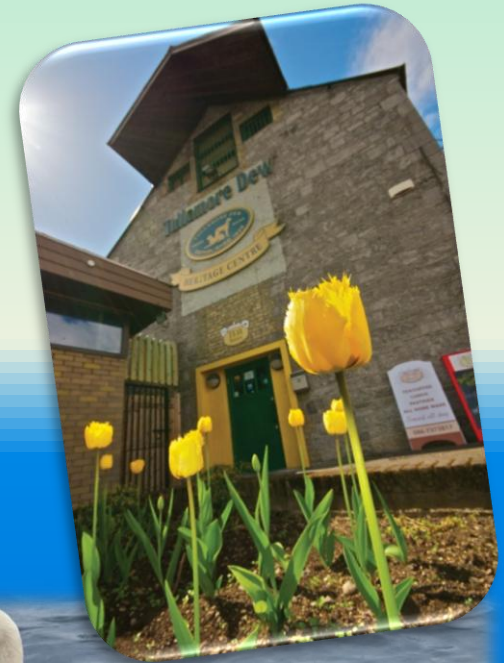


ANNUAL REPORT 2015

OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL



OFFALY
IRELAND'S HIDDEN GEM

Front cover (clockwise from top left)

Images from *Offaly – Irelands Hidden Gem*

- ❖ Ballooning in Offaly
- ❖ Tullamore DEW Heritage Centre
- ❖ Family of swans on the Canal in Edenderry
- ❖ Formal Gardens in Birr Castle
- ❖ Sculpture in Lough Boora

JOINT ADDRESS BY THE CATHAOIRLEACH AND THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE



Cllr. Eamonn Dooley — Cathaoirleach



Declan Kirrane — Príomh Fheidhmeannach

We are very pleased to present the *Offaly County Council 2015 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.

Throughout 2015, Offaly County Council continued the process of embedding the organisational changes brought about by the *Local Government (Reform) Act 2014*. Our staff in the Housing, Finance, HR and Planning Departments continued this process. The Local Enterprise Office continued their work with entrepreneurs in the County, both young and old.

There were a number of significant projects undertaken by the Council, on behalf of the citizens of Offaly, during 2015 and

perhaps the most noteworthy milestones would include:

- ❖ The new tourism brand for the County, **OFFALY – IRELANDS HIDDEN GEM**, and the launch of a new website visitoffaly.ie in September,
- ❖ Following public consultation in early 2015, the **Local Economic and Community Plan 2015-2021** was adopted in December,
- ❖ **The Junction – Offaly Innovation Centre** was launched in August,
- ❖ The **Offaly Greenways Strategy**, was approved by the members in September and Phase One of the proposed Greenway completed the Part VIII process in November,

- ❖ The **Open Library** initiative was piloted in Tullamore and Banagher Libraries,
- ❖ Five Offaly Communities took part in the National **Pride of Place** competition. **Jigsaw Offaly** secured a national runner up award in the Community Health Initiative Category,
- ❖ 8 housing units were completed and allocated in Kylebeg, Banagher, in October,
- ❖ Our Roads Department provided timely interventions to assist householder's affected by the flooding incidents in December,
- ❖ The Planning Department noted the continued increase in the number of Planning Applications in 2015, which may reflect the early stages of an economic recovery for the County,
- ❖ Since mid-2015 all County Council meetings are administered electronically,
- ❖ Offaly's 2016 Commemoration Committee drafted **Offaly's Clár Comórtha Céad Bliain**, and the programme was launched in December.

Offaly County Council continues to provide a good level of quality service to its customers despite the continuing difficult financial environment.

Offaly County Council is 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 significant challenges and it is only through the continued commitment of the Elected Members, Members of the Strategic Policy Committees, 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 County Council 2015 Annual Report* is a true reflection of the commitment and hard work of all our stakeholders and records the work and achievements of Offaly County Council over the past twelve months

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HOUSING, SOCIAL & CULTURAL SERVICES

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| SPC Chair | Peter Ormond MCC | A/Director Of Services | Tom Shanahan |
| <i>Members</i> | <i>Sectoral</i> | <i>Senior Executive Officer</i> | Ann Dillon |
| 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

SERVICES

The Council's Key Objective is to maximise the availability of accommodation to meet the different categories of need and to promote the full range of housing options.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS 2015

- Completion and allocation of 8 units constructed at Kylebeg, Banagher
- Delivery of 29 housing units at Church Hill Tullamore in partnership with Oaklee Housing Trust and NAMA.
- Delivery of 108 grants for disabled and elderly private home owners.

- Allocation of 94 homes to applicants on the housing waiting list through social leasing, Rental Accommodation Scheme or Local Authority stock.
- 41 applicant families were nominated to Approved Housing bodies and were allocated houses.
- Establishment of 95 tenancies under the Housing Assistance Payment between June and December 2015.
- Dealing with 3,344 maintenance requests from local authority tenants.
- Securing approval for the construction of 33 Housing units in Edenderry

- 4 meetings of the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee to review the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014-2018.
- Secured approval for 25 units under the Capital Assistance Scheme in partnership with Approved Housing bodies.
- Completed the acquisition of 8 units with the approval of funding from the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government.
- Secured funding for a 4 unit Group Housing Scheme in Tullamore through a national competition for a pilot scheme with an approved housing body CENA.
- Review of 2,100+ rent accounts
- Returned 65 vacant houses to productive use
- Completed adaptations to 11 Local Authority houses for tenants with disabilities
- Energy Efficiency works completed on 453 houses
- 86% rents collected
- Supported 146 Homeless presentations
- Responded to 112 anti social behaviour complaints

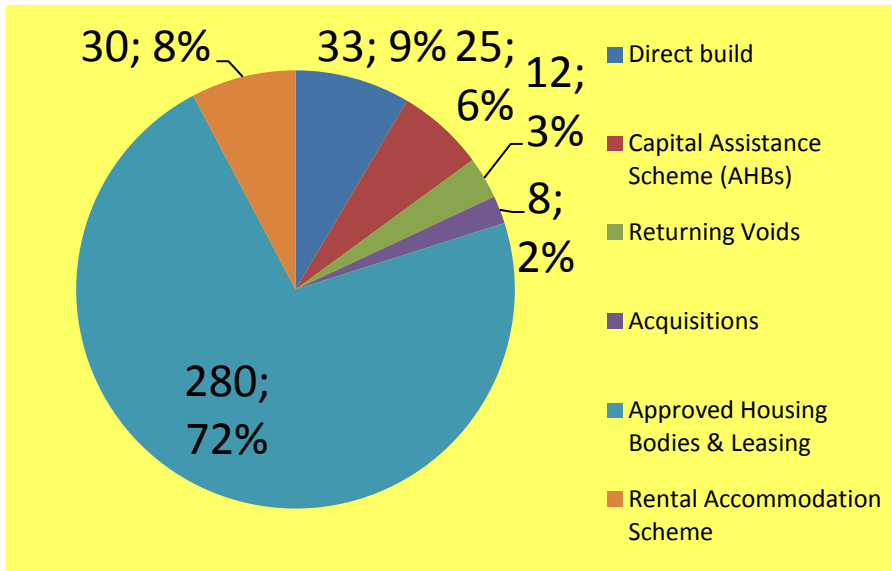
REPORT ON HOUSING STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE

The Housing, Social and Cultural SPC met 5 times in 2015. The following policies were agreed;

- Housing Maintenance Policy
- Halting Site Management Policy
- Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy
- Rent Arrears Policy
- Deposit Repayment Policy (Homeless)
- Caravan Retention Policy

SOCIAL HOUSING STRATEGY TARGETS 2015-2017

In April, Offaly was issued with its targets for 2015-2017 under the Social Housing Strategy as follows;



| | |
|------------|--|
| 33 | <i>units by construction</i> |
| 8 | <i>units by acquisition</i> |
| 25 | <i>units under Capital Assistance Scheme</i> |
| 12 | <i>units through returning voids</i> |
| 280 | <i>units through social leasing</i> |
| 30 | <i>units through Rental Accommodation Scheme</i> |
| 388 | <i>units in total</i> |

HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND ALLOCATIONS

135 tenancy allocations were made across the range of social housing options. There were 2,045 applicants on the housing waiting list at the end of 2015. Over 110 applicants joined the housing list in 2015.

| Year | Number |
|------|------------|
| 2010 | 177 |
| 2011 | 277 |
| 2012 | 333 |
| 2013 | 356 |
| 2014 | 452 |
| 2015 | 474 |

474 housing assessments were conducted in 2015. This was over two and half times the number of assessments carried out in 2010 and the number of applications and assessments continues to grow year on year.

PRIVATE SITES

No Private Sites were sold in 2015. Private sites are available at the following locations;

- ❖ *Bracknagh*
- ❖ *Clara*
- ❖ *Ferbane*
- ❖ *Kilcormac*
- ❖ *Banagher*
- ❖ *Moneygall*

ADAPTATION, MOBILITY AND OLDER PERSONS GRANTS

2015 Original Allocation - €799,081

Increased to €1,049,081 by the Department on the 13th November, 2015

| <i>Grant Type</i> | <i>Paid to 31/12/2015</i> | <i>No. of Grants Paid</i> | <i>No. remaining on waiting list as at 31/12/2015</i> |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Housing Adaption | €548,716 | 36 | 144 |
| Mobility Aid | €32,751 | 7 | 7 |
| Housing Aid for Older People | €366,675 | 65 | 55 |
| Total | €948,142 | 108 | 206 |

| <i>Grant Type</i> | <i>Amounts recouped from Dept to 31/12/2015</i> |
|------------------------------|---|
| Housing Adaption | €438,971 |
| Mobility Aid | €26,200 |
| Housing Aid for Older People | €293,342 |
| Total | €758,513 |

In addition to the above recoupment of €758,513, Occupational Therapist's costs of €7,011 were recouped.

Total recoupment as at 31/12/2015 = €765,524

LIBRARY SERVICE

INTRODUCTION

Progress on the implementation of “**Opportunities for all**” the national strategy for Public Libraries 2013-2017 continued in 2015. Key actions progressed by Offaly Library service includes:

- Implementation of the **Open Library pilot** initiative in Banagher and Tullamore Libraries.
- Roll out three **Literacy programmes**:
 - ❖ Read Anything, Anytime, Anywhere –Primary School programme
 - ❖ Summer Reading Adventure and Summer clubs
 - ❖ Once upon a Story time – preschool literacy programme
- Participation in **Libraries support Business and Employment** pilot.
- Collaborative project with Offaly Local Development providing **Work and Learning centres** in libraries.
- Lead authority for **Midlands Libraries books and media tender** 2015.

PERFORMANCE 2015

Overall the trend in increased use of the library service continues. A continuous review of library services activities including opening hours, staffing levels and evaluation of services based on financial constraints remains in place. The number of loans and visits decreased due to the temporary reduction of opening hours in Tullamore Central Library during 2015. The demand for wifi, study spaces and access to meeting rooms has increased.

| Description | 2015 | 2014 | % increase |
|------------------------|---------|---------|------------|
| <i>Members</i> | 14,557 | 14,330 | 1.58% |
| <i>Visits</i> | 250,221 | 259,520 | -3.58% |
| <i>Internet / wifi</i> | 197,378 | 145,266 | 35.87% |
| <i>Loans</i> | 259,381 | 278,397 | -6.83% |
| <i>Website hits</i> | 95,171 | 79,831 | 19.22% |

OPEN LIBRARY

A Pilot initiative funded by DECLG Government was launched in Banagher and Tullamore Library in January 2015. Both Banagher and Tullamore Library are open from 8am – 10pm, 7 days a week to library members on a self service basis outside of current

opening hours. Users 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. The service is available only to members of the library who are over 18. 1,152 people have registered to use Open Libraries in Banagher and Tullamore. Over 18,000 visits have taken place during unstaffed hours in 2015.

Open Libraries is a significant customer service development for libraries and has the potential to transform the use and value to the public of the services and the civic space provided by the council.



Science Week in Central Library, Tullamore

LIBRARY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (LMS)

A new National LMS system is currently being implemented in public libraries. Offaly Library service is in phase 3 and the system will go live in June 2016.

This new system will provide the following benefits for customers:

- One **single library membership card** to access all Public libraries in the Country.
- Users will have access to library collections, resources and digital content of all public libraries in one search.
- Virtual library accessible to all members.

CULTURE AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME

Our regular events include book clubs, storytelling activities, author visits and exhibitions.

Events included

- Science Week
- Positive Ageing Week
- Culture Night
- Heritage Week
- Birr Vintage Week
- Hullabaloo children's Art Programme
- Author Visits e.g. Geraldine O'Neill
- Book Launches
- Christmas Programme

LOCAL STUDIES AND ARCHIVES

Work carried out during 2015 includes:

- The listing of all private collections
- New access policies
- Conservation of the DeRenzy collection
- Transfer of Minute books to the Archive from Tullamore Town Council / Edenderry Town Council and Birr Town Council
- Cataloguing of the Belmont collection

2016 COMMEMORATIONS

The Library service is actively involved in the Council's 2016 Commemoration programme. The following projects were progressed during 2015.

- Schools Education Pack
- 1916 Bibliography
- Conservation of the 1916 Minute Book
- Digitisation of 1916 newspapers
- Conservation of the 1966 commemoration film
- Heritage week Talks by Dr. Philip McConway on 1916

LIBRARIES SUPPORT BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT

Offaly Library service is participating in a national pilot project to determine how libraries can support business, enterprise and employment and strengthen links with the LEOs, Intreo services and other relevant bodies, and to avoid any duplication of services.

LITERACY

- **A literacy Conference on Right to Read** took place on September 23rd 2015 in Dublin Castle where the Right to Read government initiative was launched. In 2016 Offaly County Council will implement a literacy action plan. The plan will involve local communities, child care groups, schools, adult education and other key sectors of the community.
- **Schools Programme:** During 2015 Offaly Libraries initiated a new literacy programme - **Read anything, anytime, anywhere** - with primary schools in County Offaly for 2015. 64% of primary schools in Offaly signed up to the programme.
- **Summer Literacy program:** Visits to libraries during the summer increased as over 800 Children participated in **the Summer Reading Adventure and Summer clubs.**
- **Pre-School Reading Initiative:** A new pre-school reading initiative called "Once upon a story time" is under development. This project is aimed at getting childcare providers and parents involved in reading with children and using interactive story time from a young age.



Killeen National School pupils visit Birr Library

DIGITAL RESOURCES

Our digital resources including e-books, e audio books, and e-magazines continue to grow in popularity and will be replaced by a single national online resource services accessible by the members of all local authority library services from the 2nd January 2016.

PRIORITIES FOR 2016

1. Progress plans for a new Community Library in Edenderry included in the national library capital programme 2016-2021.

2. Continue to deliver Open Library hours and examine the feasibility of expanding the service to other libraries in Offaly.
3. Prepare a new Library Development Programme 2017-2021.
4. Implement the new national shared Library Management System during 2016.
5. Participate on the 2016 Commemorations committee and implement a programme of events.
6. Progress linkages and collaborative *approaches* to supporting economic initiatives, employment, business and job creation.
7. Continue to focus on literacy and provision of a literacy programme.
8. Facilitate and promote life-long learning to ensure skills requirements are met and deficits addressed.
9. Promote heritage and culture through programme of events in Libraries.
10. Continuous review of library services activities to include opening hours, staffing levels and evaluation of services.

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 2015, we began implementing Year 3 of the new regional music education programme.

Key achievements in 2015 were:

4,500 young people across Offaly and Westmeath are now receiving music education under Music Generation.

27 musicians are employed by Music Generation locally delivering 190 hours of tuition weekly, Working in 42 schools and 3 youth/ community programmes

€40,000 from the Arts Council was added to the programme to deliver a large public event and UK

musical director Greg Beardsell was engaged to deliver Singfest a festival of choirs concert in 2016

We partnered with Youth Work Ireland to deliver FETAC level 5 sound engineering and music technology training in Mullingar Music Jam facility and sound engineering in Edenderry

8 young people composed, recorded and filmed an accompanying video on the John Lennon Bus Ireland tour;



Music Generation Students with the John Lennon Bus

Youth Rock Night brought together members of Edenderry Rockers and Mullingar Music Jam held in Edenderry Youth Cafe as part of Culture Night 2015;

PUBLIC ART – PER CENT FOR ART SCHEME



Participants in the Silent Journeys Production in Aug 2015

Secrets of Offaly – Kinnitty / Rex Ingram

Theatre maker Ciaran Taylor worked with the community of Kinnitty to recreate scenes from the life and work of **Rex Ingram**, the silent Hollywood movie director grew up in Kinnitty. The project culminated in a public performance called **Silent Journeys** with a cast of over 90 people. A DVD was made of the project and is available online.

Secrets of Offaly – John Joly / Clonbullogue

Artist Amanda Rice researched the work of scientist John Joly from Clonbullogue and created an installation based on his notes on the microscopical character of Krakatoa. The community also were invited to visit John Joly's archive and office in Trinity College. The project is available on line on www.jolyarchive.net

Secrets of Offaly – Clara / Robert Goodbody

Artists Tom Lane, Rory Grubb and Maeve Stone worked with Clara Musical Society to compose a new work, **Meeting House**, based on the life, work and Quaker tradition of the Goodbody family in Clara. Three sold out public performances of the new work took place in the Clara Meeting House, home of the Musical Society.



