



ANNUAL REPORT 2014

OFFALY
COUNTY
COUNCIL



Front Cover (clockwise from top left)

Some of our work with the young citizens of Offaly in 2014:

- ❖ Schools Workshops,
- ❖ Offaly Youth Theatre,
- ❖ Music Generation,
- ❖ Offaly's Children's Arts Festival,
- ❖ HULLABALOO!,
- ❖ Santa's Giant Post Box

JOINT ADDRESS BY THE CATHAOIRLEACH AND THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE



Cllr. Sineád Dooley — Cathaoirleach



Colette Byrne — Príomh Fheidhmeannach

We are very pleased to present the *Offaly Local Authorities 2014 Annual Report*, which outlines the various services provided by the Council, the elected members, and the staff of the various departments to the people of Offaly.

This report provides Offaly County Council and the Municipal Districts of Birr, Edenderry and Tullamore the opportunity to record the activities undertaken by these organisations.

2014 was a year of significant change for Offaly County Council and the local government sector nationally. Significant organisational changes were brought about by the enactment of the *Local Government (Reform) Act 2014*, and following the local elections held in May the Town Councils of Birr, Edenderry and Tullamore were abolished. The number of members serving on Offaly County Council was reduced from 21 to 19 and the Municipal Districts of Birr, Edenderry and Tullamore were

established. **Uisce Éireann / Irish Water** was established in January 2014 and responsibility for water and waste water services passed to the new organisation. The **Local Enterprise Office** was established in Áras an Chontae in April 2014.

The *Local Government (Reform) Act 2014* also saw the abolition of the post of County Manager and the creation of the post of Chief Executive. Ms. Colette Byrne, was welcomed to the post of Offaly's first Chief Executive, by the members at the July meeting of the Council.

In previous years Offaly County Council resolved to provide quality and a good level of service to its customers despite the continuing difficult financial environment. This ethos was continued in 2014.

Some of the more noteworthy milestones of 2014 would include:

- ❖ Establishment of the Municipal Districts of Birr, Edenderry, and Tullamore, and the abolition of the Town Councils,
- ❖ Establishment of *Local Enterprise Office, LEO* located in *Áras an Chontae, Tullamore,*
- ❖ Establishment of *Uisce Éireann / Irish Water,*
- ❖ The *Offaly County Development Plan 2014-2020* was adopted in September 2014,
- ❖ The *Tullamore Dew Distillery* opened in Tullamore in September 2014,
- ❖ The *Offaly County Council Corporate Plan 2015 - 2019* was adopted by the members in December 2014,
- ❖ The *Open Library Project* in the Central Library Tullamore and Banagher Library was progressed,
- ❖ The NWCPO office received certification for the ISO 9001 standard in November 2014,
- ❖ Offaly County Council is fully participating in the Governments 'Gateway' Jobs Initiative and are will reach their target of 55 work placements by mid-2015,
- ❖ The ICT Department commenced a feasibility study and the pilot, with the Management Team, of a Paperless Meetings solution,
- ❖ The ICT Department were the lead agency in the tender process on behalf of 8 local authorities for a *Parking Fines Management* system,

- ❖ Over 4000 students across Offaly and Westmeath are involved in the *Music Generation Programme*, and students from the Programme have performed in the Mansion House, the Electric Picnic and the National Concert Hall,
- ❖ The Planning Department recorded a slight increase in the number of Planning Applications in 2014, which may reflect the early stages of an economic recovery for the County,
- ❖ The Council established a committee to organise the commemorative events for the anniversary of 1916.

Offaly Local Authorities are fully committed to improving the co-ordination of public services and reducing costs. All sections subscribe to the National Procurement Framework and strive to achieve "value for money" in the provision of all its services.

The current economic climate presents the organisation with huge challenges and it is only through the continued commitment of the Elected Members, Chairpersons and Members of the Strategic Policy Committees, the Corporate Policy Committee, Municipal Districts, Management Team and Staff, together with the many voluntary and community organisations, with whom the Council engages, that the organisation can face these challenges with confidence.

We trust that *Offaly Local Authorities 2014 Annual Report* is a true reflection of the commitment and hard work of all our stakeholders and records the work and achievements of Offaly Local Authorities over the past twelve months.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HOUSING DEPARTMENT

- ❖ Following the abolition of Town Councils, one statutory Housing Authority replaced three Housing Authorities in the County in June 2014.
- ❖ The Housing waiting list stood at **1,895** at year end with the greatest demand from the Tullamore area.
- ❖ **94** grants, for housing adaptation, housing aid for older persons and mobility grants were issued to the value of €757,000.
- ❖ Local Authority housing stock stood at **1,758** at year end with an average occupancy rate of **98%**.
- ❖ The Offaly Local Authorities housing capital drawdown for **2014** was c. **€3m** compared to **€13m** in **2010**. The allocation enabled the acquisition of **2** housing units in **Tullamore**, **5** in **Ferbane** and commencement of **Banagher** housing scheme, upgrade works to Kilcruttin Halting Site, **Energy Efficiency upgrade to 300 houses** across the county and completion of **3 DPG's** on Council owned houses
- ❖ CAS funding was secured to accommodate **6** persons, previously housed in institutional care settings, in Kilcormac and Brosna.
- ❖ A draft **Housing Maintenance Policy 2015 -2019** was adopted by the Housing SPC.
- ❖ **143** tenancy allocations were made across the range of social housing options. **452** housing assessments were conducted in 2014, **9** "Notices to Quit" were issued, however no houses were repossessed as a result of court proceedings.
- ❖ **3** loan applications were received, **1** Loan Offer was issued, and the Council paid out **1** loan in 2014.
- ❖ The Council paid out **94** Housing Grants totalling **€757k** in 2014 under the three Grant Schemes broken down as follows: **HAGS: 22, HAOP: 64, MAGS: 8**. At the end of 2014, there were **242** eligible applications pending across the 3 grant categories.
- ❖ The **2014-2018 Traveller Accommodation Programme** was adopted in February 2014 with an overall target for the

provision of **64** accommodation units over its lifetime. The number of families accommodated during 2014 was **32**. A draft **Halting Site Management Plan 2015-2019** was adopted.

- ❖ **79** homeless cases have been addressed by Homeless Action Team since its establishment with **35** cases dealt with in 2014. A total of **123** cases (comprised of 136 Adults and 51 children) presented homeless at Aras an Chontae.
- ❖ A Community Playground was completed in Daingean and a Multi-Use Games Area was directly provided by the Council in Moneygall

LIBRARY SERVICES

- ❖ A pilot initiative – **"Open Library"** funded by Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government was launched in Banagher and Tullamore Library in November 2014.
- ❖ **Tullamore Central Library** continues to be the busiest library with almost **7,000** members renewing their membership and **average visits of 500-700 per day**.
- ❖ The refurbishment of **Banagher Library** was completed in June 2014 and now provides enhanced services including self service borrowing, wifi and enhanced print services.
- ❖ Library staff had a lead role in promoting the **"Leap into Reading programme"** – a joint reading initiative for parents and young children to improve literacy levels in Offaly.
- ❖ The **School Reading Challenge**, an initiative to improve literacy in primary schools took place between January and June at the library. **47% of primary schools** or **33** primary schools in Offaly took part in the reading challenge and over a 7 week period, **4,788 students** read **48,922 books**.
- ❖ Library Services Website hits **increased** by **12.33%** during 2014, with increases in number of eBooks and eAudiobooks downloaded from the website.

- ❖ **Branch libraries** participated in many events during 2014 including **Hullabloo Festival, author visits, family fun-days, summer reading challenge** and celebrated many national and international days such as **Culture Night** and **World Refugee Day**.

ARTS SERVICE

- ❖ The Arts Service drives a number of significant projects such as **Tullamore Community Arts Centre, FilmOffaly, Music Generation, Culture Night** and **Hullabaloo Children's Arts Festival** alongside its ongoing support and advice to the many artists, festivals, arts organisations and community projects across the county.
- ❖ Through Music Generation, **4,000 young people** across Offaly and Westmeath are now receiving music education, **25 musicians** are now employed by Music Generation locally delivering **140 hours of tuition** weekly. Students in the programme performed in the **Mansion House, the Electric Picnic** and the **National Concert Hall**.
- ❖ A sculpture entitled **Paper Boats**, assumed missing for many years was found during 2014 they were restored and relocated to **Lough Boora Discovery Park** in December.
- ❖ In 2014 the Arts Office was invited to present on Offaly County Council's **Engage with Architecture Programme 2011 - 2013** at a UK local authority conference, as an example of best practice collaborative programming between Arts, Heritage and Architecture.
- ❖ Two short films were funded through the **FilmOffaly Award, The Debt** by **Helen Flanagan** and **Strangers in the Night** by **Gavin Keane**.
- ❖ **Culture Night** in Offaly treated the public to **25 free events** as part of the national programme. Over **1,500 people attended** events right across the county
- ❖ **Offaly Youth Theatre** continued in Birr, Tullamore and Edenderry, there are currently **36 young people** learning skills for stage and screen.
- ❖ **13** community groups received grants towards arts activities through the **Arts Act Grants** Scheme.

- ❖ The **Hullabaloo! Offaly's Children's Arts Festival** continued in Edenderry, Birr and Clara during October. The festival attracted over **1,500 young people** and their families to workshops and performances. A highlight was **A Giant Blue Hand** by **Marina Carr**, performed by TADS and Offaly Youth Theatre.
- ❖ The Arts Service facilitated **Birr Vintage Week and Arts Festival, OFFline Film Festival, Offaly Fleadh, Shakefest** and **Scripts** as well as leading out with **Hullabaloo Children's Arts Festival** and **Foundation 14**.
- ❖ The construction tender phase for the **Tullamore Community Arts Centre** closed in 2014, **FOUNDATION 14 Arts Festival** continued as a way of laying the artistic foundations of the centre.
- ❖ There were 2 publications of the **Midlands Arts and Culture Magazine**.
- ❖ The Arts Office facilitated the making of **Santa's Giant Post Box** for the **Christmas in Tullamore programme** as well as working with the Local Economic Office on the expansion of the **Made in Offaly Pop-up Shop**.
- ❖ The **Aras Exhibition Programme** continued through 2014, with **9** artists and groups having their exhibitions hosted in the atrium of Áras an Chontae.

ENVIRONMENT AND WATER SERVICES

- ❖ The Council is delivering Water Services in accordance with the **SLA** with **Irish Water** and the **Annual Service Plan** and budget for 2015 has been agreed. Work is currently underway to design a **Water Industry Operating Framework** for Local Authorities and Irish Water working in collaboration.
- ❖ The most recent **EPA Drinking Water Report (2012)** shows that **Offaly** had a **100% microbiological compliance rate** in 2012 and this is likely to be achieved for 2014 also. Offaly is one of only 12 Local Authorities that does not have a Water Supply scheme on the EPA Remedial Action list.
- ❖ New wastewater treatment systems were commissioned in **Belmont, Ballycumber** and **Shannonbridge** in 2014 and accordingly, **full secondary treatment is now provided in all public sewerage schemes in Offaly**.

- ❖ There are **four** Water Conservation Watermains Rehabilitation Projects underway in Offaly.
- ❖ The Council processed approximately **€552k** in subsidies to **Group Water Schemes** in 2014 and over **€9K** was paid in **Well Grants**.
- ❖ The **NWPCO** office received certification for the **ISO 9001 standard** in November 2014.
- ❖ A **Farm Hazardous Waste Collection Day** was organised at Tullamore Mart in October 2014 and **17,000kg** of **hazardous waste** was removed from the environment.
- ❖ Over **90% of schools in Offaly** have registered for the **green schools programme**, **79** schools registered for the **Green Flag programme**.
- ❖ The Council implement a **domestic wastewater treatment system inspection programme** and in 2014, **23** systems were inspected.
- ❖ New **Control of Horses Bye Laws** for Offaly were published in February 2014.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

- ❖ The **Offaly County Development Plan 2014-2020** was adopted on 15th September 2014.
- ❖ A new **Development Contribution Scheme** was adopted in February 2014.
- ❖ On 1st June 2014, the **planning functions** of **Offaly County Council, Tullamore Town Council and Birr Town Council** were **fully amalgamated**, following the abolition of the Town Councils
- ❖ The Planning Department assists the **Local Enterprise Office (LEO)** with **pre-planning advice** and meetings for new clients or expanding businesses.
- ❖ Preparation of a draft **Offaly Greenways Strategy** began in 2014, the strategy is designed to identify the **development** of appropriate **walking** and **cycle trails** in the County

- ❖ The Planning Department recorded a **slight increase** in the number of **Planning Applications** in 2014, which may reflect the early stages of an economic recovery for the County,
- ❖ The **Built Heritage Jobs Leverage Scheme** was introduced in 2014, to assist owners of **Protected Structures**, there were **46** applicants under this scheme, with a total of **22 completed projects**.
- ❖ There are **15 estates** in **Offaly** named on the most recent **Unfinished Housing Development list**, the Council applied for **Special Resolution Funding** for **4** developments on the list and were successful in **2** cases.
- ❖ During 2014, **52** enforcement files were opened, **180** warning letters and **45** enforcement notices were issued.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- ❖ The **Local Enterprise Office** (LEO) was established in April 2014 and is based in Áras an Chontae.
- ❖ LEO issue a monthly ezine on upcoming events and relevant supports, and we manage a business owners network, **ONE (Offaly Network of Entrepreneurs)**.
- ❖ The **main activities** of LEO were delivered under two principal headings, **Selective Financial Intervention** and **Entrepreneurial and Capability Development**
- ❖ Business Development Programmes
- ❖ Tullamore-based company Future Ticketing Ltd. was announced **Overall Winner in the 2014 Offaly County Enterprise Awards**.
- ❖ **Emma Rose Conroy** was named as **Offaly's Best Young Entrepreneur** and has won an investment of €20,000, as part of the €2million Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur Competition.
- ❖ LEO provided sponsorship of the **Tullamore Show**.
- ❖ LEO continued with its policy of providing an **outreach service** in the **Birr/South Offaly area** and in **the Edenderry/North**

Offaly area. Birr and Edenderry Municipal District offices have provided office space for this service.

LOCAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- ❖ 2014 saw the establishment of the **Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)**. The LCDC held its first meeting on 22nd April, 2014 and met on five occasions by the end of 2014.
- ❖ The **LCDC** is charged with the development of a forthcoming **Local and Economic Community Plan**, to run for 6 years from 2015.
- ❖ On the 22nd of October, 2014, was The **Offaly Local Community Development Committee** organised a **Tourism Forum**, held in October 2014, to facilitate high level consultation on the issue of tourism in advance of the preparation of the Local Economic and Community Plan for the county.
- ❖ The interim '**Offaly Tourism Group**' (OTG) was established in December 2014 with a brief to develop proposals on '**branding**' the County and to prepare a **Brand Management Strategy** for marketing and promoting tourism
- ❖ The **Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP)** is the successor programme to the Local and Community Development Programme (LCDP) and is a local social inclusion programme focussed on the most marginalised in society.
- ❖ In February 2014, the **Tullamore Resettlement Interagency Working Group (TRIWG)** chaired by Offaly County Council, **31 people** across **9 family units**, arrived in Tullamore as part of Ireland's assistance to international resettlement.
- ❖ The Council continue to support **Jigsaw** in partnership with other agencies, there were **865 calls** to the Jigsaw Service with parents presenting over half of all referrals.
- ❖ The **Public Participation Network (PPN)** is the main vehicle through which the local authority connects with the community, voluntary and environmental sectors.
- ❖ The **PPN County Register** was completed in November 2014, with **220 Offaly groups** registered with the Network. **12 people** representing **Community, Social Inclusion and Environmental interests** were elected on to the PPN Secretariat

- ❖ **1,646 primary school pupils** were tested as part of this research the establishment of a "**fit school monitor**".
- ❖ **Offaly Comhairle na nÓg** held their AGM in December 2014, the theme of the AGM was to celebrate **the 25th Anniversary of Ireland signing the UN Rights of the Child**.
- ❖ **Offaly Community Watch** is now in its fourth year; a countywide text alert system for Offaly is operated and supported through Community Watch
- ❖ In October, **Offaly Mental Health Talk Week** was launched in Tullamore Central Library with **Brent Pope** as the guest speaker; a programme of **over 50 events** was delivered in November.
- ❖ The **Public Area Enhancement Scheme** was delivered through **funding of €120,000** from the DoECLG for village improvements and general enhancement of public areas.
- ❖ **Community Tourism Diaspora Fund** provided funding in the sum of **€25,750** to festivals and events who attracted **515 overseas visitors**.
- ❖ Over 100 sets of Smoke Alarms were installed to Over 65's and vulnerable households in 2014, the Smoke alarms are funded by the Fire Service

HERITAGE OFFICE

- ❖ Three projects received funding under the **Heritage Council - Heritage Officer Grant Scheme 2014: Buildings of Ireland Architecture Guide for Laois and Offaly, Japanese Knotweed and Quarries After-Use Management Plans**
- ❖ A number of heritage awareness projects were organised by the Heritage Office the **Offaly Naturalists' Field Club Programme** and **Heritage Week**, also the **Annual Offaly Heritage Seminar**
- ❖ A group was established to organise the **1916 Commemoration** activities.

- ❖ **The Landscape of Clonmacnoise** by John Feehan - a book on Clonmacnoise Parish was published. **100 Quirky facts about County Offaly** (published in 2013) featured in the **Irish Times**, on **Countryfile** on RTE Radio 1 and on **Nationwide** on RTE One television.
- ❖ The offices hosted **four talks** on different aspects of **Tidy Towns work** for the Offaly Tidy Towns Network.

ROADS AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

- ❖ The 2014 Initial Roads Budget was **€8,178,367**, comprising **NNR Grant, National Road Grant** and **Own Resources**. Additional funding was received during the year totalling **€4,543,968**, sourced from **NRA, Dept of Transport, Tourism and Sport** and **Active Travel Birr Town**.
- ❖ In 2014 the this funding was used for **Ordinary Maintenance, Pavement Overlay/Reconstruction Schemes**, and **Public Lighting Upgrade** on the National Roads **N52, N62 & N80**.
- ❖ The funding was used for on the Non-National Roads for **Ordinary Maintenance, Surface Dressing, Pavement Recycling/Overlays, Community Involvement in Roadworks Schemes, Low Cost Safety Schemes, Bridge Strengthening Works, Regional Road Bridge Inspections, Public Lighting Upgrade, Traffic Light Junction, Road & Footpath Improvement Works** in **Tullamore** and **Birr**.
- ❖ Delivered on the key objectives of **health and safety** in the organisation
- ❖ In area of **Road Safety**, we operate a **Junior School Warden**, with **50 pupils** participating in and operating the scheme throughout the school year.
- ❖ There is a **road safety message** playing daily in **Birr, Ferbane and Edenderry Credit Unions**.
- ❖ The **Gardai** and **Road Safety Working Group** have prepared a brochure on **Parking at Schools**.
- ❖ In 2014 **Offaly County Fire and Rescue Service** were alerted to **641** incidents (**477** fire calls, **150** non-fire emergencies and **14** false alarms)

- ❖ The **Fire Service** assessed over **80 Fire Safety Certificate, Dangerous Substances, and Disabled Access Certificate** applications. The fire authority dealt with **48 licence applications**, a total of **161 fire safety inspections** of premises took place
- ❖ The service is actively involved in the **Community Smoke Alarm Project** and fire alarms were installed in **84 homes** in Offaly during 2014.
- ❖ The **Building Control** function of the Council is integrated into the service, there were **112 commencement notices** with **45 building inspected**.
- ❖ **Civil Defence** provided emergency response capability, and supported the community and events throughout 2014; over **50 Civil Defence duties** were carried out.

CORPORATE SERVICES

- ❖ The **Local Government (Reform) Act 2014** provided for the establishment of **three Municipal Districts in Offaly**, namely the Municipal District of **Birr, Edenderry and Tullamore**. The Act provided for the abolition of the Town Councils of Birr, Edenderry and Tullamore.
- ❖ **Local Elections** and **European Elections** were held on **Friday, 23rd May 2014**. **37 candidates** stood for election to Offaly County Offaly. The total **valid poll** was **32,579**. The total number of Local Government Electors (eligible to vote in a Local Election) on the **Register of Electors** on 23rd May 2014 was **56,531**.
- ❖ The **Offaly County Council Corporate Plan 2015 – 2019** was adopted in December 2014. The Plan places a **strong emphasis** on **economic and tourist development** and a key action is the **establishment of an Economic Forum**.
- ❖ There are **four S.P.C's** in Offaly dealing with the policy areas.
 - Housing Policy, Social and Cultural Services – Cllr. P. Ormond
 - Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning, – Cllr. E. Dooley
 - Transportation and Emergency Service – Cllr D. Dolan
 - Environment, Water and Drainage Services – Cllr. T. McKeigue

- ❖ Following a public consultation process the members adopted the **Strategic Policy Committee Scheme** at their September meeting.
- ❖ The **Joint Policing Committee** held 2 meetings in 2014; revised Guidelines on the establishment and operation of the JPC were published in August 2014.
- ❖ Corporate Services administer the Council's support grant schemes for community swimming pools. The refurbishment of **Clara Swimming Pool** commenced in October 2014. Efforts are being made to progress the funding application for the **Edenderry Swimming Pool**.
- ❖ **15 applications** were received by the Council under the **Freedom of Information Act**. **8 applications** under the **Access to Information on the Environment** were processed.
- ❖ **184 Student Grant renewals** were awarded in the 2013/2014 academic year; **€1,055,223** was spent on Grants during this period.
- ❖ The total expenditure was **€125,681.00** (including salary) in respect of **Coroners' inquests**.

FINANCE

- ❖ The main sections within Finance are **Financial and Management Accounting, Central Revenue Collection, Accounts Payable, Payroll, Motor Taxation Office/Cash Office, General Ledger/Agresso Support, and Risk Management**.
- ❖ The Finance section completed the **unification of several accounting systems** and processes in 2014 following the abolition of Town councils.
- ❖ The main reports produced by Finance are the **Annual Budget, Annual Financial Statement (AFS), Quarterly Management Reports, and DoECLG/IMF Quarterly Reporting**.
- ❖ **Internal Audit** is an independent appraisal function which reviews the internal control system in operation within Offaly County Council.

HUMAN RESOURCES

- ❖ The **HR department** playing a key role in **facilitating staff secondments** and **delivering specific training** requirements for our staff involved at all levels of interaction with **Irish Water**.
- ❖ The total staff complement at the 31st December 2014 was **368 WTE**.
- ❖ **Gateway** is a Government initiative, our target under the scheme is **55 work placements**. At the end of 2014, **33 participants** had been **recruited**.
- ❖ The **new PMDS model** was rolled out during 2014 with training provided for all staff.
- ❖ Our 2014 **training plan** was delivered based on **identified corporate needs** and **priorities** including **mandatory training** in health and safety

INFORMATION SERVICES

- ❖ All **ICT work** required for the **deployment of national reform initiatives** such as **Irish Water, Shared Payroll, Amalgamation/Integration of Town Councils, Local Enterprise Office** and **Regional Authority**.
- ❖ Feasibility study and pilot implementation of Paperless Meetings solution - **MinutePad**
- ❖ Tender process on behalf of **eight Local Authorities** for a **Parking Fines Management system**

HOUSING, SOCIAL & CULTURAL SERVICES

SPC Chair	Peter Ormond MCC	Director Of Services	Seán Murray / Tom Shanahan
<i>Members</i>	<i>Sectoral</i>	<i>Senior Executive Officer</i>	Dermot Mahon
Cllr. Noel Cribbin	Ms. Mary Hensey	<i>Senior Executive Engineer</i>	Martin Quinn
Cllr. Declan Harvey	Mr. Michael O’Hanlon	<i>Administrative Officer</i>	Mary Flynn Kenny
Cllr. Brendan Killeavy	Mr. Tony O’Riordan	<i>Administrative Officer</i>	Jackie Finney
Cllr. John Leahy	Mr. Paul Scanlon	<i>County Librarian</i>	Mary Stuart
		<i>Arts Officer</i>	Sinead O’Reilly

HOUSING DEPARTMENT

ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS

Following the abolition of Town Councils, one statutory Housing Authority replaced three Housing Authorities in the County in June 2014. There was therefore a requirement to establish one overall management and reporting system to manage all housing functions on a countywide basis and to determine systems for the management of key housing functions centrally alongside the delegation of certain duties to Municipal District Areas. Responsibility for tenancy management from stock previously managed by Town Councils transferred to Offaly County Council with over 700 housing units transferring under this amalgamation process.

There was a further increase in the number of applications for social housing supports in 2014 due to

the ongoing economic downturn. 452 housing assessments were conducted in 2014 while 1,595 assessments have been completed over the 5 year period 2010 to 2014. The Housing waiting list stood at 1,895 at year end with the greatest demand from the Tullamore area. Preference demand at December 2014 was; Birr Municipal District 717, Edenderry Municipal District 618 and Tullamore Municipal District 1,296. Increasing demand for social housing together with capital budget restrictions continue to make it difficult for the Council to fully respond to the housing needs in the County.

A challenge to all areas of housing provision in 2014 was the increase in the number of applicants who are or have previously been home owners and who have fallen into

mortgage arrears. It is expected that this trend will continue and further increase in 2015 as more homeowners find themselves in the repossession process. A new Mortgage to Rent Scheme was introduced in 2012 to assist home owners remain in their homes under tenancy arrangements and 11 referrals were received from the Housing Agency for consideration. 2 applications were approved in 2014.

