

Offaly Local Authorities “Corporate Plan” 2005-2009



Adopted by Offaly County Council
at its meeting on 21st December 2004

CONTENTS

PAGE NO:

1.	Introductions	4
2	Political Organisation and Management Structure	7
3	Vision, Mission and Core Values	8
4	Operating Environments	10
5	Strategic Priorities	20
6	Resource & HR Issues/Constraints	29
7	Implementation and Monitoring	34
8.	APPENDICES	
	Elected Members Contact Details	
	Offaly County Council	34
	Town Councils	35
	Section Phone Numbers	36
	SPC membership	37
	How the Plan was produced	39
	Directors of Service	41
	Local Government functions	43
	National Service Indicators	44

1. INTRODUCTION

The growing sophistication of both society generally and local government in particular mean there is no alternative to working to a good, robust Corporate Plan. Now that council has a fixed term of office, it is vital that a strategic plan is in place for, at a minimum, each fixed term. The plan needs to give a clear sense of what this council is committed to doing during its five-year lifetime.

Virtually all Council services are 'givens'. That is, it is not in the Council's gift to decide not to deliver them. However if 'What' the Council does is fixed, there is still very considerable scope to improve or reshape 'How' things are done.

Developing a good Corporate Plan is one thing but having the finance to implement it is another and Offaly's financial base is not one of the strongest to start with. Benchmarking commitments for example will constrain the Council's future financial manoeuvrability.

Whatever about the difficulties, however, the Council needs a good, well thought out strategic framework, within which to work. The alternative is more or less constant 'fire fighting' and ad hoc decisions based on the here and now. A good plan will also help put the Council and the County in greater charge of their own destinies. We cannot afford to let things drift or let others determine the agenda for Offaly by default. In developing the plan we should focus on common sense, communication and continuity.

We must not forget that the Council has been very successful in a number of areas and a number of ways. But we must move to a position where what was previously in people's heads is now down on paper.

The real challenge is to make sure the Corporate Plan is not 'just another document'. It has to make a difference in terms of Offaly, its people and the Council. We're confident this plan will help to do exactly that.

Niall Sweeney
County Manager

Strategic Policy Committees – (S.P.C.s)

S.P.C.s have a key role in advising and scrutinising the Council. They were established for the first time in the last Council term 1999-2004. Their purpose is to provide a forum for debate on policy issues and for the development of policy recommendations for the Council. They have a broad membership including sectoral and community interests working with elected members and council staff. There are four S.P.C.s in Offaly dealing with the following policy areas;

- Economic Development and Planning Policy
- Environmental policy
- Transportation and Infrastructural Policy
- Housing policy, Social and Cultural Services

(See appendix for current membership of Offaly County Council SPCs)

Corporate Policy Group – (C.P.G.)

The Chairpersons of the S.P.C.s are elected members of the County Council. They, along with the Chairperson of the Council form a committee called the Corporate Policy Group (C.P.G.), advised by the County Manager. The C.P.G. is essentially the Council's 'Cabinet'. Its main roles are consultation in preparation of budgets, dealing with corporate issues, modernisation and customer service.

Management Team

The County Manager, Directors of Service and Head of Finance meet regularly, and together are known as the Management Team of the Council. The Management Team serves as the senior executive of the organisation ultimately responsible for the strategic, operational and financial management of the organisation day to day.

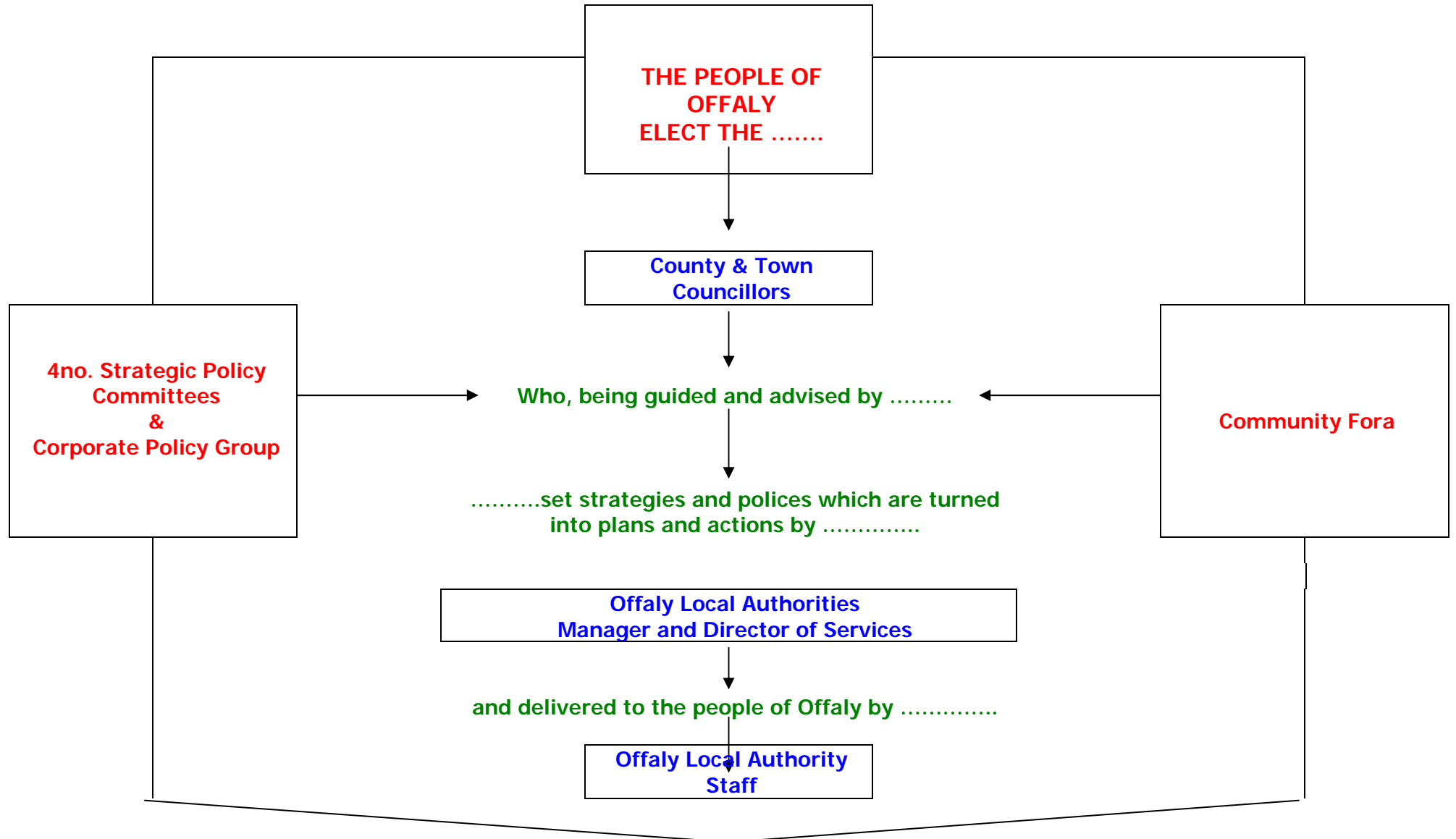
Area Committees of the Council

The elected Councillors within each of the four electoral areas in County Offaly, Ferbane, Birr, Edenderry and Tullamore, meet regularly with the Director of Service responsible for that area and other officials to discuss progress on local works and issues of concern. The Area Committee deals with matters relating to the operational delivery of local authority services.

Town Councils

There are 3 Town Councils in Offaly, in Tullamore, Birr and Edenderry. Each carries out important functions in representing the people of the local area and in relation to operational and policy matters. Town Councillors are democratically elected for a five-year term. Councillors work closely with officials in the provision of essential services such as public lighting, street cleaning, social housing, development control and physical planning. They also provide and maintain recreational and amenity facilities and oversee casual trading, and litter management. Birr and Tullamore Town Councils operate as independent housing and planning authorities within the county.

2. LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN OFFALY – POLITICAL AND MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE



Council Organisation and Management

The structure and organisation of Offaly Local Authorities need to follow the strategic priorities it has set and should also help elected members to fulfill their roles and reflect their **democratic mandate**. As democratically elected members, Councillors have a responsibility to respond to the needs of our communities but also to exercise leadership in shaping and working towards the achievement of a shared vision for the county.

The functions of local authorities are divided into Reserved and Executive Functions. Reserved Functions are discharged by elected members and involve important matters of policy including the adoption of the annual budget, the borrowing of money, the making of development plans, bye-laws, the adoption of building programme etc. Executive functions performed by the County Manager include the employment of staff, property management, planning decisions and the day to day administration of the local authorities' affairs.

The Manager is ultimately responsible for staffing and organisational arrangements in the local authority for which he is manager. The appointment of Directors of Service in recent years has led to a new management structure. The Directors are given responsibility for the delivery of specified services and related functions as delegated by the manager. A key element of the role of the Directors of Services is supporting the Strategic Policy Committees to carry out their work.