OBSERVING OFFALY – PHOTO BOOK

Photographer Veronica Nicholson was commissioned to photo document Offaly during 2015/2016 for a publication and exhibition featuring 200 images of Offaly during the centenary year.

FILMOFFALY

RTE piloted a new drama Quinn & O’Grady in Offaly. The 2015 FilmOffaly Award, was awarded to short film *Caper* which filmed in Tullamore in December 2015. €24,000 was awarded to FilmOffaly through the REDZ pilot programme for a marketing campaign to be launched in 2016. The OFFline Film Festival marked the 10th anniversary of Pure Mule. A pop up film studio for Tullamore has been marketed to further boost the potential for economic development in the film industry locally.



*Quinn &
O’Grady filmed
a Garda HQ in
Aras an
Chontae*

MINI MOVIES

In association with the OFFline Film Festival the Arts Office created a filmmaking programme for 3 schools (St. Brendan’s Community School, Crinkill NS and Seir Keiran NS), where 100 students worked with Paper Panther Productions. 240 children attended the animations premier at the festival.

BIRR THEATRE & ARTS CENTRE

Birr Theatre & Arts Centre provides a valuable Arts resource to Birr and Offaly. In 2015 the Arts Service partnered with Birr Theatre on several community arts projects, in particularly **Hullabaloo Children’s Arts Festival**. The Council also provided €23,000.00 of funding to Birr Theatre in 2015.

CULTURE NIGHT

Culture Night in Offaly treated the public to 34 free events arts as part of the national programme. Almost 2000 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 Eamon Dooley at the launch of Culture Night 2015

subsequent formation of a working group to identify the current issues and future planning objectives.

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 annual showcase in April took place in Birr Theatre to a packed house of family and friends. Later in the year OYT partnered with Jigsaw Offaly to create a performance around Youth Mental Health called *Write Your Mind* (pictured) which was funded under the Arts Act Grants.

ANAM BEO

The Arts Office facilitated a review of 10 years of Anam Beo, the Arts, Health and Wellbeing Organisation in Offaly which is jointly funded by Offaly County Council and the HSE. A new model of identity, governance and operation has emerged and 10 years of the project was marked by a public art project 'Storyboards' in partnership with Irish Rail and funded by Offaly County Council.

The process to look at the future of the Sculpture Park at Lough Boora began with a discussion workshop and the





HULLABALOO! OFFALY'S CHILDREN'S ARTS FESTIVAL

In 2015, 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.



Joe Caslin created a paper mural on Tullamore Municipal Offices highlighting mental health in young men, as part of his Nations Sons series for Foundation 15. It was featured on RTE news on Culture Night.

ARTS ACT GRANTS

17 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, Castlepalooza and Scripts as well as leading out with other festivals such as Hullabaloo Children's Arts Festival and Foundation 15.

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 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 2015 the board of Tullamore Community Arts Centre announced its decision to alter its plans in the development of a new community arts centre for the town.

Sale agreed (subject to surveys and planning) has been achieved on the former Kilroy's premises (beside Ulster Bank) on High Street, which will now house the arts centre bringing a much need redevelopment to High Street in Tullamore.

The decision came following an exhaustive process to bring down the costs of the design for the arts centre on Kilbride Park in line with its budget of €3m. Developing a building in the town centre is now the most cost effective solution achievable within the budget available.

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.

ARAS EXHIBITION PROGRAMME

Aras an Chontae atrium is a space always in demand for exhibition. In 2015 we hosted exhibitions by the following artists and organisations.

- ➔ Hazel Greene (artist / Shinrone)
- ➔ Olive Cuskelly and Paula Finlay (artists / Tullamore)
- ➔ Mary O'Connor (Famine Stitch / Edenderry)
- ➔ Annaharvey Painting Group (Tullamore)
- ➔ Gar Daly (artist / Portarlinton)
- ➔ Maura Fahy (artist / Tullamore)
- ➔ Anam Beo (arts in health / Offaly)
- ➔ Tullamore College & Offaly School of Special Education (student craft exhibition)
- ➔ Slieve Bloom Photography Club
- ➔ Local Enterprise Office

ENVIRONMENT & WATER SERVICES

| | | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| SPC Chair | Thomas McKeigue MCC | A/Director Of Services | Tom Shanahan |
| <i>Members</i> | <i>Sectoral</i> | <i>A/Senior Engineer</i> | Damien Grennan |
| 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 continuing to deliver Water Services in accordance with the SLA with Irish Water and the Annual Service Plan for 2015.

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, responsibly 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 remains 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 (2014) shows that Offaly had a 95.4% microbiological compliance rate in 2014 and a 100% Chemical Parameter Compliance rate. Offaly is one of only 11 Local Authorities that does not have a Water Supply scheme on the EPA Remedial Action list.

Countywide Unaccounted for Water (UFW) averaged 44.25% for 2015, 46.5% for 2014, 45.5% for 2013 and

47.40% for 2012. The completion of watermain rehabilitation contracts in Tullamore and Birr Town this year has aided the reduction in UFW in 2015. The introduction of Domestic charging by Irish Water along with the introduction of the Irish Water "First Fix" Scheme will assist in this regard.

The planned commencement of watermain rehabilitation projects in Edenderry and Kilcormac will further assist in this regard in 2016.

WASTEWATER

Three wastewater discharge licences were issued by the EPA during 2015, bringing the number of licences in Offaly to fourteen. The three Licences were for Clara, Ferbane and Banagher. Meeting the stringent limit values on these licences is challenging but considerable progress was made regarding same in 2015.

Full secondary treatment is now provided in all public sewerage schemes in Offaly with a significant improvement in quality standards compliance being achieved as a result.

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 through the Minor Programmes and Suppressed Capital funding



Aeration Tank Cleaning and Refurbishment Works at Birr WWTP

mechanisms which will expedite improvements to existing 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. The Tullamore and Birr Watermains Rehabilitation Projects were completed in 2015. Since the completion of the Birr Rehabilitation Project, the town and its environs have seen a dramatic reduction in Unaccounted For Water from 40.78% to 24.36%. A further watermain rehabilitation contract in Edenderry and Kilcormac will commence in 2016.

The following Schemes are on the Capital Investment

Plan 2014 – 2016 and Minor Works/ Suppressed Capital Programme

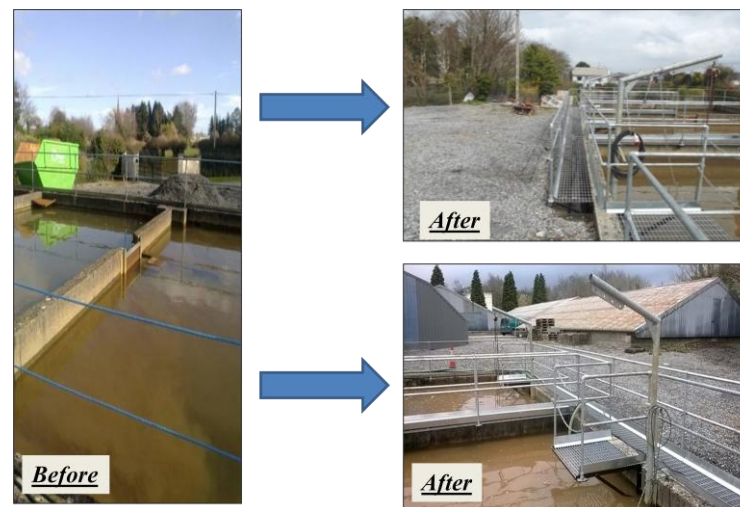
| Scheme Name | Contract Name | Current Status |
|--|---|--|
| Watermain Rehabilitation | | |
| Offaly Water Conservation Stage 3 Watermain Rehabilitation Project Phase 1 | Tullamore North & South | Complete |
| | Birr Town | Complete |
| | Edenderry and Kilcormac | To commence construction in Q1 2016 |
| | Tullamore Town | Complete |
| Capital Investment Plan 2014 – 2016 | | |
| Tullamore Water Supply Scheme Phase | Water Treatment Plant Upgrade (Clonaslee) | Treatment Plant Review being undertaken to identify future upgrade works |
| | Development of Sources | Asset Needs Brief (ANB) submitted to progress development of Boreholes |

| | | |
|--|-------------------------------|--|
| Tullamore Water Supply Scheme Phase (cont./..) | Network | Watermain Rehabilitation Complete Minor Works Programme Marian Place/O Molloy Street commenced |
| Birr Water Supply Scheme | Water Treatment Plant Upgrade | Consulting Engineer appointed by IW. |
| Tullamore Sewerage Scheme (Network) | Drainage Area Plan | Review of Network and CSOs commenced |
| Minor Programmes | | |
| Birr Sewerage Scheme | Asset Needs Brief | ANB submitted 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 | ANB submitted to address EWSS |

| | | |
|---|-------------------|--|
| Edenderry Sewerage Scheme | Asset Needs Brief | Tender Assessment Comenced on Storm Tank Provision at WWTP |
| Dillon St/Healy St, Tullamore Watermain Replacement | Asset Needs Brief | Works Complete |
| Walsh Island/Cloneygowan WWTP | Asset Needs Brief | ANB submitted to replace Reed Beds |
| Arden Reservoir, Tullamore Refurbishment Works | Asset Needs Brief | Works Complete |
| Moneygall upgrade works WTP | Asset Needs Brief | ANB submitted to upgrade Pumping System and Chlorine dosing system |



Daingean Pumping Station – Provision of New Roof



Clonaslee WTP - Provision of Walking Gantrys and Handrails

In 2016, we will continue to engage with IW on prioritising infra-structure improvements in Offaly.

Significant Health and Safety Improvement Works have been undertaken in a number of water and wastewater installations throughout 2015.

RURAL WATER PROGRAMME

SUBSIDIES

A total of €526,601 was paid in 2015 to 16 Group Water Schemes for GWS Subsidies.

RURAL WATER PROGRAMME 2015 CAPITAL WORKS

The following Rural Water Programme 2015 capital funding allocation for County Offaly was received on the 14th May 2015.

| Measure | 2015 Allocation € |
|--|----------------------|
| Group Water Scheme - Water Conservation/Network Upgrades | 230,000 |
| New Group Sewerage Schemes | 150,000 |
| <i>Total DECLG Allocation</i> | 380,000 |

The allocation was considered and approved by the Rural Water Monitoring Committee (RWMC) on 19 May 2015. In October 2015 approval for additional emergency funding was received from the Department for works at Aghancon, Bracknagh and Tubber GWS. The complete breakdown of funding is outlined below:

| Name of GWS | Allocation € |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| Aghancon GWS | 12,500 |
| Ballinagar GWS | 30,000 |
| Blackwater GWS | 5,400 |
| Bloomhill GWS | 8,500 |
| Boher GWS | 15,000 |
| Bracknagh GWS | 135,660 |
| Cadamstown GWS | 31,500 |
| Clareen GWS | 39,600 |
| Mount Lucas GWS | 50,000 |
| EGLISH, RATH & DRUMCULLEN GWS | 50,000 |
| Tubber GWS | 35,738 |
| Total | 413,898 |

Brocca GSS was designed and tendered and a Part 8 for the pumping station was adopted by the Council on 23

November 2015. However the scheme was not constructed due to the late withdrawal of some members making the scheme unviable.

The design for Arden Lane GSS was substantially completed. However the scheme did not progress further due to unresolved wayleave issues.

WELL GRANTS

Under this scheme, if your house is more than 7 years old and not connected to either a public or group scheme, you may be eligible for a grant, (subject to some conditions).

The grant is subject to a maximum of 2,031.58 euro (or 75% of cost of the work, whichever is the lesser) and must be used for the provision of a new water supply or the upgrading of an existing one.

The number of well grants paid by Municipal District in 2015 were as follows:

| No. of Well Grants Paid by Municipal District | 2015 |
|---|---------------|
| Birr Municipal District | 1 |
| Tullamore Municipal District | 0 |
| Edenderry Municipal District | 1 |
| Total Grants Paid | €4,057 |

ENVIRONMENT

NATIONAL WASTE COLLECTION PERMIT OFFICE (NWCPO)

In May 2015 the Waste Management (Collection Permit) (Amendment) Regulations, 2015 were published. These regulations brought in specific provisions for household kerbside waste collectors including the requirement to install weighing systems on vehicles by 1st July 2015 and charging by weight from the 1st July 2016. The NWCPO was charged with reviewing all household waste collection permits to apply the new conditions.

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.

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.

LITTER MANAGEMENT PLAN 2016-2018

Under Section 10 of the Litter Pollution Act 1997 each Local Authority is required to develop and implement a Litter Management Plan for its functional area. A Litter Management Plan was drafted by the Environment and Water Services SPC and considered by Offaly County Council prior to going to public consultation in late 2015. The plan was adopted at the December 2015 meeting of the Council.

FOOD WASTE AND BIO WASTE REGULATION

The European Union (Household Food Waste and Bio - Waste) Regulations 2013 imposed duties on waste collectors and householders in the



*Food Waste Prevention Initiative
– Tullamore Show 2015*

separation and collection of household waste.

Offaly County Council continue to promote awareness and enforce these Regulations. Offaly County Council

took the lead in a food waste prevention initiative at this year's Tullamore Show. The main theme of this well attended event was to educate the public on how to prevent food waste in the home by offering alternative options to throwing out food.

On 1st July 2014 the Regulations came into operation for Tullamore Urban Area (agglomeration > 10,000) and on 1st July 2015 the regulation came into operation for Birr, Edenderry, Clara, Portarlinton and Banagher (agglomeration > 1,500).

Offaly County Council continue to ensure that Waste Collectors, at a minimum, provide or arrange for the provision of a separate collection service



Cathaoirleach, Chief Executive and Offaly County Council Staff- Tullamore Show 2015

for food waste

(brown bins). Householders must ensure food waste is segregated, collected by an authorized waste collector, and is brought to an authorized facility or composted.

EASTERN MIDLANDS REGIONAL WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN 2015-2021

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 new Eastern Midlands Regional Waste Management Plan 2015-2021 was launched on the 14th May 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.

In 2015 a total of 832 cases involving litter/air/noise/water pollution were investigated by the team, with 87.74% of these cases resolved at the end of the year. This number of cases involving litter/air/noise/water pollution increased by 41% from that in 2014. We will conduct a similar number of inspections in 2016 in accordance with the Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections (RMCEI) Plan.

GREEN SCHOOLS AWARENESS PROGRAMME

Offaly County Council continues to support this environmental initiative and has achieved great progress in this regard.

Offaly County Council still maintains a 100% registration for its secondary schools. Acknowledgment has to be given to Rehab Care who were awarded their first green



Green Flag- Rehab Care 2015

green flag.

Recognition also has to go to Kinnitty National School who were chosen as the primary school winner in the Eastern Midlands category in this year's Irish Water Green-Schools of the Year Award. They were one of four primary schools chosen nationwide for this prize and an

flag and to the work of Rehab Care Resource, the National Learning Network, Offaly Special School of Education in Kilcruttin and St. Mary's Youth Centre in Tullamore all of whom are working towards their first

awards ceremony was held in the Mansion House. Although they were not the winning school on the day, their work was complemented and commended.

Offaly County Council continues to support the Green Schools Programme by frequent visits to the schools, facilitating free workshops to the schools, arranging the annual teacher training seminar as well as making a financial contribution to the schools for their environmental projects.

PROTECTION OF NATURAL WATERS

WATER FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE:

The EU Water Framework Directive 2000 seeks to protect and improve our natural waters, including rivers, lakes, groundwater, coastal water and transitional waters. The Water Framework Directive objectives are implemented through River Basin Management Plans and Programmes of Measures

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.

A new Water Framework Directive Office has been

established to facilitate a coordinated regional approach.

We will continue 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 in conjunction with this new Water Framework Directive Office

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 continue to carry out investigations in Zone of Contributions of Public Water Supply boreholes 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 2015, in accordance with EPA requirements. A total of 16 systems are to be inspected before the end of the year. 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. There have been a number of public consultation days within the county in 2015 to seek public input and submissions on these draft maps.

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. Offaly County Council continues to work in conjunction with the Midland Energy Agency in an effort to achieve the objectives as set out in the 2020 targets.

BURIAL GROUNDS

On the 20th July 2015 Offaly County Council adopted Burial Ground Bye Laws for the regulation of Burial Grounds in County Offaly. The Bye Laws came into force from 20th August 2015.

The Bye Laws include provision for the development of a number of lawn cemeteries throughout the county. Offaly County Council held a briefing Seminar in October to advise all stakeholders of the implementation of the new Bye Laws which was attended by Burial Ground

Caretakers, Undertakers and Stonemasons.

Under a pilot initiative agreements were made in 2014 with Banagher and Lowertown Cemetery Committees that they would take over the general maintenance of the burial grounds in return for an annual payment or grant from the Council. The agreement was designed to be cost neutral to the Council and was funded from receipts from the sale of plots in each cemetery, following deduction of the Caretakers salaries. A great deal of work was undertaken by the respective committees and both burial grounds are now greatly improved in appearance.

