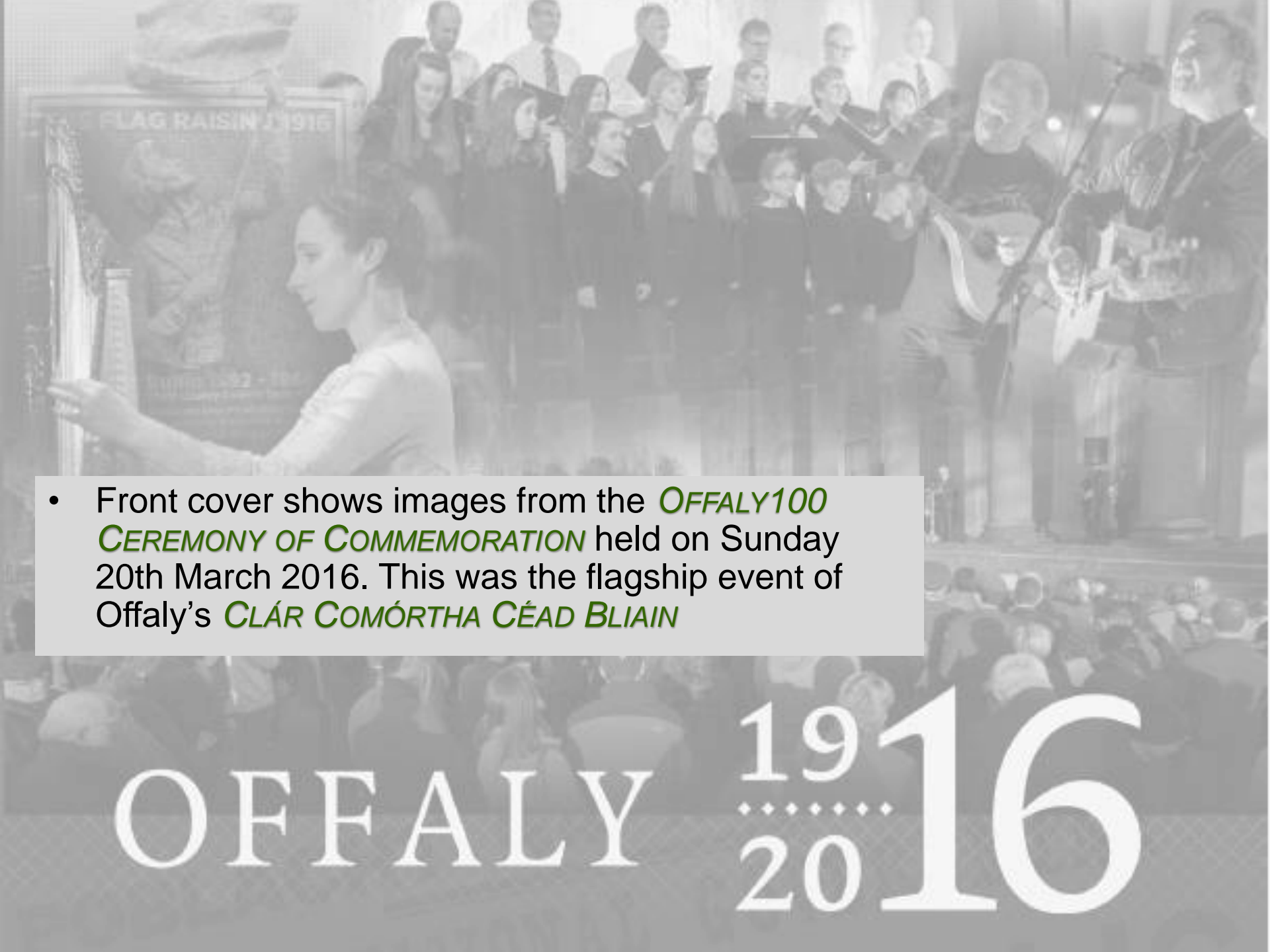




ANNUAL REPORT 2016

OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL

OFFALY 1916

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- Front cover shows images from the *OFFALY100 CEREMONY OF COMMEMORATION* held on Sunday 20th March 2016. This was the flagship event of Offaly's *CLÁR COMÓRTHA CÉAD BLIAIN*

OFFALY 1916
2016

JOINT ADDRESS BY THE CATHAOIRLEACH AND THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE



Cllr. Eddie Fitzpatrick — Cathaoirleach



Anna Marie Delaney — Príomh Fheidhmeannach

We are very pleased to present the *Offaly County Council 2016 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.

There were a number of significant projects undertaken by the Council, on behalf of the citizens of Offaly, during 2016 and perhaps the most noteworthy milestones would include:

- ❖ **OFFALY100 CEREMONY OF COMMEMORATION** and Candle-lit Walk, was held on Sunday 20th March. This was the flagship event of **OFFALY'S CLÁR COMÓRTHA CÉAD BLIAIN** and the Centenary Concert which followed saw the Church of the Assumption

filled to capacity as the citizens of Offaly joined a host of musicians and artists to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the Easter Rising,

- ❖ Offaly's new tourism brand **OFFALY – IRELANDS HIDDEN GEM**, was well received at the **NATIONAL PLOUGHING CHAMPIONSHIPS** which was held in Mucklagh, in September. Over 280,000 visitors attended the event, over 3 days, and staff from Offaly County Council worked closely with the organisers and An Garda Síochána to ensure the event ran smoothly,
- ❖ The **MY OPEN LIBRARY** initiative which was piloted in Offaly, won the Award for the Best Library Service at the **2016 CHAMBERS IRELAND EXCELLENCE IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AWARDS**,

❖ Tullamore received a **GOLD AWARD** in the **EUROPEAN ENTENTE FLORALE COMPETITION** on the town's first entry in the Competition. The Municipal District worked in partnership with Tullamore Tidy Towns Committee and Tullamore Chamber of Commerce as part of Team Tullamore in preparing the town for the competition.

❖ **MUSIC GENERATION OFFALY / WESTMEATH** held **SINGFEST 2016** over three days in June, with approximately 1,000 young singers and musicians for workshops and the Gala Concert on the last day of the event,

❖ The **TULLAMORE ARTS CENTRE** moved to the next phase with the purchase of the former Kilroys Building in Tullamore. A new design brief has been developed and a design team will be engaged to oversee the refurbishment of the building. The building was the epicentre of **CULTURE NIGHT 2016** held in September,

❖ The **IRISH WATER CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME** continued apace in 2016,

❖ The **TULLAMORE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMME** sees Offaly County Council pursuing a project to rejuvenate and redevelop the public realm of the retail core of Tullamore town,

❖ Offaly County Council have lodged 4 applications under the **TOWN AND VILLAGE RENEWAL SCHEME 2016**,

❖ **LLOYD TOWN PARK**, Tullamore achieved a **GREEN FLAG AWARD**, the benchmark national standard for publicly accessible parks and green spaces.

❖ **COMMEMORATIVE GARDENS** were opened in each of the Municipal Districts in the County, during the year as part of **OFFALY'S CLÁR COMÓRTHA CÉAD BLIAIN**.

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 2016 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 and our Municipal Districts of Tullamore, Birr and Edenderry over the past twelve months.

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HOUSING, SOCIAL & CULTURAL SERVICES

SPC Chair	Peter Ormond MCC	Director Of Services	Seán Murray / Tom Shanahan (Acting)
<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 / Mary Brady

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 2016

- The total Number of Social Housing dwellings at 31/12/2016 was 2539
- 30 Houses were acquired in 2016 with bids accepted on a further 8 units.
- 50 Households were assessed and declared eligible to buy their rented social housing units under the Tenant Purchase Scheme.

- 115 grants were paid to adapt homes for disabled and elderly private home owners.
- Allocation of 86 homes to applicants on the housing waiting list through social leasing, Rental Accommodation Scheme or Local Authority stock.
- 32 applicant families were nominated to Approved Housing bodies and were allocated houses.
- Establishment of 252 tenancies under the Housing Assistance Payment.
- Establishment of a dedicated Capital Housing Design Team.
- 3625 maintenance requests from local authority tenants.

- Stage 1 approval for the construction of 18 Social Housing units in Tullamore.
- 4 meetings of the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee. Mid-term review of the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014-2018.
- Completion of the 2016 Social Housing Needs Assessment.
- Returned 74 vacant houses to productive use
- Completed adaptations to 14 Local Authority houses for tenants with disabilities
- Energy Efficiency works completed on almost 300 houses
- 129 new Homeless presentations.
- Responded to 113 anti social behaviour complaints

REPORT ON HOUSING STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE

The Housing, Social and Cultural SPC met 5 times in 2016. The following Housing policies and procedures were reviewed;

- Private Housing Grants procedure
- Estate Management Policy
- Scheme of Letting Priorities

Offaly County Council made a submission to the

Oireachtas Committee on Housing and Homelessness in April 2016.

Rebuilding Ireland – the Government’s Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness was launched in July 2016.

HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND ALLOCATIONS

A general Housing Needs Assessment was completed in 2016. 1,715 Social Housing applicant households were contacted. There was a 46% non-response rate. There were 1,450 applicants on the housing waiting list at the end of 2016.

478 detailed housing assessments were conducted in 2016. This was over two and half times the number of such assessments carried out in 2010.

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

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number</i>
<i>2011</i>	<i>277</i>
<i>2012</i>	<i>333</i>
<i>2013</i>	<i>356</i>
<i>2014</i>	<i>452</i>
<i>2015</i>	<i>474</i>
<i>2016</i>	<i>478</i>

PRIVATE SITES

15 Private Sites were sold in 2016.

DIRECT CONSTRUCTION

Offaly County Council established and resourced a Capital Works Housing Design Team in 2016. By year end Housing construction projects were being progressed through appraisal on 8 Council owned sites.

CONSTRUCTION IN PARTNERSHIP WITH APPROVED HOUSING BODIES

Partner AHBs were selected for social housing construction of 5 sites owned by OCC. Draft plans for these sites show potential for 140 houses subject to Planning Permission and Funding approval from the Department of Housing,

Planning, Community and Local Government. OCC are continuing to work in partnership with AHBs on a number of other projects on private lands.

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST – TURNKEY DEVELOPMENTS

Expressions of interest were sought from private developers regarding the construction of family home developments for subsequent sale to the Local Authority. Over 20 responses were received and appraised. A number of these proposals were advanced by the Capital Housing Design Team

LIBRARY SERVICE

INTRODUCTION

Progress on the implementation of “**Opportunities for all**” the national strategy for Public Libraries 2013-2017 continued in 2016. Key achievements include:

- Introduction of free services: free membership and free reservations.
- Introduction of Online Services: eBooks, eMagazines, eAudiobooks, eBusiness, eLearning, eNewspapers and eLanguages.
- My Open Library initiative was awarded the Chamber Ireland’s Excellence in Local Government Award 2016.
- DHPCLG Capital Funding approval of €105,000 for My Open Library in Edenderry and Ferbane.
- DHPCLG Capital Funding approval of €1.7 for a new Community Library in Edenderry.
- New services promoting Business Enterprise and Employment Services to entrepreneurs, the underemployed and unemployed.
- Offaly 1916: Provision of a full programme of events including the publication of “**Offaly and the Rising: an educational Resource**” for primary and secondary schools launched and distributed to all schools in Offaly.

PERFORMANCE 2016

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 continues to decrease due to the reduction in funding over the last 7 years. It is expected this will increase again as funding towards book and media is restored. The use of social media and online services by our users has increased by over 40% in 2016.

Performance	2015	2016	%
<i>Members</i>	14,557	14,418	-0.95%
<i>Visits</i>	251,815	260,529	3.46%
<i>Internet/Wifi</i>	197,378	201,409	2.04%
<i>Loans</i>	259,381	239,312	-7.74%
<i>Website visits</i>	95,171	127,979	34.47%
<i>My Open Library visits</i>	15,308	25,105	64.00%

MY OPEN LIBRARY

Offaly County Council was presented with the Award for Best Library Service at the 2016 Chambers Ireland Excellence in

Local Government Awards in Dublin on Thursday 24th November 2016. The award was for the **My Open Library Service** which has now been running for two years in Offaly.

My Open Library is a service for the public that allows members the freedom and flexibility to use the library at the time that suits them best. Under **My Open Library**, registered members can access the library using their library card and pin from 8am until 10 pm 7 days a week including Sundays.

My Open Library does not involve any reduction of the existing staffed hours of service. During the regular staffed hours, library staff are available to provide expert and additional services and develop community engagement and programming.

Following the implementation of the successful pilots, the **Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government** has also funding the expansion of the pilot to an additional 2 libraries in Offaly and Edenderry libraries.

1992 people are currently registered to use My Open Library. Prior to My Open Library, Banagher was open 14 hours a week and Tullamore for 47 hours a week. Both libraries are now accessible to the public 98 hours a week. During 2016, there were 25,105 visits during My Open Library hours. In Banagher, 47% of visits take place

during My Open Library hours. In Tullamore library, which is open 6 days a week with staff, the My Open Library usage is 12% of all visits.

OFFALY 2016

Offaly & the Rising: an educational resource was launched in February 2016 as part of the Offaly 2016 Centenary Programme and was delivered to all Primary and Secondary schools in Offaly. The educational resource is available in hardcopy and online format and includes:

- Bibliography of Offaly Library Resources
- Power Point presentation of the 1916 rising in Offaly
- Video format presentation of 1916 rising in Offaly
- Teachers Notes



A Poem for Ireland POETRY COMPETITION for post-primary schools

OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL
1916
CENTENARY PROGRAMME



Secondary Schools in Offaly participated in the “1916 A Poem for Ireland National Poetry Competition” organised locally by Offaly Library Service. Each school selected a winning entry and a judging panel selected the winning County entry to go forward to the National competition. The County winner for his poem “The Street” was Samuel Denehan, a second year student at St Mary’s Secondary School, Edenderry.

LIBRARIES SUPPORTING BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT

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

In conjunction with Offaly Local Development Company, Offaly Libraries launched a Library eLearners group in Edenderry Library. The service supports people wishing to complete an online training course using the new elearning resource: Universal Class service.

LIBRARIES SUPPORTING DIGITAL LITERACY

Classes and workshops on basic ICT skills, searching, the web, and social media were delivered across the Library network for the many people who want to improve their digital literacy to enable them engage more fully with e-government services.

LOCAL STUDIES AND ARCHIVES

Local Studies 2016: Dr. Philip Conway hosted a series of talks as part of the Library 1916 programme including

- ☞ The 1916 Rising Commemorations in Offaly in 1966.
- ☞ The Offaly Republican Roll of Honour, Exploring IRA fatalities in South Offaly, 1918-1930
- ☞ “A great deed was done last night...” The role of Seamus O’ Brennan in “The Tullamore Affray” and the 1916 Rising.
- ☞ “Hated; Despised; Degraded...”? The Fate of Michael Foley, Edenderry's 1916 Rising Veteran.
- ☞ Rhode’s connections to the 1916 Rising and its legacy in North Offaly.



Archives 2016: Offaly Library Service is continuing to prioritise the development of a County Archive service working in collaboration with Offaly History. There remains a considerable work program to be completed. The following projects were funded by the Heritage Council and Offaly County Council during 2016.

- ☞ Completion of the cleaning and cataloguing of the large 90-box collection entitled 'Records of Robert Perry & Co' (P68).
- ☞ Creation of a profile for Offaly County Library on IAR (www.iar.ie) so that future catalogues can be uploaded expediently. This will raise the profile of the repository nationally and will attract new researchers.
- ☞ Creation of reference lists of (a) local government archives and (b) private collections available on the library's local studies webpages.
- ☞ Complete accession of a large tranche of the records from the former Birr UDC.
- ☞ Commencement a systematic overhaul of existing catalogues of collections that are related to the Decade of Commemorations period (1913-1923)

HERITAGE WEEK

Offaly Libraries in conjunction with the Heritage Officer ran a number of different events for Heritage week. All 8 libraries played host to Jude Stynes with "Hands on History" where guests were able to see weapons and uniforms from the 1916 period.



LIBRARIES SUPPORTING LITERACY

61 schools from across the county participated in the **Read Anything, Anytime, Anywhere Literacy Initiative**. Collectively the children of Offaly read for 3,841,761 minutes or 7 and 1/3 years.



The Summer Stars Reading programme was launched by *Minister of State for Housing and Urban Renewal, Mr. Damien English* during a visit to Tullamore Library on Tuesday 21st June, 2016.

Tullamore Library introduced a collection of books for adults and children in the Lithuanian language in 2016.



DIGITAL RESOURCES

Access to online resources is now available from our website www.offaly.ie/libraries. This is a new national service and includes the following online services available free to members

	Learn a language online Access to 60 foreign language courses available plus English courses for speakers of other languages
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	<p>Universal Class offers access to over 500 Online Continuing Education Courses.</p>
	<p>Online access to over 100 popular magazines</p>
	<p>Online access to current news and historical newspapers from ProQuest</p>
	<p>Online access to eBooks & eAudiobooks. Library users can borrow 5 eBooks and 5 EAudiobooks at any one time</p>
	<p>Online access to comics & graphic novels</p>

performance and Edenderry Library hosted Storymaking with Paul Timoney. 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

PRIORITIES FOR 2017

Publish a new Library Development Plan for Offaly Library Service 2017-2021.

1. Progress plans to develop a new library in Edenderry included in the national library capital funding programme.

CULTURAL PROGRAMME

Culture night took place on Friday 16th September. Tullamore library hosted the Le Chéile choir for a rooftop

2. Extend My Open Library project to Clara and Birr Libraries.
3. Commence a Technology Replacement Programme for all libraries.
4. Implementation of the national shared Library Management System including the migration of data to the new Library Management System.
5. Implement a programme to deliver an Age Friendly Library service in conjunction with Offaly Local Authority Age Friendly programme.
6. Continue to focus on literacy and provision of a literacy programme.
 - Implement the Right to Read literacy action plan
 - Promote and improve services to children and young people supporting parents, teachers and carers in literacy, numeracy and communications skills
 - Work with local stakeholders, PPN and LCDC to deliver literacy programmes actions.
7. Evaluate the Libraries Supporting Business, Enterprise and Employment pilot project and implement agreed actions.
8. Develop partnerships with other organisations providing local history and archives to ensure coordinated and enhanced access to collections of local history and archives for end users.
 - Work with Offaly History towards the development of a County Archive Service.
9. Work with communities to provide quality cultural services and programming.
10. Continuous review of library services activities to include opening hours, staffing levels and evaluation of services based on budgetary cuts and non filling of staff vacancies.

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 2016, MGOW moved from the philanthropic phase of our development to operating under the auspices of the Department of Education and Skills.

Some key achievements in 2016 were:

- ✓ 5,000 children and young people across Offaly and Westmeath are now regularly accessing performance music education as a result of Music Generation Offaly/Westmeath programmes.
- ✓ 27 musicians continue to deliver tuition services on behalf of Music Generation Offaly/ Westmeath and

2016 saw a total of 6,500 hours of tuition being delivered in 79 locations across the region.

- ✓ The Arts Council/ Music Generation grant of €40,000 made it possible to create a choral residency in partnership with the Association of Irish Choirs (Ireland's national resource agency for the development of choral singing).
- ✓ This residency provided an added opportunity to up-skill MGOW musicians and benefitted all MGOW partner schools. To mark the conclusion of the residency, a virtual choir of over 2,000 voices was created in the run up to Singfest, the first ever festival of singing to be held in the Midlands. Based in Athlone IT, Singfest brought together 1,000 children and young people for 3 days of music making organized into 2 school orientated days of workshops and a Big Sing, and a gala concert featuring 3 new children's choirs, all under the artistic direction of UK based conductor Greg Beardsell (Irish Youth Choir, Cross Border Orchestra of Ireland, National Youth Choir of GB).

PUBLIC ART – PER CENT FOR ART SCHEME

The exhibition titled “*The Secrets of Offaly*”, an assembly of three public Arts Projects, held in three communities during 2015, was launched in Áras an Chontae in February 2016. The exhibition explores the legacy of three Offaly communities in the early 1900’s, i.e.

- Secrets of Offaly – Kinnitty / Rex Ingram
- Secrets of Offaly – John Joly / Clonbullogue
- Secrets of Offaly – Clara / Robert Goodbody

The exhibition was launched by local historian, Michael Byrne.

FILMOFFALY

The 2016 FilmOffaly Award, was awarded to short film *Kubrick by Candlelight*, written by David O’Reilly, and was filmed in Tullamore in December 2016. The film is described as a romantic comedy set behind the scenes of the filming of Stanley Kubrick’s *Barry Lyndon* in 1970’s Ireland.

Following the allocation of REDz programme funding a significant rebranding of FilmOffaly and a targeted marketing campaign was conducted during the summer of 2016. A pop up film studio for Tullamore continues to be marketed to further boost the potential for economic development in the film industry locally.