A variety of staff are employed to carry out the different services provided by the local authorities. These vary from administrative staff to professional and technical staff in different fields. A spirit of cooperation and mutual understanding between elected members and local authority staff is important for the effective discharge of local authority business. Both councillors and staff have the common interest of serving the community. But their responsibilities are distinct. Councillors are responsible to their electorate for their elected term of office. Staff are responsible to the manager in carrying out their duties. Mutual respect and courtesy between councillors and employees is essential to good local government and should be maintained at all times.

Local authorities are multi-purpose bodies responsible for an extensive range of services. The annual budget of local authorities is formulated under eight main programme groups; housing and building; roads and transportation; water and sewerage, planning and development; environmental protection; recreation and amenity; agriculture, education, health and welfare, miscellaneous services. (See appendices for further details). Although this list does not exhaust the range of local authority activity, it gives a useful indication of the overall spread. Moreover, in a broader context, local authorities are concerned with the promotion of the general economic, social and cultural development of their areas and work with other agencies and interests, including the Community and Voluntary Forum, to promote progress through the County Development Board.

Extracts taken from Local Government and the Elected Member (2004), Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

3 VISION, MISSION, ETHOS AND CORE VALUES

A Vision for County Offaly

“That all people in Offaly will enjoy equal opportunity and a good quality of life – that they will look forward to the future with confidence while cherishing the past”

Offaly County Development Strategy 2002-2012

Offaly Local Authorities Mission Statement 2005-2009

“To improve the quality of life for people in Offaly “

Our Ethos

Offaly Local Authorities aim to be recognised for the care and respect given to each and every user of our services by every member of our organisation.

Our Core Values

- **Customer Care** – we ensure that all services are customer and user driven.
- **Fair Employment** – we treat employees fairly and enable them to contribute fully to the work of the Local Authority.
- **Integrity** – we maintain the highest standards of conduct and probity, are open, accountable and objective and make decisions in the public interest.
- **Local Democracy** – we provide clear, effective and democratic leadership. We inform, listen and respond to local people.
- **Partnership** – we work with other agencies and local communities.
- **Pride in Offaly** – we promote the county as an attractive place to live work and invest. We encourage civic pride and responsibility, celebrate people in Offaly their traditions and culture.
- **Quality Services** – we strive for continuous improvement in our service delivery.
- **Social Inclusion** – we see the person affected by services, decisions and policies.
- **Sustainability** – we work in ways that will not constrain the current or future needs of the people and communities of Offaly.

4 OPERATING ENVIRONMENTS

Changing Offaly and its Place in the World

Offaly has seen many changes in its economic, social and demographic structure in recent years. The phenomenal growth of our towns now means that Offaly has a significant urban dimension with all of the associated social, economic and physical consequences that this brings. Even basic consequences such as traffic congestion in towns have now become a vexed issue. We do however need to recognise the growing significance and implications of 'urban Offaly'. Offaly's location in the Midlands has meant that the East of the county is characterised by enormous population growth as commuters seek affordable housing within travelling distance of the capital.

The economic, social and environmental sustainability of our communities is a key issue. The other side of the 'urban growth coin' is the continued lack of growth and/or decline in parts of rural Offaly. Two 'Offaly's' have emerged, one that is prosperous and growing, the other disadvantaged with declining economies and population figures. The Council believes that land use planning policy in the county needs to reflect this. A more controlling role needs to be taken where there are pressures for development but a more developmental role where there is a 'vacuum' and where there are real pressures on people to leave, in order to sustain rural communities.

More debate is needed on what the National Spatial Strategy, and particularly the linked gateway concept, actually means for the county. Strategic political decisions are needed on foot of Tullamore's placing as part of the linked gateway. In this and other areas, there is a need for greater liaison, collaboration and joint thinking with neighbouring Councils.

Their needs and those of people living day to day with poverty and exclusion must be prioritised in the design and delivery of the services we provide in the county. Offaly has been shown to have lower levels of educational attainment, which has implications both for quality of life, and the economic status of individuals, families and communities.

As a county we now depend on improving the number and quality of jobs in Offaly by capitalising to best effect on Government's decentralisation plans, lobbying for more meaningful and effective assistance for economic and industrial development. We must respect and capitalise on Offaly's environment and the quality of life it offers, and develop the County's tourism and recreational opportunities.

A Profile of County Offaly



- Population of 63,663 based on 2002 Census of Population
- Located in the Midlands between the National Primary routes of the N7 (Dublin to Cork/Limerick) and the N4/6 (Dublin to Sligo/Galway). Shares its borders with seven other counties.
- Traversed by the Grand Canal, bordered by the River Shannon to the west and the Slieve Bloom Mountains to the south.
- Key industries are healthcare, manufacturing, peat harvesting, electricity generation, public services, construction and agriculture.
- Offaly Local Authorities and the Midland Health Board two of the largest employers in the County. Potential for more public service jobs through decentralisation of Government Departments.
- Tullamore is a centre of excellence for Healthcare / Biopharma industries.
- Tourism is, and will be, a vital part of Offaly's economy with its wild boglands, walkways and waterways, natural beauty and nature reserves, and a rich monastic heritage.
- Relatively heavily dependent on agriculture, one third of farms are economically unviable, 61% are less than 30 hectares.
- Low levels of educational attainment, particularly third level, relative to the state.
- Significant development of Tullamore includes new modern buildings, offices and several new retail and entertainment outlets.
- Excellent telecommunications systems exist including access to Broadband and Wireless Broadband available in some towns across Offaly.
- Good road and rail links to seaports and airports, Tullamore By-Pass.
- New Tullamore Hospital to be open late 2005
- Excellent amenities, schools and quality affordable housing.
- Tullamore is well served by public transport. Pilot Rural Transport Initiatives currently operate in West/South and North Offaly.
- Commuting long distances to work is an increasingly important issue for Offaly residents and communities.

Census 2002 – How did Offaly compare with the State?

Indicator	Offaly	National
Population	63,663	3,917,203
Population Change 1996-2002	+7.7%	+8%
Population Density	83 persons / mile ²	146 persons / mile ²
Percentage Age Dependent	34.9%	32.3%
Percentage of Population who left Education at 15 or younger	23.4%	21.9%
Percentage of the Population with no formal or primary education only	26.1%	22.2%
Percentage of the population that have attained 3 rd level education.	17.7%	26%
Percentage of the population At Work	52.4%	53.1%
Unemployment rate	8.8%	8.8%
Percentage of households that own at least 1 car	81.9%	78.3%
Population with disabilities	8%	8.3%

Population at Work by Industry

Employment Industry	Offaly	State
Manufacturing, Electricity & Gas	21.8%	16.0%
Commerce	19.8%	26.9%
Other	15.4%	15.1%
Professional Service	13.4%	15.4%
Building & Construction	11.1%	9.1%
Agriculture	9.1%	5.9%
Public Administration	6.0%	5.8%
Transport	3.5%	5.9%

Percentage of the population in each Social Class

Social Class	Occupation	Offaly	State
1	Professional Workers	3.8%	6.1%
2	Managerial & Technical	21.9%	25.5%
3	Non-Manual	15%	16.5%
4	Skilled Manual	20.4%	17.2%
5	Semi-Skilled	12.1%	10.9%
6	Unskilled	7.2%	5.6%
7	Others	19.6%	18.2%

Plans and Strategies and what they mean for Offaly

National Spatial Strategy

A commitment to a better regional distribution of public and private investment fostering balanced regional development. Offaly is part of the Midland Region with Laois, Longford and Westmeath. The Spatial Strategy sets out a vision for regional development in Ireland up to 2020.

National Development Plan 2000-2006

The national Development Plan will continue to sponsor major infrastructural, economic and social improvements within the county such as those listed below.

A sample of National Development Plan Projects in Offaly

- Dublin/Galway N6 (Kinnegad to Athlone)
- Dublin/Limerick N7 (Castletown to Nenagh)
- Tullamore General Hospital
- Tullamore By-Pass
- Clara Sewerage Scheme
- Tullamore Sewerage Scheme
- Ferbane Sewerage Scheme
- Birr Water Supply Scheme
- Edenderry Sewerage Scheme
- Childcare Facilities & Services
- Equality Measures
- Broadband in towns and smaller communities
- Urban & Village Renewal Projects
- Housing Projects
- Neighbourhood Watch
- Enterprise Supports

Border, Midland and Western Regional Strategy 2000 – 2006

The main focus of this regional strategy is to maintain and improve the quality of life, maintain the pace of unemployment reduction, and reduce social exclusion, including in particular rural (farm and non-farm) exclusion.

Midland Regional Planning Guidelines

Tullamore forms part of the Triangular Gateway envisioned for the Midlands in the National Spatial Strategy together with Athlone and Mullingar. These towns are expected to grow to a combined population of 100,000 by 2020 (30,000 Tullamore, 30,000 Mullingar, 40,000 Athlone).

County Development Strategy 2002-2012

Interagency strategy for the economic, social and cultural development of the county.

Offaly County Development Plan 2003-2009

Sets out the parameters for land use and development and controls growth and settlement patterns within the county.

Race Against Waste – National Strategy for Waste Management

Midlands Regional Waste Management Plan

Draft National Planning Guidelines

Important generic Cross-Cutting strategies

- Local Agenda 21 – promoting sustainable local communities
- National Anti-poverty Strategy - reducing poverty and combating social exclusion
- Sustaining Progress – maintaining National social partnership 2003-2005
- National Children's Strategy – cherishing, supporting and respecting children.
- National Health Strategy – focus on prevention and local approaches to health.

