

ANNUAL SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN 2024

Adopted by a resolution of
Offaly County Council
on 15th January 2024



Comhairle Chontae Uíbh Fhailí
Offaly County Council

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Introduction

Offaly County Council is required by Section 134A of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended by the Local Government Act 2014) to prepare an Annual Service Delivery Plan (ASDP).

The Annual Service Delivery Plan sets out the services intended to be provided to the public in the year ahead. It is consistent with the provisions of Offaly County Council's adopted budget for 2024 in setting out the expenditure estimated to be necessary for the Council to carry out its functions in the coming year.

The Service Delivery Plan is required to take account of best practice in service delivery including having regard to the scrutiny of performance by the National Oversight and Audit Commission.

The Annual Service Delivery Plan 2024 includes

- a statement of the principal services that will either continue to be provided or will otherwise be provided in 2024
- the objectives and priorities for the delivery of each of the services
- the performance standards intended to be met in the delivery of services
- the manner in which Offaly County Council proposes to assess its performance in respect of the delivery of services including identification of relevant indicators as are appropriate

The Annual Service Delivery Plan was prepared following the adoption of the Offaly County Council 2024 Budget. Following consideration by the members the plan must be adopted by resolution at the January 2024 meeting of Offaly County Council.

The adoption of the Plan is a Reserved Function.

The following resolution should be passed to adopt the plan:

"In accordance with Section 134A of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended, the Annual Service Delivery Plan 2024 as recommended by the Chief Executive is hereby adopted".

Financial Context

Cost of Living Crisis

There is significant uncertainty in relation to the economic environment that people and businesses in Offaly face in 2024. The impact of energy cost inflation and general inflation for both businesses and our citizens will be very significant in 2024, the effect of these very real and tangible cost increases will have an impact right across the county. Offaly County Council is not immune from these cost increases (in particular energy) and the indirect impacts this will have on our income streams (Rates / Loans / Rents Collections).

The impact of the current local and international economic factors has had a strong influence on the framing of the 2024 budget, given the effect on pricing from the ongoing war in Ukraine, challenges affecting local business and supply chains from the emergence from the COVID-19 global pandemic, and latterly instability in the Middle East. The cost of doing business has increased dramatically for all businesses in the county in the last twelve months and inflation, while reducing, remains at a historic high level. Throughout the economy, in every sector, wage pressures have mounted as individuals respond to economic factors. Globally interest rates have risen from a zero rate to close on 4% in the last 18 months as the response to inflation continues. Offaly County is, like any business, subject to these pressures and this budget has had to accommodate rising costs across all services. In addition, some income lines have come under some pressure as individuals and business contract their spend and manage their cashflows.

Local Property Tax (LPT)

The Local Property Tax decision is part of an annual budget statutory process, whereby the elected members decide on any increase or decrease in advance of the adoption of the annual statutory budget. At the LPT meeting on September 19th 2022, the executive formally proposed to maintain the variation to the local property tax adjustment factor applied in 2022 for 2023 and 2024. This decision has ensured that, in 2024, additional LPT income of €722,376 will be generated. It is proposed that this funding will form the basis of matching funds for development projects of significant scale in the county. This is a key form of funding for Offaly County Council as the level of discretionary funding available to the council from its own resources is low and is diminishing the council's ability to participate in the many types of match funding schemes operated by the DHLGH and other Government Departments.

Decarbonisation

The decision taken by the ESB to cease the production of power in their West Offaly Power facility located at Shannonbridge still presents a very serious risk to the commercial rates income for Offaly County Council in the coming years.

The DHLGH confirmed that government funding of € 1.7m will again be provided to Offaly County Council in 2024 (as it was in 2021-2023) in the context of the loss

of rates income to Offaly County Council following the closure of the Shannonbridge Power Plant. This funding is very welcome and will help to fund the ongoing provision of front line services in Offaly in the coming year. However, it should be noted that this funding has been recommitted to for 2024 only and that a permanent solution to this loss of income will be required to ensure that the long term financial stability of Offaly County Council is not put at risk as a direct result of the decarbonisation agenda.

General Municipal Allocation

The General Municipal Allocation (GMA) increases for 2024. This discretionary funding will be allocated to projects focussing on local community priorities and initiatives in 2024. The total allocation is €576k. It is apportioned to Municipal Districts as follows:

- Tullamore MD - €200k
- Birr MD - €192k
- Edenderry MD - €184k

Commercial Rates

Rates Changes 2024 Significant provisions in the Local Government rates and Other Matters Act 2019, have been commenced on November 6th 2023 which will see significant changes in the rates billing and collection process for 2024. While we await further clarification on the exact operations of these measures, the implications for rates billing in 2024 are,

- Rates bills will have only one moiety, as the rates become due in full on the issue of the rates demand.
- Amendments to the valuation list will become effective immediately, meaning rates bills will issue following occupancy during the year.
- As a result of this above, Property Entry Levy (PEL) will no longer apply.
- The adoption of the rates in the annual budget process is now under Section 3 of the Local Government Rates and Other Matters Act 2019
- Interest will be applicable to uncollected rates debts from 1st January 2025.
- New measures regarding the Vacancy abatement schemes will be in place. Budget 2024
- Additional measures around the obligation of a liable person to notify the local authority about changes in status of the property.
- Changes in the compilation and publication of the rate book and the billing timelines. It is not expected these measures will inconvenience compliant ratepayers and most of the changes are an attempt to streamline the billing process, and the flow of property information.

Rates Rebate on Vacant Premises Motion

The Local Government Rates and Other Matters Act 2019 provides for a change to rating law in relation to the refund of rates on vacant properties; it provides discretion to the elected members of individual local authorities to vary the level of rates refunds that apply in individual local electoral areas within the authority's overall administrative area.

Section 9 (2) of the Act provides that the decision to alter the rate of refund should be taken at the annual budget meeting and that the rate of refund decided in respect of the relevant local electoral area shall apply to eligible persons for the year to which the budget relates, only.

Delivery of Services

In preparing the Annual Service Plan for 2024 all existing services have been reviewed by the Management Team to ensure that:

- (a) They continue to be relevant to the functions of the Local Authority,
- (b) They are being delivered in an efficient and effective manner,
- (c) That value for money is being achieved in the delivery of services.

There was an extensive review of income and expenditure in all areas prior to finalising Offaly County Council's budget for 2024.

Following an extensive review of expenditure and incomes, additional funding was identified to allow Offaly County Council to increase expenditure in the following areas in 2024.

OCC Funded additional allocations for 2024	
Additional Housing Provision for Voids/Prelets	637,000
Additional Housing Stock Maintenance Expenditure	264,000
Funding for Own stock Housing DPG's	100,000
Additional County Roads/Winter Maintenance Allocation	240,000
Additional Resources for Public Lighting	100,000
Parking Meter modernisation/contract revision	144,000
Additional costs associated with increased borrowing costs in 2024	413,000
Increase in Deficit reduction provision	350,000
Additional Funding for Climate Action	300,000
Library Buildings and Utilities	104,000
Library Book Fund (including Edenderry library)	80,000
Economic development initiatives	82,000
UVR match funding	100,000
Forward Planning - Statutory plans and digitisation	110,000
Municipal District Allocations	66,000
Burial Ground Capital Provision	20,000
Greenways and Trail Maintenance	55,000
Street Cleaning	120,000
Parks and Open Spaces	90,000
Graveyard Maintenance	30,000
Playgrounds Repair and Renewals	90,000
Area Office – Signage Allocation	30,000
	3,525,000

Irish Water/Uisce Éireann

At the end July 2023, Uisce Éireann assumed full responsibility for the operation of water and waste waters services. Extensive discussions between the LA sector, UÉ and DHLGH throughout 2023 regarding the funding arrangements for this change have concluded. Transitional arrangements for staff transfers and Central Management Charge (CMC) funding have been agreed. The draft budget anticipates this arrangement will have a small impact on the revenue account of Offaly in 2024, depending on the CMC out-turn. The Funding assistance provided by the DHLGH in this transitional arrangement is very much appreciated.

Organisational Resources

Division	Adopted Budget 2023 €	%	Adopted Budget 2024 €	%
A - Housing & Building	13,964,275	18%	15,593,160	18%
B - Road Transport & Safety	21,704,705	29%	22,495,869	26%
C - Water Services	5,518,932	7%	5,408,351	7%
D - Development Management	11,914,661	16%	13,968,386	16%
E - Environmental services	9,473,761	12%	12,738,916	15%
F - Recreation and Amenity	4,913,610	6%	5,496,129	7%
G - Agri, Education, Health & Welfare	607,145	1%	623,854	1%
H - Miscellaneous Services	8,101,381	11%	8,661,506	10%
	76,198,470	100%	84,986,171	100%

In the table above is a high level overview of budgeted spending by Division for both 2023 and 2024.

1. Land Use, Planning and Economic growth

The Table below sets out the principal services to be delivered and the budgetary provision adopted by the members of Offaly County Council in Budget 2024 to fund these services;

Budget Service	Service Description	Total Budget 2024
D01	Forward Planning	€1,097,365
D02	Development Management	€2,340,700
D03	Enforcement	€395,064
D04	Industrial and Commercial facilities	€189,881
D05	Tourism Development and Promotion	€389,028
D07	Unfinished Housing Estates	€43,406
D09	Economic Development and Promotion	€3,831,872
D11	Heritage & Conservation Services	€405,028
TOTAL		€8,692,344

Objectives	Supporting Strategies	Principal Budget Service
1.1 Facilitate and support sustainable economic development	a. Lead the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) in the preparation and implementation of the Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP) and in the administration of LEADER and SICAP programmes.	D06
	b. Focus local government service delivery towards supporting enterprise and economic development including key infrastructural investment.	D01, D02, D04
	c. Ensure the County Development Plan and Local Area Plans support balanced sustainable growth and protect quality of life	D01
	d. Provide supports to start-ups and local enterprise through the Local Enterprise Office	D09
	e. Work in partnership as region to implement the Midlands Regional Enterprise Plan to maximise employment creation and economic opportunities.	D09
	f. Maximise the potential of opportunities available through the designation of the Midlands as an EU Peat Region in Transition	D01,D02,D09 D05
	g. Create an Economic Vision / Plan for each of our three main towns: Tullamore, Birr and Edenderry	D09, D01
	h. Support a vibrant rural economy through agriculture, food, technology and the creative industries.	D09 ,D04

	i. Work in partnership to promote and support industry sectors such as Manufacturing, Construction, Green Energy, Food and Drink, Healthcare, Design and Innovation.	D09
	j. Consider feasibility studies for tourism attractions and employment creation.	D05, D01
	k. Promote and support the growth of the renewable energy sector	D01, D02, D09
	l. Continue to work in partnership with Communities and use Urban Renewal, Town and Village Renewal and Outdoor Recreation programmes to increase the attractiveness of our places	D09 E10
	m. Acquire strategic sites for economic development.	Capital D01
	n. Work with land and asset owners such as ESB, Bord na Móna, Coillte and others to maximise public benefit from those assets in the 'post-peat', low carbon context	D01, D02 D05, D11
	o. Work with government agencies and telecommunication providers to facilitate deliverer of high speed broadband to all premises in Offaly.	D04, D09
1.2 Promote Offaly as a place to live, visit and do business	a. Roll out the new brand for Offaly County Council and enhance the branding of Tullamore as a place to do business, to meet and hold conferences.	D09, D05
	b. Continue to share positive publicity through social media and all other appropriate means	J03
	c. Promote Offaly as a cycling destination	D05
	d. Implement and review the Offaly Tourism Strategy	D05
	e. Make heritage sites accessible and improve signage and information including inputs to www.visitoffaly.ie	D11
	f. Promote Offaly as the location of choice for remote working from our digital hubs and reverse commuting in affordable, green office spaces	D04, D09
	g. Promote Offaly's sense of place through innovation in our arts, culture, heritage and library services and through support for creative industries.	D11, D06, F02, F05

Enabling Economic Growth – Performance Targets 2024

Broadband - Key Actions for 2024

In 2024 Offaly County Council's Broadband / Digital Officer will continue to support the National Digital Strategy (NDS), Harnessing Digital: The Digital Ireland Framework to maximise the economic and societal benefits of digitalisation and to ensure that all are able to enjoy those benefits.