The OFFline Film Festival was held in October 2016.

MINI MO BIRR THEATRE & ARTS CENTRE

Birr Theatre & Arts Centre provides a valuable Arts resource to Birr and Offaly. In 2016 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 direct funding to Birr Theatre in 2016.

CULTURE NIGHT

Culture Night took place on 16th September 2016. It was largest programme of events in Offaly to date. **36 FREE events** took place in one night throughout the county. Events included music, dance, comedy, theatre and visual art, many of which embodied the 1916 centenary theme. Participants included local artists and community groups with venues such as libraries, castles, cafes and bars hosting on the night. An estimated audience of just under **3,000 people** attended events in towns and villages around Offaly. International act **‘The German Electrophonic Orchestra’** came to Ireland specifically for this event, performing in both Tullamore and Clara, garnering national press and media coverage.

Culture Night is part funded by the Department Arts, Heritage Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

ANAM BEO

The Arts Office continued to work closely with Anam Beo which is jointly funded by Offaly County Council and the HSE. *100 Years 100 Faces Exhibition*, a collection of artworks from the art facilitators and participants of Anam Beo, Offaly's Arts, Health and Wellbeing Programme was held in *Our Arts Centre*, (former Kilroys premises), in Tullamore. The exhibition included portraits, quilts, collage, liting and reflections from the 2016 centenary year.

LOUGH BOORA

The working group established to explore the future of the Sculpture Park at Lough Boora met on a number of occasions to identify the current issues and future planning objectives. The Arts and Education Programme was launched in Lough Boora Discovery Park on Friday 27th May. The Programme was an initiative of the working group and designed to refresh the Discovery Park and to encourage schools, groups and families to visit the Park.

ARTS ACT GRANTS

Offaly Arts Grants 2016 had a creative 1916 focus. The fund for this scheme was increased to €20,000. 36 community groups received grants towards creative and cultural projects in the community that directly focused on and reflected the themes of this year of commemoration.

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 16.

HULLABALOO! OFFALY'S CHILDREN'S ARTS FESTIVAL

In 2016, Hullabaloo continued in Edenderry, Birr and Clara during the October midterm break. The festival attracted large numbers of young people and their families to workshops and performances. The festival is led by the Arts Office, in partnership with Birr Theatre and Arts Centre, Clara Family Resource Centre and the Library Service.

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 2016, the purchase of the former Kilroy's premises on High Street in Tullamore was finalised. The board of Tullamore Community Arts Centre commenced the development of a new design brief for the arts centre, from which and through a tendering process, a design team to oversee the refurbishment of Kilroys in High Street, Tullamore into an arts centre will be engaged.

This project will be financed through a grant of €2m through the ACCESS II scheme from the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and through the generosity of the people and businesses of Tullamore.

MIDLANDS ARTS AND CULTURE MAGAZINE

There were 2 publications of the Midlands Arts and Culture Magazine. This free publication highlights the diversity and quality of arts projects across the four counties and aims to create a greater national cultural identity of the Midlands.

PERFORMANCE IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE

The Tullamore Academy Chamber Choir held a special fundraising performance on 24th June 2016 in Áras an Chontae. The Academy Chamber Choir represented Ireland in Germany in July at the *Interationaler Chorwettbewerb* - a prestigious choral competition held

every two years in Miltenberg, Germany. Only six choirs from around the world have been chosen to represent their country and this is the first time in the competition's history that Ireland has been represented.

ENVIRONMENT & WATER SERVICES

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

WATER SERVICES

Offaly County Council delivered Water Services in accordance with the Service Level Agreement with Irish Water and the Annual Service Plan for 2016. 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.

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

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 EPA Drinking Water Report 2015 shows that Offaly had a 100% microbiological compliance rate and a 100% Chemical Parameter Compliance rate in 2015 with no schemes on the EPA remedial Action List. Working with IW the Council continues to improve and upgrade the Water Supply Schemes throughout the County.

The completion of four Watermain Rehabilitation Projects in Offaly and the commencement of the Edenderry and Kilcormac project in 2016 has further assisted in reducing Unaccounted for Water in the County. The Irish Water target for 2016 was 11,715m³/d, the average UFW figure

in Offaly in 2016 was 10,835m³/d.

WASTEWATER

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. There are 14 Wastewater Treatment Plants in Offaly with Discharge Licences serving agglomerations with populations greater than 500. Meeting the stringent limit values on these licences is challenging but considerable progress was made regarding same in 2016.

WATER SERVICES CAPITAL SCHEMES

The Irish Water Capital Investment Plan 2014 – 2016 identified new Capital project priorities in Offaly. A number of low cost small scale projects through the Minor Programmes and Capital Maintenance funding mechanisms progressed facilitating the upkeep and improvement of existing schemes.

The following Schemes were on the Capital Investment Plan 2014 – 2016

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	Complete May 2017
	Tullamore Town	Complete
Tullamore Water Supply Scheme Phase	Water Treatment Plant Upgrade in Clonaslee and new Water Treatment Plant and Supplementary Reservoir in Arden	The design is underway for an upgrade of the Plants. Planning permission has been granted for the sites. The detailed designs and contract documents has commenced.
	Development of Sources	The testing and development of potential new sources and landowner negotiations for Tullamore water supply scheme is ongoing.

Birr Water Supply Scheme	Water Treatment Plant Upgrade	The design is underway for an upgrade of the Plant. Planning permission has been granted for the site. The detailed design and contract documents has commenced.
Tullamore Sewerage Scheme (Network)	Drainage Area Plan	The Tullamore Drainage Area Plan study is underway with a report due by the end of 2017 on the existing condition and future plans for Tullamore Sewerage Scheme Network.
Birr Wastewater Treatment Plant	Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade	The Birr Wastewater Treatment Plant was upgraded in 2016 with Fine Bubble Diffuse Air installed to treat existing flows to the Plant and provide capacity for future development in Birr.

HEALTH & SAFETY

There is a rigorous health & safety inspection and management regime in place across all water services infra-structure and this is driving an ongoing programme of Significant Health and Safety Improvement Works. There is also a significant investment in plant replacement and process optimisation through a minor works programme.

RURAL WATER PROGRAMME

The Council remains the Water Services Authority in connection with Group Schemes, Small Private Supplies (SPS) and domestic wastewater treatment systems (septic tanks). The Council will continue to support the Group Water Scheme Sector in conjunction with the National Federation of Group Water Schemes financially, administratively and technically. The Council will support the Rural Water Programme and ensure submissions are made to the Department and funding secured for Offaly.

GROUP WATER SCHEMES SUBSIDIES

A total of €410,593 was paid in 2016 to 16 Group Water Schemes for GWS Subsidies. In August 2016 Circular L5/16 notified LAs that the amount of Subsidy payable towards the operating costs of Group Water Schemes, which was significantly reduced from 1/1/2015, will be fully restored to GWS to coincide with the 9 month period commencing 1 July 2016 when public domestic water charges are suspended.

RURAL WATER PROGRAMME 2015 CAPITAL WORKS

The Offaly RWP submission was forwarded to the Department of the Environment on in January 2016. A final funding allocation of €204,150 was received from the Department in August 2016. The funding was approved by the RWMC for the following schemes:

<i>Name of GWS</i>	<i>Measure</i>	<i>Allocation</i>
16 GWS - Water Sampling Kiosks	Water Quality Works	€28,544
Ballyboy	Water Quality Works	€8,000
Ballykilleen GWS	Water Quality Works	€15,000
Bracknagh GWS	Water Conservation/Upgrade	€41,660
Clareen GWS	Water Quality Works	€71,100
Clonfinlough GWS	Water Quality Works	€7,000
Killeigh GWS	Water Quality Works	€45,000
Source Protection Reports – various GWS	Water Quality Works	€19,023
Total		€235,227

A separate funding application was made to the Department in early May 2016 to enable the amalgamation of Aghancon GWS (34 houses) with Clareen GWS (305 houses). Approval was given for €160,000 in Nov 2016 for a pilot project.

WELL GRANTS

Under this scheme, if a residential property is more than 7 years old and not connected to either a public or group scheme, it may be eligible for a grant, subject to conditions.

The grant is subject to 75% of cost of the work, maximum of €2,031.58 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 2016 were as follows:

<i>No. of Well Grants Paid by Municipal District</i>	<i>2016</i>
Birr Municipal District	4
Tullamore Municipal District	1
Edenderry Municipal District	1
Total Grants Paid	€11,241

ENVIRONMENT

NATIONAL WASTE COLLECTION PERMIT OFFICE (NWCPO)

The NWCPO was formally approved in March 2015 to develop a system for the management of Waste Facility Permit and Certificate of Registration data. This system includes both a national register of waste facilities and an annual return system for waste facility permit and certificate of registration data. In 2016, the Annual Return System was implemented and the Register established. There are currently over 2,100 active Waste Collection Permits on the NWCPO register.

The NWCPO reviewed all household waste collection permits in 2016 to introduce a requirement on waste collectors to weigh household kerbside waste. All household kerbside waste collectors are now required to weigh household waste and report weights to their customers. This aims to raise the quality of services provided by these collectors, raise awareness of waste generation within households and prepare the sector for an incentivised charging mechanism. Charging on a Pay By Weight Basis has been deferred pending review in 2017.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

The Council continues 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.

The contract to operate the three Civic Amenity Sites and the waste transfer station at Derryclure was retendered in 2016. Due to the very substantial reduction in the value of waste and recycled material over the last few years, along with the requirement to introduce Pay By Weight at CA sites, there was a very substantial increase in the cost of the contract. Following negotiations, the facilities are being operated on a short term basis by the current service provider, and the contract will be retendered when there is more certainty in the waste market.

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. The Council is continuing to expand our textile bank infrastructure in order to provide additional services to the people of our county.

The Council continues to promote home composting through the sale of composting units as well as supporting local Tidy Towns and community initiatives through local grant aid.

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. The Council staff work with our Regional colleagues to implement the policies of the plan.

WASTE ENFORCEMENT

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

GREEN SCHOOLS AWARENESS PROGRAMME

The 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.



Green Flag- Rehab Care 2015

2016 - Environmental Pollution Complaints (October 2016)

	Total instigated by public	Total instigated by LA	No. closed	% Closed	No. of cases not finalized at 31/12/16	No investigation warranted	Investigation finalised in 2016
Litter cases	558	0	497	89.07	61	0	497
Air	32	0	16	50	16	0	16
Noise	33	0	16	48.48	17	0	16
Water	23	0	14	60.87	9	0	14
Waste pollution	132	0	87	65.91	45	0	87
Total	778	0	630	81	148	0	630

Timescale	Fines	Prosecutions	Convictions
To date in 2016	4	3	Nil

PROTECTION OF NATURAL WATERS

WATER FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE:

The Environment Section implements the objectives of Water Framework Directive River Basin Management Plans

and Programmes of Measures by working with the Local Authority Waters and Communities Office (LAWCO), established to facilitate a coordinated regional approach, by an extensive operational monitoring programme of the rivers and groundwater within Offaly and investigate activities and facilities, such as agriculture, septic tanks and commercial and industrial discharges to surface waters.

Offaly is affiliated to three River Basin Districts (the Shannon, the Eastern, and the South Eastern River Basin Districts). The Council implements an extensive operational monitoring programme of the rivers and groundwater within the County.

DOMESTIC WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEMS

The Council discontinued the direct provision of Site Suitability Testing for On-Site Wastewater Treatment (Percolation Testing) from December 2016 and now allows independent suitability qualified competent assessors to complete the testing on behalf of planning Applicants. The Council carry out an audit programme implementing the EPA Code of Practice 2009. The initial audit programme will be rigorous in order to establish a baseline and ensure that the procedure for testing is well understood.

The Council 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.

A total of 16 Domestic Wastewater Treatment systems were inspected in 2016 in accordance with EPA requirements. Grants, subject to certain criteria, are available to households to carry out remedial works recommended following inspections.

AIR QUALITY & ENVIRONMENT

The Council continues to comply with EU Directives and National Legislation on Air Quality and Pollution and implement direction from the Department in this area and work with customers and communities to resolve issues in relation to air, noise and odour.

CATCHMENT FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT STUDIES (CFRAM)

Offaly is affiliated to three CFRAMs the Shannon, Eastern and South Eastern. There are 8 Areas of Further Assessment within Offaly with varying proposals from flood forecasting and public awareness to individual property resilience and construction of new flood defense walls.

There have been a number of public consultation days within the County in 2016 to seek public input and submissions on these draft maps. A submission on behalf of the Elected Members made to the OPW following a presentation to the members at the September

meeting. The Public Consultation Period & Submission by the Public was complete by the end of 2016.

The draft Plans will be finalised taking on board the comments received and will be then sent to the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform for approval. If approved they will then be sent to the Local Authorities who may adopt them.

The Government is providing €430 million for flood risk management measures as part of the Government's overall Capital Investment Plan 2016 — 2021. The enhanced investment programme will enable the OPW in collaboration with the relevant Local Authorities, to begin the process of preparation and planning for the structural works and schemes that are expected to be recommended under the CFRAM Plans.

The Council will continue to work in collaboration with the OPW to planning for the structural works and schemes recommended under the Catchment based Flood Risk Assessment and Management Studies (CFRAM) in Offaly, (Shannon, Eastern and South Eastern) plans enabled by enhanced investment programme.

The Council made an application to the OPW on 2016 for funding under the minor works programme for a flood

defense scheme in Portavolla, Banagher. This was approved in October 2016 and the planning and design commenced. The scheme will progress to construction 2017.

The Barrow Drainage Board was abolished 2015. Offaly County Council and Kildare County Council continue to carry out joint channel maintenance works by agreement in order to maintain the Barrow system in both Counties. Works in County Offaly will be completed by the Edenderry Municipal District office.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY AWARENESS

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

Following the commencement of the Climate Action & Low Carbon Development Act 2015, a team has been formed to develop a Climate Change Adaptation Strategy for Offaly County. The development of the strategy will be led by the planning and environment sections of OCC. Training and briefing of staff is commencing at the end of 2016.

BURIAL GROUNDS

A capacity survey of all Council owned burial grounds in Offaly has been completed and was presented to the Environment & Water Services SPC on the 29th September 2016. The survey has identified 4 burial grounds with capacity issues which will require development works of varying degrees in the coming years. The burial grounds involved are Clara, Clonmacnoise, Cloncrane and Kilreaghan. Resources will need to be allocated in the coming years to fund the necessary works.

ANIMAL CONTROL AND WELFARE

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 Local Authority in 2014 and 101 were seized in 2015. A total of 41 horses were seized in the period Q1-Q3 2016, indicating that the downward trend in horse seizures is continuing.

Control of Horses	
Year	No. Seized
2010	14
2011	59
2012	50
2013	60
2014	164
2015	101
To September 2016	41

Control of Dogs

No. of Dog Licenses sold to date in 2016	1,844
No. of Dog Licenses sold in 2015	2,612
On the Spot Fines issued in 2015	15
No. Stray Dogs in Dog Pound 2015	610
No. of Dog Breeding Establishments registered in 2015	8

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 3 year service contract which has been agreed between the Council and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland and which runs from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2019. The contract covers the official controls on food safety carried out by the Council.

PLANNING, ECONOMIC & LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

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

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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

OFFALY COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2014-2020

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

TULLAMORE AND BIRR TOWN & ENVIRONS DEVELOPMENT PLANS

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.

OFFALY GREENWAYS STRATEGY

During 2016 the planning and roads sections continued to work towards delivering elements of Offaly's Walking & Cycling strategy 'Connecting People Connecting Places'.

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 design is expected to progress to Part 8 application by summer 2017. Public consultation was undertaken during 2016.

TULLAMORE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT

Offaly County Council are pursuing a project to rejuvenate and redevelop the public realm of the retail core of Tullamore town. It was confirmed in February 2016 that the project will receive 50% joint funding through the Northern and Western Regional Assembly from the ERDF. The proposal includes undergrounding cables, new paving, lighting, street furniture, planting, new layout of public areas including wider footpaths and increasing pedestrian priority within O'Connor Square and on High Street. The project also includes provision for a new pedestrian bridge and walkway to link the modern Millennium Square with the historic and retail core of the town. The tender for design and project management consultants was advertised in April 2016 and the award was made in June 2016. A period of public consultation took place in October 2016, specifically in relation to options for the redesign of O'Connor Square. In accordance with the ERDF procedure all projects must be completed by the end of 2018.

EDENDERRY LOCAL AREA PLAN 2017-2023

Following a pre-planning consultation for the draft Edenderry Local Area Plan 2017-2023, it is expected that the new Edenderry LAP 2017-2023 will be adopted by Summer 2017.

TOWN AND VILLAGE RENEWAL SCHEME 2016

In September 2016, the Planning Department lodged four applications with the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, under the **Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2016**. The central aim of the scheme is to support the revitalisation of towns and villages in order to improve the living and working environment of their communities and also to increase their potential to support increased economic activity into the future. Applications in respect of the towns of Edenderry and Clara and the two villages of Kinnitty and Shannonbridge, were lodged and the Council has received total funding in the sum of €380,000 to progress these projects in 2017.

REDZ 2016

In November 2016, the Planning Department lodged three applications with the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, under the **Rural Economic Development Zones (REDZ) 2016** scheme. The REDZ scheme aims to improve links between rural towns and their hinterlands to stimulate activity at a local level. The initiative encourages Local Authorities to work with local communities, business interests and other State bodies, to identify areas of greatest economic need, which can make better use of their local assets to generate economic activity. Applications in respect of the towns of Banagher and Kilcormac, together with Birr Castle were submitted. The Council received €414,870 to progress these projects in 2017.

MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL

Planning permission was granted by Offaly and Laois County Councils for c.80kms of mountain bike trails, together with trailhead facilities in the Slieve Bloom Mountains, in January 2017. This hopefully will bring a project which was first discussed locally as far back as 2009, closer to completion. The development underwent a long and detailed pre-planning process with substantial input, both desk based and on site from the Birr Municipal District engineering staff, roads section, environment and water services section and the county architect.

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

<i>Year</i>	<i>No of Applications</i>	<i>No. Granted</i>	<i>No. Refused</i>	<i>Total Decided</i>
2012	313*	238	14	252
2013	261*	191	15	206
2014	310*	272	12	284
2015	375*	263	12	275
2016	441*	313	16	329

(*This figure includes applications which were invalid)

Extensions of Appropriate Period:

<i>Year</i>	<i>No of Applications</i>	<i>No. Granted</i>	<i>No. Refused</i>	<i>Total Decided</i>
2014	42	38	6	44
2015	37	35	3	38
2016	20	23	0	23

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 continued recovery in the country's economic activity, has been reflected in a third increase in the number of planning applications received in 2016. 441 planning applications were received in 2016 which compares with 375 for 2015.

The Planning Department, during 2016, 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 185 pre planning meetings held in 2016, while another 268 customer's pre-planning queries were dealt with by telephone.

DERELICT SITES

There are 22 sites on the Derelict Sites Register at the end of 2016 – 15 within the Tullamore Municipal District Area and a further 7 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 INVESTMENT SCHEME 2016

The Built Heritage Investment Scheme 2016 consisted of 13 projects around the county - Birr Castle, Gloster House, Birr Theater, Derrinclare Cottage, Springmount Mill, The Old Glebe Banagher, Quaker Meeting House Clara, St Catherine's Church Tullamore, Former Garda Station Geashill, Bloomville House, Mount St Joseph Monastery, Methodist Church, Mount Palmer. Works varied from slate roof repairs, to thatch, to repair of timber joinery, sash window repair, structural consolidations to the reinstatement of architectural features. The initial standard grant approval of €50,000 was increased to a total of €70,600 by the Department due to the number of

larger projects carried out within Offaly.

STRUCTURES AT RISK FUND 2016

The Structures at Risk Scheme 2016 applied to structures in immediate danger of significant deterioration and were Protected Structures. Only three applications could be submitted by Offaly County Council for possible approval by the Department. The Department approved one application - Lynally The Church of the Swans – for urgent repairs to the medieval ruin with initial grant approval of €26,750 and an additional grant of €3,250, amounting to final grant approval of €30,000. Works involved scaffolding the entire structure, the careful removal of ivy, repointing with lime mortar and structural repairs as required on both the main church and the surrounding boundary walls. 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 2016/2017. The continued up-turn in the economic

situation is assisting in this.

SCANNING PROJECT

During 2016, 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 2016 have been scanned and are now available for viewing on the website. 2008 is currently being scanned

GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION SYSTEM

The Planning Section published an up to date GIS viewer created in conjunction with Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI). This GIS Viewer is available for the public to view on our website at <http://www.offaly.ie/eng/Services/Planning/> This is the final step in enabling the public to carry out planning searches online. This new GIS software enables the public to 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 such as zoning and protected structures.