Local Authority in 2014 and 101 were seized in 2015.

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.

ANIMAL CONTROL AND WELFARE

STRAY ANIMAL CONTROL SERVICE

Our Veterinary Section manages its Dog Control service 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 and a contract awarded for the years 2015 - 2017.

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. A total of 164 horses were seized by the

PLANNING, ECONOMIC & LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

| SPC Chair | Eamonn Dooley MCC | Director Of Services | Seán Murray |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|--|--|
| <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 |
| | | | Eamon Henry |
| | | <i>Sports Partnership Co-ordinator</i> | |

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.

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 September 2015, '**Connecting People Connecting Places**', A Strategy for Walking and Cycling in Offaly was published. This document which sets out a vision for County Offaly, to promote and develop opportunities for walking and cycling in the county, was the culmination of an extensive programme which involved, cooperation between key stakeholders, a period of public consultation / information evenings and conducting the necessary background Environmental and Ecological Assessments.

In November 2015, Part 8 approval was secured for Phase 1 - Grand Canal Blueway, A Quality Cycleway / Walkway from Digby Bridge to Turraun, which will link Tullamore to Lough Boora with a family friendly cycle track. Phase 2 of the Grand Canal Blueway is now at the initial pre-planning stage and it is expected to progress to Part 8 application by summer 2016. It is planned to conduct public consultation prior to the Part 8 process. Significantly an Ecological Survey of the entire Grand Canal has been commissioned by Waterways Ireland, which encompasses the entire Grand Canal in County Offaly.

TULLAMORE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT

In February 2016 Offaly County Council received confirmation of €1.5m ERDF funding for two projects in Tullamore in pursuance of urban renewal and urban mobility. This funding requires match funding to be provided from the Local Authority's own resources. The

first project relates to public realm improvements in the town centre of Tullamore. This will include new paving, street furniture, lighting and a redesigned layout for High Street, Columcille Street and O'Connor Square with specific emphasis on increasing the priority for pedestrians and creating a civic space in O'Connor Square. The second project consists of a pedestrian bridge linking the Bridge Centre Car Park to Millennium Square. The project is scheduled to be completed by 2018 while 2016 will consist mainly of the planning stage, with design consultants to be appointed and Part VIII permission sought this year.

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 |
|------|--------------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|
| 2011 | 347* | 293 | 27 | 320 |
| 2012 | 313* | 238 | 14 | 252 |
| 2013 | 261* | 191 | 15 | 206 |
| 2014 | 310* | 272 | 12 | 284 |
| 2015 | 375* | 263 | 12 | 275 |

(*This figure includes applications which were invalid)

Extensions of Appropriate Period:

| Year | No of Applications | No. Granted | No. Refused | Total Decided |
|------|--------------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|
| 2013 | 52 | 48 | 6 | 54 |
| 2014 | 42 | 38 | 6 | 44 |
| 2015 | 37 | 35 | 3 | 38 |

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 modest increase in the number of planning applications received in 2015. 375 planning applications were received in 2015 which compares with 310 for 2014.

The Planning Department, during 2015, 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 177 pre planning meetings held in 2015, while another 214 customer's pre-planning queries were dealt with by telephone.

QUARRIES ASSESSMENT:

Under Section 261A, 153 potential quarries have been assessed within the County. The current status of quarries in Offaly can be classified as follows:

Table 1

| QUARRY CATEGORY | Status |
|---|------------|
| With Planning Permission | 13 (2) |
| Pre-1964 under S261 conditions | 10 |
| Substitute Consent Application- Lodged- Pending | 1+1 |
| Unauthorised Quarry under Enforcement action. | 7 |
| Ceased through recent Enforcement | 22 |
| Abandoned | 58 |
| Reinstated | 31 |
| Never a quarry | 10 |
| Total | 153 |

Sixteen quarries were invited to apply for Substitute Consent, three applications have been lodged, one has been granted, one refused and the third decision is pending, details as illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2

| 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 2015 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 2015 – 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 Scheme 2015 applied to structures in immediate danger of significant deterioration and were Protected Structures. Only two applications could be submitted by Offaly County Council for possible approval by the Department. The Department approved both applications; 01 Busherstown House urgent repairs to roof with final grant approval of €20,000 and 02 Charleville Stables urgent roof work with final grant approval of €40,000. The scheme involved monthly reports along with visual proof of completed works.

UNFINISHED HOUSING ESTATES

There are currently 11 estates in County Offaly named on the most recent DoECLG Unfinished Housing Development list, published on 16th December 2015. 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, down from 34, in the first survey in 2012. Progress is being made on a number of listed developments with the expectation of a number of estates being finished out in 2016. The recent up-turn in the economic situation is aiding in this respect.

SCANNING PROJECT

During 2015, 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 2015 have been scanned and are now available for viewing on the website. 2008 is currently being scanned.

GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION SYSTEM

The Planning Section was involved in the final stages of converting our planning GIS data from MapInfo to ArcMap as well as publishing this data on ARCGIS-online (AGOL). This new GIS software is step one in enabling the public carry out a number of different types of planning searches on-line such as Planning Applications Enforcements, Part 8, Section 97 and Section 47 as well as giving the public access to some Development Plan

GIS Data. During late 2015, the Planning Section started publishing this GIS data on Javascript, a GIS viewer created by Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI). This is the final step in enabling the public to carry out planning searches online.

COMPLIANCE / ENFORCEMENT

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Warning Letters | 80 |
| Enforcement Notices: | 22 |
| District/Circuit Court Cases: | 0 |
| Prosecutions Initiated: | 0 |

During 2015, 54 enforcement files were opened. 80 warning letters and 22 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.

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.

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 2014 – Oct 2015. | |
|---|--------------|
| <i>Receipts</i> | €000's |
| Balance Available – November 2014 | 4,238 |
| <i>Contributions Received Nov 2013 to Oct 2014 (as follows):</i> | |
| Development Contributions – Customers | 944 |
| Disbursements Dec 2013– Oct 2014 (see below) | 1,127 |
| Balance Available at October 2014 | 4,055 |

| Allocation of Funds – since last report to Council, November 2014 | €000's |
|--|---------------|
| Amenities – AFS Allocations | 167 |
| Special Development Contributions – AFS Allocations | 366 |
| Amenities, etc. – Former BTC | 395 |
| Infrastructure – DCS Improvement Works N80 Clara | 60 |
| Infrastructure – DCS Tullamore College | 80 |
| Infrastructure – DCS Kilmurray Precast Concrete | 30 |
| Infrastructure – DCS Daingean | 8 |
| Infrastructure – DCS Edenderry | 4 |
| Infrastructure – DCS Rhode | 7 |
| Infrastructure – DCS Derrygolan | 10 |
| Total | 1,127 |

**OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS AVAILABLE FOR DISBURSEMENT
AS AT NOVEMBER 2015:**

| <i>Job Description</i> | <i>Funds Available €000's</i> |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| Dev. Cont. Scheme – Amenities | 314 |
| Dev. Cont. Scheme – Infrastructure | 2,255 |
| Spl. Dev. Cont. Scheme 2004 Car Parking | 522 |
| Spl. Dev. Cont. - Windfarms | 267 |
| Spl. Dev. Cont. - Scheme Clara Quarry | 4 |
| Spl. Dev. Cont. – Road Imp & Main Drumcraw | 34 |
| Spl. Dev. Cont. Scheme Communication Masts | 634 |
| Spl. Dev. Cont. - Rd Imp Tullaroe Clareen | 8 |
| Spl. Dev. Cont. – Recycling Facility at Barnan | 7 |
| Spl. Dev. Cont. - Rd Improvement to N80 Clara | 4 |
| Spl. Dev. Cont. – Passing Bays Carrick Castlejordan | 3 |
| Spl. Dev. Levy - Rest Road Ballykean Geashill | 1 |
| Spl. Dev. Cont. – Passing Bays Ballykean Geashill | 2 |
| | |
| TOTAL | 4,055 |

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

BACKGROUND TO THE LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE

The Local Enterprise Office is located in County Council Buildings, Áras an Chontae, Charleville Road, Tullamore, Co. Offaly. The Local Enterprise Office (LEO) provides a one stop shop for anyone looking to set up or grow a business. The services can be broken down into the following areas:

- Business Information & Advisory Services
- Enterprise Support Services
- Entrepreneurship Support Services
- Local Enterprise Development Services

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. During 2015, the team grew to include a Business Executive (a two year Graduate posting funded by Enterprise Ireland) and part-time intern (funded through the Gateway Scheme). These additional resources have enabled LEO Offaly deliver a wide range of services to aspiring and existing business owners.

VISION

To drive an entrepreneurial culture across the county, at all levels and to support the start-up and growth of

innovative, competitive and profitable small business enterprises that create sustainable jobs and contribute to developing a robust and diversified local economy.

LEO Offaly's remit is wide and includes both the Local Enterprise functions and the Economic Development function of Offaly County Council.

ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

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. 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).

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.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Local Enterprise Office is fully integrated into Offaly County Council, and delivers the Economic Development Function of Offaly County Council. Staff within the LEO Office liaise with community groups and industry regarding the sale of County Council lands for development. LEO Offaly works with local, regional and national enterprises to attract investment and employment. It actively promotes Local Authority business supports such as the Business Incentive Scheme, the Rates Rebate Scheme and has developed a Property Database of available industrial, retail and office premises in the County. The Local Enterprise Office promotes industrial and business parks, and the economic opportunities of different towns and villages in Offaly. The LEO Office actively pursues funding opportunities for enterprise and economic development in the County.

Furthermore, the Local Enterprise Office has a lead role

in implementing the Economic Section of the Local Economic and Community Plan. It also has a role in delivering local and regional initiatives within the Midland Action Plan for Jobs.

Together with Offaly County Council, LEO Offaly manages and promotes The Junction, Business Innovation Centre in Tullamore.

HIGHLIGHTS 2015

2015 OFFALY COUNTY ENTERPRISE AWARDS

Kinnitty based company Applied Concepts Ltd. was announced the Overall Winner in the 2015 Offaly County Enterprise Awards. Guest speaker on the night was Entrepreneur and Dragon's Den Investor Mr. Gavin Duffy. Over 80 people gathered on the night to meet the finalists, to hear Gavin Duffy and to congratulate winners of the County Enterprise Awards and Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur (IBYE) county final. 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.

There were twelve 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 Best New Business,

Female Entrepreneurship Award and Best Exporter Award. The prize fund awarded on the night amounted to €3,000

AWARD WINNERS:

There were 7 prizes, 3 category winners, 3 merit awards as well as the overall winner of the Offaly Enterprise Awards. The overall winner Applied Concepts Limited will go forward to represent the County at the National Enterprise Awards.

OVERALL WINNER:

Applied Concepts Limited

EXPORT AWARD:

Kearney Fabrications Limited

BEST NEW BUSINESS AWARD:

The Marshmallow Factory

FEMALE ENTREPRENEURSHIP AWARD:

Alison Ritchie, Polar Ice Ltd

MERIT AWARD:

Karl Mulligan, T/a FanZapp

MERIT AWARD:

Welding Quality Management Services Ltd

MERIT AWARD:

Tag Media, T/a Dezynamite

IRELAND'S BEST YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR COUNTY COMPETITION

Maria Byrne was named as Offaly's Best Young Entrepreneur and 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 2015 and is supported by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation through the Local Enterprise Office. 31 applications were received, 9 finalists selected and attended our IBYE bootcamp weekend to gear up the young entrepreneurs for judging process.

The winners of each category received investments as follows:

BEST NEW IDEA:

David Payne "Plynth"- Wireless Platform Charger. (€10,000)

BEST BUSINESS START UP:

Maria Byrne, Ardiner Distillery, T/A "Mor Gin". (€20,000)

BEST ESTABLISHED BUSINESS

Keith Lambe Diesel Services, founded in 2012. (€20,000)

These three businesses went through to represent Offaly at the regional finals which proved to be extremely competitive. This year LEO Offaly hosted the regional IBYE final for counties Kildare, Laois, Offaly and

Westmeath. The regional final was held in The Junction, Axis Business Park, Tullamore.

IRELAND'S BEST YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR REGIONAL COMPETITION

This year LEO Offaly hosted the Regional Finals of IBYE which included Laois, Kildare, Offaly and Westmeath.

The event was held in The Junction, Axis Business Park, Tullamore. Over 50 people attended on the afternoon event, guest speaker on the day was Marcella Corcoran Kennedy. The three Kildare finalists won all three categories to complete a clean sweep of all the awards up for grabs on the day.

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 fifth year. In 2015 LEO Offaly again collaborated 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 25 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

30 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 €5,000 towards associated general and marketing activities.

PLOUGHING CHAMPIONSHIP

Local Enterprise Offices in every county supported small businesses at the Ploughing through the Local Enterprise Village. For small, local businesses looking to expand, The Local Enterprise Village is the ideal gateway to customers across farming communities and rural Ireland. Many of the small businesses being supported by the Local Enterprise Offices took the opportunity to launch new products and services. The local businesses representing Offaly at the 2015 Local Enterprise Village were: O'Gorman's Cottage Condiments who produces a range of gluten free preserves, sauces and chutneys, Heartworks who manufacture slate pieces and handmade soaps, Rita Daly Designs, hat designer and The Wild Irish Foragers and Preserves who produce a range of preserves, sauces and vinegars.

NWED

LEO Offaly had a particular and specific focus on supporting women in business throughout 2015 through events such as The National Women's Enterprise Day. The aim of the event is to inspire, motivate and support

women in Offaly in running their own businesses, which will not only boost female entrepreneurship in the county but will also contribute to further recovery, more jobs and long term economic growth. Seven Offaly Business women attended the conference.

FOOD ACADEMY PROGRAMME

LEO Offaly has supported the Food Academy which was held in Ferbane Food Campus. This new venture was incredible successfully in the inaugural year with new business start-ups and LEO clients arising from the academy such as The Marshmallow Factory and MND Foods.

TRADING ONLINE VOUCHERS

Local Enterprise Offices are helping small businesses throughout Ireland through the Trading Online Voucher Scheme which support businesses trading online. The objective of the scheme is to help small businesses grow their sales, exports and ultimately jobs. Businesses are permitted to apply for one voucher, up to a value of €2,500 (matched funding). In 2015 LEO Offaly granted 17 net approvals of which 14 payments have been made amounting to €26,127 for business to improve their online trading presence.

MICROFINANCE IRELAND

Under a partnership between Microfinance Ireland (MFI) and the Local Enterprise

Offices (LEOs), Business Loans of up to €25,000 are now available through the LEOs. The loans are provided and underwritten by our partner organisation Microfinance Ireland and application can be made through the LEO office and were the applications will be in the first instance will be assessed locally and the final decision for all loan applications is made by Microfinance Ireland. Sole Traders, Partnerships and Limited Companies with fewer than 10 employees and an annual turnover of less than €2m are eligible to apply. Unlike some of the other financial supports available from the LEO, all business sectors are eligible to apply. Loans can be used to fund start-ups, existing and growth microenterprises and can be used for working capital or the hiring of new employees, the purchase of stock, equipment, machinery and business vehicles.

In 2015 LEO Offaly processed 11 applications of which the total approved loans was 5 and amounting to a total of €57,995 loaned to Offaly businesses.

| Number of LEO Applications Submitted | Value of Applications Submitted | Number of Applications Approved | Value of Approvals | Jobs Created | Declined/ Withdrawn | WIP |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|--------------|---------------------|-----|
| 11 | € 179,692 | 5 | € 57,995 | 11 | 5 | 1 |

ENTERPRISE WEEK – OFFALY DESIGN PRODUCT – ATTENDEES

To celebrate Year of Irish Design, the Local Enterprise Office showcased details of products designed by Offaly companies. The exhibition highlighted the diverse range of design and manufacturing capability in the County, and celebrated innovation in all its forms. The exhibition showcased 27 Offaly businesses. Following on from the exhibition which took place in Áras an Chontae during Enterprise Week, the exhibition was displayed in Tullamore library for the month of June.

THE JUNCTION – OFFALY INNOVATION CENTRE

Through the help of the Offaly Local Enterprise Office business support services The Junction is steadily growing from strength to strength. In January 2015, Designhub moved into the ground floor space in the centre. Designhub is a collaborative unit and umbrella entity that provides a platform of knowledge, experience and mentorship for new design-led companies to startup. Designhub provides free and subsidized training for LEO clients. They also provide design services to individuals and companies who have an idea for a product, business or service. Designhub has the capabilities to bring an idea from point A-Z and from mind to market.

Future Ticketing occupy three offices on the first floor. They specialise in online eTicketing solutions for a diverse range of clients across all industry sectors.



Minister of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, pictured at a visit to The Junction in August 2015

Frank Bourke, T/a FBA Consulting Engineers is renting a hot desk on the first floor of The Junction. Development plans made in the latter months of 2015 will see the number of hot desks rentals to increase in 2016.

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 afternoons 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, 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. During 2015, 151 mentoring sessions were delivered to 92 clients.

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. On average almost 30 people attended each of the 9 meetings held during the year and 35 attended the O.N.E network Christmas Dinner held in the Bridge the House, Tullamore.