The Broadband / Digital Officer work programme will continue to deliver on the objectives of Offaly's Digital Strategy and will look to develop a new strategy in 2024, maximising funding opportunities and ensuring the delivery of a range of diverse and accessible programmes to include;

- Be the single point of contact for engagement with telecommunications operators and government departments in the delivery of telecommunications infrastructure, including the National Broadband Plan and 5G Mobile Infrastructure.
- Manage the successful rollout of the National Broadband Plan (NPB) and implementation of actions identified in the Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce Report. In 2023, 1672 premises are now able to get Fibre broadband due to NPB, and we continue to work with National Broadband Ireland to escalate the delivery in Offaly.
- Offaly Digital Strategy - Work to commence on Offaly's second Digital Strategy and continue to project manage the implementation of actions defined and leading on certain actions as appropriate.
- Support NDS. It is set out across four core dimensions, which are aligned with the four cardinal points of the EU's Digital Compass: Digital Transformation of Business, Digital Infrastructure, Skills, and Digitalisation of Public Services.
- Engage with businesses, community groups, schools, and other sectors to foster the development of digital opportunities.
- Develop Public Wi-Fi locations which are now available in over 100 locations throughout the county, and we plan to develop initiatives to promote the use of this service.
- Continue to work on creating sustainable digital hubs in communities. These hubs provide workspaces with high-speed telecommunications capacity for the use of workers, entrepreneurs, and local communities.
- STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) Education – Continue to develop the programme in Offaly with Schools, Industry Partners & Regional Clusters.
- Midland ICT Skills & Talent – Continue to work with Industry, Education and Government to develop a digitally skilled workforce in areas such as

advanced manufacturing, robotics, engineering, software, and data analytics.

- Further develop e-denderry as a smart town/community.
- Apply for funding for Digital Initiatives under various schemes.

Enterprise & Economic Development

2024 Objectives

For 2024, LEO Offaly will continue to work with stakeholders, businesses and community groups to strengthen and develop enterprise and economic activity in the County.

2024 Enterprise & Economic Development Priorities include:

- Provide timely and relevant supports to new and existing micro-enterprises clients.
- Implement the Pilot to provide assistance to businesses with export potential, employing up to 50 staff.
- Focus on improved business efficiencies, innovation, export and sustainability.
- Promote Entrepreneurship across all ages– Student Enterprise, Female Entrepreneurship, Second Career/Senior Enterprise.
- Deliver Local Enterprise Development Plan 2021-2024.
- Collaborate with stakeholders and industry to deliver the Offaly Economic Strategy & Action Plan 2022-2027.
- Co-Ordinate and collaborate with stakeholders to deliver the Economic Element of the Local Economic & Community Plan 2022-2028.
- Explore opportunities for developing a new Industrial Park in Tullamore and/or acquiring new industrial lands elsewhere in the County.
- Assist in the development of Offaly Tourism to address new Product Development and capability development of Tourism Providers.
- Continue to work with and support Offaly Innovation & Design Centre CLG and the development of co-working hubs in Offaly.
- Develop further stakeholder engagement and promotion of Rhode Green Energy Park and Green Energy Opportunities for Offaly.
- Implement Just Transition and other Funding Awards for The Junction Business Innovation Centre and streamBIRR.

Tourism

Offaly Tourism team continue to work closely with the tourism and hospitality sectors, in developing the sector, promoting Offaly, building awareness, increasing visitor numbers and dwell time.

2024 Tourism Priorities:

- Launch and implement the new Offaly Tourism Strategy 2023-2027, through collaboration with relevant stakeholders.
- Operation of the Tourist Office in Tullamore throughout the year.
- Build on strong media coverage by continuing to focus on public relations, print media, social media and TV opportunities.
- Focus on building social media presence, through very active engagement across three social media channels; Facebook, Instagram and X.
- Maintain the Visit Offaly website (www.visitoffaly.ie) ensuring content is fresh, relevant and informative.
- Build presence at annual events such as The Holiday World Show, Tullamore Show and Birr Vintage Week.
- Inform and engage with members of Offaly Tourism Marketing CLG through regular meetings and networking events.
- Encompass new developments into our marketing activities as they emerge and grow; Slieve Bloom Mountain Bike Trails, Grand Canal Greenway etc.
- Work closely with Waterways Ireland and Failte Ireland to activate tourism initiatives along the Grand Canal Greenway.
- Offaly Tourism will take cognizance of Masterplans due to be delivered in 2024. These include Masterplans for Clonmacnoise, Banagher and Grand Canal Tullamore Harbour.
- The EU Just Transition Investment Grant Aid Scheme for Private & Community SMEs will be delivered from 2024 – 2026. The newly appointed Tourism Activator, along with the tourism team, will work closely with the tourism and hospitality sector to raise awareness, elicit quality project proposals, inform, network, mentor and assist the sector in every way possible in order to leverage the funding opportunities available.

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

Development Management

- Planning applications, pre-planning, other consents eg. Large Scale Residential Developments (LRD), Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID), Section 5 Declarations etc.
- Assistance with rollout of **National Broadband Plan** in Offaly – ‘Section 254 licences’ dealt with as expeditiously as possible.
- Continued engagement with and support for **online planning** which commenced in Offaly County Council on 27th June 2023, as part of the national roll-out.
- **Housing:** Pre-planning for private and social / affordable housing; planning applications; Input into Part 8 Local Authority Developments, Input into masterplans.
- **Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) Applications:** Pre-planning meetings, formal consultation with An Bord Pleanála, preparation of Chief Executive’s report and consultation with elected members.
- **Rent Pressure Zone** – Tullamore
- **Enforcement & Compliance** – deal with enforcement in accordance with the 2013 Ministerial Directive in relation to prioritisation.
- Maintenance of a **record** of residential development permitted.

Forward Planning

- Prepare **Tullamore Local Area Plan (LAP)**.
- Prepare **Joint Portarlington LAP, in co-operation with Laois County Council as lead Authority**.
- Carry out functions required under the Finance Act in respect of the **Residential Zoned Land Tax** i.e. draft map in Q1 and assessment of submissions,

supplemental map in Q2 and assessment of submissions, potential CDP variation arising from same and preparation of final maps before year end.

- Input into Area Based Transport Assessments (ABTAs) for Tullamore and Portarlington, which are now a pre-requisite for LAPs.
- Management of SEA, AA and Flood Risk Assessment consultants for the LAPs and potential CDP variation.
 - Input into steering groups for **Tullamore Regeneration Framework, Tullamore Urban Regeneration & Development Fund (URDF)** – with Tullamore MD, **Blundell Masterplan Edenderry, Tullamore Harbour Masterplan, Banagher Marina & Environs Masterplan** and **Birr Rectory Masterplan**.
- Membership of Offaly Heritage Forum.

Other

Delivery, in conjunction with the Regeneration Team, Birr & Edenderry Municipal Districts of the **Outdoor Infrastructure Recreation Scheme (ORIS) projects at Kinnitty (2020) and Derryounce (2021) Development Measure**.

Tourism

- Membership of Steering Group & Working Group for Clonmacnoise masterplan (OPW).
- Membership of Offaly Tourism Strategy Steering Group.
- Work in partnership with Waterways Ireland to pursue projects arising from the Shannon Masterplan.

Architecture & Conservation

- **Architectural/Conservation Report for Planning Applications** Planning reports relating to all Protected Structures and Large Planning Files, will be undertaken, (68 reports completed in 2023).
- **S57 Declarations** – Will be carried out within the required 12-week timeframe, involving site visit, research, report, (17 Declarations for 2023, note this is a considerable increase from the average 8 or 9 in previous years).

- **Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS) –€126,400** has been allocated to OCC for 2024, (11 projects completed in 2023). 2024 scheme has been launched and advertised.
- **HSF (Historic Structures Fund)** – 2024 scheme has been launched and advertised, (3 projects completed 2023; Kinnitty Castle window repairs (€37,500), Birr Suspension Bridge, repairs (€135,750), St Mary's COI Ballyboy, structural repairs – tenders received via consultants, PSCS process, OCC owned, (€37,500), Total for 2023 **€210,750**).
- **Creative Ireland:** part of Creative Ireland Team - Annual funding for Follies project **€10,000** and Vernacular **€5,000**
- **Heritage Council Stewardship Funding**, new scheme in 2022: Heritage Council, application made partnering with Irish Georgian Society for Traditional Skills weekend in Bir, June 2024. (**€19,926** Conservation Management Plan Tubberdaly Gazebo (former castle) 2023 by Howley Hayes Cooney recommendations, together with CORA Consulting Engineers, Colm Flynn, Archaeologist and Tir 3D).
- **RRDF** – Continue with Steering Group for Banagher project.
- **Masterplan Steering Groups** – Continue with Tullamore Harbour and Tullamore Town.
- **Town Enhancements** – Kinnitty, sketch proposals for further phases.
- **Birr Destination Town** – Failte Ireland funding, project to commenced on site and underway, new entrance to Birr Demesne, The Green, practically complete. New pedestrian crossing to be completed across to The Green in 2024 Q1.
- Heritage Forum attend and update quarterly meetings.

Heritage, Natural, Built and Cultural

- Delivery based on **Offaly Heritage Plan 2023-27**. Arrange four Offaly Heritage Forum meetings.
- **Heritage Council Funded Projects** total support €37,500 is allocated from Heritage Council as 75% of funding towards delivery of the plan.
- **Medieval Churches and Burial Grounds** (1) The final stages of the Just Transition project will be signed off on (2) the maintenance programme for those churches already conserved will be continued.
- **Community Monuments Fund** – Applications from the Council will be submitted to the National Monuments Service in February. It is anticipated that c. €400,000 will be made available for conservation reports and works for archaeological monuments in Offaly. Based on 2023 4-5 projects will be onsite with 1-2 conservation reports.

- The **Offaly Biodiversity Action Plan** will be developed in 2024. Biodiversity projects utilizing funding from the **Local Biodiversity Action Plan** will receive 85% funding of c €95,000.
- **Creative Ireland 2023-27.** The programme places creativity at the centre of public policy focusing on projects that are collaborative involving the arts, heritage and libraries with strong community reach with a budget of c.€200,000 anticipated in 2024. Co-ordination of the Creative Ireland Team in Offaly County Council. Karen Gray joined the team in 2023 as the full time Creative Community Engagement Officer.
- **County Archive Service** work along with the county librarian to support the development of the county archive service led by Offaly History and participate in quarterly meetings.
- **Publications** – support and facilitate the production and publication of high quality books about Offaly's heritage.
- **Tidy Towns and Local Community Heritage Projects** – work with Community section to support the Tidy Towns Network. Assist community groups to plan and deliver heritage projects.
- Progress delivery of the interpretive strategy for Lemanaghan Monastic site led by Kevin O'Dwyer in partnership with the community.
- **Heritage Awareness** – Annual Heritage Seminar in Q1; Social Media posts on facebook; Youtubes continuing the Wildflowers of Offaly series; In Your Nature podcasts; Offaly Naturalists' Field Club programming; Biodiversity Week in the spring and Heritage Week programming for 9 days in August.

Regeneration

Town Regeneration Officer

- Provide a coordinated and comprehensive response both at local and national level to the significant challenges facing Offaly Towns.
- Support the establishment of Town Teams, ensuring development and delivery on the Town Centre First Plans alongside local champions.
- Provide the vital link between the Town Teams, the expertise within the Local Authority and other organisations, and will facilitate the Town Teams in accessing funding, delivering on projects, and supporting implementation at a local a level.
- Implement/enable projects identified in Clara Town Centre First Master Plan
- Carry out Town Centre First Plan for the next town in Offaly.