COMPLIANCE / ENFORCEMENT

Warning Letters	125
Enforcement Notices	41
District/Circuit Court Cases	0
Prosecutions Initiated	0

During 2016, 51 enforcement files were opened. 125 warning letters and 41 enforcement notices were issued. Regular meetings are held with the Council’s legal advisers to ensure that all cases which proceed to the courts are pursued in a timely manner. The recovery of costs where the Council is successful in prosecution continues to be difficult.

DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTION SCHEME

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

<i>Development Contributions - Receipts and Application of Development Funds for the period from Nov 2015 – Oct 2016.</i>	
<i>Receipts</i>	<i>€000's</i>
Balance Available – October 2015	4055
<i>Contributions Received Nov 2015 to Oct 2016 (as follows):</i>	
Development Contributions – Customers	949
Disbursements Nov 2015 – Oct 2016 (see below)	120
<i>Balance Available at October 2016</i>	<i>4884</i>

<i>Allocation of Funds – since last report to Council, October 2015</i>	<i>€000's</i>
Infrastructure – DCS Improvement Works N80 Clara	20
Amenities – Slieve Bloom MTB Project	20
Infrastructure – DCS Footpaths Ballinagar	80
<i>Total</i>	<i>120</i>

Offaly County Council development contributions available for disbursement as at October 2016:

<i>Job Description</i>	<i>Funds Available €000's</i>
Dev. Cont. Scheme – Amenities	460
Dev. Cont. Scheme – Infrastructure	2,761
Spl. Dev. Cont. Scheme 2004 Car Parking	607
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	647
Spl. Dev. Cont. - Rd Imp Tullaroe Clareen	8
Spl. Dev. Cont. – Recycling Facility at Barnan	15
Spl. Dev. Cont. – Pedestrian Crossing at Church Road	24
Spl. Dev. Cont. – Passing Bays Carrick Castlejordan	4
Spl. Dev. Levy - Rest Road Ballykean Geashill	1
Spl. Dev. Cont. – Passing Bays Ballykean Geashill	2
Spl. Dev. Cont. – Junction of Cemetery / Military Road Crinkle	35
Spl. Dev. Cont. – Kilmurray Precast Concrete	15
Total	4,884

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

CHAIRPERSON AND HEAD OF ENTERPRISE JOINT REPORT

We are pleased to present this Annual Review, which outlines the activities of the Local Enterprise Office in 2016. The Local Enterprise Office (LEO) in Offaly is the “first stop shop” for all Government supports for anyone who wants to start or expand their business and create jobs in Offaly.

LEO Offaly’s remit is wide and includes both the Local Enterprise and the Economic Development functions of Offaly County Council. The Local Enterprise Office works in partnership with other sections of Offaly County Council, local and regional development agencies and stakeholders to promote a pro-business message, and the services of the local LEO.

2016 was a busy year with a number of highlights. LEO client Applied In 2016, LEO Offaly worked with colleagues in Offaly County Council to successfully bid for funding under the REDZ initiative. Offaly County Council has been awarded €316,870 towards the creation on an inspirational learning space at Mount Palmer Barn, Birr Castle.

Our annual employment survey reported increased optimism (and sales) amongst many business owners in Offaly. The Local Enterprise Offaly would like to acknowledge the resilience and determination of Offaly business owners to sustain, grow and create employment in towns and villages throughout the county. We look forward to continuing to work with them, and other people considering self-employment.

Concepts Ltd was Overall Winner in the 2016 National Enterprise Awards. Meanwhile, Offaly students won Innovation Awards at both Senior and Intermediate Categories of the National Student Enterprise Awards programme.



LEO Offaly in partnership with Offaly County Council organized a Visit Offaly pavilion at the hugely successful National Ploughing Championships in September 2016. Twenty six Offaly Food, Craft and Tourism providers showcased their products in the Visit Offaly Pavilion. Two LEO Offaly clients also had stands at the National LEO Enterprise Pavilion. Overall, 76 Offaly businesses exhibited

at the National Ploughing Championships. LEO Offaly used this opportunity to launch the #OffalyEnterprise marketing campaign, for use by all Offaly businesses.

Under the Enterprise Ireland Community Competitive Fund, LEO Offaly assisted Offaly Innovation & Design Centre Ltd with an application for funding towards the expansion of The Junction Business Innovation Centre received a visit from Minister Mary Mitchell O'Connor in July, who cited it as a model of best practice. Furthermore, The Junction Business Innovation Centre was shortlisted and received a Commendation Award in the 2016 Local Government Awards.

We would like to express our thanks to the Evaluation and Approvals Committee for the commitment and voluntary dedication to the work of the LEO. All of the Evaluation Committee Members give of their time freely in order to support and develop activities and programmes for the LEO.

STRUCTURE OF THE EVALUATION AND APPROVALS COMMITTEE

The following are the members of the Evaluation and Approvals Committee:

CURRENT MEMBERS

ANNA MARIE DELANEY	<i>(Chairperson), Offaly County Council</i>
PAT O'GORMAN	<i>Agricultural Advisor</i>
ROISIN LENNON	<i>Offaly LDC</i>
BERT FARRELL	<i>Zoosh</i>
MARK ATTERBURY	<i>Enterprise Ireland</i>
KEVIN KELLY	<i>AIB, Tullamore</i>
HUGH BYRNE	<i>(retired) Peter Sullivan, Byrne Casey & Associates</i>

EXECUTIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

ORLA MARTIN <i>Head of Enterprise</i>	GERALDINE BEIRNE <i>Business Advisor</i>
JAMES HOGAN <i>Senior Enterprise Development Officer</i>	EDEL BOYD <i>Assistant Business Advisor</i>
SINEAD SHAW <i>Administrator</i>	DERMOT SHORTT <i>Business Executive</i>
	CAROLINE CURRAN <i>Business Research & Admin Support</i> <i>(Gateway-Contract ended Sept '16)</i>

LEO NOMINATIONS TO OTHER AGENCIES

ORLA MARTIN <i>Head of Enterprise</i>	<i>Director of West Offaly Enterprise Fund Ltd. Director of North Offaly Development Fund Ltd. National Communications Strategy, LEO Network</i>
JAMES HOGAN <i>Senior Enterprise Development Officer</i>	<i>National Ploughing Championships – LEO Village Committee</i>
GERALDINE BEIRNE <i>Business Advisor</i>	<i>Rural Development Programme, Evaluation Committee</i>

FINANCIAL & LEGAL

Treasurer	Bank of Ireland, O'Connor Square, Tullamore, Co Offaly
Legal	Brian Mahon, Hoey & Denning Solicitors, Tullamore, Co Offaly
Internal Auditors	Finance Department, Offaly County Council, Áras an Chontae, Charleville Road, Tullamore
Insurers	Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurances Ltd.

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; Sinead Shaw Administrator and Dermot Shortt, Business Executive;

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 2016

2016 NATIONAL ENTERPRISE AWARD WINNER

Kinnitty based company Applied Concepts Ltd was announced the Overall Winner in the 2016 National

Enterprise Awards. The Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Ms. Mary Mitchell O' Connor T.D. presented the top prize in the National Enterprise Awards to Applied Concepts, the Kinnitty-based manufacturer and exporter of blast machines used by builders and restoration companies. As part of the award Mark Clendennen was presented with a prize of €10,000.

IRELAND'S BEST YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR COUNTY COMPETITION

Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur is an integral part of the Action Plan for Jobs and is supported by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation through the Local Enterprise Office. Darragh Egan and his company Ballyealan Engineering was named as Offaly's Best Young Entrepreneur. Darragh won the best new idea category for his new agricultural invention "Easy Arm". Thirty-one applications for the competition were received of which fourteen finalists were selected to attend our IBYE bootcamp weekend. The bootcamp weekend gears the young entrepreneurs up for the IBYE judging process.

The 2016 IBYE county final awards which was hosted in The Tullamore Court Hotel in November was a very successful event and the award winners were as follows:

BEST NEW IDEA (WINNER): Darragh Egan, Ballyealan Engineering –"Easy Arm", Mountbolus. (€7,000)

(RUNNER-UP): Carla Mooney, Silk Road On Demand, Portarlinton.(€3,000)

BEST BUSINESS START UP: John Clendennen, Giltraps Glamping, Kinnitty. (€15,000)

(RUNNER-UP): Emmet Nolan, "Request It", Birr. (€5,000)

BEST ESTABLISHED BUSINESS Jesse Morris, Dezynamite, Tullamore. (€15,000)

(RUNNER-UP): Joseph Quinn, ASPIRE, Clara. (€5,000)

The three category winners represent Offaly at the regional finals which proved to be extremely competitive.

STUDENT ENTERPRISE AWARDS

Co-ordinated by the Local Enterprise Offices in every Local Authority area, the competition is the most successful student enterprise programme of its kind in the country.

Students competed in the Offaly Final on March 2016, which was held at the Tullamore Court Hotel. 579 students participated in the programme during the school year with 100 competing at the county final. Teenage entrepreneurs that won the County competition went on to represent the county and Local Enterprise Office Offaly at the National Finals of the Student Enterprise Awards in Croke Park.

Caballis Equine Ltd from Colaiste Choilm, Tullamore won the Innovation Award at the National Finals last week (April 20th) in the Senior category. The student-run company has produced an innovative horse feeder which optimises horse health and wellbeing and the winning student was Daniel Carroll.

In the Intermediate Category, Offaly again won the Innovation Award with the business Farm Friendly Feeder from Gallen Community School, Ferbane. The students who run the business are Adam Henry, Oisín McGuire and Josh Dunican. They have developed a unique cattle feeder.

LEO Offaly has a very strong record in the student enterprise competition. Recent awards won by local secondary schools have included 2015 Senior Category winner, Shiofra Ryan from St Brendan's Community School in Birr with "An Tionchar".

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.

LOCAL ENTERPRISE WEEK

Local Enterprise Week is held during March 2016 hosted a series of events aimed at stimulating business growth and new business creation to drive economic prosperity. The programme of events included: outreach clinics; starting your own business workshop, stress and time

management workshops, finance seminar, food manufacturing workshops, and both the Student Enterprise and County Enterprise Awards.

PLOUGHING CHAMPIONSHIP

VISIT OFFALY PAVILION

LEO Offaly in partnership with Offaly County Council organized a Visit Offaly pavilion at the hugely successful National Ploughing Championships in September. Twenty six Offaly Food, Craft and Tourism providers showcased their products in the Visit Offaly Pavilion.

LOCAL ENTERPRISE VILLAGE

Each Local Enterprise Office throughout the country supported small businesses at the Ploughing through the National Local Enterprise Village. For small, local businesses looking to expand, The Local Enterprise Village and 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. Two small businesses from each LEO office had the opportunity to have a stand within the National Local Enterprise Village. The two Offaly businesses were Deanery Furniture and De Mad Food Company.

ENTERPRISE IRELAND INNOVATION ARENA

Offaly companies Dotser Web & Marketing Ltd and Caballis

Equine Ltd featured in the Enterprise Ireland Innovation Arena.

In total seventy six Offaly businesses showcased their products and services throughout the site at the immense 3 day event. Feedback was that business was brisk, and for some exhibitors "The best Ploughing ever!"

NWED

LEO Offaly had a particular and specific focus on supporting women in business throughout 2016 through events such as The National Women's Enterprise Day, a midlands event was held in The Wineport Lodge, Glasson, Athlone on 19th October 2016. National Women's Enterprise Day is an annual initiative of the Local Enterprise Offices. 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. 17 women from Offaly attended the conference.

FOOD ACADEMY PROGRAMME

LEO Offaly has continued to support the Food Academy which was held in Ferbane Food Campus. This is a programme to help develop and grow small-scale food and drink production businesses. It is centred on workshops, designed by Bord Bia, Supervalu and the Local Enterprise

Office. The intensive workshops provide companies with long-term business supports including consumer insight, technical advice, resource planning, commercial advice and marketing development. This relatively new venture is proving incredible successfully with more new business start-ups and LEO clients arising in Offaly this year such as Spiced with Love and Durrow Mills.

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 2016 LEO Offaly granted payments of 17 Trading Online Vouchers amounting to €31,500 for businesses 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 2016 LEO Offaly processed 15 applications of which the total 6 loans were approved amounting to a total of €80,000 loaned to Offaly businesses.

<i>Number of LEO Applications Submitted</i>	<i>Value of Applications Submitted</i>	<i>Number of Applications Approved</i>	<i>Value of Approvals</i>	<i>Declined/Withdrawn</i>	<i>WIP</i>
15	€129,799	6	€80,000	8	1

THE JUNCTION – OFFALY INNOVATION CENTRE

The Junction - Offaly Innovation Centre is steadily growing from strength to strength. Offaly Innovation & Design Centre Ltd continues to oversee the operation of The Junction Innovation Centre in Axis Business Park, Tullamore.

LEO Offaly was delighted to host a visit of newly appointed Minister Mitchell O'Connor to The Junction Business Innovation Centre on Friday, 3rd June. The Minister for Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation was in Tullamore to officially open BioNua Ltd, the IDA supported company in Sragh Industrial Estate. Following that event, the Minister visited The Junction and met with the tenant entrepreneurs and businesses.

In 2016 funding was received from Enterprise Ireland, under the Community Enterprise Initiative 2015-2017, for the first floor fit out of The Junction Innovation Centre. The works provides for a Hot Desk Area for up to 11 spaces and a meeting room/ training room for 50 people on the first floor.

The works were substantially completed before the end of 2016 and the Hot Desks and Meeting/Training Room will be available for use in early 2017.

In 2016, the Designhub continued to occupy the first floor. The Designhub is a collaborative unit and umbrella entity that provides a platform of knowledge, experience and mentorship for new design-led companies to startup. In 2016 the Designhub in conjunction with LEO Offaly started a free design day initiative once a month which provides free one to one mentoring clinics with businesses/entrepreneurs that required advice in certain areas such as new product development, marketing, social media marketing, product design, brand image, enhancing

productivity and improving sales. The Designhub collaborative continued to execute subsidized training/mentoring for LEO clients throughout the year. Future Ticketing now occupy three offices on the first floor of The Junction, as the company continues to grow. Future Ticketing specialise in online eTicketing solutions for a diverse range of clients across all industry sectors.

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 BANAGHER

The LEO continued with its policy of providing an outreach service in the Banagher/South Offaly area. Banagher Library provided office space and a member of the LEO's Executive was present one Thursday afternoon a month 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 2016, 190 mentoring sessions were delivered to our 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 38 attended the O.N.E network Christmas Dinner held in Siroccos, 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 2016, 693 new business contacts were added to the LEO Offaly database, and an additional 1,527 recorded client meetings took place (at customer premises, in LEO Offices and scheduled phone calls).

DIGITAL MARKETING

In 2016, Local Enterprise Office Offaly continued to keep clients up to date with relevant information and events via our website - www.localenterprise.ie/offaly and through our social media platforms Facebook and Twitter. There was a dramatic increase of followers throughout 2016 with follower numbers standing at 1304 for Facebook and 1285 Twitter followers at 31 December 2016

LOCAL AUTHORITY SUPPORTS FOR BUSINESS IN 2016

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

Rates Rebate Scheme for 2016

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 2016 included:

- **REDZ Flagship Project – REDZ Funding Award for I-LOFAR Visitor Centre in Birr**

LEO Offaly worked with Forward Planning and Director of Services for Economic Development & Planning to submit an application for the above. The application was successful and funding of €316,870 has been allocated to this innovative project.

- *LEO Offaly in collaboration with LEOs and LAs in the Midlands Region supported the publication of the Regional Food Producers Directory 2016*

OFFALY DIASPORA

LEO Offaly, on behalf of Offaly County Council applied for and received €10,000 funding towards the development of a Diaspora Strategy. Funded by Dept of An Taoiseach, the €10,000 was towards the development of a strategy and three promotional videos on Offaly's economic strengths. The strategy and videos are due for publication in Q2 2017.

COMPETITIVE FUND AWARDS

LEO Offaly assisted Offaly Innovation & Design Centre Ltd to secure funding under the Enterprise Ireland "Community Enterprise Initiative"

COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE INITIATIVE

Expansion of The Junction Business Innovation Centre in Tullamore, €125,000

The Junction Business Innovation Centre is a 4,200 sq. ft facility, designed and fitted out as a dedicated business innovation centre. Situated in Axis Business Park, Tullamore it is a multi-functional space, providing: hot desk facilities, office space, business training and mentoring, and facilities for people to develop ideas and business. This is supplemented by ongoing business supports from the Local Enterprise Office. Funding received to:

1. To recruit a dedicated Business Development Manager

2. To enhance The Junction and thereby create more enterprise space
3. To create a Fab Lab and further office space adjacent to The Junction, thereby connecting design with prototyping/batch manufacture and Midland Manufacturers.

***Enterprise Ireland "LEO Competitive Fund"
LEO Offaly in collaboration with other LEOs in the Midlands Region applied and were successful in securing funding for 2 projects:***

1. Collaborative LEO Project (among 4 Midland LEOs) to assist Engineering Sector in the Midlands, €118,000

The Midlands Engineering Cluster Programme is a structured programme of market-led innovation, best practice transfer and product and trade development. It will create a new synergy between engineering enterprises; educational institutions and support agencies in the region that will aid their sustainability.

2. Collaborative LEO Project (among 4 Midland LEOs) to assist Solo-Entrepreneurs take on their first member of staff, €62,000

The Midlands One to Two Growth Initiative will break down inherent job creation obstacles by assisting carefully selected solo entrepreneurs from across the Midlands in overcoming the legal, regulatory and

administrative barriers to adopting employer status, thus stimulating new employment creation and business expansion.

MINISTER MARY MITCHELL O'CONNOR VISITS THE JUNCTION

LEO Offaly was delighted to host a visit of newly appointed Minister Mitchell O'Connor to The Junction Business Innovation Centre on Friday, 3rd June. The Minister for Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation was in Tullamore to officially open BioNua Ltd, the IDA supported company in Sragh Industrial Estate. Following that event, the Minister visited The Junction and met many of the tenants there. Minister Mitchell O'Connor complemented Offaly County Council and Directors of Offaly Innovation & Design Centre Ltd, citing The Junction as a model of Best Practice.

Since then, the Junction has been shortlisted and commended in the 2016 Excellence in Local Government Awards.

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 aided.

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 – JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2016

The LEO received 36 complete applications in the period. Following assessment, the LEO approved -- with approval of cumulative amount of €377,539.04. Of the applications received, 3 applications were refused and 5 withdrawn at year end. The following tables set out summaries of the outturn: -

Approval Total	Feasibility Grants	Priming Grants	Business Expansion Grants
€377,539.04	€24,195.04	€43,119	€310,225

	Received	Approved	Deferred	Refused	Withdrawn	Pending at 31 Dec 2016
Priming	4	4	0	0	0	0
Business Expansion	20	19	0	0	1	0
Feasibility	12	5	0	3	4	0
Total	36	28	0	3	5	0

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

during the period to projects is included in Appendix 1.

APPENDIX 1 - LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE 2016 REVIEW – HIGHLIGHTS

The **Measure 1** financial support provided to businesses in County Offaly in 2016 can be summarised as follows:

	2015	2016
Number of Projects Received	40	36
Number of Clients Approved	29	36
M1 Amount Approved	€396,702	€377,539.04
Number of Projects Paid	34	27
Number of Clients Paid	28	27
Total M1 Payments	€292,979*	€210,161*

*Grants are live for 12 months. Many grants awarded in 2016 will be drawn down in 2017.