The Changing Roles of Offaly Local Authorities

The growing sophistication of both society generally and local government in particular mean that local authorities must now operate with a corporate outlook in the provision of its social, economic, cultural and environmental services. Organisational planning for the duration of the fixed Council term, annual operational and financial plans for each service, evaluation and monitoring of services, contracting certain services to the private sector, Public Private Partnerships and e-government are all aspects of a changing context in which local authorities now work. Local Government's central role in terms of increasingly developing and monitoring central government plans/ policies and directives has also created new roles and they are increasingly regulated and monitored centrally.

Traditionally local authorities have been associated with the provision of local infrastructure such as housing, roads and sewerage and other services such as libraries, fire services, motor taxation and so on. In recent years with societal change they have increasingly recognised their crucial role in local civic leadership and the provision of 'Quality of Life' services such as arts and culture, heritage, recreation and community development.

Offaly Local Authorities has achieved much in terms of helping to develop Offaly through facilitation of industrial development, improvement of infrastructure. They have also spearheaded improvements in interagency working through the County Development process and take an active lead in the implementation of the County Development Strategy. There have been advances in community input and involvement in decision making through the operation of Offaly Community Forum, Strategic Policy Committees and community consultation. There is a growing external expectation that Offaly Local Authorities provides such leadership, is the 'intervenor' on behalf of the county and creates and reflects the county's identity.

The roll out to local authorities of a newmodern financial management system called Agresso was completed in 2003. This new system is based on up-to-date and best accounting principles and replaced the outdated cash-based system of accounting in local authorities. The new financial amangement system provides better management information, facilitating maximising financial efficiency, accountability and value for money. In addition the creation of new posts of finance/management accountants, who work directly to heads of finance, is intended to strengthen the financial management framework in local authorities.

Offaly Local Authorities, with its partners, also needs to reflect and respond to poverty, depravation and disadvantage in the absence of RAPID and CLAR anti-poverty / exclusion mechanisms. The growing cultural diversity among our service users also has implications for the way that we deliver our services. There is no doubt that local authorities are experiencing a culture change and are moving to meet growing customer and central government demands such as the roll out of e-government and a dual language requirement for all publications. There are also increasing demands for better communication and interaction internally and externally including improving our public image and promoting our services.

Council Services

Housing

Housing is a core Council service where the Council's roles of direct provision and indirect facilitating and enabling are used to full effect. This section is responsible for the implementation of national housing policy at local level. It aims to ensure that every household in need of housing has access to quality affordable housing in an acceptable environment.

The main housing-related issues for the Council are:

- continuing to provide and promote a range of good quality housing and accommodation in Offaly
- Helping build and develop local communities through estate management

Arts

The Arts Service in Offaly County Council aims to facilitate the creativity, imagination, talent and traditions of all people in Offaly and the modes through which they are expressed.

Key arts related issues include;

- Provision of adequate resources for arts
- Development of an arts space for the county

County Library & Archives Services

The Library Service is a major resource for information and life long learning through the provision of accurate and up-to-date information in print and electronic forms; it provides access to the internet, assistive technology and literacy supports. It meets the public's right to know, is a resource for culture and imagination and a centre for learning for all.

The Local Studies and Archives Department holds extensive collections relating to Offaly's past. The Department comprehensively collects and makes available the documentary heritage of the county.

Key Issues;

- Provide on-line services - access to the library catalogue and provide loan renewals and reservations services for users and develop e-links with schools and other educational institutions
- Progress the infrastructural development plan at Birr and Tullamore
- Maximise the library's strategic role in delivering public information, in print and electronic formats to the community at large
- Further develop cultural content on the web
- Develop public access to the resources of the County Library and Archive services by improving opening hours as appropriate
- Maintain and develop quality library & archive collections and promote wider use

Community & Enterprise

The Community and Enterprise Section facilitates Offaly County Development Board and its substructures in the implementation, monitoring and review of the County Development Strategy 2002-2012. The section plays a key role in supporting the participation of the community and voluntary sector in local decision-making through Offaly Community Forum. It also supports the mainstreaming of social inclusion practices within Offaly Local Authorities and the County Development Board.

Key issues;

- Monitoring and evaluation of County Development Strategy implementation
- Key role in supporting civic leadership and social inclusion roles of Offaly local authorities
- Building the capacity of communities to be represented in decision-making

Finance

The role of finance is developing – new modern financial management systems have been installed. The finance section has a dual focus – internal and external. Providing services such as Housing Loans, Motor Taxation, payment of suppliers and staff, collecting revenues due such as housing rents, water charges and rates. Statutory financial reports, budgets and other information for Government are prepared. Internal management reports are also prepared to assist with day to day management.

Key issues;

- Further enhancement of Financial Management Systems and development of specialist skills to compliment it.
- Providing financial information and Management Reports – which assist management in decisions on resource utilisation and value for money.
- Maintain proper financial records for subsequent audit.

Planning

The Planning Department is responsible for land use policy, control of development including Building Control and protection of the natural built heritage and amenity of the County.

Land use policy is implemented by means of the County Development Plans and Local Area Plans. Planning Control involves the process of planning applications up to 1,500 per annum, the processing of Fire Safety Certificates and the taking of appropriate enforcement action where necessary.

The main planning related issues for the Council are:

- To implement Council policy as set out in various plans
- To protect the environment, heritage and amenity
- The Midlands Linked Gateway

Environmental Services:

The Environmental Services directorate has a broad area of responsibility. Its functions range from providing waste infrastructure such as the landfill disposal site and waste recycling facilities e.g. civic amenity sites, bring banks etc., through water pollution control in the form of licensing of trade effluent to waters and sewers, and percolation testing, operation of the fire service, provision of burial grounds, control of air and litter pollution, operation of a veterinary service and licensing of waste collection and disposal/recovery activities.

The principal issues:

- On-going shift from waste disposal to waste management. Implementation of the regional waste management plan/review currently under way
- Extension to landfill site at a cost of 8 million euro/about to commence
- Rationalisation of the County Offaly fire services
- Implementation of a 5 year policy on burial ground provision

Water Services

Water services aim to continue with the major programme for the prompt procurement & provision of urgently needed water and wastewater services to support the housing & industrial/commercial/community development needs of our current & future customers.

The principal issues for this section are:

- Changes in work practices arising from public private partnerships
- Maintaining levels of supply to meet pace of development
- Water quality
- Water pricing policy
- Improving level of service to meet customer demands

Roads

Roads services provide for the safe and efficient movement of persons and goods by road through the improvement and maintenance of the road network, including public lighting and signage. The roads service also administers the Taxi and Hackney licensing system, local road improvement schemes and community participation in road work schemes.

Key issues;

- New regulations, more stringent design standards, bureaucracy and reporting systems
- Staffing levels
- National Spatial Strategy
- Road safety
- Maximising use of technology

Human Resources

Our Human resources section assesses the knowledge, skills and abilities required by the organisation to operate successfully and institute staffing, performance management, training and development policies to meet those needs.

Key issues;

- Performance Management Development System (P.M.D.S.)
- Staff training to meet personal and organisational needs
- Implementation of HR elements of Better Local Government

Corporate Services

Corporate Services incorporates legal services, higher education grants, Register of Electors and support services to Council elected members and management in the form of a corporate secretariat.

Key issues;

- Development and monitoring of section business plans in line with the corporate plan
- Development of PR and Communications Strategy
- Protocol for staff when dealing with Councillors / customers
- Customer Care

Information Systems

The Information Systems Department is responsible for the technical development, implementation and maintenance of computer applications/networks throughout Offaly local authorities, providing advice and support to all other departments in the organisation.

