

ANNUAL REPORT 2017



OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL

Front Cover

Images from the Visit Offaly Pavilion at the National Ploughing Championships held in Mucklagh, County Offaly in September 2017



JOINT ADDRESS BY THE CATHAOIRLEACH AND THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE



Cllr. Liam Quinn, Cathaoirleach



Anna Marie Delaney, Príomh Fheidhmeannach

We are very pleased to present *Offaly County Council 2017 Annual Report*. This report provides Offaly County Council and the Municipal Districts of Birr, Edenderry and Tullamore the opportunity to record the activities undertaken during 2017.

The Council continued to deliver a broad range of services, projects, initiatives and events throughout 2017 to ensure that the county remains an attractive place in which to live, work, do business and visit. Among the many highlights were:

- Departmental approval was received and contracts were signed in December for 33 housing units at Blundell Wood, Edenderry.
- Offaly County Council supported the National Ploughing Championship 2017 and great numbers

attended the *Visit Offaly* Pavilion, Local Enterprise Village and Enterprise Ireland Innovation Arena. The Offaly Diaspora Strategy, *This is Offaly*, was launched during the Championships.

- Offaly Local Development Committee commenced the allocation of the LEADER/Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 funding and monitoring and reviewing progress and implementation of the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP), and procurement of services for delivery of SICAP 2018-2022.
- The National Library Management system was introduced in all libraries which allows for free access to a national catalogue of library collections.
- Over 5,000 children and young people across Offaly and Westmeath continue to access performance

music education as a result of the Music Generation Offaly/Westmeath project.

- *FilmOffaly, Music Generation, Hullabaloo Children's Arts Festival, Anam Beo - Arts and Health, Culture Night* are some of the initiatives supported by our Arts Section.
- A cross section team was established to meet the objectives of the six steps of the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy Guidelines for Offaly.
- In March, the Council commenced construction of the 23km of Greenway from Tullamore to Lough Boora Discovery Park.
- Geashill, Banagher and Shinrone received €300,000 under the Town & Village Renewal programme.
- Offaly County Fire and Rescue Service were alerted to 534 incidents.
- The Cathaoirleach and members hosted a Civic Reception for Ms. Jennifer Byrne to acknowledge her achievement in being crowned the 2017 International Rose of Tralee 2017.
- The Motor Taxation Office generated approximately €6.2m in revenue, handled almost 90,000 transactions (30% over the counter, 6% via post and 64% was processed online)

Notwithstanding all of the very positive developments that took place in 2017 there were also significant challenges facing the county in terms of service provision and the provision of enabling infrastructure. The provision of social and affordable housing remains a key priority with all viable options for the delivery of housing units being pursued. The first contract for construction of social housing in the county for a number of years was signed in December. Work is ongoing on plans for further social housing construction and 2018 will see significant progress in this area.

Finally, we would like to thank the elected members and the staff of Offaly County Council for their ongoing co-operation and support and their commitment to serve the people of County Offaly.

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HOUSING POLICY, SOCIAL & CULTURAL SPC

SPC Chair	Peter Ormond MCC (to June 2017) Declan Harvey MCC (from June 2017)	Director Of Services	Seán Murray (to July 2017) Tom Shanahan (Acting) (from July 2017)
Members	Sectoral	Senior Executive Officer	Ann Dillon
Cllr. Noel Cribbin	Ms. Mary Hensey	Senior Executive Engineer	Martin Quinn
Cllr. Declan Harvey	Mr. Michael O’Hanlon	Administrative Officer	Mary Flynn Kenny
Cllr. Brendan Killeavy	Mr. Tony O’Riordan	Administrative Officer	Jackie Finney
Cllr. John Leahy	Mr. Paul Scanlon	County Librarian	Mary Stuart
Cllr. Peter Ormond		Arts Officer	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 2017

- 25 Houses were acquired in 2017 with bids accepted on a further 4 units.
- 15 houses were sold to tenants under the Tenant Purchase Scheme.
- 155 grants were paid to adapt homes for disabled and elderly private home owners.
- 2,100 social housing rent accounts were reviewed and revised rents were implemented in September.

- Allocation of 63 homes to applicants on the housing waiting list through Social Leasing, Rental Accommodation Scheme or Local Authority stock.
- 15 applicant families were nominated to Approved Housing Bodies and were allocated houses.
- Establishment of 428 tenancies under the Housing Assistance Payment.
- 3,754 maintenance requests received from Local Authority tenants.
- 188 inspections carried out on Offaly County Council stock.
- 4 meetings of the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee. Mid-term review completed

on the *Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014-2018*.

- Completion of the 2017 Social Housing Needs Assessment.
- 56 vacant houses returned to productive use.
- Completed adaptations to 11 Local Authority houses for tenants with disabilities.
- 143 new Homeless presentations.
- Responded to 67 anti-social behaviour complaints.

REPORT ON HOUSING STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE

The Housing, Social and Cultural SPC met 3 times in 2017. The following Housing policies and procedures were reviewed:

- Scheme of Letting Priorities
- Housing Strategy for People with a disability.

DIRECT CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMME

- Four projects (76 units) in the Capital Management Framework at various stages.
- Stage 4 approval received and contracts signed in December 2017 for 33 units at Blundell Wood, Edenderry.
- The remaining 43 units at Daingean (7), Banagher(18) and Chancery (18) are moving through the Stage approval process including procurement and planning.

CONSTRUCTION IN PARTNERSHIP WITH APPROVED HOUSING BODIES

Expression of interest were sought from Approved Housing Bodies (AHB) in delivering construction projects on Council owned lands. Partner AHB's were selected for four sites, one each in Clara and Edenderry and two in Tullamore. Draft plans for these sites have the potential to deliver c.130 housing units' subject to planning and Departmental approval.

LOCAL AUTHORITY TURNKEY

We have sought and received approval for 4 schemes that will deliver 27 units over the 2018-2019 period, i.e.,

- Mill Race, Ferbane (5),
- Cluainn Na Spideoga, Cloghan (6),
- Coolagarry, Walsh Island (4), and
- McGregol, Scurragh (12).

HOUSE PURCHASE LOAN APPLICATIONS

39 house purchase loan applications were received in 2017. 13 loans applications were approved, 14 declined and the remainder are in progress.

LIBRARY SERVICE


The development and implementation of the *Offaly Library Development Plan 2018 -2022* is being progressed and will be published in 2018. The Development Plan will be informed by the new *Libraries Ireland: National Public Library Strategy 2018 -2022*.

NATIONAL LIBRARY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The introduction of a new National Library Management system in all libraries in 2017 has transformed the library service model. Nationwide there is free access to a national catalogue of library collections in Ireland providing access to 15 million items in a single search. Free membership was introduced in 2016 and this has removed a significant barrier to library membership.

ONLINE RESOURCES

All libraries have access to an online portal. This large collection of free online resources includes:

	<p>Learn a language online Access to 80 foreign language courses available plus English courses for speakers of other languages</p>
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	<p>Universal Class offers access to over 500 Online Continuing Education Courses.</p>
	<p>Online access to over 300 popular magazines</p>
	<p>Online access to 1,367 current news and historical newspapers from ProQuest.</p>
<p>eBooks and eAudiobooks</p> 	<p>Online access to eBooks & eAudiobooks.</p> <p>17,453 e-books and 7,330 digital audio books</p> <p>Library users can borrow 5 eBooks and 5 eAudiobooks at any one time</p>
	<p>Online access to comics & graphic novels</p>

PERFORMANCE

There was an expected drop in membership due to the introduction of the universal card system. Library members did have multi accounts in different authorities. More promotion and marketing is required to inform the general public of the resources available in their local library. 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 online services by our users has increased by over 150% in 2017.

Performance	2016	2017	%
Members	14,418	11,388	-21
Visits	260,529	215,320	-17
Internet / Wifi	197,085	193,916	-2
Loans	239,312	186,002	-22
Website visits	127,979	126,612	-1
My Open Library visits	25,105	30,277	21
Social Media Facebook/ Twitter		2,821	

LITERACY AND READING

The promotion of literature, books, literacy skills and reading is central to library service provision. The establishment of a national programme, **Right to Read**, to support literacy and reading development has commenced and will be progressed further in 2018.

Each Local Authority is setting up a Right to Read Network and will develop a local action plan. This initiative is very



welcome and ensures every library service in Ireland provides a core set of services, programmes and resources and works in partnership with local and national organizations.

All libraries in Offaly now deliver library services to primary and post-primary schools as a result of developing an initiative jointly with the Department of Education and Skills.

5 Key programmes delivered in 2017 include:

- **Read Any time:** 53 schools from across the county participated in this programme. 6,223 students read for a combined total of 3,534,800 minutes or 6.7 years
- **Spring into Story time:** This new story time initiative involved 40 events and 1,047 children participating.
- **Summer Stars Reading programme:** 689 children participated in this programme over the Summer holidays. Staff organised 143 events
- **Once upon a story time family reading with young children.** 39 schools and 23 crèches registered for the programme. There were 65 events and 1,885 participants.

STEAM AT THE LIBRARY PROGRAMME.

- 360 students took part in Lego Robotics and coding events organised by the library.
- There were also 327 primary school class visits and 50 secondary school class visits to the library branches in Offaly.
- In an increasing digital world, libraries are directly supporting digital literacy through guidance and access to resources and provision of classes and workshops across the library network.

WORK MATTERS

Libraries are now promoting and supporting job -seekers, the self -employed, entrepreneurs and local business with the establishment of Work Matters.

This service commenced as a pilot service and is now being rolled out as a national offer in all libraries nationwide. Libraries are providing a core set of services, infrastructure, information/research, staff support and programming. Libraries have developed partnerships with local and national organisations to deliver this service.

HEALTHY IRELAND AT YOUR LIBRARY

The Library received funding from the Healthy Ireland Fund in 2017. The **Healthy Ireland at Your Library Service** is taking place across the library network nationwide. The aim of the programme is to make libraries a “go to” place for health information as well as information about how to get involved in health and wellbeing events and activities in your local area. The programme enhances current health information in public libraries by providing new book stock, e-books, e-audiobooks and e -magazines on health and wellbeing and a wider selection of health information for all users.



SELF SERVICE TECHNOLOGY

Offaly Library has applied for funding support from the Department of Rural and Community Development to facilitate the roll -out of self -service technologies in all public libraries in Offaly. Grant aid of 75% of costs incurred on self -service technology will be provided by the Department. The receipt of this funding will ensure that all libraries in Offaly will have the self -service technology installed. The new public library strategy will focus among other things on increasing membership and the use of our public libraries and it will set an ambitious target for local authorities to increase membership over the five -year period of the strategy through the development of new services and improved access and ease of use.

MY OPEN LIBRARY

My Open Library is now in its 3rd year of operation. With an increase in opening hours of up to 85%, this new service is positive for communities and strengthens the library as an open and accessible hub in the community.

2,439 library members have signed up for this service and regularly using the service for study, meetings, borrowing of books and media, Wi-Fi etc. Visits continue to increase. In 2016 there were 25,000 visits, in 2017 this has increased to 30,277 visits. The service will be expanded to Ferbane and Edenderry in January 2018.

LOCAL STUDIES AND ARCHIVES

Offaly County Council received the Loughton House Archives on loan for five years in 2017 and the archive is currently being listed with the assistance of Heritage Council funding. A Local Studies programme continues to be in place to increase awareness of Offaly's heritage, culture and history.



CULTURAL PROGRAMMING

Funding provided by Creative Ireland and Offaly County Council enabled all libraries to provide a comprehensive programme of events, workshops and lectures. Some highlights included Heritage week, the Harry Potter nights and the Lecture and Writers series, reflecting sport, heritage and culture.

Other 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 2018

1. Publish a new Library Development Plan for Offaly Library Service 2018 -2022.
2. Evaluate existing library infrastructure in terms of fitness for purpose, national standards and benchmarks, and within the context of the local authority priorities for community and economic development.
3. Progress plans to develop a new library in Edenderry included in the national library capital funding programme.
4. Extend *My Open Library* project to Clara and Birr Libraries.
5. Continue with a Technology Replacement Programme for all libraries.
6. Implement a programme to deliver an Age Friendly Library service in conjunction with Offaly Local Authority Age Friendly programme.
7. 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.
8. Continue to support Business, Enterprise and Employment and implement national Work Matters programme.
9. 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.
10. Work with Offaly History towards the development of a County Archive Service.
11. Work with communities to provide quality cultural services and programming.
12. Continuous review of library services activities to include opening hours, staffing levels and evaluation of services based on budgetary cuts and non -filling of staff vacancies.
13. Develop a marketing and promotional strategy for Offaly Libraries.



ARTS SERVICE

Offaly County Council Arts Service is charged with investing and developing high quality, imaginative arts activity, with and for the people of Offaly and visitors to the county. In doing so, the Arts Office advocates for and clearly communicates the significant role that the arts play in enriching the wellbeing of society, of our citizens, and in enhancing the public realm. This is achieved through our strategic planning processes, with an annual programme that is delivered in cooperation with artists, cultural producers, community groups and local stakeholders and, involving regional and national partners. Offaly arts service assists with the development of a range of key county-wide arts programmes such as: *FilmOffaly*, *Music Generation*, *Hullabaloo Children's Arts Festival*, *Anam Beo - Arts and Health*, *Culture Night*, along with providing ongoing support and advice to the many artists, creative practitioners, festivals, and community groups undertaking arts and culture projects across the county.

2017 - KEY ACHIEVEMENTS INCLUDE: -

ARTS DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY: 2018-2022

The preparation and planning for Offaly's fourth consecutive arts development strategy, *Inspire-Imagine-Involve* [2018-2022] involved comprehensive public consultation meetings, which took place in the three

municipal districts of Birr, Edenderry and Tullamore. Focus group meetings were conducted with artists; creative practitioners; with young people and youth service providers; and, those involved in developing arts in the public realm. In addition, Offaly citizens could participate in an online survey about aspects of arts activity accessed through the Offaly arts website and Facebook pages. The analytics gathered from the survey were incorporated into the plan.

FILMOFFALY

The Irish premiere of the 2016 FilmOffaly/FilmBase award winning film, *Kubrick by Candlelight*, written and directed by David O'Reilly, was screened in Birr Theatre and Arts Centre, as a highlight event of the OFFline Film Festival 2017.

The 2017 FilmOffaly/Filmbase bursary was awarded to Brian Folan for his script *RedRag*, and goes into production early 2018. FilmOffaly continues to attract interest from film-makers throughout Ireland, UK and beyond. Offaly County Council Arts Service, through the Creative Ireland programme, supported a new Animation Film Residency, launched at OFFline Film Festival 2017, that will enable two film animators to undertake a six-month residency, in Birr, during 2018.



in developing a culture of filmmaking for people of all ages in Offaly.

ANAM BEO – ARTS AND HEALTH

Anam Beo, Offaly’s Arts and Health organisation promoting arts inclusion through the delivery of comprehensive arts projects in care settings.

In 2017, Anam Beo once again exceeded its expectations including hosting a successful arts and health seminar with national contributors on aspects of arts and health in Ireland and, mounting an exhibition on work developed with staff in the Midland Regional Hospital.



Anam Beo worked in 6 different locations in Offaly with 155 art sessions for 266 participants and 1,028 attendances, encouraging creativity and empowerment through a meaningful engagement in the arts with a diverse programme of visual arts, music and reminiscence, photography, traditional arts, creative dance, exhibitions, short videos.

Partnering with the Dublin Mid Leinster HSE, Offaly County Council Arts Office and facilitating artists to work in the following care centres: Clara Day Centre; Birr Community

MINI MOVIES

The screening debut of new, short live-action films, performed and created by pupils from three Tullamore schools - Tullamore College, Scoil Mhuire NS, and Scoil Bhride NS, and facilitated by filmmaker Terence White, received a rapturous reception at Birr



Theatre and Arts Centre, as part of the programme of OFFline Film Festival. *Mini Movies* continues to extend the reach of film making into schools and is an important link

Nursing Unit; Ofalia House, Edenderry; the Irish Wheelchair Association; Ballinagar; Riada House; and, Midland Regional Hospital, Tullamore.