APPENDIX 2-GRANT PAYMENTS PRIMING, BUSINESS EXPANSION AND FEASIBILITY

Name	Total Grant Paid €	Refundable Portion of Grant €	Grant Type
AI Flues Limited	8,000.00	2,800.00	Priming
Another Eureka Moment Limited	3,286.00	1,150.10	Priming
Euro Stallions (Ireland) Limited	5,205.00	1,821.75	Priming
Lisa Larkin, T/a Durrow Mills (2)	7,725.00	2,703.75	Priming

MND Foods Limited	4,000.00	1,400.00	Priming
Nessa McManus	4,000.00	1,400.00	Priming
Dunnes Ecofit Limited	10,100.00	3,535.00	Priming
Carroll Design & Surveying Limited	10,096.00	3,534.00	Business Expansion
Coral Pine	4,000.00	1,400.00	Business Expansion
Cultec Limited	10,000.00	3,500.00	Business Expansion
Decontamination Tech Services	3,800.00	0.00	Business Expansion
EMSS Limited	7,500.00	2,625.00	Business Expansion
Future Ticketing (2)	13,000.00	4,550.00	Business Expansion
G & T Farrelly Limited	14,750.00	5,162.50	Business Expansion
Graphic Index Limited	4,614.00	0.00	Business Expansion
Guinan Waste	18,253.00	6,388.55	Business Expansion
Intellicom Ireland	13,000.00	4,550.00	Business Expansion
Keith Lambe	2,621.00	917.17	Business Expansion

LCC Clothing	7,786.00	2,725.10	Business Expansion
Load Test Solutions Limited	3,362.00	1,176.70	Business Expansion
Midland Truck Mixer Parts Limited	1,575.00	0.00	Business Expansion
Spollen Garden Sheds Limited	16,500.00	5,775.00	Business Expansion
T.D. Cellular Limited	6,000.00	2,100.00	Business Expansion
Tag Media Limited	9,841.00	3,444.35	Business Expansion
Welding QMS Limited	2,387.00	0.00	Business Expansion
Wilton Accessories	18,760.00	6,566.00	Business Expansion
Total	€210,161.00	€69,224.97	

*() indicates in receipt of more than 1 grant

**APPENDIX 3-GRANT PAYMENTS – BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT SCHEME
MEASURE 2**

<i>(Business Advice, Training, Mentoring and Networking Programmes)</i>	
New Business Contacts Added to the LEO database	693
Number of client meetings (at customer premises, in LEO offices and scheduled phone calls)	1,527
Number of Training & Development Programmes & Networking Events	37
Total of Participants on Training Programmes	528
Number of Mentoring Sessions Delivered to Clients	190
Total Value of all M2 Initiatives delivered to Offaly businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs	€216,825

APPENDIX 4- MEASURE 2: TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT PARTICIPATION SUMMARY

<i>Category</i>	<i>Course Name</i>	<i>Attendees</i>
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		
	Enterprise Awards	12
	Tullamore Show	30
	Food Academy (1)	8
	IBYE	31
Business Advice/Mentoring	Mentoring	98 (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

OFFALY LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (LCDC)

Offaly LCDC is a committee of the Council and its primary role is to develop, co-ordinate and implement a coherent and integrated approach to local and community development. The Offaly LCDC was initially established in 2014 and in 2016 the committee met 10 times.

The membership comprises of a range of statutory and non-statutory socio-economic partners drawn from the Councils administrative area. The LCDC membership is constituted so as to ensure an appropriate representational balance between public and private interests, while also facilitating an appropriate mix across the broad range of sectors across the county.

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

In 2016, members also made arrangements to increase LCDC membership to 19.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME/LEADER 2014-2020

Offaly Local Community Development Committee is the Local Action Group for management of the Rural Development Programme/LEADER funding. The LAG developed a Local Development Strategy as an application for Rural Development Programme/LEADER funding 2014-2020, and county was allocated €8,036,763.90 (of which 25% is for administration costs). By mid 2016 OLDC commenced roadshows on the funding programme, and project promoters started making funding applications by late 2016, which the LCDC note as Expressions of Interest. By the end of 2016, 72 Expressions of Interest had been formally noted by the LCDC and some of these had progressed to the Independent Evaluation Committee and subsequent grant of funding by the LCDC.

SOCIAL INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY ACTIVATION PROGRAMME (SICAP)

Offaly Local Community Development Committee is the contract manager for SICAP and Offaly Local Development Company is the Programme Implementer. The SICAP programme was to the value of €738,314 for Offaly for 2016. SICAP encompasses three high level goals to tackle poverty and social exclusion. These are – to *Empower Disadvantaged Communities*, to support *Lifelong Learning* and to move the target groups closer to *Employment*. The goals serve eleven SICAP target groups for 2016 – disadvantaged Children and Families; Lone Parents; New

Communities; People Living in Disadvantaged Communities; People with Disabilities; Roma; The Unemployed, including those who are not on the live register; Low Income Workers/Households; Travellers; Young Unemployed people living in disadvantaged areas; NEETS – Young people aged 15-24 years who are not in employment, education or training.

<i>Some key SICAP indicators / targets achieved in SICAP</i>	<i>2016</i>
Disadvantaged individuals worked with on a one to one basis.	939
Community Groups assisted under SICAP	89
Children that received and educational or developmental support	2314
Recipients of employment support	641
Progression into self employment	100

LOCAL ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY PLAN

In 2016 the LCDC also undertook initial implementation work on the community elements of the Local Economic and Community Plan, defining priorities and subsequently establishing the LCDC Sub-Committee on Education, Training and Skills who met twice during the year.

GENERAL

Also, throughout the course of the year, members considered matters such as 'A Framework Policy for Local and Community Development in Ireland', the HSE LCDC Representative Resource Document, the National Children and Young Peoples Strategy, the Environmental Protection Agency 2016-2020 Strategic Plan, and various funding opportunities. The LCDC received presentations from Clann Credo - The Social Investment Fund, the Local Enterprise Office, the Offaly Sports Partnership, from OCC IT staff on Broadband in Offaly, from the Department of Social Protection on the INTREO service; from LOCAL Link Laois & Offaly on the Rural Transport Programme; from the Midlands Innovation and Research Centre, AIT and from the REDZ funded Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship pilot project in Offaly.

Declan Kirrane, Director of Services, Offaly County Council is Chief Officer to the LCDC.

TOURISM

OFFALY TOURISM LIMITED

Offaly Tourism Limited was established in December 2014 to act as a collective marketing and promotion body that is responsible for promoting Offaly to domestic and international tourism markets and its main duties included:

- Develop a new tourism '**brand**' for the County.
- Prepare a **Strategic Marketing Plan** for the marketing and promoting tourism.

Offaly Tourism Limited have completed the process of developing a new compelling tourism brand to establish a clear and consistent perception of County Offaly, '**Offaly – Ireland's Hidden Gem**' and a new tourism website (www.visitoffaly.ie) as a vehicle to create brand awareness and a range of social media platforms including; facebook, twitter and instagram.

MARKETING & TOURISM PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT SERVICES:

In June 2016, Crowe Horwath was engaged to develop and implement a strategic marketing plan for Offaly Tourism Limited. The Strategic Marketing Plan was adopted at the August meeting of Offaly Tourism Group and includes; Tourism Trends, Target Markets, Brand Alignment Consultation Process and a SWOT analysis.

The Strategic Marketing Plan is underpinned by marketing tactics will initially focus on creating awareness of the Offaly tourism brand and increasing awareness of the "hidden gems" i.e. tourism products and will be delivered via 4 Quarterly Themed Campaigns as follows:

- Local People and Local Stories – Q4 2016
- History and Heritage – Q1 2017

- ☛ Sports and Leisure – Q2 2017
- ☛ Lifestyle and Culture – Q3 2017

TULLAMORE SHOW

Offaly Tourism Ltd in partnership with Local Enterprise Office Offaly hosted the Offaly – Ireland’s Hidden Gem Pavilion at Tullamore Show on the 14th of August 2016. The Show provided an excellent platform to promote and market Offaly and develop brand awareness.

NATIONAL PLOUGHING CHAMPIONSHIPS

To coincide with the National Ploughing Championships, Offaly County Council hosted the ‘Offaly – Ireland’s Hidden Gem’ Pavilion. Offaly Tourism Marketing and Local Enterprise Office Offaly lined up exciting tourism displays and artisan food and craft producers to showcase the variety of high quality tourism attractions and artisan food and craft products available in the county.

This initiative was a major element of Offaly County Council’s work to capitalise on the fantastic opportunity presented by the National Ploughing Championships to attract tourists and investment to the county. The National Ploughing Championships are set to return to Screggan, Tullamore next year.

OFFALY – IRELAND’S HIDDEN GEM TOURISM BROCHURE

An Taoiseach, Mr. Enda Kenny launched the new ‘Offaly –

Ireland’s Hidden Gem’ Tourism Brochure at the National Ploughing Championships. The brochure provides comprehensive information about Offaly’s key tourism attractions.

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.

The Study identified a **“CORE NETWORK TRAIL”** in excess of 147km including the following key elements:

1. The Grand Canal
2. Portarlinton to the Grand Canal at Mount Lucas Wind Farm
3. Lough Boora Discovery Park to the Slieve Blooms at Kinnitty.
4. The Slieve Bloom Mountain Biking Trail

5. A Monastic trail via the Pilgrims Path to Clonmacnoise.

THE COMMUNITY TOURISM DIASPORA FUND

€23,400 was allocated across 15 events in 2016 with specific criteria to market events to the diaspora, and attract overseas visitors to Offaly, directly supporting nearly 500 overseas visitors attendance at community events.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK (PPN)

In May 2016, Offaly Public Participation Network hosted the first 'Community Supports for Disabilities' awareness day. This event came about through the PPN members who identified the need to network and showcase the range of services and supports available to families and those with a disability in Offaly. Considering the recognised waiting lists for some disability services in Offaly, the demand for families and carers to link up with local supports is extremely important.

A key target group on the day were those in the caring and education profession, as many times there is a gap between what the professional services are aware of and what's actually happening at community level. The 'Community Supports for Disabilities' awareness day, gave an opportunity to develop better linkages across all stakeholder groups who support people with disabilities.

The Offaly PPN Secretariat Committee was key to organising and planning the event. From a Local Authority perspective, it was a great example of working in partnership with the volunteers who know the sector inside out. Over 25 local support organisations were on display with thematic workshops a large attendance consistently throughout the day.

The PPN held 12 Secretariat meetings and a series of subgroup meetings preparing the Offaly PPN website and Memorandum of Understanding Constitution and workplan for approval in 2017.

OFFALY SPORTS PARTNERSHIP

Offaly Sports Partnership's 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 adults); and has a specific focus on reaching out to low participation groups.

2016 saw Offaly Sports Partnership celebrate its 10th anniversary of establishment, and a number of events were held to mark the occasion. With generous support from the Bridge House Hotel and other sponsors, the partnership hosted the Offaly Sports Awards of the Decade which saw Shane Lowry named as the county's "Sports Achiever of the

LOCAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

OFFALY COMHAIRLE NA NÓG

Offaly Comhairle na nÓg has a 32 member Executive Committee ranging in age from 12-17 representing schools and youth groups in the County. They met 11 times in 2016. The Comhairle also has a steering group representing agencies working in the youth area, which meets to support the work of the young people.

Offaly Comhairle na nÓg held the premiere of 'Who wants to be an Entrepreneur' Youth Enterprise Promotion Video on Thursday 3rd March in Tullamore Cinema. The purpose of the Video is to promote youth entrepreneurship and to help teenagers consider enterprise as a possible career option which coincides perfectly with Outcome 4 of the National Youth Strategy 2015-2020 which highlighted youth enterprise as a key area for youth development.

This was an innovative project by Young people to promote youth enterprise in response to the high rate of Youth Unemployment in Ireland and Objective 7 of the Youth Strategy which states that 'Young people are better able to participate in the labour market through enhanced employability skills that complement formal learning and training qualifications and entrepreneurship opportunities'. The video was divided into 4 parts which explores the

Decade (2006 – 2016)". Offaly Sports Partnership's new five-year strategic plan (and long term framework guiding the work of Offaly Sports Partnership), "Active Offaly" was also launched.

General activities in 2016 included a comprehensive schools fitness programme; primary and post primary schools sport and physical activity programmes; inter-generational sport and physical activity programmes such as Operation Transformation, Bike Week and Play Day (national events locally organised); sport and physical activity programmes for low income communities, older people and women / girls; an athletics integration project – nine members of which won All-Ireland medals; education and training programmes for clubs and organisations; and our Sports Inclusion Development Programme which focuses on sport and physical activity for people with disabilities.

Funding secured through the Dormant Accounts Disbursement Fund was used to implement community coaching programmes for jobseekers, and sports leadership training for young people in a number of locations in the county. Dormant Accounts funding has also been earmarked to establish a community sports and physical activity hub in Crinkle in 2017.

following areas of enterprise as follows;

1. Introduction to explore what young people know about enterprise
2. Ideas and Inspiration,
3. Marketing and Funding
4. Collaboration and advice.

There is also a sub plot of 2 young entrepreneurs who set out on their enterprise journey 'from mind to market'. Total running time 35 min 41 sec and is entirely youth led from research to filming. It was produced to be delivered over the duration of 1 class period or 2 class periods with a learning resource worksheet for teenagers in Ireland.

In November 2016, the Comhairle Executive held an event to improve intergenerational communication in teenagers and senior citizens, and also to dispel any apprehensions that either generation may have toward the other. The day was themed as a "Generation Communication" event and 220 people both young and old attended from all across Offaly. The purpose of the day was to bridge any social barriers that exist between the youth and older people in communities across Offaly.

In the eyes of all who attended, the day was a terrific success as many young people now realise that a great gap in age does not also mean a great gap in similarities. In fact, elderly people were once teenagers themselves, which led to one young person who attended the event coined the

phrase, "Recycled Teenagers" to describe the older generation.

ENTENTE FLORALE

Tullamore Town was awarded a Gold Award in the 2016 Entente-Florale Europe competition. Entente Florale is an annual competition which is organised by the European Association for Flowers and Landscape whereby an International Judging panel visits towns and villages across Europe and critiques each entry for a recognised gold, silver or bronze award.

The adjudicating criteria include: Quality of Landscape and Vegetation: Quality of natural and built environments including waste management: Community effort and involvement: Education and schools including ecology and green dimension: Attractiveness and presentation: Tourism and Leisure.

The Gold award for Tullamore was only one of three entrants to receive a Gold award. The remaining 9 towns and villages all received Silver including Straffan in Co. Kildare which represented Ireland in the village section and 10 other towns and villages in Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Netherlands and Slovenia. There was also a special award given for Lloyd Town Park as the outstanding feature for the Judges on the day when they toured Tullamore. This added to the national Green Flag for Parks Award obtained by Llyod Town Park Tullamore in July 2016.

A 6 hour prescribed, timed route through Tullamore and its environs was drawn up to showcase and address the specific judging criteria, outlined above. Funds were made available from the Municipal District and Offaly County Council. Spreading the Entente-Florale message to the Tullamore people was a key element in the endeavours to achieve the Gold status. In this regard Team Tullamore, with generous help from the local media, worked tirelessly to encourage as many townspeople as possible to get involved. The working group '**Team Tullamore**' evolved during the Entente preparations into an effective collaboration between Tullamore Tidy Towns, Tullamore Chamber of Commerce and Offaly County Council.

Tullamore was selected to participate in the prestigious Entente Florale competition due to its annual incremental rise in points and successive gold medal awards in the SuperValu National Tidy Towns Competition.

TIDY TOWNS NETWORK

This network is supported by the Local Community Development Section and also by the Offaly Heritage Officer. The network met three times in 2016. Some of the items on the agenda during the year included a presentation by the Heritage Officer on the All Ireland Pollinator Plan. Birdwatch Ireland gave a presentation to the Network in relation to Swifts. Offaly Local Development Company gave a presentation in relation to funding opportunities for TTN members. Research was carried out with the groups to

identify where they need support and all groups were encouraged to participate in the 2016 Tidy Towns competition including the Special Award categories. The results for the groups in 2016 were positive with still plenty of opportunities to further their scores with ideas and support through the network.

COMMUNITY WATCH NETWORK

This network met three times in 2016. Meeting agenda items included a presentation by OCC on reporting Public lighting faults on the Deadsureapp, Joint Policing Committee and Community Watch network links, Muintir na Tire advised the network on Garda Clearance procedures. A presentation by An Garda Síochána on the Traffic Plan for the National Ploughing Championships took place in September 2016. This plan was then circulated on Social media through the PPN and reached an audience of 60,000 people. Community CCTV still remains a concern of the Network.

PRIDE OF PLACE 2016

Offaly County Council nominated three entries to the Pride of Place 2016 all-Ireland competition. This is local authority recognition of excellent ongoing voluntary activity in communities as overall representatives of the county. The three Offaly entries were Kilcormac and Ballycommon, both nominated for their ongoing community work across various voluntary activities in their areas and Ferbane Food

Campus. Ferbane Food Campus was awarded national winner in the 'Community Business Enterprise Initiatives' category. Congratulations to all three entries who did their communities and county proud.

OFFALY MENTAL HEALTH TALK WEEK

Offaly County Council supported this event through funding and allocation of staff to the OMHTW committee to support the delivery of the OMHTW programme 2016.

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 2016 work programme is set out in the Offaly Heritage Plan for 2012-16. There is one full time heritage officer who works with staff in Offaly County Council, the Offaly Heritage Forum and the wider community to deliver the Offaly Heritage Plan. The Offaly Heritage Forum met quarterly in 2016 with working groups meeting as needed. Consultation for the Offaly Heritage Plan 2017-21 commenced in autumn 2016.

1916 CENTENARY COMMEMORATIONS

A substantial part of the year was spent as a member of the team delivering the programme of over 30 events throughout the county to mark the centenary of 1916.

HERITAGE COUNCIL, HERITAGE OFFICER GRANT SCHEME 2016

The Heritage Council allocated €27,000 towards the delivery of two actions in the Offaly Heritage Plan - Archives and a County Geological Study.

ARCHIVES

Archivist Lisa Shortall was contracted to undertake work in the Council's Archive in Tullamore Central Library, in Offaly History's archive in Bury Quay and in Birr Castle Archive. The cataloguing of the Belmont Mill archive in the Council Archive which commenced in 2015 was completed. Substantial progress was made with the cataloguing of the archive collection belonging to Offaly History. The Atom archive programme is being used to host catalogues, finding aids and digitised material on www.offalyhistoryarchives.com. The effectiveness of this has been demonstrated with the Digby collection which went on line in September and by year end had over 30,000 page views. The users are international with 54% Irish, 14% US, 13% UK, and 8% Australia as the main user base. The remaining 11% of the users come from all parts of the globe, from India to Brazil. Offaly History have purchased a unit in Axis Business Park to fit out as an archive store. This extra secure capacity is much needed for the county.

COUNTY GEOLOGICAL STUDY

This study for Offaly County Council was carried out in partnership with the Geological Survey of Ireland to audit geological and geomorphological heritage sites. It was based on a tentative list of sites for both counties which were then assessed by four professional geologists Dr

Robert Meehan, Dr Matthew Parkes, Dr Ronan Hennessy and Dr Vincent Gallagher. Some sites were deleted and some added following field work. This has resulted in 28 individual site reports ranging from eskers, to mushroom stones to bogs to rivers and streams.

DURROW MONASTIC SITE

In the autumn an allocation was made for Recreational Projects from the Dept AHRRG to construct a parking area and a path from the Coillte woods to Durrow High Cross. Planning for this commenced and it should be completed in 2017.

LYNALLY MEDIEVAL CHURCH

A successful application was made to the Structures and Risk fund for works to stabilise Lynally Medieval Church (OF016-031). The work was 80% done when it was paused for the winter season. The site should be accessible to the public in 2017.

INVASIVE SPECIES

The work to eradicate Japanese knotweed continues. Signage has been erected at certain sites to raise awareness not to cut or disturb the site as this will spread the plant. All known sites on public lands were checked and treated in September. This project is in partnership with the Infrastructure Department and Area Engineers in Offaly County Council.

The invasive Himalayan balsam has been recorded along

the Camcor river. A working group has been set up to examine the best mechanism to limit its spread and to remove it.



HERITAGE AWARENESS PROJECTS

The OFFALY NATURALISTS' FIELD CLUB PROGRAMME was co-ordinated, published and promoted with 20 events including a week long summer school on 'Offaly After the Ice Age' which was led by John Feehan and

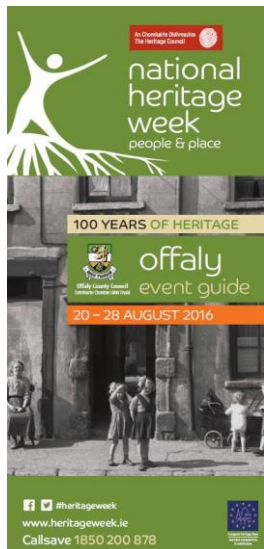
based in Birr. Sincere thanks to all of the leaders are voluntary.

HERITAGE WEEK –

The Heritage office co-ordinated events, the publication of a brochure and promotion for this 9 day celebration of heritage. A vast range of groups and organisations now host events for Heritage Week with the Historical Societies all providing very strong programme of over 40 events ranging from wildlife walks to exploring demesnes, milling history to the St Brigid Anemone.



Birr Historical Society walk from Square to Square led by Brian Kennedy and Jimmy Short.

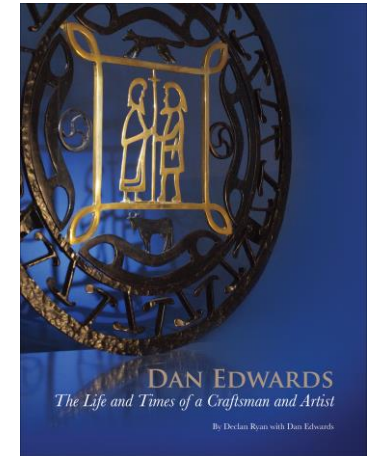


The **ANNUAL OFFALY HERITAGE SEMINAR** was held in Tullamore on Saturday 12 November profiling key projects from 2016. Site visits explored Pallas Lake and Lynally church and talks featured the geological survey, the Irish Raised Bog Conservaiton Project and the launch of the Digby Archives. Over 80 attended what is a constructive day for liaison amongst the heritage community.