The main IT issues for the Council are:

- To develop and maintain a high specification networking and communication infrastructure for the delivery of Local Authority services.
- To develop and implement a programme of new and improved Business, Management and Geographic Information systems.
- To maximise the potential of ICT to enable Offaly play a leading role in the delivery of integrated electronic public services.
- To develop and deliver a targeted ICT programme to staff and elected members.
- Develop and promote broadband/communications infrastructure throughout the county and encourage use of it.
- Establish an interactive on-line relationship with the community which is accessible to all groups

5 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

While Local Authority roles are changing, the delivery of local government public services remains at the heart of what they do. Virtually all County Council services are set out by Central Government and it is not in the power of any County Council to decide not to deliver them, or to deliver different services. However if 'What' the Council does is fixed, there is still very considerable scope to improve or reshape 'How' things are done locally. The following seven strategic issues (not in order of priority) have emerged from consultations with elected members, management, staff, communities and other stakeholder agencies are;

1. Providing **civic leadership** for Offaly and all its people, whatever their circumstances or backgrounds
 - *Being the voice for Offaly*
 - *Leading by example of best practice*
 - *Building, enhancing and promoting a county identity*
2. Maximising **productive investment** thereby facilitating the creation of good, sustainable jobs in the County
 - *Planning for a positive future*
 - *Industrial, economic and rural development*
 - *Infrastructural development*
3. Making Offaly a **pleasant, safe and enjoyable** place to live and work.
 - *Added value from public services*
 - *Health, Housing and Waste Management*
 - *Recreation and amenity*
4. Building **cohesion and inclusion** within and across the County
 - *Social inclusion and anti-poverty*
 - *Community participation and development*
 - *Working in partnership with agencies and communities*
5. Developing and **delivering quality services** which make a difference
Performance Management
 - *Financial Management and Value for Money*
 - *Customer services*
6. Develop and promote an effective **internal and external communications** strategy.
 - *Cross service integration*
 - *Public relations*
 - *Effective consultation*
7. Managing the Council to be a **good and effective place in which to work**
 - *Human Resource development*
 - *Change Management*
 - *Good workplace practice*

1. *Providing civic leadership for Offaly and all its people, whatever their circumstances or backgrounds*

What We'll Do To Deliver This Priority	How You'll Know We've Done It
We will continue to facilitate local democratic processes.	We will support the work of the County Council, Town Councils, Area Committees and Strategic Policy Committees.
We will continue to lead and actively participate in the County Development Board process.	Periodic reports on progress with the County Development Strategy will be available. Offaly Local Authorities' involvement in implementation of the strategy will be an example to all partners.
We will encourage and support active citizenship and voter participation.	We will maintain the Register of Electors and provide educational programmes on the importance of registering and using our vote.
We will work with our partner organisations to facilitate broad participation in local policy development.	We will support and develop Offaly Community Forum, its Area and Issue Fora, Comhairle na nOg Uibh Fhaili and other fora in developing policy, representation and participation.
We will raise the profile of the County and promote a sense of place, identity and pride in Offaly.	There will be a strong Offaly identity associated with quality of life, sustainable development, and inclusion.
We will explore possible further roles for Offaly Local Authorities in local civic leadership.	We will make recommendations on best practice in Civic Leadership for Offaly Local Authorities.

These actions will help us meet our targets under the following National Service Indicators: CP1,H1-5,E1-9 (See appendices)

2. Maximising productive investment thereby facilitating the creation of good, sustainable jobs in the County

What We'll Do To Deliver This Priority	How You'll Know We've Done It
We will support economic development through the provision of essential infrastructure and services.	Targets for the development of services such as roads, water, Information and Communications Technology (I.C.T.) infrastructure, housing, arts, libraries and recreation will be met.
We will continue to assemble lands for enterprise/ industrial development and promote the County as an attractive location for investment.	Our annual reports will show the sale of lands for industrial sites. In partnership with other agencies we will produce promotional material for potential investors / employers.
We will work with our neighbouring counties to build on the designation of Tullamore within the Linked Gateway under the National Spatial Strategy.	Tullamore and Offaly's other towns will have made progress towards the targets set out in the National Spatial Strategy.
We will strive to achieve a balance between economic and sustainable development and optimise opportunities for rural and tourism development in the county.	Sustainable rural enterprises and employment opportunities will help to maintain our rural economy and communities.
We will achieve the objectives set out for economic development in the County Development Plan 2003-2009.	
We will work to optimise the number of public sector jobs created in County Offaly under the Governments decentralisation programme.	There will be an increased number of public sector jobs in Offaly.

These actions will help us to meet our targets under the following National Service Indicators: R1, E1-2, P1-5 (See appendices)

3. Making Offaly a pleasant, safe and enjoyable place to live and work

What We'll Do To Deliver This Priority	How You'll Know We've Done It
We will maintain the delivery of essential infrastructural and enforcement services.	We will comply with National and European standards in the provision of water and waste water services, air quality, road design and safety, traffic management, waste management, environmental protection, emergency services, planning, and housing.
We will strengthen the delivery of services in areas that contribute to good health and wellbeing.	You will have better access to services such as arts, libraries, sport, recreation, heritage, community development and estate management.
We will encourage voluntary activity and its role in building social capital in our communities.	The organisation will support community and voluntary projects and Offaly Community Forum. Elected members, officials and community representatives will work in partnership towards the development of local areas.
We will assess our performance and renew our dedication to the principles of Local Agenda 21 - a multifaceted blueprint for sustainable local communities that are economically strong, socially inclusive and environmentally friendly.	We will work with Comhar, the national sustainability partnership, to assess our performance to date under Local Agenda 21 and will make recommendations on further action.
There will be a strong emphasis on the ongoing need to create awareness of customer needs among staff and elected members, particularly in relation to disadvantaged members of the community.	Our Training Programmes will incorporate appropriate elements to address this issue and a monitoring system will be put in place to evaluate delivery

These actions will help us to meet our targets under the following National Service Indicators: R1, E1-9, H1-5, Rec. 1-2, L 1-5, A&C1.(See appendices)

4. Building social cohesion and inclusion within and across the County

What We'll Do To Deliver This Priority	How You'll Know We've Done It
We will continue to participate in the Local Government Anti-poverty Network process.	There will be greater understanding among elected members and staff of the challenges faced by those experiencing exclusion and poverty in accessing our services.
We will strengthen our internal working group on anti-poverty projects and will strive to make our services affordable and accessible to all.	We will develop innovative local approaches to the design and delivery of services to meet local needs.
We will work closely with our partner agencies on the Social Inclusion Measures group (County Development Board) to monitor spending and ensure better outcomes for those in our county who live day to day with exclusion and poverty.	We will work with other agencies to publish and implement a Local Anti-poverty Strategy and specific Target Group Action Plans.
We will poverty proof a selection of policies put in place / being developed by Offaly Local Authorities and other agencies	Reports and recommendations will be made available on completion of each proofing exercise.
We will continue and strengthen our involvement in community development projects and processes.	We will foster tenant participation in estate management projects and will work with our partner agencies to support community groups with a social inclusion / anti-poverty focus.
We will uphold the principles of Equality and dignity at work.	The Equality Action Team will be supported in developing and implementing its work.
We will endeavour to respond promptly and effectively to those in greatest need of our services in accordance with our individual service plans and policies.	We will meet our targets for service delivery particularly in the areas of housing and accommodation, where we will have regard to the Barcelona Agreement in relation to the provision of lifetime adaptable housing

These actions will help us to meet our targets under the following National Service Indicators: H1-5, CP1, Rec 1-2, A&C 1. (See appendices)

5. *Developing and delivering quality services*

What We'll Do To Deliver This Priority	How You'll Know We've Done It
We will develop and publish a customer Service Action plan.	This plan will be adopted, published and made available in 2005.
We will examine and improve the accessibility of all of our services so that you will have access to user-friendly services in a comfortable environment close to you.	We will work with the National Adult Literacy Association to review our literature and forms. We will continue the modernisation of Area Offices and increase the number of services available from them.
We will ensure adequate staff numbers and opening hours to meet customer needs.	The availability of our staff and opening hours of our public offices will be continually reviewed.
Each section will take part in the new Performance Management Development System.	Targets will be set for the performance of each section and the teams of staff within them. There will be clear role definition agreed for each of the officers of the authority with more efficient service delivery for users as a result.
We will maintain and improve our financial performance.	We will continue to make our financial systems more efficient, seek to supplement our low rates base and will ensure a healthy balance of expenditure against income.
We will make increased use of Information technology.	You will be able to source information and carry out business with us on-line with greater accessibility for all.
As a county with a low rates base we will always strive for value for money.	There will be minimal financial risk in our resource planning while ensuring a range of quality, needs based services.

These actions will help us to meet our targets under the following National Service Indicators: Rec. 1-2, H 2-4, M1-3, E 2- 6 &10, P3-4, L 1,4,5, Rev.1-5.

(See appendices)

6. *Develop and promote effective internal and external communications strategies.*

What We'll Do To Deliver This Priority	How You'll Know We've Done It
We will continue to improve our consultation processes and will work in partnership with people and communities to identify possible solutions to local issues.	People will be given the opportunity to comment on on issues that are important to them.
We will strive to improve the general awareness of the decisions and policies that are made by the Council and why these decisions are made.	We will use local media and other methods of information provision. We will seek an on-going and active presence in local and national media. We will consider the creation of an Information Officer post and will provide public relations training for staff.
We will seek the support of the Community Forum to create 'consumer' panels to seek the views of people on service delivery such as housing, planning, roads, and other services in a structured way over the next 5 years.	Service users will have the opportunity to provide feedback on services through the Community Forum Consumer Panels.
We will roll out national plans for e-government locally and will use IT as a method to engage with service users, colleagues, elected members and sectoral interests.	You will be able to obtain comprehensive information on our services via the internet and will increasingly be able to do business with us using Information Technology.
Protocols will be developed for staff regarding communication with each other, customers and elected members. Staff will be kept informed of new developments within the Council, both formal and informal.	The existing communications strategy will be reviewed and updated based on the views expressed in consultations. Provision for both formal and informal communication will be made. Information will be made available to staff via regular newsletters, the intranet and information workshops.

These actions will help us to meet our targets under the following National Service Indicators: H4, M2, E12, c1, A&C 1, L2,3,5.