CLIENT MEETINGS AND CONTACTS

The staff in the Local Enterprise Office (LEO) provide practical assistance to anyone looking to set up or grow a business. Anyone with a business idea can book a meeting with one of the LEO Team, 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. During 2015, 749 new business contacts were added to the LEO Offaly database, and 1445 recorded client meetings took place (at customer premises, in LEO Offices and scheduled phone calls).

LOCAL AUTHORITY SUPPORTS FOR BUSINESS IN 2015

Offaly County Council and LEO Offaly initiated a number of new initiatives to support business in Offaly. These include:

➤ RATES REBATE SCHEME FOR 2015

Any ratepayer who pays their two moieties when due or enters into a standing order arrangement, can avail of a 5% reduction in their rates up to a maximum of €250.

➤ OPEN FOR BUSINESS INCENTIVE SUPPORT SCHEME

The Open for Business scheme is a business incentive scheme that will provide grant on commercial rates for up to three years for businesses re-occupying properties that have been vacant for long periods of

time.

➤ OFFALY PROPERTY DATABASE

The Local Enterprise Office has researched and compiled a listing of Industrial, Office and Retail premises available for sale or let. This is updated on a quarterly basis.

INTEGRATED SERVICE

The Local Enterprise Office (LEO) Offaly is fully integrated into the County Council suite of services. Collaborations between LEO Offaly and other areas of Offaly County Council in 2015 included:

- *Made in Offaly Pop Up Shop* – In conjunction with the Arts Office
- *Procurement Workshops* – In conjunction with Head of Procurement in Offaly County Council
- *Library Supports for Business* – In conjunction with Library Services
- *REDZ Pilot* – In conjunction with Community & Local Development Section, Arts Office, and Planning Policy & Research
- *Midlands Regional Energy Conference* – In conjunction with Planning Policy & Research

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

IDA Announcement in 2015 for Tullamore - An Irish veterinary biologics company is to create 30 new jobs in a multi-million investment in the facility formerly

occupied by Genemedix. BioNua Limited, which forms part of Nexvet Biopharma, will pay €1.75 million to secure the manufacturing assets within the facility. LEO Offaly works closely with the Regional Manager of IDA, to promote Offaly and facilitate IDA requests.

TULLAMORE DISTILLERY

In 2015, LEO Offaly and Offaly County Council continued to work William Grant & Sons with regard to the continued development of Tullamore Distillery. The company has stated its intention to transfer bottling from Clonmel to a new facility at the Tullamore Distillery Site. It is anticipated that this will take effect before the end of 2016.

INDUSTRIAL SITES

Syngefield, Birr - In 2015 the Council disposed of 5.33 acres of land at Syngefield, Birr to Romaquip Ltd. Romaquip is a manufacturer and supplier of superior quality stainless steel winter road maintenance equipment, such as salt gritters, salt spreaders, body swap systems and snow ploughs to Ireland, the UK and Continental Europe. In 2011 it developed a new design in Kerbside Collection Vehicles. The Council agreed to disposing the land to this company in order to facilitate expansion and the creation of extra jobs.

Botley Lane, Portarlinton - In 2015 commenced negotiations with two companies for the expansion of their businesses in Botley Lane, Portarlinton. This will lead to the creation of extra jobs in the area.

OFFALY GAA CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE, KILCORMAC

During 2015 Offaly GAA commenced work on the development of the new Centre of Excellence in Kilcormac. It will consist of four playing pitches, dressing rooms, meeting rooms, function rooms and a walking track. The Centre of Excellence is located on the former cow park lands which were owned by the Council. The former cow park contained twenty one acres, fourteen acres of which were disposed of to Kilcormac Development Association in 2008. When Offaly GAA contacted the Council with their proposal to build the Centre of Excellence, the Kilcormac Development Association consented to transferring the fourteen acres back to the Council. The Council then disposed of the full twenty one acres to Offaly GAA and this facilitated the development of the Centre of Excellence.

RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ZONE (REDZ) PILOT

Following on from the CEDRA report, the Dept of Environment launched a Pilot funding scheme in 2015. LEO Offaly in collaboration with other sections in Offaly County Council applied for and were successfully awarded €172,500 funding for four projects under the REDZ Pilot Scheme. The funding was in respect to the following projects:

1. **Ferbane Financial Services Proposal** - €50,000 awarded

2. **Taking Responsibility** - Developing Social Enterprise in County Offaly - €50,000 awarded
3. **Film Offaly Marketing Campaign** - €22,500 awarded
4. **Youth Entrepreneurship** - €50,000 awarded

CONNECT IRELAND/OFFALY DIASPORA

Offaly County Council in collaboration with Connect Ireland received €3,000 funding from Dept of An Taoiseach towards the production of a promotional video. LEO Offaly worked with Connect Ireland to produce a short video highlighting Offaly as a centre for energy and innovation. The video will be completed and launched in early 2016.

LOCAL ECONOMIC & DEVELOPMENT PLAN (LECP)

LEO Offaly has led the Economic Section of the LECP. It worked collaboratively with Forward Planning and Community & Local Development Sections on pre-consultations, LCDC Meetings, Steering and Technical Group Meetings, and the writing of the Economic section of the Plan. LEO Offaly is also supporting the Economic Development, Enterprise & Planning SPC whose role is to oversee and co-ordinate economic development in the County. The Plan was adopted by the Members of Offaly County Council in December 2015.

WEST OFFALY ENTERPRISE FUND LTD/NORTH OFFALY DEVELOPMENT FUND LTD

Offaly County Council, through LEO Offaly, provides secretariat support to both the West Offaly Enterprise Fund Ltd and the North Offaly Development Fund Ltd. These funding schemes from ESB continue to provide valuable assistance for enterprise in both West and North Offaly.

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.

PRIMING GRANTS AND BUSINESS EXPANSION GRANTS

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

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;
- **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.

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 2015

The LEO received 40 complete applications in the period. Following assessment, the LEO approved 34 with approval of cumulative amount of €396,702. Of the applications received, 7 applications were refused, 1 deferred and 1 pending processing at year end. The following tables set out summaries of the outturn: -

the total grant approval to be refundable. Schedule of payments during the period to projects is included in Appendix 1.

| Approval Total | Feasibility Grants | Priming Grants | Business Expansion Grants |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| €396,702.00 | €3,600.00 | €115,565.00 | €277,537.00 |

| | Received | Approved | Deferred | Refused | Withdrawn | Pending at 31 Dec 2015 |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|-------------------------------|
| Priming | 17 | 12 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Business Expansion | 22 | 21 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 1 |
| Feasibility | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 40 | 34 | 1 | 7 | 0 | 1 |

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

APPENDIX 1 - LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE 2015 REVIEW – HIGHLIGHTS

The **Measure 1** financial support provided to businesses in County Offaly in 2015 can be summarised as follows:

| | 2015 | 2014 |
|-----------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Number of Projects Received | 40 | 23 |
| Number of Clients Approved | 29 | 21 |
| M1 Amount Approved | €396,702 | €340,313 |
| Number of Projects Paid | 34 | 30 |
| Number of Clients Paid | 28 | 27 |
| Total M1 Payments | €292,979* | €327,183 |

*Grants are live for 12 months. Many grants awarded in 2015 will be drawn down in 2016.

ADDITIONAL GRANT SCHEMES AND INITIATIVES DELIVERED TO OFFALY BUSINESSES:

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| Business Development Support Scheme Grants (Website, Trade Fairs, Technical Training Grants etc) | €37,213 |
| Trading Online Vouchers | €26,127 |
| Irish Best Young Entrepreneur (IBYE) Competition | €82,153 |
| Microfinance Ireland Ltd – Loans to Offaly businesses | €57,995 |
| Total value of additional schemes and grants | €203,491 |

MEASURE 2 (BUSINESS ADVICE, TRAINING, MENTORING AND NETWORKING PROGRAMMES)

| | 2015 | 2014 |
|--|-----------------|------|
| New Business Contacts Added to the LEO database | 749 | 398 |
| Number of client meetings (at customer premises, in LEO offices and scheduled phone calls) | 1445 | 670 |
| Number of Training & Development Programmes & Networking Events | 39 | 39 |
| Total of Participants on Training Programmes | 514 | 492 |
| Number of Mentoring Sessions Delivered to 92 Clients | 151 | 150 |
| Total Value of M2 Initiatives delivered to Offaly businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs | €152,259 | |

2015 Total Expenditure: M1, M2, Additional Grant Schemes and Supports = €648,729

Grant Payments Priming, Business Expansion and Feasibility

| Name | Total Grant Paid € | Refundable Portion of Grant € | Sector |
|--|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Karl Mulligan | 10,183.00 | 3,055.00 | Priming |
| Paramount Conversions Limited (2) | 16,530.00 | 5,785.50 | Business Expansion |
| Future Ticketing Limited (2) | 23,000.00 | 6,300.00 | Business Expansion |
| Tag Media Limited (2) | 24,000.00 | 4,200.00 | Business Expansion |
| Glanbury AMS Limited | 6,684.00 | 2,339.40 | Business Expansion |
| Premier Business Media | 18,000.00 | 6,300.00 | Business Expansion |
| Fixmyi Limited | 5,000.0 | 1,750.00 | Priming |
| James Kirwan | 3,000.00 | 0.00 | Business Expansion |
| Aero Access International | 13,224.00 | 4,628.40 | Business Expansion |
| Concquest Steel Moulds Limited | 6,644.00 | 2,325.40 | Business Expansion |
| Glan Uisce Environmental Solutions Ltd (2) | 17,880.00 | 6,258.00 | Priming |
| TD Cellular Limited (2) | 14,771.00 | 3,069.00 | Business Expansion |
| EMSS Limited | 7,500.00 | 0.00 | Business Expansion |
| PF Machinery & Fabrication Limited | 27,250.00 | 9,537.50 | Priming |
| Stephen Cornally | 7,642.00 | 2,674.00 | Priming |
| Applied Concepts Limited (3) | 20,183.00 | 0.00 | Business Expansion/Feasibility |
| RFD Kitchen Gallery Limited | 10,000.00 | 3,000.00 | Business Expansion |
| Candy Creations Limited (2) | 5,635.00 | 0.00 | Business Expansion |
| Guinan Waste Recovery Limited | 20,747.00 | 0.00 | Business Expansion |
| Dale & Gary Farrell | 3,641.00 | 1,274.35 | Business Expansion |
| Euro Stallions (Ireland) Limited | 3,128.00 | 0.00 | Priming |
| Riverside Print & Design Limited | 12,000.00 | 4,200.00 | Business Expansion |
| A1 Flues Limited | 8,000.00 | 0.00 | Business Expansion |
| Louise McCormack, T/a Twisted Pixels | 1,717.00 | 0.00 | Priming |
| Keith Lambe | 2,620.00 | 0.00 | Business Expansion |
| MND Foods Limited | 4,000.00 | 0.00 | Priming |
| Total | €292,979.00 | €66,696.55 | |

*() indicates in receipt of more than 1 grant

Grant Payments Business Development Support Scheme

Total Activity

| Grant | Received | Approved | Refused | Decommitted |
|----------------------|----------|----------|---------|-------------|
| E-Business | 12 | 11 | 1 | 0 |
| Business Development | 18 | 14 | 4 | 0 |
| Trade Fair | 22 | 18 | 4 | 0 |

Trade Fair / Market Visit Payments

| Name/Address | Grant € | Sector |
|---|------------------|---------------|
| Paul Lynam, T/a Lynam Garden Furniture Tullamore | 999.00 | Manufacturing |
| Gary Hoctor, T/a Hello Camera Birr | 223.99 | Service |
| The Wild Irish Foragers | 510.00 | Manufacturing |
| Ciaran Flood, T/a Herbs on Thyme Rathangan | 732.50 | Manufacturing |
| Mauricio Martino and Monica Daly, T/a Heartworks Tullamore | 950.00 | Manufacturing |
| Total | €3,415.49 | |

E-Business Payments

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

Business Development Payments

| Name | Grant - € | Sector |
|--|------------------|---------------------|
| Aspire Online Services Limited | 450.00 | Design |
| Primo Coachworks Limited | 3,700.00 | Design |
| Mauricio Martino & Monica Daly, T/a Heartworks (2) | 616.00 | Manufacturing/Craft |
| Kearney Fabrications | 2,000.00 | Manufacturing |
| WQMS Limited | 639.00 | Manufacturing |
| The Wild Irish Foragers | 330.00 | Manufacturing |
| Tommy Conway, T/a TC Physiotherapy | 1,573.00 | Service |
| Rosemarie Langtry | 280.18 | Service |
| Gary Hoctor, T/a Hello Camera | 285.00 | Service |
| Prism Industrial Controls Limited | 2,000.00 | Manufacturing |
| Elaine Mullally, T/a Clown Around | 316.00 | Service |
| Applied Concepts Limited | 475.00 | Manufacturing |
| Conquest Steel Moulds Limited | 1,755.00 | Manufacturing |
| Total | 14,419.18 | |

Measure 2: Training & Development Participation Summary

| Category | Course Name | Attendees |
|------------------------------------|---|--------------|
| Accounts | | |
| | How to Keep Proper Accounts | 7 |
| | Costing & Pricing Course | 18 |
| IT | | |
| | Facebook for Business(2) | 23 |
| | E-Commerce Trading On-Line | 5 |
| Sales & Marketing | | |
| | How to Sell Successfully (2) | 22 |
| | How to Market your Business (2) | 14 |
| | Digital Marketing (3) | 29 |
| | New Product Development (2) | 15 |
| Start your Own Business | | |
| | Start your Own Business (9) | 114 |
| Entrepreneurial Development | | |
| | Craft Pop Up Shop | 25 |
| | Enterprise Awards | 12 |
| | Tullamore Show | 30 |
| | Food Academy (1) | 8 |
| | IBYE | 31 |
| Business Advice/Mentoring | | |
| | Mentoring | 97 (Clients) |
| Networks | | |
| | ONE Network Monthly Training Events (9) | 228 |
| Schools | | |
| | Idea Generation Sessions - Student Enterprise Awards | 660 |

*() indicates quantity of courses held

LOCAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

LOCAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (LCDC)

The Offaly Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) was established under the Local Government Act in 2014 and is managed from Offaly County Council for purposes of developing and implementing a coherent and integrated approach to local and community development. The LCDC held ten meetings during 2015. The Offaly LCDC members represent local government, state agencies, local development bodies, social, economic, environmental and community interests –

Statutory Interests (8)

| Sector | Member Name | Organisation |
|---|-----------------------|---|
| Local Authority Elected Members | Cllr John Clendennen | Offaly County Council |
| | Cllr Declan Harvey | Offaly County Council |
| | Cllr Brendan Killeavy | Offaly County Council |
| Local Authority Officials | Declan Kirrane | Offaly County Council |
| | Orla Martin | Offaly County Council |
| State Agencies | Tony Dalton | Laois & Offaly ETB |
| | Con Feighery | Teagasc |
| | Graham Tuohy | Department of Social Protection |
| Non Statutory Interests (10) | | |
| Community & Voluntary | Tom Finnerty | Offaly Public Participation Network |
| | Frances Walsh | Community Representatives (2) |
| Social Inclusion | Elizabeth Fleming | Offaly Public Participation Network |
| | Margaret Murphy | Social Inclusion Representatives (2) |
| Environment | Eimhin Shortt | Offaly Public Participation Network Environmental Representative (1) |
| Local development and community development bodies | Brendan O'Loughlin | Offaly Local Development Company |
| Other civic society or 'local and community' interests | Dominic Doheny | Construction Industry Federation |
| | John Keena | Offaly Irish Farmers Association |
| | Henry O'Shea | SIPTU |
| | Christina Byrne | Slieve Bloom Rural Development Co-op |

LCDC projects during 2015 included the preparation of the Offaly Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021; becoming contract manager for the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) from April 2015 (with Offaly Local Development Company as the Programme Implementer); and development of the Local Development Strategy application for LEADER 2014-2021 by Offaly Local Development Company as the Implementing body on behalf of the LCDC. The LCDC is the 'Local Action Group' that will be the contract holder for LEADER funding.

- **LOCAL ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY PLAN (LECP)**

One of the main responsibilities of the Offaly LCDC was to prepare a 6-year Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) for the County. The goal of the LECP is to identify and implement actions to strengthen and develop the economic and community dimensions of County Offaly. Over March and April 2015 the LCDC supported eight LECP pre-plan Public Consultations throughout County Offaly. Submissions were received from business, community, voluntary and social interests. The draft LECP went on public display from 7th to 28th October. The final LECP was adopted by Offaly County Council in December 2015 to become operational from January 2016.