Despite the significant increased demand for housing supports and integration of files from former Town Councils, the waiting time for housing assessments was kept to a minimum due to the ongoing commitment of staff in providing quality customer services. Over 50 long-term and casual voids were brought back into stock thanks to funding received from the Department under the LTV Scheme.

Meeting customer demands for housing adaptation, housing aid for older persons and mobility grants continued to be a challenge. 94 grants were issued to the value of €757,000.

Continued suspension of Estate Management grants made it more difficult to engage with residents groups or to plan additional estate improvement works. Despite this, work continues in dealing with anti-social behaviour complaints and estate management issues in a number of locations. Emergency dddd Accommodation opened in 2012 in Tullamore managed by Midlands Simon in partnership

with Tullamore Housing Association has been very successful to date in providing options for homeless customers. There are significant difficulties accessing appropriate traveller accommodation in the private rented market coupled with significant reductions in capital funds available to construct traveller specific accommodation. As a result, there remains a significant increase in the numbers of travellers presenting as homeless.



Banagher housing scheme under construction

Construction commenced on an 8 bed OPD scheme in Banagher and almost 300 LA homes benefited from energy efficiency upgrades which comprised cavity wall

and attic insulation. A prioritized land development schedule was also agreed by each Municipal District in order to progress social housing development over the coming years.



Banagher housing scheme under construction

SOCIAL AND VOLUNTARY HOUSING OUTPUT

Local Authority housing stock stood at 1,758 at year end with an average occupancy rate of 98%. Total social housing provision in the County comprised 2,516 units. 143 tenancy allocations were made across the range of social housing options in 2014 comprising: 64 local

authority homes, 75 under the Social Leasing and RAS schemes and 4 nominations to voluntary bodies. 605 tenancy allocations have been achieved over the period 2010 – 2014 comprising standard local authority lettings in newly constructed or acquired houses, Part V, RAS, Leasing and nominations to voluntary bodies. Over 350 units have now been leased by the Council under the RAS / Leasing schemes.

Proposals for the construction of units for older persons at Clonminch, Tullamore were progressed and construction is expected to commence in 2015 subject to planning and funding. The Offaly Local Authorities housing capital drawdown for 2014 was c. €3m compared to €13m in 2010. The allocation enabled the acquisition of 2 housing units in Tullamore, 5 in Ferbane and commencement of Banagher housing scheme, upgrade works to Kilcruttin Halting Site, Energy Efficiency upgrade to 300 houses across the county and completion of 3 DPG's on Council owned houses.

CAS funding for the acquisition of properties in Kilcormac and Brosna was also secured to accommodate an additional 6 persons previously housed in institutional care settings. It is anticipated that the capital budget for 2015 will enable commencement of a number of additional social housing schemes at preferred locations.

HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND ALLOCATIONS

143 tenancy allocations were made across the range of social housing options.

Year	Number
2010	177
2011	277
2012	333
2013	356
2014	452

452 housing assessments were conducted in 2014 while 1,595 assessments have been completed over the 5 year period 2010 to 2014, with the number of assessments increasing year on year. All eligible applications were accepted and assessed within statutory deadlines.

HOUSING MAINTENANCE AND PRE-LET REPAIRS

Housing maintenance and management of stock was traditionally shared between local area management at Area or Town Council level with central oversight by the Housing Unit in Aras an Chontae. With the dissolution of Town Councils in June 2014 and establishment of Municipal Districts, a revised Housing Maintenance Policy proposed the introduction of a fully integrated and centralised management structure of housing maintenance services and reduction in the number of housing maintenance areas from five to three. A revised system of recording housing repair requests through the ihouse system was also introduced in 2014. A guide for elected representatives on maintenance procedures was also prepared and issued.

Housing maintenance repairs continued throughout 2014 despite limitations in the budget available and further progress was made in bringing back into use homes that were void for periods of time. Pre-let repairs to 20 houses were completed at a cost of €100,000.

The Council will attempt to secure additional funding from the Department in 2015 in order to ensure vacant stock does not remain vacant for extended periods. €514,000 was secured from the Department to return an additional 31 units back into stock utilizing newly created Framework Agreements with pre-qualified contractors. A Housing Maintenance Policy was drafted for SPC and Council consideration in 2014. Over 2,500 repairs were completed on housing stock during 2014.

ESTATE MANAGEMENT / REMEDIAL WORKS PROGRAMMES

Fencing contracts to secure land holdings and complete boundary remedial works in a number of local authority estates were completed during the year. One scheme to upgrade a derelict house at Fairgreen Kilcormac was funded under the Public Area Enhancement Fund while funding in the region of €10,000 was made available to support local residents associations and tidy towns groups on a range of projects to enhance their areas. While Remedial works schemes costing c. €100,000 in 2013 were completed at a number of locations, no funding was available for similar works in 2014. No funding is available for any additional remedial schemes

in 2015 unless a central allocation is received from the Department under the Social Housing Investment Programme allocation.

DPG's / DEMOUNTABLE DWELLINGS / IWS



DPG Scheme underway in Edenderry

No IWS schemes were completed in 2014 while the Council provided funding for the removal of two demountable dwellings. There has been good progress in addressing the DPG list since 2010 with 25 Disabled Persons Grants projects completed on own stock at various locations to the value of c. €500,000 with 90% of

this cost claimed from the DoECLG. In addition, 8 DPG applicants have been re-housed in alternative accommodation. 3 DPG's were completed in 2014 and funding has been secured from the Department to commence works at 4 projects for completion in early 2015. Funding is required for a further 5 DPG's in 2015 at a cost of c. €150,000 and will commence subject to the availability of funding.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND PART V

A total of 156 units have been acquired under the Part V process to date, 75 of which are Affordable units. 6 unsold Affordable units in Clara were transferred to social stock in 2013 with funding received from the Department. The 5 year RAS agreement with Tuath Housing Association expired in December 2014 and the tenants transferred to Council tenancies.

The remaining 9 units in Edenderry remain allocated under the Rental Accommodation Scheme in partnership with Tuath Housing Association. No social Part V's were acquired during the year. A formal review of Part V has been undertaken by the Department and changes to the format may be introduced in 2015.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAMME

The EEP scheme was revised in 2013 to include a basic energy upgrade (attic and cavity wall insulation) to existing tenanted properties. 3 contracts were awarded in 2013 to upgrade 288 homes. 288 units were also completed under the 2014 programme at a cost of €318,043 at various locations under 5 separate contracts. Proposals to identify units for inclusion in the 2015 programme have commenced and 321 units have been included in the 2015 scheme, subject to funding. Total Energy Efficiency upgrades to local authority houses has exceeded €600,000 over the past 3 years. 2014 programme locations included: *[See table across]*

TECHNICAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Housing unit continued to provide corporate technical support services for Library facilities, Aras maintenance and service contracts together with energy efficiency contracting for swimming pools. Specifications for proposed Ferbane Fire Station were drafted and Tenders were awarded for the construction of an access road through Council lands at Killane Edenderry to facilitate future school provision. Funding for the construction of the road was provided by the Department of Education & Skills and works supervised by the Housing Unit.

Location	No. of Units	Location	No. of Units
St. Columba's Place Tullamore	35	Thornsberry Tullamore	11
Silverdale Estate, Clara	6	Beechmount Ave., Clara	20
Oak View, Clara	9	Railway View, Clara	3
College View, Rahan	6	RC Killurin, Rahan, Durrow	3
Clonin, Rhode	12	Coologue, Daingean	15
Kyleboher, Kilcomac	8	Mooney Terrace, Kilcomac	23
Bunsallagh, Croghan	1	St. Joseph's Tce, Portarlinton	27
Hill Road, Cloghan	17	Scurragh, Birr	28
Burke's Hill Birr	5	Drumbane / McAuley Drive Birr	11
Gallen View Ferbane (SEAI)	20	Glenavar Row, Ferbane (SEAI)	5
Chestnut Gardens Daingean	7	Castelcourt Daingean	16
Castleview Park Edenderry	2	Clonmullen Lane Edenderry	6
Woodlawn Drive Clonbullogue	21		

LAND MANAGEMENT

Short-term land lettings were agreed at 7 locations generating a modest income. Lands at Kilcormac, Puttaughan Tullamore and Banagher were disposed of in 2014 and pre-contract enquiries dealt with in relation to proposed disposal of some lands at Sycamore Drive Ballycumber. Proceeds from land sales are principally used to offset against other land debit balances. Lands at Kilcormac and Collins Lane Tullamore were transferred under the Land Aggregation Scheme. Remaining lands no longer eligible for transfer to LAGS have / will be transferred to regular annuity loans and provision has been made in the 2015 budget for loan charges on these land loans. Maintenance of existing land banks which have not yet been developed is a cost that must be met until lands are developed or disposed.

TENANT PURCHASE SCHEME

No new applications for TPS were accepted in 2014 as the scheme has been terminated by the Department. It is intended to introduce a new scheme providing for the sale of existing local authority houses to tenants on incremental purchase principles in 2015. In contrast to the previous TP scheme, the discounts provided under the Incremental Purchase principles will be based on household income rather than length of tenancy, thereby allowing low-income households to move into home ownership earlier than otherwise might have been

possible. The significantly reduced level of activity under TPS continues to have severe implications for the level of capital funding available to deliver programmes across a range of areas.

HOUSING RENTS

With effect from 1st June, 2014 all Town Council tenant rent accounts, including Leasing Accounts were transferred to Offaly County Council. Considerable resources are required in order to adequately manage the housing rents system and manage arrears as they arise. Tenants in arrears are immediately notified to enter into payment agreements and these agreements are monitored weekly. Where no agreement can be reached or where the tenant fails to adequately address arrears, a "Notice to Quit" may be issued. A Housing Rent Arrears Policy was adopted by the Council in 2010 which outlines our procedures in this regard. In 2014, 9 "Notices to Quit" were issued, however no houses were repossessed as a result of court proceedings.



Example of cavity wall insulation

In 2014, new regulations were introduced whereby all new tenants being allocated a house who are in receipt of an eligible social welfare payment must sign up to the Household Budget Scheme as a condition of the tenancy. An additional clause relating to the HB Scheme has been included in all new Tenancy Agreements. Existing tenants who are in persistent or serious arrears and are in receipt of an eligible social welfare payment, must first be offered the option of entering into the HB Scheme before serving a NTQ. The proposed National Differential Rents Scheme is expected to be implemented by local

authorities in 2015 with a commencement date of 1st July, 2015. A full reassessment of all rent accounts will be conducted in 2015 in line with the adopted Rent Scheme

HOUSING LOANS

In 2014, three loan applications were received, one Loan Offer was issued. The Council paid out one loan in 2014 and under the terms of the new loan scheme, the repayments are being reported monthly to the Irish Credit Bureau. A revised Housing Loan Arrears Policy was adopted in 2012 including the introduction of a Mortgage Arrears Resolution Process. All customers in loan arrears are required to engage in the MARP process. There are currently four MARP agreements in place, these agreements are in respect of Affordable Annuity Loans and Shared Ownership Loans and have been agreed by the Housing Section. Three loan borrowers who previously were under a MARP Agreement have now resumed normal repayments. The process will continue in 2015 to ensure all loan customers are in sustainable repayment agreements. The arrears outstanding on all of the loans which are now under the MARP have reduced substantially and in some cases are now cleared. The MARP agreements are being reviewed bi-annually.

ADAPTATION, MOBILITY AND OLDER PERSONS GRANTS

The Council paid out 94 Housing Grants totalling €757k in 2014 under the three Grant Schemes broken down as follows: HAGS: 22 HAOP: 64, MAGS: 8. At the end of 2014, there were 242 eligible applications pending across the 3 grant categories. Average grant amounts paid in 2014 were: €16,000 for HAG's, €3,500 for MAG's and €5,880 for HAOP's. The reduction in the amount of maximum grants available under each category has ensured that an additional number of grants are funded.

PRIVATE SITES

There was one sale completed in 2014 but two offers previously received were withdrawn. A considerable debit balance remains on lands acquired and developed previously for this purpose. Revised criteria for the sale of private sites was adopted by Council in 2010 and sites made available for sale on the open market without restriction. 45 sites remain available in 5 locations. Considerable remediation works were completed at the Meadowlands Kilcormac scheme to complete estate entrance road and to block access to part of the estate subject to frequent illegal encampments.

RENTAL ACCOMMODATION SCHEME / LEASING SCHEME

286 customers have transferred to the Rental Accommodation since inception with 14 transfers completed in 2014. Efforts will continue in 2015 to

identify and secure good quality rented accommodation under both initiatives. A shortage of suitable properties in all locations, due to limited property availability continues to be an issue in acquiring and retaining properties. Following amalgamation of Tullamore and Birr Town Councils with Offaly County Council in June 2014, the total number of individual lease agreements concluded to date in the County is 183 units, with 46 of these being signed in 2014. There is an ongoing requirement for units under these schemes in 2015 in the Council's areas of high demand.

The Council also entered pre-contract discussions with the Housing Agency on the possibility of long term-leasing of NAMA controlled properties in Tullamore and Portarlinton. It is anticipated that 29 units will become available in Tullamore by way of Payment and Availability agreement with NAMA and Oaklee Housing Trust in 2015.

PRIVATE RENTED ACCOMMODATION STANDARDS

Revised Standards and a revised system of Enforcement were introduced in 2009 requiring a more detailed level of assessment, inspection and compliance. Offaly County Council conducted 55 inspections in 2014 which also included some properties which were the subject of complaints. Increased cooperation between the Community Welfare Service of the Department of Social Protection and the Council is envisaged in 2015 with a view to identifying and inspecting substandard properties in the county.

TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION & SUPPORTS

The 2014-2018 Traveller Accommodation Programme was adopted by Offaly County Council in February 2014 with an overall target for the provision of 64 accommodation units over its lifetime. The number of families accommodated during 2014 was 32. The Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee was reconstituted after the local elections and met on a quarterly basis to co-ordinate delivery of the Programme.

There remain significant difficulties accessing appropriate traveller accommodation in the private rented market coupled with significant reductions in capital funds available to construct traveller specific accommodation. As a result, there continues to be a significant increase in the numbers of travellers presenting as homeless. A draft 2015-2019 Halting Site Management Plan was prepared. Major works at the Kilcruttin Halting site in Tullamore were completed in 2014 including the permanent closure of the 'temporary' site and relocation of a number of families to standard housing or to the permanent site at Kilcruttin.

HOMELESS SUPPORTS

Offaly operates its Homeless Services on a regional basis along with Westmeath, Longford and Laois. The Midlands Regional Homeless Action Plan 2013-2016 was adopted by the 4 Midland Counties in March 2013. The Plan sets out sets out the measures to be undertaken in the

Midlands Counties by the key stakeholders including Housing Authorities, Health Service Executive, Homeless Service Providers and any other bodies providing homeless services. The Plan was amended and readopted in October 2013 to reflect the Homeless Policy Statement 2013. The National Homeless Policy Statement published in Feb 2013 renewed the commitment to end long-term homelessness by the end of 2016. A key focus of the Statement is on a Housing-Led Approach to tackle long-term homelessness.

The Tullamore Emergency Accommodation Service has been in operation since June 2012. The facility is a 6-bed unit run by Midlands Simon Community in partnership with Offaly Local Authorities, Tullamore Housing Association and the HSE. The facility operates as a regional facility for the 4 Midlands Counties. In 2014 there were over 30 admissions. 2014 has seen an increase in young males in particular accessing emergency accommodation services.

Offaly County Council administers and Chairs the Offaly Homeless Action Team. The interagency team was established in June 2012 and meets on a fortnightly basis. The HAT team takes an interagency case management approach to the more complex homeless cases. A total of 79 homeless cases have been addressed by HAT since its establishment with 35 cases dealt with in 2014. A total of 123 cases comprised of (136 Adults and 51 children) presented homeless at Aras an Chontae.

The total number of cases presented in 2013 was 114 comprising of (132 adults and 69 children). Offaly County Council continues to contribute towards the operation of the Midlands Simon Settlement Service. In 2014, 38 referrals were made to the Settlement Service.

In 2013, Homeless funding was devolved to Westmeath County Council, the Lead Authority for the Midlands region. The total budget allocation for Offaly for 2014 was €130,604.00. A total of €68,974.48 was allocated in supports to the Tullamore Emergency Accommodation Service with the remainder of the budget allocated to supporting the Midlands Simon Settlement Service and supports for private emergency accommodation and assistance with rental deposit payments.

ESTATE MANAGEMENT

Pre-tenancy supports are provided on an on-going basis with some limited support for residents associations. The Housing Section continues to implement its Anti-Social Behaviour Policy. In 2014 there were 80 Anti Social Behaviour Complaints investigated. Offaly County Council continues to support the Grove Street Community Development Committee with its endeavours in the enhancement and development of the estate and community house. A public enhancement fund of €10,000 was secured in 2014 and allowed for 12 projects to undertake various estate enhancement projects.

PLAYGROUNDS / MULTI-USE GAMES AREAS

Over the four year period of the Offaly County Council and Offaly Local Development Company Joint Playground Policy, seventeen facilities were developed at various locations across the county based on a partnership approach combining local community planning and financial input, funding and support from Offaly Local Development Company and provision of either funding, land and insurance cover from Offaly County Council.

In 2014, a Community Playground was completed in Daingean and a Multi-Use Games Area was directly provided by the Council in Moneygall under a Capital Grant allocated under the SportNation Initiative by the Minister for the Transport, Tourism and Sport and IPB Insurance for €60,000.



*MUGA at Elderberry Drive Moneygall completed November 2014.
To be managed by Moneygall Development Association under
a Management and Maintenance Agreement with OCC.*



HOUSING, SOCIAL & CULTURAL S.P.C.

The SPC met 2 times and the following issues were agreed and recommended to Council for adoption:

SPC Policies, Programmes and Initiatives adopted

- Draft Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014 – 2018
- Draft Housing Maintenance Policy 2015- 2019
- Draft Halting Site Management Plan 2015 - 2019
- Housing Loan Arrears Policy 2012 – Amendment
- Draft Deposit Repayment Scheme 2014
- Draft Caravan Retention Scheme 2014
- Housing Data Protection Policy

Other Items considered and discussed by SPC

- Tullamore Arts Centre
- Music Generation Project
- Film Offaly Update

LIBRARY SERVICE

INTRODUCTION

Throughout 2014 the Library service continued to work within the local framework set out in the **Library Development Plan 2010-2014: Planning for the future –connecting with the community** and the new **National Strategy for Public Libraries 2013-2017: Opportunities for all**.

A new **5 year Library Development Plan** will be prepared during 2015.

Progress on the implementation of “**Opportunities for all**” a new national strategy for Public Libraries 2013-2017 continued in 2014 with work on the following actions:

- **National Shared Library Management** system for all libraries - Tender process and contract awarded in 2014.
- Review of organisations structures and service delivery – **Managing the Delivery of Effective Library Services** published in September 2014
- Shared Procurement - Four midland counties will tender for books and media for 2015

The moratorium on recruitment has put additional pressures on decreased staffing resources. A continuous

review of library services activities including opening hours, staffing levels and evaluation of services based on budgetary cuts and non filling of staff vacancies is in place. Reduced hours in some libraries during 2014 has resulted in small decreases in visits and loans. Our online presence has improved with increases in number of eBooks and eAudiobooks downloaded from the website.

PERFORMANCE 2014

Description	2013	2014	% increase
Members	14,413	14,330	-0.58%
Visits	267,572	257,441	-3.79%
Issues	300,277	278,397	-7.29%
Website hits	69,991	79,831	12.33%

A new model of public library is emerging in Offaly with libraries becoming centres of learning and culture in local communities. Visitors to libraries require study and research space and there is increased demand for assistance with digital literacy, employment support information and assistance with use of technology to access government services. Staff are working with agencies such as County Childcare committee, Local development Companies, Offaly History and local

community groups. The meeting rooms are in constant demand for technology training, community groups, performances, book clubs, education, lectures, exhibitions and community activities.

OPEN LIBRARY

A pilot initiative – **"Open Library"** funded by Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government was launched in Banagher and Tullamore Library in November 2014. Both Banagher and Tullamore Libraries are now open from 8am – 10pm, 7 days a week to library members on a self service basis outside of current opening hours.

Innovative technology has been installed in both libraries that allows users to access the buildings using their library card and PIN when staff are not present. Users are able to borrow and return items, connect to the Wifi, study, use library computers and printing facilities. This service is available only to members of the library who are over 18.

At existing opening times, library staff will continue to provide expert and additional services including Local Studies and Archives, ICT training and information services, support users and develop community engagement and programming.

Open Libraries has the potential to transform the use and value to the public of the services and the civic space provided by local libraries.

LIBRARY INITIATIVES IN 2014

- **Tullamore Central Library** continues to be the busiest library with almost 7000 members renewing their membership and average visits of 500-700 per day. A temporary reduction in opening hours from 48 hours to 42 hours was necessary in 2014 due to staffing constraints.
- The **refurbishment of Banagher Library** was completed in June 2014 and now provides enhanced services including self service borrowing, wifi and enhanced print services.
- **Library staff across the library service had a lead role in promoting the "Leap into Reading"**



Leap into Reading @ Offaly Libraries

programme “– a joint reading initiative for parents and young children to improve literacy levels in Offaly.

- The **School Reading Challenge**, an initiative to improve literacy in primary schools took place again this year between January and June at the library. 47% of primary schools or 33 primary schools in Offaly took part in the reading challenge and over a 7-week period, 4,788 students read 48,922 books.
- A new literacy challenge will be launched “**Read anytime, anywhere, anyplace, anything**” in January 2015 building on our earlier literacy initiatives.



Tullamore Gaelscoil Musical Recital

Branch libraires participated in many events during 2014 including Hullabloo festival, author visits, family fun days, summer reading challenge and celebrated many national and international days such as Culture night and World Refugee day.

PRIORITIES FOR 2015

1. Implementation of new shared structures and national workforce plan as outlined in ***Managing the Delivery of Effective Library Services*** by June 2015
2. Implementation of national shared **Library Management System** including the migration of data to the new Library Management System during 2015.
3. Monitor and review pilot **Open Library project** funded by DoECLG -Tullamore Central Library and Banagher Library.
4. Inclusion of Edenderry Library in next **Library capital funding programme 2014-2016**.
5. Continue to focus on **literacy, lifelong learning** and return to learning including online learning.
6. Improve the availability of **digital resources, quality book and media** materials to library users.
7. Promote and improve services to children and young people supporting parents, teachers and carers in literacy, numeracy and communications skills.

8. Implement **Age Friendly policies** for the provision of services to older people
9. Progress **linkages and collaborative approaches** to supporting economic initiatives, employment, business and job creation.
10. Develop partnerships with other organisations providing **local history and archives** to ensure coordinated and enhanced access to collections of local history and archives for end users.
11. Work with communities to provide quality **cultural programming**.
12. Continuous review of library services activities to include opening hours, staffing levels and evaluation of services based on budgetary cuts and non filling of staff vacancies.



Polar Express at Tullamore Library



Author Donal Ryan at Birr Library

ARTS SERVICE

Our Arts Service aims to demonstrate the multiple **cultural, social, educational and economic benefits** of increased access to and involvement in the arts for all our citizens. This is achieved by planning a strategic infrastructure and programme in partnership with the community, local and national organisation. The Arts Service drives a number of significant projects such as **Tullamore Community Arts Centre, FilmOffaly, Music Generation, Culture Night** and **Hullabaloo Children's Arts Festival** alongside its ongoing support and advice to the many artists, festivals, arts organisations and community projects across the county.

MUSIC GENERATION OFFALY / WESTMEATH

In 2014, we began implementing Year 2 of a new regional music education programme following the announcements of a successful bid worth €558,000 over the first three years of the programme.

Key achievements in 2014 were:

4,000 young people across Offaly and Westmeath are now receiving music education under Music Generation.

A capital application to Westmeath Community Development saw a grant of €48,076 for a new instrument bank for Westmeath students.

25 musicians are now employed by Music Generation locally delivering 140 hours of tuition weekly.



St. Josephs NS, Arden View, perform in Aras an Chontae

Students in the programme performed in the Mansion House, the Electric Picnic and the National Concert Hall.

In September a new instrument programme was rolled out in 8 schools and in association with schools completions projects regionally.

The primary choral programme extended into 2 secondary schools (Clara, Kilcormac) and developed into more public performances including Culture Night, end of year and Christmas concerts

PUBLIC ART – PER CENT FOR ART SCHEME

The Secrets of Offaly saw the villages of Clonbullogue, Kinnitty and Clara chosen to highlight family stories/legacies from areas, which are the Joly Family



(science and literature), Rex Ingram Hitchcock (a Hollywood director from Kinnitty) and the Goodbody family of industry from Clara. These projects will be completed in 2015.

Observing Offaly – photo book

Photographer Jackie Nickerson has been commissioned to photo document Offaly during 2015. Jackie is an internationally recognised photographer, recently commissioned by Time Magazine to photograph their person of the year.

A sculpture entitled **Paper Boats**, assumed missing for many years from Clara was found during 2014. Originally commissioned by Offaly County Council in 2000 they were rescued from being dredged from the River Brosna in 2002 and stored in the Clara Depot. They were restored and relocated to Lough Boora Discovery Park in December.

ENGAGE WITH ARCHITECTURE

In 2014 the Arts Office was invited to present on Offaly County Council's Engage with Architecture Programme 2011 -2013 at a UK local authority conference in Cardiff Millennium Centre, as an example of best practice collaborative programming between Arts, Heritage and Architecture.



