Introduction

Údarás na Gaeltachta established an interagency working group in April 2014 to assess and propose solutions to offset and compensate for the job losses in the area. The focus of An Fóram Forbartha Fiontraíochta was to make recommendations that would lead to new enterprise development and job creation opportunities on the Gaoth Dobhair Business Park. As part of its review, An Fóram Forbartha Fiontraíochta working group assessed the business needs and challenges of establishing and growing a successful enterprise in a rural area such as Gaoth Dobhair. They set out a report and action plan to focus on those challenges. The primary target set was to create 300 new jobs on the Business Park over the 3 year period of the action plan. Since March 2015 Údarás na Gaeltachta and other interested parties implemented the agreed plan as set out. The members of An Fóram Forbartha Fiontraíochta are listed in Appendix 1. A report on the implementation of the plan is set out below.

Key Recommendations

The following lists the key recommendations as agreed by the Fóram Forbartha Fiontraíochta. The key recommendations of the Fórum were:

1. That the agencies with a training and employment remit engage with employers with regard to their current skills shortages and future skills requirements. This will ensure that appropriate training courses, specific to their requirements, are provided to ensure the supply of suitable skills in the area.

2. That Údarás na Gaeltachta allocates resources to establish a marketing team aimed at:
   » raising the profile of the North-West Donegal Gaeltacht and the Gaoth Dobhair Business Park as a place to locate and develop a business;
   » working with IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland and Connect Ireland to market the area through their network of overseas offices;
   » attracting entrepreneurs and expanding enterprises to locate on the Gaoth Dobhair Business Park that would lead to the creation of 300 new jobs over 3 years (2015-2017).

3. That Údarás na Gaeltachta undertakes a capital development programme over a 3 year period aimed at refurbishing/upgrading an identified number of industrial properties on the Gaoth Dobhair Business Park.

4. That the North-West Donegal Gaeltacht region is prioritised for the installation of high speed broadband connectivity in the roll out of the Government’s National Broadband Plan 2020 under the Department of Communication, Energy and Natural Resources.

5. That Údarás na Gaeltachta, in conjunction with other relevant agencies, actively engage with early stage businesses, start-ups and the local business community in an effort to further develop and increase business activity in the area.
Key Implementation Results

An Fóram Forbartha Fiontraíochta set out 5 main recommendations as implementation challenges for Údarás na Gaeltachta and other stakeholders for which the key results may be outlined under the following headings – Employment, Investment, Broadband, Education & Skills and Relationships/Links.

Employment

Údarás na Gaeltachta has exceeded the employment target set out in the action plan in the period since March 2015.

- **313** full-time positions were approved on Gaoth Dobhair Business Park during the plan period.
- Support was approved for **21** projects in companies of varying sizes and in various sectors both traditional and innovative.
- **14** new projects were set up on the Business Park with Údarás support during the plan period.
- **529** full-time positions were reported at client companies on the Business Park at the end of May 2018.
- A recruitment drive is currently underway for a further **44** jobs.
- An additional **83** jobs will be announced in the short-term in respect of which assistance has been approved.

It is both significant and encouraging that businesses have the confidence to locate and indeed remain on the Gaoth Dobhair Business Park and make a major investment in employment for the Gaeltacht community. Employment on the Business Park has experienced a certain recovery following job losses down through the years. In 2017 the Voluntary Health Insurance Board (VHI) celebrated 10 years on the Business Park, and despite international unrest due to Brexit companies like RA Pacáistí Teo., Fáisc Miotail Teo., Euroflex Teo., Meastóirí Domhanda undertook significant international initiatives and increased employment. In addition, new employers at the Park are settling in and strengthening their presence in the Donegal Gaeltacht, companies such as Pramerica Teo., Optum Teo. and Kombucha Éireann Teo.