- **SOCIAL INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY ACTIVATION PROGRAMME (SICAP)**

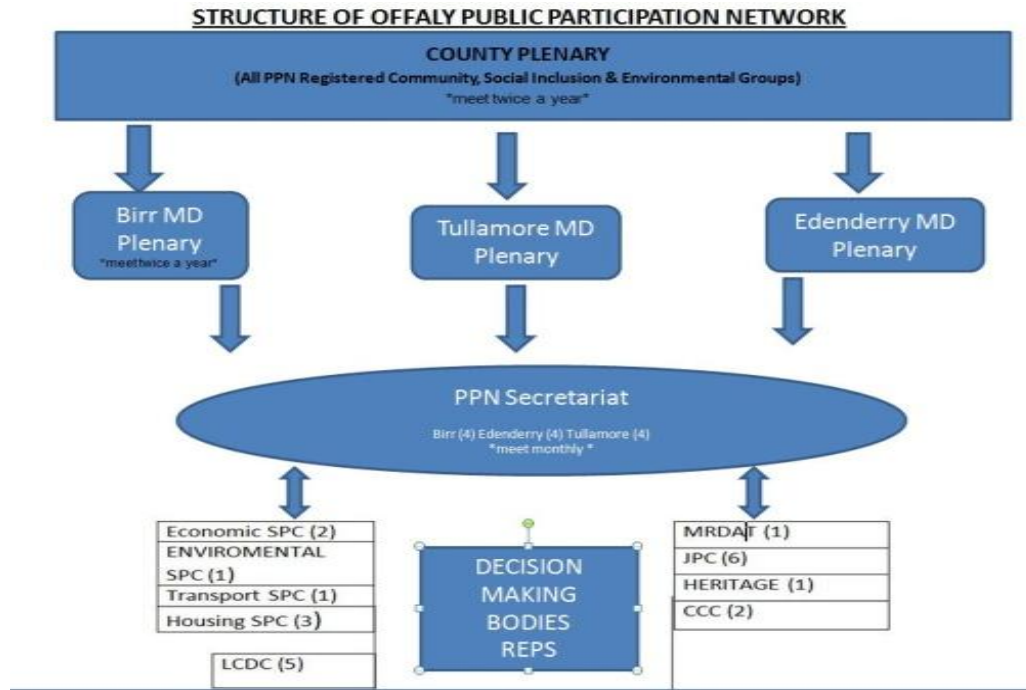
The Social Inclusion and Community Activation

Programme (SICAP) aims to tackle poverty and social exclusion. After a tender procedure by the LCDC, the Offaly SICAP contract valued at €553,736 commenced on 1st April 2015. Offaly Local Community Development Committee is the contract manager and Offaly Local Development Company is the programme implementer. There are nine SICAP target groups. These are - children and families living in disadvantaged areas; people living in disadvantaged communities; the unemployed (including those not on the Live Register); young people¹; lone parents; people with disabilities; new communities (including refugees/asylum seekers); Travellers, and Roma. There are three overall goals in SICAP - to Empower Disadvantaged Communities, to support Lifelong Learning and to move the target groups closer to Employment.

- **LEADER 2014-2020**

The Offaly LCDC is the designated Local Action Group (LAG) to manage a budget of €8,036,763.90 for the Rural Development Programme funding for Co Offaly. The Local Development Strategy, to plan how funding will be used was finalised and submitted to Pobal and the DECLG in autumn 2015. Offaly Local Development Company are the implementing body for LEADER funding.

¹ Young unemployed people aged 15-24 living in disadvantaged areas & young people aged 15-24 who are not in employment, education or training.



The Offaly Public Participation Network (PPN) is the representative structure for the community & voluntary sector. The PPN was established in 2014 to enable the public to take a more active formal role in relevant policy making and oversight committees of Offaly County Council. The PPN has replaced Offaly Community & Voluntary Forum structures. The PPN is the main link through which the Local Authority connects with the community, voluntary, social inclusion and environmental sectors. Over 200 groups are registered to date within the County and Municipal District (MD) structure outlined to the left.

The three Municipal District PPN groups each met in early summer 2015. The Secretariat held seven meetings in 2015 and have developed an online presence and produced a newsletter. The County Plenary meeting took place on 10th November 2015.

OFFALY COMHAIRLE NA NÓG

Offaly Comhairle na nÓg has a 24 member Executive Committee ranging in age from 12-18 representing schools and youth groups in the County. They met four times in

2015. The Comhairle also has a steering group representing agencies working in the youth area, which also met four times in 2015. 2015 projects were a Central Youth Café initiative in Tullamore which was piloted on October 3rd, the organisation of the AGM for 21st November 2015, preparing for the production of an enterprise DVD, and developing sub-county Comhairle structures in schools/municipal districts.

RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMME

The Tullamore Resettlement Interagency Working Group (TRIWG) held four meetings in 2015, to move the project from the resettlement phase to the integration phase of long term relocation. The Community Welcome Committee, working from the Presbyterian Church Tullamore, continued the 'Thursday afternoon drop in' facility until late Spring. This re-started in October as a pilot 'Tullamore International Welcome Centre', funded by the Office for the Promotion of Migrant Integration, Department of Justice & Equality, via Offaly County Council on behalf of the TRIWG.

PRIDE OF PLACE 2015

Five Offaly communities participated in the National Pride of Place competition. Clara, Daingean, Shinrone, Jigsaw Offaly and Arden Vale, Tullamore did the county proud in their preparation and organization for site judging visit days of 29th, 30th and 31st July. Jigsaw Offaly secured a national runner up award in the Community Health Initiative Category.

TIDY TOWNS NETWORK

This network is also supported by the Offaly Heritage Officer. The network met in April 2015 for a presentation from a Tidy Towns judge as to how to prepare competition entries and other assistance. Following excellent results for the county the network met again in Geashill on 20th October to tour the village and to attend information presentations from Geashill, Tullamore and Clonbullogue

as the three top point scoring locations in the county. Offaly County Council organised mentoring for some Tidy Towns groups for their preparation for entry into the 2016 national competition.

COMMUNITY WATCH NETWORK

This network met three times in 2015. Meeting agenda included an update from the Garda Crime Prevention Officer, Joint Policing Committee and Community Watch network links, the Text Alert system and Community CCTV.



*Jigsaw Offaly secured a national runner up award in the **Community Health Initiative Category** in Pride of Place competition.*

OFFALY MENTAL HEALTH TALK WEEK

Offaly County Council supported this event through funding and allocation of staff to the OMHTW committee to support the HSE 'Little Things' campaign, the core OMHTW programme in 2015.

SMOKE ALARMS

The section continues to allocate 10 year battery operated smoke alarms to over 65's and vulnerable households in the county. Eighty alarms were installed in 2015.

STEM

The Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths (STEM) scholarship project finished in 2015. Supported students fulfilled academic and ambassadorial roles and funding was allocated on this basis.

THE COMMUNITY TOURISM DIASPORA FUND

This €38,696 fund was allocated across 22 events for 2015, with specific criteria to market events to the diaspora, and attract overseas visitors to Offaly. A total of 660 overseas visitors were recorded.

JIGSAW OFFALY

This is chaired by Offaly County Council, with Offaly Co Co staff input to support its ongoing programme with links to agencies and the community.

LAOIS OFFALY WALKING PARTNERSHIP

This group meets twice a year, in February and

September. The main project was the upgrade of signage across the Slieve Bloom Way and the Offaly Way, to be completed before end of quarter one 2016.

OFFALY SPORTS PARTNERSHIP

The Offaly Sports Partnership remit is to increase participation in sport and physical activity in the county. It seeks to improve the health status of the people of Offaly at all life stages (children and teens, adults and older people). It has a specific focus on reaching out to low participation groups. 2015 activities included regular meetings of the Sports Partnership; a comprehensive schools fitness programme; 'Meet & Train' events; support to the Edenderry Town Park project; an athletic integration project – four members of which won All-Ireland medals; participation in national events through the organisation of Offaly 'Bike Week' with other agencies and Operation Transformation events; management of a county Swim Gala; review of the cycling activity projects for Offaly, and the work of the Sports Inclusion Development Officer. The Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport allocated €737,149 to 22 Offaly Clubs under the Sports Capital Programme 2015. Funding secured through the Dormant Accounts fund was used to implement Community Coaching Programmes for Jobseekers in a number of locations in the county.

TOURISM

'**A National Tourism Policy for Ireland**' (2014) prioritised investment in tourism and defined a central role for Local Authorities to coordinate management of their tourism destinations and the development of tourism experiences in their areas. Offaly Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) organised a Tourism 'Ideas' Forum to facilitate high level consultation on the issue of tourism in advance of the preparation of the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) for the county. As an output from that day it was agreed that there was a need to establish a new tourism group comprising of key stakeholders with overall responsibility of 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 develop a '**structure and funding**' model for tourism development in Offaly.
- To develop a '**marketing and promotion**' strategy.

In 2015 Offaly Tourism Group held 10 meetings.

- It commenced the process of developing a new compelling tourism brand to establish a clear and

consistent perception of County Offaly. Offaly Tourism Group launched the new brand, '**OFFALY – IRELAND'S HIDDEN GEM**' at Lough Boora Discovery Park on 28th September 2015.

- The group launched a new tourism website (www.visitoffaly.ie) on 23rd November 2015 as a vehicle to create brand awareness.
- The group agreed a structure and funding model.
- The group commenced a tender process for the provision of a marketing and promotion strategy and relevant services.



IRELAND'S ANCIENT EAST:

Offaly Tourism Group successfully applied to Fáilte Ireland Capital Grants Scheme for funding to 'Bring Birr's Anglo-Irish and Early Christian history to life'. The allocation of €84,000 will be used to provide heritage signage, a tourism map, a walking tour, and a tourism app including the provision of iBeacon proximity technology.

MIDLAND CYCLE DESTINATION PROJECT:

Bord na Móna (BnM), Coillte and Offaly County Council have come together to prepare a Feasibility Study to assess the potential to develop a national cycle destination as a major tourism project in County Offaly. The scope of this project covers most of county Offaly, but links into wider regional and national strategic plans for off-road trail networks and will dovetail into trail projects currently underway. It comprises the development of trails primarily and also the identification of services and their locations to cater to the users of the trail network.

OFFALY TOURISM FORUM

The county wide Offaly Tourism Forum met four times in 2015 with attendance from tourism service providers, the wider business sector and community groups. Attendees were consulted with regard to the ongoing projects of brand development, website production, and Ireland's Ancient East. They also assisted with tourism student site visits to Offaly as part of the Dublin Institute of Technology 'Students in the Community' initiative.

HERITAGE

In the context of the 1995 Heritage Act, the term 'Heritage' is considered to encompass **monuments, archaeological objects, heritage objects, architectural heritage, flora, fauna, wildlife habitats, landscapes, seascapes, wrecks, geology, heritage gardens and parks, inland waterways.** The framework for the current work programme is set out in the [Offaly Heritage Plan for 2012-16](#).

The Offaly Heritage Office, along with the members of the Offaly Heritage Forum, aims to **'work with all of us in Offaly, to increase awareness and appreciation of our manmade, cultural and natural heritage, leading to actions which promote its protection, enhancement and vitality'**.

OFFALY HERITAGE FORUM

4 meetings of this interagency group were held during 2015 in March, June, September and December. The final meeting consisted of a site visit to Lynally Medieval church as the



Donation of the Frances Johnson drawings by Frank Murray

received funding from the Heritage Council for a report by Margaret Quinlan.

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

Three projects received funding under this programme; archives, artefacts in the community and castles publication.

1. ARCHIVES IN OFFALY

Working closely with Offaly History and the Library Service a County Archive Strategy was drawn up. Archivist, Lisa Shortall sorted and catalogued the Offaly County Archives in Tullamore Central Library while giving particular focus to cataloguing the Belmont Mill collection (donated in 2003 following Offaly Mills Survey). The 17th century De Renzi manuscripts were conserved by the Muckross Bindery along with the 1916 minute book.

Work has also been done on the Offaly History Centre's

extensive archive collection. Activity in this area also resulted in the donation of Frances Johnson's drawings of St Catherine's Church of Ireland.

2. DRUMCULLEN HIGH CROSS-HEAD AND THE SHEELA NA GIG IN EDENDERRY

Both of these items are of national importance. The sheela-na-gig is one of only 111 in Ireland and is now professionally mounted in Edenderry Library. It is part of the collection of the National Museum on loan to the library as it was donated there historically.

The Drumcullen High Cross head has been lying at the monastic site of Drumcullen for many centuries however it is portable and there were concerns about its safety and condition. JDB casemakers made a stand for it and it is on display in the nearby parish church of Rath.



The new mount made by JDB Design Casemakers displaying the high cross-head from Drumcullen Monastic Site now in Rath Parish Church

3. CASTLES PUBLICATION

Progress has been made on this project but was limited by the work load in the National Monuments Service who are key partners. A publication on the O'Molloy castles in the Kilcormac/Ballyboy area is being finalised.

AWARENESS

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

The **Offaly Naturalists' Field Club Programme** included the 10th annual biodiversity summer school week which focused on the Asteraceae family this year. The field club hosts 15-20 days each year with a wide variety of events and leaders who all offer up their time for free. This has developed over the years into an excellent resource for the county.

HERITAGE WEEK IN OFFALY

The Heritage Office role involves the prompting and co-ordination of events, publication of brochure and promotion of the programme with the busiest week to date in 2015. With the theme of industrial heritage a special focus was put on the library programme to host talks and exhibitions relevant to this theme. The programme also included the oral history project at Turraun/ Pullough which was part funded by the Heritage Council community grant scheme.



The Interviewees at the Turraun Oral History Recording Project

THE NATIONAL SCIENCE PLAQUE PROGRAMME

A *National Science Plaque* to **John Joly** was erected at Hollywood House, Bracknagh to mark his birthplace, with a function in September for the unveiling. Work is progressing for a plaque to Mary Ward in Ferbane to be erected in spring 2016.



Launch at Hollywood House Saturday 26th September

1916 / 2016 COMMEMORATIONS: The heritage office has been working with the arts, library and corporate sections within a wider committee to research, plan and liaise with community groups to set up the extensive programme of events for next year. Over 30 different projects are planned.

NATIONAL PILGRIM PATH GROUP – We worked with the local steering group to arrange participation in the National Pilgrim Path day on Easter Saturday with a walk from Clonbonny and a cycle from Ballycumber.

The **Annual Offaly Heritage Seminar** was held on 7th November in Tullamore with field trips to the archives, Mount Lucas Windfarm to see the regeneration and the cycle path and a third trip to see two memorial recording projects in West Offaly. In the afternoon 4 papers on current projects were presented. 125 people attended the seminar. It is a very positive means to keep the Offaly heritage sector in touch and up to date.



BURIAL GROUNDS SURVEY AND DATABASE

Working with the Environment Section of Offaly County Council, intern Stephen Callaghan completed the database of 187 burial grounds in the county. This is now online on www.offaly.ie/heritage.

Worked with the Mucklagh Development Association on the condition report for Lynally Church which was jointly funded by the Heritage Council community grant scheme and Offaly County Council.

SURVEY OF HOLY WELLS

Archaeology student, David Whyte worked with the

heritage office during the summer to visit and review the condition of the 68 holy wells recorded on www.archaeology.ie.

TIDY TOWNS SUPPORT

In conjunction with Community and Environment sections, County Tidy Towns Network information evenings were held in the spring and autumn with mentoring provided for 3-5 year plans and application forms. Good progress was made within the county with Geashill, Clonbulloge and Tullamore all making good progress towards a national award. Geashill were joint winners of the National Tree Council award for their extensive tree planting and awareness project.



Ballyheashill well – OF004-026---location previously unrecorded and unique in Offaly.

PERCENT FOR ART COMMITTEE.

Two heritage focused projects were developed in 2015. One is a photographic record of the county in 2015 which will be published in 2016.

The second involved working with 3 communities looked at less well known aspects of their heritage. Kinnitty (Rex Ingram silent film maker), Clara (the Goodbody connection) and Clonbullogue (geologist John Joly) were all teamed up with artists and explored these aspects of their heritage. This collaboration with the arts section was very successful and hopefully this partnership can be utilised to explore other heritage projects in Offaly.

JAPANESE KNOTWEED CONTROL PROGRAMME

For the second year in a row, all the known sites of Japanese Knotweed on public land were treated. Good results were achieved from the 2014 treatment. Owners of private land with Japanese knotweed were notified. Knotweed is extremely expensive to eradicate so as much control is being done in Offaly to stop it spreading. Compared to other counties we have relatively few sites and have been working on awareness and control since 2008. It has been agreed with the Roads Department that all known sites will be marked with an A3 road sign in 2016 to increase awareness and stop accidental cutting. The first site of Himalayan knotweed was found and is being dealt with as it is adjacent to a water treatment works extension.