BIRR THEATRE & ARTS CENTRE

Birr Theatre & Arts Centre continues to provide an extensive arts programme through its annual performance season, its learning and outreach community projects and as an incubation and administrative hub for a considerable number of prestigious arts festivals in Offaly: Birr Vintage and Arts Week, OFFline film festival, Scripts - Offaly film and playwriting festival; Birr Festival of Music and Voice and, as co-producer with Offaly County Council of the Hullabaloo! Children's Arts Festival. Offaly County Council provided funding of €23,000 to Birr Theatre and Arts Centre in 2017.

CULTURE NIGHT OFFALY 17

Culture Night Offaly brought its very best in arts and culture with its most exciting programme to date with venues as historic as Charleville Castle, Leap Castle, and, Birr Castle Gardens & Science Centre, to Lough Boora Discovery Park visitor's centre, JJ Houghs in Banagher, Birr Theatre & Arts Centre, Tullamore D.E.W. visitor centre, VR Party Tullamore, Midlands Regional Hospital, Tullamore, libraries in Edenderry, Tullamore and Birr, and, Tullamore Community Arts Centre. Approximately 1,850 people attended one of the 30 programmed events that were held in 23 venues within the county. Culture Night Offaly received excellent media coverage in the local,

regional and national press and media with interviews on Newstalk *High Noon* programme during the Ploughing Championships, with Offaly's Culture Night cultural ambassador, playwright Eugene O' Brien, being interviewed for RTÉ Radio One's *Drivetime*. Culture Night is funded by the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaelteacht.



ARTS ACT GRANTS

31 groups from the arts, community and voluntary sectors received grants towards arts activities in their community

totalling €20,000.00. The projects were selected on the basis of their ability to provide an innovative and high quality engagement with arts activity within particular community settings and sectors.

FESTIVAL AND ARTISTS SUPPORT PROGRAMMES

The county arts service disburses grants on an annual basis to a wide selection of arts and cultural festivals taking place in Offaly. In 2017, Offaly County Council provided financial assistance, advice and promotional assistance to, Birr Vintage Week and Arts Festival, OFFline Film Festival, Offaly Fleadh, Shakefest and Scripts as well as leading out with other festivals such as Hullabaloo Children's Arts Festival in partnership with Birr Theatre and Arts Centre.

HULLABALOO! OFFALY'S CHILDREN'S ARTS FESTIVAL

Hullabaloo! celebrated its eleventh annual festival, delivering a 4-day high intensity and wide-ranging programme of creative workshops in puppet making, dance, printmaking, to name a few, as well as presenting performances for children of all ages. Offaly County Council Arts Office, in partnership with Birr Theatre and Arts Centre, during the autumn school midterm break rolled out a total of 70 workshops and 12 performances in 10 venues; from Birr, to Clara, to Edenderry and in selected Offaly libraries. Highlights this year included the day-long live action filmmaking workshop in Edenderry, with Young Irish Filmmakers, and, live sculpting



workshops, facilitated by Siobhan Bulfin, which were in demand.

MUSIC GENERATION OFFALY WESTMEATH (MGOW)

Over 5,000 children and young people across Offaly and Westmeath continue to regularly access performance music education as a result of the Music Generation Offaly/Westmeath project. 27 musicians not only deliver performance music tuition on behalf of Music Generation Offaly/ Westmeath but also benefit from on-going career

support through the provision of professional development.



Singfest 2017

The success of *Singfest* continued in 2017, expanding to include even more young people. MGOW hopes to see *Singfest*, which is delivered in partnership with the Association of Irish Choirs (Ireland's national resource agency for the development of choral singing), develop into an annual event.

In 2017, MGOW began to work in partnership with Maynooth University Music Department leading to the creation of an orchestral residency involving 35, 3rd level

students and 35 young musicians from the Offaly/Westmeath area. This residency brings together an outstanding team of orchestral players who work with the young musicians on a monthly basis. The concluding concert is scheduled to take place in April 2018.

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

This year saw Tullamore Community Arts Centre make significant progress with the appointment of Kenny Lyons Architects, Tullamore, following an open competition, to design and refurbish Kilroy's, the former department store on High Street, into a multi-purpose community arts centre. The preliminary design prepared by Kenny Lyons was approved by the Board of Tullamore Community Arts Centre Limited. The design for Part VIII Planning Approval and Cost Plan are currently being considered by the Board.

MIDLANDS ARTS AND CULTURE MAGAZINE

The Midlands Arts and Culture Magazine, published biannually in spring and autumn, provides comment, opinion and listings information on current arts and cultural activity and forthcoming events. The magazine is a cooperation project between the four midland local authority arts offices (Laois, Longford, Offaly, Westmeath) and illustrates the rich diversity of practice and quality of arts making taking place across the four county midland region. Offaly commissions a range of writing, in English and Irish, most especially inviting artists and creative practitioners to present their working processes and ideas to a wider public. This free publication is available from selected retail outlets across the county, or to download, in pdf format, from the Offaly County Council arts webpage.



ÁRAS EXHIBITION PROGRAMME

The magnificent atrium space of Áras an Chontae continues to provide opportunities for Offaly based visual artists, sculptures, and community groups to avail of exhibition space presenting their work, on public display, for Offaly citizens to enjoy.

In 2017, a total of seven exhibitions were hosted by the arts office, ranging from solos works, from visual and mixed media artists, photographers, ceramicists, and art students. Through an open call application, the following

artists and community groups exhibited:

- *Boats of Ireland: Sibel Geraghty - photographer*
- *Postcard Project: - mixed media community exhibition facilitated by Roisin Ui Oistín, in partnership with Tullamore twinning town, Chandler, Arizona*
- *Frontier: David Fox - visual artist*
- *Ceramics graduate show: Elizabeth Lartey, Nikita Oakley & Sandra Cole-O' Brien*
- *Head Full of Dreams: 3D work second year art & design students, St Mary's secondary school, Edenderry*
- *A Bower for Sisters: Aisling O'Rourke - photographer*
- *Vista: Aileen Kavanagh and Rosemarie Langtry - mixed media*



ENVIRONMENT, WATER & DRAINAGE SERVICES SPC

SPC Chair	Thomas McKeigue MCC (to June 2017) John Clendennen MCC (from June 2017)	Director Of Services	Seán Murray
<i>Members</i>	<i>Sectoral</i>	<i>Senior Engineer</i>	Tom Shanahan / Jean Ryan
Cllr. John Clendennen	Mr. Joseph Deverall	<i>Administrative Officer</i>	Brian Pey
Cllr. John Foley	Mr. Tony McCormack (to October 2017)	<i>Senior Executive Engineer</i>	Joe Coleman
Cllr. John Leahy	Ms. Lynne Gallagher	<i>A/Senior Executive Engineer</i>	Jean Ryan
Cllr. Seán Maher	Mr. Niall Mulligan	<i>A/Senior Executive Engineer</i>	Vivian O'Brien
Cllr. Tommy McKeigue			

WATER SERVICES

Offaly County Council delivered Water Services in accordance with the Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Irish Water (IW) and the Annual Service Plan for 2017. 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 together with the completion of the Edenderry and Kilcormac project in 2017 has further assisted in reducing unaccounted for water in the County. The Irish Water target for 2017 was 11,715m³/d, the average UFW figure in Offaly in 2017 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 Licenses serving agglomerations with populations greater than 500. Meeting the stringent limit values on these licenses is challenging but considerable progress was made regarding same in 2017.

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 Projects were ongoing or completed in Offaly in 2017:

Scheme Name	Contract Name	Current Status
Offaly Water Conservation Stage 3 Watermain Rehabilitation Project Phase 1	Tullamore North & South	Complete
	Birr Town	Complete
	Edenderry & Kilcormac	Complete May 2017
	Tullamore Town	Complete
Tullamore Water Supply Scheme	Water Treatment Plant Upgrade in Clonaslee & New Water Treatment Plant and Supplementary Reservoir in Arden	Preliminary design is complete and Contract Documents were completed in 2017. 5 Contactors were invited to submit a tender. The intention is to appoint a Design and Build Contractor in 2018 subject to successful conclusion of land Purchase Agreements and a modification to Planning Permission.
	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	Preliminary design is complete and Contract Documents were completed in 2017. 5 Contactors were invited to submit a tender The intention is to appoint a Design and Build Contractor in 2018.
Tullamore Sewerage Scheme (Network)	Drainage Area Plan	The Tullamore Drainage Area Plan study is underway with a report due by the end of 2018 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 Diffuser Air installed to treat existing flows to the Plant and provide capacity for future development in Birr.
Clonbullogue WWTP	Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade	The Clonbullogue Wastewater Treatment Plant was upgraded in 2016 with Fine Bubble Diffuser Air installed.
Clara WWTP	Clara Waste Water Treatment Plant	The No. of Diffuser Heads were increased in two of the three Aeration Tanks combined with the removal of old Heads. This will help to increase the efficiency & effluent quality of the plant.

Ferbane WWTP	Ferbane Waste Water Treatment Plant	The existing Diffuser Heads were removed & replaced with more efficient Heads for both Aeration Tanks. This will help to increase both the efficiency & effluent quality if the plant.
Daingean WWTP		Ferric Dosing added to Plant to increase the final effluent quality
Shinrone		Ferric Dosing added to Plant to increase the final effluent quality
Kinnitty WWTP		Ferric Dosing added to Plant to increase the final effluent quality

HEALTH & SAFETY

There is a rigorous health and 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.

MULTI-ANNUAL RURAL WATER PROGRAMME 2016 - 2018

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.

The total RWP Allocation for 2017 amounted to €689,437. The full allocation was spent by the schemes apart from Clareen / Aghancon GWS and Killeigh / Meelaghans GWS amalgamation projects, where works are ongoing and are due for completion in 2018.

Name of GWS	Total Allocation €	Total Drawdown to Date €
Blackwater-Clondelara GWS	4,000	4,000
Boher GWS	75,512	75,512
Cadamstown GWS	15,000	15,000
Clareen/Aghancon GWS amalgamation	340,900	175,270
Clonfinlough GWS	25,000	29,243
Killeigh/Meelaghans GWS amalgamation	200,000	27,200

Mount Lucas GWS	21,600	21,600
Tubber GWS	7,425	7,425
	689,437	355,250

GROUP WATER SCHEMES SUBSIDIES

A total of €581,012 was paid in 2017 to 16 Group Water Schemes for GWS Subsidies. The level of maximum subsidy payable to GWS was reduced from January 2015 to reflect the new domestic water charging regime introduced for customers of Irish Water. Restoration of the pre-2015 rate of subsidy has gradually been made and final backdated payments will be made to schemes in 2018.

The Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government, in consultation with the NFGWS, completed a review of the existing subsidy levels for group water schemes in December 2017. It has been confirmed that maximum subsidy levels will be increased from 1/1/2018, with the maximum subsidy per domestic connection increasing from €140 to €231 for Private schemes, and from €70 to €115 for Public schemes (IW sources).

Subsidy Payments	2013 €	2014 €	2015 €	2016 €	2017 €
Total	574,107	553,071	522,001	410,593	581,012

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, to a 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 2017 is as follows:

No. of Well Grants Paid by Municipal District	2017
Birr Municipal District	6
Tullamore Municipal District	2
Edenderry Municipal District	2
Total Grants Paid	€19,073.55

REVIEW OF THE RURAL WATER SECTOR

The National Rural Water Review Group was established in 2016 with representatives from six Local Authorities, WSTO, National Federation of Group Water Schemes and the DHPCLG. The purpose of this group is to identify an improved service delivery model for the Rural Water Sector. Options in relation to the future structure of the Rural Water sector is due to be reported on in Q1 2018.

ENVIRONMENT

No. of Dog Breeding Establishments Registered	5
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BURIAL GROUNDS

A capacity survey of all Council owned burial grounds in Offaly was completed in 2016 which 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. These extensions will require Part 8 planning approval in due course. Resources will also need to be allocated in the coming years to fund the necessary works.

ANIMAL CONTROL AND WELFARE

CONTROL OF DOGS

Our Veterinary Section manages the Dog 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 - 2018.

Control of Dogs	2016	2017
No. of Dog Licenses sold	2,815	2,699
On the Spot Fines issued		15
No. Stray Dogs in Dog Pound		247

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, 101 in 2015 and 60 in 2017, 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
2017	60

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.

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 (CA) 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. We are advised the market may settle when the effects of Covanta's incinerator opened in 2017 is realised. We reviewed all operations at Derryclure

in 2017, requesting the Department fund a feasibility study. We will review the recommendations of this study in Q2 2018 prior to retendered a maintenance contract.

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. The facility's feasibility study shall incorporate the existing landfill. We are presently carrying out on-site testing of the landfill surface water lagoon and leachate. The results of this will aid a design of an on-site leachate treatment system, to eradicate existing substantial leachate transport cost.

RECYCLING FACILITIES

There are currently 43 bring banks in the County for glass, aluminum & 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.

2017 - Environmental Pollution Complaints							
	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 2017
Litter	749	0	666	89%	83	0	666
Air	22	0	16	73%	6	0	16
Noise	26	0	19	73%	7	0	19

Water	26	0	10	38%	16	0	10
Waste pollution	156	0	98	63%	58	0	98
Total	979	0	809	91%	170	0	809

Timescale	Fines	Prosecutions	Convictions
To date in 2017	43	8	2 (Note: only 2 of the 8 heard to date)

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.

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 15 Domestic Wastewater Treatment systems were inspected in 2017 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.

The Plans are finalised and have been 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 has agreed an increased allocation of funding for flood relief activities totalling €430m in its Capital Investment Plan for the period 2016-2021 with the annual budget allocation rising from €45m to €100m by 2021. The capital allocation included in the Plan for flood risk management in 2018 is €70m and in 2019 is €80m. 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.

In collaboration with the OPW, with funding from the minor works programme the flood defense scheme in Portavolla, Banagher was completed in October 2017. The Council have made a number of further applications for other areas requiring flood relief in the county to be carried in 2018.

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 continues to be key area where the Council is required to show leadership in both promoting public awareness and in changing mind sets towards climate change and energy management.

The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015 provides for the approval of plans, a national mitigation plan and a national adaptation framework, by the Government in relation to climate change for the purpose of pursuing the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050.

Offaly County Council established a cross section team in 2017 to meet the objectives of the plans. Through a series of workshops with the core team and larger groups across the Council the team are working through the six steps of the Adaptation Strategy Guidelines to developing the strategy for Offaly.

The objective of the Local Authority Adaptation Strategy is to take steps to adjust human and natural systems in response to existing or anticipated climatic change in order to avoid unwanted impacts and to take advantage of new opportunities that may arise. The Local Authority Adaption Strategy Development Guidelines were published by the EPA in 2016 and provides a stepped approach to producing the Adaption Strategy.

The National Energy Efficiency Action Plan 2009 requires local Authorities to improve energy efficiency by 33% by 2020. On 1st March 2017 the DCCAIE requested each Local Authority to appoint an Energy Performance Officer to support the additional effort needed to meet the 33% target in line with a new Public Sector Energy Efficiency

Strategy published by the DCCAE in January 2017. 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.

Working through the requirements of the guidelines the Council carried out Public Consultation & Stakeholder Engagement commencing at the Council meeting of the 16th October 2017 for a period of eight weeks. The information received will further guide the Strategy.

NATIONAL WASTE COLLECTION PERMIT OFFICE (NWCPO)

The NWCPO continues to process waste collection permit applications and currently holds a register of 1963 waste collectors for the state. The NWCPO also maintains a national register of waste facility permits and certificates of registration on behalf of all local authorities. The NWCPO manages the online portal for gathering waste collection permit and waste facility annual return data which is used for local, regional and national waste reporting requirements.

The NWCPO reviewed all household waste collection permits in 2017 to remove flat rate fees from household kerbside waste collection services. This is to be phased in from September 2017 to September 2018.

The NWCPO has commenced a tender process for the supply of an online waste collection permit application

system which will gain further efficiencies for the office and enhance the quality of the service being provided to stakeholders.



