



Pat Fannin

Committee Secretariat

Committee of Public Accounts

Houses of the Oireachtas

Dublin 2

6 September 2021

Your ref: S0495 PAC33

A chara,

I refer to your correspondence of 28 July last in respect of matters pertaining to Galway 2020 raised by the Public Accounts Committee at its meeting on 6 July last. Please see set out below my response to the matters raised.

I can confirm that the Department is satisfied that the provisions set out in its Performance Delivery Agreement with Galway 2020 are being met. These provisions include commitments by Galway 2020 to deliver an effective cultural programme under its year as Ireland's 2020 European Capital of Culture; compliance with the requirements set out for the drawdown of Department funds and quarterly monitoring and reporting arrangements; the establishment of a monitoring and evaluation programme to review the implementation and deliverables from Galway 2020; compliance with recommendations set out by the EU Expert Panel for the European Capital of Culture; development and implementation of programmes that support project delivery in the areas of communications, volunteering, business, tourism and branding; and, finally, attendance at regular meetings with the Department on progress against deliverables.

As part of the next step in the European Capital of Culture process, and following an open competitive tendering process, the Galway 2020 monitoring and evaluation programme is currently being undertaken by independent arts evaluation organisation, The Audience Agency. The M&E programme is collating the key inputs, outputs and outcomes, to date, from the activity by Galway 2020 European Capital of Culture. The report will be published before the end of this year and will provide comprehensive information on all key deliverables under Galway 2020. The Department will furnish a copy of the report to the Public Accounts Committee as soon as it is available.

Having regard to the further information requests set out in your correspondence, I can advise the following:

1. Any capital assets or legacy benefits from the project

Noting from the transcript of the Committee discussions that the question concerning capital assets will be directed to the local authorities, I wish to address the matter of legacy benefits. In that regard, I can advise that while the monitoring and evaluation programme is ongoing and part of its remit is to provide information on benefits arising from the project, preliminary findings indicate a number of operational and legacy benefits. These benefits include:

- a. The delivery of over 500 events through a combination of physical and online formats, employing in excess of 600 artists and supporting cultural workers, with the majority of events delivered during a global pandemic year as part of a restructured cultural programme. In this regard, hundreds of events across all art-forms were reformatted, often on more than one occasion and at short notice, within allocated budgets, to comply at all times with evolving public health requirements.
- b. Galway 2020 cultural partners have built up new and significant capacity to conceptualise, develop and deliver large scale cultural projects, many in cooperation with other national, European and international partners.
- c. Galway 2020 cultural partners, as a result of delivering many events online, have reached new international audiences that would not have been otherwise accessible. Statistics on this international reach are being collated and will be included in the final monitoring and evaluation report. Such global access serves to enhance Galway's global reputation in culture and delivery, notably during the pandemic.
- d. Galway 2020 has been instrumental in the establishment of a number of new cultural organisations in Galway that now exist directly as a result of Galway's designation as European Capital of Culture. These include youth orchestra Symphonic Waves who as part of its Galway 2020 project engaged in capacity building workshops and performances with the RTÉ National Concert Orchestra. The organisations also include Hope it Rains, who delivered events focused on the impact of human activity on climate change. A further example is Livefeed, a youth music initiative.
- e. Further opportunities are arising for Galway 2020 cultural partners and the projects they developed as part of the European Capital of Culture. Projects by cultural partners Branar, Aistriú under NUIG and the Galway International Arts Festival, originally commissioned and delivered as part of Galway 2020, will feature in the upcoming 2021 Galway International Arts Festival. Upcoming European

Capitals of Culture are also engaged with Galway 2020 Head of Programme to include cultural partners from Galway 2020 in their programming, the latter being a key performance indicator identified by the European Commission for European Capitals of Culture.

- f. Galway 2020 international promotion programme served to significantly increase international awareness of Galway as a destination for cultural and general tourism. This promotion resulted in Galway 2020 receiving a number of international designations as a destination for 2020 including from Lonely Planet, Conde Nast, Rough Guide, CNN Travel, BBC Good Food, United Airlines and more. While it is recognised that Galway could not immediately capitalise on these designations due to the onset of the pandemic, they have served to place Galway on the international travel map for the future.
2. The project drew on the experiences of previous similar projects across a number of areas as follows:
- a. From Bid Book stage, Galway 2020 consulted through workshops and participation in public meetings with previous European and national Capitals of Culture, including Liverpool and Derry/Londonderry. These consultation contributed to shaping the Galway 2020 approach and draft programme. Bob Palmer, one of the leading experts on European Capitals of Culture, acted as primary advisor for the Galway bid.
 - b. In developing the performance delivery agreement with Galway 2020, the Department took account of key recommendations from a published ex-post evaluation carried out by the Department on Limerick National City of Culture 2014. These recommendations included ensuring adequate strategic planning, appropriate administrative and operational arrangements and provision for economic and impact assessment. In developing the key performance indicators set out in the schedule to the PDA, the Department took account of the aforementioned recommendations to include provisions for the monitoring of amongst other things, the cultural programme, governance, finance and audit, and the Galway 2020 monitoring and evaluation programme.
 - c. The Department also oversaw Cork 2005 as European Capital of Culture and the value of planning with national and European Capitals and international partners as well as close engagement with the local authority were known to be critical.
 - d. The Board of Galway 2020 has included a number of senior representatives from previous European and national capitals of culture who were appointed to guide and advise on the direction and operation of Galway 2020 from the perspective of their experience. The former Chair of the Board, who steered Galway 2020 through its initial post-designation implementation phase was part of the leadership for Derry/Londonderry 2013 UK City of

Culture. The Board also included representatives from Lille 2004 and Liverpool 2008 European Capitals of Culture.

- e. Galway 2020 worked closely with Aarhus 2017 and Leeuwarden 2018 European Capitals of Culture on Galway's European Neighbourhood Project *Small Towns Big Ideas* with curators and artists from the previous ECOCs spending time in local communities in Galway to provide advice and build capacity for project delivery. Over 70 STBI projects from throughout the County of Galway have been since delivered.

- 3. In relation to any learnings going forward for similar projects, the remit of the Galway 2020 monitoring and evaluation programme includes the examination of lessons learned from the project. As set out above, the monitoring and evaluation report will be published before the end of the year and I will be happy to provide a copy of this Report to the Committee in due course.

Yours sincerely,



Katherine Licken

Secretary General