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

GENERAL

The 2015 Initial Roads Budget was €8,951,905 and this included an NNR grant of €6,201,737, a National Road Grant of €1,154,654 and Own Resources funding of €1,595,514 (including machinery yard/stores, payroll allowances and town allocations)

Additional funding was received as follows during the year: -

| | |
|---|-----------------------|
| National Roads Authority (NRA) | € 3,077,971.00 |
| Dept of Transport, Tourism & Sport (DTTS) | € 625,609.00 |
| Total | € 3,703,580.00 |

Projects undertaken and completed during 2015 are

detailed under the following Grant Categories: -

NATIONAL ROAD GRANTS

2015 National Roads (N52, N62 & N80 = 104kms)

- Ordinary Maintenance (€1,012,894)
- Pavement Overlay/Reconstruction Schemes (€2.459M)
 - N62 Galros Ferbane (100 metres)
 - N62 Ferbane/Ballycumber Junction Improvement [completed Q1 2016]
 - N62 Cloghan/Ferbane (650 metres)
 - N62 Roscrea Road Birr (1870 metres) [completed Q1 2016]
 - N80 Skid Resistance Renewal Schemes (900 metres) [completed Q1 2016]
 - National Road Safety Barrier Renewal (€81,000) [completed 2016] N52 Birr

N52 Public Lighting Upgrade in Kilcormac (€38,000)

NON NATIONAL ROAD GRANTS

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

- Ordinary Maintenance (€2.26M)
- Surface Dressing (€925,000)
- Pavement Recycling/Overlays (€3.853M)
- Low Cost Safety Schemes – 8 No.(€202,000)
- Bridge Strengthening Works – 13 No (€200,000)
- Public Lighting Upgrade at Edenderry, Clara & Daingean
- Town Allocations [Tullamore, Birr & Edenderry](€825,231)

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 in Offaly County Council are reminded of the risks they face and how to eliminate or reduce this risk.
- Nationally, during 2015, 38 fatalities occurred. Seven happened in the construction industry and 13 in the Agriculture sector (to the 1st of Oct). Three of these fatalities occurred in the Local Authority sector involving staff carrying out similar tasks to ourselves and ultimately these are situations that Offaly County Council wants to avoid happening to any of the staff or contractors.
- One of the main targets for 2015, was to improve communication with staff on accidents/incidents and good practices from other local authorities and private companies. This was achieved through monthly safety discussions. This will continue in 2016.
- 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 September 2015 when compared to the same period in 2014.
- Senior management continued to provide leadership in order to raise the profile of safety within Offaly County Council. A key focus in 2015 is Driving for Work and raising employees awareness around this topic

ROAD SAFETY 2014

- Continuous Weather Alerts circulated to all Offaly County Council staff
- Update County Councils website in relation to weather alerts and road safety initiatives
- Road safety Video / Message installed in Ferbane and Banagher Credit Unions.
- Liaising with other Credit Unions regarding Road Safety Video / Message
- Circulation of road safety Posters to all National schools in the County
- Collaboration with the Road Safety Authority of **"Check it Fits Service"** – Child Car Seats in Banagher and Birr
- Liaised with Clara Ard Scoil Chiarian Naofa regarding Sponsored Cycle. Provide cycle vests and advised of **"Top Tips"** for Safer Cycling
- Presentation of Junior School Warden Certificates to 2 schools – Portarlington NS and Ferbane NS
- Preparation of Road Safety at Schools- Parking of Vehicles Brochure which has been circulated to all Primary Schools

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 2015 Offaly County Fire and Rescue Service were alerted to 631 incidents, made up of 441 fire calls and 172 non-fire emergencies and 18 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 2015. The 2015 budget of €2.9 million maintained the Fire Service.

TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT

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 2015. The training centre in Tullamore was utilised for training internally, by other Local Authorities and by the Defence Forces.

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. Funding was obtained in 2015 from the Dept. Of Environment for Thermal Imaging Camera's, replacement air mats, a high pressure fire fogging system, and a 4WD vehicle.

FERBANE FIRE STATION

Approval was received in 2015 from the Dep. Of Environment to proceed with the construction of Ferbane Fire Station. Offaly County Council has awarded the

tender for Design Consultancy Services to Tobin Consulting Engineers for the delivery of a new fire station to be located on the site of the Ferbane Area Office, Gallen. It is hope to start construction in July 2016 with an expected completion date of early 2017.

FIRE PREVENTION & BUILDING CONTROL

Offaly County Council Fire Service assessed 43 Fire Safety Certificate applications and 27 Disabled Access Certificate applications. The fire authority also gave advice on 54 planning referrals. The Fire Service also dealt with 49 licence applications. In total 154 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 139 homes in Offaly during 2015, bringing the total for the last 5 years to 1,068 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 function also includes the inspection and monitoring of new works to monitor for compliance with all the requirements of the Building Regulations, 1997. In 2015 there were 117 commencement notices with 42 building inspected, which represents 35% 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. Offaly County Council chaired the Regional Steering Group and Regional Working Group for Major Emergency Management in 2015. Training was provided to Council staff in the following areas: Information Management, On-Site Co-ordination, and Media Liaison.

CIVIL DEFENCE

2015 was a busy year for Offaly Civil Defence with various Duties / Training courses Callouts / Up-skilling etc. completed in the Unit. Our training classes normally commence in the first week of February and finish at the end of May, in order to facilitate the number of requests for assistance during the summer months. We recommence in September and ran until mid December. All our training courses are accredited by the Civil Defence College (Approved Course Provider Faculty) P.H.E.C.C. National Ambulance Service or other external bodies, this is to ensure Civil Defence are compliant with the various H&S regulations, various other protocols, and are covered by proper Insurance in the operations in which we are involved in.

The activities in 2015 of Offaly Civil Defence included:

- Assisting at approximately 41 duties during the year ranging from Cross Country events, Sean Kelly 80k and 120k cycle, Charity 10k walks, Birr Vintage week, Tullamore Show, Slieve Bloom Vintage Run, Offaly Rose of Tralee Tour, Darkness in to light Pieta House Walk, and many other events in support of the Community in Offaly.
- A number of new Tetra Radios were issued to the Unit by the Civil Defence College and two Radio Instructors attended an introductory course.
- Providing assistance to Dublin Civil Defence with regard to the Homeless in conjunction with Dublin City Council.
- Response to Flooding during the period from December 2015 to January 2016, working with the Fire Service and the Local Authority
- Participation in a joint training exercise with Lagan Search & Rescue in Belfast, and Offaly Civil Defence were the first Responder Unit involved in such a cross border exercise.
- Procurement of a Mini Bus funded by the Department of Defence, as the age profile of the original one was deemed excessively high,

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

| CORPORATE SERVICES | | FINANCE | |
|--|----------------------|---|------------------------|
| <i>Director of Services:</i> | Frank Heslin | <i>Head of Finance</i> | Declan Conlon |
| <i>Senior Executive Officer:</i> | Monica Cleary | <i>Financial Management Accountant:</i> | Thomas Mawe |
| <i>Administrative Officer / Partnership Facilitator:</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> | Declan Conlon |
| <i>Senior Executive Officer:</i> | Ruth McNally | <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.

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 | Renua |
| 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; (087) 220 0906 | noelbourke@hotmail.com | Fianna Fáil |
| Cribbin, Noel | Francis Street, Edenderry | ----- ; (087) 907 3804 | noelcribb56@gmail.com | Non-Party |
| Fitzpatrick, Eddie | Benfield, Cloneyhurke, Portarlinton | (057) 86 23261; (087) 258 0428 | eddiefitzp@eircom.net | Fianna Fáil |
| 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 |

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 2015.

At the Annual Meeting, held on 15th June 2015, Councillor Eamonn Dooley was elected Cathaoirleach and Councillor Declan Harvey was elected Leas Cathaoirleach.

The May monthly meeting, held on 18th May 2015, was held in Ballinamere Community Centre.



*May monthly meeting held in Ballinamere Community Centre,
18th May 2015*

From June 2015 all meetings of the Council, C.P.G., County Council, Municipal District, J.P.C., S.P.C., etc are administered electronically. Members receive the agenda and supporting documentation on MinutePad.

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 2015.

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 policy areas.

- Housing Policy, Social and Cultural Services – Cllr. P. Ormond (Chairperson)
- Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning, – Cllr. F. Moran (Chairperson) *[from 20th July 2015]*
- Transportation and Emergency Service – Cllr D. Dolan (Chairperson)
- Environment, Water and Drainage Services – Cllr. T. McKeigue (Chairperson)

REGISTER OF ELECTORS

The Register of Electors was produced on the 1st February and came into force on 15th February 2015. The total electorate for County Offaly for the 2015/2016 Register of Electors was 56,642 broken down over the local electoral areas as follows:

| | |
|------------------------------|---------------|
| Birr | 20,051 |
| Edenderry | 15,929 |
| Tullamore | 20,662 |
| Total on the Register | 56,642 |

JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE

The Joint Policing Committee met on three occasions in 2015. The Committee adopted their Strategic Work Plan 2015 – 2020 at their meeting held on 25th May 2015.

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. The refurbished pool reopened to the public in August 2015. The refurbishment is being funded by the Department of Transport and Sport, Offaly County Council, National Lottery funds, Clara & District Recreation Association Ltd.

The Council continues to work with Edenderry Swimming Pool in an effort to secure funding towards its refurbishment.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

Offaly County Council processed 56 Freedom of Information requests during 2015; this represented a significant increase on the number of applications received in 2014, which stood at 15.

During 2015 Offaly County Council processed 18 applications under the Access to Information on the Environment; this represented an increase on the number of applications received in 2014, which stood at 9.

OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

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

Payments Made to Members in 2015

| Name | Representational Payment | Monthly Allowance | Expenses Conferences / Training incl. Fees, Telephone | SPC Chairpersons Allowance | Municipal District Chairpersons Allowance | Chairpersons / Vice Chairpersons Allowance | Foreign Travel |
|-------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|--|----------------------------------|--|---|-------------------|
| Noel Bourke | € 16,565.04 | € 5,307.99 | € 2,761.20 | | | | |
| John Carroll | € 16,565.04 | € 5,520.64 | € 743.86 | | | | |
| John Clendennen | € 16,565.04 | € 5,000.82 | € 2,171.25 | | €3,500.00 | | |
| Noel Cribbin | € 16,565.04 | € 5,378.87 | € 1,978.55 | | | | |
| Dervill Dolan | € 16,565.04 | € 4,386.50 | | € 6,000.00 | | | |
| Sinead Dooley | € 16,565.04 | € 4,386.50 | € 1,708.43 | | | € 8,333.35 | € 2,885.00 |
| Eamon Dooley | € 16,565.04 | € 5,000.82 | € 280.00 | € 3,322.58 | | € 11,666.65 | |
| Eddie Fitzpatrick | € 16,565.04 | € 4,764.54 | € 1,957.49 | | | | |
| John Foley | € 16,565.04 | € 5,307.99 | | | €2,500.00 | | |
| Declan Harvey | € 16,565.04 | € 4,386.50 | € 2,085.22 | | | € 2,333.35 | |
| Brendan Killeavy | € 16,565.04 | € 4,386.50 | | | | | |
| John Leahy | € 16,565.04 | € 4,693.66 | | | €2,500.00 | | |
| Tommy McKeigue | € 16,565.04 | € 4,386.50 | € 1,048.40 | € 6,000.00 | €2,500.00 | | |
| Frank Moran | € 16,565.04 | € 4,386.50 | € 2,336.54 | € 2,677.42 | | € 1,666.65 | |
| Carol Nolan | € 16,565.04 | € 4,764.54 | | | | | |
| Peter Ormond | € 16,565.04 | € 6,300.36 | € 3,219.16 | € 6,000.00 | | | |
| Danny Owens | € 16,565.04 | € 4,386.50 | € 2,065.61 | | €3,500.00 | | |
| Martin O'Reilly | € 16,565.04 | € 4,386.50 | | | | | |
| Liam Quinn | € 16,565.04 | € 5,142.59 | € 3,140.76 | | €3,500.00 | | |
| TOTAL | € 314,735.76 | € 92,274.82 | € 25,496.47 | € 24,000.00 | € 18,000.00 | € 24,000.00 | € 2,885.00 |

| Councillors supported and attended the following conferences in 2015 | Venue | Date of Conferences | No. Delegates |
|--|----------------|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Equal Status Rights Explained : Esperanza Enterprises | Galway | 17/18 April | 1 |
| Crime Prevention and Community Safety : Esperanza Enterprises | Galway | 8/9 May | 1 |
| Local Government and Economic Development : Superior Training Services Ltd. | Edgeworthstown | 12/13 June | 2 |
| The Councillors' Development Plan 'A Reserved Function' : Irish Private and Public Bodies (Consulting) Ltd. | Wexford | 26 - 28 June | 4 |
| Local Economic and Community Plans : Celtic Conferences | Clonakilty | 10 - 12 July | 1 |
| Changes to Community Development : Esperanza Enterprises | Galway | 31 July - 1 August | 1 |
| Government re-think? On Districts Municipal / Borough / Metropolitan : Irish Private and Public Bodies (Consulting) Ltd. | Wexford | 11 - 13 September | 1 |
| Consumer Rights Bill - Landmark Reform of Consumer Law : Celtic Conferences | Clonakilty | 6 - 8 November 2015 | 3 |
| Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 : Esperanza Enterprises | Galway | 20 - 21 November | 2 |

| Councillors attended the following training in 2015 | Venue | Date of Conferences | No. Delegates |
|--|----------------|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Association of Irish Local Government : Module 1 - Governance (Part 1) of Local Authorities | Arklow | 21 st February | 1 |
| Regenerating Local Spaces through Effective Community Planning | Dublin | 26 th February | 2 |
| Association of Irish Local Government: Annual Conference | Carrickmacross | 12/13 March | 6 |
| LAMA Spring Training Seminar | Tuam | 10/11 April | 6 |
| Association of Irish Local Government : Module 2 - Local Economic Development & The Role of the Local Authority | Limerick | 14 th April | 1 |
| Association of Irish Local Government : Module 3 - Local Community Development & LCDC's - A new Role for Local Authorities | Portlaoise | 21 st May | 2 |
| Association of Irish Local Government: Autumn Seminar | Clonakilty | 1 - 2 October | 8 |
| Association of Irish Local Government : Module 5 - Roads, Transportation & Safety - A Key Function for Local Authorities | Tullamore | 6 October | 3 |
| LAMA Autumn Training Seminar | Kilkenny | 9 - 10 October | 11 |
| Realising the Hidden Potential of Ireland's Towns : The Heritage Council | Kilkenny | 5 th November | 2 |
| Association of Irish Local Government : Module 6 - Ground Water, Drinking Water, Surface Water, Septic Tanks & Water Pollution : Registration of Lobbying Act 2014 | Dublin | 14 November | 3 |

STUDENT GRANTS

83 Student Grant renewals were awarded by Offaly County Council in the 2014/2015 academic year. €500,801 was spent on 2014/2015 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. Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI) were established in 2012 to administer Student Grant Applications as a single awarding authority, all new students entering third-level educational institutes now apply to SUSI for support.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Each section, as appropriate, prepared their National Performance Indicators statistics. The statistics were collated by Corporate Services and submitted to the Local Management Services Board and the National Oversight and Audit Committee (NOAC). NOAC published the national Service Indicator Report for all local authorities in December 2015.

COUNTY CORONERS

The total expenditure was €105,756 (including salary) in respect of coroners' inquests in 2015.

EXHIBITIONS HELD IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE

A number of art exhibitions were held in Áras an Chontae during 2015.

OFFALY 2016 COMMEMORATION COMMITTEE

Offaly County Council established a Committee to coordinate and organise the 2016 Commemorations in the County. The following are the members of the Committee;

| | |
|----------------------------|---------------------|
| Cllr. Sinead Dooley | Chairperson |
| | |
| Cllr. John Carroll | Cllr. Declan Harvey |
| Cllr. Brendan Killeavy | Cllr. Peter Ormond |
| Cllr. Liam Quinn | Frank Heslin |
| Monica Cleary | Sinead O'Reilly |
| Amanda Pedlow | Mary Stuart |
| Fiona Flaherty | |

A Public Information meeting organised by the Offaly 2016 Commemorative Committee was held on Wednesday 13th May 2015. The meeting was well received, with in excess of 90 members of the public and elected members attending. The Ireland 2016 Head of Communications, Madeline Boughton gave an overview of the national programme. Amanda Pedlow and Sinead O'Reilly gave an overview of the programme being considered in Offaly. A number of facilitated workshops were held on the evening. The Offaly 2016 Commemorative Committee finalised the programme based on the submissions received from the workshops.

Subsequently Offaly's Clár Comórtha Céad Bliain was launched by Cathaoirleach Cllr Eamonn Dooley on Thursday 3rd December 2015. The launch was well attended with the attendees being entertained by an extract from "Sisters of the Rising" by Christiane O'Mahoney. Michael Hanna read extracts from a letter from his grandfather, Wesley Hanna, written in Dublin during Easter Week in 1916.

Michael O'Reilly, Ireland 2016 Office acknowledged the extensive programme developed in Offaly, and wished all involved every success in the implementation of its Programme. The Programme of events was widely circulated on the Councils website and Offaly 2016 Facebook page.



An extract of Sisters of the Rising being performed at the launch of Offaly's Clár Comórtha Céad Bliain held on 3rd December 2015



Offaly 2016 Commemorative Committee Public Information meeting held 13th May 2015

REPRESENTATIVES TO VARIOUS BODIES:

| | |
|--|--|
| Association of Irish Local Government: | Cllr. N. Cribbin Cllr. D. Owens Cllr. P. Ormond |
| 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 |



A **Ceremony of Recognition Reception** was held in Mount St Joseph's Abbey, Roscrea on 21st May 2015. The reception was held to acknowledge the achievements of the college in the **2015 Leinster Schools Senior Rugby Cup**.

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.

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.

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.



Staff present a cheque to Dóchas following a charity walk fund raising event organised in memory of Roisin Mulhare (O'Neill), a former staff member.