Dereliction & Vacancy

- Derelict/Vacancy Team resourced, including Vacant Homes Officer
- Implement Policy and Procedure on Derelict Sites adopted in May 2023 on a town-by-town basis.
- Implement Croí Cónaithe Vacant Homes Refurbishment Grant
- Maintain all Department developed apps with respect to vacancy and dereliction.
- Rollout Call 3 Urban Regeneration & Development Fund – €2m secured to address vacancy and dereliction in Tullamore town.

Rural Regeneration Development Fund (RRDF)

Continue development of the following

- Banagher Regeneration Projects, launch Masterplan for Banagher Marina and Environs.
- Ferbane Regeneration project redevelopment of St Joseph's Convent and site.
- Edenderry Blundell Masterplan and Edenderry Community Library and Arts Space development Phase II.
- Submit application for Edenderry Phase III for the redevelopment of the former Tesco Site.

Town & Village Renewal Scheme (TVR)

Continue development of the TVR Scheme including:

- Ferbane Fairgreen
- Killeigh Community Centre.
- Ballyboy development of green space and recreational area.
- Clonbullogue creation of the "People's Park" and safe walking train route
- Development of plaza at Market Sq., Birr
- Redevelopment of Old Fiesta Hall, Kilcormac
- Redevelopment of Old Shinrone Library
- Project Development Measures of 71 Church view Moneygall to secure Design team for development of a community building.
- Project Development Measures of Daingean Townhall to develop an updated Conservation Master Plan.
- Develop projects which receive approval under the 2023 TVR Scheme
- Develop, prepare and submit applications under the 2024 TVR Scheme
- Liaison with the community groups re accessing TVR funding opportunities.

Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS)

Continue development of ORIS successful projects including:

- Project Development Measure 2022 - Derrycastle Lakes and Trails – 10-year strategy plan and project development for future itemised projects
- Project Development Measure 2023 – The Peatland Communities of Offaly: Quality of Life, Place & Experience.

Community Centre Investment Fund

- Develop projects which receive approval under the 2023 scheme.
- Develop, prepare and submit applications under the 2024 Scheme.

2. Housing

The Table below sets out the principal services to be delivered and the budgetary provision adopted by the members of Offaly County Council in Budget 2024 to fund these services;

Budget Service	Service Description	Total Budget 2024
A01	Maintenance and Improvement of LA Housing Units	€4,096,459
A02	Housing Assessment, Allocation and Transfer	€499,821
A03	Housing Rent and Tenant Purchase Administration	€959,940
A04	Housing Community Development Support	€417,898
A05	Administration of Homeless Service	€1,007,103
A06	Support to Housing Capital Programme	€2,172,928
A07	RAS and Leasing Programme	€3,257,264
A08	Housing Loans	€665,113
A09	Housing Grants	€1,946,716
A11	Agency & Recoupable Services	€141,168
A12	Housing Assistance Programme	€428,750
TOTAL		€15,593,160

Objectives	Supporting Strategies	Principal Budget Service
2.1 Increase Social Housing Provision and improve	a. Increase the stock of housing, by the various means available, i.e., Local Authority build programme; AHB programme; acquisition, and leasing, to accommodate current and future social	A06, A07, A12,

existing housing stock	housing demands in line with the objectives of 'Rebuilding Ireland'.	
	b. Maximise the availability of accommodation to meet the different categories of need	A02
	c. Implement a planned programme of maintenance and refurbishment of our existing stock in Offaly, subject to resources and seek to maximize funding for housing maintenance.	A01
	d. Maximise the availability of accommodation in association with the Approved Housing Bodies	A06
	e. Optimise supply and utilisation of existing houses through the Vacant Homes Strategy	D07 A06
	f. Conduct Private Rental Inspections	A07
	g. Acquire lands for Social Housing development	Capital & D10
	h. Seek to provide exemplar social housing developments	D01, D02
	2.2 Enhance Sustainable communities	a. Foster estate management and tenant participation
b. Work with other agencies and stakeholders to develop a sense of ownership and respect through estate management schemes		A04
c. Provide integration supports to International Protection Applicants		A04
2.3 Address the needs of people experiencing homelessness and improve housing services	a. Implement the Regional Homeless Strategy for the Midlands in Partnership with Westmeath, Laois and Longford County Councils	A05
	b. Assess those presenting as Homeless in accordance with regulations and provide relevant supports including the HAP Place Finder Service	A05
	c. Implement the Housing First National Implementation Plan	A05
2.4 Support independent living of all sectors of society	a. Administer loans, grants and incentives for people housing themselves subject to funding being made available and in accordance with schemes	A08, A09, A03
	b. Provide for marginalised groups such as persons with disabilities, Travellers and homeless within agreed Housing Accommodation Programmes	A01-A12

Housing – Performance Targets 2024

Priorities for 2024

- Implementation of the four strands outlined in *Housing for All – A new Housing Plan for Ireland* and in line with the supporting Regulations and Department Circulars.

- Progressing with the delivery of the multi-annual targets of new build units between 2022 and 2026, i.e., 463 units, and in line with *Offaly's Housing Delivery Action Plan*.
- Increasing social housing supply through all available means, including
 - Progression of Council owned construction projects through the department stage approvals, including procurement, planning, construction and completion.
 - Appraisal and progression of new direct build proposals, repair and lease scheme, and return of voids.
 - Continue to work with Approved Housing Bodies to increase social housing supply.
 - Seek expression of interest for housing capital lands in areas of housing need.
- Initiate a review of Housing Needs Demand Assessment for Tullamore to support an application to the Department for the introduction of an Affordable Housing Scheme.
- Progress the Retrofit Programme in line with funding received under the National Retrofit Programme.
- Review and record status of Local Authority Housing stock for planning and maintenance purposes.
- Seek to maximise the resources available to improve housing stock to meet tenant's needs via programmes such as energy efficiency, voids, Disabled Persons Grants and Traveller Accommodation funding.
- Administration and management of Housing Disability, Mobility Aid and Older Persons Grant Schemes
- Progress the *Traveller Accommodation Plan 2019-2024* including advancing Group Housing projects and commence the development of *Traveller Accommodation Plan 2025-2029*.
- Working with the Housing Disability Steering Group progress the actions identified in the National Disability Implementation Plan.
- Ongoing support of Offaly County Council's Age Friendly Strategy.
- Implement the Housing First Programme in accordance with the Service Level Agreement.
- Progress the opening of Regional Clonamore Emergency Accommodation facility.
- Increase the number of private rented and Local Authority tenanted inspections.
- Continue the on-going administration of the Housing Assistance Payment Scheme.
- Administration and management of the Tenant Purchase Scheme in accordance with most recent regulations.
- Progress Local Authority Home Loan applications in a timely manner.

- Initiate and administer a Rent Review on Rental Accommodation Scheme, Social Leasing tenants and those in receipt of Housing Assistance Payments.
- Support and build capacity for Local Authority Residents' Associations through an Estate Management Programme in consultation with the Municipal Districts.
- Implement a programme of review and revision of Local Authority tenancy issues.
- Progress the various strategies provided for in the Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy.
- Work with the Estate Management Interagency Steering Group, established under the aegis of the Joint Policing Committee.
- Support the work of the Council's Climate Action Steering Group programme.
- Develop best use of technologies to maximise online service delivery for customers and begin the process of reducing paper files retained and moving to a paperless record management system.
- Working with the National Coordination Committee progress the Housing Management iHouse programme and support the implementation of Project Dion and the National Asset Management and Inspection Projects
- On-going review of the structure, efficiency, and effectiveness of Offaly County Council's Housing Services in the interests of customers and staff.
- Provide integration supports to International Protection applicants to enable them to live independently in the community, linking them with local service providers and working with the Community Response Forum.

3. Climate Action, Environment, Water and Infrastructure

The Table below sets out the principal services to be delivered and the budgetary provision adopted by the members of Offaly County Council in Budget 2024 to fund these services;

Budget Service	Service Description	Total Budget 2024
E01	Landfill Operation and Aftercare	€1,021,708
E02	Recovery and Recycling Facilities Operations	€658,511
E03	Waste to Energy Facilities Operation	€8,920
E04	Provision of Waste to Collection Services	€1,192,020
E05	Litter Management	€483,841

E06	Street Cleaning	€756,816
E07	Waste Regulations, Monitoring and Enforcement	€1,027,363
E08	Waste Management Planning	€31,583
E09	Maintenance of Burial Grounds	€284,205
E13	Water Quality, Air and Noise Pollution	€252,174
E14	Agency and Recoupable Services	€3,771
E15	Climate change and Flooding	€541,268
C01	Water Supply	€1,811,106
C02	Waste Water Treatment	€1,583,150
C04	Public Conveniences	€43,546
C05	Administration of Group and Private Installations	€1,398,271
C06	Support to Water Capital Programme	€297,664
B02	National Secondary Road – Maintenance and Improvement	€4,461,873
B03	Regional Road – Maintenance and Improvement	€5,893,252
B04	Local Road Maintenance and Improvement	€7,757,493
B05	Public Lighting	€1,280,499
B06	Traffic Management Improvement	€190,031
B07	Road Safety Engineering Improvement	€810,266
B08	Road Safety Promotion and Education	€103,714
B09	Car Parking	€490,264
B10	Support to Roads Capital programme	€664,628
B11	Agency and Recoupable Services	€727,970
F01	Swimming Pools	€511,322
F03	Outdoor Leisure Areas Operations	€618,705
G01	Land drainage	€252,482
G04	Veterinary Services	€366,598
G06	Agency and Recoupable Services	€142
H01	Profit & Loss Machinery Account	€1,093,481
H02	Profit & Loss Stores Account	€5,000
H06	Weighbridges	€3,500
H07	Operation of Markets and Casual Trading	€3,059
D10	Property Management	€91,599
Total		€36,721,795

Objectives	Supporting Strategies	Principal Budget Service
3.1 Enable Offaly County Council to fulfil a leadership role in learning about and responding to climate change and build a resilient future for and with the communities of County Offaly	a. Use the UN Sustainable Development Goals as a framework for the development of policy which balances social, economic and environmental needs.	E01-E08
	b. Implement Offaly County Council's Climate Change Adaptation Strategy Goals 2019	E15
	c. Pilot initiatives on sustainability and climate adaptation such as retrofitting, energy efficient buildings and water conservation	E03, E15, Ao1

	d. Comply with the 2019 Charter committing to decarbonise Local Government activities, pursue sustainable development and build climate resilience.	E03, E15
	e. Maximise the use of industrial peatlands for renewable energy, climate adaptation and mitigation, climate education and leadership, amenity and biodiversity in the context of the 'Just Transition' process.	D01, D02, D05, D09
3.2 Protect, enhance and develop our county's built and natural resources	a. Provide a Waste Management infrastructure in accordance with National and Regional Waste Management Policy	E01, E02, E05, E07, E08, E13
	b. Continue to lead and manage the National Local Government Shared Service – the National Waste Collection Permit Office (NWCPO).	E04
	c. Continue to work in partnership to improve water quality in watercourses and implement the River Basin Management Plans	C02, C01, E13
	d. Implement the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) process	E15, G01
	e. Minimise the impact of Offaly County Council's activities on the environment.	E02, E05, E06, E15
	f. Develop policies and practices to promote and support sustainable behaviours.	E05
	g. Prevent water, waste, air and noise pollution through public awareness and education, monitoring and enforcement having regard to environmental legislation.	E13
	h. Address derelict sites through a targeted collaborative approach.	E10
	i. Ensure Offaly's natural and built heritage is protected, conserved and maintained to the highest standards.	D01, D02, D11 E07, E13
	j. Promote the All Ireland Pollinator Plan and control invasive species	D11
	k. Provide a Veterinary Public Health Service and Animal Control and Welfare Service	G04
3.3 Ensure we have in place the infrastructure to deliver our strategic aims and objectives	a. Identify infrastructural deficits and seek to provide infrastructure essential to support enterprise and employment	B02-B11
	b. Actively seek adequate funding to maintain and upgrade the public roads network.	B02, B03, B04, B07, B09, B10

	c. Increase awareness of the Community Involvement in Roadworks and Local Improvement Schemes for the upgrading of non-public roads	B04
	d. Work with Irish Water to provide the required investment in water infrastructure to facilitate future needs	C01
	e. Continue to implement the Strategic Rural Water Plan	C01, C05
	f. Promote, facilitate and support Rural Transport, smart travel, walking and cycling routes. Promote reverse-commuting from Dublin to Offaly.	D04, B06,,
	g. Examine traffic flows through towns and deal with congestion and speed limits	B06
	h. Promote Road Safety and provide Road Safety Education	B08
	i. Support the rollout of all digital infrastructure including the National Broadband Plan.	B10, D09
	j. Resource and support the development of recreation and tourism infrastructure including Greenways.	D05, B10, F03