(See appendices)

7. Managing the Council to be a good and effective place in which to work

What We'll Do To Deliver This Priority	How You'll Know We've Done It
We will continue to provide family friendly work practices in line with the capacity of the organisation to maintain service levels and equality for staff.	Where it will mean no unreasonable additional workload for those remaining flexible work options will be made available to those who seek them. An analysis of the impact of family friendly work practices will be carried out regularly.
As an organisation we will continue to adapt to change and manage it effectively.	Management and staff will draw up and implement plans for the management of our changing working environment.
We will work to make sure our staff have the skills and knowledge they need to do their jobs. We will identify staff training needs specific to the services we provide.	Our training plan will set out the training needs of staff each section / service and how they will be met. Staff will be supported in learning their role and learning more about the organisation.
We will seek to provide opportunities for career development based on merit and capability.	Staff will be supported in their efforts to develop their skills and advance within the local government system.
We will actively seek to improve interaction between sections/areas of the organisation.	Services will be integrated, needs based and will provide the best possible value for money for the organisation and the customer.
Staff welfare and morale will be prioritised as a key contributors to the efficient and effective operation of the organisation.	All staff will have access to support and advice to assist them in carrying out their work in an environment of equality and fairness.

These actions will help us to meet our targets under the following National Service Indicators: C 1-2, (See appendices)

6 Resource & HR Issues/Constraints

Offaly Local Authorities are committed to good financial and human resource management. Available resources, both human and financial, will be allocated to programmes and services based on the strategic priorities agreed for the organisation as determined through widespread consultation with elected members, staff and other stakeholders.

As an organisation we are required to ensure that all of our activities are based on sound financial and business management, based on readily accessible and accurate financial information.

Over the next five years, we will capitalise on the potential of our financial management system to identify the costs of the provision of services in line with the strategic priorities identified in the Corporate Plan and subsequently in the individual service plans. This will assist elected members and officials in making informed rational decisions on the allocation of financial resources. We are committed to value for money reviews and audits to review programme expenditure on a regular basis.

Our single biggest resource as an organisation is our human resources. This enables us to carry out our obligations and deliver our services. The continued commitment and expertise of our staff and elected members is our greatest asset.

A training plan has been developed for the staff of Offaly Local Authorities based on identified needs. This will be resourced based on the national requirement that 3% of our annual budget will be spent on training and development. Staff will be encouraged to undertake training appropriate to their role.

The allocation of new responsibilities to local authorities and the extension of existing programmes means we need to continually monitor our staffing structure and allocations to ensure we are best placed to respond to demands for our services. We also need to explore the best configuration to optimise responsiveness while retaining our level of expertise within our three planning and housing authorities.

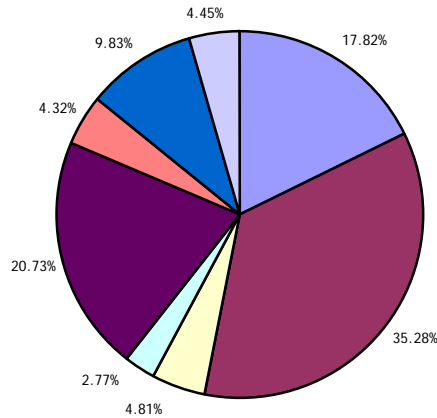
Our Equality Action Team and Workplace Partnership Committee will continue to ensure that all of our staff are involved in shaping and enjoy a work environment that is supportive, fair, safe, open and rewarding.

In setting our direction over the next five years, it is essential that decisions on resource allocation allow us to maintain and improve our standards of service delivery in terms of both what we do and how we do it.

Council Income & Expenditure Summary 2003/2004

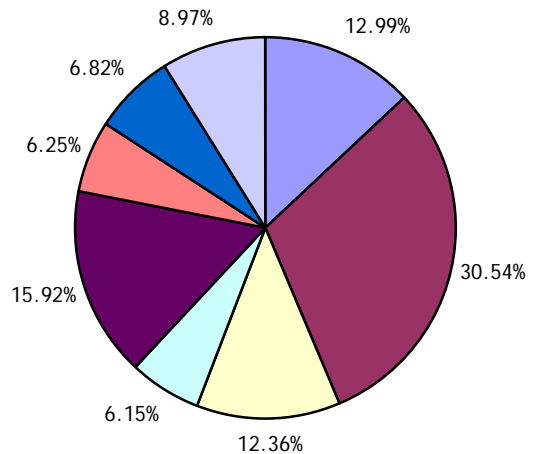
Gross Revenue Income as adopted for the Annual Budget 2005

- 01 Housing & Building
€4,779,594.00
- 02 Road Transportation & Safety
€9,464,201.00
- 03 Water Supply & Sewerage
€1,289,733.00
- 04 Development Incentives and Controls €741,948.00
- 05 Environmental Protection
€5,560,841.00
- 06 Recreation & Amenity
€1,159,254.00
- 07 Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare €2,637,899.00
- 08 Miscellaneous Services
€1,193,663.00



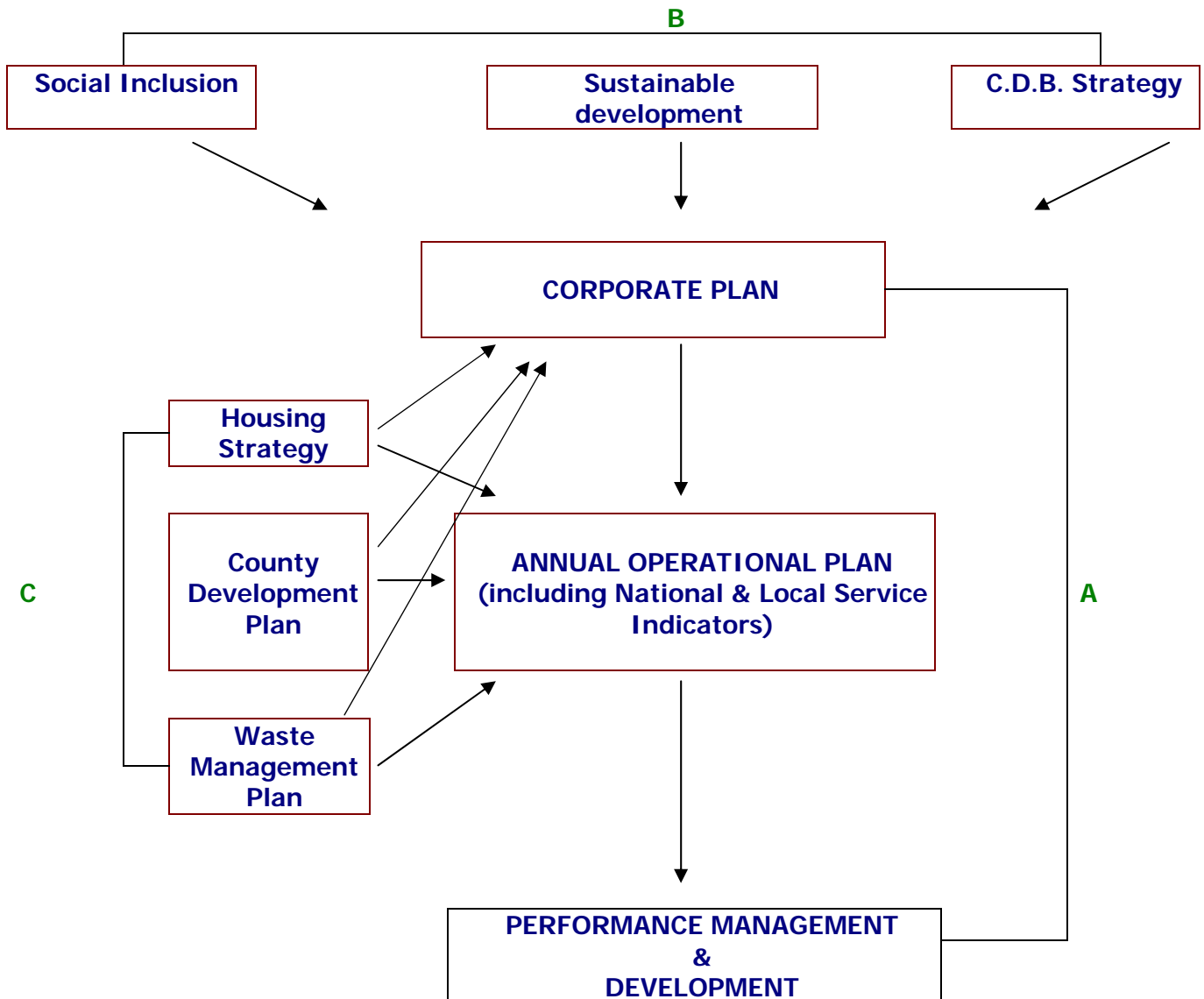
Gross Revenue Expenditure as adopted for Annual Budget 2005

- 01 Housing & Building
€6,080,859.00
- 02 Road Transportation & Safety
€14,293,790.00
- 03 Water Supply & Sewerage
€5,786,623.00
- 04 Development Incentives and Controls €2,880,394.00
- 05 Environmental Protection
€7,450,021.00
- 06 Recreation & Amenity
€2,923,554.00
- 07 Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare €3,190,414.00
- 08 Miscellaneous Services
€4,195,963.00



7. Performance Management, Implementation and Monitoring

Relationship between Corporate Plan & Business Plans:



- A: Strategic Spine
- B: Overarching Influences
- C: Examples of Other Strategic Influences

As an accountable and transparent organisation it is necessary to measure the performance of the local authority against the objectives set in the Corporate Plan on a frequent and structured basis. The strategic priorities set out in this plan span a five year period and are at a high level. These will be reflected in the more detailed annual plans to be produced by each section of the organisation. A range of service indicators have been developed nationally as part of regular management review processes to monitor performance of the organisation. Other local indicators based on our strategic priorities will be contained in the service plans.