FilmOffaly Board members

FILMOFFALY

2014 saw more film activity come into Offaly and an endorsement by Brendan Gleeson, who recorded a piece to camera about his experience working here in 2010. Two short films were funded through the FilmOffaly Award, *The Debt* by Helen Flanagan and *Strangers in the Night* by Gavin Keane. FilmOffaly's industry event at the OFFline Film Festival was very successful, with an industry audience of almost 80-100 filmmakers.

MINI MOVIES

In association with the OFFline Film Festival the Arts Office created a filmmaking programme for 3 schools (St.



Cllr. John Leahy at the premier of Mini Movies

Brendan's Boys School Birr, St. Brendan's Community School and Mercy Primary School, Birr) working with Paper Panther Productions. Almost 100 children all

attended their own animations premier at the festival.

BIRR THEATRE AND ARTS CENTRE

Birr Theatre & Arts Centre provides a valuable Arts resource to Birr and Offaly. In 2014 the Arts Service partnered with Birr Theatre on several community arts projects, in particularly **Hullabaloo Children's Arts Festival**. The Council also provided €20,000.00 of funding to Birr Theatre in 2014.

CULTURE NIGHT

From jazz in a castle to choirs on the street, Culture Night in Offaly treated the public to 25 free events as part of the national programme. Over 1,500 people attended

events right across the county making it one of the most anticipated cultural events of the year, which is part funded by the Dept of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.



Cathaoirleach Sinead Dooley at the launch of Culture Night 2014

OFFALY YOUTH THEATRE

Offaly Youth Theatre continued in Birr, Tullamore and Edenderry. There are currently 36 young people learning skills for stage and screen. The Theatre's annual showcase, in April, took place in Birr Theatre to a packed house of family and friends.



OYT Edenderry on stage in Birr Theatre and Arts Centre

ARTS ACT GRANTS

13 community groups received grants towards arts activities in their community totalling €5,000.00. The projects were specifically chosen for their innovativeness and quality arts impact on the community.

FESTIVAL SUPPORT

The Arts Service facilitated with funding, advice and promotional assistance to, Birr Vintage Week and Arts Festival, OFFline Film Festival, Offaly Fleadh, Shakefest and Scripts as well as leading out with other festivals such as Hullabaloo Children's Arts Festival and Foundation 14.



HULLABALOO! OFFALY'S CHILDREN'S ARTS FESTIVAL

In 2014, Hullabaloo continued in Edenderry, Birr and Clara during the October midterm break. The festival attracted over 1,500 young people and their families to workshops and performances. Led by the Arts Office, in partnership with Birr Theatre and Arts Centre, Clara Family Resource Centre and the Library Service over 40 events were organised. A highlight was A Giant Blue Hand by Marina Carr, performed by TADS and Offaly Youth Theatre (pictured)

SUPPORT AND INFORMATION TO PROFESSIONAL & VOLUNTARY GROUPS/INDIVIDUALS

The Arts Office is a resource for artists and organisations that require advice, direction and information on developing and promoting a project or their practice. This element of the service



Foundation 14 Arts Event in Tullamore

is based on best practice principles in all forms of arts development and is intended to give rise to increased confidence in quality methods and professional approaches.

TULLAMORE COMMUNITY ARTS CENTRE

In 2014 the construction tender phase closed, a value engineering exercise was achieved and the project is currently awaiting Dept sign off. FOUNDATION 14 Arts Festival continued as a way of laying the artistic foundations of the centre.

MIDLANDS ARTS AND CULTURE MAGAZINE

There were 2 publications of the Midlands Arts and Culture Magazine. This free, 32 page magazine,

highlights the diversity and quality of arts projects across the four counties and aims to create a greater national cultural identity of the Midlands.

CHRISTMAS IN TULLAMORE

The Arts Office facilitated the making of Santa's Giant Post Box for the Christmas in Tullamore programme as well as working with the Local Economic Office on the expansion of the Made in Offaly Pop-up Shop



ARAS EXHIBITION PROGRAMME

Aras an Chontae atrium is a space always in demand for exhibitions. In 2014 we hosted exhibitions by the following artists and organisations. We also hosted children's workshops and music performances throughout the year.

- Aileen Kavanagh - artist
- Catherine Brereton - artist

- By Degrees - group show
- Tracy McEvoy - artist
- Clara Youth Reach – arts in education
- Siobhan McCormack - artist
- Anam Beo – arts in health
- Fergal McCabe – architect
- Michael Bulfin – artist



Anam Beo – schools postcard project



John Lonergan, speaking at opening the Clara Youthreach exhibition in Aras an Chontae

ENVIRONMENT & WATER SERVICES

SPC Chair	Thomas McKeigue MCC	Director Of Services	Seán Murray
<i>Members</i>	<i>Sectoral</i>	<i>Senior Engineer</i>	Tom Shanahan
Cllr. John Clendennen	Mr. Joseph Deverall	<i>Administrative Officer</i>	Brian Pey
Cllr. John Foley	Mr. Tony McCormack	<i>Senior Executive Engineer</i>	John Connolly
Cllr. John Leahy	Ms. Lynne Gallagher	<i>A/Senior Executive Engineer</i>	Jean Ryan
Cllr. Carol Nolan	Mr. Niall Mulligan	<i>A/Senior Executive Engineer</i>	Vivian O'Brien

WATER SERVICES

IRISH WATER SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT (SLA)

The Council is delivering Water Services in accordance with the SLA with Irish Water and the Annual Service Plan and budget for 2015 has been agreed.

Work is currently underway to design a Water Industry Operating Framework for Local Authorities and Irish Water working in collaboration. The Water Industry Operating Framework (WIOF) will put in place an industry structure to operate efficiently, effectively, responsively and cohesively under the SLA agreement.

Water services are 100% funded by Irish Water who are now the Statutory Authority for water services and all major decisions around funding of services will be approved by Irish Water. The Local Authority, under an

excluded provision in the Act, remain the Water Services Authority in connection with Group Schemes and domestic wastewater treatment systems (septic tanks).

The delivery of Water Services under the SLA, although challenging, is an opportunity to retain a level of water services activity within Local Government and to influence water services investment and policy in the future.

DRINKING WATER SUPPLY

The most recent EPA Drinking Water Report (2012) shows that Offaly had a 100% microbiological compliance rate in 2012 and this is likely to be achieved for 2014 also. Offaly is one of only 12 Local Authorities that does not have a Water Supply scheme on the EPA Remedial Action list.

Countywide Unaccounted for Water (UFW) averaged

46.5% for 2014, 45.5% for 2013 and 47.40% for 2012. The completion of watermain rehabilitation contracts will further reduce UFW in 2015 and the introduction of Domestic charging will assist in this regard.



Refurbishment works at Edenderry Wastewater Treatment Works

WASTEWATER

Three wastewater discharge licences were issued by the EPA during 2014, bringing the number of licences in Offaly to eleven. Meeting the stringent limit values on these licences is challenging for us but considerable progress was made in 2014.

New wastewater treatment systems were installed in Belmont, Ballycumber and Shannonbridge in 2013 and these plants were commissioned in 2014. Accordingly, full secondary treatment is now provided in all public sewerage schemes in Offaly with a significant improvement in quality standards compliance. The remaining three discharges to be licensed are Clara, Ferbane and Banagher. These licenses are expected to be issued early in 2015.

WATER SERVICES CAPITAL SCHEMES

The Irish Water Capital Investment Plan 2014 – 2016 identifies new Capital project priorities in Offaly. It is envisaged that greater emphasis will be placed on completing low cost small scale projects that will expedite improvements to schemes. This approach will be beneficial to our county given the large number of small schemes.

There are currently four Water Conservation Watermains Rehabilitation Projects in Offaly. Contract 4, Tullamore was completed in 2014, and Contract 1, Tullamore is in progress and will be complete in 2015. Contract 3, Birr was nearing completion by December 2014. A further watermain rehabilitation contract in Edenderry and Kilcormac will be further developed in 2015.

The following Schemes are on the Capital Investment Plan 2014 – 2016 or Minor Works Programme

Scheme Name	Contract Name	Current Status
Watermain Rehabilitation		
Offaly Water Conservation Stage 3 Watermain Rehabilitation Project Phase 1	Contract 1 Tullamore North & South	Contract 1 ongoing; completion date May 2015
	Contract 2 Birr	Contract 2 complete December 2014
	Contract 3 Edenderry	Contract 3 CDs complete; tender 2015
	Contract 4 Tullamore Area 1-3	Contract 4 complete; final account ongoing
Capital Investment Plan 2014 – 2016		
Tullamore Water Supply Scheme Phase	Water Treatment Plant Upgrade (Clonaslee)	Drilling Contract complete
Tullamore Water	Contract 3 Development of Sources	Asset Needs Brief submitted to progress development of Boreholes

Supply Scheme Phase (cont./..)	Contract 2 (Network)	Watermain Rehabilitation contracts ongoing. Minor upgrade works identified and submitted as ANB
Birr Water Supply Scheme	Water Treatment Plant Upgrade	Consulting Engineer appointed by IW.
Edenderry Sewerage Scheme	Contract 1 (Network)	OCC to submit ANB to address deficiencies in the networks and PS that require urgent upgrade works
	Contract 2 (Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade)	ANB for Storm tank
Tullamore Sewerage Scheme (Network)	Contract 2 Network & Pumping Stations	Review of Network and CSOs to identify upgrade works.
Minor Programmes		
Birr Sewerage Scheme	Asset Needs Brief	OCC to prepare and submit ANB to address deficiencies in the network in particular CSOs and the Storm tank at the WWTP

Small countywide Wastewater Treatment Plants	Asset Needs Brief	OCC to prepare and submit ANB to address CSOs in smaller schemes throughout the county
Edenderry Water Supply Scheme	Asset Needs Brief	OCC to prepare and submit ANB to review EWSS. Economic factors may put pressure on EWSS to meet new development demands

Watermain rehabilitation works under Stage 3 of the National Water Conservation Programme provide immediate return in terms of reduced water production and network repair costs.

In 2015, we will continue to engage with IW on prioritising infra-structure improvements in Offaly.



Watermain Rehabilitation Contract 1 Tullamore: New 160mm pipe on Convent Road

RURAL WATER PROGRAMME

The Capital Allocation to Offaly Group Water Schemes (GWS) for 2014 is outlined below:

Funding Allocation - Offaly Rural Water Programme 2014	
Category	€
GWS Network Upgrades/ Water Conservation	350,000
Takeover of Group Water Schemes	60,000
New Group Sewerage Schemes	193,750
Total	603,750

The Council processed approximately €552k in subsidies to Group Water Schemes in 2014 and over €9K was paid in Well Grants in 2014.

NWCPO receiving ISO 9001 certification from NSAI

ENVIRONMENT

NATIONAL WASTE COLLECTION PERMIT OFFICE (NWCPO)

On the 1st February, 2012 Offaly County Council was designated as the National Waste Collection Permit Office and has since made significant progress in establishing and developing its operations. Funding for the NWCPO comes from a levy of €4,000 on each local authority and by application fees from waste collection permit holders. The Office remains cost neutral in 2014.

The office received certification for the ISO 9001 standard in November 2014 and all applications received by the office are processed in accordance with this standard. New Waste Permit regulations are due to come into effect from July 2015 which will impact on the operations of the office.



WASTE MANAGEMENT

DERRYCLURE LANDFILL

The Council continues to operate a waste acceptance facility at the site, where waste from domestic customers and local businesses is accepted and transported off site for reprocessing. The aftercare costs of the landfill continue to be a financial burden on the Council.

RECYCLING FACILITIES

There are currently 43 bring banks in the County for glass, aluminium & steel cans recycling on both private and public sites. We are continuing to expand our textile bank infrastructure in order to provide additional services to the people of our county.

We continue to operate three Civic Amenity Facilities (CAF) in Birr, Derryclure and Edenderry. These accept a wide range of materials for recycling and complement our existing bring bank facilities. Charges apply for all waste brought to these facilities, with the exception of electrical items, glass packaging and batteries.

A Farm Hazardous Waste Collection Day was organised at Tullamore Mart in October 2014. Many farmers availed of the opportunity and 17,000kg of hazardous waste was removed from the environment.

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of the opportunity and 17,000kg of hazardous waste was removed from the environment.

We continue to promote home composting through the sale of composting units as well as supporting local Tidy Towns and community initiatives through local grant aid. Food Waste Regulations came into force in the Tullamore area during 2014. A newspaper and radio information campaign was organised and an information morning was held in the Bridge Centre.



Farmers queue up to dispose of hazardous waste at Tullamore

WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Waste Management Planning regional structure was changed to three regions in line with the 2012 Government Policy document "A Resource Opportunity-Waste Management Policy in Ireland". Offaly is in the Eastern/Midlands Region, as defined under "Putting People First". The lead Authority is Dublin City Council.

A draft Waste Management Plan for the region is currently open for public consultation. This Plan is expected to be published by summer 2015.

WASTE ENFORCEMENT

We continue to investigate all illegal waste activities and instigate legal proceedings as appropriate with a significant number of successful prosecutions. We inspected and audited the operations of Waste Collector Permit holders and Waste Facility Permit Holders in the functional area including vehicles and premises.

AWARENESS PROGRAMME

We continue to actively promote environmental awareness both in the community sector and schools. Over 90% of schools in Offaly have registered for the green schools programme. Currently we have 79 schools registered for the Green Flag programme and 66 of these have received their Flag.

We are supporting communities in their efforts to introduce community composting units, anti-graffiti and

hedge-planting initiatives and the Midlands Gateway initiative. We continue to promote and support litter awareness, especially during national spring clean week. We host tidy town seminars to facilitate groups participating in the national tidy towns programme.



Composting display at Áras an Chontae

PROTECTION OF NATURAL WATERS

WATER FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE

Offaly is affiliated to three River Basin Districts (RBDs); namely the Shannon International River Basin District, the Eastern River Basin District and the South Eastern River Basin District. We continue to implement an extensive operational monitoring programme of the rivers and groundwater within the county.

We continued to investigate activities and facilities, such as agriculture, septic tanks and commercial and industrial discharges to surface waters, within the catchment area of designated rivers with less than good status. We also continue to identify and implement remediation measures

On 21 October 2014 a Ministerial Order was signed which provides for the dissolution of the Barrow Joint Drainage Committee and transfer of its functions to Laois, Offaly and Kildare County Councils with effect from 1st January 2015.

PROTECTION OF GROUNDWATER

Staff from the Environment Section implements the revised Code of Practice for the assessment of onsite waste water treatment systems for single houses (new developments).

We carried out investigations of Zone of Contributions of

Public Water Supply boreholes and prepared Aquifer Protection Plans; based on the perceived risk from agricultural, domestic, commercial and industrial activities to the groundwater quality.

DOMESTIC WASTEWATER TREATMENT

We have implemented a domestic wastewater treatment system inspection programme in 2014, in accordance with EPA requirements. A total of 23 systems were inspected. Grants, subject to certain criteria, are available to households to carry out remedial works recommended following inspections.

CATCHMENT FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT STUDIES (CFRAM)

Work by the OPW is continuing nationally on the CFRAM studies and there is a high degree of consultation with Local Authorities. Offaly is affiliated to three CFRAM's; namely the Shannon, Eastern and South Eastern. In 2014 Public Consultation days were held for the Rahan, Birr, Clara and Pollagh Areas of Further Assessment (AFA).

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY AWARENESS

Climate Change & Energy awareness continue to be key area where we are required to show leadership in both promoting public awareness and in changing mind sets towards energy management.

BURIAL GROUNDS

The Council's Burial Ground policy now offers the opportunity for greater involvement by local community groups who wish to maintain council cemeteries by agreement with the Council. Dungar and Portarlinton Joint Burial Boards were dissolved on 1st June 2014 and all of their assets and liabilities were transferred to Offaly County Council.

ANIMAL CONTROL AND WELFARE

STRAY ANIMAL CONTROL SERVICE

Our Veterinary section manages its Dog Control service in co-operation with the ISPCA and in accordance with the Control of Dogs Act, 1986. In line with procurement requirements the Control of Dogs and Dog Warden service was tendered in October 2014.

CONTROL OF HORSES

Under the Control of Horses Act 1996, all local authorities are responsible for the control of horses in their area including the collection of stray horses on public land. New Control of Horses Bye Laws for Offaly were published in February 2014.

FOOD SAFETY

Our Veterinary Department is responsible for carrying out functions in relation to Food Protection and Disease Control. It implements the terms and conditions of a Service Contract between the Food Safety Authority of

Ireland (FSAI) and Offaly County Council in relation to the slaughter of food animals and imposes statutory controls on the production of meat, meat products and poultry.

PLANNING, ECONOMIC & LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

SPC Chair	Eamonn Dooley MCC	Director Of Services	Declan Kirrane
<i>Members</i>	<i>Sectoral</i>	<i>Senior Planner</i>	Andrew Murray
Cllr. Noel Bourke	Ms. Gillian Barrett	<i>Senior Executive Planner</i>	Lorraine Mitchell
Cllr. John Carroll	Mr. Dominic Doheny	<i>Administrative Officer</i>	Caroline Dempsey
Cllr. Sinead Dooley	Ms. Lynne Gallagher	<i>Senior Executive Architect</i>	Rachel McKenna
Cllr. Eddie Fitzpatrick	Mr. Michael Guinan	<i>Heritage Officer</i>	Amanda Pedlow
Cllr. Frank Moran		<i>Senior Executive Officer</i>	Martin Daly , Local and Community Development
Cllr. Martin O'Reilly		<i>Head of Local Enterprise Office</i>	Orla Martin
		<i>Administrative Officer</i>	James Hogan , Economic Development
		<i>Administrative Officer</i>	Catriona Hilliard , Local and Community Development
		<i>Sports Partnership Co-ordinator</i>	Eamon Henry

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Land use policy is implemented by means of the County Development Plan (incl. Town Development Plans), Local Area Plans, Village and Sráid Plans. Planning Control involves the processing of planning applications and the taking of appropriate enforcement action where necessary.

OFFALY COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2014-2020

The Offaly County Development Plan 2014-2020 was adopted by Members on 15th September 2014 and came into effect on 13th October 2014. The Plan runs to

October 2020.

The plan comprises the following:

- Volume 1: Written Statement.
- Volume 2: Settlement Plans.
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.
- Record of Protected Structures (proposed additions).
- Wind Energy Strategy.
- Environmental Report.
- Natura Impact Report.

DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTION SCHEME 2014-2020

A new Development Contribution Scheme was adopted in February 2014 (effective 1st March 2014) with significant revisions to reflect the current economic climate and to comply with revised Government Guidelines.

AMALGAMATION OF PLANNING AUTHORITIES

On 1st June 2014, the planning functions of Offaly County Council, Tullamore Town Council and Birr Town Council were fully amalgamated, following the abolition of the Town Councils. Offaly County Council now administers the fully centralised system in Tullamore.

In accordance with the provisions of the Electoral, Local Government and Planning and Development Act 2013, Offaly Local Authorities (Offaly County Council, Birr Town Council and Tullamore Town Council), decided not to review the Birr Town and Environs Plan 2010-2016 and the Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016 in accordance with Section 11(a)(2)(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.

The life of both plans will now extend to the same period as provided by the Offaly County Development Plan and will be read in conjunction with it.

LIAISON WITH LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE

The Planning Section assists the Local Enterprise Office (LEO) which was set up within the County Council in

2014. Such assistance includes pre-planning advice and meetings for new clients or expanding businesses and also includes inputting into the profile of all businesses in Offaly which is being compiled by the LEO.

OFFALY GREENWAYS STRATEGY

In August 2014, the Planning Department began preparation of a draft Offaly Greenways Strategy. The strategy is designed to identify the development of appropriate walking and cycle trails in suitable locations across the County, in a partnership approach with key stakeholders, where appropriate. Public information evenings will be held in January 2015 with the intention of bringing the strategy before the full Council in February 2015. Forward Planning has worked closely with the Roads Department on detailed examination of the initial routes with a view to progressing some of the projects to Part 8 in the first quarter of 2015. Screening of the Strategy for Strategic Environmental Assessment, Appropriate Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment is shortly commencing.

STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETINGS:

During 2014, two meetings of the committee were held and the Committee considered the following matters:

- Review of County Development Plan 2009-2015
- Review of the Development Contribution Scheme
- Update on the 2013 Peatlands Survey
- Draft National Peatlands Strategy
- Updates on Planning & Development Legislation, most notably in relation to the startup of Irish Water and also in relation to the Draft Wind Energy Guidelines
- Consideration of initiatives to promote and support Economic Development and Tourism in the County such as strategic links, promotion / marketing.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

The following table sets out the trend in the number of planning applications received and decided by the Council over the past number of years:

Planning Applications

Year	No of Applications	No. Granted	No. Refused	Total Decided
2010	449*	332	54	386
2011	347*	293	27	320
2012	313*	238	14	252
2013	261*	191	15	206
2014	310*	272	12	284

(*This figure includes applications which were invalid)

Extensions of Appropriate Period:

Year	No of Applications	No. Granted	No. Refused	Total Decided
2012	75	45	17	62
2013	52	48	6	54
2014	42	38	6	44

Planning permission is required for any development of land or property unless the development is exempted development. Development management ensures that these developments comply with the statutory provisions in the County Development Plan, the Planning Acts and the Regulations. All applications must be screened under Environmental Impact Assessment and Appropriate Assessment, along with compliance with the Midland Regional Planning Guidelines.

The early stage recovery in the country's economic activity, has been reflected in a slight increase in the number of planning applications received in 2014. 310 planning applications were received in 2014 which compares with 261 for 2013.

The Planning Department, during 2014, continued to focus on other areas of activity, such as the taking in charge of housing estates, the resolving of unfinished housing developments and a more consistent and concerted effort in relation to enforcement, preplanning consultation meetings for economic development and compliance issues. There were 226 pre-planning meetings held in 2014.

An application under the Strategic Infrastructure Act (Yellow River Windfarm) was received on 3rd December 2013. The Planning section prepared a detailed report (Managers Report) which was discussed at the February meeting. Members attached their recommendations to the managers report. Detailed further information was received from the developers in April 2014. A further managers report issued thereafter. Permission for 29 turbines was granted by An Bord Pleanala on 3rd June 2014. The Board's decision was subsequently the subject of a Judicial review which is due for hearing in Feb. 2015.

QUARRIES ASSESSMENT:

Under Section 261A, 153 potential quarries have been

assessed within the County, 28 quarries received a determination under sub-section 2(a), i.e. that an EIA or AA was required but not prepared. Quarry owners/operators were notified of the outcome and were afforded an opportunity to seek a review of this determination and the subsequent decision of the Planning Authority. The remaining 125 have also been assessed in terms of their planning status, enforcement action has commenced in many of these cases. Quarries in Offaly have been subdivided into the following categories.

Table 1

QUARRY CATEGORY	Status
With Planning Permission	15 (2)
Pre-1964 under S261 conditions	9
Substitute Consent Application- Lodged- Pending	2+1
Unauthorised Quarry under Enforcement action.	15
Ceased through recent Enforcement	17
Abandoned	56
Reinstated	28
Never a quarry	10
Total	153

Of the 28 quarries which received a determination, 13

applied to An Bord Pleanala for a review of this decision, An Bord Pleanala upheld the decision of the County Council in 92% of these cases see details in Table 2.

Table 2

Outcome of Section S261A decisions reviewed by An Bord Pleanala				
	Number reviewed	ABP Confirm decision	ABP overturn decision	ABP decision pending
Section 261 Decision	13	12	1	0

Sixteen quarries were invited to apply for Substitute Consent, two applications have been lodged with a third one pending, the remaining quarries were served with Section 154 enforcement notices, details as illustrated in Table 3 below.

Table 3

16 Quarries which were invited by ABP to apply for Substitute Consent.					
	Invited to apply for SC	SC applied for	SC Pending	S154 Enforcement	Quarry Abandoned
Section 261 Decision	16	2	1	12	1

2013 DoECLG PEATLAND’S SURVEY & PETITION 755/2010 TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

The Planning Section continued to engage with the DoECLG during 2014 in relation to the implications of Petition 755/2010 to the European Parliament. The petition relates to the alleged extraction of peat by industrial undertakers without Environmental Impact Assessment. As a result of this engagement, it is expected that the DoECLG will be issuing legislative amendments / new regulatory requirements for industrial peat extraction. In addition to Bord na Mona extraction sites, the DoECLG identified 32 potential industrial scale extraction sites in Co. Offaly in 2013 and therefore the impact of such amended legislation will be particularly relevant to the county.

DERELICT SITES

There are 23 sites on the Derelict Sites Register at the end of 2014 – 15 within the Tullamore Municipal District Area and a further 8 at various sites around the county. In line with Council policy and objectives in relation to dereliction, Planning will continue to focus on site inspections of these sites with a view to engaging with the owners in order to have the necessary works carried out. It is also a focus of the Planning section to identify any sites which may be suitable for the provision of social housing.

BUILT HERITAGE JOBS LEVERAGE SCHEME

The Structures at Risk Fund was replaced by the Built Heritage Jobs Leverage Scheme in 2014, to assist owners of Protected Structures. There were 46 applicants under this scheme, with a total of 22 completed projects. The overall cost of the completed projects came to €432,921, with grant aid from the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht totalling €170,610. Monthly reports were compiled during 2014.

UNFINISHED HOUSING ESTATES

There are currently 15 estates in County Offaly named on the most recent DoECLG Unfinished Housing Development list, published in December 2014. This figure represents the significant amount of work which has been done in this area and which as a result has

seen a year on year annual reduction in the number of estates on the list. Offaly County Council applied in 2014 for Special Resolution Funding for 4 developments on the list and were successful in 2 cases. Progress is being made on a number of listed developments with the expectation of a number of estates being finished out in 2015. The recent up-turn in the economic situation is aiding in this respect.