The employment narrative of the Business Park is much more extensive than outlined above as An Screabán has experienced a new lease of life with on-going initiatives taking place in recent years. Organisations and various businesses on the Gaoth Dobhair Business Park employ a total of **622** full-time employees and 14 part-time employees. A wide variety of organisations are availing of the excellent business facilities available at the Gaoth Dobhair Business Park.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jobs on the Gaoth Dobhair Business Park</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Client companies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other organisations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iomlán</td>
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<tr>
<td>Current Recruitment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short-term Recruitment</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong> (Potential pipeline included)</td>
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</table>
An Garda Síochána, the Health Service Executive, the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge, Letterkenny Institute of Technology, Fire Station, Library, SOLAS, Donegal Local Development Company (DLDC) and community and child care organisations have offices / facilities on the Business Park. This continuous presence cultivates and promotes opportunities for cooperation for organisations and businesses which in turn creates a demand for ancillary services in the surrounding area.

The increase in employment figures on the Gaoth Dobhair Business Park is replicated in terms of progress made in employment numbers in the Donegal Gaeltacht as a whole. 243 new jobs were created in the Donegal Gaeltacht in 2017. When the number of job losses is taken into account, there was a net increase of 103 jobs, which shows that there were 2,193 jobs in Údarás na Gaeltachta client companies by year end, the highest number since 2009. 968 jobs were approved in the Donegal Gaeltacht in the course of the implementation of the action plan.

**Investment**

The action plan recognised the importance of significant capital investment in the Business Park and in the facilities available there.

- **€6.1m** was invested as part of a 3 year capital development programme.  
- The investment was targeted at refurbishing / upgrading a number of industrial units on the Gaoth Dobhair Business Park.  
- **€1.7m** is currently being invested in a number of initiatives  
- Is is proposed to invest a further **€3m** on projects which are primed to be developed in Gaoth Dobhair over the next 18 months subject to sufficient capital resources being available.  
- **€212,502** was invested in energy efficiency projects in various units and projects on the Business Park.

The essential investment on the Údarás’s property portfolio on the Business Park included:

- **€0.5m** on a new ring road on the Business Park.  
- **€1.28m** for office fittings/business incubation on the first floor of Áislann Ghaoth Dobhair.  
- **€1.64m** on a number of projects for RA Pacáistí Teo. a company which employs 230 people.  
- **€2.2m** was spent on redeveloping the former DiaNorm factory on the Business Park to facilitate its conversion into a modern **logistics unit**.  
- **€190,000** was invested on essential refurbishment and redevelopment works on six other units in order to attract projects to the Business Park.

As part of the capital expenditure an investment of **€212,502** was made in renewable energy / energy efficiency projects in various units and projects on the Gaoth Dobhair Business Park. Grant supports at various rates were provided to projects under the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland’s scheme **Better Energy Communities**.

Energy efficiency works which were carried out include the upgrade of street lighting on the Business Park, insulation projects and with lighting upgrades in some units. Údarás na Gaeltachta is exploring the possibility of developing training projects in this sector in conjunction with the Letterkenny Institute of Technology in order to promote further energy initiatives / opportunities on the Gaoth Dobhair Business Park.
At present investment to the value of €1.7m is being made in a number of initiatives on the Business Park to support the creation and stabilisation of employment as well as providing facilities to attract new projects.

An tÚdarás proposes to invest a further €3m on projects which are primed to be developed in Gaoth Dobhair over the next 18 months subject to sufficient capital resources being available. These projects include:

- the development of the second floor at gteic@Gaoth Dobhair (Áislann Ghaoth Dobhair),
- the refurbishment of the former Crolly Doll factory for Drioglann Thír Chonaill distillery project,
- the refurbishment of an additional building for a proposed expansion by RA Pacáistí Teo.

**Broadband**

Although Údarás na Gaeltachta doesn’t have a direct role in the provision of broadband services it has, over the years, lobbied the relevant organisations to raise awareness of the Gaeltacht’s broadband requirements. Significant inroads have been made in the provision of high-speed broadband access in Gaoth Dobhair over the duration of the action plan.