Science Week in Tullamore Central Library

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENTERPRISE & PLANNING SPC

SPC Chair	Frank Moran MCC (to June 2017) John Carroll MCC (from June 2017)	Director Of Services	Declan Kirrane (to July 2017) Tom Shanahan (from July 2017)
Members	Sectoral	Planning: Senior Planner Senior Executive Planner Administrative Officer Senior Executive Architect Heritage Officer	Andrew Murray Lorraine Mitchell Caroline Dempsey Rachel McKenna Amanda Pedlow
Cllr. Eamon Dooley Cllr. Sinead Dooley (to September 2017) Cllr. Eddie Fitzpatrick Cllr. Frank Moran Cllr. Tony McCormack (from October 2017) Cllr. Martin O' Reilly Cllr. John Carroll Cllr. Noel Bourke (to June 2017)	Mr. Michael Guinan Mr. Dominic Doheny Ms. Gillian Barrett Ms. Lynne Gallagher	Community Development: Senior Executive Officer Administrative Officer Sports Partnership Co-ordinator	Martin Daly Catriona Hilliard Eamon Henry
		Local Enterprise Office: Head of Local Enterprise Office Administrative Officer	Orla Martin James Hogan

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

In March of 2017 the Council commenced construction of the 23km of Greenway from Tullamore to Lough Boora

Discovery Park. 4km has been constructed from Tullamore Srah Road, westwards to Ballycowan Bridge, to date. Under Measure 1 of the Outdoor Recreational Scheme €10,000 has been approved for a promotional website for the Grand Canal Greenway. This is due to be launched in Spring 2018. Also under Measure 2 of the Outdoor Recreation Scheme, funding (2 x €100,000) has been approved to do works to the West and East of the Existing Grand Canal Greenway. This funding will provide for the construction of an additional 5.5k of Greenway. Other funding streams continue to be actively pursued to progress the development of the Greenway to Lough Boora Discovery Park.

A new Part 8 Application to extend the Greenway from Tullamore (Digby Bridge) Eastwards to Edenderry; an additional 33kms of Grand Canal Greenway, is due to be launched in early 2018.

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 would receive 50% joint funding through the Northern and Western Regional Assembly from the ERDF. The proposal included 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 development was granted a part 8 consent in December 2017 by Offaly County Council and the development is due to commence in the next few months. In accordance with the ERDF procedures the project is due to be completed by the end of 2018.

EDENDERRY LOCAL AREA PLAN 2017-2023

The *Edenderry Local Area Plan 2017-2023* was formally adopted by Members of the Offaly County Council at their meeting dated 18th September 2017. The purpose of this plan is to set out the overall development and growth strategy, including policies and objectives, for the proper planning and sustainable development of the plan area. The plan has a six-year timeframe with a strong emphasis on the consolidated and coherent growth of the town and promoting quality of life for all its citizens. The plan became effective as of the 16th October 2017.

PORTARLINGTON LOCAL AREA PLAN 2018-2024

The process of making the *Portarlington Local Area Plan 2018-2024* commenced in October 2017. This is a joint Local Area Plan taking in the entire area of Portarlington Town located in the administrative areas of both Laois and Offaly County Councils. The pre-draft consultation stage commenced in October 2017 with engagement with

interested stakeholders. Information obtained at this early stage of the process will feed into the preparation of the draft local area plan which will be published for public display in Q1 2018. Accompanying strategies including Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report, Appropriate Assessment and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment will accompany the local area plan through the remaining stages of the process to final adoption by both Laois and Offaly County Councils which is envisaged for Q2 2018.

URHA – VARIATIONS TO COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2014-2020, TULLAMORE TOWN AND ENVIRONS DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2010 (AS EXTENDED) AND BIRR TOWN AND ENVIRONS DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2010 (AS EXTENDED).

The Vacant Site Levy, as introduced through the *Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015*, is a mechanism available to local authorities to incentivise the use and development of vacant and underutilised sites with a view to meeting housing demand and to supporting economic development in urban areas. The implementation of vacant site levy provisions provides for the inclusion of an explicit objective in development plans for the development and renewal of identified '*residential land*' and /or '*regeneration land*' in which the levy can be applied. The incorporation of this specific objective requires variations to *the Offaly County Development Plan 2014-2020*, the *Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan 2010 (as extended)* and *Birr Town and*

Environs Development Plan 2010 (as extended). The variations along with accompanying Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment Screening Reports were placed on public display and open to comment in December 2017 and January 2018. The inclusion of this objective in these development plans which will be complete in early 2018 allows for the next stage of implementation of the vacant site levy provisions in the formal identification and pursuit of individual 'vacant sites'.

TOWN AND VILLAGE RENEWAL SCHEME 2017

In June 2017, the Planning Department lodged four applications with the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, under the **Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2017**. 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 Geashill, Banagher and Shinrone were lodged and the Council has received total funding in the sum of €300,000 to progress these projects in 2018.

MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL

During 2017, €1m grant aid was secured from the Department of Rural and Community Development under the Rural Recreation Scheme towards the first phase of

this project. Offaly Co. Co. will add €176,000 match funding, as will Laois Co. Co. as this project is developed in partnership with Coillte. Full planning permission is in place for c.80kms of mountain bike trails, together with trailhead facilities since January 2017. Coillte advertised for tenders in November 2017 and works are expected to commence in Q2 2018. The development will give a major tourism boost to the area and will see the village of Kinnitty as a hub for services such as bike hire, showers, bike wash, food and accommodation in addition to its existing prominence as a meeting / starting point for the many walks and road cycling routes in the Mountains.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

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

Planning Applications

Year	No of Applications	No. Granted	No. Refused	Total Decided
2013	261*	191	15	206
2014	310*	272	12	284
2015	375*	263	12	275
2016	441*	313	16	329
2017	519*	378	29	407

(*This figure includes applications which were invalid)

Extensions of Appropriate Period:

Year	No of Applications	No. Granted	No. Refused	Total Decided
2015	37	35	3	38
2016	20	23	0	23
2017	13	13	0	13

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 2017. 441 planning applications were received in 2016 which compares with 375 for 2015.

The Planning Department, during 2017, 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 156 pre planning meetings held in 2017, while another 247 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 2017, 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 2017

The Built Heritage Investment Scheme 2017 consisted of 19 properties around the county – The Keep Gate Birr (window repair), Mount Palmer Cottage, Bloomville House, Newbridge Street, Main Street Kilcormac, 9 Johns Mall, Sranure Thatch cottage, High Street Tullamore, Springmount Mill, Clonbulogue, Emmett Street, The Square Clara, Dan and Molly's Ballyboy, Edenderry Railway Station, Thatch Crinkill, The Steps O'Connell Street, 1 Oxmantown Mall and 10 Charleville Parade. 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 €124,382 by the Department due to the number of larger projects carried out within Offaly.

STRUCTURES AT RISK FUND 2017

The Structures at Risk Scheme 2017 applied to structures in immediate danger of significant deterioration and were Protected Structures. Only two applications were received and these were submitted by Offaly County Council for possible approval by the Department. The Department approved one application – The Keep Gate Birr – for urgent repairs to the roof and stone parapet with grant approval of €20,000. Works involved repointing with lime mortar and structural repairs, rebuilding the parapet, repairs to the flat roof and repairs to the internal timber staircase.

UNFINISHED HOUSING ESTATES

There are currently 7 estates in County Offaly named on the most recent DoECLG Unfinished Housing Development list, published on 23rd March 2017. 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 2018. The

continued up-turn in the economic situation is assisting in this.

SCANNING PROJECT

During 2017, 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 2017 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 108
- Enforcement Notices 40
- District/Circuit Court Cases 21
- Prosecutions Initiated 13

During 2017, 60 enforcement files were opened. 108 warning letters and 40 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:

Allocation of Funds – since last report to Council, October 2016	€000's
Infrastructure – DCS Ambulance Base Edenderry	66
Infrastructure – DCS Kilmurray Precast	31
Total	97

Development Contributions - Receipts and Application of Development Funds for the period from Oct 2016 – Sep 2017.

<i>Receipts</i>	€000's
Balance Available – October 2016	4,884
<i>Contributions Received Oct 2016 to Sep 2016 (as follows):</i>	
Development Contributions – Customers	859
Disbursements Oct 2016 – Sep 2017 (see below)	97
Balance Available at September 2017	5,646

OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS AVAILABLE FOR DISBURSEMENT AS AT SEPTEMBER 2017:

<i>Job Description</i>	<i>Funds Available €000's</i>
Dev. Cont. Scheme – Infrastructure	638
	3,171
Spl. Dev. Cont. Scheme 2004 Car Parking	516
Spl. Dev. Cont. - Windfarms	366
Spl. Dev. Cont. - Scheme Clara Quarry	4
Spl. Dev. Cont. – Road Imp & Main Drumcraw Mt. Lucas	34
Spl. Dev. Cont. Scheme Communication Masts	647
Spl. Dev. Cont. - Rd Imp Tullaroe Clareen	8
Spl. Dev. Cont. – Recycling Facility at Barnan	25
Spl. Dev. Cont. – Passing Bays Carrick Castlejordan	4
Spl. Dev. Levy - Rest Road Ballykean Geashill	2
Spl. Dev. Cont. – Passing Bays Ballykean Geashill	1
Spl. Dev. Cont. – Pedestrian Crossing at Church Road	24
Spl. Dev. Cont. – Junction of Cemetery / Military Road Crinkle	35
Spl. Dev. Cont. – Roundabout R402 Lidl Edenderry	15
BTC Dev. Cont. 04 – Non Prov Carparking	156
TOTAL	5,646

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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; Dermot Shortt, Business Executive and Sinead Shaw, Administrator.

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.

MEASURE 1 FINANCIAL SUPPORTS – ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

LEO Offaly operates 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 Measure 1 criteria.

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 €15,000 whichever is the lesser.

LEO INNOVATION INVESTMENT FUND (LIIF)

The LEO Innovation Investment Fund Pilot Scheme was launched in 2017 which targeted existing Local Enterprise Office clients looking to undertake innovative developments or who now want to consider starting up an innovative new business. At the conclusion of the programme clients had the opportunity to make a formal pitch to an Investor Panel to potentially secure a LEO Grant Investment of €25k to fund their innovative business start-up or development. Fourteen companies were shortlisted from the midlands region of Kildare, Laois, Offaly and Westmeath to make a pitch to the Investor Panel to secure a LEO Grant Investment of €25k. Two of the four Offaly clients that were shortlisted secured the investment of €25k. (Applied Concepts Ltd & Intellicom)

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR MICRO EXPORTERS

The Technical Assistance Grant enables clients to explore and develop new market opportunities. This grants part funds the costs that can be incurred in investigating and researching export markets, e.g. exhibiting at Trade Fairs,

preparing marketing material and developing websites specifically targeting overseas markets. The grant covers 50% of eligible costs (net of vat) to a max of €2,500.

HIGHLIGHTS 2017

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. The awards ceremony was hosted in The Tullamore Court Hotel in November 2017 and was attended by finalists and their supporters. Special guest speaker on the night was Niamh Sherwin Barry of the Irish Fairy Door Company who gave the keynote address and Councillor John Clendennen, Leas Cathaoirleach, Offaly County Council who presented the awards.



Eoin Bara and his company Arderin Distillery T/A Mór Gin was named as Offaly's Best Young Entrepreneur. Eoin won the best established business category for his award winning Gin distillery. Thirty-two applications for the competition were received of which sixteen finalists

were selected to attend our IBYE bootcamp weekend which gears the young entrepreneurs up for the IBYE judging process. The full list of awards winners on the night were:

Best New Idea: Deirdre Hynds, Health Food Snacks, Cloghan (€7,000)

(Runner-up): Conor Leen, Stampify, Geashill (€3,000)

Best Business Start-up: David Kelly, Codeucate, Tullamore. (€15,000)

(Runner-up): Daniel Carroll, Caballis Equine, Tullamore (€5,000)

Best Established Business: Eoin Bara, Arderin Distillery T/A Mór Irish Gin, Tullamore (€15,000)

(Runner-up): Mark Feely, CarpentryWorks.ie, Daingean (€5,000)



2017 COUNTY ENTERPRISE AWARD WINNER

Jesse Morris of Tag Media Ltd, T/a Dezynamite was announced Overall Winner in the 2017 Offaly Enterprise Awards. Dezynamite specialises in graphic, print and website design, corporate identity, printing and promotional products. The Tullamore based design company was presented with a prize of €1,500 and he

then went on to represent Offaly at the National Enterprise Awards.

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. The students competed at the Offaly Final on Thursday 9th March, which was held in the Tullamore Court Hotel. An estimated 400 students from nine schools took part in the annual programme locally. 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.



The winner of the competition was Ciarán Corcoran of EasyTag from Banagher College, Colaiste na Sionna. Ciarán has developed a new and innovative product that allows farmers to easily record animal births. He also won the special "Student Prize" which was chosen by all the students on the day.

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 2017 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.

NATIONAL PLOUGHING CHAMPIONSHIP 2017

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. Thirty-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 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. One small businesses from each LEO office had the

opportunity to have a stand within the National Local Enterprise Village. The Offaly businesses that had a stand was Kinnitty based business Applied Concepts.

ENTERPRISE IRELAND INNOVATION ARENA

Offaly companies Ballyealan Engineering and QualEpass featured in the Enterprise Ireland Innovation Arena at the National Ploughing Championship.

OFFALY DISPORA STRATEGY LAUNCH – THIS IS OFFALY

The National Ploughing Championship was a fitting venue for the launch as Offaly once again welcomed over 280,000 visitors to Europe's largest outdoor event. Minister McHugh who launched the Dispora Strategy remarked that the National Ploughing Championships showcases the best of indigenous and international talent in the agri-food sector and is a perfect example of local diaspora initiatives in action.



With support from the Department of An Taoiseach through the Local Diaspora Engagement Fund, Offaly County Council is pleased to publish the *Diaspora Strategy 2017-2020*. Speaking about the Strategy, Chief Executive of Offaly County Council commented *"The Strategy brings together key initiatives that will connect and engage Offaly's global Diaspora to bring positive change and impact for Offaly and ensure that the Diaspora feel part of a shared progressive vision that benefits "bring home". The ultimate focus of these initiatives is to capitalise on linkages and connections to create economic progression and jobs in the county"*.

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.

In 2017 Offaly Innovation & Design Centre Ltd recruited a Business Development Manager on a two year fixed contract for The Junction. The new Manager, Caroline Spollen is responsible for managing the facility, promoting hot desks and office space together with arranging training and events in the new training room.

The Junction featured on RTE 1's *Drivetime* on Wednesday, 23rd August 2017. Journalist John Cooke was

researching a piece on Rural Enterprise Ideas and he visited The Junction to interview a number of people there. The broadcast focused on the benefits of a supported co-working environment such as The Junction, and the benefits of Tullamore as a business base.

Future Ticketing now occupy the larger office on the ground 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.

NWED

LEO Offaly had a particular and specific focus on supporting women in business throughout 2017 through events such as The National Women's Enterprise Day, a midlands event was held in The Heritage, Killenard, Portarlinton on Thursday, 12 October 2017.



Ramona Nicholas, Cara Group; Orla Martin, Head of Enterprise, Local Enterprise Office Offaly and Heidi Higgins, Fashion Designer.

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.

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 2017 LEO Offaly granted

payments of 15 Trading Online Vouchers amounting to €18,877 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 assessed locally by LEO Staff 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 2017 LEO Offaly processed 13 applications of which the total 7 loans were approved amounting to a total of €82,670 loaned to Offaly businesses.

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 2017, 221 mentoring sessions were delivered to our clients.

OUTREACH OFFICE IN BANAGHER, BIRR AND EDENDERRY

The LEO continued with its policy of providing an outreach service in the Birr/South Offaly area. Banagher Library, Birr and Edenderry Municipal Districts provided office space and a member of the LEO's Executive was present to facilitate client meetings at designated times.

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

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 Tullamore Court Hotel.

DIGITAL MARKETING

In 2017, Local Enterprise Office Offaly continued to keep clients up to date with relevant information and events via our website - www.localenterprise.ie/offaly, our monthly ezine and through our social media platforms Facebook and Twitter. There was a dramatic increase of followers throughout 2017 with follower numbers standing at 1,515 for Facebook and 1,595 Twitter followers.