SCANNING PROJECT

During 2014, the scanning project continued, whereby planning applications can be viewed on-line. This allows members of the public to view planning applications at a time and place of their choosing rather than being restricted to office hours.

All current applications are scanned and made available for viewing on a daily basis, and to date, previous years planning applications from 2009 to 2014 have been scanned and are now available for viewing on the website.

GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION SYSTEM

The planning section was involved in the first stage of converting our planning GIS data from MapInfo to Arc Map. This new GIS software enables the creation of Online Interactive webmaps for both internal and public use. ArcMap software, in conjunction with the Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) will replace both the PlanReg and Gplan GIS systems

currently used in Offaly.

During late 2014, the Planning section in conjunction with the Community and Local Development Section, employed a GIS Intern under the 'JobBridge Scheme'. The GIS Intern, under the guidance of the Planning section and in conjunction with both the Local Enterprise Office and the Community & Local Development Section, was involved in producing both paper and interactive maps for the Local Economic and Community Plan.

COMPLIANCE / ENFORCEMENT

Warning Letters	180
Enforcement Notices:	45
District/Circuit Court Cases:	0
Prosecutions Initiated:	0

During 2014, 52 enforcement files were opened. 180 warning letters and 45 enforcement notices were issued. Regular meetings are held with the Council's legal advisers to ensure that all cases which proceed to the courts are pursued in a timely manner. The recovery of costs where the Council is successful in prosecution continues to be difficult.

DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTION SCHEME

Details of amounts received and disbursed as circulated to members, with the Budget as follows:

Development Contributions - Receipts and Application of Development Funds for the period from Nov 2013 – Oct 2014.	
<i>Receipts</i>	€000's
Balance Available – November 2013	3,668
<i>Contributions Received Nov 2013 to Oct 2014 (as follows):</i>	
Development Contributions – Customers	697
Disbursements Dec 2013– Oct 2014 (see below)	127
Balance Available at October 2014	4,238

Allocation of Funds – since last report to Council, November 2013	€000's
Amenities – 2014 Moneygall Community Playground	3
Amenities – 2014 Public Area Enhancement Scheme	30
Infrastructure – DCS Surface Water Drainage Walsh Island	74
Infrastructure – DCS Pedestrian Crossing Daingean	20
Total	127

**OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS AVAILABLE FOR DISBURSEMENT
AS AT NOVEMBER 2014:**

<i>Job Description</i>	<i>Funds Available €000's</i>
Dev. Cont. Scheme – Amenities	428
Dev. Cont. Scheme – Infrastructure	2,210
Spl. Dev. Cont. Scheme 2004 Car Parking	611
Spl. Dev. Cont. – Windfarms	267
Spl. Dev. Cont. – Scheme Clara Quarry	4
Spl. Dev. Cont. – Road Imp & Main Drumcraw	31
Spl. Dev. Cont. Scheme Communication Masts	551
Spl. Dev. Cont. – Rd Imp Tullaroe Clareen	8
Spl. Dev. Cont. – Recycling Facility at Barnan	15
Spl. Dev. Cont. – Rest Road Down Park Daingean	4
Spl. Dev. Cont. – Rd Improvement to N80 Clara	37
Spl. Dev. Cont. – Ballykilleen Edenderry	4
Spl. Dev. Levy Kilmurray Precast Concrete	60
Spl. Dev. Cont. – Rest Roadway Springfield	8
TOTAL	4,238

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

BACKGROUND TO THE LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE

The Local Enterprise Office is based in Offaly County Council, Áras an Chontae, Charleville Road, Tullamore. The team comprises Orla Martin, Head of Enterprise, James Hogan, Senior Enterprise Development Officer; Geraldine Beirne, Business Advisor; Edel Boyd, Assistant Business Advisor; and Sinead Shaw Administrator.

The Local Enterprise Office (LEO) provides a wide range of services to the enterprise sector in Offaly. These include direct grant assistance to eligible micro-enterprises, subsidised business training, mentoring, free events and seminars, and a range of online supports. The LEO assists clusters of business, e.g. food, craft, manufacturing and works with groups to promote enterprise and industrial parks. The Local Enterprise Office also has a strong remit to promote an Enterprise Culture, and it does this with a number of programmes delivered in primary and secondary schools in Offaly.



The Local Enterprise Office (LEO) provides a one stop shop for anyone looking to set up or grow a business. Anyone with a business idea can book a meeting

with one of our Business Advisors, and talk through the

business idea. These meetings are free of charge, and can cover discussions around the commercial viability, business planning, guidance on any required permits/regulations or costs associated with a particular business. The business advisors can provide signposting for further assistance, information on relevant business training courses etc

Existing businesses can also benefit from the Local Enterprise Office. We can assist with site visits, business health checks, mentoring, and in some cases, selective financial intervention (i.e. grants). LEO Offaly has a range of targeted supports to help businesses improve efficiencies. These include: technical software grants, website grants, trade fair supports and assistance with certification such as CE Marking, ISO, etc

The Local Enterprise Office has a calendar of events taking place throughout the year, all designed to assist business owner sustain and grow. In addition, we issue a monthly ezine on upcoming events and relevant supports, and we manage a business owners network, ONE (Offaly Network of Entrepreneurs). This network meets monthly and provides an ideal forum for business owners to meet and learn from each other and from guest speakers.

The main activities of the LEO (in the period April to December 2014) were delivered under two principal headings, as follows:

1. MEASURE 1: SELECTIVE FINANCIAL INTERVENTION

LEO Offaly operated schemes, through priming, business expansion and feasibility grants, aimed at assisting the establishment of small-scale economic projects with the central objective of facilitating the creation and maintenance of sustainable jobs and the development of economic infrastructure at local level.

Eligible sectors consist of manufacturing and internationally traded services, which in time can develop into strong export entities and graduate to the Enterprise Ireland portfolio and tourism projects aimed predominantly at overseas visitors. An eligible enterprise employs between 1 and 10 full-time staff.

2. MEASURE 2: ENTREPRENEURIAL & CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

The LEO provided assistance to qualified business in the area of trade fair participation, new market development attendance, quality assurance certification schemes and website development. The schemes provided matching funds to encourage clients to engage in market development and also embrace new technology and process. A summary of payments and activity during the period is included at Appendix 2.

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

LEO Offaly provided a range of “back up” supports to new and existing businesses in the County. These ‘back up’ supports included business related training programmes, one to one mentoring and a “walk in” Business Advisory service. A schedule of the programmes provided during the period is included at Appendix 3.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP SUPPORT SERVICES

LEO Offaly undertook a number of initiatives to promote entrepreneurship and the development of clusters. These included: Enterprise Awards schemes, Food Academy Programme, sponsorship of Tullamore Show, Made in Offaly Pop Up Shop.

HIGHLIGHTS 14 APRIL 2014 – 31 DECEMBER 2014 2014 OFFALY COUNTY ENTERPRISE AWARDS 2014

Tullamore-based company Future Ticketing Ltd. was announced Overall Winner in the 2014 Offaly County Enterprise Awards. Guest speaker on the night was Explorer and Entrepreneur Mr Pat Falvey. Over 100 people gathered on the night to meet the finalists, hear Pat Falvey and to congratulate winners of the County Enterprise Awards and Irish Best Young Entrepreneur (IBYE) competition. Future Ticketing Ltd provide event ticketing and associated services to hotels, festivals, conferences and car parking. This company are based in “The Junction” – Innovation Centre in Axis Business Park.

There were fifteen finalists for this competition. The overall winner was presented with an engraved glass trophy, a perpetual trophy and a cheque for €1,500. There were also cash prizes for the Silver and Bronze Business Awards, Innovation Award, Best Marketing Award, Best Artisan Food Award. The prize fund awarded on the night amounted to €4,750.

Award Winners:

- **INNOVATION AWARD:** Polar Ice Ltd.
- **BEST MARKETING AWARD:** Dezynamite
- **BEST ARTISAN FOOD AWARD:** Clanwood Organic Farm
- **BRONZE AWARD:** Premier Business Media Ltd
- **SILVER AWARD:** Applied Concepts Ltd.
- **GOLD AWARD:** Future Ticketing Ltd.

BEST YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR

Emma Rose Conroy was named as Offaly's Best Young Entrepreneur and has won an investment of €20,000, as part of the €2million Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur Competition. Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur is an integral part of the Action Plan for Jobs 2014 and is supported by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation through the Local Enterprise Office. There were nine finalists for Offaly's Best Young Entrepreneur.

The winners and investments won were as follows:

BEST NEW IDEA: Jack Dooley representing "Greener Globe" €10,000. Greener Globe is owned by four 5th year students from Tullamore College. They have created two water conservation devices: a water saving showerhead, and a leak Detection System.

BEST BUSINESS START UP: Emma Rose Conroy, "Eurostallions" €20,000. Trading since March 2014, Euro Stallions, is Ireland's first and only fully dedicated stallion semen agency and Ireland's first EU Approved Semen Storage Centre. Euro Stallions specialises in providing sport horse breeders ease of access to the world's top sport horse stallions.

Best Established business with new Add on Service: Mark Clendennen, "Applied Concepts Ltd." €20,000. Founded in 2010, Applied Concepts Ltd specialises in the design and manufacturing of abrasive blasters, and in the supply of abrasive blast media, blast pot consumables, abrasive blasting safety gear, various blast equipment parts



and accessories

The three businesses went through to regional finals with Emma Rose Conroy proceeding to the national finals where she competed for the award of being named Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur at a ceremony in Dublin.

MADE IN OFFALY POP-UP SHOP

Following on from the success of the pop-up shop in previous years, the LEO supported the temporary craft shop for a fourth year. In 2014 however, the LEO Offaly collabor

ated with the Arts Office to develop a larger Made in Offaly



Pop Up Shop. This was situated on High Street, Tullamore and showcased art, film, books, poetry, craft and food made by 46 Offaly artists and craft makers.

Customers were able to see first-hand the quality and diversity of local art and craft and have an opportunity to buy locally made products. Furthermore, by occupying a vacant retail premises, the pop-up shop gave a much needed boost to the main shopping area in the town and attracted visitors to the town.

TULLAMORE SHOW

15 Offaly Craft and Food makers took stands in the Offaly Food and Craft pavilion at the Tullamore Show. This national agricultural show brings visitors from all around the Country. It provides a valuable opportunity for Offaly businesses to promote their products to a national audience. The LEO provided sponsorship of €10,000 towards associated general and marketing activities.

OUTREACH OFFICE IN BIRR

The LEO continued with its policy of providing an outreach service in the Birr/South Offaly area. Birr Municipal District provided office space and a member of the LEO's Executive was present on Thursday mornings to facilitate client meetings.

OUTREACH OFFICE IN EDENDERRY

The LEO decided to provide an outreach service in the Edenderry/North Offaly area. Edenderry Municipal District provided office space and a member of the LEO's Executive was present on Tuesday mornings to facilitate client meetings.

MENTORING

The LEO continued to develop its panel of experienced business advisors, matching skills to client requirements. The mentor contributes independent observations and advice to aid decision-making. Assignments typically

include general management, financial restructuring, production planning, marketing and strategic planning. All applications for mentor assistance are dealt with on an individual basis and are preceded by a training needs analysis and are confidential.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

In line with Corporate Governance, the LEO was selected for an EU Audit covering both Measure 1 and Measure 2 activities. The audit received a positive outcome.

OFFALY NETWORK OF ENTREPRENEURS (O.N.E.)

The ONE network was co-ordinated by the LEO and designed to help business people promote their company, meet other businesspeople in the same situation and learn from shared experiences through the power of networking. The meetings took place once a month. The Network is free to join and attend and members also benefit from the wide range of speakers who give a one hour presentation at each meeting.



MEASURE 1 FINANCIAL SUPPORTS – ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

LEO Offaly operated schemes, through priming, business expansion and feasibility grants, aimed at assisting the establishment of small-scale economic projects with the

central objective of facilitating the creation and maintenance of sustainable jobs and the development of economic infrastructure at local level.

Eligible sectors consist of manufacturing and internationally traded services, which in time can develop into strong export entities and graduate to the Enterprise Ireland portfolio and tourism projects aimed predominantly at overseas visitors. An eligible enterprise employs between 1 and 10 full-time staff.

The following is a brief outline of the supports available to eligible businesses.

A Priming Grant is a business start-up grant, available to micro enterprises **within the first 18 months of start-up**. The Business Expansion Grant is designed to assist the business in its growth phase **after the initial 18 month start-up period**. Micro enterprises that have availed of a Priming Grant are ineligible to apply for a Business Expansion Grant until 18 months after the final drawdown date of the Priming Grant, except in exceptional circumstances. These grants may be available for sole traders, partnerships, community groups or limited companies that fulfil the following criteria:

- Located within the LEO's geographic area;
- A business which on growth may or may not have the capacity to fit the Enterprise Ireland portfolio;
- A business employing up to 10 employees;

- A Manufacturing or Internationally traded services business;
- A Domestically traded services business with the potential to trade internationally;
- A Domestically traded services business being established by a female returning to the workforce or unemployed persons where the potential for deadweight and displacement does not exist (Priming Grant only). The maximum Priming Grant or Business Expansion Grant payable must not exceed 50% of the investment or €150,000 whichever is the lesser. Grants over €80,000 and up to €150,000 shall be the exception and shall only apply in the case of projects that clearly demonstrate a potential to graduate to Enterprise Ireland and/or to export internationally. In all other cases, the maximum grant shall be 50% of the investment or €80,000 whichever is the lesser. Subject to the 50% limit, a maximum grant of up to €15,000 per full time job created shall apply in respect of any employment support grant aided.

- **Marketing Costs:** brochures, trade fairs, packaging, website design, etc;
- **Consultancy Costs:** design fees, patent costs, and professional services;
- **Business Specific Training:** specialized management training programmes.



Expenditure may be considered under the following headings:

- **Capital items:** e.g. fit out of workspace, machinery, etc;
- **Salary Costs:** for first year of employment;
- **Utility Costs:** installation costs for telephone and broadband;

FEASIBILITY/INNOVATION GRANTS

Feasibility/Innovation Grants are designed to assist the promoter with researching market demand for a product or service and examining its sustainability. This includes assistance with innovation including specific consultancy requirements, private specialists, design, and prototype development. The maximum Feasibility/Innovation Grant payable for the BMW Region must not exceed 60%

of the investment or €20,000 whichever is the lesser.

Expenditure may be considered under the following headings:

- **Innovation Costs:** research costs, prototype development, innovative design
- **Own Labour Research:** to a maximum of €400 per week;
- **Consultancy Costs:** design fees, architect, accountant and legal fees;
- **Miscellaneous Costs:** telephone, mileage, subsistence, air travel etc.

MEASURE 1: SELECTIVE FINANCIAL INTERVENTION – APRIL TO DECEMBER 2014

The LEO received 17 complete applications in the period. Following assessment the LEO approved 9 with approval of cumulative amount of €150,233.



4 applications were refused, 0 deemed ineligible and 4 pending processing at year end. The following tables set out summaries of the outturn:

Approval Total	Feasibility Grants	Priming Grants	Business Expansion Grants
€150,233	€0	€54,275	€95,958

	Received	Approved	Deferred	Refused	Withdrawn	Pending at 31 Dec 2014
Priming	8	4	0	4	0	1
Business Expansion	9	5	0	0	0	3
Feasibility	0	0	0	0	0	
Total	17	9	0	4	0	

Under the BMW Regional Operational Programme, all or part of priming or business expansion grants provided is in refundable form. The policy of refundable aid on grants is a National directive which requires LEOs recoup a portion of the grant to supplement the LEOs' resources to support new and developing business. The LEO complied with its requirement for a minimum of 30% of the total grant approval to be refundable. Schedule of payments during the period to projects is included in Appendix 1.

Grant Payments Priming, Business Expansion and Feasibility

Name and Address	Total Grant Paid €	Refundable Portion of Grant €	Sector
Antonella M. Vaugh, T/a MAGVA Design & Letterhead, Ferbane	4,278.00	0.00	Priming
Automate Warehousing Ltd., Rahan Road, Ferbane	25,000.00	8,750.00	Business Expansion
Brendan Magee, Kilmalady, Clara	918.00	0.00	Feasibility/Innovation
Breweyed Limited, Banagher	4,420.00	0.00	Business Expansion
Clara Fields Limited, Rahan, Clara	19,710.00	9,855.00	Business Expansion
Decontamination Technical Services Limited, Oakfield, Tullamore	7,500.00	6,625.00	Business Expansion
Dressed for the Feis Limited, Cloghan, Birr	7,500.00	2,625.00	Priming
Edcase Limited, Clara Road, Tullamore	6,000.00	2,100.00	Priming
Fixmyi Limited (2) Patrick Street, Tullamore	6,925.00	1,750.00	Business Expansion/Priming
Future Ticketing (2), Ashley Court, Tullamore	19,183.00	6,414.00	Priming/Business Expansion
G & G Panel Services Ltd, Edenderry (2)	2,200.00	769.87	Business Expansion
Gary Hoctor, T/a Hello Camera, Green St. Birr	6,000.00	1,800.00	Business Expansion
Guinan Waste Recovery Ltd. Geashil	11,463.00	4,012.18	Priming
John Mooney Landscaping Ltd, Aharney, Tullamore	2,625.00	786.76	Business Expansion
Midland Truck Mixer Parts Ltd. Croghan, Tullamore	5,000.00	1,750.00	Business Expansion
Paramount Conversions Ltd., Cloncollog, Tullamore	12,000.00	2,100.00	Business Expansion
Pauric Fitzpatrick Manufacturing Ltd., Clonsast	16,170.00	0.00	Feasibility/Innovation
Premier Business Media Ltd, JKL Street Edenderry	12,000.00	4,200.00	Business Expansion
T.D Cellular Limited., Axis Business Park, Clara Road, Tullamore	6,500.00	2,600.00	Business Expansion
The Farm Channel, William Street, Tullamore	8,752.00	2,625.39	Business Expansion
Wilton Accessories Ltd, Ferbane Bus. Park, Ferbane	8,970.00	0.00	Business Expansion
Glanbury AMS Limited, Syngfield, Birr	4,522.00	0.00	Business Expansion
Karl Mulligan, Tullamore	7,317.00	0.00	Priming
Corpway Ltd, Cappincur, Tullamore	45,000.00	0.00	Priming
Eamonn Dunne Plumbing Limited	4,980.00	0.00	Feasibility
Total	€254,933.00	€58,763.20	

*() indicates in receipt of more than 1 grant

Grant Payments Business Development Support Scheme

Total Activity

Grant	Received	Approved	Refused	Decommitted
E-Business	8	6	2	0
Business Development	9	9	0	0
Trade Fair	14	12	1	1

Trade Fair/Market Visit Payments

Name/Address	Grant €	Sector
Breweyed Limited (2) Banagher	900.00	Manufacturing
Absolute Insulation Shannonbridge	866.00	Manufacturing
Decontamination Technical Service Ltd Tullamore	300.00	Service
Paramount Conversions Limited Tullamore	2000.00	Manufacturing
Gary Hcctor, T/a Hello Camera Birr	283.72	Service
Reusable Plastics Limited Birr	1,400.00	
Ciaran Flood, T/a Herbs on Thyme Rathangan	670.00	Service/Manufacturing
Heartworks Tullamore	800.00	Manufacturing
Total	€7,219.72	

E-Business Payments

Name/Address	Grant €	Sector
Applied Concepts Kinnitty, Birr	1,250.00	
Enda Mulhare, T/a Gaelpac Cloghan, Birr	1,293.00	
Graphic Index Ltd Tullamore	1,500.00	Design
Trade Safety Limited Clara	1,175.00	Service
Total	€5,218.00	

Business Development Payments

Name/Address	Grant €	Sector
G & G Panels Edenderry	1,600.00	Service
MAGVA Designs Limited Ferbane	379.37	Design
Adele Kenny Tullamore	810.18	Design
Total	€2,789.55	

Measure 2: Training & Development Participation Summary

Category	Course Name	Attendees
Accounts		
	Small Business Accounts (4 courses)	20
IT		
	Facebook	6
	LinkedIn (1 Courses)	5
Personal Development		
	Mindfulness (1 course)	11
Sales & Marketing		
	Art of Effective Selling (3 courses)	24
	Costing & Pricing (2 courses)	30
	Digital Marketing (1 course)	8
Start your Own Business		
	Start your Own Business (6 courses)	62
Entrepreneurial Development		
	Craft Pop Up Shop	46
	Enterprise Awards	15
	Tullamore Show	15
	Intertrade Business Breakfast	28
	Food Academy (1 course)	6
	IBYE	
Business Advice/Mentoring		
	Mentoring	98
Networks		
	ONE Network Monthly Training Events (7 events) (average)	199
Schools		
	Idea Generation Sessions - Student Enterprise Awards (7 schools)	

LOCAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

2014 saw the enactment of the Local Government Reform Act, 2014 and established a Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) in each County, replacing the previous County Development Boards. The Local and Community Development section has the core function of facilitating the new Offaly Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) in its operation.

OFFALY LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The LCDCs replaced the County Development Boards and while retaining the collaborative nature of County Development Boards, have a number of statutory functions amongst which are:

- Oversight of the publically funded programmes including the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP).
- The preparation and implementation of the community element of the Offaly Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP).
- Improve the co-ordination of public-funded local and community development programmes and reduce duplication.

The LCDC held its first meeting on 22nd April, 2014 and met on five occasions by the end of 2014. The 18 member LCDC has broad representation from public and private interests including business, local development, education, enterprise, agriculture, voluntary and local authority members and includes:

Name	Organisation
Cllr. John Clendennen	Offaly County Council
Cllr. Declan Harvey	Offaly County Council
Cllr. Brendan Killeavy	Offaly County Council
Colette Byrne	Offaly County Council
Orla Martin	Offaly County Council
Joe Cunningham	Laois & Offaly Education & Training Board
Con Feighery	Teagasc
John Amerlynck	Department of Social Protection
Tom Finnerty	St. Carthages AFC
Frances Walsh	Offaly Dyslexia Group
Elizabeth Fleming	Clara Community & Family Resource Centre
Margaret Murphy	Arden View Community & Family Resource Centre
Eimhin Shortt	Grow IT Yourself

Brendan O'Loughlin	Offaly Local Development Company
Dominic Doheny	Construction Industry Federation
John Keena	Offaly Irish Farmers Association
Henry O'Shea	SIPTU
Christina Byrne	Slieve Bloom Rural Development Cooperative

- It is anticipated that the LECP will be finalised by the fourth quarter of 2015.

TOURISM

OFFALY TOURISM FORUM

On the 22nd of October, 2014, a Tourism Forum was organised by Offaly Local Community Development Committee to facilitate high level consultation on the issue of tourism in advance of the preparation of the Local Economic and Community Plan for the county. The Forum

brought together tourism agencies, local government, trade organisations and operators and community

representatives to discuss tourism in Offaly. The main aim of the forum was to explore the current trends in tourism and generate ideas around how Offaly could enhance the visitor experience and find new ways to market and promote tourism in the County.



LOCAL ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY PLAN (LECP)

The LCDC is charged with the development of a forthcoming Local and Economic Community Plan, to run for 6 years from 2015. This section is responsible for the Community element of the plan, and is contributing to the overall coordination with our colleagues in the Local Enterprise Office (responsible for the Economic element of the plan). By end of 2014, the following work has been undertaken:

- A Draft Socio Economic Framework for Offaly has been formulated, overviewing wide research on the county across various demographic and socio economic perspectives.
- Data mapping on a wide range of indices has been compiled by the Planning Department, providing a visual and geographic set of references.
- Research interviews with agencies and sectors are being held to supplement desk and data based research.

As an output from that day, it was agreed to establish a new Tourism Group comprising of key stakeholders with overall responsibility for promoting and marketing tourism in Offaly.

OFFALY TOURISM GROUP

The interim 'Offaly Tourism Group' (OTG) was established in December 2014 under the auspices of Offaly LCDC and its main duties include:

- To develop proposals on 'branding' the County.
- To prepare a Brand Management Strategy for marketing and promoting tourism.
- To develop a sustainable funding model for marketing and promoting tourism.

The interim 'Offaly Tourism Group' (OTG) is as follows:

Name	Organisation
Cllr. Sinead Dooley	Offaly County Council
Colette Byrne	Offaly County Council
Pat Lenaghan	Bridge House Hotel
Louise Lenaghan	Bridge House Hotel
Christina Byrne	Offaly Tourism Network
Barry Loughnane	County Arms Hotel
Kieran Mangan	Castle Barna Golf Club
Christy Maye	Tullamore Show
Caspar MacRae	Tullamore D.E.W. Heritage

	Centre
Cathy Sullivan	Tullamore D.E.W. Heritage Centre
Barbara Smyth	Silverline Cruisers
Paula Moran-Tahraoui	Tullamore & District Chamber of Commerce
Lord Oxmantown	Birr Castle Gardens & Science Centre
Gerry Ryan	Bord na Móna
Tommy McKeigue	Tullamore Tidy Towns

SOCIAL INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY ACTIVATION PROGRAMME (SICAP)

The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) is the successor programme to the Local and Community Development Programme (LCDP) and is a local social inclusion programme focussed on the most marginalised in society. It aims to tackle poverty and social exclusion through local engagement and partnership between disadvantaged individuals, community organisations and public sector agencies. During 2014, Offaly Local Community Development Committee commenced managing Stage Two of the public procurement processes and once completed will have overall responsibility for the oversight and monitoring of the effectiveness and otherwise of the SICAP programme in Offaly.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

In late 2014 the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government advised that Local Action Group (LAG) applicants for LEADER 2014-2020 funding will be drawn from Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs), Local Development Companies (LDCs) and other potential groups that emerge locally. Selection of potential LAGs and Local Development Strategies (LDSs) will be a two stage process. It is the policy of the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government that one LDS should be proposed for each County.

INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

RESETTLEMENT PROJECT

At the end of February 2014, 31 people across 9 family units (all UN Programme Refugees, then living in Syria, but originally mostly from Afghanistan) arrived in Tullamore as part of Ireland's assistance to international resettlement. The Tullamore Resettlement Interagency Working Group (TRIWG) chaired by Offaly County Council - had commenced meeting the previous July. TRIWG members include the Departments of Justice & Social Protection, Tusla – The Child and Family Agency, the Laois/Offaly Education and Training Board, An Garda Síochana, the Offaly Local Development Company, and the Community Welcome Committee

Support was provided to the group and their families by Offaly County Council and HSE staff. There was some months of support and orientation from the agencies and



in particular the local community (co-ordinated by Rev. William Hayes and team

from Tullamore Presbyterian Church), schools and many helpers across various community groups in the town. After some time the new arrivals had successfully started language and lifestyle orientation programmes; developed an art exhibition detailing their experiences which was exhibited in Tullamore Central Library during August 2014; participated in the community showcase event organised by OLDC in Autumn 2014; and produced crafts for the Tullamore pop up shop organised by the Offaly Local Enterprise Office for Christmas 2014.

JIGSAW

Offaly County Council continue to support Jigsaw in partnership with other agencies in its development as a

County wide resource. Jigsaw Offaly has been supported to provide one to one mental health support to 12-25 year olds from Offaly. In 2014 there were 865 calls to the Jigsaw Service with parents presenting over half of all referrals. Staff have supported Jigsaw to engage youth in the service and co-ordinate a Youth Advisory Panel to assist the work of Jigsaw. The youth panel offer ideas and suggestions of how to target young people with information about the Jigsaw service and supports for young people and their families with the overall aim of promoting mental health awareness in the community.

COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK

The Public Participation Network (PPN) is the main vehicle through which the local authority connects with the community, voluntary and environmental sectors. During 2014 Offaly County Council completed a County Register of all community, voluntary, social inclusion and environmental groups who wished to register as members of the PPN. A series of seven briefings were held throughout the County to explain the PPN structure and how to nominate representatives to the PPN and decision making bodies.

The PPN County Register was completed in November 2014 with 220 Offaly groups registered with the Network. From this membership, 12 people representing Community, Social Inclusion and Environmental interests

were elected on to the PPN Secretariat and a range of decision making bodies, including SPC's, the Local Community Development Committee and the Joint Policing Committee for the County were also completed by November 2014. The PPN when fully operational will facilitate input by the public into local government through a structure that ensures public participation and representation on decision-making committees and bodies within local government.

OFFALY SPORTS PARTNERSHIP

Offaly County Council continued to host Offaly Sports Partnership for an eight year. A range of activities targeting people of all ages and all abilities were delivered on. Key highlights of the year 2014 include:

Fitness testing for the establishment of a "fit school monitor": 1,646 primary school pupils were tested as part of this research.

Integration through sport: The Partnership's integration programmes continue to work to bring children of a migrant background into mainstream sports clubs.



Increased adult participation in recreational sport: National statistics shows large increases in adult participation since 2008. This has been mirrored in County Offaly with almost half of all adults now participating in sport or exercise at least twice a year.

COMHAIRLE NA NÓG

Offaly Comhairle na nÓg held their AGM in December 2014. The theme of the AGM was to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of Ireland signing the UN Rights of the Child. This event explored the rights of the child in a fun and



interactive way. The 120 young people present at the AGM then elected new members to the executive committee.

Work on the three projects that commenced in

2014 will continue in 2015, namely: 1) An enterprise promotion video for teenagers encouraging them to consider enterprise as a career, 2) A central Youth Café for teenagers from rural areas who have no facilities to meet up, to do so in a central space on a regular basis and 3) Sub Comhairles established in Schools, so there is a greater link with the Comhairle Executive Committee and

the wider group of teenagers in Offaly who are interested in active citizenship and youth engagement in local democracy. All projects to be completed in 2015.

COMMUNITY WATCH

Offaly Community Watch is now in its fourth year of operation as a network of all Community Alert and Neighbourhood Watch groups in Offaly. The countywide text alert system for Offaly is operated and supported through Community Watch and is proving very popular with good Garda support and community interaction.

OFFALY MENTAL HEALTH TALK WEEK (OMHTW)

Offaly Mental Health Talk Week had its most successful programme of events this year. The launch took place in October in Tullamore Central Library with Brent Pope as the guest speaker to launch the programme of over 50 events over a 2 week period in November.

Offaly Mental Health Talk Week, now in its fourth year, is an initiative of Offaly Community Forum with Offaly County Council collaborating with the HSE and many other agencies who



have a responsibility working to promote positive mental health in all communities in Offaly. The programme this year embraced the National Office of Suicide Prevention 'Little Things' campaign and promoted the key messages of this campaign throughout the OMHTW events.

FUNDING PROGRAMMES

PUBLIC AREA ENHANCEMENT SCHEME 2014

The Public Area Enhancement Scheme was delivered through funding of €120,000 from the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government for village improvements and general enhancement of public areas. Projects were undertaken in Kinnitty, Birr, Kilcormac, Tullamore, Edenderry and Geashill. Twenty four Tidy Towns groups and some Residents Associations also received financial support.

COMMUNITY TOURISM DIASPORA FUND

Offaly County Council in partnership with Fáilte Ireland and Irish Public Bodies Insurances provided funding in the sum of €25,750 to festivals and events who attracted 515 overseas visitors.

SMOKE ALARMS

Over 100 sets of Smoke Alarms were installed to Over 65's and vulnerable households in 2014. The Smoke alarms are funded by the Fire Service, administered by the Local and Community Development Section in partnership with North Offaly Development Company, South and West

Offaly Home Fix and Tullamore Social Services as installers of the smoke alarms.

RURAL RECREATION FUNDING

The section applied for and administered a grant of €11,941.82 from the Rural Recreation Fund for the Slieve Bloom Way, the Offaly Way and Paul's Lane loop, in conjunction with the Laois Offaly Walking Partnership. A further funding allocation of €14,145 was advised from the same fund, for signage board upgrades in early – mid 2015; for the Slieve Bloom Way and the Offaly Way.



HERITAGE

OFFALY HERITAGE FORUM

4 meetings were held in 2014, the first in March in Daingean Court House followed by a site visit to Mount Lucas Wind farm, the second in Aras an Chontae in June, the third at the new Lough Boora Discovery Centre in September and the final meeting in Aras an Chontae in 9th December with a presentation by John Feehan on the Clonmacnoise area featured in his new publication.

HERITAGE COUNCIL, HERITAGE OFFICER GRANT SCHEME 2014 – 75% FUNDED BY THE HERITAGE COUNCIL

Three projects received funding under this programme.

BUILDINGS OF IRELAND ARCHITECTURE GUIDE FOR LAOIS AND OFFALY

The Offaly Heritage Officer worked with Laois Heritage Officer, the Board of the Buildings of Ireland and author Andrew Tierney, to arrange illustrations and photography for this architectural guide for Laois and Offaly to be published by Yale.

JAPANESE KNOTWEED

Japanese knotweed eradication programme. All known sites in the county were plotted and treated twice in 2014 in partnership with the area engineers and Roads Department.

QUARRIES AFTER-USE MANAGEMENT PLANS

Commissioned a number of afteruse management plans with biodiversity as the main focus, in partnership with the planning department of Offaly County Council.



Geologist John Feehan, part of the project team, examining faces of the quarry

AWARENESS

A number of heritage awareness projects were organised by the Heritage Office.



The **Offaly Naturalists' Field Club Programme** was co-ordinated, published and promoted with 20 events including a week long summer school on 'Evolving Habitats'. All of the leaders are voluntary.

Heritage Week, co-ordination of events, publication of brochure and promotion with the busiest week to date.

The **Annual Offaly Heritage Seminar** was held on 15th November in Birr profiling new heritage projects in the county with a specific emphasis on delivering the Offaly Heritage Plan 2012 -2016. The morning consisted of trips to Lough Boora Discover Centre, the newly revamped Birr Science Centre at Birr Demesne and a tour of Birr Castle after its first full season of being open to the public for tours. The afternoon hosted a series of lectures. The event was booked out.



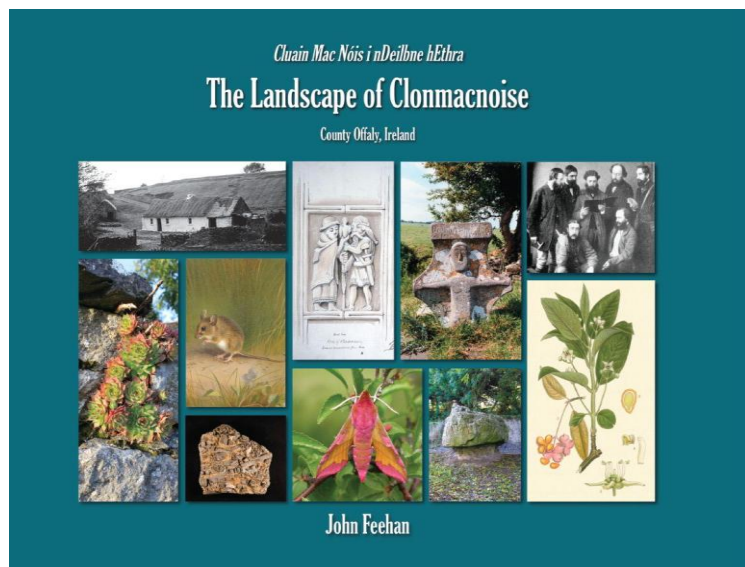
The Annual Offaly Heritage Seminar tour to the new facilities for visitors at Lough Boora Discover Park.

Pilgrim Path Group – worked with the local steering group to arrange participation in the Nation Pilgrim Path day on Easter Saturday with two walks and a cycle. We hosted a meeting of the national Pilgrim Path group in September.

1916 commemoration – Towards the end of the year, a group was set up to manage the 1916 commemoration.

Managed the www.offaly.ie/heritage website.

Social Media - Managed the facebook and twitter accounts



The Landscape of Clonmacnoise by John Feehan
 - a book on Clonmacnoise Parish.
 One of a series of books of the same style.

CASTLES

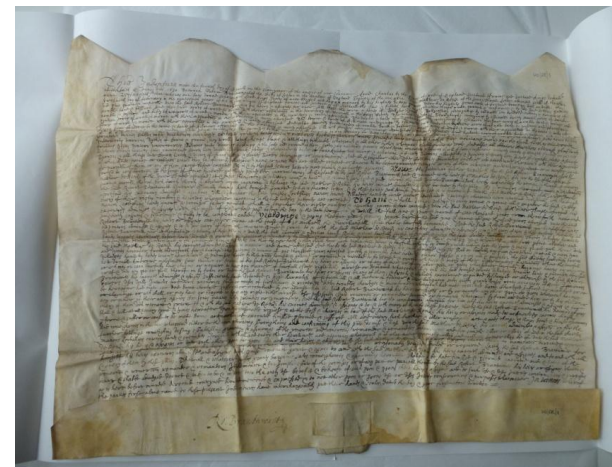
Prepared text for the editor for 8 castles in Offaly from O'Molloy country. To be published in 2015.

BURIAL GROUNDS SURVEY DATABASE

Working with the Environment Section of Offaly County Council, the heritage office took on an intern, Stephen Callaghan to work on a database of approx 180 burial grounds in the county. This has never been done for Offaly and is developing into most useful project collating information on many aspects of each site along with photographs.

ARCHIVES

A contract archivist was employed to catalogue a series of documents from the De Renzi family dating to the 17th century held in Offaly County Library archive. This highlighted certain gaps in the county archive service which needed attention as the library had moved its collection twice during renovation works and



PUBLICATIONS

Did you know? 100 Quirky facts about County Offaly was published in 2013 and was reviewed by Rosita Boland in the Irish Times in January 2014, featured on Countryfile on Radio 1 in February and Nationwide filmed sites featured in it for day on 27th August (to be aired in 2015). 3000 books sold by end of 2014.

the Council has not had an archivist for the past 10 years.

In addition, the records of Birr Town Council were sorted into current records and archives and moved out of the old offices. This has led to the area of archives being the priority project for 2015 funding.

TIDY TOWNS SUPPORT

Hosted four talks on different aspects of Tidy Towns work for the Offaly Tidy Towns Network, judge Sharon Eastwood on preparing the application form, engaging with architecture, public art and the heritage project for 2015 and Lynne O'Keefe Lascar on wildlife landscaping, . Provided advice on applications and development plans. Secured grant assistance from Public Area Enhancement Scheme for 23 Tidy Towns groups plus specific funding for Edenderry, Geashill, Kinnitty and Birr projects.

PUBLIC REALM PLANS & VILLAGE ENHANCEMENT PLANS

Attended monthly meetings of Birr Public Realm Plan until the dissolution of the Birr Town Council. Worked with county architect, Rachel McKenna on village enhancement plans and community liaison.

COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN & ACA

Prepared comments for Offaly County Development Plan. Geashill ACA documentation was prepared with county architect, Rachel McKenna for Forward Planning and led to the adoption later in the year of Offaly's first ACA.

PERCENT FOR ART COMMITTEE

Two heritage projects were submitted in 2014 and have been approved for 2015. One is a photographic record of the county in 2015 and the second, working with 3 communities looking at less well known aspects of their heritage. Kinnitty, Clara and Clonbullogue have been selected.

BUILT HERITAGE JOB LEVERAGE SCHEME

Assisted with assessments of applications. The delivery of the scheme in Offaly was managed by conservation architect with Offaly County Council, Rachel McKenna.

CONSERVATION OF THE TOWER ON MULLAGH HILL, FOLLY



The Tower on Mullagh Hill conserved with a new coat of whitewash.

In 2012 a conservation report was prepared by Margaret Quinlan, funded by the Follies Trust. This meant we were able to avail of the Built Heritage Job Leverage Scheme funding and Follies Trust finance to complete the conservation of the folly owned by the Dillon family. It was filmed for the Nationwide programme and was given front page coverage in the Tullamore Tribune.

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND

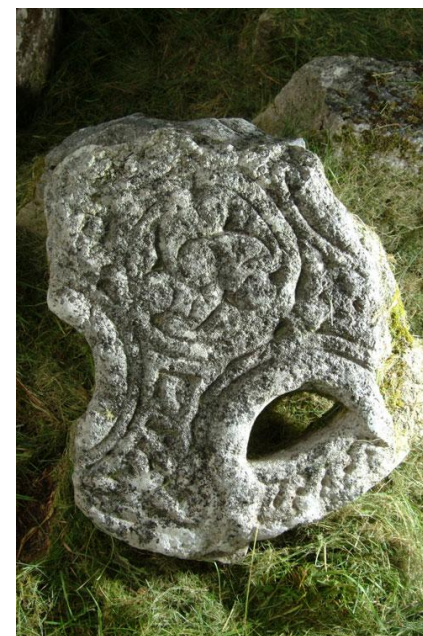
Due to the absence of a county museum in Offaly, it is important to have a strong connection with the National Museum so that finds are reported and that there is an awareness of the Museum being a repository for artefacts from Offaly. Two presentations by the National Museum about the Banagher Swords finds were made at the Annual Offaly Heritage Seminar.

We liaised with the antiquities department about the loan of the sheela na gig originally from Rahan to the Church of Ireland, Rahan. We arranged for a number of finds to

be deposited with the National Museum and got assistance from the Museum on the management of the head of Drumcullen high cross.

TOURISM

Attended the discussion day hosted by the County Council in October and am working with a number of groups within the Council to examine the potential of several of tourism sites in the county.



Drumcullen High Cross Fragment

ROADS AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

SPC Chair	Dervill Dolan MCC	Director Of Services	Frank Heslin
<i>Members</i>	<i>Sectoral</i>	<i>Senior Engineer</i>	Charles McCarthy
Cllr. John Clendennen	Mr. Richard Scally	<i>Senior Executive Engineer</i>	Joe Coleman
Cllr. Carol Nolan	Mr. Peter Lyons	<i>Administrative Officer</i>	Phyllis Hughes
Cllr. Danny Owens	Mr. John O'Connor	<i>Chief Fire Officer</i>	Eoin O'Ceilleachair
Cllr. Liam Quinn	Mr. Jason Leigh	<i>Health & Safety Officer</i>	Dennis Gibbons

ROADS; HEALTH AND SAFETY

1. GENERAL

The 2014 Initial Roads Budget was €8,178,367 and this included an NNR grant of €6,192,754, a National Road Grant of €885,423 and Own Resources funding of €1,100,190.

Additional funding was received as follows during the year: -

• National Roads Authority (NRA)	€ 2,608,550.23
• Dept of Transport, Tourism & Sport (DTTS)	€ 981,418.00
• Active Travel Birr Town (DTTS)	€ 954,000.00
Total	€ 4,543,968.23

Projects undertaken and completed during 2014 are

detailed under the following Grant Categories: -

2. NATIONAL ROAD GRANTS

- 2014 National Roads (N52, N62 & N80 = 104kms)
 Ordinary Maintenance (€822,000)
 Pavement Overlay/Reconstruction Schemes (€2.2M)
- N52 Brackagh Tullamore (1200 metres))
 - N80 Derryclure Tullamore (40 metres)
 - N62 Doon Ferbane (430 metres)
 - N62 Cloghan/Ferbane (485 metres)
 - N62 Crinkill/Ballyegan Birr (1500 metres)
 - N52 Birr Town (1600 metres)
 - N62 Skid Resistance Renewal Schemes (300 metres)
 - National Road Safety Barrier Renewal (€85,650)
 N62 Corr Hill Ferbane
 N62 Drumakeenan Birr
 N52 Ballynaguilsha Birr

N52 Public Lighting Upgrade in Kilcormac (€40,000)

3. NON NATIONAL ROAD GRANTS

2014 Non National Roads (Regional 390kms + County 1640 kms = 2030 kms)

- Ordinary Maintenance (€2.26M)
- Surface Dressing (€871,000)
- Pavement Recycling/Overlays (€3.385M)
- Community Involvement in Roadworks Schemes – 20No (€658,000)
- Low Cost Safety Schemes – 8 No.(€197,000)
- Bridge Strengthening Works – 13 No (€200,000)
- Regional Road Bridge Inspections (€100,000)
- Public Lighting Upgrade at Moneygall, Mucklagh, Horseleap and Geashill (€85,000)
- Killane Cross Edenderry – Traffic Light Junction (€125,000)
- Road &Footpath Improvement Works in Tullamore Town (€176,000)
- Road &Footpath Improvement Works in Birr Town (€161,300)

4. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Health and Safety objectives were set out at the beginning of the year with the management team.

The key objectives were;

1. To improve the safe working environment for all employees of Offaly County Council and members of the public.
 2. To ensure that communication between all levels of staff within the organisation relating to health and safety are improved.
 3. To continue to work closely with external groups and consider any improvements which are suggested.
- Every day staff are reminded of the risk they face and how to eliminate or reduce this risk. During 2014 alone, there were 39 fatalities, 7 of these in the Construction Industry and 22 in the Agriculture Sector (Up to the 1st of October).
 - All work needs to be treated safely and a suitable Safe system of Work agreed and communicated to all staff prior to commencing the works.
 - There was an overall reduction in the accident ratio up to October 2014 when compared to the same period in 2013.
 - Senior management continued to provide leadership in order to raise the profile of safety within Offaly County Council.

- The management team and senior management group carried out a number of inspections during the year.
- A health and safety review of 2014 will be completed in full in early 2015 and this will be used to set out the areas for improvement in 2015.
- Meeting with several schools in relation to road safety issues.
- There is a road safety message playing daily in Birr, Ferbane and Edenderry Credit Unions. These messages contain information concerning wearing of safety belts, use of mobile phone, wearing of reflector arms bands and vests, speeding, drinking and driving, etc.

5. ROAD SAFETY 2014

Offaly County Council in conjunction with St. Patrick's Boys National School, Portarlington and St. Cynoc's National School Ferbane, operate a Junior School Warden Scheme in each school.

- In total 50 pupils participate and operate the scheme throughout the school year. Their primary aim is to ensure safe crossing of the road for all pupils.
6th Class with the help of 5th Class, as required, participated in the scheme.
- The schemes have been operating very successfully over the last 15 years. The children learn road safety at an early age and it is something they bring with them throughout their lives and hopefully will stay with them.
- Distribution of road safety leaflets to all national schools in the county.
- By-annual meetings are held with the Gardai, National Road Authority staff, Road Safety Authority staff and Roads staff to discuss various road matters.
- The Gardai and Road Safety Working Group have prepared a brochure on Parking at Schools and this was circulated to all National Schools for distribution to parents/guardians of children.

FIRE SERVICE

The aim of the Offaly County Council Fire Authority is to protect the public from fire and to preserve life and property. The Fire Service is an organisation established and maintained in accordance with Sections 9 and 10 of the Fire Services Act, 1981. Offaly County Fire and Rescue Service provides a total fire service to the community 24 hours a day every day of the year.

The Fire Authority provides a number of services ranging from the emergency response to incidents such as fires, road traffic accidents, chemical incidents, etc. To ensuring the fire safety of the community and built environment through certification, inspection, enforcement and education. The Authority also provides information and training on fire safety management and fire fighting

OPERATIONS

In 2014 Offaly County Fire and Rescue Service were alerted to 641 incidents, made up of 477 fire calls and 150 non-fire emergencies and 14 false alarms. The response to these calls came from 5 stations located throughout the county.

SECTION 26 PLAN

The Section 26 Fire and Emergency plan formed the basis for the Fire Service work program 2014. The 2014

budget of €2.9 million maintained the Fire Service.

TRAINING

There is a very strict training regime in the Fire Brigade as is necessitated by the sometimes difficult and dangerous environment in which Firefighters work.

Significant resources have been made available for training within the Fire Service with an expected spend of €130,000 for training alone in 2014. In addition the Councils commitment to training for fire fighters, and research into the latest equipment and technology ensures that our fire crews are best equipped to respond quickly, safely and effectively to the full range of emergency incidents that we attend.

The training centre in Tullamore was utilised for training internally and by other Local Authorities.

FIRE PREVENTION & BUILDING CONTROL

Offaly County Council Fire Service assessed over 80 Fire Safety Certificate, Dangerous Substances, and Disabled Access Certificate applications. The fire authority also gave advice on planning referrals, and dealt with 48 licence applications. In total 161 fire safety inspections of premises took place.

Offaly Fire service is actively involved in the Community Smoke Alarm Project and fire alarms were installed in 84 homes in Offaly during 2014, bringing the total for the last 4 years to 929 homes. The Fire Service also delivered the Fire Safety Schools program to all primary schools in the county.

The Building Control function of Offaly County Council is integrated into the fire service. This relates to the processing and reception of commencement notices and maintaining the register of same as per the building control regulations. This also includes the inspection and monitoring of new works to monitor for compliance with all the requirements of the Building Regulations, 1997.

2014 saw the introduction of the Building Control Amendment Regulations and Offaly County Council introduced the new Building Control Management System.

In 2014 there were 112 commencement notices with 45 building inspected, which represents 37% of new buildings notified to the local authority.

MAJOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Both the Local and the Regional Major Emergency Plan were maintained, reviewed and revised by the Major Emergency Development Committee, the Regional Working Group and the Regional Steering Group. Offaly County Council participated in the regional Steering Group and Regional Working Group in 2014.

CIVIL DEFENCE

Civil Defence provided emergency response capability, and supported the community and events throughout 2014. Over 50 Civil Defence duties were carried out during 2014, providing Ambulance/First Aid cover and logistical support to various events such as: 10k walks; Cycling races; Football matches; Charity events; Community activities; St. Patrick's Day parades; Equestrian events; and the Tullamore Phoenix festival. The largest duty in terms of manpower and resources, were the Tullamore Livestock show. Civil Defence worked in conjunction with other agencies such as the HSE Ambulance service, Gardai, Irish Red Cross, Order of Malta and Offaly Fire & Rescue Service.

INTERNAL SERVICES (incl. CORPORATE SERVICES, HUMAN RESOURCES, FINANCE, INFORMATION SYSTEMS)

CORPORATE SERVICES		FINANCE	
<i>Director of Services:</i>	Seán Murray	<i>Head of Finance</i>	Declan Conlon
<i>Senior Executive Officer:</i>	Monica Cleary	<i>Financial Management Accountant:</i>	Thomas Mawe
<i>Partnership Facilitator/Administrative Officer:</i>	Gerry Bruton	<i>Administrative Officer:</i>	Mary Gaughran
HUMAN RESOURCES		INFORMATION SYSTEMS	
<i>Director of Services:</i>	Frank Heslin	<i>Director of Services</i>	Frank Heslin
<i>Senior Executive Officer:</i>	Ann Dillon	<i>Head of I.S.:</i>	Hugh O'Donoghue
<i>Administrative Officer:</i>	Paula Donovan	<i>I.S. Project Leader</i>	Eileen Jackson
		<i>I.S. Project Leader</i>	Ray Bell

CORPORATE SERVICES

FUNCTIONS

The main functions of the Corporate Services section include:

- To provide an efficient and professional secretariat to the Council and their committees.
- To make information available to the members in a timely, convenient and flexible manner to allow for informed decision making.
- To maintain and update the register of electors.
- To implement the Student Grant Scheme in a fair and efficient manner.
- To develop initiatives to increase cross-departmental awareness and input to the development of corporate policies.