National Service Indicators (S.I.s)

The service indicators initiative developed for local authorities by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (Delivering Value for People: Service Indicators in Local Government 2004) has introduced 42 Key Performance Indicators across the range of local authority functions (see appendix). Alongside the introduction of local indicators the intention is that performance can be measured and assessed in a meaningful and understandable way by the customer. Indicators are focussed on outcomes and in some cases are linked to targets established in the County Development Board Strategy.

Additional review mechanisms will be introduced to the work of Offaly County Council including the Performance Management Development Systems (P.M.D.S.) from 2005 onwards. The commitments of Offaly County Council under the County Development Board Strategy are also reviewed periodically.

Mechanisms for Review

A number of mechanisms are available to report on progress including Annual Operational Plans and annual reports.

Annual Operational Plan

The Annual Operational Plan is a key mechanism by which the Corporate Plan will be implemented and its importance will be further underlined through the Performance Management Development System (PMDS) for local authority staff. For the 5 year duration of this Plan an Annual Operational Plan will be developed to outline the specific activities that will be undertaken in support of achievement of the Core Objectives. The Operational Plan will ground the objectives of the Corporate Plan into more detailed actions which link with annual activity in each service or section. Annual Operational Plans will be developed by the end of January each year and will be linked to the budgetary process, PMDS, national and local service indicators.

Annual Report

The Annual Report of Offaly County Council will report on the implementation of the Corporate Plan. This will be achieved by providing a summary report on progress achieved and by assessing implementation against national and local performance indicators. In addition, regular reporting to the Corporate Policy Group will ensure ongoing assessment and review. The local authority needs to be responsive to change. Monitoring and review processes will enable changes in direction or focus be signalled. Any changes from the Corporate Plan will be reflected in the Annual Operational Plan.

Customer Services Plan to follow

A Customer Services Plan reflecting the priorities identified in the corporate planning consultations will be produced in early 2005.

8. APPENDICES

Offaly Local Authority Elected Members:



**Offaly County Council
Comhairle Chontae Uibh Fhaili**



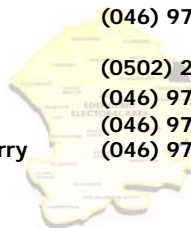
Birr Electoral Area:

Carroll, John	The Ring, Birr	(0509) 20976	cllrjohncarroll@eircom.net	Non-Party
Clendennen, Percy	Kinnity, Birr	(0509) 37076	percyclendennen@oceanfree.net	Fine Gael
McLoughlin, Tony	Main Street, Birr	(0509) 21376		Non-Party
Moylan Ryan, Sinead	Ard Abhainn, Cuba Ave, Banagher	(0509) 52916	smoylan@offalycoco.ie	Fianna Fáil
Ormond, Peter	Kyleogue, Shinrone, Birr	(0505) 47079	ossiec@eircom.net	Fianna Fáil



Edenderry Electoral Area:

Bourke, Noel	Killane, Edenderry	(046) 9731295	noelbourke@hotmail.com	Fianna Fáil
Fitzpatrick, Eddie	Benfield, Cloneyhurke, Portarlinton	(0502) 23261	eddiefitzp@eircom.net	P.D.
Foran, John	Clonbullogue, Edenderry	(046) 9730200	cllrjforan@hotmail.com	Fine Gael
Killaly, Gerard	81 JKL Street, Edenderry	(046) 9732565	killalg@indigo.ie	Fianna Fáil
McDonnell, Fergus	51 Gilroy Avenue, Edenderry	(046) 9731608	mcdonnellfergus@eircom.net	P.D.



Ferbane Electoral Area:

Corcoran-Kennedy, Marcella	Oakley Park, Clareen, Birr	(0509) 31208	corcorankennedy@eircom.net	Fine Gael
Dooley, Eamon	Na Tullaig, Aughaboy, Ferbane	(090) 6454510	eamondooley@eircom.net	Fianna Fáil
Feighery, Tom	Freagh, Kilcormac	(0509) 35091	feigherytom@eircom.net	Fianna Fáil
Hanniffy, Constance	Doon, Ballinahown	(090) 6430106	connieh@iol.ie	Fine Gael



Tullamore Electoral Area:

Buckley, Molly	Moylena, Clara Rd, Tullamore	(0506) 41357	mollybuckley@eircom.net	Non-Party
Butterfield, Johnny	Ballincanty, Blueball, Tullamore	(0506) 54027	butterfield.iad@eircom.net	Non-Party
Cowen, Barry	Kilnacarra, Lahinch, Clara	(0506) 23277	cowenauct@eircom.net	Fianna Fáil
Dolan, Dervill (Cathaoirleach)	The Square, Clara	(0506) 23530	dervilldolan@eircom.net	Non-Party
Fox, Michael	Kilmurry, Tullamore	(0506) 21530	michaelfox@eircom.net	Fine Gael
McKeigue, Thomas	Spollanstown, Tullamore	(0506) 41519	tommymckeigue@eircom.net	Fine Gael
Owens, Danny	Lugamarla, Mountbolus, Tullamore	(0506) 54814	dannyowens@eircom.net	Fianna Fáil



Birr Town Council Elected Members:



Campbell, Michael	Woodland Park, Birr	(0509) 20407		Fine Gael
Carroll, John	The Ring, Birr	(0509) 20976	cllrjohncarroll@eircom.net	Non-Party
Doorley, Sean	3 Meadowville, Burke's Hill, Birr	(0509) 22176	seandoorlev@iolfree.ie	PD's
Fanneran, Seamus	Whiteford, Birr	(0509) 33057		Labour
Hynes-Spain, Ann	3 Bengal Lodge, Birr	(0509) 23055		Fine Gael
Loughnan, Michael	13 Meadowville, Burke's Hill, Birr	(0509) 20430	loughoil@iol.ie	Fianna Fail
McLoughlin, Tony	Main Street, Birr	(0509) 21376		Non-Party
Russell, Noel	30 Pound Street, Birr	(0509) 21595		Fianna Fail
Sheils, Denis	10 Ely Place, Crinkle, Birr	(0509) 20966		Fine Gael

Edenderry Town Council Elected Members:



Brady, Patricia	Dublin Road, Edenderry	(046) 9731025		Fine Gael
Carroll, Brian	Dublin Road, Edenderry	(046) 9731045		Fianna Fail
Cribbin, Noel	Francis Street, Edenderry	(046) 9731145		Fianna Fail
Foley, John	Killane, Edenderry	(046) 9732332		Fianna Fail
Hogan, Liam	Carrick Road, Edenderry	(046) 9732021		Fine Gael
McDonnell, Fergus	51 Gilroy Avenue, Edenderry	(046) 9731608		P.D.
Murrin, Jim	49 Assumption Road, Edenderry	(046) 9732082		Non-Party
O'Neill, Finian	Derries, Edenderry	(046) 9731766		Fianna Fail
Quinlan, John	38 St. Columcilles Rd., Edenderry	(046) 9732644		Fianna Fail

Tullamore Town Council Elected Members:



Buckley, Molly	Moylena, Clara Rd, Tullamore	(0506) 41357	mollybuckley@eircom.net	Non-Party
Byrne, Laurence	15 O'Brien Street, Tullamore	(0506) 41208	larpbyrne2@eircom.net	Labour
Coughlan, Joe	252 Arden View, Tullamore	(0506) 22085	jodyco@eircom.net	Non-Party
Dooley, Sinead	Rahan Road, Tullamore	(0506) 21976		Fianna Fail
Flanagan, John	New Road, Tullamore	(0506) 52132	flangroup@tinet.ie	Fianna Fail
Egan, Richard	Spollanstown, Tullamore	(0506) 23235	richardegan@ireland.com	Fine Gael
McKeigue, Thomas	Spollanstown, Tullamore	(0506) 41519	tommymckeigue@eircom.net	Fine Gael
O'Brien, Sean	83 Whitehall Estate, Tullamore	(0506) 52905	cllrsean@ireland.com	Labour
Rowland, Paddy	Knockowen Road, Tullamore	(0506) 52917	rowland@eircom.net	Fianna Fail

Offaly County Council
Comhairle Chontae Uibh Fhaili



Telephone: (0506) 46800 Fax: (0506) 46868
E-mail: corpserv@offalycoco.ie Website: www.offaly.ie
24-Hour Emergency Service (outside office hours) 1890 750 750