- 6,293 buildings already have access to high-speed broadband services in the area.
- EIR will provide 3,425 buildings with high-speed broadband by the end of 2018.
- The Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment has indicated that the contract for the National Broadband Plan will be signed in September 2018.
- 8,530 buildings in the Donegal Gaeltacht are in the AMBER region under the National Broadband Plan.
- A €20,000 investment has been made in the broadband infrastructure in Áislann Ghaoth Dobhair.

gteic@Gaoth Dobhair is a digital and innovation hub which it is hoped it will have a positive impact on potential further employment opportunities on the Gaoth Dobhair Business Park. 20 hot desks and shared spaces for remote working and e-workers have been developed in gteic@Gaoth Dobhair with an opportunity for future expansion also. Up to 26 fully fitted office spaces and incubation units have been developed for start-up or expanding businesses. Underpinning this development is access to high-speed internet with a capacity for gigabit broadband. The new conferencing, meeting, training and video-
conferencing facilities, which are available to gteic members and other organisations at a competitive rate, offer considerable development opportunities.

18 businesses are operating in gteic@Gaith Dobhair which employ up to 50 employees. The facility is now part of the digital ecosystem Údarás na Gaeltachta is developing and promoting, an ecosystem which will have hubs in 30 Gaeltacht locations throughout the country when the project is rolled out.

Education & Skills
Údarás na Gaeltachta, employers at Gaith Dobhair Business Park and other organisations have made significant investment in developing workforce skills in the Gaith Dobhair area in the last three years.

- A review of skills was undertaken with employers on the Business Park in conjunction with North West Regional Skills Forum.
- Courses and seminars were delivered in conjunction with other training organisations to address identified shortcomings and the excellent cooperation established in terms of training will continue.
- Respected education providers including Acadamh na hOllscoíolaíochta Gaeilge, Letterkenny IT and the Donegal Education Training Board have offices on the Business Park.
- Training grants to the value of €692,000 were approved for client companies.
- €408,136 in Research, Development & Innovation grants were approved for 5 businesses.
- Support to the value of €180,000 was granted for 3 tourism initiatives in the Gaith Dobhair area under the Tourism Management Development Scheme.

Údarás na Gaeltachta and agencies with a training remit engaged with employers with regard to their current skills shortages and future skills requirements. The Board of Údarás na Gaeltachta also approved training grants to the value of €692,000 for client companies located on the Gaith Dobhair Business Park. This was an investment in the skillset of employees at the Business Park which the businesses identified in association with Údarás na Gaeltachta. This support gave the businesses an opportunity to expand and improve their business and management acumen which will facilitate growth and development.

Research, Development & Innovation
The Board of Údarás na Gaeltachta approved support to the value of €408,136 in Research, Development & Innovation grants for 5 businesses located on the Gaith Dobhair Business Park during the period of the action plan. This support assists businesses in developing their products, services, markets, their staff and is particularly valuable in businesses which are expanding. Grant rates up to 45% of expenditure were provided to small businesses which enabled them to invest in research, development and innovation.

An tÚdarás also approved support worth €62,500 to 4 businesses on the Gaith Dobhair Business Park to receive specific training and consultancy services in relation to management and marketing activities. An tÚdarás delivers these supports in conjunction with Enterprise Ireland.
The benefit of this support to companies can be highlighted in two of the businesses which received research, development and innovation support from Údarás na Gaeltachta and have developed new innovative products and secured markets recently.

Kombucha Teo., which operates from the Gaoth Dobhair Business Park, has secured a major contract with the Sainburys supermarket chain in the UK and began selling its health products in over 700 stores in the UK in recent weeks. As a result of process improvements and innovation at RA Pacáistí Teo., which produces packaging products for the fast food market throughout Britain, was presented with a British Sandwich Industry Technical Excellence Award 2018. The company won the award for reducing the level of plastic in its packaging product from 80% to 20%.