- To improve communications internally and externally on Local Authorities activities.
- To ensure best practice is applied in securing value for money in the management and maintenance of corporate property.



Members of Offaly County Council at the Annual Meeting held June 2014

(L to R) Cllr. Brendan Killeavy, Cllr. John Clendennen, Cllr. Eddie Fitzpatrick, Cllr. Peter Ormond, Cllr. Danny Owens, Cllr. Eamon Dooley, Cllr. Declan Harvey, Cllr. Noel Cribbin, Cllr. Martin O'Reilly, Cllr. Dervill Dolan, Cllr. John Carroll.
(Seated L to R) Cllr. John Foley, Cllr. John Leahy, Cllr. Frank Moran (*Leas-Cathaoirleach*), Cllr. Carol Nolan, Cllr. Sinead Dooley (*Cathaoirleach*), Cllr. Thomas McKeigue, Cllr. Liam Quinn, Chief Executive Mr. Sean Murray.

(Inset Cllr. Noel Bourke)

OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL MEMBERS, ELECTED FOLLOWING LOCAL ELECTIONS HELD ON 23RD MAY 2014

BIRR ELECTORAL AREA:

Carroll, John	The Ring, Birr	(057) 91 20976; (087) 228 3772	cllrjohncarroll@eircom.net	Non-Party
Clendennen, John	Kinnitty, Birr	----- ; (087) 611 8883	john@johnclendennen.com	Fine Gael
Dooley, Eamon	Na Tullaig, Aughaboy, Ferbane	(090) 64 54510; (086) 223 7058	eamondooley@hotmail.com	Fianna Fáil
Leahy, John	Glendine, Kilcormac	----- ; (087) 207 3226	info@johnleahy.net	Non-Party
Nolan, Carol	The Curragh, Cadamstown	----- ; (087) 774 3709	nu1carolnolan@gmail.com	Sinn Féin
Ormond, Peter	Kyleogue, Shinrone, Birr	(0505) 47079; (086) 212 1449	peter.ormond@gmail.com	Fianna Fáil

EDENDERRY ELECTORAL AREA:

Bourke, Noel	Killane, Edenderry	(046) 97 31295; -----	noelbourke@hotmail.com	Fianna Fáil
Cribbin, Noel	Francis Street, Edenderry	----- ; (087) 907 3804	noelcribbin@yahoo.com	Non-Party
Fitzpatrick, Eddie	Benfield, Cloneyhurke, Portarlinton	(057) 86 23261; (087) 258 0428	eddiefitzp@eircom.net	Non-Party
Foley, John	Killane, Edenderry	(046) 97 32332; (087) 252 2882	cllr.johnfoley@gmail.com	Non-Party
O'Reilly Martin	St. Martins, Clonadd, Daingean	----- ; (087) 148 4307	oreillysf@gmail.com	Sinn Féin
Quinn, Liam	Edenderry Road, Rhode	----- ; (087) 916 3066	liamjq@gmail.com	Fine Gael

TULLAMORE ELECTORAL AREA:

Dolan, Dervill	10 Cormac Street, Tullamore	(057) 93 23530; (086) 825 7259	dervilldolan@eircom.net	Non-Party
Dooley, Sinead	Rahan Road, Sragh, Tullamore	(057) 93 51828; (087) 230 1525	sineadtdooley@gmail.com	Fianna Fáil
Harvey, Declan	11 Park Avenue, Tullamore	----- ; (087) 410 6571	dmharvey@eircom.net	Fianna Fáil
Killeavy, Brendan	Colehill, Cappincur, Tullamore	----- ; (087) 753 1817	brendankilleavy@live.ie	Sinn Féin
McKeigue, Thomas	Spollanstown, Tullamore	(057) 93 41519; (086) 165 8359	tommymckeigue@eircom.net	Fine Gael
Moran, Frank	Lahinch, Clara	----- ; (086) 887 9524	moranfrank1@hotmail.com	Fianna Fáil
Owens, Danny	Lugamarla, Mountbolus, Tullamore	(057) 93 54814; (087) 127 1526	dannyowens@eircom.net	Fianna Fáil

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

The *Local Government (Reform) Act 2014* provided for the establishment of three Municipal Districts in Offaly, namely the Municipal District of Birr, Edenderry and Tullamore. The Act provided for the abolition of the Town Councils of Birr, Edenderry and Tullamore.

The number of Offaly County Council elected representatives' changed, with effect from the Local Elections held on 23rd May 2014, from 21 members to 19 members.

SUPPORT SERVICES

The Corporate Services section provides a secretariat service for meetings of the County Council. The Council normally meets on the third Monday of each month, excluding August. In addition an Annual Budget Meeting and an Annual Meeting must be held. In all, **17** council meetings were held in 2014.

At the Annual Meeting, held on 6th June 2014, Councillor Sinead Dooley was elected Cathaoirleach and Councillor Frank Moran was elected Leas Cathaoirleach.

The May monthly meeting, held on 19th May 2014, was held in Crank House, Banagher.

LOCAL ELECTION 23RD MAY 2014

Local Elections and European Elections were held on Friday, 23rd May 2014. 37 candidates stood for election to Offaly County Offaly. The total valid poll was 32,579.

CORPORATE PLAN 2015 - 2019

At its meeting held in December the members adopted the ***Offaly County Council Corporate Plan 2015 – 2019***. The Plan places a strong emphasis on economic and tourist development and a key action is the establishment of an Economic Forum in 2015. The document lists eleven strategic priorities that support the goals of Plan. Offaly County Council's mission statement and strategic priorities are implemented in accordance with the core values identified in the Plan.



May monthly meeting held in Crank House, Banagher, 19th May 2014

CORPORATE POLICY GROUP (C.P.G.)

The Chairpersons of the Strategic Policy Committees are elected members of the County Council. They, along with the Cathaoirleach of the Council, form a committee called the Corporate Policy Group (C.P.G.), advised by the Chief Executive. Where a Municipal District is not represented on the C.P.G. that Municipal District may elect a member to the C.P.G. The C.P.G. is essentially the Council's 'Cabinet'. Its main roles are consultation in preparation of budgets, dealing with corporate issues, modernisation and customer service.

The Corporate Policy Group met on **11** occasions during 2014.

STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEES (S.P.C.s)

S.P.C.s have a key role in advising and informing the Council. Their purpose is to provide a forum for debate on policy issues and for the development of policy recommendations for the Council. They have a broad membership including sectoral and community interests working with elected members and council staff. There are four S.P.C.'s in Offaly dealing with policy areas. The following Chairpersons were elected to chair the SPC's at the 2014 Annual Meeting:

- Housing Policy, Social and Cultural Services – Cllr. P. Ormond
- Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning, – Cllr. E. Dooley

- Transportation and Emergency Service – Cllr D. Dolan
- Environment, Water and Drainage Services – Cllr. T. McKeigue

Following a public consultation process the members adopted the **Strategic Policy Committee Scheme** at their September meeting.

REGISTER OF ELECTORS

The Register of Electors was produced on the 1st February and came into force on 15th February 2014. The total electorate for County Offaly for the 2014/2015 Register of Electors was 55,189 broken down over the local electoral areas as follows:

Birr	19,633
Edenderry	15,635
Tullamore	19,921
Total on the Register	55,189

A Supplement to the Register of Electors was produced in 2014, i.e., for the Local Elections held on 23rd May 2014. The total number of Local Government Electors (eligible to vote in a Local Election) on the Register of Electors on 23rd May 2014 was 56,531.

JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE

The Joint Policing Committee met on two occasions in 2014. Revised Guidelines on the establishment and operation of the JPC were published in August 2014.



An Cathaoirleach of Offaly County Council, Cllr S. Dooley with the members of the Executive Committee of Óglaigh Náisiúnta na hÉireann Teoranta at the Civic Reception, held on 26th September 2014, to mark the occasion of the ONE Conference held in Tullamore.

SWIMMING POOLS

Corporate Services administer the Council's support grant schemes for community swimming pools.

The refurbishment of Clara Swimming Pool commenced on 28th October 2014. It is anticipated completion date

of mid July 2014. The refurbishment is being funded by the Department of Transport and Sport, Offaly County Council, National Lottery funds, Clara & District Recreation Association Ltd.

Senior staff met with Department of Transport and Sport personnel in September 2014 in an effort to progress the funding application for the Edenderry Swimming Pool.



An Cathaoirleach Cllr S. Dooley with the Tullamore College Transition Year students and members at the Civic Reception, held on 15th December 2014, to mark the achievements of Greener Globe, 2014 SAGE World Cup Winners

Payments Made to Members in 2014

Name	Representational Payment	Monthly Allowance	SPC Chairperson's Allowance	Expenses Conferences, incl. Conf. Fees, Telephone/Broadband	Chairperson's Allowance	Foreign Travel
Noel Bourke	€ 16,565.04	€ 5,357.29		€ 2,928.86		
^Molly Buckley	€ 6,902.10	€ 1,827.28		€ 1,323.60		
^Johnny Butterfield	€ 6,902.10	€ 1,827.28		€ 1,323.60		
John Carroll	€ 16,565.04	€ 5,583.06		€ 170.38		
*John Clendennen	€ 9,662.94	€ 2,941.61		€ 479.83		
^Percy Clendennen	€ 6,902.10	€ 2,086.80		€ 1,323.60		
*Noel Cribbin	€ 9,662.94	€ 3,168.90		€ 486.18		
Dervill Dolan	€ 16,565.04	€ 4,411.44	€ 3,500.00			
Sinead Dooley	€ 16,565.04	€ 4,411.44	€ 2,500.00	€ 366.28	€ 11,720.45	€ 628.21
Eamon Dooley	€ 16,565.04	€ 5,041.96	€ 3,500.00	€ 1,079.10		
Eddie Fitzpatrick	€ 16,565.04	€ 4,769.33		€ 1,487.67		
John Foley	€ 16,565.04	€ 5,357.29			€ 3,500.00 **	
^Connie Hanniffy	€ 6,902.10	€ 2,086.80		€ 1,323.60		€ 2,256.79
*Declan Harvey	€ 9,662.94	€ 2,572.29		€ 546.59		
^Nichola Hogan	€ 6,902.10	€ 2,263.60	€ 2,500.00	€ 1,214.98		
*Brendan Killeavy	€ 9,662.94	€ 2,572.29				
John Leahy	€ 16,565.04	€ 4,726.70	€ 2,500.00		€ 3,500.00 **	
Tommy McKeigue	€ 16,565.04	€ 4,411.44	€ 3,500.00	€ 422.61	€ 3,500.00 **	
^Tony McLoughlin	€ 6,902.10	€ 2,249.00				
*Frank Moran	€ 9,662.94	€ 2,572.29		€ 850.63	€ 2,344.06	

Payments Made to Members in 2014 - cont/..

Name	Representational Payment	Monthly Allowance	SPC Chairperson's Allowance	Expenses Conferences, incl. Conf. Fees, Telephone/Broadband	Chairperson's Allowance	Foreign Travel
^Sinead Moylan Ryan	€ 6,902.10	€ 2,540.95		€ 356.06	€ 11,286.71	
*Carol Nolan	€ 9,662.94	€ 2,799.58				
Peter Ormond	€ 16,565.04	€ 6,378.35	€ 3,500.00	€ 2,374.01		
Danny Owens	€ 16,565.04	€ 4,411.44		€ 130.00		
*Martin O'Reilly	€ 9,662.94	€ 2,572.29				
^Ger Plunkett	€ 6,902.10	€ 1,827.28	€ 2,500.00	€ 1,413.77		
Liam Quinn	€ 16,565.04	€ 5,192.52		€ 1,893.16		
^Paddy Rowland	€ 6,902.10	€ 1,827.28		€ 140.00		
TOTAL	€ 328,539.96	€ 97,787.78	€ 24,000.00	€ 21,634.51	€ 35,851.22	€ 2,885.00

* Elected in May 2014

^ Retired in May 2014

** Indicates Municipal District Chairpersons Allowance

Councillors supported and attended the following conferences in 2014	Date of Conferences	No. Delegates
"Developing and Supporting Enterprises Locally"	10 th – 11 th January 2014	1
"An Overview of Political Reform"	10 th – 12 th January 2014	1
"Local Government Bill 2013"	17 th – 18 th January 2014	1
"Volunteering in the Community and the Elected Member"	17 th – 19 th January 2014	1
"Rural Housing Planning & Development Design Guideline"	17 th – 19 th January 2014	1
"Local Authorities and Waste Management"	24 th – 25 th January 2014	1
"An Inconvenient Reality"	31 st Jan – 2 nd February 2014	1
LAMA Spring Seminar	31 st Jan – 1 st February 2014	5
"Keeping Communities Safe – Fire Safety"	7 th – 8 th February 2014	2
AMAI Spring Seminar	14 th – 15 th February 2014	2
"Powers of Local Authorities to Stem Anti-Social Behaviour"	14 th – 15 th February 2014	1
"Improved protection for Consumers with New Building Regulations"	21 st – 22 nd February 2014	1
"Educating to drive the economy"	28 th February – 1 st March 2014	1
Annual Conference of Association of County and City Councils	6 th – 7 th March 2014	5
"Pylons and Windfarms, what's the Law"	7 th – 9 th March 2014	1
West Cork Tourism Seminar on Internet marketing	4 th – 6 th April 2014	1
"The Environment, the Community and the Elected Member"	25 th – 27 th April 2014	1
"Know your Rights 2014"	25 th – 27 th April 2014	1
"Service Provision in Local Authorities"	2 nd – 3 rd May 2014	1
"River Flooding and Management Issues"	2 nd – 4 th May 2014	1
"Managing Change in Local Government"	9 th – 11 th May 2014	1
LAMA Autumn Seminar 2014	17 th – 18 th October 2014	1
AILG Annual Conference	29 th – 30 th October 2014	8
"MABS and The Insolvency of Ireland"	14 th – 15 th November 2014	1
"Charities – Regulation and Legislation"	5 th – 6 th December 2014	2
"Protected Disclosures Act 2014"	12 th – 13 th December 2014	1
"Developing and Supporting Enterprises Locally"	10 th – 11 th January 2014	1
"An Overview of Political Reform"	10 th – 12 th January 2014	1
"Local Government Bill 2013"	17 th – 18 th January 2014	1
"Volunteering in the Community and the Elected Member"	17 th – 19 th January 2014	1
"Rural Housing Planning & Development Design Guideline"	17 th – 19 th January 2014	1

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

In 2014 under the Freedom of Information Act, the total numbers of applications were as follows:

- 15 applications received by **Offaly County Council**;
- 0 applications received by **Birr Town Council**;
- 0 application received by **Tullamore Town Council**; and
- 0 applications received by **Edenderry Town Council**.

In 2014 Offaly County Council processed 8 applications under the Access to Information on the Environment.

OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

The Council responded to the Office of the Ombudsman in relation to Offaly County Council issues.

STUDENT GRANTS

184 Student Grant renewals were awarded by Offaly County Council in the 2013/2014 academic year. €1,055,223 was spent on 2013/2014 Student Grants during this period. This money is recoupable from the Department of Education & Skills, except for a fixed contribution made by Offaly County Council. The administration of the scheme is a service provided by this Council to students and parents in County Offaly.

SERVICE INDICATORS

Each section, as appropriate, prepared their National Service Indicators statistics. The statistics were collated by Corporate Services and submitted to the Local Management

Services Board.

COUNTY CORONERS

The total expenditure was €125,681.00 (including salary) in respect of coroners' inquests in 2014.

EXHIBITIONS HELD IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE

A number of art exhibitions were held in Áras an Chontae during 2014.

REPRESENTATIVES TO VARIOUS BODIES:

Association of Irish Local Government:	Cllr. N. Cribbin Cllr. D. Owens Cllr. P. Ormond
Barrow Drainage Board:	Cllr. M. O'Reilly Cllr. L. Quinn
Board of Directors Oxmantown Hall Management Committee:	Cllr. J. Clendennen Cllr. C. Nolan
Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly	Cllr. E. Dooley Cllr. E. Fitzpatrick
Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurances Ltd:	Cllr. J. Clendennen

Joint Policing Committee:	Cllr. N. Bourke Cllr. J. Carroll Cllr. J. Clendennen Cllr. N. Cribbin Cllr. S. Dooley Cllr. E. Fitzpatrick Cllr. J. Foley Cllr. D. Harvey Cllr. B. Killeavy Cllr. J. Leahy Cllr. F. Moran Cllr. C. Nolan Cllr. P. Ormond
Local Authority Members Association:	Cllr. N. Bourke
Local Community Development Committee:	Cllr. J. Clendennen Cllr. D. Harvey Cllr. B. Killeavy
Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee:	Cllr. E. Dooley Cllr. E. Fitzpatrick Cllr. B. Killeavy Cllr. J. Leahy Cllr. P. Ormond
Laois and Offaly Education Training Board:	Cllr. J. Carroll Cllr. E. Dooley Cllr. S. Dooley Cllr. E. Fitzpatrick Cllr. C. Nolan Cllr. L. Quinn

Midland Energy Agency Steering Committee:	Cllr. T. McKeigue
Midland Regional Drugs Task Force:	Cllr. F. Moran
North Offaly Development Fund Ltd:	Cllr. N. Bourke Cllr. N. Cribbin Cllr. E. Fitzpatrick Cllr. J. Foley Cllr. M. O'Reilly Cllr. L. Quinn
Offaly Film Commission:	Cllr. D. Harvey Cllr. C. Nolan Cllr. P. Ormond
Offaly Innovation & Design Centre:	Cllr. S. Dooley
Offaly Sports Partnership:	Cllr. F. Moran Cllr. D. Owens
Offaly Heritage Forum:	Cllr. E. Dooley
Regional Health Forum, Dublin-Mid-Leinster:	Cllr. E. Fitzpatrick Cllr. B. Killeavy Cllr. T. McKeigue
Rural Water Monitoring Committee:	Cllr. N. Cribbin Cllr. E. Fitzpatrick Cllr. D. Owens

Swimming Pool Committees:	<i>Birr</i> – Cllr. J. Leahy <i>Clara</i> – Cllr. F. Moran <i>Edenderry</i> - Cllr. J. Foley
Tullamore Leisure Ltd.	Cllr. S. Dooley Cllr. D. Harvey Cllr. B. Killeavy Cllr. T. McKeigue
Tullamore Community Arts Centre:	Cllr. S. Dooley Cllr. D. Harvey Cllr. B. Killeavy Cllr T. McKeigue
Tullamore Sports Link Ltd.:	Cllr. T. McKeigue
Tullamore Chandler Sister Cities:	Cllr. S. Dooley Cllr. D. Owens
Sub-Project Committee, Municipal District Of Birr:	Cllr. P. Ormond
West Offaly Enterprise Fund Ltd:	Cllr. E. Dooley Cllr. J. Leahy

FINANCE

OUR GOALS

To plan the strategic financial management of Offaly Local Authorities and deliver the services of the finance function in an efficient, effective and professional manner.

OUR STRATEGIES

- Develop and operate accounting and management information systems that deliver the best possible basis for future planning, budgeting and decision making in order to maximise financial resources available.
- Promote and direct Value for Money concepts and foster a culture of effective use of resources.
- Prepare an annual financial budget that reflects our corporate objectives.
- Enhance the Financial Management System and in particular, the provision of more meaningful financial management information.
- Ensure prompt payment to suppliers.

OUR SERVICES

The Finance Department deals with both the short and long term financing of all the Council's operations, both of a Revenue and Capital nature. This involves:

- Monitoring and controlling income and expenditure.

- Arranging financing requirements.
- Treasury Management
- Compliance with all statutory and financial accounting principles, which apply to all monies paid by or to the Council.

The Council's revenue and day-to-day expenditure is funded from sources such as:

- Commercial Rates;
- Local Government Fund;
- Government Grants;
- Housing Rents, Planning Fees, Commercial Water Charges, NPPR, Household Charges and other Fees.

MAIN SECTIONS WITHIN FINANCE:

FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTING

Financial reporting is the preparation of the Annual Financial Statements (AFS), other statutory returns, reporting to external agencies and dealing with the Local Government Audit process. Management Accounting is the preparation of quarterly management reports to

assist with budgetary control and the decision-making process within each directorate. The Annual Budget process is managed in this section, in consultation with all the service divisions. This section provides variance analysis, costing information and other financial information required by internal and external customers

CENTRAL REVENUE COLLECTION

This section mainly deals with the recovery of Commercial Rates, Housing Rents, Housing Loans, Water billing, and other local charges - collection and receipt of all monies due to the Council.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

The processing and payment of suppliers invoices with statutory deductions and the completion of statutory returns. This section ensures compliance with all statutory taxation returns and application of revenue commissioners enforcement procedures for all Offaly County Council.

PAYROLL

The processing of the wages, salaries, pensions and the completion of statutory returns to Revenue Commissioners and other agencies.

MOTOR TAXATION OFFICE/CASH OFFICE

The Council collects vehicle licence duties within its

functional area on behalf of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. Additional responsibilities regarding general Cash collection were allocated to this section in 2014.

GENERAL LEDGER/AGRESSO SUPPORT

This group manage the Financial Management System (FMS) and ensure proper control over all the organisations assets and liabilities. Compliance with the national accounting code of practice and enforcement of DECLG circulars also falls within its remit. This group manage the Financial Management System (FMS) and ensure proper control over all the organisations assets and liabilities. Compliance with the national accounting code of practice and enforcement of DECLG circulars also falls within its remit.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Coordination of the Risk Management function within Offaly County Council.

UNIFICATION

The Finance section completed the unification of several accounting systems and processes in 2014 following the abolition of Town councils in May 2015. Financial and accounting support is extended to the new Municipal districts on an ongoing basis.

MAIN REPORTS PRODUCED BY FINANCE:

THE ANNUAL BUDGET

The Finance Department prepares the overall Revenue Budget in consultation with the Council Members, Chief Executive and the Management Team. The Local Government (Reform) Act 2014 specified a new statutory budget process, timetable and disclosures to be completed in advance of the adoption at the Annual Budget Meeting.



Staff present a cheque to Irish Cancer Society – Night Nursing Unit following a charity walk fund raising event organised in memory of Geraldine Flattery, a former staff member.

THE ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT (AFS)

The AFS is produced annually and details the income and expenditure for the financial year for both revenue and capital expenditure. The Balance Sheet shows the assets and liabilities of the County Council at the end of the year. THE AFS is presented to members at Council Meeting and audited by the Local Government Auditor.

QUARTERLY MANAGEMENT REPORTS

The quarterly management report provides details of the income and expenditure for the various services provided by the council. The actual results are compared to Budget and all variances are investigated in monitoring budgetary control.

DoECLG/IMF QUARTERLY REPORTING

All Offaly Local Authorities report financial performance Quarterly to the DECLG. These reports consist of a quarterly Income and Expenditure Report, Capital Account report and Debtors report, and are presented to the council. In addition various reports are produced for budget holders in Offaly County Council relating to all aspects of the councils activities.

MOTOR TAXATION OFFICE

This office issues vehicle licences and processes other transactions such as change of ownership for pre-1993 vehicles, certificates of roadworthiness, vehicle registration certificates vehicle licensing arrears. The Section also produces information for Gardai and other

Local Authorities, e.g. penalty points, traffic fines, parking fines, etc. Payments are made at the counter, electronically and through postal application.

In 2014, this office generated approximately €10.5m in revenue, handled over 90,000 transactions (40% over the counter, 10% via post and 50 % was processed online)

INTERNAL AUDIT FUNCTION

Internal Audit is an independent appraisal function which reviews the internal control system in operation within Offaly County Council. It objectively examines evaluates and reports on the adequacy of internal controls as a contribution to the proper, economic, effective and efficient use of resources.

During 2014 the Internal Auditor undertook a number of audits and the findings and recommendations from each audit were reported to management. The Internal Auditor also undertook follow up audits to assess the implementation of the recommendations from the previous audits.

The Audit Committee was dissolved at Local Elections in May. The new Committee in Offaly County Council consists of five members: Mr. Peter Scully, Committee Chairperson, Ms. Constance Hanniffy, Mr. Brian Gunning, Mr Eugene Mulligan and Mr. Tom Feighery. The Audit Committee met twice in 2014.