HEADQUARTERS

Aras an Chontae, Tullamore (0506) 46800

DEPARTMENTS

Arts Office (0506) 57400

Community & Enterprise (0506) 57401

Corporate Services (0506) 57402

Environment (0506) 57403

Finance

- Accounts (0506) 57404

- Agresso Support (0506) 57405

- Housing Loans (0506) 57406

- Payroll (0506) 57407

- Rates (0506) 57408

Housing (0506) 57409

Human Resources (0506) 57410

IS Department (0506) 57411

Motor Taxation (0506) 57413

Planning (0506) 57414

Roads & Infrastructure

- Roads (0506) 57415

- Water Services (0506) 57416

Stores (0506) 57417

AFTER HOURS

Lo Call 1890 750 750

FIRE SERVICE

Fire Station HQ, Tullamore (0506) 21441

LANDFILL

Derryclure Landfill Site (0506) 44186

DOG WARDEN

Dog Pound, Cappincur (0506) 51181

TOWN COUNCILS

Tullamore Town Council (0506) 46850/52470

Edenderry Town Council (046) 9731256

Birr Town Council (0509) 20187

AREA OFFICES

Tullamore Area Office (0506) 20050

Birr Area Office (0509) 20017

Ferbane Area Office (0906) 454306

Edenderry Area Office (046) 9731256

LIBRARIES

Library HQ (0506) 57412

Banagher (0509) 51471

Birr (0509) 20961

Clara (0506) 31389

Daingean (0506) 53005

Edenderry (046) 9731028

Ferbane (0906) 6454259

Kilcormac (0509) 35086

Tullamore (0506) 46832

Shinrone (0505) 47045

Strategic Policy Committees

Economic Development & Planning Policy

County Council Members:

Chairman: Cllr. Thomas Feighery, Freagh Kilcormac
Cllr. Dervill Dolan, Patrick Street, Tullamore
Cllr. Barry Cowen, Kilnacarra, Lahinch, Clara
Cllr. Thomas McKeigue, Spollanstown, Tullamore
Cllr. Johnny Butterfield, Ballincanty, Blueball, Tullamore
Cllr. Danny Owens, Lugamarla, Mountbolus, Tullamore

Edenderry Town Council

Member: Cllr. Noel Cribben, St. Francis Street, Edenderry

Sectoral Members:

Trade Union: Mr. Joe Enright, MSF, 37 Fr. Paul Murphy St., Edenderry
Business/Commercial: Mr. Sean Loughnane, Loughnane Concrete, Birr.
Tourism: Dominic Doheny, Flanagan Group, Tullamore
Agriculture/Farming: Mr. Dominic Carroll, ICMSA, Ballysheil, Belmont

Housing Policy Social & Cultural Services

County Council Members:

Chairman: Cllr. John Carroll, The Ring, Birr
Cllr. Sinead Moylan-Ryan, Ard Abhainn, Cuba Ave., Banagher
Cllr. Molly Buckley, Moylena, Clara Road, Tullamore
Cllr. Marcella Corcoran-Kennedy, Oakley Park, Clareen, Birr
Cllr. Fergus McDonnell, 51 Gilroy Ave., Edenderry.

Tullamore Town Council

Member: Cllr. Joe Coughlan, 252 Arden View, Tullamore

Sectorial Members:

Community/Voluntary/

Disadvantaged: Ms. Susan Ryan, Offaly Citizens Information, Tullamore
Tourism: Ms. Anne Starling, Tullamore Phoenix Festival
Environment/Culture/
Conservatorion: Ms. Barbara Daly, 12 Delvin Park, Fermoy

Transportation & Infrastructural Policy

County Council Members:

Chairman: Cllr. Noel Bourke, Killane, Edenderry
Cllr. Michael Fox, Kilmurray, Ballinagar, Tullamore
Cllr. Constance Hanniffy, Doon, Ballinahown, Athlone
Cllr. Tony McLoughlin, Main Street, Birr
Cllr. Peter Ormond, Clonlisk, Shinrone, Birr

Tullamore Town Council

Member: Cllr. Paddy Rowland, Knockowen Road, Tullamore

Sectoral Members:

Business/Commercial: Mr. Frank Feery, IBEC, Moorock, Ballycumber
Development/
Construction: Mr. Noel Healion, Arden Road, Tullamore.
Comm./Vol.: Mr. Hugh Farrell, Unit 7, McCormack Centre, Dublin Rd.,
Athlone

Environmental Policy

County Council Members:

Chairman: Cllr. Percy Clendennen, Kinnitty, Birr
Cllr. Gerard Killally, 81 JKL St., Edenderry
Cllr. Eddie Fitzpatrick, Benfield, Cloneyhurke
Cllr. John Foran, Clonbullogue, Edenderry
Cllr. Eamon Dooley, Na tullaig, Aughaboy, Fermoy.

Birr Town Council

Member: Cllr. Michael Loughnane, 13 Meadowville, Birr

Sectorial Members:

Agricultural/Farming: Mr. Joe Parlon, IFA, The Leap, Roscrea, Co. Tipperary
Development/
Construction: Ms. Anne Fahey, Enviroco Management, Tullamore.
Environment/Culture/
Conservation: Ms. Teresa Ryan-Feehan, 17 Woodlands, Birr

HOW THE PLAN WAS PRODUCED

- Cross-Council Corporate Planning Team put in place
- Widespread consultation undertaken within and beyond the council (see list below)
- Detailed analyses of other plans, strategies and background information carried out.
- Plan approved and adopted by Offaly County Council.

List of Consultees:

- Elected Members, County & Town Councils
- Senior Management Team, Offaly County Council
- Staff of Offaly Local Authorities via questionnaire and workshops
- Member organisations of Offaly County Development Board;
 - ADM Groups
 - County Enterprise Board
 - Offaly County Childcare Committee
 - Offaly LEADER +
 - Department of Education & Science, Regional Office
 - Department of Social and Family Affairs, Regional Office
 - Enterprise Ireland
 - FAS
 - An Garda Siochana
 - IDA
 - Midland Health Board
 - Midlands East Tourism
 - Shannon Development
 - Teagasc
 - Offaly VEC
 - Agriculture and Farming Organisations
 - Employers and Business
 - Trade Unions
- Offaly Community Forum Steering Group
- Organisations we work with as per the following list;

An Board Pleanála	Institute of Public Administration
An Bord Gáis	Library Association of Ireland
An Comhairle Leabharlann	Little Sisters of Jesus & Mary
An Taisce	Local Government Computer Services Board
Arts Council	Local Government Management Services Board
Birr Chamber of Commerce	Midland's Regional Authority
Birr Town Council	National Library of Ireland
Bord na Mona	National Museum of Ireland
Central Fisheries Board	National Roads Authority
Chambers of Commerce of Ireland	Newgrove Housing Association
Clúid Housing Association	O ₂

Commissioner of Valuation
 Community Forum
 Corporate Planning Group
 County Development Board
 Department of Agricultural Food &
 Rural Development
 Department of Arts, Sports &
 Tourism
 Department of Defence
 Department of Education &
 Science
 Department of Heritage,
 Environment & Local
 Government
 Department of Social & Family
 Affairs
 Edenderry Town Council
 Eircom
 Electricity Supply Board
 Environmental Protection Agency
 Food Safety Authority of Ireland
 Health & Safety Authority

Offaly County Council
 Offaly Local Authority Elected
 Members
 Offaly Local Authority Staff
 Office of Public Works
 Public
 REPAK Ltd.
 Respond Housing Association
 Revenue Commissioners
 Rural Resettlement Ireland
 Shannon Regional Fisheries
 Senior Management Team
 Sue Ryder Foundation
 Tullamore & Districts Chambers of
 Commerce
 Tullamore Housing Association
 Tullamore Town Council
 Vodafone Ireland Ltd

- The Public



Comhairle Chontae Uíbh Fhailí
OFFALY
 COUNTY
 COUNCIL

**Offaly Local Authorities are currently
 preparing a Corporate Plan for the period
 2005-2009**

Preparation of the plan involves both internal and external stakeholders. Submissions are now being sought from interested individuals or groups on their views on the strategic direction of Offaly Local Authorities over the next 5 years. The Corporate Plan will set out the core values of the organisation and its strategic objectives. Submissions should be no longer than two A4 pages and should be returned by October 15th to:

Corporate Planning Team
 Offaly Local Authorities
 Aras An Chontate corporateplanteam@offalycoco.ie
 Charleville Road
 Tullamore
 Co. Offaly.

offaly.ie - your community online

**Advertisement Placed in Local Newspapers seeking submissions
 from interested parties**

List of Strategies, Plans and Policy Documents referred to:

National/EU

Children First – National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children
Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government Statement of Strategy
2003-2005
E-Government Strategy
Hanly Report
Health Strategy
Homelessness Strategy
Local Agenda 21
National Anti-Poverty Strategy (N.A.P.S.)
National Children's Strategy
National Development Plan
National Rail Review
National Spatial Strategy
Sustaining Progress – Social Partnership Agreement 2003-2005

Regional

BMW and S&E Regional Assembly Operational Programmes
Border, Midland and Western Region – Development Strategy 2000-2006
Midlands Regional Waste Management Plan
Regional Planning Guidelines