Climate Action, Environment, Water & Infrastructure – Performance Targets 2024

Roads & Infrastructure

A number of schemes the Road Section wish to progress in 2024 at various stages of approval and funding include:

- Complete the National, Regional and Local Roads Improvement Programme in accordance with the 2024 Grant Allocations and apply for and deliver capital maintenance schemes on National Roads;
- Complete the 2024 identified Road Safety Improvement Schemes on Regional and Local Roads and work with TII to progress Roads Safety Schemes on National Roads;
- Promote Road Safety awareness in association with the Road Safety

Authority, the Gardaí and TII(Offaly County Council Road Safety Working Group); progress Road Safety Initiatives in Offaly;

- Deliver Offaly County Councils Winter Service Plan response and Severe Weather response in accordance with the 2023 – 2024 Winter Maintenance & Severe Weather Plans;
- Complete the mainline of the Grand Canal Cycling Route by Q1 2024 and commence the delivery of the associated links from our Towns and Villages starting with Edenderry Harbour to the Greenway;
- Operate and maintain the machinery yard fleet in a safe and efficient manner. Continue with App based vehicle inspections sheets. Build on the introduction of 5 new Zero Emission Vehicles into the fleet in 2023 and expand the use of HVO across all fleet vehicles by the end of 2024.
- Continue our programme of upgrading Public Lighting to LED in the interest of energy efficiency and ongoing maintenance;
- Manage the PLEEP Project in Offaly which is due for delivery in 2024;
- Continue our programme of upgrading Pedestrian Crossings;
- Continue our bridge rehabilitation programme, develop plans and seek funding for further schemes;
- Progress the Community Involvement Scheme, Local Improvement Scheme and CLAR funded by DTTAS and DRCD;
- Undertake Health & Safety (work practices) Schedule of Inspections;
- Continue to engage with stakeholder and report on planning applications & Strategic Infrastructure;
- Continue to issue Roads & Services in charge letters and Abnormal Load Permits;
- Continue to prioritise and promote the N52 Tullamore to Kilbeggan Link design in collaboration with the TII, Westmeath National Design office and Consulting Engineers;
- Progress the N62 Cloghan to Kennedys Cross peat replacement Minor Works Scheme;
- Complete Stage 2 of the Edenderry Town Inner Relief Road specific road improvement scheme;
- Progress the Birr Distributor Road R439 Banagher Road to N52 Tullamore Road specific road improvement scheme to tender and construction in 2024 subject to funding approvals;
- Appoint Technical Consultancy Services for the Birr South Eastern Distributor

Road;

- Strengthen and build on the engagement from 2023 with NTA and Local Link to progress a new bus stop program for County Offaly;
- Deliver on the agreed NTA funded Active Travel Program for 2024;
- Procure the Technical Consultancy Services for the Regional Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure for Laois/Offaly/Westmeath/Roscommon and Longford;
- Progress the Monasteroris Specific Improvement scheme through the Part 8 process;
- Deliver the Ballycommon Trailhead project which includes for 53 parking spaces, EV charging, Public Lighting and upgrades to the public road infrastructure;
- Identify additional Specific Improvement schemes for our main Towns.
- Identify and incorporate new methodologies and approaches to service delivery, which will provide a reduction on the roads Carbon output for 2024.
- Deliver the Urban Greenway linking the east and west Greenway through Tullamore under the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund Call 1.
- Progress the six projects in Tullamore under the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund Call 2.
- Complete the Lloyd Town Park enhancement projects under the Outdoor Public Space Scheme, Community Recognition Fund and General Municipal Allocation.
- Complete the Area Based Transport Assessment in Tullamore under Active Travel.
- Progress the significant cycle network plans in Tullamore under Active Travel.

WATER SERVICES & RURAL WATER

Uisce Éireann have taken over the management and direction of Offaly County Council's Water Services Staff as of 26th July 2023, known as the Effective Date. Since the effective date Uisce Éireann have full accountability for the delivery of public water and wastewater services. The Council will continue to co-operate and provide support to Uisce Éireann under a Services Support Agreement Water Services are 100% funded by Irish Water who are now the Statutory Authority for water services and all major decisions around funding of services will be approved by Irish Water (IW).

The Local Authority will continue with its role as the Water Services Authority for the Rural Water Sector, in the administration and management of the Rural Water Programme. Offaly County Council have a significant role in Group Water Schemes, i.e. schemes that are privately owned and operated. Offaly Co. Co. continue to administer grants and subsidies, in addition to having the remit to test the water supply of Group Schemes, Small Private Supplies (SPS), and ensure it is safe to drink, under the Drinking Water Regulations. However, OCC are not responsible for maintaining group scheme pipes and filtration systems.

OCC will also continue to administer all aspects of Well Grants, Lead Remediation Grants, and Domestic Waste Water Treatment System Grants.

Offaly County Council's role as Water Services Authority means there is an opportunity to retain a level of water services activity within Local Government, to support and co-ordinate water services investment locally and to influence policy in the future. The separation of this function from the broader former Water Services offer allows local authorities to retain some skills and capability in water & related testing going forward.

Rural Water Programme

A total of €1,072,067 was paid 15 Group Water Schemes for GWS Subsidies to support group water scheme to operate to their full potential and deliver potable water to their customers in 2023 to.

We also assist Group Water Schemes with funding for capital projects, such as source protection, public health compliance and the enhancement of the scheme, including water conservation measures. The funding for these projects is provided under the Multi-Annual Rural Water Programme.

The Rural Water Unit of the Department of Housing have advised that the next Multi-Annual Rural Water Programme capital funding scheme will be announced in early 2024. Under the most recent programme over €2m of funding was secured for 24 separate projects ranging from public health measures to amalgamation of group water schemes.

Domestic Waste Water Treatment System (DWWTS) Grants

The DWWTS grant scheme will be amended from 1st January 2024, removing the requirement for the septic tank to be registered and increasing the grant to 85% of allowable costs up to a maximum of €12,000.00.

The focus of the grant is on the protection of surface and ground water, (particularly drinking water sources), and our waterways from the risks posed by malfunctioning systems.

In 2023 we paid out 4 DWWTS grants to the value of €19,956.76 to protect our waterways under the Water Framework Directive.

Well Grants

Grants are available from Offaly County Council to assist with the improvement of a water supply to an individual private dwelling (this means a water supply providing water intended for human consumption and domestic purposes that serves only one house).

A total of 21 Domestic Water grants totalling €65,549.95 were paid out in 2023 to assist the provision of good quality water to private households.

Lead Remediation Grants

Grants are available to assist households with the cost of replacing lead pipes and fittings within the boundaries of the property. The grant is available if you receive a water supply from either a public or private water supplier. The grant was recast in 2022 and the level of the grant was increased to 85% of approved costs, up to a maximum of €5,000.00.

Environment

Offaly County Council will comply with all EU Directives and National Legislation in Environmental Management in 2021 to implement the priorities of the Environment and Water Services team development plan with key objectives linked to the Corporate Plan. The Council will implement the priorities identified in Offaly County Councils Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections (RMCEI) plan for 2024.

Ongoing areas of priority for 2024 include:

- Environmental Awareness and litter management, incorporating work with community groups, schools, Tidy Towns groups etc.
- Identify projects which assist in the delivery of raising awareness regarding litter pollution. Promote activities using various communication tools including print and social media.
- Manage three Civic Amenity Facilities (CAF) in Birr, Derryclure and Edenderry and 42 bring banks in the County for glass, aluminium & steel cans recycling on both private and public sites.
- Investigate all litter complaints and take appropriate action.

- Management of waste activities through education, enforcement and authorisations.
- Implementation of Water Framework Directive, while working with other stakeholders to improve water quality.
- Manage the surveillance and operational monitoring programme of the rivers within Offaly in accordance with WFD/EPA requirements.
- Undertake Catchment Assessments to identify pressure(s) impacting on water quality and collaborate with all stakeholders to address findings and ultimately improve the water quality status of the watercourses.
- Inspect a minimum of 8 randomly selected domestic wastewater treatment systems in accordance with the EPA National Inspection Plan 2022 – 2026.
- Investigate complaints relating to water quality in surface and groundwater's and work with the stakeholders to address any issues identified.
- Monitor and advance compliance of the Section 4 discharge licenses for discharges to water under the Water Pollution Act 1977 & 1990 as amended. Review all new licence applications for developments requiring Section 4 discharge licences in accordance with relevant requirements.
- Continue to work with the community to provide sufficient capacity in our burial grounds.
- Implement legislation with regard to air quality, noise and odours.
- Tullamore Living River Project: Further develop and maintain the project.
- Improving Agricultural compliance under Good Agricultural Practise for the Protection of Waters Regulation, through farm inspections, supported by additional resources provided by DHLGH.
- Co-operating and collaborating with external bodies such as WERLA to improve knowledge sharing and enhance effectiveness.
- Advancing progress in the stated National Waste Enforcement Priorities for 2024:
 - Tackling illegal waste activities and Multi-Agency Sites/Operators of Concern
 - Construction and Demolition Waste
 - ELV and Metals
 - Household and Commercial Waste

BURIAL GROUNDS

Offaly County Council manages 21 open burial grounds and 37 closed/disused burial grounds around the county and we are responsible for the provision of and extension to our burial grounds. Offaly Co. Co. are currently in the process of tendering for the construction of an extension to St. Mary's Cemetery, Edenderry. The extensions of Clonmacnoise, Cappincur and Cloncrane burial grounds will be

further investigated in 2024. Resources will need to be allocated annually in the coming years to fund the necessary works.

Many of our burial grounds are beautifully maintained by voluntary local committees who bring great energy, enthusiasm and innovative ideas. We have been able to support these groups with grants of over €30,000 in total, to maintain and enhance the burial grounds.

In 2023, Offaly Co. Co. have supported seventeen cemetery committees with grants for the upkeep and enhancement of their local cemeteries. The overall standard of work carried out by these volunteer groups continues to be very high and the Council will continue supporting these groups in 2024, and look forward to working with new committees in 2024.

VETERINARY

The Council manage the Control of Dogs and Horses through the Veterinary Section in accordance with the Control of Dogs Act, 1986 and the Control of Horses Act 1996, Dog Breeding Establishments Act, 2010 and the Animal Health and Welfare Act, 2013.

Up to early December, the Control of Dogs team have cared for over 300 dogs in our Dog Shelter, increasing by approximately 10% year on year. On average approximately 15% of the dogs have been reclaimed by their owners, with a further approx. 70% been rehomed by dog welfare charities or rehomed by the Care of Dogs team directly from the Dog Shelter. The Control of Dogs Staff have dealt with 72 complaints in 2023 and brought 2 successful prosecutions in the District Court under the above legislation.

The Council continue to carry out functions in relation to Food Protection and Disease Control through the Veterinary Section by implementing the terms and conditions of the service contract agreed between the Council and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, in both Offaly and in Westmeath, under a shared service agreement with Westmeath County Council.

Climate Change

The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (amendment) Act 2021 has set ambitious legally binding sectoral and societal targets for Green House Gas (GHG) emission reductions and energy efficiency increases. Local Authorities are recognised by both the National Adaptation Framework (NAF), 2018 and the Climate Action Plan (CAP) 2021 and subsequent 2023 CAP – Changing Ireland for the Better, as being uniquely placed, owing to their distinctive capabilities, to translate and lead on delivery of the national climate objective for the broadest local impact.