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 2015, this office generated approximately €10.5m in revenue, handled over 90,000 transactions (35% over the counter, 10% via post and 55% was processed online)

REVENUE COLLECTION SERVICE INDICATORS

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

| | |
|------------------|-----|
| Rents | 85% |
| Commercial Rates | 85% |
| Housing Loans | 61% |

Extract from the Unaudited Annual Financial Statement for the Year ended December 31, 2015

**DRAFT INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT STATEMENT FOR YEAR ENDED 31st
DECEMBER 2015**

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> |
|--|--------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| | 2015 | 2015 | 2015 | 2014 |
| | € | € | € | € |
| Housing & Building | 9,449,936 | 9,800,891 | -350,955 | 116,327 |
| Roads Transportation & Safety | 16,767,379 | 12,570,475 | 4,196,904 | 4,132,263 |
| Water Services | 5,266,444 | 4,851,017 | 415,427 | 496,707 |
| Development Management | 5,261,046 | 2,063,230 | 3,197,816 | 2,886,941 |
| Environmental Services | 6,637,910 | 1,982,959 | 4,654,951 | 4,074,910 |
| Recreation & Amenity | 3,418,783 | 595,519 | 2,823,264 | 2,670,266 |
| Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare | 1,024,540 | 622,787 | 401,752 | 224,967 |
| Miscellaneous Services | 7,042,462 | 2,936,493 | 4,105,969 | 4,670,518 |
| Total Expenditure/Income | 54,868,500 | 35,423,372 | | |
| Net cost of Divisions to be funded from Rates & Local Government Fund | | | 19,445,128 | 19,272,899 |
| Rates | | | 14,649,342 | 14,675,504 |
| Local Property Tax | | | 6,663,642 | 6,663,642 |
| Pension Related Deduction | | | 978,460 | 992,646 |
| Surplus/(Deficit) for Year before Transfers | | | 2,846,316 | 3,058,893 |
| Transfers from/(to) Reserves | | | (2,260,079) | (2,500,538) |
| Overall Surplus/(Deficit) for Year | | | 586,237 | 558,355 |
| General Reserve @ 1st January 2014 | | | (4,734,969) | (5,293,324) |
| General Reserve @ 31st December 2014 | | | (4,148,732) | (4,734,969) |

Capital Account Summary

Extract from the Draft Annual Financial Statement for the Year ended December 31, 2015

| | 2015 | 2014 |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|
| | € | € |
| Balance (Debit)\Credit @ 1 January | 13,632,737 | 4,287,669 |
| Total Expenditure (Incl. Transfers) | (15,737,817) | (7,872,562) |
| Total Income (Incl. Transfers) | 9,774,095 | 17,217,630 |
| Balance (Debit)\Credit @ 31 December | 7,669,015 | 13,632,737 |

HUMAN RESOURCES

STAFFING

The total staff complement at the 31st December 2015 was as follows:-

| <i>Core Staff</i> | <i>No. (Headcount)</i> | <i>Whole Time Equivalent</i> |
|---|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Managerial | 4 | 4.00 |
| Clerical/Administrative | 163 | 149.00 |
| Professional/Technical | 69 | 67.80 |
| Outdoor | 137 | 136.00 |
| Fulltime Firefighters | 2 | 2.00 |
| Incentivised career break scheme | 0 | 0.00 |
| Supernumeraries | 5 | 5.00 |
| Total Core Staff | 380 | 368.80 |
| <i>Other Staff</i> | | |
| Contract Posts | 6 | 6.00 |
| Site Supervisory Contract Posts | 0 | 0.00 |
| Temporary/Seasonal | 0 | 0.00 |
| NDP Project Staff | 4 | 4.00 |
| Total Other Staff | 10 | 10.00 |
| <i>Staff Not Included in Above No's</i> | | |
| Retained Firefighters | 50 | N/A |
| Non DoECLG (inc. Gateway) | 81 | 34.60 |

RECRUITMENT

The following new staff were recruited during 2015 :-

- 4 Clerical Officers
- 1 Information Systems Analyst/Developer
- 2 Executive Engineers
- 1 Fitter/Mechanic in the Fire services

GATEWAY

This scheme offers work placements to long term unemployed for the purposes of re-skilling and bridging the gap between unemployment and re-entering the workforce. Offaly County Council's target of 55 placements was met during the year. Sanction was also received to fill two General Operative vacancies in Offaly County Council by way of a confined competition amongst existing Gateway participants.

TRAINING & STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The new PMDS scheme was fully embedded throughout the organisation in 2015. The 2015 staff training plan was delivered based on the following priorities:-

1. Mandatory Health & Safety Training
2. Identified corporate needs and priorities
3. Training needs identified by staff in the Personal Development Plan

The following is a summary of the diverse range of training delivered during the year across the organisation:-

- *Court Room Skills*
- *Safe Pass*
- *Leadership in Local Government*
- *Manual Handling*
- *Media Skills*
- *Occupational First Aid*
- *Debt Collection*
- *Driver Competency*
- *Interview Competency Skills*
- *CSCS Signing, Lighting & Guarding*
- *Mindfulness*
- *Forklifts*
- *Middle Management Development*
- *Telescopic Handlers*
- *Specialised Water/Waste Water training*
- *Mobile Elevated Work Platforms*
- *Cardiac First Responder*
- *Abrasive Wheels*
- *Safety Rep Training*
- *Chemical herbicides and pesticides*

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 requirements of the Public Service Agreements continued during 2015 following the publication of the Lansdowne Road Agreement which extends the Haddington Road Agreement up to the end of 2018.

RETIREMENTS

The following staff retired during 2015:

- ❖ Mary Treacy Assistant Staff Officer
- ❖ Frank Owens Driver Mechanic Fire Services
- ❖ Noel Kennedy Light Equipment Operator
- ❖ Sean Taylor Retained Fireman
- ❖ Eugene Bevans Halting Site Caretaker
- ❖ Marie Dillon Senior Staff Officer
- ❖ Pat O'Connell Water & Sewerage Caretaker
- ❖ Tom Lynch Staff Officer



Offaly County Council staff visit I-LOFAR installation in Birr Castle on the Staff Tour in May 2015

INFORMATION SYSTEMS

In 2015 the Information Systems department completed projects in a variety of areas across the entire organisation.

These included:-

- ➔ Technology refresh of SAN (Storage Area Network) and Virtualisation infrastructure to future proof the organisation's data and compute requirements for the next 5 years.
- ➔ Further integration of Municipal Districts into Offaly County Council with Implementation of a new Parking Management and Phone System.
- ➔ Improvements in organisation IT security with various solutions installed including new firewalls which will increase the security of our corporate network from security threats.
- ➔ Migration of all servers from platforms no longer supported by Microsoft to ensure data integrity and security.
- ➔ Implementation of Paperless Meetings solution for council meetings.
- ➔ New infrastructure implemented and operational in Motor Tax. The upgrade included software and integration to Council's network.
- ➔ Completion and Implementation of Fixed Line Phone Framework tender, resulting in ongoing savings for the organisation.
- ➔ Support regarding the Open Libraries initiative.
- ➔ Deployment of new strategic GIS platform.
- ➔ Updated I.S. policy documents including new Communications Policy for organisation.
- ➔ Strategic involvement in National Eircode Initiative with particular emphasis on Register of Electors and Rates.
- ➔ Continued development of online portal requirements for the National Waste Collection Permits Office, now based in Áras an Chontae.
- ➔ 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 utilized by close to 400 users.

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF TULLAMORE

Director of Services / Area Manager: Declan Kirrane (*Jan to Aug 2015*)
Director of Services / Area Manager: Seán Murray (*Sept to Dec 2015*)
Senior Executive Engineer: Paul Devaney
Meetings Administrator: Miriam Brady

REPORT ON THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF TULLAMORE

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. The September and November meetings were held in Clara Community & Family Resource Centre, and Rahan Hall, respectively.

ELECTED MEMBERS OF MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF TULLAMORE

Cathaoirleach Tommy McKeigue (*Jan. to June 2015*)
Cathaoirleach Danny Owens (*June to Dec. 2015*)
Leas Cathaoirleach Danny Owens (*Jan. to June 2015*)
Leas Cathaoirleach Frank Moran (*June to Dec. 2015*)
Councillor Dervill Dolan
Councillor Sinead Dooley
Councillor Declan Harvey
Councillor Brendan Killeavy

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 2015:

- 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.
- Commencing preparations of, and engaging in consultation on, Tullamore Street Enhancement Programme Phase 1.

- Schedule of Works 2015 – Consideration and adoption of the Schedule of Works for the Municipal District.
- Budget 2016 - Consideration of General Municipal Allocation.
- Delegations were received from the following:
Lloyd Town Park Tullamore Skate Park Users
- Supporting community and voluntary groups in the Municipal District by way of payment of community grants.
- Making of Main Street Tullamore Parking Bye-Laws.
- Reports from Offaly County Council were given to members at Municipal District Meetings as follows:

Environment & Water Services;
Roads & Infrastructure;
Housing;
Preparation of Local Economic Community Plan 2016-2021;
Offaly Burial Grounds Survey



Members and staff of Municipal District of Tullamore, Offaly County Council, and Clara Community & Family Resource Centre, before the September 2015 meeting of the Municipal District, held in Clara Community & Family Resource Centre, the first meeting to be held outside Tullamore.

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF EDENDERRY

Director of Services / Area Manager: Declan Conlon
Meetings Administrator: Therese O'Meara
Senior Executive Engineer: John Connolly
Assistant Engineer: Leonard Geoghegan

REPORT ON THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF EDENDERRY

MONTHLY MEETING

Monthly Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month in the Town Hall, Edenderry at 3.30pm. The members agreed to hold 3 of their monthly meetings outside of Edenderry town. Meetings were held in Garryhinch in April, Daingean in May and Rhode in July of 2015.

ELECTED MEMBERS OF MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF EDENDERRY

Cllr John Foley, Non Party (Cathaoirleach)
(June 2014 to May 2015)
Cllr Liam Quinn, Fine Gael (Cathaoirleach)
(June 2015 to May 2016)
Cllr Liam Quinn, Fine Gael (Leas Cathaoirleach)
(June 2014 to May 2015)
Cllr Noel Cribbin, Non Party (Leas Cathaoirleach)
(June 2015 to May 2016)

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 FROM OTHER DEPARTMENTS

On a rolling monthly basis the members met with staff from the Council Housing, Water and Environment and Roads departments in order to be kept up to date on activities within these sections. The members also received reports from the Local Enterprise Community Development section in order to assist in the development of the Local Economic and Community Plan for 2016 to 2021.

AGENDA ITEMS

The members of Edenderry Municipal District agreed that the following be included on their agenda for their monthly meeting as set items - Job Creation, Bus Éireann and Bus Shelters, Hotel Site in Edenderry and

Ofalia House.

MEETINGS WITH OTHER BODIES

During 2015 the members met with Eircom, Bord na Mona and Bus Éireann in order to discuss their concerns and suggestions with these companies.

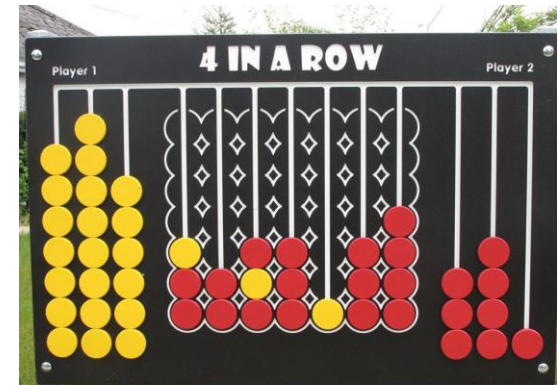
GENERAL MUNICIPAL ALLOCATION 2015

In 2015 the members received an allocation of 55k which was available to community groups and organizations within their district for projects and events/activities. The members agreed that this funding could be applied for during the course of the year and that decisions would be made on a monthly basis. See attached breakdown of funding allocated during 2015.

| Edenderry Municipal District - GMD Allocation 2015 | | | |
|--|--|-----------------|----------------|
| Events/activities | | Total Allocated | 10,000 |
| Name | Reason | Approved | € |
| 1 Edenderry St Patrick Day Parade Committee | Parade | February | 500 |
| 2 Oaklands Secondary School - TEAM ADAM | Competition | February | 250 |
| 3 Rhode Parish Playground Project | Maintenance | March | 500 |
| 4 Edenderry Coarse Angling Club | Festival | April | 1,000 |
| 5 Civic Reception for Sean Norman | Civic Reception - Food Tea and Coffee | April | 0 |
| 6 Daingean Youth Club | Let's go mental - workshop | June | 3,000 |
| 7 Team Hurricane | Martial Arts Club, uniforms/fees | June | 1,000 |
| 8 Shandra Woods, Portarlinton | Engraving stone for estate name | June | 525 |
| 9 Cloneygowan defibrillator committee | remainder of funding requested for purchase of defibrillator | June | 500 |
| 10 Edenderry Ladies GAA | purchase of jerseys | October | 500 |
| 11 Coder Dojo | training for kids to write computer programme | October | 500 |
| 12 Fahy Handball Club | development and upgrading of facilities | October | 1,000 |
| 13 St Vincent De Paul - Edenderry | Christmas appeal | December | 500 |
| 14 St Vincent De Paul - Daingean | Christmas appeal | December | 500 |
| 15 Hire of Daingean Community centre | for monthly meeting | | 80 |
| | | Total | €10,355 |

Edenderry Municipal District - GMD Allocation 2015

| <u>Projects</u> | | <u>Total Allocated</u> | 45,000 |
|--|---|------------------------|----------------|
| <u>Name</u> | <u>Project</u> | <u>Approved</u> | <u>€</u> |
| 1 Rhode Parish Enterprise Association Ltd | Re Build Wall at Croghan Graveyard | March | 3,500 |
| 2 Rhode Parish Enterprise Association Ltd | Rhode Community Garden | March | 3,500 |
| 3 Edenderry Pitch and Putt Club | overall plan to creation of pitch and putt course | April | 3,200 |
| 4 BOLD Ltd | Two Construction Projects at community centre | May | 5,500 |
| 5 Irish Red Cross | toward the purchase of an Ambulance | May | 1,000 |
| 6 Walsh Island Development Group | Erect timber post and rail fencing | May | 1,773 |
| 7 Garr Graveyard committee | construction works in graveyard | June | 3,800 |
| 8 St Brochans Park Hall, Bracknagh | re roofing hall | October | 4,250 |
| 9 Edenderry Playground | towards equipment and maintenace | October | 3,000 |
| 10 Edenderry 1916 Commemoration Committee | towards works in graveyard | October | 3,000 |
| 11 St Brigid's Social Club Garryhinch | erect new security fencing around community hall | October | 3,000 |
| 12 Donation towards OCC 1916 commemooration committe | funding to help pay for costs incurred in celebrations to be held in 2016 in Offaly | October | 5,000 |
| Total | | | €40,523 |



RHODE PLAYGROUND COMMITTEE

EXAMPLES OF PURCHASE / WORKS CARRIED OUT IN THE DISTRICT FROM FUNDING GRANTED FROM GMA



GARR CEMETERY BEFORE AND AFTER THE WORKS (GARR GRAVEYARD COMMITTEE)



PART VIII FOR BLUNDELL PARK, EDENDERRY

On the 19th of October 2015 the Part VIII for Blundell Park in Edenderry was approved by the full council. This meant that planning permission was granted for 33 no houses, a pitch and putt course, the provision of a location for a skateboard park (which will require separate planning permission), landscaping of the park, the installation of walking routes through the park, a link to the canal pathway from the park, a link to the park via the playground, upgrading of public lighting and the installation of play and sports areas for children (to include goal posts) and a toddlers play area. This approval brought to a conclusion a successful public consultation period during which submissions were made and concerns raised and addressed by the public, elected members and the council. The granting of permission for this project will open up a relatively unused space in the town and will provide sought-after amenities for people together with additional social housing. It is hoped that the development of the park will enhance the quality of life for people from Edenderry and surrounding areas.

WORKS / PROJECTS UNDERTAKEN IN MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OFFICE

CANAL PATHWAY, EDENDERRY

Resurfacing works were completed on the canal pathway in Edenderry from Colgans bridge to Rathmore bridge in 2015. This work is an extension of works carried out in 2014 which has resulted in a walking route having been

developed by the Council's own staff from the Harbour to George's Bridge and onwards to Rathmore bridge. This work has provided a much need walking route for people in the town. Various circuits on this route are now used on a daily basis by people in the community. The canal pathway has now become an area of recreational benefit to the people. This work was carried out by area staff under a licence issued from Waterways Ireland.

ROADS PROGRAMME FOR THE DISTRICT

In 2015 a Roadwork's Programme was completed in the sum of **€2,261,614** in areas of ordinary maintenance, road reconstruction and the surface dressing. This allocation included capital works such as bridge improvement works & low cost safety schemes.