PUBLICATIONS

During Heritage Week, the book *Dan Edwards, the Life and Times of a Craftsman and Artist* by Declan Ryan with Dan Edwards was launched. Offaly County Council published this book which is an important record of Dan's life and work and an insight into nine decades of Clonfanlough life.

In November *Heart and Soul* by Stephen Callaghan and Caimin O'Brien, published by Offaly County Council was launched in Birr. This documents St Brendan's burial ground in Birr and those interred there.



PLAQUES

A National Science Plaque was erected for scientist Mary Ward on the Community Building in Ferbane. This project in partnership with Brendan Ryan, local historian in Ferbane and the National Science Plaques Committee.

TIDY TOWNS NETWORK

The Council hosted four talks on different aspects of Tidy Towns work for the Offaly Tidy Towns Network, Judge Sharon Eastwood on preparing the application form, the pollinator plan and monitoring and conserving swifts. Advice for Tidy Towns Plans, application forms and

projects was provided.

Geashill held the county title with 320 points, closely followed by Clonbullogue (316) and Tubber (311). Tullamore (315) was awarded the Gold Medal for its category, Geashill the Silver, and Clonbullogue the bronze. Pullough achieved the endearvour award with 263 points.

Birr was the national winner of the '**LET'S GET BUZZING – POLLINATOR AWARD**' IN 2016. This is a considerable achievement and a positive sign for Birr in the future of Tidy Towns.

This year an additional focus came with the opportunity for Tullamore who were asked to represent Ireland for the large town category of the Entente Florale which resulted in a Gold Medal Awarded in September. This involved a large Council, community and business partnership to present Tullamore at its best.



The unveiling of the plaque to the Hon. Mary Ward, née King, Ballylin, Ferbane

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 2016 Initial Roads Budget was as follows:

Transport Infrastructure Ireland	€ 619,761.00
Department of Transport Tourism & Sport	€ 6,254,894.00
Offaly County Council (Own Resources)	€ 1,642,129.00
Total	€ 8,516,784.00

The 2015 Initial Roads Budget was €8,951,905.

The Offaly County Council allocation above does not include

an allocation of €839,500 for Public Lighting and a central management charge (support services) of €2,938,702

Additional funding was received as follows during the year: -

Transport Infrastructure Ireland	€ 3,310,854.00
Department of Transport Tourism & Sport (Flooding and Public Lighting)	€ 2,000,000.00 € 12,300.00
Department of Environment (Flooding)	€ 427,067.08
Total	€5,750,221.08

Projects undertaken and completed during 2016 are detailed below.

NATIONAL ROAD GRANTS

2016 National Roads (N52, N62 & N80 = 104 kms)

Ordinary Maintenance	€871,354
Pavement Overlay/Reconstruction Schemes	€2,625,200
N52 Roundabouts on Tullamore By Pass	€201,200
N62 Cloghan/Ferbane	€1,970,000
N52 Kilcormac	€454,000
N80 Killeigh Surface Water	€156,500
N52 & N62 Bridge Improvements	(Managed by TII)
N52 Public Lighting Refurbishment Project (160 LEDs)	€105,161

NON NATIONAL ROAD GRANTS

2016 Non National Roads (Regional 390 kms + County 1640 kms = 2030 kms)

Ordinary Maintenance	€2,290,000
Surface Dressing	€871,000
Pavement Recycling / Overlays	€2,942,000
Low Cost Safety Schemes	€190,000
6 No	
Bridge Strengthening Works	€200,000
13 No	
Non-National Road upgrades (300 LEDs) throughout Offaly	own resources
Town Allocations	€940,190
<i>[Tullamore, Birr & Edenderry]</i>	
30 kph speed limit introduced into all public housing estates	
Introduced "Driver Feedback Signs" at a number of locations in all 3 Municipal Districts.	
Birr Active Travel project substantially completed	
Inventory of all public lights (part funded by TII, SEAI and own resources)	€45,000

Additional funding of €2m was received to repair roads damaged in the 2015 / 2016 flooding event. This allocation was mostly spent in the Lusmagh / Shannonbridge / Shannon Harbour Area.

SPEED LIMIT REVIEW

The Draft Road Traffic Special Speed Limit Bye-Laws 2017 were prepared in consultation with Councillors, The Gardai, and Transport Infra-Structure Ireland. The Draft Bye Laws were available to the public for inspection from the 7th of December 2016 to 27th January 2017.

The Draft Bye-Laws will be brought to the March 2017 Council meeting for consideration.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Health and Safety objectives were set out at the beginning of the year with the management team after reviewing 2015 both from a local and national level.
- The key objectives were;
 1. To continue to enhance the safe working environment for all employees of Offaly County Council and members of the public.
 2. To ensure that **communi-cation** between all levels of staff within the organisation relating to health and safety are improved.

3. To continue to work closely with external groups such as the Health and Safety Authority 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 2016, 44 fatalities occurred (A reduction of 12 on the same period for 2015).

<i>Industry</i>	<i>Number of Fatalities in 2016</i>
<i>Agriculture</i>	21
<i>Fishing and aquaculture</i>	3
<i>Mining and quarrying</i>	1
<i>Manufacturing</i>	2
<i>Water supply</i>	1
<i>Construction</i>	9 (Down from 11 in 2015)
<i>Repair of motor vehicles</i>	2
<i>Transportation and storage</i>	1
<i>Support service activities</i>	4

Information as of the 5th of January 2017 - from the H.S.A. website

- One of the main targets for 2016 was to enhance communication with staff on accidents/incidents and good practices from other local authorities and private companies. This was achieved through monthly safety discussions and through re-fresher health and safety training. This will continue in 2017.
- 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 Offaly County Councils accident ratio in 2016 when compared to the same period in 2015.
- Senior management continued to provide leadership in order to raise the profile of safety within Offaly County Council. A key focus in 2016 involved safety discussion with all staff. Guest speakers who have had serious injury in the workplace were invited into give their experience on how workplace injuries have changed their lives and their families.
- The management team and senior management group carried out a number of inspections during the year and this will remain a key focus for 2017.

- A health and safety review will be completed in full in early 2017 and this will be used to set out the targets and areas for improvements in 2017.

ROAD SAFETY 2016

- Continuous Weather Alerts circulated to all Offaly County Council staff and Councillors
- Information in relation to weather alerts and road safety initiatives provided on Offaly County Councils website
- Road safety Video/Message installed in Birr, Ferbane, Edenderry and Banagher Credit Unions.
- Liaising with other Credit Unions regarding Road Safety Video/Message.
- Collaborated with the Road Safety Authority in relation to the "Check it Fits Service" – Child Car Seats in Offaly.
- Presentation of Junior School Warden Certificates in 2 schools – Portarlington N.S. and Ferbane N.S.
- Organised the introduction of a Junior School Warden Scheme at St. Brendan's National School, Birr.
- Arranged training for new JSW Scheme in Birr.
- Visited several Primary Schools along with the RSA Promotion Officer to deliver Road Safety Awareness.

- Liaised with Area Engineers in relation to queries regarding road safety at schools.
- Consulted with a number of National Schools to provide a Road Safety Authority Initiative called Street Smart Kids to alert children to the care required while on the road.
- Organised “Drive for Life” Programme to visit a number of Secondary Schools to deliver road safety message to 5th year students.
- Preparation of Road Safety Plan in consultation with TII, An Garda Síochána and the Road Safety Authority.

KEY ACTIONS FOR 2017:

1. Undertake Health & Safety (work practices) Schedule of Inspections
2. Complete the already commenced (Q4 2016) Speed Limit Review.
3. To complete the Non-National Roads Programme in accordance with the 2017 Roadworks Programme.

4. To complete the National Road Improvement Programme in accordance with the 2017 Roadworks Scheme.
5. Road Safety Working Together Committee to meet on at least 2 occasions in 2017.
6. Complete 2017 identified Road Safety Improvement Schemes.
7. Deliver the Winter Maintenance Plan.
8. Progress Smarter Travel Strategies within Offaly.
9. Advance Planning & Design for the N52 Kilbeggan-Tullamore Link
10. Ongoing Maintenance of 7,000 public lights.

FIRE SERVICE

FIRE SERVICE REPORT 2016

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 2016 Offaly County Fire and Rescue Service were alerted to 642 incidents, made up of 429 fire calls and 187 non-fire emergencies and 26 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 2016. The 2016 budget of €2.9 million maintained the Fire Service.

TRAINING & 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 a spend of €130,000 for training alone in 2016.

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 2016 from the National Directorate for Fire & Emergency Management for a new Maintenance Van, a new 4WD Jeep, 3 no. HGV Stabilisation Kits, a High Pressure Fire Fogging System, and a second-hand Volvo chassis the construction of a Water Tanker. Funding has subsequently been granted for the construction of this Water Tanker.

TULLAMORE BA TRAINING CENTRE

The Breathing Apparatus Training Centre in Tullamore is utilised for the training of Offaly Firefighters and is leased by other Fire Authorities and non Local Authority organisations. Tullamore Breathing Apparatus(BA) Training Centre has been available for hire since 2009 and currently averages 86 days occupancy to external Fire Authorities and approximately 14 Day for Offaly in relation to Breathing Apparatus only. Offaly further occupy the facilities for 64 Day in non-BA related courses. This gives an occupancy rate of 164 days per average year.

This level of occupancy has indicated a need for further development of the facilities. In June 2016, a detailed preliminarily appraisal for the proposed expansion of facilities at Tullamore Breathing Apparatus Training Centre was submitted to the National Directorate for Fire & Emergency Management. This €1.1 million project will extend the existing drill training yard into the adjoining lands and provide a training support block incorporating a lecture room, syndicate rooms, computer training room, instructor's office, canteen, briefing/de-briefing room, male and female showers and changing facilities, and unisex drying room. In addition, the proposed expansion will include additional vehicle storage bays to accommodate training support vehicles.

FERBANE FIRE STATION

Approval was received in 2015 from the Dept. of Environment to proceed with the construction of Ferbane Fire Station on the site of the Ferbane Area Office, Gallen. In December 2016, Offaly County Council appointed Finna Construction Ltd. as the main contractor. Construction has commenced with an expected completion date of October 2017.

FIRE PREVENTION & BUILDING CONTROL

Offaly County Council Fire Service assessed 53 Fire Safety Certificate applications and 44 Disabled Access Certificate applications. The fire authority also gave advice on 88 planning referrals. The Fire Service also dealt with 63 license applications. In total 149 fire safety inspections of premises took place.

The Fire Service also delivered the Fire Safety Schools program to all primary schools in the county. In cooperation with the OTM (Offaly Traveller movement) Offaly Fire Service carried out 89 traveler home fire safety checks during 2016. In late 2016 Offaly Fire service began a pilot project in the Ferbane area of carrying out Home fire safety checks.

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 2016 there were 156

commencement notices with 60 building inspected, which represents 38% 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 2016. Training was provided to Council staff in the following areas: Information Management, On-Site Co-ordination, and Media Liaison.

OFFALY CIVIL DEFENCE REPORT 2016

Offaly Civil Defence had a very busy operational year in 2016 covering many various Duties & Events within the county, running various local courses, and also assisting a neighbouring Civil Defence Unit within our Region. 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 2016 of Offaly Civil Defence included:

- Assisting at approximately 50 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, National Ploughing Championship and many other events in support of the Community in Offaly.
- Offaly Civil Defence provided Cardiac First Response courses to staff of Offaly County Council.
- Offaly Civil Defence purchased a 4x4 Jeep and a Transit Luton body van. Both vehicles will augment the present fleet and assist greatly in an operational role. .
- Responded to Flooding during January 2016, working with the Fire Service and the Local Authority

Health & Safety: The Unit Commenced a new format of Manual Handling Course in 2016: The Civil Defence Officer and the Health & Safety Officer are working together in order to improve H&S procedures within the Unit. The C.D.O.'s within the Region meet on a regular basis to update the H&S documents for the four Counties and consult with their local H&S Office.

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

CORPORATE SERVICES		FINANCE	
<i>Director of Services:</i>	Sean Murray	<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>Acting Head of I.S.:</i>	Ray Bell
<i>Administrative Officer:</i>	Paula Donovan	<i>I.S. Project Leader</i>	Eileen Jackson
		<i>I.S. Project Leader</i>	<i>Vacant</i>

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
Maher, Sean **	Rock Lane, Crinkle, Birr	----- ; (087) 769 7367	seanfmaher@yahoo.co.uk	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	----- ; (085) 720 2507	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

** Co-opted to Offaly County Council at the meeting held on 21st March 2016, following the election of Carol Nolan T.D. to Dáil Éireann

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, **20** council meetings were held in 2016.

At the Annual Meeting, held on 20th June 2016, Councillor Eddie Fitzpatrick was elected Cathaoirleach and Councillor Noel Bourke was elected Leas Cathaoirleach.

The May monthly meeting, held on 16th May 2016, was held in Ferbane Heritage Centre.



*May monthly meeting held in Ferbane Heritage Centre,
16th May 2016*

Members continued to receive the agenda and supporting documentation electronically on MinutePad (introduced in June 2015) for all meetings of the Council.

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 **13** occasions during 2016.

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

MEETING WITH MEMBERS OF THE OIREACHTAS

The Cathaoirleach and the members of the Management Team briefed the Oireachtas Members on progress to date and challenges to the Local Authority on 26th September 2016.

REGISTER OF ELECTORS

The Register of Electors was produced on the 1st February and came into force on 15th February 2016. The total electorate for County Offaly for the 2016/2017 Register of Electors was 57,654 broken down over the local electoral areas as follows:

Birr	20,345
Edenderry	16,167
Tullamore	21,142
Total on the Register	57,654

A Supplement to the Register of Electors was produced in 2016, for the Dáil Election held on 26th February 2016. The total number of Dáil Electors on the Register of Electors on 26th February, 2016 was 56,352.

GENERAL ELECTION 2016

The Dáil General Election was held on 26th February 2016. Mr Barry Cowen, Ms Marcella Corcoran-Kennedy and Ms Carol Nolan were elected to represent the constituency. Mr. Sean Maher was co-opted to Offaly County Council at the meeting held on 21st March 2016, following the election of Carol Nolan T.D. to Dáil Éireann

JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE

The Joint Policing Committee met on three occasions in 2016. The Committee held its annual Public Meeting on 6th October 2016.

The JPC organised a Safer Community Seminar which was held on 6th October 2016. Presentations were provided by Sergeant Graham Kavanagh; Colin Connolly, IFA Theft Stop; Kenneth P Hill, Durrow Community Alert; Sarah O’Connell, Road Safety Authority; Michael Hogan, Offaly County Council Fire Service

Public stands were set up by Offaly County Council Fire Service; Offaly County Council Roads Department; Road Safety Authority, Offaly Gardaí / Crime Prevention Unit / Community Alert; Laois TRIP South & West Offaly Home Fix; Tullamore Social Services; North Offaly Care and

Repair Service; Ballycommon Friendly Call Service; Citizens Information; IFA Theft Stop; Drugs Taskforce; Age Friendly Ireland and Muintir na Tire

SWIMMING POOLS

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

Clara Swimming Pool reopened following its refurbishment in autumn 2015. The refurbishment was funded by the Department of Transport and Sport, Offaly County Council, National Lottery funds, Clara & District Recreation Association Ltd. A Department audit of the works was held in summer 2016.

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 69 Freedom of Information requests during 2016; this represented an increase on the number of applications received in 2015, which stood at 56.

Applications received / processed in 2016;

Applications on hand at 31/12/2015	12
Applications received during 2016	69

Decisions taken during 2016	75
Applications withdrawn and dealt with outside FoI	0
Applications on hand 31/12/2016	6

Nature of the information requested;

Personal (to applicant)	9
Non-personal	60

The requests were received from the following groups;

Journalists	33
Business / Interest	7
Oireachtas	3
Staff	2
Clients	6
Others	18

During 2015 Offaly County Council processed 11 applications under the Access to Information on the Environment.

OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

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

Payments Made to Members in 2016

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	€ 3,088.99			€ 2,333.35	
John Carroll	€ 16,565.04	€ 5,520.64	€ 1,497.73				
John Clendennen	€ 16,565.04	€ 5,000.82	€ 3,472.67		€2,500.00		
Noel Cribbin	€ 16,565.04	€ 5,378.87	€ 1,966.01		€3,500.00		
Dervill Dolan	€ 16,565.04	€ 4,386.50		€ 6,000.00			
Sinead Dooley	€ 16,565.04	€ 4,386.50	€ 609.97				€ 2,885.00
Eamon Dooley	€ 16,565.04	€ 5,000.82	€ 1,977.89		€3,500.00	€ 8,333.35	
Eddie Fitzpatrick	€ 16,565.04	€ 4,764.54	€ 3,183.24			€ 11,666.65	
John Foley	€ 16,565.04	€ 5,307.99					
Declan Harvey	€ 16,565.04	€ 4,386.50	€1,529.65			€ 1,666.65	
Brendan Killeavy	€ 16,565.04	€ 4,386.50	€717.81				
John Leahy	€ 16,565.04	€ 4,693.66					
Tommy McKeigue	€ 16,565.04	€ 4,386.50	€ 840.01	€ 6,000.00			
** Sean Maher	€13,016.06	€4,300.69					
Frank Moran	€ 16,565.04	€ 4,386.50	€ 2,364.90	€ 6,000.00	€3,500.00		
** Carol Nolan	€2,857.19	€ 821.79					
Peter Ormond	€ 16,565.04	€ 6,300.36	€ 3,397.53	€ 6,000.00			
Danny Owens	€ 16,565.04	€ 4,386.50	€ 2,676.43		€2,500.00		
Martin O'Reilly	€ 16,565.04	€ 4,386.50	€712.07				
Liam Quinn	€ 16,565.04	€ 5,142.59	€ 2,959.48		€2,500.00		
TOTAL	€314,043.97	€92,632.76	€ 30,994.38	€ 24,000.00	€ 18,000.00	€ 24,000.00	€ 2,885.00

Councillors supported and attended the following conferences in 2016	Venue	Date of Conferences	No. Delegates
Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2014: Esperanza	Galway	5 / 6 February	1
Mental Health & Suicide Awareness : Waterford City & County Council	Dungarvan	19 / 20 February	2
The Finance Act, 2015: Celtic Conferences	Clonakilty	4 / 6 March	1
USA Ireland Sister Cities Summit	Dublin	22 nd April	1
Magill Summer School	Glenties	20 th / 23 rd July	1
Domestic Water Saving and Conservation Techniques : Celtic Conferences	Clonakilty	16 th / 18 th September	1
Waterways Ireland – the Vision and Expectations for 2017-2020 : Celtic Conferences	Clonakilty	11 th / 13 th November	1
Community Development : Achieving Social Inclusion, Reconciliation and Equality : Esperanza	Galway	16 th / 17 th Dec.	1

Councillors attended the following training in 2016	Venue	Date of Conferences	No. Delegates
Association of Irish Local Government : Module 1 – Local Authority Safety Services – A guide for the Elected Member	Mullingar	18 th February	2
LAMA Spring Training Seminar	Sligo	1 / 2 April	9
Association of Irish Local Government Annual Conference	Buncrana	5 / 6 May	6
AILG : Module 2 – Local Authority Cultural Services : Arts, Heritage & Library Services	Arklow	10 th May	2
AILG : Module 3 – Local Authority Planning – An update briefing for Elected Members	Ennistimon	14 th June	7
AILG : Module 4 – Local Authority Housing & the National Action Plan for Housing July 2016	Longford	15 th September	4
LAMA Autumn Training Seminar	Bantry	30 th Sept / 1 st Oct.	12
AILG : Autumn Seminar	Gorey	13 th / 14 th Oct.	8
AILG : Module 5 – National & Local Authority Emergency Planning – A briefing for Elected Members	Birr	18 th Oct.	3
AILG : Module 6 – Regional Assemblies & their role with Local Authorities & The Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2016	Dublin Ballinasloe	19 th November 24 th November	1 3

STUDENT GRANTS

9 Student Grant renewals were awarded by Offaly County Council in the 2015/2016 academic year. €61,474 was spent on 2015/2016 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 November 2016.

COUNTY CORONERS

The total expenditure was €118,887 (including salaries) in respect of coroners' inquests in 2016.

PROTECTED DISCLOSURES ACT, 2014

No protected disclosures were made to the Council in 2016.

CORPORATE PLAN REVIEW

The objectives and priorities of the *Offaly Corporate Plan 2015-2019* continued to be reviewed by the relevant Strategic Policy Committees. Progress was reported, via the Budget Supplementary Directorate Reports, during the 2017 Budget process and the monthly Management Reports circulated at the monthly Council meetings.

CIVIC WELCOME

Offaly County Council welcomed members of the Irish United Nations Veterans Association on Friday June 25th 2016. Their Annual Conference was held in the Tullamore Court Hotel on Saturday 26th June.