Offaly County Council has prepared the Offaly Climate Change Adaptation Strategy in accordance with the provisions of The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015 and the National Adaptation Framework (NAF) 2018. The Offaly Climate Change Strategy was adopted by the Elected Members at the Council meeting of 16th September 2019. We have also signed the Local Authority Climate Action Charter.

A number of projects are being progressed under the banner of Climate Change right across the organisation, including

- Climate Action Steering Group monthly meetings
- Development of statutory Local Authority Climate Action Plan (5 year plan)
- Appointment of two dedicated resources as Climate Action Co-Ordinator and Climate Action Officer
- Appointment of a dedicated Community Climate Action Officer resource to assist and support local communities in climate projects
- Appointment of dedicated Biodiversity Officer
- Development of a countywide Tree Management Policy
- Drainage and flood relief work with the OPW, e.g. Rahan, Birr
- Tullamore Living River Project
- Tullamore Bike Hire scheme
- Housing Retrofit programme
- Energy Efficiency measures across the organisation
- Installation of EV charging points.

Offaly County Council have developed our draft Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 for adoption by Reserve Function before 23rd February 2024. On adoption, the Council will proceed to advance the 110 stated actions therein, under six areas of thematic focus:

- Governance & Leadership
- Built Environment
- Transport
- Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure
- Community Resilience & Transition
- Sustainability and Resource Management

The Council will also proceed with the development of Tullamore as the designated Decarbonising Zone (DZ), demonstrating what is possible for decarbonising and climate action at a local and community level. Tullamore will show real leadership in delivering climate, biodiversity and sustainability actions through innovation, technology, creativity, and empowering community

engagement, thus demonstrating local place-based successes that can be scaled up and replicated across the region.

Offaly County Council will administer the Community Climate Action Fund (CCAF) within Offaly. The Community Climate Action Fund (CCAF), launched within Offaly on 13th December 2023, and remains open for application for 12 weeks, until 6th March 2024.

The Community Climate Action Programme, under the Climate Action Fund, has been developed under two strands addressing both direct climate action, and climate education and capacity building.

Strand 1 has two parts:

- Strand 1 entitled "Action: Building Low Carbon Communities" for €24 million, and;
- Strand 1a entitled "Shared Island Community Climate Action" for €3 million.

Under Strand 1, €444,000 is being provided to Offaly Co. Co. to work in partnership with communities, large and small, rural and urban, within their areas of operation to build low carbon communities in a considered and structured way.

The projects will address the following five themes:

- Home/energy
- Travel
- Food and waste
- Shopping and recycling
- Local climate and environmental action

Strand 1A funding (€3m) is being provided nationally by the Government's Shared Island Fund to support cross-border and all-island community climate action initiatives.

NWCPO

The NWCPO administers the Waste Collection Permitting System on behalf of all Local Authorities. In addition, The NWCPO maintains the Waste Facility Register and the Annual Returns system on behalf of all Local Authorities.

Throughout 2024 NWCPO continue to lead and manage the;

- National Local Government Shared Service – the National Waste Collection Permit Office (NWCPO).
- Enhance the services of the NWCPO to implement the policies and measures of "A waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy, 2020"

- Implement the National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy (subject to funding).
- Coordinate “A study of incentivised charging for waste collection and its implementation through the Waste Collection Permitting System” on behalf of the Department of Environment, Climate and Communication.
- Continue to develop partnerships and synergies with other waste shared services and stakeholders.

4. Serving Communities

The Table below sets out the principal services to be delivered and the budgetary provision adopted by the members of Offaly County Council in Budget 2024 to fund these services;

Budget Service	Service Description	Total Budget 2024
D06	Community & Enterprise Function	€5,048,771
D08	Building Control	€131,672
F02	Operation of Library and Archival Service	€3,457,750
F05	Operation of Arts Programme	€908,352
G05	Educational Support Services	€4,632
E10	Safety of Structures and Places	€420,888
E11	Operation of Fire Service	€5,789,059
E12	Fire Prevention	€266,789
TOTAL		€16,027,913

Objectives	Supporting Strategies	Principal Budget Service
4.1 Encourage and support active citizenship, volunteering and community activity.	a. Work in Partnership with the Local Community Development Committee to build community capacity and engagement.	D06
	b. Support the Public Participation Network in its community leadership and policy development roles.	D06
	c. Support Strategic Policy Committees and the Joint Policing Committee to facilitate community input and policy development.	D06
	d. Support and promote the activities of Comhairle na nÓg and other youth participation initiatives including voter registration and participation.	D06
	e. Promote Pride of Place and Tidy Towns initiatives and support community activity through the County Library network.	D06 F02

	f. Support An Garda Síochána and communities with crime prevention through the Joint Policing Committee, Community CCTV, PPN / Community Alert Scheme, and Municipal Districts.	D06, J02
4.2 Coordinate internal and external funding streams and community efforts to maximise local outcomes.	a. Coordinate Community Grant Funding to maximise the leverage and benefit for communities	D06, D09
	b. Promote and coordinate community supports through the Municipal Districts	D06
	c. Work across functions and with communities and partner agencies to maximise regeneration funding and supports	D06, D09, F02, F05, D11, A04
4.3 Support the library, arts and heritage services and improve the quality and range of cultural programmes and assets for the benefit of all.	a. Expand and develop Offaly County Library services, including 'My Open Library' through the implementation of the Library Development Plan 2020.	F02
	b. Provide library infrastructure through the Library Capital Development programme.	Capital & F02
	c. Support the Arts service to increase engagement in the arts, nurture artistic talent and support creative endeavour	F05
	d. Support and promote the development of cultural spaces	Capital
	e. Maximise opportunities available through Creative Ireland	D11, F05, F02,
	f. Support the Heritage programme including community partnership projects, the management of key county sites and the development of public realm plans.	D11
	g. h. Develop a County Archive Service in partnership with Offaly History, and the Library Service.	F02
4.4 Ensure the responsiveness and effectiveness of our fire and emergency services	a. Provide a suitably equipped, efficient and effective emergency response capability in accordance with 'Keeping Communities Safe' and 'Major Emergency Management' Frameworks.	E11, E12
	b. Develop a National Fire Training Centre at Tullamore Fire Station	E11 Capital
	c. Advise and inform the Strategic Policy Committee on Fire Safety and Major Emergency Planning	E11, E12
	d. Continue Fire Education by local Firefighters in National Schools and extend the programme into Secondary schools.	E11, E12
	e. Work with agency partners such as Bord na Móna to review and plan for the control of bog fires	E11, E12

	f. Maximise community participation in Civil Defence to facilitate its role in supporting emergency services and community support.	E10
	g. Work with communities to prepare for co-operation in emergency/crisis situations	E11, E12
4.5 Health and Wellbeing	a. Support and promote Mental and Physical Health through the Healthy Ireland initiative	D06
	b. Create opportunities for participation in sport and physical activity at all life stages through Offaly Sports Partnership	D06
	c. Remove barriers to participation experienced by socially and economically excluded groups	D06
	d. Improve sports infrastructure in Offaly (including capital facilities for organised sport and recreational facilities using the county's natural environment)	D06, D01
	e. Positively promote Offaly as a destination for sport and recreation	D06, D05, D01
	f. Promote health and well-being of older persons through the implementation of the Age Friendly Action Plan	D06
4.6 Human Rights Equality and Inclusion	a. Maintain a clear focus on social inclusion in conjunction with other agencies and promote universal access for all in the delivery of services and infrastructure.	J02, J05,
	b. Continue to lead and co-ordinate the efforts of all agencies to support existing and new communities in Offaly including Traveller, resettlement and migrant.	D06, A02, A04
	c. Establish and support an Offaly County Council Human Rights and Equality Action Team and work programme	J02, J05
	d. Audit our provision of services to People with Disabilities and develop an Action Plan	J05, D06
	e. Target supports towards hard to reach and disadvantaged communities through the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme via the LCDC.	D06
4.7 Facilitate and support the rollout of Digital Infrastructure and Skills to all citizens in Offaly	a. Facilitate the development of high speed broadband and digital infrastructure to all citizens and businesses	D09, D02
	b. Promote the benefits and use of digital technology in a safe way and improve digital equality and digital skill competency of Citizens	D09, J02
	c. Promote economic development and grow tourism and employment opportunities in Co. Offaly in the digital age	D09, D05, D04
	d. Enhance the delivery of Offaly County Council's services to its Citizens by increasing the capability of online services	J03

Serving Communities – Performance Targets 2024

LIBRARY SERVICE

Offaly County Library Service will deliver on the objectives of the new National Public Library Strategy 2023-2027: *The Library is the Place: Information, Recreation, Inspiration*, which was published in 2023.

The library service has reviewed achievements under the eight priority strategic headings of the outgoing interim development plan: *Creating Collaborative Communities, Offaly Libraries Development Plan 2022-2023*, which was adopted by Offaly County Council in January 2022. Consultations and preparations for a new Library Development Plan for 2024-2028, are currently underway.

The library team will harness innovative technologies, including *My Open Library* services, and utilise our unique civic spaces to strengthen the role of libraries as gateways to and transmitters of cultural works, skills, and experiences. Efforts will be directed towards embedding Social Inclusion, Sustainability & Climate Action and Accessibility into our service models in support of increasing user engagement.

Strategic national programmes under *The Library is the Place* will include the following;

- **People** (*Reading Festivals, Libraries for All, Skills for Life*)
- **Spaces** (*The Library as the Centre of the Community, Buildings & Sense of Place, Sustainability & Climate Action*)
- **Connections** (*Our Digital Offer, Community & Cultural Provision, Partnerships, Collaborations & Co-operation*)

Offaly Library Service priorities for 2024 include:

- Progress capital development of a new community library and arts space in Edenderry
- Introduce and adopt a new Library Development Plan for 2024 – 2028

- Embed strategic alignments and maximise funding opportunities at a local, national and European level
- Launch *My Open Library* services at Kilcormac Library
- Showcase Offaly Libraries as the heart of reading and literacy development within our communities
- Progress service and building improvements in library facilities across the county
- Contribute to local and national climate and environmental objectives by providing information and programmes for the community via libraries.
- Libraries at the heart of communities, creating a 'sense of place'. Continue to promote social inclusion and develop innovative partnerships and meaningful in-person community and cultural event programmes
- Increase accessibility and library engagement by developing traditional and digital collections, services and library technology
- Increase active membership by encouraging users back into library spaces
- Strengthen the partnership between Offaly Archives Service and Offaly Libraries, and further promote Offaly Archives and Offaly Libraries Local Studies services
- Raise the library profile locally, nationally and internationally through in-person advocacy, and online promotions to include newsletters, blogs, interactive cultural programmes and social media campaigns
- Review, monitor and evaluate library service activities. in line with all local and national service indicator requirements, for the benefit of the community

LOCAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- Facilitate and support Offaly Local Community Development Committee
- Ongoing administration, payment of claims, Article 48 Administration checks on claims approved under the Offaly LEADER Programme 2014-2022.
- Implement the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP 2024-2028) - Supporting Communities and Supporting Individuals
- Facilitate and support the Empowering Communities Working Group

- Prepare and adopt new Offaly Local Economic and Community Plan 2024-2029
- Facilitate and support the Community, Culture & Emergency Services SPC
- Support and facilitate interagency Community Response Fora to provide local response to pandemic or other national crises which arise.
- Facilitate and support the Offaly Age Friendly Alliance.
- Prepare new Offaly Age Friendly Strategy 2024-2029.
- Facilitate and support the OCC Age Friendly Interdepartmental Team
- Host the Midlands Regional Age Friendly programme
- Facilitate and support the formalization of the Offaly Older Person's Council (OPC) in 2024
- Facilitate the Offaly Public Participation Network (PPN). There are now over 600 groups registered as members of Offaly PPN.
- Support Groups in joining the PPN, accessing a range of grants including MD grants, Community Enhancement Programme grants, and Clár funding
- Host Planning Workshops, Secretariat Meetings, PPN Municipal District meetings and plenary meetings. Develop the Community Vision Statement and feed into the LECP and other consultations.
- Embed the PPN more fully into the work of the LCDC, JPC and SPC policy development.
- Facilitate Comhairle na nÓg and support its input into local decision making and policy structures.
- Administer the Community Enhancement Programme, Community Recognition Fund, Local Enhancement Programme, and Disability Grants.
- Support the Tidy Towns Network and its work programme.
- Support communities with their entries to the Pride of Place 2024 Competition
- Support and Facilitate Offaly Community Watch Network/Community CCTV.
- Implement the Migrant Integration Strategy
- Support implementation of Healthy Ireland Round 4 initiatives.
- Develop and implement the Healthy Ireland Fund Local Strategy
- Support Offaly Sports Partnership to actively increase and sustain participation in sport in Offaly.
- Implement the 5 year Sports Strategy for the county, support the management committee and establish a sports partnership stakeholder forum.
- Implement the 2023 Dormant Account Fund Allocation.