Tourism

The tourism sector will play a critical role in the further rejuvenation of Gaoth Dobhair Business Park and the Donegal Gaeltacht economy in the next number of years. A joint tourism promotion venture between Údarás na Gaeltachta, Donegal County Council and Donegal Tourism has been set up to boost the development of this sector which will be located at gteic@Gaoth Dobhair on the Business Park. The Fáilte Thír Chonaill initiative is being promoted as part of Údarás na Gaeltachta’s Tourism Management Development Scheme and as part of the county’s tourism strategy. Specific emphasis will be placed on cultural and language-based tourism, developing walks and the Gaeltacht elements of the Wild Atlantic Way will be further promoted. Support of €30,000 per annum over a two year period has been approved towards the initiative to part fund a tourism officer who will be appointed to market the Donegal Gaeltacht and based in gteic@Gaoth Dobhair.

Assistance in the amount of €30,000 per annum over a two year period has been also approved by Údarás na Gaeltachta to Amharclann Ghaoth Dobhair and Ionad Cois Locha, Dún Lúiche. A cultural and tourism executive position in both organisations will be appointed to develop, manage and administer a cultural tourism and arts programme.

Relationships/Connections

- Due to agreements and cooperation with Údarás na Gaeltachta relevant Údarás client companies have the opportunity to avail of the offices and services of Enterprise Ireland worldwide.
- Sponsor and attend important business events such as the Small Business Big Impact Conference in Philadelphia and the Golden Bridges Conference in Boston.
- Trade missions to North America are organised for Údarás client companies in North West Donegal in an effort to develop current markets and secure new markets.
- Foster business and cultural links between the Sichuan region of China and Donegal.
- 15 projects under the LEADER Programme in Donegal received funding in 2017.
- New SAFER & LECo projects are located on the Gaoth Dobhair Business Park.

Connections and relationships Údarás na Gaeltachta has nurtured throughout Ireland, Europe and the World result in client companies located on the Gaoth Dobhair Business Park utilising the offices and availing of the services of Irish agencies overseas to access new international markets.
Údarás na Gaeltachta has also nurtured valuable connections with the business community in North America, in cities such as Philadelphia, Cleveland, Boston and New York in order to market the opportunities available at Gaoth Dobhair Business Park and in Ireland’s Gaeltacht areas. An tÚdarás regularly sponsors and attends business events such as the *Small Business Big Impact* Conference in Philadelphia and the *Golden Bridges* Conference in Boston and also offers client businesses opportunities to participate on trade missions in an effort to secure new markets.

In addition to the strong links with America, Newfoundland and Scotland, a delegation from The Letterkenny Institute of Technology, Donegal County Council and Údarás na Gaeltachta visited Neusoft University in Dujiangyan, in the Sichuan region of China in 2017 to identify a range of actions which would nurture / foster strong business and cultural links between Donegal and China.

Údarás na Gaeltachta has worked tirelessly over the past number of years to create strong links with the Gaeltacht Diaspora and one of the organisations strategic projects is to further enhance these links with the Gaeltacht community throughout Ireland and the world.

**SAFER & LECo Project**

The SAFER initiative is an EU project based in gteic@Gaoth Dobhair whose objective is to further develop the food sector in the Donegal Gaeltacht. This initiative aims to assist food producers to promote food as a tourism product in the region. A Development Officer has been appointed for this project and gteic@Gaoth Dobhair will be used as an information point to provide an information and training resource for the project.