LEO OFFALY PERFORMANCE METRICS

Measure 1	Output 2017	Target 2018
Number of Applications Received:		
Feasibility/Priming/Business Expansion/TAME	35	37
Grant Applications Approved: Number	23	27
Value	363,770	N/A
Feasibility: Number:	2	3
Value:	13,460	N/A
Priming: Number:	3	4
Value:	53,923	N/A
Business Expansion: Number:	15	15
Value:	290,664	N/A
TAME: Number	4	5
Value	5,723	N/A
No. of projected potential new jobs associated with Approvals (Priming & Business Expansion)	39	40
Costs per job calculation associated with approvals (Average Cost calculated on new jobs over three years)	€8682	€8600

Measure 2	Output 2017	Target 2018
Training/Development Programmes (All Training and Networking events)		
Total No. of All Programmes (Training/Networking/Events/Seminars)	30	31
Total No. of all Participants participating in above Programmes	476	500
No. of Females	219	230
No. of Males	257	270
No. of Core Training Programmes/ Mgt. Dev. Programmes (Programmes specifically available to clients that target starting and growing a business e.g. Core Pillars of Business – Finance, Mgt. Dev., Sales & Marketing, IT, Operations/ Production, HR)	8	9
No. of Participants availing of Core Training	121	125
No. of General Programmes (Non-Core)	0	0
No. of General Programme (Non-Core) Participants	0	0
No. of SYOB Programmes	11	11
No. of SYOB Participants	104	110
No. of Network Events/Seminars	11	11
No. of Participants attending Networks Events/Seminars	251	260
No. of Brexit Seminars / Brexit Information Events	0	1
Mentoring:		
Total Number of individual mentoring – (participants availing of one to one mentoring – one to one engagement by a Mentor with one client)	221	232
Total Number of group mentoring participants – (are all group mentoring engagements or clinics where a mentor engages with a group of clients.	0	0
Total Number of Mentoring Participants (both one to one and group)	221	232

Schools Entrepreneurship:	Output 2017	Target 2018
Number of Schools Participating (Secondary schools only engaged in school enterprise programmes)	9	9
Number of Students Participating	425	450

Trading On Line Vouchers:	Output 2017	Target 2018
No. of Trading Online Vouchers approved	15	16
Value (€) of Trading Online Vouchers Paid	18,877	20,000

MFI:	Output 2017	Target 2018
Number of Applications submitted	15	9

Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur:	Output 2017	Target 2018
Number of Applications	32	35

Lean for Micro Project:	Output 2017	Target 2018
No. of Companies who have undertaken a Lean for Micro Assessment by a Lean Expert	2	5

LOCAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Offaly Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

The Offaly LCDC has been established for the purposes of developing, coordinating and implementing a coherent and integrated approach to local and community development. Offaly County Council was one of ten “front runner” LCDC’s commenced operating in February 2014, with formal establishment of the LCDC in November 2014.

The functions of Offaly LCDC

Functions of the Local Community Development Committee are set out under Section 128A of Local Government Reform Act 2014. They are as follows;

- Prepare and adopt the community elements of the 6 year Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP).
- Implement or arrange for the implementation of the community elements of the LECP.
- Coordinate the management and oversee the implementation of the programmes that have been approved either by the local authority or by agreement between the LCDC and other public bodies.
- Ensure effectiveness, coordination, consistency and the avoidance of duplication between publicly

funded local and community development programmes.

- Optimise resources for the benefit of local communities and improve the efficiency with which publicly funded local and community development resources are used.

LCDC Meetings

The Offaly LCDC held 14 meetings during 2017 as follows: 12th January; 9th February, 9th March, 13th April, 24th April, 11th May, 8th June, 13th July, 31st July, 14th September, 12th October, 19th October, 10th November, and 14th December. Meetings take place on the second Thursday of each month at 11.00 a.m. in Tullamore Municipal District offices and additional dates as required.

Membership of Offaly LCDC in 2017

The 19-member Local Community Development Committee has broad representation from public and private interests including business, local development, education, enterprise, agriculture, voluntary and local authority members. Membership of Offaly LCDC during 2017 is as follows:

Statutory Interests (9)		
Sector	Members Name	Organisation
Local Authority Elected Members	<i>Cllr John Clendennen</i>	Offaly County Council (Chair)
	<i>Cllr Declan Harvey</i>	Offaly County Council
	<i>Cllr Martin O Reilly¹</i>	Offaly County Council
Local Authority Officials	<i>Ms. Anna Marie Delaney</i>	Offaly County Council
	<i>Ms. Orla Martin</i>	Offaly County Council
State Agencies	<i>Mr. Declan Tuomey¹</i>	Dept of Social Protection
	<i>Mr. Tony Dalton</i>	Laois and Offaly Education & Training Board
	<i>Mr. Con Feighery</i>	Teagasc
	<i>Mr. Nick Devery²</i>	Health Service Executive
Non Statutory Interests (10)		
Sector	Members Name	Organisation
Public Participation Network	<i>Mr. Jimmy Todd³</i>	Community & Voluntary Sector
	<i>Ms. Sinead McDonagh⁴</i>	Community & Voluntary Sector
	<i>Ms. Elizabeth Fleming</i>	Social Inclusion Sector
	<i>Ms. Margaret Murphy</i>	Social Inclusion Sector
	<i>Mr. Eimhin Shortt</i>	Environment Sector
Local & Community Development	<i>Mr. Brendan O'Loughlin</i>	Offaly Integrated Local Development Company
Other Civic Society or	<i>Mr. Dominic Doheny</i>	Construction Industry Federation

Local Community Interests	<i>Mr. John Keena</i>	Irish Farmers Association
	<i>Vacant⁵</i>	Vacant
	<i>Ms. Christina Byrne</i>	Slieve Bloom Rural Development Co-operative

2017 Membership of Offaly Local Community Development Committee

¹ Replacing Cllr Brendan Killeavy from March 2017.

¹ Replacing Mr. Graham Tuohey from April 2017.

¹ Appointed from April 2017 – increase in Statutory Interests.

¹ Replacing Mr. Tom Finnerty from April 2017.

¹ Replacing Ms. Frances Walsh from April 2017.

¹ Resignation of Henry O Shea

Main achievements of LCDC in 2017

There were a number of key priorities progresses and developed in 2017 by the LCDC as follows: -

1. Implementation of the Offaly Local Development Strategy and commencing allocation of the LEADER/Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 funding;
2. Monitoring and reviewing progress and implementation of the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) in 2017, and procurement of services for delivery of SICAP 2018-2022;

3. Implementation of the Offaly Community Facilities Grant Scheme;
4. Implementation of the Offaly Revitalising Areas by Planning, Investment and Development (RAPID) Scheme in 2017;
5. Implementation of the Offaly Healthy Ireland fund in 2017;
6. Implementation of the Offaly Local Economic & Community Plan 2016-2021; and,
7. Developing the tourism potential in Offaly.

LEADER/Rural Development Programme 2014-2020

Offaly Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) has responsibility for the delivery of LEADER 2014-2020 in the county. The implementation partner is Offaly Local Development Company. During the period 2016-2020, in excess of €6m of LEADER funding will be invested in innovative community and private enterprise projects throughout County Offaly. The aim of the LEADER Rural Development Programme 2014 – 2020 is to promote social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas.

In 2017 there were 116 '**Expressions of Interest**' for LEADER grant supports from local community and enterprise groups and 5 '**Targeted Calls**' were completed for LEADER funding for: Community Planning; Community Walking Tracks; Social Enterprise; Community Playgrounds and Tourism Accommodation. Offaly LCDC

approved 52 LEADER projects in 2017 and a detailed breakdown is outlined below: -

Theme	Sub-Theme	No of projects approved 2017	€ Actual Project Approval Value to year end 2017	€ Actual Project Expenditure (<i>claims</i>) to year end 2017
Economic Development	Rural Tourism	11	73,346.33	18,993.14
	Enterprise Development	15	174,435.29	7,593.80
	Rural Towns	4	21,253.50	
	Broadband	1	22,132.80	
Social Inclusion	Basic Services	19	688,733.88	37,463.76
	Rural Youth	2	39,612.58	
Rural Environment	Water Resources			
	Biodiversity			
	Renewable Energy			
Totals:		52	€1,019,514.30	€64,050.70

LEADER Projects approved to the end of 2017

Monitoring and review of SICAP 2017 & procurement for SICAP 2018-2022

Monitoring and reviewing progress and implementation of SICAP:

The LCDC is responsible for the monitoring and review of the nationally-funded Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) which is delivered by Offaly Local Development Company (SICAP Programme Implementer) across the County with an overall budget of €738,314.



The SICAP programme has three main goals which are:

- (i) strengthening local communities;
- (ii) promoting lifelong learning; and,
- (iii) helping people to become more job ready. In 2017, the SICAP Programme Implementer worked with 96 local community groups and 902 individuals across the county, strengthening community development, providing education and training and preparing people for employment.

Some key SICAP indicators / targets achieved	2017
Disadvantaged individuals worked with on a one to one basis.	902
Community Groups assisted under SICAP	96
Children that received an educational or developmental support	1,838
Recipients of employment support	654
Progression into self-employment	98

SICAP 2017 key indicators

During the course of the year, the LCDC carried out an end-of-year review of the 2016 programme, a mid-year review of the 2017 programme and an appraisal of the proposed annual plans for 2018.

Procurement of Services for Delivery of SICAP 2018-2022

On 31st July 2017, Offaly Local Community Development Committee requested tenders for the delivery of services of the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) 2018-2022. The Offaly SICAP 2018-2022 Tender Report was approved at the November 2017 meeting of the LCDC and the Tender was awarded to Offaly Integrated Local Development CLG. The value of the contract for 2018 is €760,463.

Offaly Community Facilities Scheme

Under the Offaly Community Facilities Scheme 2017 Offaly LCDC allocated €64,500 in grants for Community and Voluntary Groups. The Scheme was focused on providing

small-scale capital grants to help grass roots community projects get underway and Offaly LCDC approved 127 grants for a range of projects including ICT projects, sports kits, cemetery improvements and garden/landscape power tools. Individual grants ranged in value from €325 to €956.

Offaly Revitalising Areas by Planning, Investment and Development (RAPID) Programme 2017

Under the Offaly RAPID Programme 2017 the Offaly LCDC awarded €64,500 towards funding for disadvantaged urban areas and was focused on supporting the work of Tidy Towns Committees and Urban Community Built Playgrounds. Nine groups were approved under Call 1 for Tidy Towns groups with a total allocation of €25,000 to Tullamore, Edenderry, Birr, Ferbane, Banagher, Daingean, Crinkill, Moneygall and Rhode. Works supported included landscaping projects and the purchase of a ride on lawnmower by one of the Tidy Towns Groups. Ten groups were approved under Call 2 for community playgrounds with a total allocation of €40,500 to Clara, Edenderry, Ferbane, Banagher, Daingean, Moneygall, Rhode, Shannonbridge, Shinrone and Kilcormac with the focus of these applications on the general repair, maintenance and replacement of playground equipment by project groups.

Offaly Healthy Ireland 2017 Fund

Healthy Ireland - A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013-2025 is the national framework for action to improve the health and wellbeing of Ireland over the coming generation.

Under the Offaly Healthy Ireland fund in 2017 the Offaly LCDC was awarded €99,000 towards innovative, cross-sectoral, evidence-based projects and initiatives that support the implementation of key national policies in areas such as obesity, smoking, alcohol, physical activity and sexual health. The projects approved for funding include the Edenderry healthy food/gardening project; sexual health, education and LGBTI support projects; children and adult projects by Offaly Sports Partnership; the further development of the Building Healthy Communities project (started some years ago by Offaly Local Development Company), and the development of a Healthy Offaly Plan.

The Healthy Offaly Strategic Plan will be evidence-based, outcome focused and strategically aligned with Healthy Ireland, A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013-2025, Better Outcomes Brighter Futures, National Physical Activity Plan, The National Sexual Health Strategy, Tobacco Free Ireland and the Obesity Policy and Action Plan. The plan will target communities in disadvantaged areas and other groups who are vulnerable

to health inequalities. The plan is due to be completed by the end of Q1 2018.

Offaly Healthy Ireland Funding Allocation		
1.	Healthy Offaly Strategic Plan	€14,000
2.	Edenderry healthy food and gardening	€10,000
3.	Sexual health Promotion, Education & LGBTI support	€10,000
4.	Children fundamentals development	€14,000
5.	Couch to 5k recreational jogging	€10,000
6.	Building Healthy Communities	€31,000
7.	Supporting Parents and Teens	€8,000
8.	PAX Good Behaviour	€2,000
TOTAL ALLOCATION		€99,000

Offaly Healthy Ireland funding allocation

The Offaly Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021



Offaly LCDC had a busy year in 2017 actively driving the development of the Offaly Local Economic and Community Development Plan 2016-2021 (LECP).

The purpose of the LECP, as provided for in the *Local Government Reform Act 2014*, is to set out, for a six-year period, the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development and the local and community development of the County.

The LCDC sub-committee on Education, Training and Skills met three times in 2017 to progress priority actions as follows -

- To develop two introductory level courses for the construction industry;
- To compile a register of the community and agency training venues across the county; and

- To pilot youth entrepreneurship training supported by Rural Economic Development Zones (REDZ) funds.

The LCDC will commence the mid-term review of the Offaly Local Economic & Community Development Plan (LECP) in 2018.

Develop the Tourism Potential of Offaly.

Offaly Tourism Marketing was established in December 2014 under the auspices of Offaly LCDC and its main duties include:

- To develop proposals on 'branding' the County.
- To prepare a Strategic Marketing Plan for the marketing and promoting tourism.

Offaly Tourism Marketing has completed the process of developing a new compelling tourism brand to establish a clear and consistent perception of County Offaly and the new brand, 'Offaly – Ireland's Hidden Gem'. The group has also completed a new tourism website (www.visitoffaly.ie) as a vehicle to create brand awareness.



Offaly Tourism Marketing in partnership with Local Enterprise Office Offaly hosted the Offaly – Ireland's Hidden Gem Pavilion at Tullamore

Show on 13th August 2017. Over September 19th to 21nd

Offaly County Council hosted the 'Offaly – Ireland's Hidden Gem' Pavilion on site at the National Ploughing Championships. 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.



Cllr. Liam Quinn, Cathaoirleach at the National Ploughing Championships, 2017

Public Participation Network (PPN)

Bridie Costello Hynes took up the full time PPN Resource Worker position on 6th February. Initial work included organizing PPN member meetings in each of the Municipal Districts; managing elections to fill PPN vacancies on the PPN Secretariat and the LCDC; establishing the Offaly PPN website (<http://www.offalyppn.ie>); and, arranging a PPN

County Plenary meeting for 28th March. To mid-2017, work undertaken included presenting at the Community Finance Options Information Session organized by Bord na Móna in Mount Lucas; assisting with the public consultation for the *Offaly Arts Plan 2018-2022*; and, ongoing promotion of the PPN.

Offaly attended the first PPN National Conference (17th October). PPN representative training took place on 29th September. Ten meetings were arranged for PPN members across the three Municipal Districts during September and October, with linkage groups, the Gardaí, sustainable energy, BHP Insurances, the Library and Healthy Ireland as topics on meeting's agenda. A further county plenary meeting was held on 28th November, the theme of which was '*Celebrating Volunteerism*' with over 200 people attending representing 135 groups, and 16 service providers attending with information stands. By the end of 2017 PPN membership had reached 350 and 3 new members had taken up positions on the PPN secretariat.

Age Friendly Strategy

The PPN is assisting with the Offaly Age Friendly Strategy development. A consultation process commenced in late in 2017. An Age Friendly Business workshop was held on 12th September, the first Age Friendly Alliance meeting took place on 27th September (at which a Work Plan and Terms of Reference were agreed), and subsequently an

Offaly Age Friendly Consultation and Networking event was held on 10th October (in preparation for a further 3 public consultations during that month). The Offaly Age Friendly Alliance is coordinating the strategy development and ongoing networking, with the Age Friendly Alliance Coordinator and two representatives from the Offaly Older Peoples Network attending the two-day National Convention in early November 2017.



Launch of Age Friendly Business Workshop

Comhairle na nÓg

Offaly Comhairle na nÓg has a 29-member Executive Committee ranging in age from 12 to 17 representing schools and youth groups in the County. They met 17

times in 2017. The Comhairle also has a steering group representing agencies working in the youth area, which meets to support the work of the young people. Activities included discussing issues around substance misuse; the impact of Brexit on teenagers (at an event attended by three members of Offaly Comhairle); and, planning for events such as the AGM and attendance at Dail na nÓg.

The Comhairle 2017 *Better You Better Me* AGM took place on 19th October in the Tullamore Court Hotel, with attendance by 10 of the 11 secondary schools in Offaly. The young people delivered a peer to peer presentation on '*Better You Better Me*'. The young people facilitated the workshops and carried out a survey regarding LGBTI+ awareness of supports in Offaly. To conclude the year, the Dail na nÓg event in Croke Park in Dublin on 6th December – the theme of which was '*in all fairness...*' – was attended by seven delegates from Comhairle in Offaly. Through Healthy Ireland, initial funding was awarded to Offaly County Council reflecting the Comhairle priorities for an LGBTI support group and better sexual health training for the youth sector.