OFFALY ARTS SERVICE

In 2024 Offaly County Council's Arts Office will continue to be responsible 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 office 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. In 2024 the **new Art Strategy 2024-28** will be published and implemented; the service will include:

Strategic Planning

- Implementation and delivery of Offaly's Arts Infrastructure Strategy 2023-28
- Publication and delivery of Offaly County Council's Arts Strategy 2024-28
- Develop plan to deliver recommendations of the 'Film in Offaly Review'
- Development of a Public Art and Collections policy
- Support for the development and operation of arts venues referenced in the Arts Infrastructure Strategy
- Development (in partnership with Bord na Móna) of Lough Boora Sculpture Park
- Development of Creative Places Edenderry, in conjunction with the planned capital development of the Edenderry Library, Arts and Studio Base

Arts Office Supports and funding

- Arts Act Grants
- Professional Artist Support Awards
- Arts Festivals Grants
- Film Offaly Award
- Birr Writer's Residency
- Arts and Health - Anam Beo
- Support for Arts Venues, Birr Theatre and Arts Centre and Esker Arts
- Support the development of Offaly Arts Infrastructure network initiative
- Information and advisory service e.g. the Offaly Arts News Alert, support and advice to artists and communities on matters relating to the arts

Programming

- Development of the Bealtaine programme in collaboration with arts venues
- Youth Arts Commissions and development of youth arts
- Hullabaloo! Children's Arts Festival
- Mini Movies – expansion and re-branding following from a youth led project Meeting of Young Minds – Mini Movies evaluation 2023

- Film Offaly Commission programming
- Culture Night Offaly
- Art in Landscape – Festival of Change
- Creative Ireland projects including community projects, supports to the animation residency and Lough Boora Sculpture Park programming
- Delivery of Per cent for Art Commissions and chair the Public Art Working Group
- Collaborations with National Programmes; e.g. Invitation to Collaboration, Culture Night, National Poetry Day
- Arts Audience and Participation Development
- Arts programme monitoring and evaluation.

FIRE SERVICE

- Offaly County Council Fire & Rescue Service will continue to provide an efficient, effective and professional response to emergencies on a 24/7 basis, 365 days per year.
- Continue the ongoing training of fire fighters, and research into the latest equipment and technology to ensure that our fire crews are best equipped to respond quickly, safely and effectively to the full range of emergency incidents that we attend.
- Complete the construction of a new Training Facility in Tullamore and provide a new fire appliance in the county.
- Continue the assessments of all Fire Safety Certificate, Dangerous Substances, and Disabled Access Certificate applications, give advice on planning referrals, process licence applications, conduct fire safety inspections of public premises, and actively promote fire safety.
- Continue the Community Smoke Alarm Project and Fire Safety Schools program.
- Implement the Building Control function of Offaly County Council including the inspection and monitoring of new works to monitor for compliance with all the requirements of the Building Regulations.
- Maintain, review and revise the Local and the Regional Major Emergency Plan.
- Continue to provide an emergency response capability through Offaly Civil Defence and support community and events.

5. Developing our organisation

The Table below sets out the principal services to be delivered and the budgetary provision adopted by the members of Offaly County Council in Budget 2024 to fund these services;

Budget Service	Service Description	Total Budget 2024
H03	Administration of Rates	€4,006,226
H04	Franchise Costs	€ 55,013
H05	Operation of Morgue and Coroner Expenses	€152,549
H09	Local Representation / Civic Leadership	€1,792,671
H10	Motor Taxation	€ 1,002,466
H11	Agency and Recoupable Costs	€547,541
TOTAL		€7,556,466

The following are **Central Management Charges** which have been apportioned across all service costs in Divisions A to H presented above. They are presented below with their pre-apportioned totals for information.

Budget Service	Service Description	Total Budget 2024
J01	Corporate Buildings	2,182,380
J02	General Corporate Services	1,250,795
J03	Information and Communications Technology	1,676,858
J04	Print/Post room Services	104,000
J05	Human Resources Function	1,386,376
J06	Finance	1,607,139
J07	Pension and Lump sum costs (net)	4,341,324
J08	Area Offices	1,396,716
TOTAL		€ 13,945,588

Objectives	Supporting Strategies	Principal Budget Service
5.1 Direct organisational resources to areas of priority	a. Restructure Strategic Policy Committees in line with Corporate Priorities 2019-2024	J02
	b. Review Business Processes across a range of priority services	J02
	c. Introduce best use of new technologies	J03, J02
	d. Continue Project Team approach as appropriate	J02, J05
	e. Continue cooperation between all services and Municipal Districts	J02, J05
	f. Seek to continue to match fund capital projects with own resources including the Local Property Tax.	J06, J02
5.2 Ensure good corporate and financial governance	a. Continue Local Government Audit and Audit Committee reviews of service areas and implement best practice	J06
	b. Continue to reduce the Council's deficit	J06
	c. Continue to implement the Ethics Register and Code of Conduct, GDPR, FOI, Child Protection.	J02, J05
	d. Provide regular training on the use of the Council's Financial Management System.	J06
	e. Implement new Records Management system for both paper and digital records	J02, J03
	f. Ensure value for money in the procurement of goods and services through the use of best practice and compliance with national procurement policies and systems.	J06
	g. Comply with the requirements of the Public Spending Code	J06
	h. Maintain and review the Risk Register and act on mitigating measures	J06

	i. Ensure that the property and assets of Offaly County Council are managed in a manner that maximises their potential.	J02,
	j. Maximise the potential of sources of funding through collaboration, project assessment and project management.	J02,
	k. Promote and support the safety, health and welfare of all employees through the implementation of the comprehensive, organisation-wide Health and Safety System.	J02
5.3 Corporate Services	a. Support the elected members in their representative and policy development roles through the provision of timely information, training, support and facilities.	J02, H09, J03
	b. Support political structures at all levels – Council, Corporate Policy Group, Municipal Districts, Strategic Policy Committees, and Local Community Development Committee.	J02, D06,
	c. Continue to foster the partnership between elected members and staff.	J02
	d. Form a Corporate Governance subgroup co-ordinated by Corporate Services to provide support across internal services	J02
	e. Monitor and incrementally improve Service Indicators annually. Share good practice with other Local Authorities.	J02
	f. Promote Voter Registration and Voter participation.	J02
5.4 Customer Service	a. Investigate the feasibility of a Customer Relationship Management System	J02
	b. Continue to include Public Consultation as good practice in project development.	D01, D06, D09
	c. Review the Customer Charter including the customer complaints system.	J02

	d. Provide training to staff and elected members on Public Sector Duty	J05, J02
	e. Establish a cross service team on Equality and Public Sector Duty (Equality Action Team).	J05, J02
	f. Promote online services and broaden the range of online services available	J02, J03
	g. Maximise the use of our Municipal District offices, Libraries and other council facilities for customer service.	J02
	h. Facilitate and promote the use of the Irish language.	J02
	i. Complete an audit of access to Council Services for People with Disabilities.	J02
5.5 Communications	a. The Council will continue to provide reports on the direct benefits to communities of revenue raised through the Local Property Tax.	J06
	b. Monthly Management Reports will be available on the Council website.	J02
	c. Develop a Communications Strategy and consider the assignment of a Communications Officer	J02
	d. To continue to enhance the Council's online presence.	D09, J02
5.6 Human Resource Management	a. Enhance the skills, competencies and motivation of staff through full implementation of the Performance Management & Development System (PMDS)	J05
	b. Provide staff with the facilities, skills and knowledge required to effectively carry out their roles.	J05
	c. Ensure continuous Workforce Planning and timely recruitment taking account of current skill needs and the skill mix.	J05

	d. Review all Delegation Orders	J02, J05
	e. Use staff resources to the optimum level by focusing on collaboration across disciplines, departments and geographical areas.	J02, J05
	f. Consider the establishment of a cross-functional staff committee to review policies and practices.	J05, J02
	g. Encourage good employee relations and engage with staff interests around change programmes and organisational performance.	J05
5.7 Information Systems	a. Develop a targeted Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Strategy and maximise the use and potential of ICT to deliver efficiency and customer service.	J03
	b. Continue to work to deliver Fibre / High Speed Broadband, improve mobile phone coverage and roll out Wi-Fi	J03, D09
	c. Promote our digital hubs and develop further hubs to meet demand	D04, D09
	d. Provide digital support to council services, communities and business	J03

Organisational Development - Performance Targets 2024

CORPORATE SERVICES

Priorities for 2024:

- Administer meetings of the County Council, Corporate Policy Group, Management Team and Joint Policing Committee.
- Maintain the Register of Electors.
- Administer financial support for Swimming Pools.
- Implement priority actions from our Access Plan in compliance with the Disability Act 2005.
- Hold regular staff meetings.
- Coordinate the Authority's submission of the Service Indicators in accordance with the national timeframe.
- Explore cost efficiencies that may be achieved with regard to advertising, stationery and other services.
- Ensure that data is managed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations.
- Local Elections 2024
- Corporate Plan 2024-2029

HUMAN RESOURCES

Priorities for 2024

- Targeted recruitment based on organisational needs and priorities and robust business cases.
- Workforce Planning taking into account the current age profile of staff and on-going sectoral changes and reform.
- Administration of the Council's payroll and superannuation.
- Implementation of an E-Recruitment system.
- Implementation of online application processes for various Work-life balance schemes, Educational Assistance Schemes, Special Leave applications, etc
- Implementation of an Electronic Personnel files system in lieu of a paper-based files system.
- Review and administration of the Council's Blended Working Policy and Procedures.
- Implementation and monitoring of the PMDS process.

- Review and maintenance of the HR Makodata management information system.
- Driving organisational change and development in line with national and local policies.
- Managing increasing levels of industrial relations issues including implementation of national agreements in respect of Fire Services and Uisce Eireann .
- Continue to invest in the training and personal development of our staff to ensure effective implementation of the on-going local government reform agenda with particular emphasis on Health & Safety Training.
- Providing ongoing support and advice to all employees including promotion of the Council's Employee Assistance Programme.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Priorities for 2024

The primary role of the Finance Department is to assist in achieving the strategic priority of developing and delivery of quality services with particular regard to Financial Management and Value for Money. Our priorities in 2024 for the finance department will be to continue to maintain core financial services and the solvency of the council's finances in the face of a continued economic uncertainty in the following work areas:

- Management Accounting and Budgetary control,
- Annual Financial Statements,
- Financial Management Systems Development,
- Capital Account Management
- Motor Taxation Office,
- Billing and Revenue Collection,
- Accounts Payable,
- Treasury Management,
- Insurance,
- Compliance requirements of Statutory Organisations.

As the business environment in which we operate is one of continued material and energy inflation, supply uncertainty and rising interest rates, the key challenge for the Department in 2024, is to continue to maintain the core services in this uncertain political and economic environment, from within existing staff resources, while at the same time implementing incremental improvements in the areas of Budgetary control, Cash flow management, A/P internal controls, and Audit and Statutory compliance.