RECORD OF ACTIVITIES

| <i>Repairs requests received</i> | |
|----------------------------------|-------------|
| Housing | 638 |
| Roads | 526 |
| Public Lighting | 39 |
| <i>Cash office</i> | |
| Transactions completed | 2925 |
| Income received | €243,623.73 |
| Purchasing transactions | 1544 |
| <i>Reports</i> | |
| Planning | 134 |
| Road Opening | 52 |
| Traffic fines issued | 340 |
| Income from Traffic Fines | €7,635.00 |
| Income from Parking meters | €49,951.39 |

EDENDERRY MD MEMBERS PHOTO TAKEN AT APRIL MEETING IN GARRYHINCH GOLF CLUB, PORTARLINGTON



Back row: left to right, Cllr Noel Bourke, Leonard Geoghegan, Assistant Engineer, Cllr Noel Cribbin, Cllr Liam Quinn and Cllr Eddie Fitzpatrick

Front Row left to right; John Connelly, Area Engineer, Declan Conlon, Area Manager, Cllr. John Foley, Therese O'Meara, Meetings Administrator and Cllr Martin O'Reilly

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF BIRR

| | |
|---|---|
| Director of Services / Area Manager: | Frank Heslin (<i>Jan to Aug 2015</i>) |
| Director of Services / Area Manager: | Tom Shanahan (<i>Sept to Dec 2015</i>) |
| Meetings Administrator: | Deirdre Molloy |
| Town Engineer: | Anne Healy-Smyth |

REPORT ON THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF BIRR FOR THE PERIOD.

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 Clendennen, Fine Gael (Cathaoirleach)
Cllr Eamonn Dooley, Fianna Fáil (Leas Cathaoirleach)
Cllr John Leahy, Renua
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 |
| Birr Theatre and 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:

| | | |
|------------------|---|--|
| January | - | Roads |
| February | - | Planning and LEO |
| March | - | Roads |
| April | - | Housing |
| May | - | Water Services |
| June | - | Roads |
| July | - | Housing |
| September | - | Environment & Water, Roads, and LEO |
| October | - | Roads and Community & Local Development |
| November | - | Housing and Roads |
| December | - | Environment & Water |

The Members also agreed to rotate their meetings to other locations within the MD and as a result of this the October meeting was held in Banagher and the December meeting was held in Kinnitty.

MEETINGS WITH OTHER BODIES

Irish Water The Members met with Mr Vincent Angland and Kieran Lehane of Irish Water to discuss the Watermain Rehabilitation Project

Irish Farmers Association The Members met with IFA Co Chairman Mr John Keena, William Dolan Regional Development Officer and Richard Scally Vice Chair Offaly IFA to discuss the challenges facing farmers in the area.

Coillte 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.

SERVICE INDICATORS 2015

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.

Following on from the experience of collecting the data for the 2014 report, NOAC has engaged in further consultation on many of the indicators and this has resulted in a number of changes to the set of indicators that Local Authorities are being asked to report on in respect of 2015 activity.

For 2015, there are 31 local authority performance indicators, as follows:

- HOUSING (H1 TO H6)
- ROADS (R1 TO R3)
- WATER (W1)
- WASTE/ENVIRONMENT (E1 TO E3)
- PLANNING (P1 TO P4)
- FIRE SERVICE (F1 TO F3)
- LIBRARY/RECREATION (L1 AND L2)
- YOUTH/COMMUNITY (Y1 AND Y2)
- CORPORATE (C1 TO C4)
- FINANCE (M1 AND M2)
- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (J1)

| H: HOUSING (H1 TO H6) | 2015 | 2014 |
|--|--------------|---------------------|
| H1: SOCIAL HOUSING STOCK | | |
| A. The overall total number of dwellings provided by the local authority in the period 1/1/2015 to 31/12/2015; comprising: | 130 | 49 |
| B1. The number of dwellings directly provided, constructed in 2015 | 8 | 0 |
| B2. The number of dwellings directly provided, purchased in 2015 | 1 | 2 |
| C. The number of units provided under the Rental Accommodation Scheme in 2015 | 4 | 1 |
| D. The number of units provided under the Housing Assistance Payment Scheme in 2015 if operated (or else indicate if scheme not yet being operated in the L.A.) | 95 | <i>Not operated</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) in 2015 | 22 | 46 |
| F. The overall total number of social housing dwellings in the LA at 31/12/2015; comprising: | 2,246 | 2,116 |
| G. The total number of dwellings directly provided (constructed or purchased) by the LA | 1,762 | 1,754 |
| H. The total number of units provided under the Rental Accommodation Scheme | 157 | 176 |
| 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) | 95 | <i>Not operated</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) | 232 | 186 |

| | | |
|---|--------------------------|------------|
| H2: HOUSING VACANCIES | | |
| A. The percentage of the total number of dwellings at H1.G that were vacant on 31/12/2015 | 1.64% | 2.39% |
| H3: AVERAGE RE-LETTING TIME AND COST | | |
| A. The time taken from the date of vacation of dwelling to the date in 2015 when a new tenancy had commenced in the dwelling, averaged across all units re-let in 2015 | 33.00 wks | 37.40 wks |
| B. The cost expended on getting the re-tenanted units in 2015 ready for re-letting, averaged across all units re-let in 2015 | € 16,436.00 | € 8,375.00 |
| H4: HOUSING MAINTENANCE COST | | |
| A. Expenditure during 2015 on the repair and maintenance of housing bought or built by the LA compiled on a continuous basis from 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2015, divided by the no. of directly provided units in the LA stock at 31/12/2015 i.e. data at indicator H1G. | € 554.51 | € 535.00 |
| H5: PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR INSPECTIONS | | |
| A. Total number of registered tenancies in the LA area | <i>Figures from PRTB</i> | 2,856 |
| B. Number of inspections carried out | 30 | 50 |
| H6: LONG-TERM HOMELESS ADULTS | | |
| A. Number of adult individuals in emergency accommodation that are long-term (i.e. 6 months or more within the previous year) homeless as a % of the total number of homeless adult individuals in emergency accommodation at the end of 2015. | 0.00% | 1.71% |

| R: ROADS (R1 AND R2) | | 2015 | 2014 |
|--|-----------------|------|------------------------|
| R1: RATINGS IN PAVEMENT SURFACE CONDITION INDEX (PSCI) | | | |
| A. The % of (a) Regional , (b) Local Primary , (c) Local Secondary , and (d) Local Tertiary roads that have ever received a PSCI condition rating, | Regional | 68% | <i>New in 2015</i> |
| | Local Primary | 97% | |
| | Local Secondary | 94% | |
| | Local Tertiary | 81% | |
| B. The % of total regional roads that received a PSCI condition rating during 2015 | | 75% | <i>New in 2015</i> |
| C. The % of total (a) Regional , kilometres represented by the numbers of kilometres at 31/12/2015 rated in each of the following 4 groupings of the 10 PSCI rating categories; 1-4, 5-6, 7-8 and 9-10 | Category 1 - 4 | 10% | <i>Amended in 2015</i> |
| | Category 5 - 6 | 9% | |
| | Category 7 - 8 | 21% | |
| | Category 9 - 10 | 28% | |
| C. The % of total (b) Local Primary , road kilometres represented by the numbers of kilometres at 31/12/2015 rated in each of the following 4 groupings of the 10 PSCI rating categories; 1-4, 5-6, 7-8 and 9-10. | Category 1 - 4 | 33% | <i>Amended in 2015</i> |
| | Category 5 - 6 | 27% | |
| | Category 7 - 8 | 24% | |
| | Category 9 - 10 | 13% | |
| C. The % of total (c) Local Secondary road kilometres represented by the numbers of kilometres at 31/12/2015 rated in each of the following 4 groupings of the 10 PSCI rating categories; 1-4, 5-6, 7-8 and 9-10. | Category 1 - 4 | 35% | <i>Amended in 2015</i> |
| | Category 5 - 6 | 21% | |
| | Category 7 - 8 | 21% | |
| | Category 9 - 10 | 17% | |

| | | | |
|---|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|
| C. The % of total (d) Local Tertiary road kilometres represented by the numbers of kilometres at 31/12/2015 rated in each of the following 4 groupings of the 10 PSCI rating categories; 1-4, 5-6, 7-8 and 9-10. | Category 1 - 4 | 35% | Amended in 2015 |
| | Category 5 - 6 | 14% | |
| | Category 7 - 8 | 15% | |
| | Category 9 - 10 | 17% | |
| R2: REGIONAL ROAD GRANTS WORKS | | | |
| A. Kilometres of Regional road strengthened during 2015 using Road Improvement (RI) grants and the RI grant amount | Km of Road | 10.112 km | New in 2015 |
| | Grant Amount | € 3,861,516 | |
| B. Kilometres of Regional road resealed during 2015 using Road Maintenance (RM) grants and the RM grant amount . | Km of Road | 8.315 km | New in 2015 |
| | Grant Amount | € 942,971 | |
| R3: % 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). | | 55.56% | 47.24% |

R1: In order to compile this information, the RMO will extract the following data from Map Road and submit to the LGMA:

R2: These figures will be provided to the eReturns system directly by the RMO.

R3: 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 1/1/2015 to 31/12/2015 and the number of such transactions conducted online.

| W: WATER (W1) | 2015 | 2014 |
|---|------------------------|-------------|
| W2: % DRINKING WATER (PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHEMES) IN COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS | | |
| The indicator that will be presented in the performance indicators report is the data supplied to the EPA in respect of the monitoring of the quality of private drinking water supplies during 2014. | <i>Provided by EPA</i> | 98% |

Note: This data will be obtained directly from the EPA

| E: WASTE / ENVIRONMENT (E1 TO E3) | 2015 | 2014 |
|--|---|------------------------|
| E1: No. / % OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH ACCESS TO A 3 BIN SERVICE | | |
| A. The number of households, based on the 2011 Census, who are situated in an area covered by a licensed operator providing a 3 bin service at 31/12/2015 | <i>Provided by NWCPO</i> | 3,240 |
| B. The % of households within the LA area (also as per the 2011 Census) that the number at A represents. | <i>Provided by NWCPO</i> | 12.21% |
| E2: % OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION COMPLAINTS CLOSED | | |
| A. The total no. of pollution cases in respect of which a complaint was made during 2015, the number of pollution cases closed from 1/12/2015 to 31/12/2015 and the total no. of cases on hands at 31/12/2015. | Complaints Made | 806 |
| | No. Closed | 750 |
| | No. on Hand | 54 |
| | | <i>Amended in 2015</i> |
| E3: % OF LA AREA WITHIN THE 5 LEVELS OF LITTER POLLUTION | | |
| A. The % of the area within the LA that when surveyed in 2015 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> | 13 |
| | | 70 |
| | | 16 |
| | | 1 |
| | | 0 |

The data will be submitted by Tobin Consulting Engineers directly to the LGMA from the data for the 2015 National Litter Pollution Monitoring System Report that should be ready for publication in mid 2016.

| P: PLANNING (P1 TO P4) | 2015 | 2014 |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| P1: NEW BUILDINGS INSPECTED | | |
| A. Buildings Inspected as a percentage of new buildings notified to the local authority | 35% | 37% |
| 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 2015 | 20 | 12 |
| B. % of the determinations at A which were to confirm (either with or without variation) the decision made by the LA | 60% | 33% |
| P3: % OF PLANNING ENFORCEMENT CASES CLOSED AS RESOLVED | | |
| A. Total number of planning cases referred to or initiated by the local authority in the period 1/1/2015 to 31/12/2015 that were investigated | 54 | 52 |
| B. Total number of cases that were closed during 2015 | 41 | 27 |
| C. % of the cases at B that were dismissed under Section 152(2), Planning and Development Act 2000 or were closed because statute barred or an exempted development | 11% | 22% |
| D. % of the cases at B that were resolved to the LA's satisfaction through negotiations | 3% | 0% |
| 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) | 86% | 78% |
| F. Total number of planning cases being investigated as at 31/12/2015. | 46 | 25 |
| 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. | € 33.29 | € 29.55 |

| F: FIRE SERVICE (F1 TO F3) | 2015 | 2014 |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| F1: COST PER CAPITA OF THE FIRE SERVICE | | |
| A. The Annual Financial Statement (AFS) Programme E expenditure data divided by the population of the LA area per the 2011 Census for the population served by the fire authority as per the Risk Based Approach Phase One reports. | € 39.67 | € 38.30 |
| F2: SERVICE MOBILISATION | | |
| A. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Full-Time Stations in respect of fire | N/A | N/A |
| B. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Part-Time Stations (retained fire service) in respect of fire | 5.13 | 5.07 |
| 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 | N/A |
| 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 | 5.27 | 5.42 |
| F3: PERCENTAGE OF ATTENDANCE TIMES AT SCENES | | |
| A. % of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at the scene is within 10 minutes | 56.85% | 56.61% |
| B. % of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at the scene is after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes | 37.08% | 36.56% |
| C. % of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes | 6.07% | 6.83% |
| D. % of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance at the scene is within 10 minutes | 32.99% | 42.71% |
| 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 | 55.67% | 50.00% |
| F. % of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes | 11.34% | 7.29% |

| L: LIBRARY / RECREATION SERVICES (L1 AND L2) | 2015 | 2014 |
|---|-----------------|--------------------|
| L1: LIBRARY VISITS AND ISSUES | | |
| A. Number of visits to libraries per head of population for the LA area per the 2011 Census. | 3.26* | 3,357 |
| B. Number of items issued to library borrowers in the year. | 259,381 | <i>New in 2015</i> |
| L2: COST OF OPERATING A LIBRARY SERVICE | | |
| A. The Annual Financial Statement (AFS) Programme F data divided by the population of the LA area per the 2011 Census. | € 28.24* | € 27,660.63 |

*. The figures (L1A and L2A) are amended in 2015; figures for 2014 are per 1,000 of population (per 2011 Census)

| Y: YOUTH / COMMUNITY (Y1 TO Y4) | 2015 | 2014 |
|---|----------------------|-------------|
| Y1: PARTICIPATION IN COMHAIRLE NA NÓG SCHEME | | |
| A. Percentage of local schools involved in the local Youth Council / <i>Comhairle na nÓg</i> scheme. | 100.00%** | 92.86% |
| Y2: GROUPS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK (PPN) | | |
| A. The number of organisations included in the County Register at 31/12/2015 and the proportion of those organisations that opted to be part of the Social Inclusion College (SIC) within the PPN | No. of Organisations | 238 |
| | No. on SIC | 23 |

** Amended in 2015, the *Comhairle na nÓg* (Y1) relates to Second Level Schools only.

| C: CORPORATE SERVICES (C1 TO C4) | 2015 | 2014 |
|---|-------------------|--------------------|
| C1: TOTAL NUMBER OF WTES | | |
| A. The wholtime equivalent staffing number as at 31 December 2015 | 374.1883 | 374.79 |
| C2: WORKING DAYS LOST TO SICKNESS | | |
| A. Percentage of working days lost to sickness absence through medically certified leave | 3.47% | 3.40% |
| B. Percentage of working days lost to sickness absence through self-certified leave | 0.249% | 0.30% |
| C3: NO. OF PAGE VISITS TO LA WEBSITE | | |
| A. Total page views of the local authority's website in 2015. | 741,181 | 774,354 |
| B. Total number of followers at end 2015 of the LA's social media accounts (if any) **. | 12,693 | <i>New in 2015</i> |
| C4: OVERALL COST OF ICT PROVISION PER WTE | | |
| A. All ICT expenditure in the period from 1/1/2015 to 31/12/2015, divided by the WTE no. supplied under the C1 indicator. | € 2,560.28 | € 3,026.00 |

** Offaly County Council does not have a Corporate Social Media presence; figures shown are cumulative total for Library Section, Arts Section, Heritage Section, Community and Enterprise – Comhairle na nÓg, Corporate Services – Offaly 2016, Environment – Offaly Dog Shelter, NWCPO.

M: FINANCE (M1 AND M2)

2015

M1:5 YEAR SUMMARY OF REVENUE ACCOUNT BALANCE

| | |
|--|--------------|
| A. The cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2011 in the Revenue Account from the Income and Expenditure Account Statement of the Annual Financial Statement (AFS) | -€ 4,609,456 |
| B. The cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2012 | -€ 5,782,975 |
| C. The cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2013 | -€ 5,293,325 |
| D. The cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2014 | -€ 4,734,969 |
| E. The cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2015* | -€ 4,148,732 |
| F. The cumulative surplus or deficit at 31/12/2015 as a percentage of Total Income in 2015 from the Income and Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS** | 7.188% |

M2:5 YEAR SUMMARY OF % COLLECTION LEVELS FOR MAJOR REVENUE SOURCES

| | <i>Rates</i> | <i>Rents and Annuities</i> | <i>Housing Loans</i> |
|--|--------------|----------------------------|----------------------|
| 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 2011 | 81.42% | 87.15% | 63.47% |
| B. Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2012 | 81.80% | 85.82% | 59.23% |
| C. Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2013 | 81.66% | 84.79% | 60.44% |
| D. Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2014 | 82.12% | 85.34% | 61.63% |
| E. Appendix 7 of the AFS** for 2015 | 84.32% | 85.42% | 61.13% |

* The figures in the unaudited AFS are to be used where the audit by the Local Government Audit Service has not taken place by the end of June.

| J: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (J1) | 2015 | 2014 |
|--|-------------|-------------|
| J1: No. of JOBS CREATED | | |
| A. The no. of jobs created with assistance from the Local Enterprise Office during the period 1/1/2015 to 31/12/2015 | 71.5 | <i>109</i> |

This figure will be obtained directly from the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation based on the information provided to it by the Local Enterprise Offices.