REVENUE COLLECTION SERVICE INDICATORS

Amount collected as a percentage of the amount due at 2014 year end:

Rents	88%
Commercial Rates	94%
Non Domestic Water Charges	72%
Housing Loans	60%

Extract from the Unaudited Annual Financial Statement for the Year ended December 31, 2014

**DRAFT INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT STATEMENT FOR YEAR ENDED 31st
DECEMBER 2014**

The Income and Expenditure Account Statement brings together all the revenue related income and expenditure

<i>Net Expenditure by Division €</i>	<i>Gross Expenditure</i>	<i>Income</i>	<i>Net Expenditure</i>	<i>Net Expenditure</i>
	2014	2014	2014	2013
	€	€	€	€
Housing & Building	8,968,513	8,852,187	116,327	226,958
Roads Transportation & Safety	15,474,571	11,342,308	4,132,263	4,183,745
Water Services	6,026,383	5,529,675	496,707	8,305,938
Development Management	4,194,918	1,334,261	2,860,657	3,060,521
Environmental Services	6,214,940	2,140,030	4,074,910	4,491,460
Recreation & Amenity	3,256,406	599,535	2,656,872	2,628,203
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	1,466,425	1,241,458	224,967	259,893
Miscellaneous Services	7,486,153	2,775,957	4,710,196	4,500,745
County Charge	----	----	----	2,083,800
Total Expenditure/Income	53,088,310	33,815,411		
Net cost of Divisions to be funded from Rates & Local Government Fund			19,272,899	29,741,261
Rates			14,675,504	14,839,142
Local Government Fund - General Purpose Grant			6,663,642	13,843,657
Pension Related Deduction			992,646	1,068,543
County Charge			----	2,083,800
Surplus/(Deficit) for Year before Transfers			3,058,893	2,093,880
Transfers from/(to) Reserves			(2,500,538)	(1,604,229)
Overall Surplus/(Deficit) for Year			558,355	489,651
General Reserve @ 1st January 2014			(5,293,324)	(5,782,975)
General Reserve @ 31st December 2014			(4,734,970)	(5,293,324)

Capital Account Summary

Extract from the Draft Annual Financial Statement for the Year ended December 31, 2014

	2014	2013
	€	€
Balance (Debit)\Credit @ 1 January	4,287,669	10,189,049
Total Expenditure (Incl. Transfers)	(7,555,361)	(18,273,886)
Total Income (Incl. Transfers)	16,495,491	12,372,486
Balance (Debit)\Credit @ 31 December	13,227,799	4,287,669

HUMAN RESOURCES

STAFFING

Offaly County Council in common with other public sector agencies is subject to the public sector staffing moratorium introduced in 2009. Under the terms of this, sanction must be sought from the Department of the Environment, Community, & Local Government to fill positions prior to any recruitment process being commenced. Only positions required to meet statutory obligations or essential services or posts which have specific external funding committed, are being approved by the Department. Engagement with Irish Water at national and local level continued during 2014 with the HR department playing a key role in facilitating staff secondments and delivering specific training requirements for our staff involved at all levels of interaction with Irish Water.

In 2014, eight new staff joined the Council through a combination of recruitment and redeployment, including three new staff from the former County Enterprise Board who are based in the Council's new Local Enterprise Office.

The total staff complement at the 31st December 2014

was as follows:-

Core Staff	No. (Headcount)	Whole Time Equivalent
Managerial	4	4
Clerical/Administrative	164	151
Professional/Technical	69	68
Outdoor	137	136
Fulltime Firefighters	2	2
Supernumeraries	7	7
Total Core Staff	383	368
Other Staff		
Contract Posts	4	4
Site Supervisory Contract Posts	2	2
Temporary/Seasonal	2	2
Retained Firefighters	50	N/A
Non DoECLG (inc. Gateway)	64	31.60
Total Other Posts	122	39.60

GATEWAY

Gateway is a Government initiative to reduce employment and offers work placements as a valuable route for participants to learn new skills and to return to the routine of work. The scheme assists the personal and social development of participants by providing short-term work opportunities with the objective of bridging the gap between unemployment and re-entering the workforce. Offaly County Council's target under the scheme is 55 work placements. At the end of 2014, 33 participants had been recruited.

TRAINING & STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Offaly County Council recognise that our staff are our most valuable asset and we endeavour within available resources to support their training and development needs. The new PMDS model was rolled out during 2014 with training provided for all staff. Each staff member is now required to undertake an end of year evaluation with their line manager which will now be linked to incremental progression.

Our 2014 training plan was delivered based on identified corporate needs and priorities including mandatory training in health and safety. Other training provided during the year included:-

- PMDS
- Agresso
- Dealing with Difficult Situations
- Prevention & management of aggression & violence in the workplace
- Report writing
- Stress & Time management
- Retirement Planning
- Mediation Training
- Equality, Diversity, Dignity at Work

INDUSTRIAL AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

The Human Resource department manages the council's relationship with trade unions and staff representatives dealing with both local and national issues as they arise. The implementation of the provisions of the Haddington Road Agreement continued in 2014 along with the implementation of the council's local action plan under the Public Service Agreement 2010-2014. Further actions have been successfully implemented involving review and restructuring of services including the integration of town council services and maximising inter-agency and collaborative arrangements in co-operation with our workforce.

RETIREMENTS

The following staff retired during 2014:

- ❖ John McDonald General Operative
- ❖ Anne Sullivan Staff Officer
- ❖ Gerard Doyle Assistant Foreman
- ❖ Paul Reddin Semi Skilled II/Ganger
- ❖ John Thomas Caretaker
- ❖ Macus Malone Retained Firefighter

of Public Expenditure & Reform identified a public sector target of 3.5% of working days lost to sick leave. Offaly County Council achieved this target during 2014.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

The implementation of the provisions of the Public Service Agreement 2010-2014 (Croke Park Agreement) and The Public Service Stability Agreement 2013-2016 (The Haddington Road Agreement) continued during 2014. This process was managed through on-going engagement with staff representatives on efficiency measures and reform practices.

PUBLIC SERVICE MANAGEMENT (SICK LEAVE) REGULATIONS 2014

The Public Service Management (Sick Leave) Regulations 2014 were introduced with effect from 31st March, 2014 and superseded all previous arrangements as they related to arrangements for paid sick leave in the local government sector. In November, 2013, the Department

INFORMATION SYSTEMS

In 2014 the Information Systems department completed projects in a variety of areas across the entire organisation.

These included:-

- All ICT work required for the deployment of national reform initiatives such as Irish Water, Shared Payroll, Amalgamation/Integration of Town Councils, Local Enterprise Office and Regional Authority
- Completion of ICT requirements regarding the Open Libraries initiative
- Specification and implementation of technologies required for upgrade of Motor Tax system and integration to Council's network
- Feasibility study and pilot implementation of Paperless Meetings solution - MinutePad
- Deployment of ARCGIS as the organisation's strategic GIS platform.
- Completion of tender process and implementation of a new Data Security and Recovery solution
- Tender process on behalf of eight Local Authorities for a Parking Fines Management system
- Continued development of online portal requirements for the National Waste Collection Permits Office, now based in Áras an Chontae
- Implementation of ICT requirements under the organisation's Change Management Initiative regarding Customer Contact recording in the Housing and Roads sections
- The Information Systems department manages all of the Council's ICT hardware and software infrastructure. This infrastructure is spread across approximately fifty locations in the County and is utilised by close to 400 users.

TULLAMORE TOWN COUNCIL

Director of Services: Declan Kirrane
Town Clerk: Martin Daly
Senior Executive Engineer: Paul Devaney

Tullamore is the capital town of Offaly with a population of over 10,000. The Council is involved in a broad range of service provision including Housing, Roads and Car Parks, Planning and Recreation, Leisure and Amenity facilities.

ELECTED MEMBERS OF TULLAMORE TOWN COUNCIL

- Mayor Paddy Rowland
- Councillor Sinead Dooley
- Councillor Molly Buckley
- Councillor Declan Harvey
- Councillor Brendan Killeavy
- Councillor Tony McCormack
- Councillor Tommy McKeigue
- Councillor Sean O'Brien
- Councillor Laurence Byrne

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Meetings of the council are held on the second Thursday of the month at 5.00pm in the Council Chamber, Tullamore Town Hall

REPRESENTATIVES TO VARIOUS BODIES:

Laois & Offaly Education & Training Board:	Cllr. Brendan Killeavy Cllr. Laurence Byrne
A.M.A.I.:	Cllr. Laurence Byrne Cllr. Sean O'Brien
Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurances Ltd.:	Cllr. Tommy McKeigue
Tullamore Leisure Ltd:	Cllr. Molly Buckley Cllr. Paddy Rowland Cllr. Sean O'Brien

Offaly County Development Board:	Cllr. Tony McCormack
Tullamore Sports Link Ltd.:	Cllr. Tommy McKeigue
Tullamore/Chandler Sister Cities:	Cllr. Molly Buckley Cllr. Tony McCormack
Tullamore Arts Centre Ltd:	Cllr. Tommy McKeigue Cllr. Declan Harvey
Environment & Water Services Strategic Policy Committee:	Cllr. Brendan Killeavy
Transportation & Emergency Services Strategic Policy Committee:	Cllr. Paddy Rowland

- Continued promotion and implementation of Business Incentive and Sponser Roundabout Schemes.
- Leasing of 22 social housing units.
- Working with Offaly County Council and other agencies in providing social housing for 31 Afghan refugees as part of Refugee Resettlement Programme.
- Supporting of community festivals & events including Tullamore Chamber Christmas Lights, St Patrick's Day Parade, Cannonball Festival.
- Provision of continued support to the Jigsaw Project.
- Hosting of commemorative event at the ending of Tullamore Town Council in May 2014, to honour and recognise all voluntary/sporting/community groups in the town.
- Hosting of civic receptions for St Colmcille's Pipe Band & the 100th Anniversay of O' Brien Street.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2014:

- Maintaining street cleaning services on a daily basis, thereby contributing to the town reaching joint 5th place nationally and maintaining the town's 'Clean to European Norms' status in the IBAL Litter League.
- Working with Tullamore Tidy Towns Committee which achieved it's first gold medal in the annual Tidy Towns Competition achieving 306 marks.
- Working with Tullamore Chamber of Commerce and other organisations in promoting the town.



Members and staff on the last day of Tullamore Town Council





Resettlement Programme Gathering at Town Hall, March 2014



Unveiling plaque at O' Brien St



Mr Ger Doyle on his retirement in May 2014 after over 40 years service.



St Colmcille's Pipe Band

Payments Made to Tullamore Town Council Members in 2014

Name	Representational payments	Monthly Allowance	Conference Expenses - Home	Conferences - Fees	Conference Expenses - Abroad	Chairperson's Allowance	Mobile Phone Allowance
Molly Buckley	€ 0.00	€ 843.00	€ 0.00	€ 0.00	€ 0.00	€ 0.00	€ 0.00
Laurence Byrne	€ 1,714.00	€ 843.00	€ 265.00	€ 200.00	€ 0.00	€ 0.00	€ 0.00
Tommy McKeigue	€ 0.00	€ 843.00	€ 0.00	€ 0.00	€ 0.00	€ 0.00	€ 0.00
Sean O'Brien	€ 1,714.00	€ 843.00	€ 404.00	€ 200.00	€ 0.00	€ 0.00	€ 269.00
Sinead Dooley	€ 0.00	€ 843.00	€ 0.00	€ 0.00	€ 0.00	€ 0.00	€ 0.00
Paddy Rowland	€ 0.00	€ 843.00	€ 0.00	€ 0.00	€ 0.00	€ 3,375.00	€ 0.00
Brendan Killeavy	€ 1,714.00	€ 843.00	€ 0.00	€ 0.00	€ 0.00	€ 0.00	€ 0.00
Tony McCormack	€ 1,714.00	€ 843.00	€ 0.00	€ 0.00	€ 0.00	€ 0.00	€ 0.00
Declan Harvey	€ 1,714.00	€ 843.00	€ 0.00	€ 0.00	€ 0.00	€ 0.00	€ 215.00
TOTAL	€ 8,570.00	€ 7,587.00	€ 669.00	€ 400.00	€ 0.00	€ 3,375.00	€ 484.00

Conferences	Date	Location	Attendees
AMAI Conference	14 - 15/02/14	Bundoran	Cllr Laurence Byrne Cllr Sean O'Brien

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT of TULLAMORE

Director of Services: Declan Kirrane
Senior Executive Engineer: Paul Devaney
Meetings Administrator: Miriam Brady

REPORT ON THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF TULLAMORE FOR THE PERIOD, JUNE TO DECEMBER 2014

The Municipal District of Tullamore comprises of an area of 417km² - 21% of Offaly; with a population of 28,720 - 37.45% of the total population of Offaly.

MONTHLY MEETING

Meetings of the council are held on the second Thursday of the month at 4.00pm in the Council Chamber, Tullamore Town Hall.

ELECTED MEMBERS OF MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF TULLAMORE

Cllr. Tommy McKeigue (Cathaoirleach)
 Cllr. Danny Owens (Leas Cathaoirleach)
 Cllr. Dervill Dolan
 Cllr. Sinead Dooley
 Cllr. Declan Harvey
 Cllr. Brendan Killeavy
 Cllr. Frank Moran

REPRESENTATIVES TO VARIOUS BODIES:

Tullamore Leisure Ltd:	Cllr. Sinead Dooley Cllr. Declan Harvey Cllr. Brendan Killeavy Cllr. Tommy McKeigue
Tullamore Community Arts Centre Ltd.:	Cllr. Sinead Dooley Cllr. Declan Harvey Cllr. Brendan Killeavy Cllr. Tommy McKeigue
Tullamore Chandler Sister Cities:	Cllr. Sinead Dooley Cllr. Danny Owens
Clara Swimming Pool Committee:	Cllr. Frank Moran
Tullamore Sports Link Ltd.:	Cllr. Tommy McKeigue

ACTIVITIES OF 2014: (JUNE – DECEMBER 2014).

- Maintaining street cleaning services throughout the Municipal District area.
- Working with Tidy Towns Committees.
- Working with Tullamore Chamber of Commerce and other organisations in promoting the Municipal District.
- Budget 2015 - Consideration of General Municipal Allocation.
- Delegations were received from the following:
 - Offaly IFA
 - Clontarf Road Residents
- Reports from Offaly County Council were given to members at Municipal District Meetings as follows:

Environment & Water Services;
Roads & Infrastructure;
Housing;
Draft Offaly County Development Plan 2014 - 2020;
Preparation of Local Economic Community Plan 2015-2020;



Members and staff at the first meeting of Municipal District of Tullamore in June 2014.

Back row: Cllr. B. Killeavy, Cllr. D. Harvey, Ms. C. Hughes, Mr. D. Kirrane, Cllr. D. Owens, Cllr. F. Moran, Mr. S. Hynds.
Front row: Cllr. D. Dolan, Ms. M. Brady, Cllr. T. McKeigue, Cllr. S. Dooley, Mr. P. Devaney.

EDENDERRY TOWN COUNCIL

Director of Services:
A/Town Clerk:
Senior Executive Engineer:

Declan Conlon
Therese O'Meara
Damien Grennan

MONTHLY MEETING

Monthly Meeting were held on the second Wednesday of each month in the Town Hall, Edenderry at 7.30pm.

ELECTED MEMBERS OF EDENDERRY TOWN COUNCIL

- Cllr. Patricia Brady, Fine Gael
- Cllr Mary Breen, Fianna Fáil
- Cllr Noel Cribbin, Non Party
- Cllr John Foley, Non Party
- Cllr Liam Hogan, Fine Gael
- Cllr Fergus Mc Donnell (Leas Cathaoirleach), Non Party
- Cllr Jim Murrin, Non Party
- Cllr Finian O'Neill, (Cathaoirleach), Fianna Fáil
- Cllr Declan Leddin, Labour

REPRESENTATIVES TO VARIOUS BODIES

A.M.A.I.:

Cllr. Fergus McDonnell
Cllr. Liam Hogan

Barrow Drainage Board:

Cllr. Finian O'Neill



Photograph taken on the occasion to mark the end of the Town Council in May 2014. (Elaine Mc Crossan, Photography)

Front left to right: Cllr John Foley, Therese O'Meara, Town Clerk, Cllr Fergus Mc Donell (Leas Cathaoirleach) and, Cllr Patrica Brady.

Back left to right; Cllr Liam Hogan, Declan Conlon, Area Manager, Cllr Finian O'Neill, Cathaoirleach, Cllr Declan Leddin, John Hutchinson, Caretaker of Town Hall, Cllr Noel Cribbin and Cllr Jim Murrin.

Missing from photography Cllr Mary Breen.

MEETINGS WITH OTHER GOVERNMENT/STATE BODIES

During 2014 the members met with representatives of various government and state bodies to discuss issues relevant to the town of Edenderry. For example;

Bord na Mona: meeting to discuss the wind farm development at Mount Lucas and any future wind energy developments in North Offaly.

HSE: The future of Ofalia House Nursing Home in Edenderry was discussed with the HSE due to the reduction in bed numbers available in the facility.

IDA and Enterprise Ireland: Very successful meetings were held with both agencies in light of the production of the "Doing Business in Edenderry" brochure. These agencies were provided with information on the locality and made aware of the opening of the R402 which results in significantly reduced travel times from Edenderry to Dublin.

FINAL DONATIONS

Edenderry Town Council have a long history of providing financial donations to groups/organisations in Edenderry. Examples of some of the final donations made are;

project managed by Kildare County Council.

CCTV: the members of the Town Council together with the members of the Joint Policing Committee had approved the provision of funding for CCTV cameras to be installed in the town. An application was made to the Advisory Committee of an Garda Síochána in relation to same. The Area Manager agreed to set aside this donation and until approval from the Gardai was received. The Municipal Districts will no longer have a Joint Policing Function.

Irish Red Cross: A branch of the Irish Red Cross was established in Edenderry in 2014. A donation was made to them to assist in the purchase of necessary equipment.

Landscaping at the entrances of the town: the members agreed to make a donation to Offaly County Council for landscaping at the two main entrances to the town (Tullamore and Dublin side) was carried out.

O'Connell/Market Square, Edenderry: the members made a donation to Offaly County Council to complete the renovation of footpaths in O'Connell/Market Square. This would bring this work to completion.

OPENING OF THE R402:

The members had campaigned for many years for improvement works to the R402 from Edenderry to Enfield. 2014 saw the opening of this road which was



Final meeting of Edenderry Town Council held on the 14th of May 2014.

Back left to right: Cllr. Noel Cribbin, Cllr. Declan Leddin, Cllr. Liam Hogan, Cllr. Jim Murrin, Cllr. Fergus Mc Donnell, Cllr. John Foley,

Front row left to right: Cllr. Mary Breen, Therese O'Meara, Town Clerk, Declan Conlon, Area Manager, Cllr. Finian O'Neill, Cathaoirleach, & Cllr Patricia Brady.

Payments Made to Edenderry Town Council Members in 2014

Name	Representational Payments	Monthly Allowance	Expenses Conferences, incl. Conf. Fees, and Travel	Chairperson's Allowance	Foreign Travel
Patricia Brady	€ 936.69	€ 424.16	€ 519.42		
Mary Breen	€ 936.69	€ 339.33	€ 0.00		
Noel Cribbin	€ 936.69	€ 424.16	€ 265.18		
John Foley	€ 936.69	€ 424.16	€ 0.00		
Liam Hogan	€ 936.69	€ 339.23	€ 796.37		
Declan Leddin	€ 936.69	€ 424.16	€ 0.00		
Fergus Mc Donnell	€ 936.69	€ 424.16	€ 684.40		
Jim Murrin	€ 936.69	€ 424.16	€ 0.00		
Finian O'Neill	€ 936.69	€ 424.16	€ 0.00	€ 700.00	€ 2,726.45
TOTAL	€ 8,430.21	€ 3,647.68	€ 2,265.37	€ 700.00	€ 2,726.45

Conferences	Location	Attendees
National Tourism Conference	Ennistymon, County Clare	Cllr Patricia Brady
Tidier Towns – The Way Forward	Fermoy, County Cork	Cllr Noel Cribbin
AMAI Conference	Bundoran, County Donegal	Cllr Liam Hogan Cllr Fergus McDonnell
LAMA Conference		Cllr Liam Hogan
St. Patricks Day Parade	New York, United States of America	Cllr Finian O’Neill

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT of EDENDERRY

Director of Services:
A/Town Clerk:
Senior Executive Engineer:

Declan Conlon
Therese O'Meara
Damien Grennan

REPORT ON THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF EDENDERRY FOR THE PERIOD, JUNE TO DECEMBER 2014

MONTHLY MEETING

Monthly Meeting are held on the second Wednesday of each month in the Town Hall, Edenderry at 3.30pm.

ELECTED MEMBERS OF MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF EDENDERRY

Cllr John Foley, Non Party (Cathaoirleach)
Cllr Liam Quinn, Fine Gael (Leas Cathaoirleach)
Cllr Noel Bourke, Fianna Fáil
Cllr Eddie Fitzpatrick, Fianna Fáil
Cllr Noel Cribbin, Non Party
Cllr Martin O'Reilly, Sinn Féin

REPRESENTATIVES TO VARIOUS BODIES

North Offaly Development Fund:

All members of the Edenderry Municipal District

Edenderry Swimming Pool:

Cllr. John Foley

MEMBER REQUIRED FOR CORPORATE POLICY GROUP (CPG)

Cllr Eddie Fitzpatrick was chosen by the members to represent Edenderry Municipal District on the CPG as there is no representative on this board at present from Edenderry.

SCHEDULE OF REPORTS

It was agreed by the executive of Offaly County Council that reports would be presented to the members from various Council departments on a rolling monthly basis. During this period reports were received from the following:

September	-	Environment & Water
October	-	Roads
November	-	Housing
December	-	Environment & Water

SET AGENDA ITEMS

The members of Edenderry Municipal District proposed that the following items be placed on their agenda as set items;

- **Job Creation**
- **Other Agencies Issues**
 - Bus Éireann & Bus Shelter
 - Hotel Site in Edenderry
 - Ofalia House
- **Other Area Issues**

MEETINGS WITH OTHER BODIES

Local Enterprise Office (L.E.O.): Orla Martin, Head of LEO gave presentation to the members in September 2014. The LEO office is based in Offaly County Council

headquarters and now combines the skills and knowledge of the former Offaly County Enterprise Board staff together with Offaly County Council staff. A local outreach office is also available on a weekly basis in the Town Hall in Edenderry for those who wish to avail of the services.

Irish Farmers Association: The members had a very informative meeting with John Keena, Chairman of the Offaly Irish Farmers Association and William Dolan, County Development Officer at their November meeting. They were informed in relation to the concerns and issues that farmers are currently experiencing particularly in relation to prices that they receive for animals and farm produce. The members were advised that farmers are market price takers who can't control the price of raw materials. The members were reminded that Offaly farmers are known for quality of their produce and that quality assurance is key.

St Mary's Secondary School: The members were delighted to be joined by the 1st Year, Boyne English Class from St Mary's Secondary School, Edenderry at their December meeting. The students had compiled a petition which was given to each member in relation to the need for covered bus shelters in town. Two students addressed the members on behalf of the group. They asked that the members keep them informed of proceedings with regard to the application for funding for a bus shelter which has been submitted to the National

Transportation Authority (NTA).

Renovation of former Court Room, Town Hall, Edenderry: The Court Services in Offaly were amalgamated 2014. The former Court Room in Edenderry Town Hall was renovated by Offaly County Council with a view to hiring it out to other agencies & the public for training, conferences and meetings and other events.



Student of St Mary's Secondary School at the December meeting of Edenderry Municipal District together with Cllr Eddie Fitzpatrick, Cllr John Foley (Cathaoirleach), Cllr Noel Cribbin and Cllr Noel Bourke



Photograph taken at the Annual Meeting of Edenderry Municipal District held on the 16th of June 2014.

Front left to right: Leonard Geoghegan, Assistant Engineer, Declan Conlon, Area Manager/Director of Services, Cllr. John Foley, Cathaoirleach, Therese O'Meara, Meetings Administrator.,

Back left to right; Cllr Noel Cribbin, Cllr Martin O'Reilly, Cllr Eddie Fitzpatrick, Cllr Liam Quinn.

Missing from photograph is Cllr Noel Bourke.

BIRR TOWN COUNCIL

<i>Cathaoirleach:</i>	Councillor John Carroll
<i>Director of Services:</i>	Frank Heslin
<i>Town Clerk:</i>	James Hogan
<i>Town Engineer:</i>	Anne Healy-Smyth

ELECTED MEMBERS OF BIRR TOWN COUNCIL

- Councillor Tony McLoughlin, Non-Party
- Councillor Denis Sheils, Non-Party
- Councillor Noel Russell, Fianna Fail
- Councillor John Carroll, Non-Party
- Councillor Michael Loughnane, Fianna Fail
- Councillor Michael Campbell, Fine Gael
- Councillor Denis Tierney, Fianna Fail
- Councillor Brian Whelahan, Fine Gael
- Councillor Bernadette Fanneran, Fianna Fail

Birr is the largest town in South-West Offaly. Birr, originally a monastic settlement founded by St Brendan in the 6th century has seen continuous habitation & development & is well known for its Georgian architecture. The urban district of Birr comprises

approximately 1500 acres and has a population of approx 4,000.

The Town Council is involved in a broad range of service provision including Housing, Roads and Car Parks, Planning and Recreation, Leisure and Amenity facilities.

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Meetings of the council are held on the second Monday of the month at 6.00pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Wilmer Road, Birr.

REPRESENTATIVES TO VARIOUS BODIES:

Vocational Educational Committee:

Cllr. John Carroll
Cllr. Bernadette Fanneran

A.M.A.I.:	Cllr. Michael Campbell Cllr. Noel Russell
Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurances Ltd.:	Cllr. Michael Loughnane
Offaly Strategic Policy Committee:	Cllr. Michael Loughnane
Oxmantown Hall, Theatre & Arts Centre:	Cllr. Bernadette Fanneran Cllr. Denis Tierney

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF 2014 ACTIVITIES

2014 was another positive year for both the Council and Birr town with a number of important projects completed and a continuation of the visual enhancement of the town.

Among the main highlights of the year were:-

- Funding was secured through Warmer Homes to install external insulation to houses in Drumbane
- Major refurbishment works were carried out on two houses at 18 Scurragh and 34 Presentation Place to facilitate children with medical difficulties.
- Pre-letting repairs carried out on houses.