The finance department also anticipates in Quarter 1, the task of administering The Increased Costs of Business Scheme as announced as part of Budget 2024 and we are awaiting final clarification of the scheme.

2024 will also see the completion of the MyCoCo project. This new online payment portal will improve the level of service for our rates, rents and housing loan customers by providing an additional payment option and also giving the customers access to their account to view statements and transactions.

Tax compliance review across all tax heads will also continue to be the focus of the finance department in 2024.

Motor Taxation

Offaly Motor Tax Office (MTO) processes approx. €3.5 million of transactions annually and offer a variety of payment options. During 2023, Offaly Motor Tax continued to process 99% of all transactions processed in-house on the same day. 93.64% of transactions occur at the Motor Tax Office counter while 6.36% are postal applications (source Q3 2023 Service Indicators in Local Authorities).

On-line transactions via www.motortax.ie slightly decreased in 2023, which is mainly due to the public office re-opening in 2022 (post Covid). Approximately 81.5% of all Motor Tax transactions for Offaly registered vehicles occur online (Q3 2023 Service Indicators). We expect a marginal change in these trends in 2023.

INFORMATION SYSTEMS

In 2024, the work programme for the IS Department will include work on the following projects:

- Upgrade Offaly Co. Council network infrastructure to a more resilient communications platform for all offices.
- Migrate the phone system to Teams Calling. Assist in procuring an events management system for public event applications. Prepare for the local elections in June 2024 and assist with new councillor's device connectivity.
- The upgrade of the Áras ICT comms room to allow for downsizing the space requirements, along with replacing out of service environmental infrastructure such as air conditioning, fire suppression and uninterruptable power supplies.
- Working on initiatives that support climate action such as reducing energy consumption of IT equipment, promoting Microsoft Teams collaboration and remote access technologies to reduce unnecessary car journeys.

- Digital Transformation – Develop, implement and promote technology as a means for the Council to collaborate, engage and promote internally and externally, and automate manual processes.
- Continue work on cyber-security in line with the Public Service Cyber Security Baseline Standards and increase staff awareness to help combat against emerging cyber threats.
- Continued support for NWCPO, Libraries, Fire stations & Digital Hubs and upgrade of network connectivity to sites focussing on library and Municipal District site upgrades.
- Publication of Offaly County Council ICT and Digital Strategy 2024-2026, in line with the local government's ICT and Digital Strategy 'Digital Local Government: Working for Everyone'
- Continue to work with Government in relation to the National Broadband Plan and implementation of Offaly's Digital Strategy.
- Continue to support remote working in line with Blended working policies for all office-based staff and carry out upgrades to Municipal District audio/visual technology to allow MD's to conduct hybrid meetings.

COMMUNICATIONS

Offaly County Council engages with and listens to our citizens, building strong relationships as we progress on the delivery of our strategic framework goals.

During 2024, we will continue to communicate our message via radio, print and social media platforms as well as engaging with local and national news outlets.

Priorities for 2024

- To provide information to the public in a timely manner via relevant communication platform(s).
- To continue to support LGMA communication campaigns.
- To comply with the Official Languages Acts.
- To provide support to all internal Departments within the Council as they deliver their message, which in turn strengthens our customer service.

DATA PROTECTION & RECORDS MANAGEMENT

Priorities for 2024

- Implementation of Offaly County Council's Records Management Policy across all directorates, departments and sections.
- Ensure Records Management facility at Axis Business Park is running efficiently.

- Working with staff in the various departments of Offaly County Council to establish best practice in records management and to ensure that the Council's records management policy is effectively implemented.
- Ensuring that Offaly County Council becomes and remains in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).
- Implement a document and records management software solution for Offaly County Council.
- Complete CCTV audit and to ensure systems meet the standards required by the Data Protection Commission.
- Complete training to ensure that there is a Data Protection Liaison Officer in each section. Establish regular meetings.
- Training for incoming staff.
- Implement back-up arrangements for DPO function.
- Contribute to and update Data Protection section of *Data Governance* area of Intranet.

Performance Indicators – NOAC – LG Returns

01/01/2022 - 31/12/2022 (Annual) (Most recent year available for Performance Indicators)

Offaly County Council

Status: Locked

Topic	Indicator	Value	Comment
Housing: H1, H2 & H4 Approved	A. Number of dwellings in the ownership of the local authority at 1/1/2022	1953	
	B. Number of dwellings added to the local authority owned stock during 2022 (whether constructed or acquired)	58	
	C. Number of local authority owned dwellings sold in 2022	1	
	D. Number of local authority owned dwellings demolished in 2022	0	
	E. Number of dwellings in the ownership of the local authority at 31/12/2022	2010	
	F. Number of local authority owned dwellings planned for demolition under a D/HLGH approved scheme at 31/12/2022	0	
	A. The percentage of the total number of local authority owned dwellings that were vacant on 31/12/2022	2.14 %	
	The number of dwellings within their overall stock that were not tenanted on 31/12/2022	43	
	A. Expenditure during 2022 on the maintenance of local authority housing compiled from 1 January 2022 to 31	€655.63	

Housing: H3 & H5 Approved	December 2022, divided by the no. of dwellings in the local authority stock at 31/12/2022, i.e. the H1E less H1F indicator figure		
	Expenditure on maintenance of local authority stock compiled from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022, including planned maintenance and expenditure that qualified for grants, such as Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) grants for energy efficient retro-fitting works but excluding expenditure on vacant properties and expenditure under approved major refurbishment schemes (i.e. approved Regeneration or under the Remedial Works Schemes).	€1317822	
	A. The time taken from the date of vacation of a dwelling to the date in 2022 when the dwelling is re-tenanted, averaged across all dwellings re-let during 2022	42 wk	
	B. The cost expended on getting the dwellings re-tenanted in 2022, averaged across all dwellings re-let in 2022	€36927.89	
	The number of dwellings that were re-tenanted on any date in 2022 (but excluding all those that had been vacant due to an estate-wide refurbishment scheme)	46	
	The number of weeks from the date of vacation to the date the dwelling is re-tenanted	1932 wk	
	Total expenditure on works necessary to enable re-letting of the dwellings	€1698683	
	A. Total number of registered tenancies in the LA area at the end of June 2022		
B. Number of rented dwellings inspected in 2022	331		

Housing: H6 Approved	C. Percentage of inspected dwellings in 2022 not compliant with the Standards Regulations	100.00 %	
	D. Number of dwellings deemed compliant in 2022 (including those originally deemed non-compliant)	15	
	E. The number of inspections (including reinspections) undertaken by the local authority in 2022	389	
	A. Number of adult individuals in emergency accommodation that are long-term (i.e. 6 months or more within the previous year) homeless as a percentage of the total number of homeless adult individuals in emergency accommodation at the end of 2022	15.56 %	
	The number of adult individuals classified as homeless and in emergency accommodation on the night of 31 December 2022 as recorded on the PASS system	45	
The number out of those individuals who, on 31/12/2022, had been in emergency accommodation for 6 months continuously, or for 6 months cumulatively within the previous 12 months	7		
Roads: R1 & R2 Approved	A. (a) The percentage of Regional road kilometres that received a PSCI rating in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2022	96.00 %	
	A. (b) The percentage of Local Primary road kilometres that received a PSCI rating in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2022	69.00 %	

A. (c) The percentage of Local Secondary road kilometres that received a PSCI rating in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2022	60.00 %
A. (d) The percentage of Local Tertiary road kilometres that received a PSCI rating in the 60 month period prior to 31/12/2022	64.00 %
B. (a.1) The percentage of total Regional road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 1-4 at 31/12/2022	6.29 %
B. (a.2) The percentage of total Regional road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 5-6 at 31/12/2022	16.51 %
B. (a.3) The percentage of total Regional road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 7-8 at 31/12/2022	38.89 %
B. (a.4) The percentage of total Regional road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 9-10 at 31/12/2022	38.30 %
B. (b.1) The percentage of total Local Primary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 1-4 at 31/12/2022	8.32 %
B. (b.2) The percentage of total Local Primary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 5-6 at 31/12/2022	23.35 %
B. (b.3) The percentage of total Local Primary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 7-8 at 31/12/2022	35.35 %
B. (b.4) The percentage of total Local Primary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 9-10 at 31/12/2022	32.19 %
B. (c.1) The percentage of total Local Secondary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 1-4 at 31/12/2022	11.47 %
B. (c.2) The percentage of total Local Secondary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 5-6 at 31/12/2022	21.44 %
B. (c.3) The percentage of total Local Secondary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 7-8 at 31/12/2022	40.28 %

B. (c.4) The percentage of total Local Secondary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 9-10 at 31/12/2022	26.32 %	
B. (d.1) The percentage of total Local Tertiary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 1-4 at 31/12/2022	18.25 %	
B. (d.2) The percentage of total Local Tertiary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 5-6 at 31/12/2022	10.96 %	
B. (d.3) The percentage of total Local Tertiary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 7-8 at 31/12/2022	23.50 %	
B. (d.4) The percentage of total Local Tertiary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 9-10 at 31/12/2022	33.00 %	
A.1 Kilometres of regional road strengthened during 2022	15.4 km	
A.2 The amount expended on regional roads strengthening work during 2022	€2799417.00	
A.3 The average unit cost of regional road strengthening works per square metre (€/m ²)	€27.73	
B.1 Kilometres of regional road resealed during 2022	14.1 km	
B.2 The amount expended on regional road resealing work during 2022	€549008.00	
B.3 The average unit cost of regional road resealing works per square metre (€/m ²)	€6.48	
C.1 Kilometres of local road strengthened during 2022	47.6 km	
C2. The amount expended on local road strengthening work during 2022	€4165259.00	
C.3 The average unit cost of local road strengthening works per square metre (€/m ²)	€19.96	
D.1 Kilometres of local road resealed during 2022	51.0 km	

	D.2 The amount expended on local road resealing work during 2022	€1162598.00	
	D.3 The average unit cost of local road resealing works per square metre (€/m2)	€5.17	
Motor Tax: R3 Approved	A. The percentage of motor tax transactions which were dealt with online (i.e. transaction is processed and the tax disc is issued) in 2022	81.10 %	
Water: W1 & W2 Approved	Percentage of drinking water in private schemes in compliance with statutory requirements		
	The number of registered schemes monitored by each local authority as a percentage of total schemes registered	97.87 %	
	The number of registered schemes monitored in 2022	46	
	Total number of registered schemes in 2022	47	
Waste: E1 Approved	A. The number of households which availed of a 3-bin service offered by a licensed operator at 31/12/2022	7252	
	B. The percentage of households within the local authority that the number at A represents (based on agglomerations of more than 500)	69.81 %	
Environmental Pollution: E2 Approved	A. Total number of pollution cases in respect of which a complaint was made during 2022	929	
	A. Number of pollution cases closed from 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022	1110	

Litter Pollution: E3 Approved	A. Total number of pollution cases on hands at 31/12/2022	185	
	The opening number of pollution cases carried forward from the year end 2021	366	
	A1. The percentage of the area within the local authority that when surveyed in 2022 was unpolluted or litter free	5 %	
	A2. The percentage of the area within the local authority that when surveyed in 2022 was slightly polluted	61 %	
	A3. The percentage of the area within the local authority that when surveyed in 2022 was moderately polluted	32 %	
	A4. The percentage of the area within the local authority that when surveyed in 2022 was significantly polluted	2 %	
A5. The percentage of the area within the local authority that when surveyed in 2022 was grossly polluted	0 %		
Green Flag Status: E4 Approved	A. The percentage of schools that have been awarded/renewed green flag status in the two years to 31 December 2022	33.77 %	
	Schools which attained a Green Flag for the first time in 2022	0	
	Schools which renewed their Green Flag in 2022	13	
	Schools which held a Green Flag from 2021 and therefore do not require renewal until 2023	13	