Community Watch Network

This network met three times in 2017. Meeting agenda items included road safety in Offaly (21st February) after which they nominated priority issues on this as Social Media public relations; advocating for a Fixed Charge Penalty Notice to be enforced for failure to wear a high

vis vest on public roads as a pedestrian or cyclist; greater availability of mobile flashing speed cameras as a speed deterrent; speed checks; a streetwise campaign for pedestrians regarding use of headphones; and, raising awareness of possible offences by cyclists. At the 18th



April meeting the network considered the CCTV funds application process. The concluding meeting was held on 22nd November in Kilcormac Community Centre. Community CCTV remains high as a priority for the groups.

Tidy Towns Network

This network is supported by the Local Community Development Section and also by the Offaly Heritage Officer. The network met four times in 2017. The first Network meeting on 8th February had a focus on the Special Categories section of the SuperValu Tidy Towns Competition and received a presentation from the Local Authorities Water Communities Office. The March 22nd meeting heard presentations from the 2016 National Winners (Skerries) and Mark McMahon from the Council's Environment Section. The 26th April meeting focused on a presentation from Tidy Towns Judge Ann O'Leary and the Offaly LCDC Community Facilities Grant 2017 application process. The 28th November meeting focused on the Town and Village Renewal Scheme where 18 groups were

present to engage with the Council's Planning Department.

At the National Tidy Towns Awards in Dublin in September, Geashill Tidy Towns won the National All Ireland Pollinator Award, and Pullough won the Endeavour Cup for Offaly as they had the biggest score increase of all 22 Offaly entrants. Tullamore won a Gold medal, which added to the Lloyd Town Park 'An Taisce Green Flag Pollinator' award received in July 2017. Overall, all Offaly entrants increased their scores and will learn where they can improve their areas for the 2018 competition.

National Tree Week took place from the 5th -12th March 2017. The Tree Council of Ireland provided 200 free saplings for distribution to Community Groups in Offaly. Saplings were distributed through the Local Community Development Section to thirteen Tidy Towns groups from across the county who had expressed an interest in planting trees in their local communities.

The Offaly Youth Enterprise Project

This project resulted from the 2016 REDZ funded project to pilot the Youth Start- Youth Enterprise Project in Offaly. By Q1 2017 the project had developed enough to host the regional qualifiers for NFTE, with 6 Offaly entrants for the competition on 15th March (including the 'Nifty Dog Collars' project that made it to the National Young Entrepreneur Competition final on 30th March).

Six new groups were trained in 2017. Given the success of the project Laois Offaly ETB now support a full time employee to deliver youth enterprise training in Offaly. The project is also replicated in Laois give the demand from youth projects.

IPB Pride of Place 2017

Offaly County Council submitted three entries in the 2017 competition for site judging in July 2017. These were the Acorn Project and Youth Cafe (Edenderry Municipal District) as a 'Community Youth Initiative' and Tullamore Housing Association, Midland Simon and Rights for the Elderly Housing Association (Tullamore Municipal District) in the 'Housing Estates' category. Birr, the Offaly entry in the 'Creative Place Initiative' Category was awarded the 'National Runner Up' prize in this category for their work, at the national awards event on 9th December 2017.

Tullamore Pfizer Healthy Town 2017

Tullamore was chosen as the Pfizer Healthy Town 2017, launched at national level on May 31st 2017. A local advisory panel was established to assist with deciding on locations for inclusion in the 'Healthy Town Map' and associated public relations launching the project from 12th September to run for eight weeks. The activity programme of events included free health and wellness related seminars; public health checks; parenting and family health talks; cookery demonstrations; mental health workshops; and heart and cancer screening information

provision events. A 'before and after' survey on various aspects of the Healthy Town Programme showed an improvement in positivity about health and wellbeing; and an increase in awareness of health issues such as exercising more, nutrition and mental health. The project benefitted from wide engagement in it by representatives on the Advisory Panel, community groups, sports organisations and the general public and wishes to acknowledge the support from those quarters.

Community Smoke Alarm Scheme

Offaly County Council provide 10-year battery operated smoke alarms to Over 65s and vulnerable households in the county. We ask voluntary groups/volunteers and others who visit people in vulnerable households to identify these homes and notify us so that we can arrange installation. Applications are also welcome from qualifying individual households who are in a position to install the alarm themselves. In 2017 25 sets of smoke alarms were distributed by the Community Section of Offaly County Council.

Connecting for Life – Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide 2015-2020

A local plan on this strategy is to commence from January 2018. The consultation for Laois/Offaly ran over October 2017 and Offaly Co Co staff attended the Action Plan workshop on 13th November regarding council support for appropriate action over 2018-2020.

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 physical activity 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.

Significant highlights of the year included: -

- the announcement of the employment of a FAI Community Development Officer. The announcement was attended by Martin O'Neill, Republic of Ireland Manager and John Delaney, CEO FAI. Offaly Sports Partnership worked closely with all partners in securing the post, and Gary Seery commenced work in September 2017, rolling out FAI grassroots soccer programmes throughout the county. He is situated beside Offaly Sports Partnership in the offices of Offaly County Council.
- Following the securing of €40,000 in 2016 through the Dormant Accounts Disbursement Fund, the south Offaly Community Sports and Physical Activity Hub (known as the Hub) was established in 2017. Operating out of Crinkle Sport and Recreation Centre, the Hub has delivered a range of outreach programmes to schools, clubs and organisations.

General activities in 2017 included: -

- a comprehensive schools' fitness programme with 33 schools participating,
- 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,
- sport and physical activity programmes for low income communities, older people, and women and girls,
- integration projects including the Integrated Academy for Athletics Performance – nine members of which won All-Ireland medals,
- education and training programmes for up to 250 volunteers / coaches in clubs and organisations.

2017 also saw the continued delivery of our Sports Inclusion Development Programme, led out by Aoife Byrne, our Sports Inclusion Development Officer. This programme focuses on increasing the participation of people with disabilities in sport and physical activity, and reached over 600 participants.

Funding secured through various agencies e.g. Dormant Accounts, Department of Justice – was used to support delivery of additional physical activity programmes for ethnic minorities and people with disabilities, as well as

sports leader training for up to 140 transition year students in post primary schools across the county. Dormant Accounts funding has also been earmarked to deliver a community coaching programme for jobseekers in 2018.

2017 also saw a call for Sports Capital and Trail Maintenance funding. €30,115 was secured to upgrade existing national trails in Offaly; while €984,406 was approved for 43 clubs / organisations in Offaly as part of the Sports Capital Programme 2017.



Announcement of FAI Community Development Officer

HERITAGE

The Heritage Office works with the Offaly Heritage Forum to deliver the Offaly Heritage Plan. The new *Offaly Heritage Plan 2017-22* was prepared and adopted by the Council in March 2017.

The forum meets four times a year and is made up of people from state agencies, council staff and NGOs. The human resources of the forum are very valuable, providing advice, contributing to projects and leading awareness events. The Heritage Council provides funding towards the running of the Heritage office and also gives an allocation towards the delivery of the Offaly Heritage Plan.

Heritage Council Funded Projects

Funding from the Heritage Council of €27,000 was received in 2017 towards two projects: the archives programme in conjunction with Offaly Library Service and Offaly Historical and Archaeological Society and the conservation of medieval churches.

Archives -Work is ongoing with cataloguing and digitising key collections in the County Archive Service and Offaly History. Two significant donations and loans were made to the county archive service with George Cunningham of Roscrea donating his archive relating to Offaly and Pat

McDonagh of Supermacs entering a loan agreement for the archive he purchased from the Loughton House near Moneygall.

Medieval Churches

A maintenance programme has been put in place for churches including Lemanaghan, Kilbride Clara, Kilbride Ballycowan, Ballintemple near Walsh Island, St Brendan's Birr and Roscomroe to monitor and keep them in good repair. This is greatly assisted where volunteer groups are active such as at Lemanaghan where there is a weekly work group. Works at Lynally Church were completed during 2017. Documents have been drawn up for the Ministerial Consent needed to commence conservation work at Drumcullen monastic site near Rath. Liaison is ongoing with the vestry at Seir Kieran at Clareen to put a programme of repair in place for the boundary walls.



A walking route to Durrow monastic site is planned from the west through the Coillte woods. Work is ongoing with an application made for Ministerial Consent for works.

Creative Ireland

Creative Ireland is the Government's Legacy Programme for Ireland 2016 – a five-year initiative, from 2017 to 2022, which places creativity at the centre of public policy. The Heritage Officer is involved in the Creative Ireland working group for 2017 along with the Arts Office, Library Service, Corporate Services, Community and Local Development and the Architect's office. For 2017, the Heritage Officer was the county co-ordinator.

In the spring a Culture and Creativity Plan 2017 for Offaly was developed. Following a workshop day in September and a period for public submissions *the 2018-2022 Culture and Creativity Plan 2018-2022* was adopted by the members at the December Council meeting.



€64,000 was received from central government in 2017 to commence projects that are collaborative arts, heritage and libraries with strong community reach. Three community projects were piloted, Mary Ward's Amazing World of

Wonder co-ordinated by Caroline Conway and Tina Claffey; The Place of Holes at Pullough, by artist Rachel Champion with Pullough Tidy Towns; and, Rahan looks back with Offaly History and Tullamore Camera Club.

A key commission was an invitation to artists to promote the All Ireland Pollinator Plan and this was awarded to composer Karen Power who worked with a number of sites in Offaly particularly Clara Bog Visitor Centre. The library developed a culture programme for 2017 and additional finance was allocated to collaborative arts and heritage projects.

Heritage Awareness

The Offaly Naturalists' Field Club programme is co-ordinated through the Heritage Office and twenty events were held throughout the year with the summer school led by John Feehan based in Birr this year on the theme of '*Trees, past, present and future*'.



Image: Summer School visiting Cadamstown Silver River

Heritage Week

Heritage Week is co-ordinated by the Heritage Office with the majority of the 45 events planned and delivered by community groups. Offaly County Library service embrace this week and host a number of events across their branch network.

Edenderry Revolutionary Tour Heritage Week organised by Edenderry Historical Society.



Annual Seminar



The annual seminar was held on 17th/18th November in Birr.

This seminar reports back to the general public on progress with heritage projects during 2017. It is open to all and free.

Publications

In November, *Flights of Fancy*, written by the Council's Senior Executive Architect, Rachel McKenna was published and launched in Birr Castle. The Heritage Officer also supported the publication of *The Battle of Geashill* by Clemens Von Ow which launched during Heritage Week.

Public Realm and Town and Village Renewal

The Heritage Officer is part of the Council's in-house working group for Town and Village Renewal projects and has liaised with the Banagher Group focusing, in particular, on the partnership project with Waterways Ireland to conserve and make Fort Eliza accessible.

Tidy Towns

Working with the Council's Community and Local Development Section, 3 information evenings for Tidy Town groups along with one to one mentoring were held. There was great success with Geashill winning the All Ireland Pollinator Award (which Birr won in 2016). Tullamore Lloyd Town Park also won the Green Flag Award for Pollinator Friendly Parks.

Carrigeen Farmhouse, Five Alley - Home of Hynes / Egan family

The owners contacted us and a site visit showed this to be a vernacular site of national importance for the integrity of the house, fixtures and fittings and family context. Dr Claudia Kinmonth, expert in Irish Country Furniture, carried out a two-day assessment in June and returned to work with the family to present 4 guided tours for Heritage Week which were extremely well received. It is also featured for a site visit for the Offaly Annual Heritage Seminar.



Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam

Work continues to combat this destructive plant and to try and contain it. A comprehensive mapping programme has been developed and all sites on public land have been treated for the 4th consecutive year. Where sites have been identified on private lands the owners have been notified and advised to commence treatment.

A working group has been set up to plan to contain and control the spread of Himalayan Balsam particularly on the Camcor catchment.

TRANSPORTATION AND EMERGENCY SERVICES SPC

SPC Chair	Dervill Dolan, MCC (to June 2018) Noel Bourke, MCC (from June 2017)	Director Of Services	Frank Heslin (to July 2017) Sean Murray (from July 2017)
Members	Sectoral	Acting Senior Engineer	Damien Grennan
Cllr. Noel Bourke (from June 2017) Cllr. Dervill Dolan (to June 2017) Cllr. Sean Maher Cllr. Danny Owens Cllr. Liam Quinn	Mr. Richard Scally Mr. Peter Lyons Mr. John O'Connor Mr. Jason Leigh	Administrative Officer Acting Senior Executive Engineer Acting Senior Executive Engineer Chief Fire Officer Health & Safety Officer	Phyllis Hughes Willie Ryan Vivian O' Brien Eoin O'Ceilleachair Dennis Gibbons

ROADS; HEALTH AND SAFETY

Roads

The 2017 Initial Roads Budget was as follows:

Transport Infrastructure Ireland	€ 1,114,052.00
Department of Transport Tourism & Sport	€ 6,638,537.00
Offaly County Council (Own Resources)	€ 1,642,129.00
<i>Total</i>	€ 9,394,718

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 €2,761,440.

The 2016 Initial Roads Budget was €8,516,784.

Additional funding was received as follows during the year: -

Transport Infrastructure Ireland	€1,384,321.00
Dept. of the Transport, Tourism and Sport	€64,957.00
Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (CLAR)	€186,954
Department of Rural and Community Development (LIS)	€676,155
Department of Housing Planning and Local Government (Storm Ophelia)	€226,160
Total	€2,520,517

Projects undertaken and completed during 2017 are detailed below.

National Road Grants

2017 National Roads (N52, N62 & N80 = 104kms)

Ordinary Maintenance	€449,430
Pavement Improvement Schemes- Total	€1,595,523
N62 Ferbane Main Street, N52 Riverstown Birr, Site Investigation and Retexturing Works	€1,175,695
N62 Cloghan Junction	€274,093
N62 Doon	€145,735
National Route Lighting Energy & Led Upgrade	€269,628

Non National Road Grants

2017 Non National Roads

(Regional 390kms & County 1,640kms = 2,030kms)

Ordinary Maintenance (Regional & County)	€ 2,375,861
Surface Dressing	€925,112
Pavement Improvement Schemes	€3,660,496
Low Cost Safety Schemes 1 No	€287,383
Bridge Strengthening Works (9 No)	€202,574
Non-National Road upgrades (260 LEDs) throughout Offaly	own resources
Town Allocations [Tullamore, Birr & Edenderry]	€930,672
Clar Schemes	€186,954
Local Improvement Schemes	€676,155
Storm Ophelia Repair Costs	€226,160

Speed Limit Review

The Draft *Road Traffic Special Speed Limit Bye-Laws 2017* were prepared in consultation with Councillors, Gardaí, 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 were considered and adopted by the members at the meeting held on 24th April, 2017. Signage work was carried out throughout 2017 by Offaly County Council and contractors for the Transport Infra-Structure Ireland. It is envisaged that these Bye-Laws will come into effect in January 2018.

Health and Safety

Health and Safety objectives were agreed at the beginning of the year with the Management Team after reviewing 2016/17 both from a local and national level. The key objectives agreed 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 communication between all levels of staff within the organisation relating to health and safety are improved.
3. To continue to work closely with external groups 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 2017, 47 fatalities occurred, this represents a reduction of 1 on the same period for 2016.

Industry	No. of Fatalities in 2016	No. of Fatalities in 2017
<i>Agriculture</i>	21	24
<i>Fishing and aquaculture</i>	3	2
<i>Mining and quarrying</i>	1	0
<i>Manufacturing</i>	2	0
<i>Water supply</i>	1	1
<i>Construction</i>	9	6
<i>Repair of motor vehicles</i>	2	2
<i>Transportation & storage</i>	1	6
<i>Support service activities</i>	4	0

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

Some key initiatives held in 2017: -

- One of the main targets for 2017 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 2018.
- 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 Council's accident ratio in 2017 when compared to the same period in 2016.
- Senior Management continued to provide leadership in order to raise the profile of safety within Offaly County Council. A key focus in 2017 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 2018.

- A health and safety review will be completed in full in early 2018 and this will be used to set out the targets and areas for improvements in 2018.