The Cathaoirleach and members hosted a Civic Welcome for the American Ambassador, Mr. Kevin O'Malley, on 20th September.



The Cathaoirleach and members with the American Ambassador, Mr. Kevin O'Malley

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. S. Maher
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. S. Maher 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. S. Maher 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. S. Maher Cllr. P. Ormond
Offaly Innovation & Design Centre:	Cllr. S. Dooley
Offaly Sports Partnership:	Cllr. F. Moran Cllr. D. Owens
Offaly Heritage Forum:	Cllr. E. Dooley
Regional Health Forum, Dublin-Mid-Leinster:	Cllr. E. Fitzpatrick Cllr. B. Killeavy Cllr. T. McKeigue
Rural Water Monitoring Committee:	Cllr. N. Cribbin Cllr. E. Fitzpatrick Cllr. D. Owens
Swimming Pool Committees:	<i>Birr</i> – Cllr. J. Leahy <i>Clara</i> – Cllr. F. Moran <i>Edenderry</i> - Cllr. J. Foley
Tullamore Leisure Ltd.	Cllr. S. Dooley Cllr. D. Harvey Cllr. B. Killeavy Cllr. T. McKeigue

Tullamore Community Arts Centre:	Cllr. S. Dooley Cllr. D. Harvey Cllr. B. Killeavy Cllr T. McKeigue
Tullamore Sports Link Ltd.:	Cllr. T. McKeigue
Tullamore Chandler Sister Cities:	Cllr. S. Dooley Cllr. D. Owens
Sub-Project Committee, Municipal District Of Birr:	Cllr. P. Ormond
West Offaly Enterprise Fund Ltd:	Cllr. E. Dooley Cllr. J. Leahy

FINANCE

OUR GOALS

To plan the strategic financial management of Offaly County Council 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 Property Tax;
- ➔ Government Grants;
- ➔ Agency Water Services
- ➔ Housing Rents, Planning Fees, Charges, NPPR, and other Fees

MAIN SECTIONS WITHIN FINANCE

FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTING

Financial reporting involves 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 custom

CENTRAL REVENUE COLLECTION

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

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

The processing and payment of suppliers invoices, ensuring compliance with all procurement regulations and appropriate statutory deductions. This section ensures compliance with all statutory taxation returns and application of revenue commissioners enforcement procedures for Offaly County Council.

PAYROLL

The management of the wages, salaries, pensions payments and 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 Housing, Planning Community and Local Government. This unit also manages general Cash collection and housing

rent arrears.

GENERAL LEDGER / AGRESSOSUPPORT

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. Housing loan collection is also in this section.

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 extensive statutory budget process, timetable and disclosures, including determination of LPT, 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.

DECLG / 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 council's activities.

MOTOR TAXATION OFFICE

This office issues vehicle licences and processes other transactions such as change of ownership for pre-1993 vehicles, certificates of roadworthiness, vehicle registration certificates vehicle licensing arrears. The Section also produces information for Gardai and other Local Authorities, e.g. penalty points, traffic fines, parking fines, etc. Payments are made at the counter, electronically and through postal application.

In 2016, this office generated approximately €10.5m in revenue, handled over 90,000 transactions (30% over the

counter, 10% via post and 60% was processed online)

REVENUE COLLECTION SERVICE INDICATORS

Amount collected as a percentage of the amount due at 2016 year end: (Draft percentages)

Rents.....	86%
Commercial Rates	87%
Housing Loans ..	59%

Extract from the Draft Annual Financial Statement for the Year ended December 31, 2016

DRAFT INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT STATEMENT FOR YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2016

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

<i>Expenditure by Division €</i>	<i>Gross Expenditure</i>	<i>Income</i>	<i>Net Expenditure</i>	<i>Net Expenditure</i>
	2016	2016	2016	2015
	€	€	€	€
Housing & Building	10,294,996	10,109,318	185,678	(354,042)
Roads Transportation & Safety	18,880,025	13,881,358	4,998,667	4,196,904
Water Services	4,918,006	4,479,531	438,476	415,427
Development Management	5,627,284	2,640,660	2,986,625	3,197,816
Environmental Services	6,828,064	2,029,203	4,798,861	4,654,951
Recreation & Amenity	3,354,107	626,348	2,727,759	2,823,264
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	756,429	122,376	634,053	401,752
Miscellaneous Services	7,242,368	2,084,655	5,157,713	4,114,547
Total Expenditure/Income	57,901,279	35,973,447		
Net cost of Divisions to be funded from Rates & Local Property Tax			21,927,832	19,450,620
Rates			15,587,756	14,649,342
Local Property Tax			7,202,197	6,663,642
Pension Related Deduction			725,425	978,460
Surplus/(Deficit) for Year before Transfers			1,587,546	2,840,825
Transfers from/(to) Reserves			(1,044,845)	(2,260,079)
Overall Surplus/(Deficit) for Year			542,700	580,746
General Reserve @ 1st January 2016			(4,154,223)	(4,734,969)
General Reserve @ 31st December 2016			(3,611,523)	(4,154,223)

Capital Account Summary

Extract from The Draft Annual Financial Statement for the Year ended December 31, 2016

	2016	2015
	€	€
Balance (Debit)\Credit @ 1 January	7,621,429	13,632,737
Total Expenditure (Incl Transfers)	(11,411,300)	(15,737,817)
Total Income (Incl Transfers)	13,151,276	9,726,509
Balance (Debit)\Credit @ 31 December	9,361,405	7,621,429

HUMAN RESOURCES

STAFFING

The total staff complement at the 31st December 2016 was as follows:-

<i>Core Staff</i>	<i>No. (Headcount)</i>	<i>Whole Time Equivalent</i>
Managerial	5	5.00
Clerical/Administrative	165	152.80
Professional/Technical	66	65.00
Outdoor	134	132.60
Fulltime Firefighters	2	2.00
Incentivised career break scheme	0	0.00
Supernumeraries	10	10.00
<i>Total Core Staff</i>	382	367.40
<i>Other Staff</i>		
Contract Posts	5	5.00
Site Supervisory Contract Posts	0	0.00
NDP Project Staff	0	0.00
Temporary/Seasonal	6	6.00
<i>Total Other Staff</i>	11	11.00
<i>Staff Not Included in Above No's</i>	<i>No. (Headcount)</i>	<i>Whole Time Equivalent</i>
Retained Firefighters	48	n/a
Non DoECLG (inc. Gateway)	37	14.40

RECRUITMENT

The following number of new staff were recruited during 2016 :-

- 5 No. Clerical Officers
- 2 No. Library Assistants
- 2 No. Branch Librarians
- 1 No. Chief Executive
- 2 No. Environment Technician Grade 11
- 2 No. General Operatives
- 3 No. Fire Fighters
- 2 No. Senior Executive Technicians
- 2 No. Staff Officers

TRAINING & STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Staff training 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 their Personal Development Plan

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

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

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 on-going implementation of the requirements of the

Public Service Agreements continued during 2016.

RETIREMENTS

The following staff retired during 2016:

- ❖ Hugh O'Donoghue Head of I. S.
- ❖ Joseph Heffernan Craftsman (R.I.P.)
- ❖ Frank Condron Clerical Officer
- ❖ Colm Mannion Craftsman
- ❖ Bridget Nee Assistant Staff Officer
- ❖ James Quinn Senior Executive Technician
- ❖ Eamonn Larkin Library Van Driver/Assistant
- ❖ Frances Berry Clerical Officer
- ❖ Anne Healy Smyth Senior Executive Engineer
- ❖ Deirdre Horan Clerical Officer
- ❖ Geoffrey Back General Operative

INFORMATION SYSTEMS

In 2016 the Information Systems department completed projects in a variety of areas across the entire organisation.

These included :-

- Improvements in organisation IT security with various solutions installed which will continue to increase the security of our corporate network.
- Implementation of new Library Management System.
- Upgrade of the HR & Payroll System.
- Upgrade of the Financial Management System.
- Continued development of software systems for the National Waste Collection Permits Office, now based in Áras an Chontae.
- Integration of phone system throughout the organisation with all Municipal Districts now fully integrated.
- Review of Cloud Technology.
- Support regarding the Open Libraries initiative.
- Management of all ICT systems for water and waste water sites throughout the county.
- New ICT infrastructure procured for our LAN/WAN network.
- Migration of servers to ensure data integrity and security.
- National Broadband Plan – Broadband Officer Role.
- 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: Sean Murray
Senior Executive Engineer: Paul Devaney
Meetings Administrator: Miriam Brady

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Meetings of the Municipal District are held on the second Thursday of the month at 4.00pm, generally in the Municipal District Chamber, Town Hall, Tullamore.

The January and April meetings were held in Mucklagh and Ballycumber Community Centres respectively.

ELECTED MEMBERS OF MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF TULLAMORE

Cathaoirleach Danny Owens (*Jan. to June 2016*)
 Cathaoirleach Frank Moran (*June to Dec. 2016*)
 Leas Cathaoirleach Frank Moran (*Jan. to June 2016*)
 Leas Cathaoirleach Sinead Dooley (*June to Dec. 2016*)
 Councillor Dervill Dolan
 Councillor Declan Harvey
 Councillor Brendan Killeavy

REPRESENTATIVES TO VARIOUS BODIES:

Tullamore Leisure Ltd:	Cllr. Sinead Dooley Cllr. Declan Harvey Cllr. Brendan Killeavy (<i>to Jan 2016</i>) Cllr. D. Owens (<i>from Feb 2016</i>) Cllr. Tommy McKeigue
Tullamore Community Arts Centre Ltd:	Cllr. Sinead Dooley Cllr. Declan Harvey Cllr. Brendan Killeavy (<i>to Jan 2016</i>) Cllr. D. Owens (<i>from Feb 2016</i>) Cllr. Tommy McKeigue
Tullamore Sports Link Ltd:	Cllr. Tommy McKeigue

Tullamore Chandler Sister Cities:	Cllr. Sinead Dooley Cllr. Danny Owens
Clara Swimming Pool Committee:	Cllr. Frank Moran

ACTIVITIES OF 2016:

- Tullamore received a gold award in the European Entente Florale Competition on the town's first entry in the Competition. The Municipal District worked in partnership with Tullamore Tidy Towns Committee and Tullamore Chamber of Commerce as part of Team Tullamore in preparing the town for the visit of the Entente Florale adjudicators in July 2016. The award was announced and presented at a ceremony in the Czech Republic.
- Worked with Tidy Towns/Villages Committees throughout the Municipal District.
- Working with Tullamore Chamber of Commerce and other organisations in promoting the Municipal District.
- Maintained street cleaning services throughout the Municipal District area.
- Appointed the Design Team for, and engaged in consultation on, Tullamore Street Enhancement

Programme Phase 1, following confirmation of approved funding. Phase 1 includes Street Enhancement from the Town Hall to Kilbreggan Bridge, and the provision of a bridge linking Main Street to the Bridge Centre.

- Funding also approved for Clara under the 2016 Rural Town and Village Renewal Scheme.
- Lloyd Town Park, Tullamore achieved a Green Flag Award in 2016, the benchmark national standard for publicly accessible parks and green spaces.
- Remembrance Garden created in Lloyd Town Park as part of Easter 1916 Commemorations.
- Worked in partnership with other agencies in facilitating the hosting of the National Ploughing Championships in Mucklagh.
- A Certificate of Recognition was presented to Tullamore Soccer Club in commemoration of the Club's 75th Anniversary.
- Schedule of Works 2016 – Consideration and adoption of the Schedule of Works for the Municipal District.
- Budget 2017 - Consideration of General Municipal Allocation.

- Supporting community and voluntary groups in the Municipal District by way of payment of community grants, and estate enhancement grants.
- Facilitating the hosting of Christmas Markets in O'Connor Square & Market Square, Tullamore.
- Delegations were received from the following:
 - ❖ Tullamore Traveller Movement
 - ❖ Hop Hill Residents Association.
- Reports from Offaly County Council were given to members at Municipal District Meetings as follows;
 - ❖ Environment & Water Services;
 - ❖ Roads & Infrastructure;
 - ❖ Housing.



Celebrating gold medal award in Entente Florale, and raising of Green Flag in Lloyd Town Park.



MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF EDENDERRY

Director of Services / Area Manager:
Meetings Administrator:
Senior Executive Engineer:
Assistant Engineer:

Declan Conlon
Therese O'Meara
John Connolly
Leonard Geoghegan

REPRESENTATIVES TO VARIOUS BODIES/BOARDS

NORTH OFFALY DEVELOPMENT FUND

All members of 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.

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Monthly Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month in the Town Hall, Edenderry at 3.30pm. In May 2016 the members held their meeting in

Ballycommon community centre. This former church has been renovated by the community and is now a beautiful multi function space.



Front row: Cllr Noel Bourke, Leonard Geoghegan, Assistant Engineer, Cllr Liam Quinn (Cathaoirleach), Therese O'Meara, Meetings Administrator

Back row: Cllr Noel Cribbin, Cllr Martin O'Reilly, Cllr Eddie Fitzpatrick, Declan Conlon, Area Manager, Cllr John Foley and John Connelly, Area Engineer

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 & Bus Shelters, Hotel Site in Edenderry & Ofalia House. This year they added to this Ambulance Services in 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.

2016 ACTIVITIES

AMBULANCE SERVICE

In 2016 the staff of the Ambulance Services based at Ofalia House in Edenderry advised the National Ambulance Services that due to Health and Safety concerns in their work place they would have had no alternative but to cease working from that space. They subsequently moved to the Tullamore where they were based for the remainder of the year. The members were gravely concerned about the loss of service from Edenderry and met with National Ambulance Services Staff regarding same. In October 2016 the members met with the TDs from Offaly in order to make them aware of the situation and to seek their assistance in this regard. In December 2016, as arranged by Junior Minister Corcoran Kennedy, the members met with Minister Harris who advised them that construction

would commence in March 2017 on a new ambulance base for Edenderry. He also advised that a temporary location for the service had been sourced in Edenderry which would see the service return to the town.



Front row: Deputy Carol Nolan TD, Junior Minister Marcella Corcoran Kennedy TD, Therese O'Meara, Meetings Administrator

Back row: Cllr Noel Bourke, Cllr Martin O'Reilly, Cllr John Foley, Cllr Eddie Fitzpatrick and Deputy Barry Cowen TD.

MEETING WITH CHIEF EXECUTIVE

In February 2016, Anna Marie Delaney, became the new Chief Executive for Offaly County Council. On the 13th of July the members held a very positive meeting with Anna Marie Delaney. This special meeting was called in order for the members to discuss specific concerns/issues that the members have within the district. Issues for discussions included Edenderry Inner Relief Road (from Tesco to Clonmeen Rise), Ambulance services in Edenderry, Edenderry streetscape, status of funding for a new library in Edenderry, the canal walkway, job creation within the district/promotion of Edenderry and its environs. The members discussed these issues at length with the Chief Executive who gave advice and suggestions and updates where possible. The members thanked the Chief Executive for attending their meeting and she agreed to meet several times per year in the district.



Members pictured with Minister Harris, Junior Minister Corcoran Kennedy and representatives from the National Ambulance Service.



Right to left: Cllr Noel Cribbin, Cathaoirleach of Edenderry Municipal District, Anna Marie Delaney, Chief Executive, Cllr Eddie Fitzpatrick, Cathaoirleach of Offaly County Council and member of Edenderry Municipal District.

GENERAL MUNICIPAL ALLOCATION 2016

In 2016 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 quarterly basis. See attached breakdown of funding allocated during 2016.

Edenderry Municipal District - General Municipal Allocation 2016			€10,000
<u>Activites/Events</u>			
<u>Name</u>	<u>Reason</u>		<u>€</u>
1 Edenderry St Patricks Day Parade	Towards running of parade for 2016		500.00
2 Croghan Active Retirement Group	Run an art class		500.00
3 Edenderry Cabin Disability group	trip for the disabled members		500.00
4 Irish Youth Anglers Club	tackle, bait and refreshments for Junior Anglers		300.00
5 Grand Canal Wheelers Cycling club	towards the purchase of a bike for club members		350.00
6 Relay for life, Edenderry	raising money for concert charity		500.00
7 Killane View Residents Association	naming stone for the estate		500.00
8 Pairc na hEornan Residents Association	Create fruit and nut orchard and plant hedgerow along boundary		500.00
9 Payment of Musicians	for Edenderry switching on of christmas lights		300.00
10 Oaklands College	green schools project		500.00
11 Little Wishes Edenderry	Marathon for charity		250.00
12 Rhode Parish Playground committee	annual donation		500.00
13 Rhode Youth Club	purchase of equipment for activities		500.00
14 Moleworth Bridge (Daingean) Playground committee	annual donation		500.00
15 Edenderry playground	annual donation		500.00
16 Edenderry Christmas lights committee	Contribution		500.00
		Total	€7,200

<u>Projects</u>			
<u>Name</u>	<u>Project</u>		<u>€</u>
1 Portarlinton Community Development Association	Derryonce lakes walking routes		3,000
2 Edenderry Coarse Angling Club	25th anniversary special donation		1,500
3 Edenderry Athletic Club	towards creation of running track around Derry Rovers pitch		5,000
4 Ballycommon Telework and Training Centre Ltd	drainage and resurfacing of existing car park		5,000
5 Rhode Game Club	creation of boxes		2,500
6 Edenderry Stakepark	Donation required to meet 30k funding		3,000
7 Rhode First Responders	training and parts for defibrilator		1,000
8 Edenderry community cabin	towards power washihng and painting of cabin		1,000
9 St Bridget Boxing Club, Edenderry	towards an event which will see international boxers come to Edenderry to take part		1,000
10 Col. Ned Broy Memorial Committee	erect monument to honour Col Ned Broy		4,000
11 Naomh Mhuire Daingean	purchase of timing kit for road races		1,500
12 Clonbullogue Development Assoication	replacement of timber post and rail fencing		5,000
13 Geashill Tidy Towns	replacement of seating		2,000
14 Daingean Development Association	extend tunnel used to grow flowers planted in the town		1,000
15 Ballinagar Tidy Tows	development of a bus shelter		3,000
16 St Jospeh Boxing Club	purchase of uniforms and essentials		3,500
17 Walsh Island community centre committee	towards the building of an extension to their community centre		4,000
18 Twinning Project	Twining with Jaux in Frane		5,000
19 Edenderry Youth Cafe	putting on a Christmas Panto about Edenderry		4,000
		Total	€56,000

WORKS/PROJECTS UNDERTAKEN IN MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OFFICE

ROADS PROGRAMME FOR THE DISTRICT

In 2016 a Roadwork's Programme was completed in the sum of €2,179,631 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.

PART VIII FOR BLUNDELL PARK, EDENDERRY

On foot of the approved Part VIII for Blundell Park, planting and improvements to footpaths in the park were completed in 2016. The area where the Pitch and Putt will be constructed was also fenced off during the year. Construction of houses as part of this Part VIII has yet to commence.

RECORD OF ACTIVITIES

<i>REPAIRS REQUESTS RECEIVED</i>	
Housing	684
Roads	382
Public Lighting	39
<i>CASH OFFICE</i>	
Transactions completed	2671
Income received	€236,935
Purchasing transactions	1690
<i>REPORTS</i>	
Planning	145
Road Opening	42
Traffic fines issued	205
Income from Traffic Fines	€6,220
Income from Parking meters	€48,766

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF BIRR

Director of Services / Area Manager:
Senior Executive Engineer:
Meetings Administrator:

Tom Shanahan/Declan Kirrane
Anne Healy-Smyth/Paul McLoughlin
Deirdre Molloy

REPORT ON THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF BIR

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Monthly Meetings are held on the second Monday of each month in the Birr Civic Offices at 4.30pm. Meetings were also held in Ferbane in September and Banagher in November

ELECTED MEMBERS OF BIRR MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Cllr John Clendennen, Fine Gael (Cathaoirleach)
Jan- June
Cllr Eamonn Dooley, Fianna Fáil (Cathaoirleach)
June-Dec
Cllr Peter Ormond, Fianna Fáil (Leas Cathaoirleach)
June-Dec
Cllr John Carroll, Non Party
Cllr John Leahy, Renua
Cllr Carol Nolan, Sinn Féin
Cllr Sean Maher, Sinn Fein Co-opted following the election of Carol Nolan to the Dail

REPRESENTATIVES TO VARIOUS BODIES/BOARDS

BIRR SWIMMING POOL

Cllr John Leahy, January – October
Cllr Sean Maher, October- December

SUB PROJECT COMMITTEE

Cllr Peter Ormond

WEST OFFALY ENTERPRISE FUND

Cllrs John Leahy and Cllr Eamonn Dooley

BIRR THEATRE AND ARTS CENTRE

Cllr Carol Nolan, Cllr John Clendennen, Cllr John Leahy and Cllr Peter Ormond, following the election of Cllr Nolan to the Dail, Cllr Sean Maher was nominated on the above board in April

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	<i>Roads, Flooding Update and Housing</i>
February	<i>Roads, Flooding and Moorpark St Traffic flow</i>
March	<i>Schedule of Municipal District Works</i>
April	<i>Roads Flooding Update, Housing</i>
May	<i>Water and Environment Services</i>
June	<i>Housing and Roads</i>
July	<i>Roads</i>
September	<i>Environment & Water, Roads</i>
October	<i>Roads – Speed Limit Review 2016</i>
November	<i>Housing & Roads</i>

SERVICE INDICATORS 2016

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.