Energy Efficiency: E5 Approved	A. The cumulative percentage of energy savings achieved by 31/12/2022 relative to baseline year (2009)	-40.21 %	
Public Lighting: E6 Approved	A. Total annual consumption of the public lighting system	3337.24 MWh	
	B. Average wattage of each public light	86.49 W	
	C. Percentage of the total system that LED lights represent	43.27 %	
	Number of LED lights in the public lighting system	4014	
	Number of non-LED lights in the public lighting system	5262	
Climate Change: E7 Approved	1 a) Does the local authority have a designated (FTE) Climate Action Coordinator?	Yes	
	1 b) Does the local authority have a designated (FTE) Climate Action Officer?	Yes	
	2. Does the local authority have a climate action team?	Yes	
Planning: P1 Approved	A. Buildings inspected as a percentage of new buildings notified to the local authority	14.29 %	
	Total number of new buildings notified to the local authority i.e. buildings where a valid Commencement Notice was served in the period 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022 by a builder or developer on the local authority	315	
	Number of new buildings notified to the local authority in 2022 that were the subject of at least one on-site	45	

Planning: P2 & P3 Approved	inspection during 2022 undertaken by the local authority		
	A. Number of local authority planning decisions which were the subject of an appeal to An Bord Pleanála that were determined by the Board on any date in 2022	22	
	B. Percentage of the determinations at A which confirmed (either with or without variation of the plan) the decision made by the local authority	22.73 %	
	Number of determinations confirming the local authority's decision (either with or without variation)	5	
	A. Total number of planning cases referred to or initiated by the local authority in the period 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022 that were investigated	59	
	B. Total number of investigated cases that were closed during 2022	14	
	C. Percentage of the cases at B that were dismissed as trivial, minor or without foundation or were closed because statute barred or an exempted development	14.29 %	
	D. Percentage of the cases at B that were resolved to the local authority's satisfaction through negotiations	21.43 %	
	E. Percentage of the cases at B that were closed due to enforcement proceedings	64.29 %	
	F. Total number of planning cases being investigated as at 31/12/2022	275	
Number of cases at B that were dismissed as trivial, minor or without foundation or were closed because statute barred or an exempted development	2		

Planning: P4 & P5 Approved	Number of cases at B that were resolved to the local authority's satisfaction through negotiations	3	
	Number of cases at B that were closed due to enforcement proceedings	9	
	€38.17		
	A. The 2022 Annual Financial Statement (AFS) Programme D data divided by the population of the local authority area per the 2022 Census		
	AFS Programme D data consisting of D01 - Forward Planning, D02 - Development Management, D03 - Enforcement (inclusive of the relevant Programme D proportion of the central management charge) for 2022	€3155409	Per the NOAC guidelines, the Gross 2022 Expenditure figures have been used. In 2021, the Net figures were used which included all Income across D01, D02 and D03.
	A. The percentage of applications for fire safety certificates received in 2022 that were decided (granted or refused) within two months of their receipt	76.19 %	
	B. The percentage of applications for fire safety certificates received in 2022 that were decided (granted or refused) within an extended period agreed with the applicant	23.81 %	
	The total number of applications for fire safety certificates received in 2022 that were not withdrawn by the applicant	42	
	The number of applications for fire safety certificates received in 2022 that were decided (granted or refused) within two months of the date of receipt of the application	32	
	The number of applications for fire safety certificates received in 2022 that were decided (granted or refused) within an agreed extended time period	10	

Fire Service: F1 Approved	A. The Annual Financial Statement (AFS) Programme E expenditure data for 2022 divided by the population of the local authority area per the 2022 Census figures for the population served by the fire authority as per the Risk Based Approach Phase One reports	€42.03	
	AFS Programme E expenditure data consisting of E11 - Operation of Fire Service and E12 - Fire Prevention for 2022	€3474647	
Fire Service: F2 & F3 Approved	A. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Full-Time Stations in respect of fire	0 min	No full time brigades in Offaly
	B. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Part-Time Stations (retained fire service) in respect of fire	5.24 min	
	C. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Full-Time Stations in respect of all other (non-fire) emergency incidents	0 min	No full time brigades in Offaly
	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	5.38 min	
	A. Percentage of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at scene is within 10 minutes	36.88 %	
	B. Percentage of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at the scene is after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	48.50 %	
	C. Percentage of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes	14.62 %	

D. Percentage of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance at the scene is within 10 minutes	31.14 %	
E. Percentage of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance at the scene is after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	42.51 %	
F. Percentage of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes	26.35 %	
Total number of call-outs in respect of fires from 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022	301	
Number of these fire cases where first fire tender attendance at the scene is within 10 minutes	111	
Number of these fire cases in which first fire tender attendance at the scene is after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	146	
Number of these fire cases in which first fire tender attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes	44	
Total number of call-outs in respect of all other emergency incidents (i.e. not including fire) from 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022	167	
Number of these non-fire cases in which first fire tender attendance at the scene is within 10 minutes	52	
Number of these non-fire cases in which first fire tender attendance at the scene is after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	71	
Number of these non-fire cases in which first fire tender attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes	44	

Library Service: L1 Approved	A. Number of visits to libraries per head of population for the local authority area per the 2022 Census	1.81	
	B. Number of items issued to library borrowers in the year	201645	
	C. Library active members per head of population		
	D. Number of registered library members in the year	13024	
	Number of visits to its libraries from 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022	149497	
Library Service: L2 Approved	A. The Annual Financial Statement (AFS) Programme F data for 2022 divided by the population of the local authority area per the 2022 Census	€35.85	
	B. The annual per capita expenditure on collections over the period 1/01/2022 to 31/12/2022	€1.81	
	A. AFS Programme F data consisting of F02 - Operation of Library and Archival Service (inclusive of the relevant proportion of the central management charge for Programme F) for 2022	€2964023	
	B. The annual expenditure on new stock acquired by the library in the year	€150000	
	Youth and Community: Y1 & Y2 Approved	A. Percentage of local schools involved in the local Youth Council/Comhairle na nÓg scheme	91.67 %
Total number of second level schools in the local authority area at 31/12/2022		12	
Number of second level schools in the local authority area from which representatives attended the local Comhairle na nÓg AGM held in 2022		11	

	A. The number of organisations included in the County Register at 31/12/2022 and the proportion of those organisations that opted to be part of the Social Inclusion College within the PPN	11.24	
	Total number of organisations included in the County Register (maintained in accordance with section 128 of the Local Government Act 2001) for the local authority area as at 31/12/2022	605	Total number of Groups for 2022 are less than 2021 due to re-registration. Some groups have ceased since Covid.
	Total number of those organisations that registered for the first time in 2022	31	
	Number of organisations that opted to join the Social Inclusion Electoral College on whatever date they registered for the PPN	68	
Corporate: C1, C2, C4 & C5 Approved	A. The wholetime equivalent staffing number as at 31 December 2022	429.45	
	A. Percentage of paid working days lost to sickness absence through medically certified leave in 2022	5.28 %	
	B. Percentage of paid working days lost to sickness absence through self-certified leave in 2022	0.20 %	
	Total number of working days lost to sickness absence through medically certified leave in 2022	5147 day	
	Total number of working days lost to sickness absence through self-certified leave in 2022	199 day	
	Number of unpaid working days lost to sickness absence included within the total of self-certified sick leave days in 2022	3 day	

Corporate: C3 Approved	Number of unpaid working days lost to sickness absence included within the total of medically certified sick leave days in 2022	0 day	
	If any staff are on long-term sick leave (i.e. a continuous period of more than 4 weeks), include a text note of the number of staff on long-term sick leave		
	A. All ICT expenditure in the period from 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022, divided by the WTE no.	€3905.92	
	Total ICT expenditure in 2022	€1677396.42	
	A. All ICT expenditure calculated in C4 as a proportion of Revenue expenditure	2.06	
	Total Revenue expenditure from 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022 before transfers to or from reserves	81540654	
	A. The per capita total page views of the local authority's websites in 2022	16.15	
	B. The per capita total number of followers at end 2022 of the local authority's social media accounts (if any)	1.21	
	The cumulative total page views of all websites operated by the local authority for the period from 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022 obtained from a page tagging on-site web analytics service or equivalent	1335083	
	The total number of social media users who, at 31/12/2022, were following the local authority on any social media sites	100275	
	The number of social media accounts operated by the local authority	31	

Finance: M1 to M4 Approved	Indicate if there was a change to the cookie policies on the local authority sites and the date this came into effect	No Change	
	A. Cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2018 in the Revenue Account from the Income & Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€-2505853	
	B. Cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2019 in the Revenue Account from the Income & Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€-1873757	
	C. Cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2020 in the Revenue Account from the Income & Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€-1661523	
	D. Cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2021 in the Revenue Account from the Income & Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€-1637257	
	E. Cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2022 in the Revenue Account from the Income & Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€-1213190	
	F. Cumulative surplus or deficit at 31/12/2022 as a percentage of Total Income in 2022 from the Income and Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	-1.38 %	
	G. Revenue expenditure per capita in 2022	€986.36	
	H. Revenue expenditure per capita in 2022 excluding significant out of county / shared service expenditure	€0	
	The 2022 Total Income figure from the Income and Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€87674339	
	The 2022 Total Expenditure figure from the Income and Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€81540654	

The 2022 Revenue expenditure excluding county / shared service expenditure for the service providers of HAP, MyPay, DRHE and Dublin Fire Services	€0
A. (a) Collection level of Rates in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2018	88.7 %
A. (b) Collection level of Rent & Annuities in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2018	86.8 %
A. (c) Collection level of Housing Loans in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2018	55.9 %
B. (a) Collection level of Rates in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2019	88.0 %
B. (b) Collection level of Rent & Annuities in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2019	89.0 %
B. (c) Collection level of Housing Loans in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2019	62.0 %
C. a) Collection level of Rates in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2020	77.0 %
C. b) Collection level of Rent & Annuities in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2020	92.0 %
C. (c) Collection level of Housing Loans in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2020	75.0 %
D. (a) Collection level of Rates in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2021	86.0 %
D. (b) Collection level of Rent & Annuities in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2021	93.0 %
D. (c) Collection level of Housing Loans in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2021	82.0 %

	E. (a) Collection level of Rates in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2022	85 %	
	E. (b) Collection level of Rent & Annuities in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2022	93 %	
	E. (c) Collection level of Housing Loans in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2022	85 %	
	A. Per capita total cost of settled claims for 2022	€2.70	
	IPB Insurance: Number of notified claims for 2022	41	
	IPB Insurance: Number of settled claims for 2022	25	
	IPB Insurance: Total cost of settled claims for 2022	€223195.63	
	Total cost of claims settled under excess for 2022	€0	
	Self-insured: Number of notified claims for 2022		
	Self-insured: Number of settled claims for 2022		
	Self-insured: Total cost of settled claims for 2022		
	A. Overall central management charge as a percentage of total expenditure on revenue account	15.03 %	
	B. Total payroll costs as a percentage of revenue expenditure	34.82 %	
	Overall central management charge from the Local Authority FMS and defined in the Annual Budget	€12256356	
	Total payroll costs from Appendix 1 of the AFS for 2022 (including Salaries, Wages and Pensions)	€28394901	
Economic Development: J1 to J5 Approved	A. The number of jobs created with assistance from the Local Enterprise Office during the period 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022 per 100,000 of population	186.2873	

The number of jobs created with assistance from the Local Enterprise Office during the period 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022		154.0	
A. The number of trading online voucher applications approved by the Local Enterprise Office in 2022 per 100,000 of population		18.1449	
B. The number of trading online vouchers that were drawn down in 2022 per 100,000 of population		7.2579	
The number of trading online voucher applications approved by the Local Enterprise Office in 2022		15	
The number of those trading online vouchers that were drawn down in 2022		6	
A. The number of participants who received mentoring during the period 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022 per 100,000 of population		180.2390	
The number of participants who received mentoring during the period 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022		149	
A. Does the local authority have a current tourism strategy?	Yes		
B. Does the local authority have a designated Tourism Officer?	Yes		
The spend on local economic development by the local authority in 2022 per head of population		€136.40	
The spend on local economic development by the local authority in 2022		€11275934	