Funding of €1.9m has been approved for the LECo (Local Energy Communities) programme from the European INTERREG Programme under the Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme (NPA). A project officer has been appointed, employed by Údarás na Gaeltachta who is based in gteic@Gaoth Dobhair. The aim of the project is to connect innovative technologies with natural resources to establish Sustainable Energy Communities in rural areas. Údarás na Gaeltachta is a project partner in this project along with other stakeholders.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Plan Targets</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
<th>Result/Current Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td>The local labour force must be retrained and upskilled to meet the demands of current businesses, potential new enterprises and entrepreneurs.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1(a)</strong></td>
<td>Engage with employers in the area to assess their current skill shortages and future skills needs in respect of the available labour force. Provide training programmes to fulfil the requirements.</td>
<td>ÚnaG/DSP/ Donegal ETB/LYIT/ Skillnets/ Acadamh</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Provide training and upskilling programmes to prepare the local labour force for future employment opportunities in these target sectors: • Food &amp; Beverage - HACCP • Marine Resource - FETAC • Engineering - Toolmakers/Technicians • Tourism - FETAC • Internationally Traded Services - IT Skills, Administration, Marketing, Languages</td>
<td>Donegal ETB/DSP/LYIT/ Skillnets/ Acadamh</td>
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<td><strong>1(b)</strong></td>
<td>Promote and provide entrepreneurship training through the New Frontiers Programme</td>
<td>LYIT/ÚnaG/EI/ LEO</td>
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<td><strong>1(c)</strong></td>
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<th>Action Plan Targets</th>
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<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>Raise the profile of the North-West Donegal Gaeltacht and the Gaoth Dobhair Business Park as a place to locate and develop a business, and increase the number of site visits by prospective new enterprises to the area</td>
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<td><strong>2(a)</strong></td>
<td>Initiate a marketing plan and publicity campaign that will raise the profile of the North-West Donegal Gaeltacht as a place to locate and develop a business.</td>
<td>ÚnaG</td>
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<td>2(b)</td>
<td>Liaise with and enhance links with IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland to market the North-West Donegal Gaeltacht through their network of overseas offices. Create a database of privately owner-managed foreign medium sized companies and target those companies with a view to investing and establishing a business in the NorthWest Donegal Gaeltacht area.</td>
<td>ÚnaG/IDA/EI</td>
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<tr>
<td>2(c)</td>
<td>Liaise with Connect Ireland with a view to informing the organisation of the potential business offering for foreign companies in the North-West Donegal Gaeltacht.</td>
<td>ÚnaG/IDA/Connect Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2(d)</td>
<td>Liaise with Donegal County Council to access its Donegal Diaspora network and develop links with the Diaspora as a means of attracting inward investment to the North-West Gaeltacht region.</td>
<td>ÚnaG/Donegal County Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>2(e)</td>
<td>Organise and deliver an international business conference to market the NorthWest Donegal Gaeltacht investment proposition amongst local, national and international entrepreneurs and drive the discussion on how</td>
<td>ÚnaG</td>
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organized to promote the Business Park – *Small Business Big Impact* in Philadelphia, *Golden Bridges* in Boston, networking event in Glasgow etc.

- Site visits held to outline the excellent facilities to groups of all types.
- Due to agreements and cooperation between Údarás na Gaeltachta, Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland relevant Údarás client companies have the opportunity to avail of the expertise and experience that the offices and executives of Enterprise Ireland worldwide.
- Trade missions to North America were organised for Údarás client companies in North West Donegal to support them to add to their current markets and to find new markets.
- Two IDA Ireland companies, - Optum and Pramerica, are operating in gteic@Gaith Dobhair.

- There was a continuous link between Connect Ireland and Údarás during the lifetime of Connect Ireland.
- Údarás has established a beneficial relationship with the business community in the North American cities of Philadelphia, Cleveland, Boston and New York and the opportunities available on Páirc Ghnó Ghaoth Dobhair and in Gaeltacht na hÉireann are being promoted to them.

- A delegation from LYIT, Donegal County Council and Údarás na Gaeltachta visited Neusoft University in Dujiangyan, in the Sichuan region of China in 2017 to identify a range of actions which would nurture / foster strong business and cultural links between Donegal and China.
- Strong links have been created with Massachusetts University, Boston Irish Business Association, educational institution in Newfoundland/Canada.