Road Safety 2017 initiatives:

- Updated the Council's website in relation to weather alerts and road safety initiatives. These were also emailed to Councillors and staff, and placed on the Council's Facebook and Twitter pages.
- Road Safety Video/Message is now operational in Ferbane, Edenderry, Birr and Banagher Credit Unions.
- Organised RSA Street Smart Programme to visit a number of national schools in the county. This programme aims to bring issues of road safety to life for young schoolchildren.
- Collaborated with the Road Safety Authority in "Check it Fits Service" – free expert checking of child car seats in various locations throughout the county
- Organised day long live flexible presentation "Drive for Life Programme" for four Secondary Schools in the County. This programme is tailored for students and young adults in a school setting and issues such as consequences of speed, alcohol, drugs and driving, mobiles phones, seat belts forms part of the content of the programme.
- Presentation of Junior School Warden Certificates to 2 schools – Portarlinton NS and Ferbane NS.
- Liaised with Municipal Districts concerning road safety at various schools.
- Road Safety presentations delivered to over 25 national schools in the County.
- Organised Safe Cycle Art Competition for national schools in Tullamore schools.
- Organised Staff Tyre Check as part of Irish Road Safety Week, 2nd to 8th October.
- Circulated Hi-Vis Vests to: Birr and Tullamore Cattle Marts; Municipal District offices in Birr, Edenderry and Tullamore; Motor Tax Office in the Áras an Chontae, Joint Policing Committee public meeting; and, also made available road safety leaflets and information to the public.

FIRE SERVICES & CIVIL DEFENCE

Fire Services

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 2017 Offaly County Fire and Rescue Service were alerted to 534 incidents. 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 2017. The 2017 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 2017.

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 2017 from the National Directorate for the provision of a water tanker, and vehicle Stabilisation Kits.

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. A detailed preliminary 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

In December 2016, Offaly County Council appointed Finna Construction Ltd. as the main contractor. Construction is almost complete with occupation in early 2018 expected.

Fire Prevention & Building Control

Offaly County Council Fire Service assessed 62 Fire Safety Certificate applications. The fire authority also gave advice on 88 planning referrals. The Fire Service also dealt with

45 license applications. In total 150 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 2017 Offaly Fire service began a pilot project in the Ferbane area and carried out over 150 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 2017 there were 170 commencement notices with 36 building inspected, which represents 22% 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 2017. Training was provided to Council staff in the following areas: Information Management, On-Site Co-ordination, and Media Liaison.

CIVIL DEFENCE

Offaly Civil Defence again had a very busy operational year in 2017. The Unit covered many various duties and events within the County, running various local courses and working alongside neighbouring Civil Defence County Units. Training classes normally commence in February and finish at the end of May, in this way we can concentrate our time to duties and other Community requests for assistance during the summer months. We re-start our classes in September and run until mid-December. All our training courses are accredited by the Civil Defence College or other external bodies. Approved course providers or P.H.E.C.C. who are the Pre. Hospital. Emergency. Care. Council. who are compliant with the various rules and regulations pertaining to training.

Key 2017 Activities

- Civil Defence provided community support within the County, and to other organisations who submitted requests on the approved Duty request form.
- Our unit covered approximately 45 duties during the year ranging from the annual Sean Kelly 80k and 12k cycles. A number of charity 10k walks / 5k runs, Birr Vintage week Tullamore Show, National Ploughing championship, St. Patricks day parades x

3 and indeed many other various events and projects.

- Ambulance cover to *Darkness into Light* in aid of Pieta House, and other worthwhile community events spread throughout the County.
- Supplied two C.F.R. (Cardiac. First. Response.) Instructors to deliver a number of CFR courses to the Local Authority staff assisting the training section and H.R. in this certification course.
- Our Unit holds in storage and erects the Temporary Mortuary Unit to assist the HSE and erected the system in Tullamore and Portlaoise Hospitals in line with MEM requirements as laid out in the Regional document.
- We commenced to deliver Manual Handling courses to members of our Unit and this course delivery is ongoing and a work in progress project.
- Offaly Civil Defence participated in one of the Regional exercises hosted by Limerick City & Council Civil Defence Unit.
- We launched our new Mountain Bike unit during 2017 & members were trained up by one of our own Volunteers who holds certification from Cycling Ireland, our Bike Unit now cover various duties during our operational year.
- Members attended as students on a two day 4 x 4 Driving course.

- A number of new members joined our Unit during the year.
- Our Unit provided Minibus transport to the Offaly Rose of Tralee contestants who were on a tour of Offaly and sites of interest.
- Civil Defence provided Ambulance cover to Teen Aware concerts on two occasions.

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

CORPORATE SERVICES		FINANCE	
<i>Director of Services:</i>	Frank Heslin	<i>Head of Finance</i>	Declan Conlon
<i>Senior Executive Officer:</i>	Monica Cleary	<i>Financial Management Accountant:</i>	Thomas Mawe
<i>Administrative Officer:</i>	Gerry Bruton	<i>Administrative Officer:</i>	Mary Gaughran
HUMAN RESOURCES		INFORMATION SYSTEMS	
<i>Director of Services:</i>	Frank Heslin	<i>Director of Services</i>	Declan Conlon
<i>Senior Executive Officer:</i>	Ruth McNally	<i>Head of I.S.:</i>	Ray Bell
<i>Administrative Officer:</i>	Paula Donovan	<i>I.S. Project Leader</i>	Eileen Jackson

CORPORATE SERVICES

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 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.

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
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
McCormack, Tony***	Daingean Road, Tullamore	----- ; (086) 8229399	tony.mccormack@yahoo.ie	Fianna Fáil
McKeigue, Thomas	Spollanstown, Tullamore	(057) 93 41519; (086) 165 8359	tommymckeigue@eircom.net	Fine Gael
Moran, Frank	2 Oak View, Kilcoursey, 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

*** Co-opted to Offaly County Council at the meeting held on 18th September 2017, following the resignation of Sinead Dooley

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, 16 council meetings were held in 2017.

At the Annual Meeting, held on 19th June 2017, Councillor Liam Quinn was elected Cathaoirleach and Councillor John Clendennen was elected Leas Cathaoirleach.



June Annual Meeting held in Áras an Chontae on 19th June 2017

The May monthly meeting, held on 15th May 2017, was held in St. Brigid's Social Club, Garryhinch, Portarlinton.

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 2017.

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.

Chairpersons of Offaly S.P.C.'s are: -

- *Housing Policy, Social and Cultural Services*
Cllr. P. Ormond (Chairperson January – June 2017) and
Cllr. D. Harvey (Chairperson June 2017 – to date)
- *Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning*
Cllr. F. Moran (Chairperson January – June 2017) and
Cllr. J. Carroll (Chairperson June 2017 – to date)
- *Transportation and Emergency Services*
Cllr D. Dolan (Chairperson January – June 2017) and
Cllr. N. Bourke (Chairperson June 2017 – to date)
- *Environment, Water and Drainage Services*
Cllr. T. McKeigue (Chairperson January – June 2017)
and
Cllr. J. Clendennen (Chairperson June 2017 – to date)

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 27th November 2017.

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 2018 Budget process and via the monthly Management Reports considered at the monthly Council meetings.

REGISTER OF ELECTORS

The Register of Electors was produced on the 1st February and came into force on 15th February 2017. The total electorate for County Offaly for the 2017/2018 Register of Electors was 58,066 broken down over the local electoral areas as follows:

Birr	20,550
Edenderry	16,273
Tullamore	21,243
Total on the Register	58,066

Electoral Amendment (Dáil Constituencies) Act 2017 – Revision of Dáil Constituencies

The *Electoral Amendment (Dáil Constituencies) Act 2017* was signed into law by the President on 23rd December 2017. The new constituency of Laois-Offaly will become the constituencies for Dáil and Presidential elections and referendums on and after the dissolution of the current Dáil. In the meantime, the constituencies established by the *Electoral (Amendment) (Dáil Constituencies) Act 2013* will continue in force. The Act can be viewed in www.oireachtas.ie.

JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE

The Joint Policing Committee met on three occasions in 2017. The Committee held its annual Public Meeting on 2nd October 2017 in Mucklagh Community Centre.

During the year the Committee reviewed the Department of Justice and Equality Community CCTV Scheme in an effort to assist communities with their applications.

SWIMMING POOLS

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

The Feasibility Study, prepared by the Edenderry Swimming Pool Committee, was submitted to the Department in May 2017. A meeting was subsequently held with officials from the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport in December 2017 in an effort to progress the development of the Swimming Pool.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON THE ENVIRONMENT

During 2017 Offaly County Council processed 18 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.

PROTECTED DISCLOSURES ACT, 2014

No protected disclosures were made to the Council in 2017.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

Offaly County Council processed 78 Freedom of Information requests during 2017, an increase on the 69 applications received in 2016.

Applications received / processed in 2017	
Applications on hand at 31/12/2016	2
Applications received during 2017	78
Decisions taken during 2017	76
Applications withdrawn and dealt with outside FoI	2
Applications on hand 31/12/2017	3

Nature of the information requested	
Personal (to applicant)	13
Non-personal	65

Requests were received from the following	
Journalists	23
Business / Interest	2
Oireachtas	3
Staff	1
Clients	5
Others	44

Payments Made to Members in 2017

Name	Representational Payment / Municipal District Allowance €	Monthly Allowance €	Expenses Conferences/ Training incl. Fees, Telephone €	SPC Chairperson's Allowance €	Municipal District Chairpersons Allowance €	Chairperson's/ Vice Chairperson's Allowance €	Foreign Travel €
Noel Bourke	17,065.04	5,307.99	2,949.58	3,000.00	€3,500.00	2,000.00	
John Carroll	17,065.04	5,520.64	-	3,000.00			
John Clendennen	17,065.04	5,000.82	1,741.79	3,000.00		2,000.00	
Noel Cribbin	17,065.04	5,378.87	3,085.97		€2,500.00		
Dervill Dolan	17,065.04	4,386.50	-	3,000.00			
Sinead Dooley *	11,251.25	2,925.29	511.68		€1,407.69		
Eamon Dooley	17,065.04	5,000.82	988.65		€2,500.00		
Eddie Fitzpatrick	17,065.04	4,764.54	2,880.85			10,000.00	€3,934.68
John Foley	17,065.04	5,307.99	-				
Declan Harvey	17,065.04	4,386.50	2,245.16	3,000.00	€1,310.89		
Brendan Killeavy	17,065.04	4,386.50	1,938.54				
John Leahy	17,065.04	4,693.66	318.40				
Tony McCormack **	5,073.45	1,260.98	-				
Tommy McKeigue	17,065.04	4,386.50	1,465.53	3,000.00			
Sean Maher	17,065.04	5,473.38	-				
Frank Moran	17,065.04	4,386.50	2,230.12	3,000.00	€2,500.00		
Peter Ormond	17,065.04	6,300.36	3,389.19	3,000.00	€3,500.00		
Danny Owens	17,065.04	4,386.50	3,459.00				
Martin O'Reilly	17,065.04	4,386.50	1,885.24				
Liam Quinn	17,065.04	5,142.59	1,494.91			10,000.00	
TOTAL	€323,495.42	€92,783.43	€30,584.61	€24,000	€17,218.58	€24,000	€3,934.68

* to 31st Aug. 2017

** co-opted Sept. 2017

Councillors supported and attended the following conferences in 2017	Venue	Date of Conferences	No. Delegates
"The Finance Act 2016"	The Clonakilty Hotel, Clonakilty, Co. Cork.	24 th - 26 th March	2
Tourism Conference 'Collaborate Locally to Compete Globally'	The Riverside Park Hotel, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford	29 th / 30 th March	1
Energy Conference 2017	Galway Bay Hotel, Salthill, Col Galway	5 th May	1
MacGill Summer School 2017	Glenties, Co. Donegal	16 th - 21 st July	1
Celtic Conference: 'A Practical Guide to Budget 2018'	The Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford, Co. Louth.	13 th - 15 th October	2
The Future of Towns	Radisson Blu Hotel, Sligo	18 th October	1
The Fair Deal Scheme: What's the deal with Nursing Home Care?	Clonakilty Hotel, Clonakilty.	17 th - 19 th November	1
A Practical Guide to Budget 2018	The Clonakilty Hotel, Clonakilty, Co. Cork.	8 th - 10 th December	1
Local Authorities and Regional Assemblies Managing Executive Governance	The Connaught Hotel, Dublin Road, Galway	15 th / 16 th December	1

Councillors attended the following training in 2017	Venue	Date of Conferences	No. Delegates
AILG Training Module 1	Radisson Hotel, Athlone, Co. Westmeath	16 th February	4
AILG Annual Conference 2017	Tracey's West County Hotel, Ennis, Co. Clare.	6 th - 8 th April	13
LAMA Spring Training Seminar	City North Hotel, Gormanston, Co. Meath.	27 th - 29 th April	7
AILG Training: Module 2	Arklow Bay Hotel, Arklow, Co. Wicklow.	9 th May	5
AILG Training: Module 2	Castlecourt Hotel, Westport, Co. Mayo	13 th May	1
AILG Training: Module 3	Crowne Plaza Hotel, Dundalk, Co. Louth.	10 th June	4
AILG Training: Module 3	Bundoran	15 th June	2
AILG Training: Module 4	City North Hotel, Gormanstown, Co. Meath	14 th September	3
LAMA Autumn Training Seminar	Hotel Minella, Coleville Rd., Clonmel, Co. Tipperary	29 th / 30 th September	11
AILG Autumn Training Seminar	Sligo Park Hotel, Sligo.	12 th - 13 th October	8
AILG Training: Module 5	Bridge House Hotel, Tullamore	19 th October	2
AILG Training: Module 5	Landmark Hotel, Carrick-on-Shannon	21 st October	2
AILG "Recent Experience of Local Authorities in Severe Weather"	Dunboyne Castle Hotel, Dunboyne, Co Meath	18 th November	4

STUDENT GRANTS

2016/2017 was the final year that Offaly County Council administered Student Grants. There were no Student Grant renewals, in the 2017/2018 academic year.

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 directly 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). At the year end, NOAC had not published the National Service Indicator Report for all Local Authorities for 2017.

COUNTY CORONERS

The total expenditure was €107,434.68 (including salaries) in respect of coroners' inquests in 2017.

CIVIC WELCOME

The Cathaoirleach and members hosted a Civic Reception for Ms. Jennifer Byrne to acknowledge her achievement in being crowned the 2017 International Rose of Tralee 2017. The Civic Reception was held in Áras an Chontae on 18th December 2017.



The Cathaoirleach, members of Offaly County Council, Deputy Marcella Corcoran-Kennedy and Chief Executive and Management Team at the Civic Reception held for the Rose of Tralee, Ms Jennifer Byrne

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. T. McCormack 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. T. McCormack 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/Cllr. T. McCormack
Offaly Sports Partnership:	Cllr. F. Moran Cllr. D. Owens Cllr. J. Carroll

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. S. Maher <i>Clara</i> – Cllr. F. Moran <i>Edenderry</i> - Cllr. J. Foley
Tullamore Leisure Ltd.	Cllr. S. Dooley/Cllr. T. McCormack Cllr. D. Harvey Cllr. B. Killeavy Cllr. T. McKeigue

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

* Cllr. S. Dooley resigned as an elected member of Offaly County Council with effect from midnight 31st August, 2017.

**Cllr. T. McCormack was appointed in October 2017, to replace Cllr. S. Dooley on the relevant committees.

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, to support effective business decision making.
- 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 DHPCLG 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 the Department of the Housing, Planning Community and Local Government (DHPCLG) and external agencies and dealing with the Local Government Audit process.

Management Accounting is the preparation of quarterly management reports to assist with budgetary control

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

CENTRAL REVENUE COLLECTION

This section mainly deals with the collection and receipt of almost 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 enforcement procedures on behalf of the Revenue Commissioners.

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 (DHPCLG). This unit also manages general Cash

collection and Housing rent arrears.

GENERAL LEDGER / AGRESSOSUPPORT

This unit manages the Financial Management System (FMS) and ensures proper control over all the organisations assets and liabilities. Compliance with the national accounting code of practice and enforcement of DHPCLG 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 specifies an 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.