Further to the July 2016 visits to selected local authorities to validate the 2015 data, NOAC has again reviewed a number of the indicators and made some changes to the set of indicators that are being reported on in respect of 2016 activity.

For 2016, there are 34 local authority performance indicators, as follows:

- HOUSING (H1 TO H6)
- ROADS (R1 TO R3)
- WATER (W1)
- WASTE/ENVIRONMENT (E1 TO E3)
- PLANNING (P1 TO P5)
- 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 TO J3)

A number of Indicators have been amended and additional Indicators are reported on in 2016. The Rented Housing Indicator (**H5**) includes the number of dwellings not compliant with the Standards; Indicator (**R2**) now includes data on Roads Improvement and Maintenance Grants expenditure on Local Roads. A new Planning Indicator (**P5**) which reports on Fire Safety Certificates has been included, Revenue Indicator (**M1**) now includes details on the per capita Revenue Expenditure and two new LEO Indicators (**J2**) gives details on trading Online Vouchers and (**J3**) the number of participants who received mentoring during the year.

H: HOUSING (H1 TO H6)	2016	2015
H1: SOCIAL HOUSING STOCK		
A. The overall total number of dwellings provided by the local authority in the period 1/1/2016 to 31/12/2016 ; comprising:	323	<i>130</i>
B1. The number of dwellings directly provided, constructed in 2016	0	<i>8</i>
B2. The number of dwellings directly provided, purchased in 2016	30	<i>1</i>
C. The number of units provided under the Rental Accommodation Scheme in 2016	5	<i>4</i>
D. The number of units provided under the Housing Assistance Payment Scheme in 2016 if operated (or else indicate if scheme not yet being operated in the L.A.)	252	<i>95</i>
E. The number of units provided under the Social Housing Current Expenditure Programme (SHCEP) (including unsold Affordable Scheme units and NAMA sourced properties and the Mortgage to Rent Scheme) in 2016	36	<i>22</i>
F. The overall total number of social housing dwellings in the LA at 31/12/2016 ; comprising:	2,539	<i>2,246</i>
G. The total number of dwellings directly provided (constructed or purchased) by the LA	1,794	<i>1,762</i>
H. The total number of units provided under the Rental Accommodation Scheme	138	<i>157</i>
I. The total number of units provided under the Housing Assistance Payment Scheme if operated (or else indicate if scheme not yet being operated in the LA)	347	<i>95</i>
J. The total number of units provided under the SHCEP (including unsold Affordable Scheme units and NAMA sourced properties and the Mortgage to Rent Scheme)	260	<i>232</i>

H2: HOUSING VACANCIES		
A. The percentage of the total number of dwellings at H1.G that were vacant on 31/12/2016	1.56%	1.64%
H3: AVERAGE RE-LETTING TIME AND COST		
A. The time taken from the date of vacation of dwelling to the date in 2016 when a new tenancy had commenced in the dwelling, averaged across all units re-let in 2016	22.31 wks	33.00 wks
B. The cost expended on getting the re-tenanted units in 2015 ready for re-letting, averaged across all units re-let in 2016	€ 17,274.00	€ 16,436.00
H4: HOUSING MAINTENANCE COST		
A. Expenditure during 2016 on the repair and maintenance of housing bought or built by the LA compiled on a continuous basis from 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2016, divided by the no. of directly provided units in the LA stock at 31/12/2016 i.e. data at indicator H1G.	€ 461.00	€ 554.51
H5: PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR INSPECTIONS		
A. Total number of registered tenancies in the LA area	3,287	3,220
B. Number of inspections carried out	26	30
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 2016.	6.25%	0.00%

R: ROADS (R1 AND R2)		2016	2015
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,	<i>Regional</i>	99%	68%
	<i>Local Primary</i>	97%	97%
	<i>Local Secondary</i>	94%	94%
	<i>Local Tertiary</i>	81%	81%
B. The % of total regional roads that received a PSCI condition rating during 2016		5%	75%
C. The % of total (a) Regional , kilometres represented by the numbers of kilometres at 31/12/2016 rated in each of the following 4 groupings of the 10 PSCI rating categories; 1-4, 5-6, 7-8 and 9-10	<i>Category 1 - 4</i>	14%	10%
	<i>Category 5 - 6</i>	17%	9%
	<i>Category 7 - 8</i>	32%	21%
	<i>Category 9 - 10</i>	37%	28%
C. The % of total (b) Local Primary , road kilometres represented by the numbers of kilometres at 31/12/2016 rated in each of the following 4 groupings of the 10 PSCI rating categories; 1-4, 5-6, 7-8 and 9-10.	<i>Category 1 - 4</i>	32%	33%
	<i>Category 5 - 6</i>	27%	27%
	<i>Category 7 - 8</i>	26%	24%
	<i>Category 9 - 10</i>	13%	13%
C. The % of total (c) Local Secondary , road kilometres represented by the numbers of kilometres at 31/12/2016 rated in each of the following 4 groupings of the 10 PSCI rating categories; 1-4, 5-6, 7-8 and 9-10.	<i>Category 1 - 4</i>	35%	35%
	<i>Category 5 - 6</i>	21%	21%
	<i>Category 7 - 8</i>	22%	21%
	<i>Category 9 - 10</i>	17%	17%

C. The % of total (d) Local Tertiary , road kilometres represented by the numbers of kilometres at 31/12/2016 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%	35%
	Category 5 - 6	14%	14%
	Category 7 - 8	15%	15%
	Category 9 - 10	18%	17%
R2: REGIONAL ROAD GRANTS WORKS			
A. Kilometres of Regional Road strengthened during 2016 using Road Improvement (RI) Grants and the RI Grant Amount	Km of Road	8.8 km	10.112 km
	Grant Amount	€ 1,027,221	€ 3,861,516
B. Kilometres of Regional Road resealed during 2016 using Road Maintenance (RM) Grants and the RM Grant Amount .	Km of Road	5.9 km	8.315 km
	Grant Amount	€ 223,500	€ 942,971
C. Kilometres of Local Road strengthened during 2016 using Road Improvement (RI) Grants and the RI Grant Amount	Km of Road	27.0 km	New in 2016
	Grant Amount	€ 2,239,394	New in 2016
D. Kilometres of Local Road resealed during 2016 using Road Maintenance (RM) Grants and the RM Grant Amount .	Km of Road	35.6 km	New in 2016
	Grant Amount	€ 683,611	New in 2016
R3: % OF MOTOR TAX TRANSACTIONS CONDUCTED ONLINE			
The percentage of motor tax transactions which are dealt with online (i.e. transaction is processed and the tax disc is issued).		60.59%	55.56%

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 1/1/2016 to 31/12/2016 and the number of such transactions conducted online.

W: WATER (W1)	2016	2015
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 2016.	<i>Provided by EPA</i>	99.07%

Note: This data will be obtained directly from the EPA

E: WASTE / ENVIRONMENT (E1 TO E3)	2016	2015	
E1: No. / % OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH ACCESS TO A 3 BIN SERVICE			
A. The number of households, based on the 2016 Census, who are situated in an area covered by a licensed operator providing a 3 bin service at 31/12/2016	3,465	3,542	
B. The % of households within the LA area (also as per the 2016 Census) that the number at A represents.	12.75%	13.34%	
E2: % OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION COMPLAINTS CLOSED			
A. The total no. of pollution cases in respect of which a complaint was made during 2016, the number of pollution cases closed from 1/1/2016 to 31/12/2016 and the total no. of cases on hands at 31/12/2016.	<i>Complaints Made</i>	933	806
	<i>No. Closed</i>	848	750
	<i>No. on Hand</i>	85	54
E3: % OF LA AREA WITHIN THE 5 LEVELS OF LITTER POLLUTION			
A. The % of the area within the LA that when surveyed in 2016 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>		11
			60
			29
			0
			0

The data will be submitted by Tobin Consulting Engineers directly to the LGMA from the data for the 2016 National Litter Pollution Monitoring System Report that should be ready for publication in mid-2017.

P: PLANNING (P1 TO P5)	2016	2015
P1: NEW BUILDINGS INSPECTED		
A. Buildings Inspected as a percentage of new buildings notified to the local authority	38.46%	35%
P2: No. / % OF PLANNING DECISIONS CONFIRMED BY <i>AN BORD PLEANÁLA</i>		
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 2016	17	20
B. % of the determinations at A which were to confirm (either with or without variation) the decision made by the LA	88.24%	60%
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 1/1/2016 to 31/12/2016 that were investigated	51	54
B. Total number of cases that were closed during 2016	29	41
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	17.24%	11%
D. % of the cases at B that were resolved to the LA's satisfaction through negotiations	0.00%	3%
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)	82.76%	86%
F. Total number of planning cases being investigated as at 31/12/2016.	59	46
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 2016 Census.	€ 29.11	€ 33.29
P5: APPLICATIONS FOR FIRE SAFETY CERTIFICATES		
A. The average no. of weeks taken to deal with applications for Fire Safety Certificates received in 2016	4.22 wks	<i>New in 2016</i>

F: FIRE SERVICE (F1 TO F3)	2016	2015
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 2016 Census for the population served by the fire authority as per the Risk Based Approach Phase One reports.	€ 40.28	€ 39.67
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	5.19	5.13
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	5.20	5.27
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	46.36%	56.85%
B. % of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at the scene is after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	46.36%	37.08%
C. % of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes	7.27%	6.07%
D. % of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance at the scene is within 10 minutes	30.39%	32.99%
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	56.86%	55.67%
F. % of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes	12.75%	11.34%

L: LIBRARY / RECREATION SERVICES (L1 AND L2)	2016	2015
L1: LIBRARY VISITS AND ISSUES		
A. Number of visits to libraries per head of population for the LA area per the 2016 Census.	3.34	3.26
B. Number of items issued to library borrowers in the year.	239,312	259,381
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 2016 Census.	€ 28.04	€ 28.24

Y: YOUTH / COMMUNITY (Y1 AND Y2)	2016	2015	
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%	100.00%	
Y2: GROUPS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK (PPN)			
A. The number of organisations included in the County Register at 31/12/2016 and the proportion of those organisations that opted to be part of the Social Inclusion College (SIC) within the PPN	No. of Organisations	259	238
	No. on SIC	24	23

C: CORPORATE SERVICES (C1 TO C4)	2016	2015
C1: TOTAL NUMBER OF WTES		
A. The wholtime equivalent staffing number as at 31 December 2016	378.40	374.1883
C2: WORKING DAYS LOST TO SICKNESS		
A. Percentage of working days lost to sickness absence through medically certified leave	3.68%	3.47%
B. Percentage of working days lost to sickness absence through self-certified leave	0.24%	0.249%
C3: NO. OF PAGE VISITS TO LA WEBSITE		
A. Total page views of the local authority's website in 2016.	576,020	741,181
B. Total number of followers at end 2016 of the LA's social media accounts (if any) **.	17,603	12,693
C4: OVERALL COST OF ICT PROVISION PER WTE		
A. All ICT expenditure in the period from 1/1/2016 to 31/12/2016, divided by the WTE no. supplied under the C1 indicator.	€ 2,695.96	€ 2,560.28

** 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)		2016	
M1:5 YEAR SUMMARY OF REVENUE ACCOUNT BALANCE			
A. The cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2012			-€ 5,782,975
B. The cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2013			-€ 5,293,325
C. The cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2014			-€ 4,734,969
D. The cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2015			-€ 4,148,732
E. The cumulative surplus or deficit balance at 31/12/2016			- € 3,611,785
F. The cumulative surplus or deficit at 31/12/2016 as a percentage of Total Income in 2015 from the Income and Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS**			- 6.07%
G. Revenue Expenditure per capita for the year			€ 742.45
M2:5 YEAR SUMMARY OF % COLLECTION LEVELS FOR MAJOR REVENUE SOURCES			
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	% Rates	% Rents and Annuities	% Housing Loans
A. <i>Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2012</i>	81.80	85.82	59.23
B. <i>Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2013</i>	81.66	84.79	60.44
C. <i>Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2014</i>	82.12	85.34	61.63
D. <i>Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2015</i>	84.80	86.00	61.13
E. <i>Appendix 7 of the AFS** for 2016</i>	87.10	86.00	59.00

* 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 17th April.

J: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (J1, J2 AND J3)	2016	<i>2015</i>
J1: NO. OF JOBS CREATED		
The no. of jobs created with assistance from the Local Enterprise Office during the period 1/1/2016 to 31/12/2016	82.00	<i>71.50</i>
J2: TRADING ONLINE VOUCHERS		
The no. of trading online voucher applications approved by the Local Enterprise Office in 2016.	14	<i>New in 2016</i>
The no. of those trading online vouchers applications that were drawn down in 2016.	17	<i>New in 2016</i>
J3: NO. OF MENTORING RECIPIENTS		
The no. of participants who received mentoring during the period 1/1/2016 to 31/12/2016	140	<i>New in 2016</i>

This figure will be obtained directly from Enterprise Ireland based on the information provided to them by the Local Enterprise Offices.

Offaly's Clár Comorthas Cead Bliain

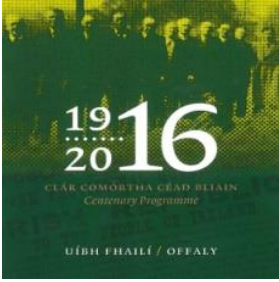




Offaly's Clár Comorthas Cead Bliain, commemorating the 1916 Easter Rising, was celebrated in music, film, lectures, theatre, historic exhibitions, formal ceremonies of remembrance, and many other cultural and artistic events.

Eleven Offaly men are known to have fought in the Rising: Seamus Kenny and Patrick McDonnell from Belmont; James Carroll from Shannonharbour; Peadar Bracken and Seamus O'Brennan from Tullamore; Patrick Doyle from Ferbane; Seamus Kelly from Mucklagh; Joseph Doolan from Killoughey; Kieran Kenny from Banagher; Eamon Bulfin from Birr; and Michael Foley from Edenderry. The members of Offaly County Council and the Offaly 1916 - 2016 Commemoration Committee acknowledge and thank their descendants for their active engagement with the programme.

Offaly 100, our flagship civic event on 20th March 2016, captured the national spirit of commemoration, reflection and celebration locally. Commencing with a solemn ceremony of commemoration at the Courthouse, followed by a candlelit walk, unveiling of a plaque at the site where a fracas had broken out in Colmcille Street on 20th March 1916, and finishing with an uplifting union of Offaly voices of all ages in The Church of the Assumption truly was a night never to be forgotten by all who attended.

There were many other special events throughout the county from Clonmacnoise to Shinrone, Edenderry to Birr, Clara to Banagher. Offaly County Council commissioned a film hoping to capture the spirit of the commemorations and to demonstrate the unique contributions of the Offaly men and women in 1916. This report seeks to record the numerous events held throughout the county, many of which are captured on the commemorative DVD. Many other remaining legacies were created like our *Raising the Flag* plaque; Kathleen Kingston paintings; *Faithful Rising* Film; our many publications; and, indeed our Gardens of Remembrance which we hope will provide a lasting place to remember, reflect and re-imagine our futures.

The Offaly 2016 Commemorative Committee and Offaly County Council have sensitively, respectfully and creatively embraced the Offaly centenary programme, ensuring that all citizens were afforded the opportunity to feel ownership of the momentous events that took place in Easter week 1916.

	<p><i>Launch of 2016 Offaly's Clár Comorthas Cead Bliain</i></p> <p>The launch of our Centenary Programme for Offaly was held in Áras an Chontae on Thursday 3rd December. The launch included a reading of 'Letter from Wesley Hanna to his family' by Michael Hanna and a theatre extract of 'Sisters of the Rising' by Christiane O' Mahoney. Live music by Killeigh Ceoltas provided an ambient atmosphere which afforded everyone the opportunity to meet with others working towards a year of commemorations in Offaly.</p>
	<p><i>Council 1916 Minute Book</i></p> <p>Conservation of the Council's 1916 Minute Book was arranged and it featured at many of the exhibitions hosted in the libraries and in Áras an Chontae during the year. The Minute Book contains the Tullamore Urban District Council condemnation of 'the outbreak in Dublin' and also the cancellation of the motion later.</p>
	<p><i>Pádraig Mac Piarais agus an Ghaeilge</i></p> <p>The first exhibition of the Offaly 2016 Centenary Programme was held on Monday, 18th January in Áras an Chontae, Tullamore and celebrated the Proclamation signatory Pádraig Mac Piarais and his solidarity with the Irish language. The exhibition of photographic material and short films featuring the poetry of Pádraig Mac Piarais was later toured through the County Library network.</p>
	<p><i>Offaly Arts Act Grants 2016</i></p> <p>Offaly Arts Act Grants 2016 was open to creative and cultural projects in the community that directly focused on and reflected the themes of this year of commemoration. 36 communities, voluntary groups, drama groups and individual artists applications were approved at the February Council meeting. The funding provided supported them in their delivery of projects that reflected on the past 100 years and helped to re-imagine our future.</p>
	<p><i>Offaly Historical Society Talks</i></p> <p>Offaly Historical Society held many talks and seminars throughout the year. The series commenced with "The Military Strategy of the 1916 Leaders" – a retrospective military analysis of the 1916 Rising was provided by Mr. James P. Cullen, Brigadier General (Retired), U.S. Army on 8th February 2016 in Bury Quay, Tullamore.</p>

	<p><i>Edenderry Historical Society Talks</i></p> <p>Edenderry Historical Society worked closely with the Offaly Commemoration Committee and provided a series of talks during the year, many focusing on those from Edenderry known to have taken part in the Rising and observing Edenderry at that time. 'Exploring 1916: A Midlands Perspective' was held on 19th February in Oakland's Community College.</p>
	<p><i>Offaly and the Rising, an Educational Resource</i></p> <p><i>Offaly and the Rising, an Educational Resource</i> was launched in Tullamore Central Library on Wednesday 24th February by Cllr. Eamon Dooley, Cathaoirleach of Offaly County Council. Killeigh NS provided an excerpt of their 1916 play at the launch which they later toured to many other schools in the county.</p> <p>This resource, developed in-house by Offaly County Council staff, provides an overview to County Offaly's connections to the Rising of 1916 and is supported by teachers training notes and a bibliography of Offaly Library Service resources. A copy was provided to every school in the county.</p> <p>Dr. Ciarán Reilly, NUIM, commissioned by the Offaly 2016 Commemoration Committee, provided talks to many national schools and these greatly complemented the educational resource.</p>
	<p><i>Library Talks</i></p> <p>'The 1916 Rising - Its Legacy in Rhode and North Offaly'- A talk by Dr. Philip McConway was held on 4th March.</p>
	<p><i>Flagstones & Monuments</i></p> <p>The 1916 - 2016 Commemoration Committee acknowledged that a number of memorials already existed connected with 1916 in Offaly, namely: at the Courthouse and Columcille St in Tullamore, Rev Thomas Burbage in Geashill, Edenderry, Clonmacnoise and Shinrone. The committee focused on improving these memorials, rather than commissioning new memorials, and accordingly conservation work and their settings were enhanced.</p> <p>Two carved paving stones, marking the monument at the Courthouse, Tullamore and the location of the fracas in 1916, were installed in Cormac Street and Columcille Street in Tullamore.</p>

	<p><i>Shinrone Heritage Group Commemoration</i></p> <p>Shinrone Heritage Group held their 1916-2016 Commemoration event on 6th March 2016. It commenced with a Remembrance Service in St Mary's Church, Shinrone, followed by commemoration at the Dr. Doyle Monument. In 1966 the people of Shinrone erected a monument to Dr. P.J. Doyle opposite St. Mary's RC Church Shinrone. He had participated in the Rising, with his company in Jameson's Distillery, Marrowbone Lane and later in 1920 he was appointed to Shinrone / Moneygal as Dispensary Doctor.</p> <p>At the reception that followed in the Community Centre Shinrone NS performed a play depicting many scenes from Dr. Doyle's life during and after the Rising. Large number of relatives, including Dr. Doyle's son, Cuimín, attended the event.</p>
	<p><i>Library Talks</i></p> <p>"A great deed was done last night...The role of Seamus O'Brennan in "The Tullamore Affray" and the 1916 Rising" was delivered by Dr. Philip McConway on 8th March in Tullamore Central Library.</p>
	<p><i>'Who we are - from cave men to 1916'</i></p> <p>St Brendan's boys school presented their school play 'Who we are - from cave men to 1916' on 9 March in The Marian Hall in Birr.</p>
	<p><i>1966 - 50th Anniversary Tribune Supplement</i></p> <p>The Tribune, both Midland and Tullamore, in association with Offaly County Council reissued its 1966 50th anniversary supplement of the 1916 Rising on Thursday 10th March. A special edition centenary supplement of ongoing and upcoming centenary events was also published.</p>
	<p><i>Offaly Historical Society Talks</i></p> <p>A lecture entitled "The Tullamore Incident" by Mr. Michael Byrne provided a comprehensive and insightful view of the fracas that occurred in Tullamore on 20th March 1916.</p>

