



**An Roinn Turasóireachta, Cultúir,
Ealaíon, Gaeltachta, Spóirt agus Meán**
Department of Tourism, Culture,
Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media

Oifig an Ard-Rúnaí
Office of the Secretary General

Ms Éilis Fallon
Committee Secretariat
Committee of Public Accounts
Houses of the Oireachtas
Dublin 2

24 June 2021

Your ref: SO431 PAC33

Dear Ms Fallon,

I refer to your letter of 14 June last on behalf of the Public Accounts Committee requesting information on the governance arrangements for Galway 2020 European Capital of Culture and whether the Department is satisfied with the use of funding it provided for the projects.

Background

The European Capitals of Culture programme is a European Union Action, launched in 1985, that sets out the right of all EU Member States to designate a city in their country to hold the title of European Capital of Culture as per the list of rotating eligible countries published in periodic Decisions of the European Parliament and Council.

The competition for the designation is launched six years in advance of the title year with the award conferred two years later. The selection process is carried out by an independent panel of experts who assess the proposal or 'bid' by each nominated city using criteria based on the objectives of the

programme. The panel then recommends to the Member State one city to be designated to hold the title.

Galway 2020's designation as Ireland's European Capital of Culture commenced in February 2020 and extended by agreement of the Minister and European Institutions to end April 2021 due to the impact of the COVI-19 pandemic on cultural programme delivery.

Governance of Galway 2020

Galway Cultural Development and Activity Company trading as Galway 2020, is established as a company limited by guarantee with designated charitable status, to deliver the Galway 2020 Programme. The Company is governed by a Board, chaired by Mr Arthur Lappin, an experienced cultural producer and director. The Board is comprised of eleven members and includes the Chief Executives of Galway City and County Councils. It also includes the Mayor of Galway City and the Cathaoirleach of Galway County. The Minister has a representative on the Board of Galway 2020 who keeps the Minister and Department apprised of key items in the work of the Board and the governance of and progress on delivery of the cultural programme.

The Board met on nineteen occasions in 2020 and on six occasions to date in 2021. The Board has in place an audit committee, chaired by a member of the Board, which monitors the integrity of the financial statements before their submission to the Board. The audit committee meets at least three times per year and assesses the effectiveness of the financial procedures, internal controls and risk management procedures. The Company is up to date in its reporting to both the Company Registrations Office and the Charity Regulator including the lodging of audited Financial Statements on an annual basis. The Financial Statement for 2020 was signed off by the Board at its most recent meeting on 25 June last and will be lodged shortly with the Companies Registration Office and published on the Galway 2020 website immediately thereafter.

Galway 2020 is led by Chief Executive Patricia Philbin on secondment from Galway City Council. The secondment of Ms Philbin will end on 30 June in the wake of the completion on 30 April last of Galway 2020's year as Ireland's European Capital of Culture. The development of a legacy plan for Galway 2020 will be led by Ms Marilyn Gaughan Reddan, Head of Programme and Legacy at Galway 2020, who is on secondment from Galway County Council and has worked on the project since 2015.

Performance Delivery Agreement

The Department has in place a Performance Delivery Agreement (PDA) with Galway 2020, which sets out the oversight arrangements and the terms and conditions for the drawdown of funding from the Department. Oversight arrangements under the PDA include the review by the Department of a quarterly management report submitted by Galway 2020 with details of progress on meeting milestones under key performance indicators covering all aspects of Galway 2020 activity, as set out in the schedule to the PDA. Each report is followed up with a management meeting between the Department and the Executive of Galway 2020 to discuss key items in further detail.

The Department is also furnished with a quarterly financial review from an independent accountant confirming that Galway 2020 follows best practice in transparency, accountability and securing value for money.

As part of the overall funding commitment to Galway 2020 European Capital of Culture, the Department also has in place a PDA with Galway City Council for the delivery of elements of the cultural programme. Under the terms of the PDA and an addendum to the agreement between the Council and Galway 2020 Company, the Company is also responsible for the day-to-day monitoring of these elements of the cultural programme on behalf of Galway City Council. Prior to the drawdown of funds by the Council, the latest financial and management reports must be furnished to the Department in addition to a letter from the Chief Executive of Galway City Council confirming that all payments will be made in compliance with the terms of the PDA.

Galway 2020 Programme Delivery

Owing to COVID-19, Galway 2020's term as Ireland's 2020 European Capital of Culture was prolonged by the EU to end April 2021. The impact of the pandemic on major cultural projects and artistic organisations around the world gave rise to the need to restructure the Galway 2020 Programme. In July last year Minister Martin approved the revised plans for delivery of the Programme which had been adapted and extended to enable delivery in line with prevailing public health requirements as they arose throughout the period.

Under the Galway 2020 restructured programme at least 350 Irish based artists and other cultural professionals worked throughout the past year to complete their projects, delivering commissioned original work with over 500 events through a combination of online and limited physical performance. High profile physical performances were delivered last autumn, when public health restrictions permitted. These included the *Druid Gregory* tour of Galway County where outdoor spaces such as on the grounds of Coole Park and Kylemore Abbey were used as venues for 38 theatrical performances seen by 1,200 members of the public. *Druid* also held performances in 5 schools and engaged with pupils in post-performance workshops.

