Nominations from the Development/ Construction, Business/Commercial and Trade Union sectors will be sought from the National Pillars in accordance with the Departmental guidelines, and may also be sought from relevant local organisations as appropriate.

Galway City Council will write to the National contacts as outlined above seeking nominations to the relevant Strategic Policy Committees in accordance with the adopted scheme. The exact mechanism for selecting nominees will be left to the National Pillars and any issues pertaining to the Nomination mechanism used by the National Pillars will be referred to the appropriate contact point. The selected members should be representative of local organisations active in the City, as it is the local perspective of the respective pillars that the members would be expected to bring to the SPC's. One month will be allowed to enable the selection process of the National Pillars.

Representatives from the Community/Voluntary Sector, the Social Inclusion Sector and Environment/Conservation Sector and the Culture Sector will be nominated by Galway Public Participation Network.