	<p><i>Proclamation Day</i></p> <p>The Ireland 2016 office designated Tuesday, 15th March as Proclamation Day for all educational institutes. A key initiatives of the Ireland 2016 Centenary Programme was the presentation of the National Flag and a copy of the 1916 Proclamation to every National School in the country by teams from the Defence Forces. SN Peadar agus Pol in Horseleap were the first Offaly School to receive their flag from the Defence Forces on 16th September 2015. Secondary Schools received their flag and proclamation from the President at a ceremony held in Croke Park. All schools in the county held a Flag Raising ceremony and a reading of the Proclamation on Proclamation Day.</p>
	<p><i>Edenderry Library</i></p> <p>On 16th March 2016 Edenderry Library hosted Edenderry Comhaltas in a celebration of music of the period. A selection of poetry from 1916 relating to both the Rising and other contemporary events were recited by Dr.Philip Brady and St.Mary's Secondary School Transition Year students.</p>
	<p><i>St. Patrick Day Parades</i></p> <p>St. Patrick Day parades, held across the county, embraced the centenary year and many reflected on 1916. In Tullamore the large attendances saw a reenactment of the shots fired on 20th March 1916 in Tullamore during the affray that has become known as The Tullamore Incident.</p>
	<p><i>Irish Volunteers Exhibition</i></p> <p>An exhibition of artifacts telling the story of the Irish Volunteers was held in Our Arts Centre (former Kilroys premises) on High Street in Tullamore on Friday 18th and Saturday 19th March 2016</p>
	<p><i>Offaly Historical Society Talks</i></p> <p>On 21st March Birr Historical Society held a talk on <i>Thomas McDonagh - A 1916 Leader</i>. The talk presented by May Casey of the Thomas McDonagh centre in Cloughjordan, was well received by all who attended. Birr Historical Society had started their series of talks reflecting on the centenary year on 19th October 2015 with a talk by Brian Kennedy on the <i>'The century that led to 1916'</i>.</p>



Offaly 100 Together we Remember

Offaly 100 Together we Remember was held on Sunday, 20th March. A large gathering congregated at the Courthouse in Tullamore to remember, to reflect and to celebrate 100 years of our nation in Offaly. Following the welcome by Cllr. Eamon Dooley, Cathaoirleach of Offaly County Council members of Comhairle na nÓg read the proclamation. A wreath was laid at the monument by Cllr. Eamon Dooley, Cathaoirleach and Cllr. Sinead Dooley, Chairperson of the 1916 – 2016 Commemoration Committee. The national flag was raised by Michael and Jeanne Bulfin, children of Eamonn Bulfin who had raised the flag on Princess Street on the GPO during the Easter Rising. Cuimín Doyle, son of Dr. P.J. Doyle, lit a candle and this light was then passed through those attending and the gathering followed the Columcille Pipe Band to William Street where the Offaly Historical Society provided an overview of events 100 years ago in Tullamore. The walk continued to the Church of the Assumption where the packed church was treated to a delightful evening of song and verse from performers, both professional and amateur, from the county. Together we created fond memories and a new history of hope for the next centenary



Library Talks

A talk by Dr. Philip McConway on *'The Offaly Republican Roll of Honour, Exploring Offaly IRA fatalities, 1918-1937'* was held on Wednesday 30th March 2016 in Birr Library.






Kieran Cullen gave a lecture in Daingean Library on 1st April.







Proclamation For A New Generation

Over 40 of Offaly's primary and secondary schools jointly exhibit their re-imagined proclamations for Ireland. Created by students, they acknowledge the social issues of our time and express their hope for the bicentenary and beyond. Many of the themes echo those of 1916, such as equal rights and opportunities for all citizens as well as the pursuit of happiness. Hopes of resolving problems such as the housing crisis and the current state of healthcare also featured in many of the students' proclamations.

The exhibition of these Proclamations was launched in Áras an Chontae on 11th April. Shinrone NS delivered an excerpt from a play they had developed based on Dr. P.J. Doyle, who had participated in the 1916 Rising. The Proclamations were later exhibited in the relevant Municipal District offices.

	<p><i>Sisters of the Rising</i></p> <p><i>Sisters of the Rising</i>, a funny and poignant story and a testament to the many forgotten women who fought for Irish independence, was written by Offaly playwright and actor Christiane O'Mahony and supported by Offaly 2016 Commemoration Committee. Its performance on Saturday 16th April in Birr Theatre & Arts Centre received great reviews. It was later performed in other theatres across the country</p>
	<p><i>Tullamore Garden of Remembrance</i></p> <p>The unveiling of the Tullamore Garden of Remembrance in honour of the Centenary Year 2016, held on Tuesday 19th April 2016 in Tullamore Town Park was attended by the Vice Mayor of Chandler Jack Sellers and Teri Ferguson Chandler Chamber Of Commerce. The Offaly County Council choir sang the <i>Foggy Dew</i> and the Defence Forces flag raising party attended and read the Proclamation and raised the Irish Flag.</p>
	<p><i>Sister Cities Conference</i></p> <p>Cities and Counties from the USA and Ireland gathered in Dublin as part of the <i>All Ireland – US Sister Cities Mayor's Summit</i> from 22nd to 24th April 2016. The Summit, the first of its kind in the world, identified projects and actions that cities can take together to improve business, education and social justice. The conference was attended by 400 US and Irish delegates, involved in reciprocal twinning programmes, and President Michael D. Higgins made the keynote address. The Summit marked the centenary of 1916 and also the 60th anniversary of the establishment of Sister Cities International by President Eisenhower. Members of the Tullamore and Chandler Sister Cities Committees attended the conference.</p>
	<p><i>Library Talks</i></p> <p>Edenderry Library hosted a talk by Oliver Conlan, MA NUIM Maynooth on Frank Burke, Carbury, Co. Kildare - His life and times and his contribution to 1916.</p>
	<p><i>Stories from 100 Years Ago</i></p> <p>Twenty short digital recordings entitled <i>Our Midlands, Our History, Your Heritage – Stories from 100 Years Ago</i> were made. They included interesting facts about some of the eleven men from Offaly who are known to have fought in the Rising and from life in Offaly at that time. The recordings were played on Midlands 103.</p>

	<p><i>'Sowing the Wind'</i></p> <p>Birr Theatre and Arts Centre, playing their part in the 1916 commemoration programme with a Birr Stage Guild theatrical presentation called <i>'Sowing the Wind'</i> which was performed in Friday 22nd and Saturday 23rd April. The production set out to give a flavour of life in Birr and in the country generally in the early years of the 20th century and culminates in the actual events of the Rising. The performance was so well received that it was performed again in July 2016.</p>
	<p><i>Edenderry Commemoration</i></p> <p>On Easter Sunday, the Edenderry Commemoration Committee held their ceremony of commemoration on Friday 24th April 2016. Following a ceremony in the Church, a wreath laying ceremony was held at the newly commissioned wall. The proclamation was read and a solemn flag raising ceremony followed.</p>
	<p><i>Biorra le Gaeilge</i></p> <p>A flag raising ceremony was also held in Emmet Square, Birr on Sunday 24th April. Biorra le Gaeilge marked the 100 years since Pádraig Pearse read out the Proclamation and the two Irish flags of the Republic were raised upon the GPO, outside the post office in Emmet Square in Birr</p>
	<p><i>Faithful Rising - An illustrative exhibition</i></p> <p>The premiere of <i>Faithful Rising</i> was screened on Friday 29th April in Birr Theatre and Arts Centre. The landmark documentary, presented by Tullamore-born historian Dr. Paul Rouse (UCD), and telling the stories of two Offaly men who took part in The 1916 Rising, Peadar Bracken from Tullamore and Éamonn Bulfin from Birr. The film was produced by Gary Hoctor of Hello Camera and researched by Miriam Smyth, Tullamore. It was supported by Offaly 2016 Committee and was later screened at the finale event in Tullamore.</p>
	<p><i>Midwives Of The Nation</i></p> <p>1916 <i>Midwives Of The Nation</i> was performed by Carnation Theatre in Offalia House, Edenderry, Riada House, Tullamore and in Birr community nursing unit on 1st and 2nd May. <i>Midwives</i> celebrates the often forgotten contribution of women to the events of 1916 - the big and the not so big characters of which there are so many: Elizabeth O'Farrell, Margaret Skinnider, Countess Markievicz, Winnie Carnie to name but a few featured in the performance.</p>

	<p><i>Garden of Remembrance , Mill Island Park Birr</i></p> <p>Members of the Defence Force attended the launch of the Garden of Remembrance opened in Mill Island Park Birr on 9th May 2016.</p>
	<p><i>Offaly Crafty Exhibition</i></p> <p>The exhibition programme in Áras an Chontae continued on Monday 16th May when three members of Offaly crafty; Hazel Greene, Rosemarie Langtry and Ann Larkin explored the evolution of craft through the century, from trade to art in this exhibition.</p>
	<p><i>Rebellion</i></p> <p>The Tullamore branch of the Midland Drama School presented <i>Rebellion</i> in the Rugby Club, Tullamore on 26th May. It highlighted many teen pressures and comparing their lives with the life of a 1916 teenager.</p>
	<p><i>A Continuing Journey</i></p> <p>“<i>A Continuing Journey</i>” included in the series of centenary inspired exhibitions on Thursday 9th June and featured the work of Louise O’Brien, Tony Coady, Willie Redmond, Caroline Conway, David Fox, Tim Quinlan, Rosemarie Langtry, Aileen Kavanagh, Sibel Ozben Geraghty and Rita Duffy. A volunteer’s jacket made of paper also featured as a project of students of St Mary’s Secondary School in Edenderry. The exhibition was curated by Gary Robinson, a Longford based artist</p>
	<p><i>Tullamore - A century on.</i></p> <p>Sleeve Bloom Photography Club launched a photographic exhibition in High Street, Tullamore on 30th June. It reflected locations in Tullamore in the early 1900's and in the present day.</p>
	<p><i>Drama in Birr, Oxmantown Hall, 1889 to 1916</i></p> <p>An attractive well-illustrated booklet <i>Drama in Birr, Oxmantown Hall, 1889 to 1916</i> by Margaret Hogan was launched in Birr Theatre and Arts Centre on 1st August.</p>

One Family Many Visions



One Family Many Visions, a special exhibition involving eleven relatives of Eamonn Bulfin was launched in Áras an Chontae on 23rd August. Eamonn Bulfin was born in Argentina but moved back to Derrinlough in Birr with his family in 1902. He subsequently attended Pdraig Pearse’s St Enda’s Boys School and in 1913, both Bulfin and Pearse became members of the Irish Republican Brotherhood. Following his participation in the Rising, saved by his Argentine passport, he was exiled to Buenos Aires in 1919. During his exile, he was elected the first Cathaoirleach of the newly named Offaly County Council in 1921, and the tri colour draped across his empty chair in his absence.

Brian Pey (Offaly County Council) gave a background on Eamonn Bulfin’s life and participation in the Rising. Sculptor Michael Bulfin, Eamonn’s son spoke about his father and expressed pride at his father’s legacy. Also in attendance on the night was Minister Gustavo Bobrik, Chargé d’Affaires of the Embassy of Argentina in Dublin

The Flag Raising



Renowned as the Offaly man who raised the green flag of the Irish Republic on the GPO during the 1916 Rising Eamonn Bulfin was honoured with the unveiling of a bronze plaque at the opening of the *One Family Many Visions* exhibition. Specially commissioned by Offaly County Council the plaque, entitled “*The Flag Raising*” was designed by his Granddaughter Siobhan Bulfin and commemorates his role in the Rising and subsequently as the first Cathaoirleach of Offaly County Council. Minister Gustavo Bobrik, Chargé d’Affaires of the Embassy of Argentina in Dublin unveiled the plaque.

Information Board in Edenderry



An information board acknowledging the contribution of Michael Foley a 1916 activist with the Irish volunteers and William Mulraney who fought in world war 1 and was killed in Dublin quashing the rising, organised by Edenderry Historical Society was erected outside the Municipal District of Edenderry offices. Relations from both families attended and unveiled the board on 24th August during Heritage Week. Heritage Week was themed as *People and Places 1916*.



Rambles in Éireann cycle

During Heritage week in 2015 the Irish Country Roads and Culture Trails organized a unique Offaly historical week event. A large contingent joined in the 110km, 36 hour cycle, on high nelly bicycles as they followed the wheel rims of William Bulfin book *Rambles In Éireann* from his home place in Derrinlough, Birr to Durrow in Laois. The cycle continued in Laois during Heritage Week, 2016.



Library Heritage Week events

An extensive 1916 themed programme titled *Communities and Commemorating 1916* was delivered throughout the library service during Heritage week, including, *Hands on History* - a 1916 interactive event by Jude Stynes; *Kevin Barry and his Time* exhibition; talks by Dr. Ciarán Reilly and Dr. Philip McConway; and an exhibition *1916 and the Irish Country House: Rebellion and War* curated by Dr. Ciarán Reilly and the Centre for the Study of Historic Houses and Estates, Maynooth University.



After Easter

'*After Easter*' photographs of Dublin by Thomas Johnson Westropp opened on Tuesday 13th September in the Atrium of Municipal District of Birr offices. Westropp, well known for his archaeological work, took these unique images of the aftermath of the Rising. The photographs now enlarged show details previous not prominent. The exhibition was a much appreciated loan from the [Irish Architectural Archive](#).



Culture Night Offaly 2016

Culture Night Offaly 2016, consisting of 36 free events took place on Friday, 16th September 2016 in towns and villages throughout the county. 1916 formed the theme of several events including Military maneuvers in Banagher, Love in the Harbour in Shannonbridge, The other flag in Birr, Thomas McDonagh a night of music in Moneygall.



Fading Facades

A black and white photographic exhibition by Robert Smyth , titled *Fading Facades*, was held from 22nd to 30th September 2016 in Áras an Chontae

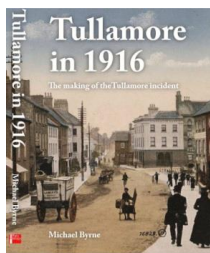
	<p><i>‘100 Years, 100 Faces’</i></p> <p>‘100 Years, 100 Faces’, a collection of artworks from the art facilitators and participants of Anam Beo, exhibition was held from 23rd September to 7th October 2016 in Tullamore Community Arts Centre (former Kilroys, Tullamore). The exhibition included portraits, quilts, collage, liling and reflections from the 2016 centenary year.</p>
	<p><i>Faithful Rising Illustrations</i></p> <p>A unique artistic expression of the events of the 1916 Rising. Cork based artist Eoin Coveney was commissioned by Offaly County Council to create illustrations of the documented events of 2016 with reference to Offaly and the role played by Offaly men in the Rising. Held in Áras an Chontae from 5th to 21st October 2016 the exhibition showed the illustrations that featured in the film <i>Faithful Rising</i>.</p>
	<p><i>Clonmacnoise</i></p> <p>On 30th October , a gathering of over 100 people were present to remember James Kenny, Kieran Kenny and Patrick McDonnell, three men from Offaly who were involved in the 1916 Rising and are buried in Clonmacnoise. The commemorative bronze plaque unveiled by Alf Murray GAA President in 1966 was relocated to a more suitable location for the ceremony. Family members laid wreaths at each of the graves.</p>
	<p><i>Kathleen Kingston - The strength of a woman from Birr</i></p> <p>From 25th October to 18th November 2016, all who attended the exhibition in Áras an Chontae were treated to a high quality exhibition. Featuring images printed on linen and cotton by artist Hazel Greene, a visual artist and designer, based in her studio in Shinrone. The exhibition was opened by Kathleen Kingston’s grandson Professor Cathal Brugha.</p>
	<p><i>Ferbane Commemoration</i></p> <p>A commemoration evening was held in Ferbane on 18th November. A plaque was placed on the ancestral home place of Dr. P.J. Doyle, who fought in the Rising. <i>The call of the Lonesome bog</i>, a compilation of poems, by various authors, living and dead, from the Offaly Countryside was edited and published by Brendan Ryan and was launched on the evening.</p>

Publications

A number of publications by Offaly Historical Society and others were launched in December.



Offaly Heritage 9 - A collection of essays on County Offaly to mark the 100th anniversary of the 1916 rising. It marks 1916 and the impact it had on County Offaly. About eleven people from County Offaly are known to have participated in the Rising. This publication also sets the scene in terms of the background from the 1880s, the by-elections in North Offaly during the First World War (unique events), the Tullamore Incident, the growth of Cumann na mBan in the County, the story of young Thomas Holohan of Tullamore who was killed at Gallipoli, the maltmen strike in Tullamore in 1916, the influence of the local press on events and their own particular viewpoints. The publication was supported by the Offaly County Council's 1916—2016 Fund.

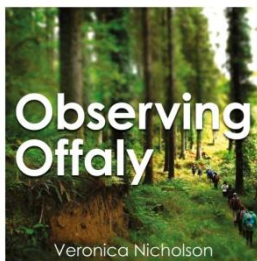


Tullamore in 1916 – The making of the Tullamore Incident by Michael Byrne outlines the 'Tullamore Incident' which took place on 20th March 1916, one month prior to the Easter Rising. It looks at Tullamore town as a place to live during this period of Irish history and the issues confronting the town in terms of housing, local government and employment. The incident took place in what some called the Gaelic League rooms, others the Volunteer rooms and others the 'Sinn Fein Hall'.



Edenderry, 1916 & the revolutionary era by Dr. Ciarán Reilly provides an overview of the main events and people connected with the revolutionary period, 1912 to 1923.



On the banks of three rivers, stories from west Offaly' by Padraig Heavin features three men from west Offaly who fought in Rising.



Observing Offaly Photography Book & Exhibition

This unique photo book project commissioned by Offaly County Council and photographed so sensitively by Veronica Nicholson between 2015 and 2016 was launched on 22nd November.

Recognizing that we are living through a rapidly changing culture the book seeks to capture a visual profile of Offaly at this moment in time for future record and provides a visual definition of life in Offaly today. Guest speaker at the launch was David Davison. Veronica later gave talks on the project in a number of the libraries.

	<p><i>Killeigh Commemorations</i></p> <p>To coincide with the 100 years anniversary of the 1916 Easter Rising, Killeigh GAA Field Committee unveiled a plaque and landscaped area to commemorate the historic achievement of the Killeigh Senior Football team in winning the 1916 County Championship at Killeigh GAA Field on Sunday, 4th December 2016.</p>
  	<p><i>Offaly Clár Comorthas Cead Bliain Finale Event</i></p> <p>A film record of the Commemorative year's events in Offaly was premiered at the Offaly Clár Comorthas Cead Bliain finale event. The screening was held in the IMI cinema in Tullamore and contains footage from various centenary events throughout the county including civic ceremonies, community and school events and many of the art exhibitions and theatre shows that featured during the year. The commemorative film also featured archive footage of Offaly 1966 commemorations and excerpts from the <i>Offaly 100</i> concert held on 20th March 2016 in the Church of the Assumption.</p> <p>Following the screening and the launch of the commemorative DVD, a reception was held in the Bridge House Hotel, Tullamore. Killeigh Ceoltas provided the music as the large contingent mingled and recalled many of the memories that were created during the year. Cllr. Noel Bourke, Leas Cathaoirleach of Offaly County Council and Cllr. Sinead Dooley, Chairperson of the Offaly 1916 - 2016 Commemoration Committee thanked all the communities and all those who had participated and had ensured that the events of 1916 were appropriately commemorated during the year.</p>
	<p><i>Offaly 1916 -2016 Commemoration Committee</i></p> <p>Cllr. Sinead Dooley, Chairperson Cllr. John Carroll Cllr. Declan Harvey Cllr. Brendan Killeavy Cllr. Peter Ormond Cllr. Liam Quinn Monica Cleary, Senior Executive Officer & 2016 Coordinator Fiona Flaherty, Corporate Services Frank Heslin, Director of Services Sinead O'Reilly, Arts Officer Amanda Pedlow, Heritage Officer Mary Stuart, County Librarian</p>

Centenaries and Commemorations
Offaly County Council
Offaly 100 – Together We Remember
20th March 2016















OFFALY 19^{.....}2016