- Údarás has for the last three years, cofunded and sponsored business seminars and conferences in North America which client companies attended.
- A broad range of workshops & seminars are organised in gteic@Gaith Dobhair including the Erudite international workshop in 2017 which had participants from various countries throughout Europe and which connected with digital hubs in Cork and Italy. The seminar was part of a two day
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<th>3</th>
<th>Further develop local business infrastructure and facilities.</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3(a)</strong></td>
<td>Carry out a redevelopment/refurbishment programme on a number of identified properties on the Gaoth Dobhair Business Park over a three year period at an estimated cost of €1.7 million, to help support the attraction/expansion of foreign direct and indigenous investment to the area.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• €6.1m was invested as part of a capital development programme.</td>
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<td>• The investment was targeted at refurbishing/upgrading a number of industrial units on the Gaoth Dobhair Business Park.</td>
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<td>• €0.5m on a new ring road on the Business Park.</td>
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<td>• €190,000 was invested on essential refurbishment and redevelopment works on six other units in order to attract projects to the Business Park.</td>
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<td><strong>3(b)</strong></td>
<td>Expedite plans in relation to wind and biomass energy development programme on the Gaoth Dobhair Business Park.</td>
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<td>• ESB Networks &amp; EirGrid are upgrading a new 110kw line to the area and it is hoped to be completed in 2019. It will allow renewable energy sources to connect to the electricity network in the future.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• An investment of €212,502 was made in renewable energy/energy efficiency projects under the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland’s scheme Better Energy Communities.</td>
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<td>• Údarás and specialist consultants have conducted research on the feasibility of establishing a district heating system on Gaoth Dobhair Business Park.</td>
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<td>• Two 150kw biomass boilers have been installed in gteic@Gaith Dobhair. These boilers can serve a max load of up to 300kw depending on demand and further increases could be made to biomass heating in the building if required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• A LECo (Local Energy Communities) programme project is based in gteic@Gaith Dobhair with the aim to connect innovative technologies with natural resources to establish Sustainable Energy Communities in rural areas.</td>
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<td>• It is hoped to establish Gaith Dobhair Business Park as a “green” park in the future.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Údarás na Gaeltachta are investigating the training opportunities in the sector in association with LYIT, so that further training course in the energy sector can be developed on Gaith Dobhair Business Park.</td>
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</table>
3(c) **Review the status of development plans for the N14/A5 and prioritise and expedite its development as per plans prepared in 2008.**

- It is reported that the ‘The A5 Western Transport Corridor (A5WTC)’ will be delayed due to legal challenges being taken against the decision to complete the project.
- The development and completion of this important infrastructure project would provide a direct dual carriageway connection for most of the route from Dublin to Donegal.

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<tr>
<th>Donegal County Council/ National Roads Authority</th>
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3(d) **Work with Donegal Airport in order to achieve an enhanced air service provision for business/leisure purposes.**

- There is ongoing cooperation between Údarás and Donegal Airport as regards achieving an improved air service for business/tourism/recreation.
- A new PSO contract for the Dublin route was announced in early 2018 for Stobart Air which will continue until 2022.
- A new service from Donegal Airport to Glasgow commenced which is serviced by Loganair.
- The airport is an integral part of the development infrastructure of the Donegal Gaeltacht into which the State has made significant investment also in recent years.

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<tr>
<th>Donegal Airport/Local business representatives</th>
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3(e) **Donegal County Council and Irish Water to urgently prioritise their commitment towards the Gaoth Dobhair Sewerage Scheme which was approved for investment in 2013 by the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government.**

- A pilot sewerage scheme is being operated at the moment with 12 houses connected to it as part of Gaoth Dobhair Sewerage Scheme.
- The County Council/Irish Water will be making a decision as regards the most appropriate system depending on the results of this pilot scheme.
- The Gaoth Dobhair Sewerage Scheme will be connected to the effluent system on Gaoth Dobhair Business Park.

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<tr>
<th>Donegal County Council/Irish Water</th>
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3(f) **Engage in the preparation of the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) to ensure that the needs of the North West Donegal Gaeltacht are incorporated in the LECP which is currently being drafted for the County.**

- Údarás na Gaeltachta is a member of Donegal Local Community Development Committee (LCDC).
- Údarás participated in the preparation and implementation of Donegal LECP (Local Economic & Community Plan).
- The aims and objectives set out of the development of Gaoth Dobhair Business Park are identified and included in the aims and objectives of the LECP.
- Údarás na Gaeltachta is one of four partners under the Donegal Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) responsible for the Local Action Group (LAG) for the administration and implementation of the LEADER programme in the Donegal Gaeltacht (excluding the Gaeltacht Islands which are under the remit of Comhair na nOileán).
- €1,690,381 is being made available under the Údarás LEADER programme to be invested in Gaeltacht projects for the 2016 – 2020 period.

