

Statement from the Steering Committee of the Mayo GAA Strategic Action Plan

On Sunday last, May 15, our steering committee received a draft of a Mayo GAA Strategic Action Plan. Given that our extended group of 86 people had devoted six months to a series of meetings where we sought to produce a strategic action plan for Mayo GAA, we were curious to see the contents of the plan now produced by Mayo county board.

Mayo GAA Board asked us to do this work over the winter of 2010/'11. Our committee did not force itself upon them. Our work was to form part of a "root and branch examination" (the board's words, not ours) of Mayo GAA.

The final plan now produced ticks a box, but does no more than that. Somewhere, an entry can now be made: "Yes, Mayo now has a strategic plan." But it is a dry document without any soul or heart.

The plan produced does not provide for Mayo doing something dramatic, something bold, something truly innovative. It is hard to disagree with any of the proposals in it, but it certainly will not inspire.

If adopted, it means that Mayo GAA is happy to keep doing what it has always done, thereby continuing to fail to realise its vast potential as a GAA force. A strategic plan should have vision, creativity and passion – the very traits that should be synonymous with our county, and the very traits our people have displayed here in Mayo, throughout Ireland, and all over the world.

This is a plan that could be produced by any county, anywhere – any county simply aspiring to tick a box.

The plan has over 9,000 words, but completely lacks any inspirational dimension. It ticks boxes in many areas – coaching, finance, harnessing the support of Mayo people worldwide, and others – but it doesn't go in deep enough to create the conditions whereby genuine innovations and unstoppable momentum might be generated by Mayo GAA.

Our committee has written to Mayo county board to disassociate our names from the plan.

Root and branch? The plan now produced barely touches on the healthiest leaf on the tree, let alone delve further. It refuses to take the hard and difficult decisions necessary for success. It is a missed opportunity.

It seems Mayo GAA wishes to keep doing what it has always done, and so no-one in the future should wonder why we will continue to get the results we've all too frequently got.

From time to time, we get results that are uplifting and joyous. Hopefully we may even get one such result this very year.

But, taken as part of a continuum, the results achieved are rarely of a scale consistent with a county of our size, our passion for GAA, and our supportive Diaspora.

Mayo GAA deserves better.