DHPCLG / IMF QUARTERLY REPORTING

All Offaly Local Authorities report financial performance Quarterly to the DHPCLG. 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 2017, the Motor Taxation Office generated approximately €6.2m in revenue, handled almost

90,000 transactions (30% over the counter, 6% via post and 64% was processed online)

REVENUE COLLECTION SERVICE INDICATORS

Amount collected as a percentage of the amount due at 2017 year end: (Draft percentages)

Rents	86%
Commercial Rates	83%
Housing Loans	55%

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME (INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT STATEMENT)					
FOR YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2017					
Expenditure by Division					
		Gross Expenditure	Income	Net Expenditure	Net Expenditure
		2017	2017	2017	2016
	Notes	€	€	€	€
Housing & Building		10,700,762	11,119,635	(418,873)	180,141
Roads Transportation & Safety		16,684,303	11,225,378	5,458,926	4,937,112
Water Services		4,700,887	4,351,930	348,957	438,476
Development Management		6,372,694	3,373,211	2,999,483	2,995,064
Environmental Services		7,189,998	1,783,152	5,406,845	4,795,976
Recreation & Amenity		3,530,142	551,399	2,978,743	2,727,759
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare		709,786	223,991	485,796	634,053
Miscellaneous Services		7,192,685	2,905,821	4,286,863	4,487,350
Total Expenditure/Income	15	57,081,256	35,534,517		
Net cost of Divisions to be funded from Rates & Local Property Tax				21,546,739	21,195,931
Rates				16,631,937	15,587,756
Local Property Tax				7,656,288	6,896,255
Pension Related Deduction				-	725,425
Surplus/(Deficit) for Year before Transfers	16			2,741,486	2,013,505
Transfers from/(to) Reserves	14			(2,187,703)	(1,471,066)
Overall Surplus/(Deficit) for Year				553,782	542,438
General Reserve @ 1st January 2017				(3,611,785)	(4,154,223)
General Reserve @ 31st December 2017				(3,058,002)	(3,611,785)

Capital Account Summary
Extract from The Draft Annual Financial Statement for the Year ended December 31, 2017

	2017	2016
Balance (Debit)\Credit @ 1 January	9,701,572	7,621,429
Total Expenditure (Incl Transfers)	(11,692,521)	(11,411,300)
Total Income (Incl Transfers)	9,654,268	13,491,443
Balance (Debit)\Credit @ 31 December	7,663,319	9,701,572

INTERNAL AUDIT UNIT

INTERNAL AUDITS UNDERTAKEN

During 2017, the Internal Audit Unit completed 9 Audits as per the agreed Internal Audit Plan 2017. Audit Reports were circulated to the Management Team and the Audit Committee. Follow-up audits on the implementation of recommendations of previous Audits were also undertaken. Responsibility for Internal Audit was moved from the Finance Directorate to Corporate Services during 2017.

2018 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN

The 2018 Internal Audit Plan was prepared and agreed by Management Team and the Audit Committee in December 2017.

PUBLIC SPENDING CODE QA PROCESS

Internal Audit was responsible for compilation of the public spending code annual return for 2016. A Public Spending Code QA report for 2016 was submitted to NOAC in May 2017 and is published on the OCC website. Two in-depth reviews were completed by Internal Audit as part of the process.

COLLABORATION

The Internal Auditor attended National and Regional

collaboration meetings during 2017.

SUPPORT TO AUDIT COMMITTEE

The Internal Audit Unit provided support to the Audit Committee in the fulfilling of its duties in 2017.

AUDIT COMMITTEE

During the course of 2017, the Audit Committee met on the following dates:

- 1st March 2017
- 31st May 2017
- 2nd October 2017
- 11th December 2017

The Committee met with the Chief Executive, Head of Finance, Directors of Services, Local Government Auditor, Internal Auditor, Procurement Officer and Protected Disclosures Designated Officer, during the year.

The Audit Committee considered the following in 2017:

- Internal Audit Plan for 2018
- Final Internal Audit Reports
- Follow Up Internal Audit Reports
- Audit Committee Work Plan 2018
- Procurement update
- Quarterly updates on Local Government Auditor's

Report

- Quarterly updates on Internal Audit progress
- Annual Financial Statement 2016
- Offaly County Council Budget 2018
- Local Authorities Performance Indicators 2015,2016
- NOAC's Report on Performance Indicators in Local Authorities 2015, 2016
- Audit Committee Charter 2017
- Internal Audit Charter 2017.
- Offaly County Council Annual Report 2016

The Committee were briefed in relation to a number of issues including:

- Offaly County Council's Public Spending Code Quality Assurance Report 2016
- Internal Audit Procedures Manual
- Monthly Management Report to Council
- DECLG Value for Money Reports.
- Directorate Presentations
- Offaly County Councils Protected Disclosures Policy & Procedures 2017

The Committee adopted 'Offaly Local Authorities' Protocol for dealing with receipt of disclosures about Financial Reporting or other Financial Matters under the Local Government (Audit Committee) Regulations 2014 and in accordance with the Protected Disclosures Act,

2014'.

The Audit Committee members are Mr. Peter Scully (Chair); Mr. Michael Loughnane; Ms. Connie Hanniffy; Mr. Brian Gunning; Mr. Eugene Mulligan.

The Chair of the Audit Committee presented the following to the Council at its meeting of 27th March 2017:

- Audit Committee Annual Report 2016
- Audit Committee Report to Council on 2015 Annual Financial Statement and Local Government Auditor's Report
- Audit Committee Charter 2017
- Audit Committee Work Plan 2017.

HUMAN RESOURCES

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The role of the HR Department is to recruit, retain and support a competent workforce, to deliver organisational priorities and act as the key driver for organisational change and development.

The work of the Department is broadly divided into seven key areas:

- ✓ Workforce Planning
- ✓ Recruitment
- ✓ Employee Welfare
- ✓ Industrial Relations
- ✓ Staff Training and Development
- ✓ Performance Management
- ✓ Workplace Policies

STAFFING

The total staff complement has reduced by approximately 25% since 2008 when the public service moratorium on employment was introduced. Details of numbers employed at 31st December 2008 and 2017 respectively are set out below for comparison purposes: -

Year	Total Staff Headcount	Non-DHPLG Posts	Retained Fire Fighters
2008	516	12	63
2017	386	25	49

RECRUITMENT

Significant recruitment took place during 2017 including a number of major competitions in entry grades across administrative, technical, professional and specialist posts. 23 different competitions were held involving the processing of over 1,500 applications and resulted in 34 new staff joining the organisation.

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

Additional funding was provided by the Members in the training budget for 2017 and used to support middle management development and staff wishing to undertake the Local Government Certificate and Diploma course in the Institute of Public Administration. This positive move

was welcomed by staff and is particularly important for new staff working in the local authority sector for the first time.

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

IPA Cert in Local Government	Safe Pass
Leadership in Local Government	Manual Handling
Retirement Planning	Ride on mower
BER assessors Training	Resilience Training Housing staff
Interview Skills Training	CSCS Signing, Lighting & Guarding
Social Housing Fundamentals for Local Authorities	Confined Spaces
Management Development	Telescopic Handlers
Specialised Water/Waste Water Training	Temporary Traffic Management
Cardiac First Responder	Pole Saw
IAT Roads Engineering Course	Temporary Traffic Management
I-house Training	Building Defects Analysis

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 in particular the Haddington Road agreement continued during 2017.

RETIREMENTS

The following staff retired during 2017:

- Willie Casey
- Paul Devaney
- John Doyle
- Anthony Gannon
- Patrick Gibbons
- Jimmy Grennan
- Rosemary Keoghan
- Declan Kirrane
- Patricia Marron
- Patrick Moran
- Charles McCarthy
- Christopher Newe
- Maura O'Rourke
- John Ryan
- Michael Slevin
- James Wynne

INFORMATION SYSTEMS

In 2017 the Information Systems department completed projects in a variety of areas across the entire organisation. These included: -

- Maintaining a modern, reliable, secure ICT infrastructure including ongoing migration of all core applications, devices and users to our new ICT infrastructure.
- Development and launch of new mobile responsive website offaly.ie and social media platforms.
- Cyber Security – Continued to deploy suitable and effective technologies to protect the confidentiality, security and integrity of data, applications and infrastructure including new End Point Protection Anti-Virus software.
- Continued development of software systems for the National Waste Collection Permits Office.
- Libraries - Continue to support the library service with all new national initiative including open libraries.
- Irish Water (Water and Waste Water) - Continue to work with water services in the delivery of their ICT requirements.
- GIS – Enhanced the platform for departments and the public to interact with Offaly County Council using latest mapping technologies.
- Upgrade of the Financial Management System
- Implementation of new Library Management System.
- Government Networks Upgrade to 1 Gigabit and VOIP upgrade in Fire Station HQ.
- Ongoing review of Cloud Technology.
- IT Audit completed.
- Ferbane Fire station IT Requirements.
- Office 2016 Rollout to all PC's across the organisation.
- Implementation of ShareFile which is a secure content collaboration, file sharing solution.
- Migration of servers to ensure data integrity and security.
- Continued to work with Government in relation to the National Broadband Plan to ensure that all citizens and businesses have access to high speed broadband no matter where they live or work.
- Value for Money – Continued to work towards the best possible return from investment in ICT and utilise multiple ICT frameworks.
- 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 (to July 2017) John Connelly (from July 2017)
Meetings Administrator:	Miriam Brady

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

Elected Members of Municipal District of Tullamore

Cathaoirleach Frank Moran (Jan. to June 2017)
 Cathaoirleach Sinead Dooley (June to Aug. 2017)
 Cathaoirleach Declan Harvey (Oct. To Dec. 2017)
 Leas Cathaoirleach Sinead Dooley (Jan. to June 2017)
 Leas Cathaoirleach Declan Harvey (June to Oct. 2017)
 Leas Cathaoirleach Frank Moran (Oct. to Dec. 2017)
 Councillor Dervill Dolan
 Councillor Brendan Killeavy
 Councillor Tommy McKeigue
 Councillor Tony McCormack (co-opted from Oct. 2017)

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.

Representatives to Various Bodies

Tullamore Leisure Ltd:	Cllr. Sinead Dooley (to Aug. 2017) Cllr. Declan Harvey Cllr. Danny Owens Cllr. Tommy McKeigue Cllr. Tony McCormack (from Nov. 2017)
Tullamore Community Arts Centre Ltd:	Cllr. Sinead Dooley (to Aug. 2017) Cllr. Declan Harvey Cllr. Danny Owens Cllr. Tommy McKeigue Cllr. Tony McCormack (from Nov. 2017)

Tullamore Sports Link Ltd:	Cllr. Tommy McKeigue
Tullamore Chandler Sister Cities:	Cllr. Sinead Dooley (to Aug. 2017) Cllr. Danny Owens Cllr. Tony McCormack (from Dec. 2017)
Clara Swimming Pool Committee:	Cllr. Frank Moran

2017 Key Activities

- The Municipal District continued its work in partnership with Tullamore Tidy Towns Committee and Tullamore Chamber of Commerce. The town was rewarded with its efforts in September when it was named the cleanest town in Ireland in the first round of the IBAL Awards. Tullamore was also selected to host the Entente Florale Awards Ceremony in 2018, following on from its success in the 2016 Competition.
- Worked with Tidy Towns/Villages Committees throughout the Municipal District.
- Worked with Tullamore Chamber of Commerce and other organisations in promoting the Municipal District.
- Maintained street cleaning services throughout the Municipal District area.
- Continued the Design and Consultation Process for Tullamore Street Enhancement Project, culminating in the preferred option progressing to Part VIII approval

in December. The Project includes Street Enhancement from the Town Hall to Kilbeggan Bridge, and the provision of a bridge linking Main Street to the Bridge Centre.

- Commenced the Clara Rural Town and Village Renewal Scheme, as approved in 2016.
- Lloyd Town Park, Tullamore retained its' Green Flag in 2017, the benchmark national standard for publicly accessible parks and green spaces. The Park also received a Pollinator Project Award for actions carried out to reduce the loss of biodiversity in Lloyd Town Park, including the development of a Pollinator Friendly Garden.
- Worked in partnership with other agencies in facilitating the hosting of the National Ploughing Championships in Mucklagh.
- Received visits/delegations from the following: Mayor of Inverell Shine (Australia), Paul Harmon, in July; Vice-Mayor of Chandler, Kevin Hartke (Chandler is sister city of Tullamore), in August; Delegation from Czech Republic, including Jaroslav Kubera, Vice-President of the Senate, in September.
- A Certificate of Recognition was presented to the Tullamore Branch of the Irish National Foresters on the occasion of the hosting of the 2017 National Convention in Tullamore.
- Schedule of Works 2017 – Consideration and adoption of the Schedule of Works for the Municipal District.

- Budget 2018 - 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 & Church Street, Tullamore.
- Reports from Offaly County Council were given to members at Municipal District Meetings as follows: Environment, Water Services; Housing; Roads & Infrastructure.



Cllr. Tommy McKeigue and Brenda Molloy Carroll, staff member, Municipal District of Tullamore, at the presentation of the Green Flag Awards held in Malahide Castle in July.



Members & staff of Municipal District of Tullamore & Offaly County Council, members of Tullamore Chandler Sister Cities Committee, with the Vice-Mayor of Chandler, Kevin Hartke, (front row centre) and other guests at a civic welcome held in the Town Hall in August 2017.

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF EDENDERRY

Director of Services / Area Manager:

Declan Conlon

Meetings Administrator:

Therese O'Meara & Josephine Lee (from 18th of September 2017)

Senior Executive Engineer:

John Connolly & Mark Mahon (from 10th July 2017)

Assistant Engineer:

Leonard Geoghegan

Elected Members of Edenderry Municipal District

Cllr John Foley, Non Party

Cllr Liam Quinn, Fine Gael

Cllr Noel Bourke, Fianna Fáil, Cathaoirleach (from June 2017)

Cllr Eddie Fitzpatrick, Fianna Fáil, Cathaoirleach (to June 2017)

Cllr Noel Cribbin, Non Party

Cllr Martin O'Reilly, Sinn Féin

Representatives to Various Bodies/Boards

<i>North Offaly Development Fund</i>	All members of Edenderry Municipal District
<i>Edenderry Swimming Pool</i>	Cllr John Foley



Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport, Shane Ross, TD, met with Edenderry Municipal District Members and Offaly County Council Executive

Member required for Corporate Policy Group (CPG)

Cllr Eddie Fitzpatrick represented the Edenderry Municipal District on the CPG until June 2017.

Monthly Meetings

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

The members agreed that the following be included as standing items on their monthly agendas - Job Creation, Hotel Site in Edenderry and the Ambulance Service, the Edenderry Garda Station, Inner Relief Road and Local Enterprise Development.

The members received regular updates from various sections in the Council, namely, Housing, Water and Environment, and Roads Departments.

2017 Activities

Work commenced on the new ambulance base for Edenderry in early March 2017. When up and running this will be open on a 24/7, 365 day basis.

The Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport, Shane Ross, TD, met with Edenderry Municipal District Members and Offaly County Council Executive on Monday, 9th October 2017. Minister Ross received a briefing from Director of Services, Declan Conlon and Area Engineer, Mark Mahon. They outlined the infrastructure priorities,

which are: Inner Relief Road for Edenderry Town, high percentage of roads on cut away peatland; and, R400 from M6 to M7 via Rhode and Portarlington. The Chairman presented the Minister with two books, *"The Wildflowers of Offaly"* by John Feehan and *"Did you know.. 100 quirky facts about County Offaly"* by Amanda Pedlow.

Funding from the Town and Village Renewal Scheme was awarded to Edenderry and Geashill.

As a result Public Realm works commenced on O'Connell Square and the undergrounding of cabling commenced in Geashill.

An example of the art works that were included in an Art Project which was carried out by our resident artist, Annette Troy



Funding was approved and works were completed for 4 Local Improvement Scheme projects.

In 2017 a Roadwork's Programme was completed 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.