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<th>Donegal County Council/ÚnaG</th>
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| 4(1) | Prioritise the North-West Donegal Gaeltacht region for the installation of high speed broadband connectivity in the National Broadband Plan 2020. | ÚnaG/ Department of Communication, Energy and Natural Resources | • Significant progress has been made regarding high speed broadband supply for the Gaoth Dobhair area during the action plan period.  
• 6,293 buildings have access to high speed broadband in the area already.  
• EIR will be supplying high speed broadband to 3,425 buildings before the end of 2018.  
• The National Broadband Plan (NBP) contract will be signed in September 2018 according to the Department of Communications.  
• 8,530 buildings in the Donegal Gaeltacht area are in the AMBER category of the NBP.  
• An Investment of €20,000 has been made in broadband infrastructure in Áislann Ghaoth Dobhair. |

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<tr>
<th>5</th>
<th>Actively engage with new start ups and the local business community in an effort to further develop their business and increase business activity in the area.</th>
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</table>
| 5(a) | Develop and support business networks for local entrepreneurs and businesses. | ÚnaG | • Innovation & Digital Hub gteic@Gaoth Dobhair has been opened with 18 businesses operating there which employ up to 50 employees.  
• The facility is now part of the digital ecosystem Údarás na Gaeltachta is developing and promoting, an ecosystem which will have hubs in 30 Gaeltacht locations throughout the country when the project is rolled out.  
• Údarás supported Cumann Tráchtála & Turasóireachta Ghaoth Dobhair to develop and launch a website focussed on business and tourism networks in the area and in Northwest Donegal.  
• Seminars on Tourism & Brexit issues were held during the plan period.  
• Various collaborative projects implemented with North West Regional Skills Forum (NWRSF).  
• Údarás organised an open day on employment opportunities on the Business Park for the diaspora that returned home for Christmas in 2016  
• R.A. Pacáistí and Randox organised recruitment open days in December 2017.  
• Ongoing mentoring services are being made available by Údarás for companies in the area. |

5(b) | Support early stage business development with a particular focus on North-West Donegal’s competitive advantage in specific sectors. Provide mentoring service to start-ups and developing enterprises. | ÚnaG |  |  |

5(c) | Actively engage with new and existing product and service providers to grow businesses in the tourism sector. | ÚnaG/ LYIT School of Tourism/ Fáilte Ireland | • The appropriate agencies and organisations (Fáilte Éireann, Údarás na Gaeltachta, Donegal County Council, LYIT, Donegal Airport, Projects, Community Groups etc.) are working together to develop tourism projects and products. |  |  |
| 5(d) | Progress the development of the visitor centre at Teach Mhuiris, Cnoc Fola in providing a compelling reason for visitors to travel from Glenveagh National Park to the area and increase dwell time. | ÚnaG/Local Providers/Donegal Tourism Committee/Fáilte Ireland/LYIT School of Tourism | • Údarás and Donegal Co.Co. commissioned a facilitated session for CTTGD to develop tourism development priorities for the Northwest area.  
• Support of €180,000 has been approved for tourism projects in the area over a period of 2 years.  
• Comharchumhann Forbartha Ghaoth Dobhair have secured planning permission to develop a cultural tourism hub near Teach Mhuiris on Údarás na Gaeltachta property. Discussions have been ongoing with business advisors to prepare a business plan that will make up an application for funding for the project under “Fáilte Ireland Grant Scheme for Large Tourism Projects 2016-2020” before the end of 2018.  
• Údarás is supporting the recruitment of tourism officers in Amharclann Ghaoth Dobhair & Ionad Cois Locha to progress campaigns directed on tourism.  
• A certificate course in CEDRA is being provided by Údarás in conjunction with LYIT in Killybegs. The course is focused on seafood & tourism for restaurants, public houses and hotels. |
| 5(e) | Engage in the development of the Wild Atlantic Way experience activities and products. | Local Providers/Donegal Tourism Committee/LYIT School of Tourism/Fáilte Ireland | • Roinn na Gaeltachta approved support of €485,000 for Amharclann Ghaoth Dobhair in 2016 and this historical building was refurbished and developed for the benefit of the Gaoth Dobhair area and the Northwest.  
• Support of €30,000 per year for a period of two years has been approved by Údarás na Gaeltachta for Amharclann Ghaoth Dobhair and a Cultural and Tourism Officer is to be filled at the moment to develop, manage and administer a tourism and arts work programme. |
| 5(f) | Work in collaboration with Iontaobhaithe Amharclann Ghaoth Dobhair to source funding to restore and develop Amharclann Ghaoth Dobhair as a state-of-the-art theatre/performance facility suitable for hosting theatre performances, concerts, seminars and workshops and also a tourist information office for the Gaoth Dobhair area. | ÚnaG/Iontaobhaithe Amharclann Ghaoth Dobhair/The Dept of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht | • Roinn na Gaeltachta approved support of €485,000 for Amharclann Ghaoth Dobhair in 2016 and this historical building was refurbished and developed for the benefit of the Gaoth Dobhair area and the Northwest.  
• Support of €30,000 per year for a period of two years has been approved by Údarás na Gaeltachta for Amharclann Ghaoth Dobhair and a Cultural and Tourism Officer is to be filled at the moment to develop, manage and administer a tourism and arts work programme. |
Appendix 1