- Upgrading the old Workhouse Graveyard including hedge cutting, grass cutting, new fencing and repairs to the monument.
- Worked in partnership with Birr Tidy Towns and TUS on projects such as street cleaning, gardening and grass cutting.
- Maintaining the housing stock.
- Maintaining street cleaning services in the town.
- Provided financial support to various groups in the town such as Birr Vintage Week Committee, the Offline Film Festival, Birr Leisure Centre, Birr Chamber of Commerce, Birr Theatre and Arts Centre and the Heritage Council.
- Birr Town Council hosted a lunch and planted a tree on the 29th April to mark the occasion of the visit of the Cuban Ambassador to Birr.
- In April funding secured for the Active Travel Project in the sum of €1 million from the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport.
- Tree planted to mark the end of Birr Town Council.



Members and senior staff on the last day of Birr Town Council

Payments Made to Birr Town Council Members in 2014

Name	Representational Payments	Monthly Allowance	Expenses Conferences, incl. Conf. Fees, and Travel	Chairperson's Allowance	Foreign Travel
Michael Campbell	€ 1,714.00	€ 1,018.00	€ 562.05		
John Carroll	€ 0.00	€ 1,018.00	€ 266.69	€ 1,200.00	
Bernadette Fanneran	€ 1,714.00	€ 1,018.00	€ 0.00		
Michael Loughnane	€ 1,714.00	€ 1,018.00	€ 178.27		
Tony McLoughlin	€ 0.00	€ 1,018.00	€ 0.00		
Noel Russell	€ 1,714.00	€ 1,018.00	€ 402.64		
Denis Sheils	€ 1,714.00	€ 1,018.00	€ 402.64		
Denis Tierney	€ 1,714.00	€ 1,018.00	€ 0.00		
Brian Whelehan	€ 1,714.00	€ 1,018.00	€ 0.00		
TOTAL	€ 11,998.00	€ 7,126.00	€ 1,813.29	€ 1,200.00	€ 0.00

Conferences	Location	Attendees
AMAI Conference	New Ross, County Wexford	Cllr Michael Campbell
ACCC Annual Conference	Waterford, County Waterford	Cllr John Carroll
AMAI Conference	Bundoran, County Donegal	Cllr Noel Russell
LAMA Conference	Monaghan, County Monaghan	Cllr Denis Sheils
IPB AGM	Dublin City	Cllr Michael Loughnane

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT of BIRR

Director of Services/ Area Manager: Frank Heslin
Meetings Administrator: Deirdre Molloy
Town Engineer: Anne Healy-Smyth

REPORT ON THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF BIRR FOR THE PERIOD, JUNE TO DECEMBER 2014

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Monthly Meeting are held on the second Monday of each month in the Birr Civic Offices at 4.30pm.

ELECTED MEMBERS OF MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF BIRR

Cllr John Leahy, Non Party (Cathaoirleach)
Cllr John Clendennen, Fine Gael (Leas Cathaoirleach)
Cllr Eamonn Dooley, Fianna Fáil
Cllr Peter Ormond, Fianna Fáil
Cllr John Carroll, Non Party
Cllr Carol Nolan, Sinn Féin

REPRESENTATIVES TO VARIOUS BODIES:

Birr Swimming Pool:	Cllr. John Leahy
SUB Project Committee:	Cllr. Peter Ormond
West Offaly Enterprise Fund:	Cllr. John Leahy Cllr. Eamonn Dooley
Offaly Strategic Policy Committee:	Cllr. Michael Loughnane
Birr Theatre & Arts Centre:	Cllr. Carol Nolan Cllr. John Clendennen Cllr. John Leahy Cllr. Peter Ormond

SCHEDULE OF REPORTS

It was agreed by the executive of Offaly County Council that reports would be presented to the members from various Council departments on a rolling monthly basis. During this period reports were received from the following:

September	-	Environment & Water
October	-	Roads
November	-	Housing
December	-	Environment & Water

MEETINGS WITH OTHER BODIES

Health Service Executive The Members met with Mr Joe Ruane and Mr Nick Devery of the HSE in September to discuss issues in relation to the Birr Community Nursing Unit and the services being provided by the HSE in the Municipal District of Birr area.

Slieve Bloom Trail Mr Daithi DeForge of Coillte gave a very informative presentation to the Members at their October meeting in relation to the proposed Slieve Bloom Cycle Trail. He agreed to meet the Members at a future date as the project progressed to update them on same.

Service Indicators 2014

A function of the National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC) established in July 2014 under section 61 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 is to scrutinise the performance of any local government body against or in comparison with relevant indicators that the Commission considers it appropriate to refer to, and which includes relevant indicators relating to customer service.

NOAC's role in relation to the scrutiny of local government performance against relevant performance indicators replaces, in respect of performance in 2014 and subsequent years, the service indicators in local authorities that were introduced by the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government in 2004. The LGMA role in the collection of the data and the compilation of the report will continue in respect of the replacement report to NOAC.

The replacement performance indicators continue to measure a wide range of the functions carried out by local authorities: including housing, planning, environmental services and finance. In determining the relevant indicators to apply to 2014, NOAC has had the benefit of a Strategic Overview on the Indicators from the Independent Assessment Panel and a report prepared by the CCMA's KPI Working Group, which recommended the deletion or amendment of many of the previously applicable service indicators as well as some new ones.

In this report where there similar indicators reported in 2013, these figures have been shown for comparison. If the indicator is not recorded or reported in 2013, we have shown N/A in the 2013 column. Similarly some of the indicators are provided by third parties and these were not published or available when this report was prepared.

H: HOUSING (H1 TO H6)	2014	2013
H1: SOCIAL HOUSING STOCK		
A. The overall total number of dwellings provided by the local authority	49	<i>N/A</i>
B1. The number of dwellings directly provided i.e. constructed by the LA	0	<i>N/A</i>
B2. The number of dwellings directly provided, i.e. purchased by the LA	2	<i>N/A</i>
C. The number of units provided under the Rental Accommodation Scheme in 2014	1	<i>N/A</i>
D. The number of units provided under the Housing Assistance Payment Scheme in 2014 if operated (or else indicate if scheme not yet being operated in the LA)	Not operated	<i>N/A</i>
E. The number of units provided under the Social Housing Leasing Initiative (including unsold Affordable Scheme units and NAMA sourced properties and the Mortgage to Rent Scheme)	46	<i>N/A</i>
F. The overall total number of social housing dwellings in the LA at 31/12/2014; comprising:	2,116	<i>N/A</i>
G. The total number of dwellings directly provided (constructed or purchased) by the LA	1,754	<i>1749</i>
H. The total number of units provided under the Rental Accommodation Scheme	176	<i>N/A</i>
I. The total number of units provided under the Housing Assistance Payment Scheme if operated (or else indicate if scheme not yet being operated in the LA)	Not operated	<i>N/A</i>
J. The total number of units provided under the Social Housing Leasing Initiative (including unsold Affordable Scheme units and NAMA sourced properties and the Mortgage to Rent Scheme)	186	<i>N/A</i>

H2: HOUSING VOIDS		
A. The percentage of the total number of dwellings at H1.G that were vacant on 31/12/2014	2.39%	<i>2.01%</i>
H3: AVERAGE RE-LETTING TIME AND COST		
A. The time taken from the date of vacation of dwelling to the date in 2014 when a new tenancy had commenced in the dwelling, averaged across all units re-let in 2014	37.40 wks	<i>N/A</i>
B. The cost expended on getting the re-tenanted units in 2014 ready for re-letting, averaged across all units re-let in 2014	€ 8,375.00	<i>N/A</i>
H4: HOUSING MAINTENANCE COST		
A. Expenditure during 2014 on the repair and maintenance of housing bought or built by the LA compiled on a continuous basis from 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2014, divided by the no. of directly provided units in the LA stock at 31/12/2014 i.e. data at indicator H1G.	€ 535.00	<i>N/A</i>
H5: PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR INSPECTIONS		
A. Total number of registered tenancies in the LA area	2,856	<i>2,767</i>
B. Number of inspections carried out	50	<i>40</i>
H6: LONG-TERM HOMELESS ADULTS		
A. Number of adult individuals that are long-term homeless as a % of the total number of homeless adult individuals.	1.71%	<i>N/A</i>

R: ROADS (R1 AND R2)		2014	2013
R1: RATINGS IN PAVEMENT SURFACE CONDITION INDEX			
(a) The % of Regional road surfaces in each of the 10 PSCI rating categories (1 to 10) at 31/12/2014	<i>Category 1</i>	0.00%	<i>N/A</i>
	<i>Category 2</i>	0.02%	<i>N/A</i>
	<i>Category 3</i>	1.80%	<i>N/A</i>
	<i>Category 4</i>	12.08%	<i>N/A</i>
	<i>Category 5</i>	3.48%	<i>N/A</i>
	<i>Category 6</i>	10.85%	<i>N/A</i>
	<i>Category 7</i>	11.95%	<i>N/A</i>
	<i>Category 8</i>	15.31%	<i>N/A</i>
	<i>Category 9</i>	41.50%	<i>N/A</i>
	<i>Category 10</i>	3.01%	<i>N/A</i>
(b) The % of Local Primary road surfaces in each of the 10 PSCI rating categories (1 to 10) at 31/12/2014	<i>Category 1</i>	0.01%	<i>N/A</i>
	<i>Category 2</i>	1.28%	<i>N/A</i>
	<i>Category 3</i>	5.65%	<i>N/A</i>
	<i>Category 4</i>	33.30%	<i>N/A</i>
	<i>Category 5</i>	11.17%	<i>N/A</i>
	<i>Category 6</i>	14.48%	<i>N/A</i>
	<i>Category 7</i>	11.51%	<i>N/A</i>
	<i>Category 8</i>	5.71%	<i>N/A</i>
	<i>Category 9</i>	16.43%	<i>N/A</i>
	<i>Category 10</i>	0.46%	<i>N/A</i>

(c) The % of **Local Secondary** road surfaces in each of the 10 PSCI rating categories (1 to 10) at 31/12/2014

<i>Category 1</i>	0.64%	<i>N/A</i>
<i>Category 2</i>	2.02%	<i>N/A</i>
<i>Category 3</i>	6.39%	<i>N/A</i>
<i>Category 4</i>	34.26%	<i>N/A</i>
<i>Category 5</i>	10.29%	<i>N/A</i>
<i>Category 6</i>	9.81%	<i>N/A</i>
<i>Category 7</i>	9.90%	<i>N/A</i>
<i>Category 8</i>	4.17%	<i>N/A</i>
<i>Category 9</i>	21.13%	<i>N/A</i>
<i>Category 10</i>	1.40%	<i>N/A</i>

(d) The % of **Local Tertiary** road surfaces in each of the 10 PSCI rating categories (1 to 10) at 31/12/2014

<i>Category 1</i>	3.57%	<i>N/A</i>
<i>Category 2</i>	3.31%	<i>N/A</i>
<i>Category 3</i>	11.75%	<i>N/A</i>
<i>Category 4</i>	29.43%	<i>N/A</i>
<i>Category 5</i>	7.20%	<i>N/A</i>
<i>Category 6</i>	7.90%	<i>N/A</i>
<i>Category 7</i>	10.57%	<i>N/A</i>
<i>Category 8</i>	5.49%	<i>N/A</i>
<i>Category 9</i>	18.82%	<i>N/A</i>
<i>Category 10</i>	1.95%	<i>N/A</i>

R2: % OF MOTOR TAX TRANSACTIONS CONDUCTED ONLINE		
A. The percentage of motor tax transactions which are dealt with online (i.e. transaction is processed and the tax disc is issued).	45.24%	38.26%

In order to compile this information, data will be obtained directly from the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport's Vehicle Registration Unit for upload to eReturns of the total number of all motor tax type transactions (however conducted) involving a payment in the period 1/1/2014 to 31/12/2014 and the number of such transactions conducted online.

W: WATER (W1 AND W2)	2014	2013
W1: UNACCOUNTED FOR WATER AS % OF TOTAL VOLUME OF WATER SUPPLIED UNDER LA SCHEMES		
A Unaccounted for water (UFW) as a percentage of total volume of water supplied in 2014 under the water supply schemes that the local authority is responsible for under a Service Level Agreement	45.98%	45.50%
W2: % DRINKING WATER (PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHEMES) IN COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS		
A % of drinking water (public and private schemes) in compliance with statutory requirements	<i>Provided by EPA</i>	N/A

The *indicator* that will be presented in the performance indicators report is the data supplied to the EPA in respect of the monitoring of water quality of public and private water supplies during 2013.

Note: This data will be obtained directly from the EPA

E: WASTE / ENVIRONMENT (E1 TO E5)		2014	2013
E1: NUMBER OF LICENSEES OPERATING IN LA AREA			
A	The number of waste operators that have been licensed by the LA to operate in its area on 31/12/2014.	<i>Provided by NWCPO</i>	<i>N/A</i>
E2: No. / % OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH ACCESS TO A 3 BIN SERVICE			
A.	No. / % of Households with access to a 3 bin service	<i>Provided by NWCPO</i>	<i>N/A</i>
E3: No. OF WASTE COMPLAINTS LODGED WITH THE EPA OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT			
A.	The number of distinct complaints relating to waste within the LA area that were referred to the OEE in the period 1/1/2014 to 31/12/2014 because the problem persisted after investigation of the complaint by the LA.	0	<i>N/A</i>
E4: % OF OTHER (I.E. NOT WASTE) ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION COMPLAINTS CLOSED			
The total no. of cases (litter/air/noise/water pollution) in respect of which a complaint/s was/were made through any medium during 2014 whether instigated by the public or by the LA itself and the % of those cases closed by 31/12/2014.	Litter	96.81%	<i>N/A</i>
	Air	37.50%	
	Noise	42.31%	
	Water	25.58%	
E5: % OF LA AREA WITHIN THE 5 LEVELS OF LITTER POLLUTION			
A.	The % of the area within the LA that when surveyed in 2014 was 1) unpolluted or litter free, 2) slightly polluted, 3) moderately polluted, 4) significantly polluted, or 5) grossly polluted.	<i>Provided by Tobin Consulting Engineers</i>	<i>N/A</i>

The data will be submitted by Tobin Consulting Engineers directly to the LGMA from the data for the 2014 National Litter Pollution Monitoring System Report that should be ready for publication in mid 2015.

P: PLANNING (P1 TO P4)	2014	2013
P1: NEW BUILDINGS INSPECTED		
A. Buildings Inspected as a percentage of new buildings notified to the local authority	37%	<i>47.54%</i>
P2: NO. / % OF PLANNING DECISIONS CONFIRMED BY AN BORD PLEANÁLA		
A. Number of LA planning decisions which were the subject of an appeal to An Bord Pleanála that were determined by the Board on any date in the last year	12	<i>9</i>
B. % of the determinations at A which were to confirm either with or without variation the decision made by the LA	33%	<i>33%</i>
P3: % OF PLANNING ENFORCEMENT CASES CLOSED AS RESOLVED		
A. Total number of planning cases (as opposed to complaints) referred to or initiated by the local authority in the period 1/1/2014 to 31/12/2014 that were investigated	52	<i>N/A</i>
B. Total number of cases that were closed during 2014	27	<i>N/A</i>
C. % of the cases at B that were dismissed under section 152(2), Planning and Development Act 2000	22%	<i>N/A</i>
D. % of the cases at B that were resolved to the LA's satisfaction through negotiations	0%	<i>N/A</i>
E. % of the cases at B that were closed due to enforcement proceedings (i.e. in remedied in response to a warning letter issued under section 152 of the Act or to an enforcement notice issued under section 154 of the Act or where a prosecution was brought under section 157 or an injunction was sought under section 160 of the Act)	78%	<i>N/A</i>
F. Total number of planning cases being investigated as at 31/12/2014.	25	<i>N/A</i>
P4: COST PER CAPITA OF THE PLANNING SERVICE		
A. The Annual Financial Statement (AFS) Programme D data divided by the population of the LA area per the 2011 Census.	€ 29.55	<i>N/A</i>

F: FIRE SERVICE (F1 TO F3)	2014	2013
F1: COST PER CAPITA OF THE FIRE SERVICE		
A. The Annual Financial Statement (AFS) Programme E data divided by the population of the LA area per the 2011 Census.	€ 37.41	<i>N/A</i>
F2: SERVICE MOBILISATION		
A. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Full-Time Stations in respect of fire	N/A	<i>N/A</i>
B. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Part-Time Stations (retained fire service) in respect of fire	5.07	<i>5.39</i>
C. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Full-Time Stations in respect of all other (non-fire) emergency incidents	N/A	<i>N/A</i>
D. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Part-Time Stations (retained fire service) in respect of all other (non-fire) emergency incidents	5.42	<i>4.87</i>
F3: PERCENTAGE OF ATTENDANCES AT SCENES		
A. % of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at the scene is within 10 minutes	56.61%	<i>54.55%</i>
B. % of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at the scene is after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	36.56%	<i>37.17%</i>
C. % of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes	6.83%	<i>8.28%</i>
D. % of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance at the scene is within 10 minutes	42.71%	<i>47.11%</i>
E. % of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance at the scene is after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	50.00%	<i>42.15%</i>
F. % of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes	7.29%	<i>10.74%</i>
L: LIBRARY / RECREATION SERVICES (L1 AND L2)	2014	2013
L1: LIBRARY VISITS		
A. Number of visits to libraries per 1,000 population for the LA area per the 2011 Census.	3,357	<i>3,489</i>
L2: COST OF OPERATING A LIBRARY SERVICE		
A. The Annual Financial Statement (AFS) Programme F data divided by 1,000 population of the LA area per the 2011 Census.	€ 27,660.63	<i>N/A</i>

Y: YOUTH / COMMUNITY (Y1 TO Y4)	2014	2013
Y1: PARTICIPATION IN COMHAIRLE NA NÓG SCHEME		
A. Percentage of local schools and youth groups involved in the local Youth Council / <i>Comhairle na nÓg</i> scheme.	92.86%	<i>92.86%</i>
Y2: NO. OF GATEWAY PARTICIPANTS EMPLOYED AS % OF TARGET		
A. Number of Gateway participants who commenced a work placement during 2014 expressed as a % of the placements allocated to the LA.	60.0%	<i>N/A</i>
Y3: % OF NOMINEES TO LCDC MEMBERSHIP VIA THE PPN STRUCTURES FROM THE MOST MARGINALISED SICAP GROUPS		
A. The overall number of private sector members of the Local Community Development Committee at 31/12/2014 nominated via the People's Participation Network structures who are any of; Travellers, Roma, Unemployed, People with Disabilities, Lone Parents or Families in Disadvantages Areas and Disadvantaged or New Communities (including Refugees/Asylum Seekers)	60.0%	<i>N/A</i>
Y4: NUMBER PROGRESSING TO FT, PT OR SELF-EMPLOYMENT WITHIN 6 MONTHS OF RECEIPT OF A GOAL 3 EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT		
A. The no. of people in the 'Individuals supported into employment or self-employment' category, who commenced that employment within 6 months of receiving a Goal 3 support, included in the Local Community Development Programme Annual Report for 2014, the figures for which will be available by end March 2015 (although the report is not published by Pobal until the Autumn).	0	<i>N/A</i>

C: CORPORATE SERVICES (C1 TO C4)	2014	2013
C1: TOTAL NUMBER OF WTEs		
A. The wholtime equivalent staffing number as at 31 December 2014 (consistent with figures provided to D/ECLG by way of staffing returns for December 2014).	374.79	<i>378.16</i>
C2: WORKING DAYS LOST TO SICKNESS		
A. Percentage of working days lost to sickness absence through medically certified leave	3.40%	<i>3.89%</i>
B. Percentage of working days lost to sickness absence through self-certified leave	0.30%	<i>0.27%</i>
C3: NO. OF PAGE VISITS TO LA WEBSITE		
A. The cumulative total page views for the period from 1/1/2014 to 31/12/2014 obtained from a page tagging on-site web analytics service.	774,354	<i>N/A</i>
C4: OVERALL COST OF ICT PROVISION PER WTE		
A. All revenue expenditure on hardware and software plus depreciation (20% straight-line) on existing hardware plus IT consultancy and IT contracts plus IT licensing fees and the relevant proportion of the central management charge for the period from 1/1/2014 to 31/12/2014, divided by the WTE no. supplied under the C1 indicator.	€ 3,026	<i>N/A</i>

M: FINANCE (M1 AND M2)		2014	2013	
M1:5 YEAR SUMMARY OF REVENUE ACCOUNT BALANCE				
A. The debit/credit balance (denoting which) at 31/12/2010 in the Revenue Account from the Income and Expenditure Account Statement of the Annual Financial Statement (AFS)		-€ 2,463,992	<i>N/A</i>	
B. The debit/credit balance (denoting which) at 31/12/2011 in the Revenue Account from the Income and Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS		-€ 4,609,456	<i>N/A</i>	
C. The debit/credit balance (denoting which) at 31/12/2012 in the Revenue Account from the Income and Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS		-€ 5,782,975	<i>N/A</i>	
D. The debit/credit balance (denoting which) at 31/12/2013 in the Revenue Account from the Income and Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS		-€ 5,293,325	<i>N/A</i>	
E. The debit/credit balance (denoting which) at 31/12/2014 in the Revenue Account from the Income and Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS*		-€ 4,731,779	<i>N/A</i>	
M2:5 YEAR SUMMARY OF % COLLECTION LEVELS FOR MAJOR REVENUE SOURCES				
	Rates	Rents and Annuities	Housing Loans	
A. The individual % figures for each of (a) Rates , (b) Rent & Annuities and (c) Housing Loans in the final column of Appendix 7 of the Annual Financial Statement (AFS) for 2010	83.88%	86.79%	67.83%	<i>N/A</i>
B. Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2011	81.42%	87.15%	63.47%	<i>N/A</i>
C. Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2012	81.80%	85.82%	59.23%	<i>N/A</i>
D. Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2013	81.66%	84.79%	60.44%	<i>N/A</i>
E. Appendix 7 of the AFS* for 2014	82.12%	85.34%	61.63%	<i>N/A</i>

J: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (J1)	2014	2013
J1: No. of JOBS CREATED		
A. The no. of jobs created with assistance from the Local Enterprise Office during the period 1/1/2014 to 31/12/2014	109	<i>N/A</i>

LOCAL ELECTIONS 2014 – CANDIDATE EXPENDITURE AND DONATIONS

<i>Surname</i>	<i>First Name</i>	<i>Personal Spend</i>	<i>Party Spend on Candidate's behalf</i>	<i>Donations Received</i>	<i>Total Spend</i>
Bourke	Noel	€0.00	€1,069.70	€0.00	€1,069.70
Bracken	John	€0.00	€0.00	€0.00	€0.00
Brennan	Richard	€0.00	€0.00	€0.00	€0.00
Brady	Patricia	€50.00	€2,263.52	€0.00	€2,313.52
Buckley	Molly	€0.00	€2,263.52	€0.00	€2,263.52
Carroll	John	€3,872.50	€0.00	€0.00	€3,872.50
Carroll	Stephen	€1,100.00	€0.00	€0.00	€1,100.00
Clendennen	John	€0.00	€0.00	€0.00	€0.00
Cribbin	Noel	€3,100.00	€0.00	€0.00	€3,100.00
Doheny	Patrick	€3,185.00	€0.00	€0.00	€3,185.00
Dolan	Dervill	€4,362.00	€0.00	€0.00	€4,362.00
Dooley	Eamon	€600.00	€1,210.20	€0.00	€1,810.20
Dooley	Sinead	€989.00	€1,488.00	€0.00	€2,477.00
Fitzpatrick	Eddie	€0.00	€1,069.70	€0.00	€1,069.70
Foley	John	€1,940.00	€0.00	€0.00	€1,940.00
Harvey	Declan	€1,040.00	€0.00	€0.00	€1,040.00
Kellaghan	Robert	€325.00	€1,069.80	€0.00	€1,394.80
Killeavy	Brendan	€0.00	€5,343.15	€0.00	€5,343.15
Kirwan	Seamus	€1,635.00	€0.00	€0.00	€1,635.00
Leahy	John	€7,434.00	€0.00	€0.00	€7,434.00
Leddin	Declan	€1,015.00	€0.00	€0.00	€1,015.00
Loughnane	Michael	€2,398.70	€1,510.30	€0.00	€3,909.00
McDonnell	Fergus	€3,334.54	€0.00	€0.00	€3,334.54
McKeigue	Tommy	€1,196.00	€0.00	€0.00	€1,196.00
Moran	Frank	€165.01	€1,488.32	€0.00	€1,653.33
Nolan	Carol	€1,504.36	€1,028.90	€0.00	€2,533.26
O'Brien	Sean	€4,542.00	€0.00	€0.00	€4,542.00
O'Reilly	Martin	€0.00	€3,742.00	€0.00	€3,742.00
Ormond	Peter	€1,866.23	€1,210.30	€0.00	€3,076.53
Owens	Danny	€800.00	€1,488.00	€0.00	€2,288.00
Phelan	Pat	€590.00	€0.00	€0.00	€590.00
Plunkett	Ger	€0.00	€0.00	€0.00	€0.00
Quinn	Liam	€0.00	€2,263.52	€0.00	€2,263.52
Ryan-Feehan	Teresa	€3,858.16	€0.00	€0.00	€3,858.16
Sheils	Denis	€300.00	€2,263.52	€0.00	€2,563.52
Sweeney	Emmanuel J.	€4,180.00	€0.00	€0.00	€4,180.00
Whittle	William	€138.00	€2,263.52	€0.00	€2,401.52
Wrafter	Theresa	€0.00	€2,263.52	€0.00	€2,263.52