Funding was approved for 4 CLÁR projects in the area; create parking at Croghan National School and Cappagh National School; playground equipment for Cappagh National School; and, Signage at the entrance to Croghan School

Three new members of staff started in Edendry Municipal District in 2017; Mark Mahon, Area Engineer, Josephine Lee, Staff Officer and David McEnroe, Traffic/Litter Warden



Our resident staff member and artist in action - Annette Troy



Members and Staff of the Municipal District of Edenderry

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF BIRR

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

Tom Shanahan/Declan Kirrane
Paul McLoughlin/John Mitchell
Deirdre Molloy

Monthly Meetings

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

Elected Members of Birr Municipal District

Cllr Eamonn Dooley, Fianna Fáil, Cathaoirleach (to June 2017)

Cllr Peter Ormond, Fianna Fáil, Cathaoirleach (from June 2017)

Cllr John Carroll, Non Party, Leas Cathaoirleach (from June 2017)

Cllr John Leahy, Renua

Cllr Sean Maher, Sinn Fein

Cllr John Clendennen, Fine Gael

Representatives to Various Bodies/Boards

Birr Swimming Pool	Cllr Sean Maher
SUB Project Committee	Cllr Peter Ormond
West Offaly Enterprise Fund	Cllr Eamonn Dooley Cllr John Leahy
Birr Theatre and Arts Centre	Cllr John Clendennen Cllr John Leahy Cllr Sean Maher Cllr Peter Ormond

Schedule of Reports

It was agreed by the executive of Offaly County Council that reports would be presented to the members from various Council departments on a rolling monthly basis.

During this period reports were received from the following:

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

General Municipal Allocation - Community Grants

In 2016 the Members received an allocation of €70,000 which was made available to community groups and organisations within the Municipal District for projects and activities.



Birr Municipal District won a Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government award for Birr Town in the category 'Enhancing the Urban Environment'

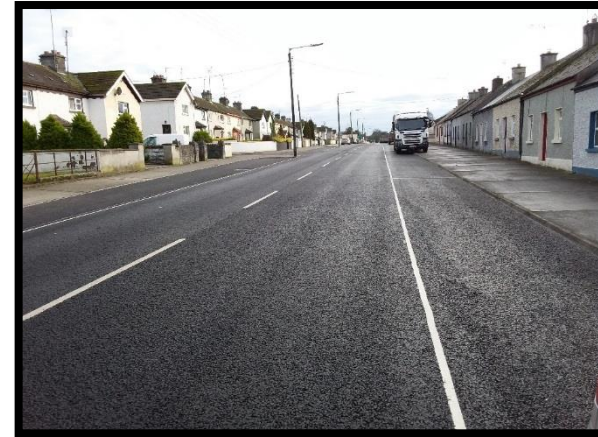


A new pedestrian Bridge was installed at Bridge Street in April 2017 as part of the Birr Active Travel programme

€4 million roads programme was delivered in Birr Municipal District in 2017 improving approximately 50km of the road network in the district



Clonisk School Road

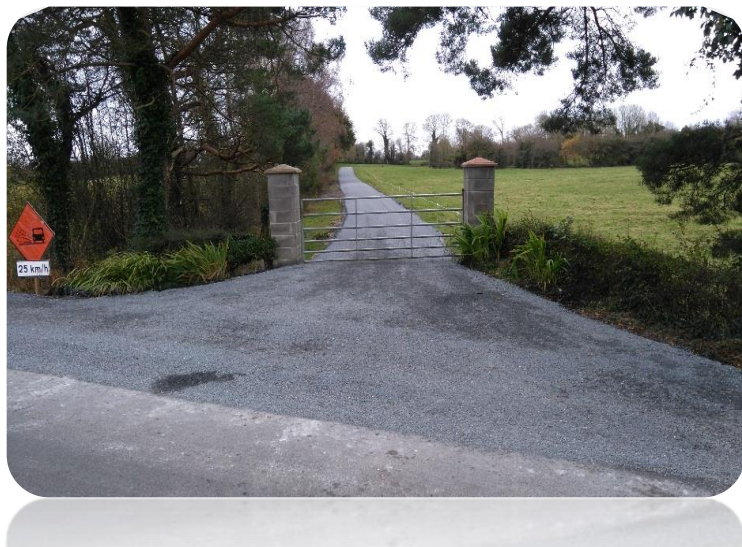


Pound Street, Birr



Kinnitty – Mountrath Road

Birr Municipal District were succesful in delivering a €400,000 Local Improvement Scheme programme on privately owned roads



LIS scheme at Dunkerrin



LIS scheme at Fivealley

SERVICE INDICATORS 2017

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 June 2017 visits to selected local authorities to validate the 2016 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 2017 activity.

For 2017, there are 35 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 J4)

A number of Indicators have been amended and additional Indicators are reported on in 2017. Most of the Housing stock (**H1**) indicator data will be obtained directly from the D/HPLG and the Housing Assistance Payment Shared Services Centre, and NOAC will decide the format of the presentation of the data when it has been compiled and validated. The Roads condition (**R1**) indicator has been amended in relation to the proportion of roads condition surveyed within the specified and the roads works (**R2**) indicator is no longer confined to works funded by grants. The Planning Indicator dealing with Fire Safety Certificates (**P5**) now collects the proportion of applications decided within 2 months and within an agreed extended period. A new Economic Development indicator to establish if a current tourism strategy and designated Tourism Officer are in place (**J4**).

H: HOUSING (H1 TO H6)	2017	2016
H1: SOCIAL HOUSING STOCK		
A. The number of dwellings in the ownership of the Local Authority at 1/1/2017	1800	<i>New in 2017</i>
B. The number of dwellings added to the Local Authority owned stock during in 2017 (whether constructed or acquired)	25	<i>New in 2017</i>
C. The number of Local Authority owned dwellings sold in 2017	19	<i>New in 2017</i>
D. The number of Local Authority owned dwellings demolished in 2017	0	<i>New in 2017</i>
E. The number of dwellings in the ownership of the Local Authority at 31/12/2017	1806	<i>New in 2017</i>
F. The number of Local Authority owned dwellings planned for demolition under a DHPLG approved scheme	0	<i>New in 2017</i>
H2: HOUSING VACANCIES		
A. The percentage of the total number of Local Authority owned dwellings that were vacant on 31/12/2017	1.38%	<i>1.56%</i>
H3: AVERAGE RE-LETTING TIME AND COST		
A. The time taken from the date of vacation of dwelling to the date in 2017 when a new tenancy had commenced in the dwelling, averaged across all units re-let in 2017	25.50 wks	<i>22.31 wks</i>
B. The cost expended on getting the dwellings re-tenanted units in 2017 ready for re-letting, averaged across all units re-let in 2017	€ 16,163.75	<i>€ 17,274.00</i>
H4: HOUSING MAINTENANCE COST		
A. Expenditure during 2017 on the repair and maintenance of housing bought or built by the LA compiled on a continuous basis from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017, divided by the no. of directly provided units in the LA stock at 31/12/2017	€ 458.03	<i>€ 461.00</i>

H5: PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR INSPECTIONS		
A. Total number of registered tenancies in the LA area at the end of June 2017	3,476	3,287
B. Number of rented dwellings inspected in 2017	94	26
C. Percentage of inspected dwellings in 2017 that were found not to be compliant with the Standards Regulations	6.38%	<i>New in 2017</i>
D. Number of non-compliant dwellings that became compliant during 2017	6	<i>New in 2017</i>
H6: LONG-TERM HOMELESS ADULTS		
A. Number of adult individuals in emergency accommodation that are long-term homeless as a % of the total number of homeless adult individuals in emergency accommodation at the end of 2017.	59.38%	6.25%

R: ROADS (R1 AND R2)		2017	2016
R1: RATINGS IN PAVEMENT SURFACE CONDITION INDEX (PSCI)			
A. The % of (a) Regional , (b) Local Primary and (c) Local Secondary , road kilometres that have received a PSCI condition rating in the 24-month period prior to 31/12/2017 The % of (d) Local Tertiary road kilometres that have received a PSCI condition rating in the 60-month period prior to 31/12/2017	<i>Regional</i>	96%	99%
	<i>Local Primary</i>	79%	<i>Amended in 2017</i>
	<i>Local Secondary</i>	27%	<i>Amended in 2017</i>
	<i>Local Tertiary</i>	80%	<i>Amended in 2017</i>
B. The % of total regional roads that received a PSCI condition rating during 2016		Not reported in 2017	5%
C. The % of total (a) Regional road kilometres at 31/12/2017 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>	2%	14%
	<i>Category 5 - 6</i>	19%	17%
	<i>Category 7 - 8</i>	51%	32%
	<i>Category 9 - 10</i>	28%	37%
C. The % of total (b) Local Primary , road kilometres at 31/12/2017 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>	12%	32%
	<i>Category 5 - 6</i>	35%	27%
	<i>Category 7 - 8</i>	36%	26%
	<i>Category 9 - 10</i>	15%	13%
C. The % of total (c) Local Secondary , road kilometres at 31/12/2017 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>	31%	35%
	<i>Category 5 - 6</i>	21%	21%
	<i>Category 7 - 8</i>	23%	22%
	<i>Category 9 - 10</i>	19%	17%

C. The % of total (d) Local Tertiary , road kilometres at 31/12/2017 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%	35%
	<i>Category 5 - 6</i>	13%	14%
	<i>Category 7 - 8</i>	16%	15%
	<i>Category 9 - 10</i>	18%	18%
R2: REGIONAL ROAD GRANTS WORKS			
A. Kilometres of Regional Road strengthened during 2017.	<i>Km of Road</i>	10.5 km	8.8 km
	<i>Amount Spent</i>	€ 1,106,201	€ 1,027,221
B. Kilometres of Regional Road resealed during 2017.	<i>Km of Road</i>	6.9 km	5.9 km
	<i>Amount Spent</i>	€ 195,551	€ 223,500
C. Kilometres of Local Road strengthened during 2017.	<i>Km of Road</i>	24.3 km	27.0 km
	<i>Amount Spent</i>	€ 1,828,659	€ 2,239,394
D. Kilometres of Local Road resealed during 2017.	<i>Km of Road</i>	39.6 km	35.6 km
	<i>Grant Amount</i>	€ 675,950	€ 683,611
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) in 2017		63.79%	60.46%

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 1/1/2017 to 31/12/2017 and the number of such transactions conducted online.

W: WATER (W1)	2017	2016
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 2017.	<i>Provided by EPA</i>	98.93%

Note: This data will be obtained directly from the EPA and was not available at time of publication.

E: WASTE / ENVIRONMENT (E1 TO E3)	2017	2016	
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 31/12/2017	3,726	3,465	
B. The % of households within the LA area (also as per the 2016 Census) that the number at (A) represents.	13.71%	12.75%	
E2: % OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION COMPLAINTS CLOSED			
A. The total no. of pollution cases in respect of which a complaint was made during 2017, the number of pollution cases closed from 1/1/2017 to 31/12/2017 and the total no. of cases on hands at 31/12/2017.	<i>Complaints Made</i>	1033	933
	<i>No. Closed</i>	899	848
	<i>No. on Hand</i>	123	85
E3: % OF LA AREA WITHIN THE 5 LEVELS OF LITTER POLLUTION			
A. The % of the area within the LA that when surveyed in 2017 was 1) unpolluted or litter free , 2) slightly polluted , 3) moderately polluted , 4) significantly polluted , or 5) grossly polluted .	<i>Provided by Tobin Consulting Engineers</i>		13%
			60%
			27%
			0%
			0%

The data will be submitted by Tobin Consulting Engineers directly to the LGMA from the data for the 2017 National Litter Pollution Monitoring System Report that should be ready for publication in mid-2018.

P: PLANNING (P1 TO P5)	2017	2016
P1: NEW BUILDINGS INSPECTED		
A. Buildings Inspected as a percentage of new buildings notified to the local authority	21.18%	38.46%
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 2017	17	17
B. % of the determinations at A which were to confirm (either with or without variation) the decision made by the LA	82.35%	88.24%
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 1/1/2017 to 31/12/2017 that were investigated	60	51
B. Total number of cases that were closed during 2017	39	29
C. % of the cases at B that were dismissed, as trivial, minor, or without foundation, under Section 152(2), Planning and Development Act 2000 or were closed because statute barred or an exempted development.	25.64%	17.24%
D. % of the cases at B that were resolved to the LA's satisfaction through negotiations	5.13%	0.00%
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)	69.23%	82.76%
F. Total number of planning cases being investigated as at 31/12/2017.	79	68
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.	€ 29.13	€ 29.11

P5: APPLICATIONS FOR FIRE SAFETY CERTIFICATES		
A. The % of applications for Fire Safety Certificates received in 2017 that were decided (granted or refused) within two months of their receipt.	95.16%	<i>New in 2017</i>
B. The % of applications for Fire Safety Certificates received in 2017 that were decided (granted or refused) within an extended period agreed with the applicant.	4.84%	<i>New in 2017</i>

F: FIRE SERVICE (F1 TO F3)	2017	2016
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.	€ 43.04	€ 41.50
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	5.39	5.19
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	5.16	5.20
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	47.21%	46.36%
B. % of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at the scene is after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	40.22%	46.36%

C. % of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes	12.57%	7.27%
D. % of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance at the scene is within 10 minutes	35.92%	30.39%
E. % of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance at the scene is after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	50.49%	56.86%
F. % of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes	13.59%	12.75%

L: LIBRARY / RECREATION SERVICES (L1 AND L2)	2017	<i>2016</i>
L1: LIBRARY VISITS AND ISSUES		
A. Number of visits to libraries per head of population for the LA area per the 2016 Census.	3.15	<i>3.34</i>
B. Number of items issued to library borrowers in the year.	222,186	<i>239,312</i>
L2: COST OF OPERATING A LIBRARY SERVICE		
A. The Annual Financial Statement (AFS) Programme F data divided by the population of the LA area per the 2016 Census.	€ 29.95	<i>€ 28.04</i>

Y: YOUTH / COMMUNITY (Y1 AND Y2)	2017	2016
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%	<i>100.00%</i>
Y2: GROUPS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK (PPN)		
The number of organisations included in the County Register at 31/12/2017 and the proportion of those organisations that opted to be part of the Social Inclusion College (SIC) within the PPN	3.92	<i>Amended in 2017</i>

C: CORPORATE SERVICES (C1 TO C4)	2017	2016
C1: TOTAL NUMBER OF WTEs		
A. The whole-time equivalent staffing number as at 31 December 2017	369.70	<i>378.40</i>
C2: WORKING DAYS LOST TO SICKNESS		
A. Percentage of working days lost to sickness absence through medically certified leave	2.61%	<i>3.68%</i>
B. Percentage of working days lost to sickness absence through self-certified leave	0.26%	<i>0.24%</i>
C3: No. OF PAGE VISITS TO LA WEBSITE		
A. Total page views of the local authority's website in 2017.	869,358	<i>576,020</i>
B. Total number of followers at end 2017 of the LA's social media accounts (if any).	41,084	<i>17,603</i>
C4: OVERALL COST OF ICT PROVISION PER WTE		
A. All ICT expenditure in the period from 1/1/2017 to 31/12/2017, divided by the WTE number	€ 3,446.12	<i>€ 2,695.96</i>

M: FINANCE (M1 AND M2)		2017		
M1:5 YEAR SUMMARY OF REVENUE ACCOUNT BALANCE				
A. The cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2013				-€ 5,293,325
B. The cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2014				-€ 4,734,969
C. The cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2015				-€ 4,154,223
D. The cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2016				- € 3,611,785
E. The cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2017				-€ 3,058,002
F. The cumulative surplus or deficit at 31/12/2017 as a percentage of Total Income in 2016 from the Income and Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS**				- 5.09%
G. Revenue Expenditure per capita for the year				€ 738.99
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 2013</i>		81.66	84.79	60.44
B. <i>Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2014</i>		82.12	85.34	61.63
C. <i>Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2015</i>		84.80	86.00	61.13
D. <i>Appendix 7 of the AFS** for 2016</i>		88.00	86.00	59.00
E. <i>Appendix 7 of the AFS** for 2017</i>		85.80	83.30	55.30

* 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 TO J4)	2017	<i>2016</i>
J1: No. of JOBS CREATED		
The no. of jobs created with assistance from the Local Enterprise Office during the period 1/1/2017 to 31/12/2017	62.00	<i>82.00</i>
J2: TRADING ONLINE VOUCHERS		
The no. of trading online voucher applications approved by the Local Enterprise Office in 2017.	15	<i>14</i>
The no. of those trading online vouchers applications that were drawn down in 2017.	10	<i>17</i>
J3: No. of MENTORING RECIPIENTS		
The no. of participants who received mentoring during the period 1/1/2017 to 31/12/2017	124	<i>140</i>
J4: TOURISM		
Does the Local Authority have a current Tourism Strategy?	Yes	<i>New in 2017</i>
Does the Local Authority have a designated Tourism Officer?	Yes	<i>New in 2017</i>

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