Members of An Fóram Forbartha Fiontraíochta 2014

Chairman:
Séamus Mac Eochaidh, Manager – Enterprise and Employment Division, Údarás na Gaeltachta

Secretary:
Cathal Ó Gallchóir, Executive – Enterprise and Employment Division, Údarás na Gaeltachta

Members:
John Nugent, Manager North West – Business & Relationship Development, IDA Ireland
Méabh Conaghan, Senior Executive in Food Entrepreneurship, Enterprise Ireland
Micheál Mac Giolla Easbuig, Regional Manager, Údarás na Gaeltachta
Sinéad Ní Fhatharta, Senior Executive, Enterprise and Employment Division, Údarás na Gaeltachta
Seán Ó Leidhinn, Assistant Principal Officer, An Roinn Ealaíon, Oidhreachta agus Gaeltachta
Micheál Ó hÉanaigh, Director of Services, Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall
Mary O’Malley (R.I.P) Regional Training Manager, Donegal Education Training Board
John Andy Bonner, Head of Development, Letterkenny Institute of Technology
Francis Byrne, Assistant Principal, Employment Programmes – North West Region, Department of Social Protection
Appendix 2

Submissions to An Fóram Forbartha Fiontraíochta

John McDermott, Manager, R. A. Pacáistí Teo, Gaoth Dobhair Business Park

John Clancy, Promoter/Manager along with Kieran Gallagher and Paddy Farren, Mobileonix Teoranta, Gaoth Dobhair Business Park

Mark Campbell, Pauline Bradley, Ivan McConnell and Ciarán Richardson, Senior Manager, Randox Teoranta, An Clochán Liath

Bridget Gallagher, Manager, VHI, Gaoth Dobhair Business Park

Martin & Louise Boyle, Owners, Martin Boyle Haulage Ltd., Gaoth Dobhair

Karen Campbell, Manager, Fáisc Miotal Éireann Teoranta, Gaoth Dobhair Business Park

Raymond Coyle, Entrepreneur/Business Investor, Largo Foods

Seimí Ferry and John McFadden (Largo Employees) along with Declan Ferry and Paul McGee (SIPTU representatives)

Alan Nuzum, CEO, Skillnets Ltd and Siobhán Grant, Network Manager, Tech North West Skillnet

Eileen Borland, Department of Social Protection

Fergus McAllister, Business Development Manager, Eircom

Éamonn Mac Giolla Bhríde and James Cassidy, Cumann Tráchtála Ghaoth Dobhair