Online presentation has enabled many projects to reach wider audiences than could have been achieved through physical delivery alone. It has also benefitted Galway 2020's cultural project partners in acquiring new digital skills. For example, *Interaction* by Galway Theatre Festival held 34 events online reaching audiences of over 3,000.

Critically European partnerships established over the past six years have been sustained and these should help to facilitate future work opportunities. In that regard, Galway 2020 is currently in discussion with upcoming European Capitals of Culture, including those being held in 2022 and 2023, to feature artists and works from the Galway 2020 programme in their cultural programmes.

Conditions of the approval by the Minister of the Galway 2020 restructured cultural programme, have included a fortnightly meeting between the Department and Galway 2020 and the submission by Galway 2020 of a monthly written report on the progress of projects under the cultural programme. The monthly written reports detailed progress towards delivery of each project, health and safety measures in place in light of the pandemic, and key risks faced by each project and associated mitigating measures. In this way, the Department has had appropriate oversight of

compliance with both health and safety requirements and details of cultural programme delivery throughout the prevailing challenging environment.

Combined with project events delivered prior to the onset of the pandemic, key projects that were part of Galway 2020's winning bid as Ireland's European Capital of Culture have been delivered according to budget, providing employment to at least 600 artists and other cultural workers such as producers, technicians and crew. With the conclusion of the core of the cultural programme at end April, cultural project partners are in the process of completing individual post-project evaluations. The data from the evaluations will be collated to provide information on key project deliverables including income and expenditure, numbers employed, number of events held, level of audience engagement, partnerships developed, outcomes and possible legacy opportunities. This information is used to inform the overall monitoring and evaluation framework for Galway 2020 which is set out in further detail below.

Department Funding

Galway 2020 has drawn down €14 million of the overall €15 million from the Department commitment to the project. Expenditure by Galway 2020 is broken down as follows:

Allocation of expenditure	Amount spent	Percentage spend
Cultural Programme	€10,251,122	73%
Cultural programme production	€ 1,148,538	8%
Volunteering	€ 252,680	2%
Operations and Monitoring and Evaluation	€ 1,115,995	8%
Spend to End of Programme	€ 1,231,665	9%
Total	€14,000,000	100%

Cultural programme expenditure comprises the funding paid to cultural partners for the creation, development and delivery of their projects under Galway 2020. Cultural programme production comprises the expenditure for the creative direction, programming and production resource costs to deliver the cultural programme. Volunteering expenditure refers to the funding paid for the volunteer programme under Galway 2020. Operations and monitoring and evaluation expenditure comprises the funding paid for ongoing operational costs and the Monitoring and Evaluation programme, the latter being one of the criterion for delivery as part of the designation as European Capital of Culture. Spend to end of programme comprises the funding due to be paid to cultural partners for delivery of the events under the final months of the cultural programme. These funds

are paid as final project deliverables and supporting documentation as well as post-project evaluations are provided by the cultural partners to Galway 2020.

Galway 2020 Monitoring and Evaluation programme

As per the requirements of all European Capitals of Culture, Galway 2020 has in place monitoring and evaluation arrangements that will culminate in a report to be delivered later this year. Monitoring and evaluation is undertaken by an independent entity – The Audience Agency – on behalf of Galway 2020.

The Audience Agency was awarded the contract following a competitive tender process advertised on eTenders. The Audience Agency is a registered charity. It is funded by the Arts Council England as a cultural sector support organisation. It is an experienced and internationally recognised monitoring and evaluation organisation whose mission is to enable cultural organisations to use data to increase their relevance, reach and resilience.

The Monitoring and Evaluation programme, developed in consultation with stakeholders, including the Department, provides for review of the Galway 2020 project in terms of how:

- it developed Galway's cultural capacity;
- delivered the programme rooted in people and place; and,
- the social and economic benefit accruing.

Under the monitoring and evaluation programme for Galway 2020, The Audience Agency is engaging with stakeholders across the spectrum of the project including audience surveys and focus group discussions; general population surveying; training workshops in data collection with Galway 2020 volunteers; cultural partner interviews and skills building workshops to develop their capacity to more effectively engage with audiences in the future and capture their feedback. It also includes interviews with funders and the Galway 2020 team. The data gathered is being collated and analysed to produce a comprehensive report on all aspects of the Galway 2020 project.

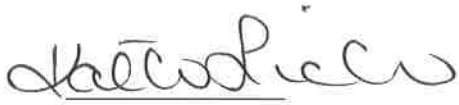
The final Monitoring and Evaluation report, scheduled for delivery before the end of this year, will include results on the number of cultural organisations supported, the jobs created to deliver the programme, new projects commissioned, cultural sector capacity developed, events held, audience numbers and a breakdown of the total income and expenditure. It will also address the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic on the achievement of the overall aims of the project.

Legacy Plans

Legacy planning is a key element of all European Capitals of Culture. In the coming months, Galway 2020 will commence a focused stakeholder consultation process with creative, community, business, Government, and European stakeholders. This consultation process together with the report from the Monitoring and Evaluation programme will inform the development of a sustainable strategic legacy plan for Galway 2020. This legacy plan is due to be finalised before year end for subsequent implementation.

The remaining €1 million from the Department's overall funding commitment of €15 million for Galway 2020 will contribute to the implementation of the legacy plan.

Yours sincerely

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

Katherine Licken

Secretary General