Local

Arts Plan
Bullying/Harassment Policy
Burial Grounds Plan
County Development Board Strategy
County Development Plan 2003-2009
Customer Service Plan
Equality Plan
Heritage Plan
Housing Strategy
ICT Communication Plan
Litter Management Plan 2002
Major Emergency Plan
PMDS
Sludge Management Plan
Training Plan
Traveller Accommodation
Water Services Investment Programme 2004-2012

List of Directorate Staff

County Manager Niall Sweeney

Directors of Services

Transportation & Infrastructural Policy
Birr Town Council & Birr/Ferbane Electoral Areas: Michael Roche

Economic Development & Planning Policy
Tullamore Town Council & Tullamore Electoral Area: Declan Kirrane

Housing Policy, Social & Cultural
County Development Board: Frank Heslin

Environmental Policy
Edenderry Town Council & Edenderry Electoral Area: Sean Murray

Head of Finance Declan Conlon

Local Government Functions

The full range of local authority functions as set out in the table below rests with the county and city councils, as the primary units of local government. In the case of some functions (e.g. library, motor tax, water services and usually national roads and fire services) the county council has responsibility throughout the entire county including the towns. Town councils exercise functions to varying degrees within the towns concerned, from a fairly extensive role for some to a mainly representational role in case of certain town councils. However, all local authorities exercise a representational role and enjoy broad powers to support the community interest, to make bye-laws to regulate local matters and may raise a community contribution to support local projects. Town councils are also represented on the relevant county council area committees. The Local government Act 2001 requires that county councils and town council's work together to provide a unified service to the public.

Services:

Summary of Activities/Services

Roads & Transportation:

Provision, maintenance and upkeep of the road network, traffic management, provision of public lighting, low cost action improvement schemes, road safety initiatives, community involvement schemes, local improvement schemes, management of small public services vehicles (hackneys), jobs initiative scheme, issuing of casual trading licenses

Water Services:

Major water and sewerage services schemes, management of group water and sewerage schemes, provision of well grants/domestic water supply, serviced land initiatives, monitoring of water quality

Housing, Social & Cultural Services:

Provision and maintenance of local authority housing, delivery of estate management initiatives, provision of accommodation for travellers, implement tenant purchase schemes, implement shared ownership schemes, provision of affordable housing, provision of disabled persons repairs grants schemes, mortgage allowance schemes, annuity loans and reconstruction loans, provision of local authority housing sites, caravan loans, provision of public libraries, parks and open spaces, swimming pools, provision of county-wide internet and community information points in all branch libraries, host a wide range of cultural and literary events annually, Co-ordination of the implementation of the county development strategy, facilitation of Offaly county development board

Planning & Development:

Preparation and implementation of county and area development plans, land use, adoption of development plan, planning and control of building standards and unauthorised development, decisions of planning applications, town renewal schemes, urban & village renewal schemes, heritage and conservation protection and awareness programmes, conservation grants, industrial and tourism infrastructure and support

Corporate & Human Resources Services:

Administration of higher education grants and register of electors, coroners expenses, maintenance of office accommodation, promotion of Irish language, workplace partnership, promotion of positive corporate image, recruitment of staff, staff training and development, provision of quality information technology support and development

Financial Services:

Processing of all creditor payments in respect of supply of goods and services to the council, collection of motor taxes, issuing of driving licenses, rate collection, financial management, administration of cash office

Environmental Services:

Waste management planning, protection of water quality, promote and encourage recycling, green schools programme, household composting scheme, anti-litter grants, local environmental partnership fund, environmental grants, veterinary services, abattoirs meat inspections, small meat manufacturing premises – inspections, milk & dairies inspections, control of dogs and horses, environmental awareness education, litter prevention and control, environmental protection, provision and maintenance of burial grounds, provision of fire fighting and rescue services, environmental awareness initiative, national spring clean campaign, household hazardous waste collection scheme, issuing of waste collections permits, civil defence, fire services, air/water pollution controls, building safety

(Extract from Local Government and the Elected Member (2004), Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government.)

List of National Service Indicators:

HOUSING

Housing Vacancies

- Total Number of Dwellings in Local Authority Stock
- % of dwellings that are let
- % of dwellings that are empty
- % of empty dwellings subject to major refurbishment schemes
- empty dwellings unavailable for letting
- empty dwellings available for letting
- Average time taken to re-let dwellings available for letting
- Number of repairs completed as a percentage of the number of valid repair requests received
- Average time taken to inform applications of local authority's decision on applications for:
 - Shared ownership housing scheme
 - Housing loan schemes
 - Local authority housing
- Traveller Accommodation
 - Total number of traveller families accommodated as a percentage of the targets set in the local traveller accommodation programmer

ROADS

- Local and Regional roads surface dressed per annum (square meters)
- Percentage of local and regional roads surface dressed per annum

MOTOR TAXATION

- Percentage of motor tax transactions which
 - paid with over the counter
 - paid with by post
 - paid with in other ways (e.g. online, by telephone)
- Number of postal applications and percentage of overall postal applications which are dealt with (i.e. disc/driver licence issued) from receipt of the application:
 - same day
 - third day or less
 - fifth day or less
 - more than five days
- Opening Hours
 - Average number of opening hours per week

E: ENVIRONMENT

Water:

- E.1** Percentage of river channel which is:
 - (a) Unpolluted
 - (b) Slightly polluted
 - (c) Moderately polluted
 - (d) Seriously polluted
- E.2** Percentage of drinking water analyses results in compliance with statutory requirements with regard to:
 - Public scheme
 - Private schemes (where appropriate)

Fire Service:

- E.3** Average time in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in:
- Full-time stations
 - Part-time stations
- E.4** Percentage of attendances at scenes where:
- First attendance is at scene within 10 minutes
 - First attendance is at scene within 20 minutes
 - First attendance is at scene after 20 minutes
- E.5** Fire Prevention
- Total number of fire safety certificate applications received
 - Total number of fire safety certificate applications processed

Waste Management:

- E.6** Percentage of households provided with segregated waste collection
- E.7** Percentage of household waste recycled
- E.8** Percentage of household waste going to landfill

E.9 Recycling Facilities

Category	No. of Bring Sites	No. of Civic Amenity Sites	Total No. of Facilities	No. of Locations per 5,000 population	Tonnage of waste collected for recycling per 5,000 population
Glass					
Cans					
Textiles					
Batteries					
Oils					
Others					

Litter Prevention and Environmental Enforcement

- E.10** Litter
- No. of Litter Wardens:
- | Total No. of full-time litter wardens | Total no. of part-time litter wardens | No. of litter wardens (both full and part time) per 5,000 population |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
- No. of On-the-Spot Fines
- No. of prosecution cases taken because of non-payment of on-the-spot fines
- No. of prosecutions secured
- Percentage of areas within the local authority that are:
- Unpolluted (i.e. litter-free)
 - Slightly polluted with litter
 - Moderately polluted with litter
 - Significantly polluted with litter
 - Grossly polluted with litter
- E.11** Environmental Complaints and Enforcement
- Total number of cases subject to complaints concerning environmental pollution (relating to waste, litter, water pollution, noise pollution, air pollution)
 - Number of complaints investigated, and number dismissed
 - Number of enforcement procedures taken
- E.12** Percentage of schools participating in environmental campaigns
- Primary schools
 - Secondary schools

REV: REVENUE COLLECTION

Rev.1 House Rent

- (a) Amount collected at year end as a percentage of amount due
- (b) Percentage of arrears:
 - (i) 4-6 weeks old
 - (ii) 6-12 weeks old
 - (iii) More than 12 weeks old

Rev.2 Housing Loans

- (a) Amount collected at year end as a percentage of amount due
- (b) Percentage of arrears:
 - (i) 1 month old
 - (ii) 2-3 months old
 - (iii) More than 3 months old

Rev.3 Commercial Rates

Amount collected at year end as a percentage of amount due

Rev.4 Refuse Charges

Percentage of households paying refuse charges at year end

Rev.5 Non-Domestic Water Charges

Amount collected at year end as a percentage of amount due

C. CORPORATE ISSUES

C.1 Percentage of working days lost to sickness absence though

- Certified leave
- Uncertified leave

C.2 Expenditure on Training & Development as a percentage of total payroll costs

L: LIBRARY SERVICES

L.1 Public Opening Hours:

- Average number of opening hours per week for full-time libraries
- Average number of opening hours per week for part-time libraries (where applicable)

L.2 Number of registered library members as a percentage of the local population

L.3 Number of items issued per head of population (county/city wide) for:

- (a) Books
- (b) Other items

L.4 Percentage of libraries that offer internet access to the public

L.5 Number of internet sessions provided per 1,000 population

A&C: ARTS AND CULTURAL SERVICES

A&C.1 Arts Grant

- Number of arts grants allocated
- Total value of arts grants allocated per 1,000 population

REC: RECREATIONAL SERVICES

Rec.1 Number of children's playgrounds per 1,000 population

- Directly provided by the local authority
- Facilitated by the local authority

Rec.2 Number of visitors of local authority facilitated swimming facilities per 1,000 population

CP: COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION & CO-OPERATION – YOUR LOCAL AUTHORITY

CP.1 Percentage of local schools involved in the local Youth Council/Comhairle na N-óg scheme

P: PLANNING & BUILDING CONTROL

P.1 Planning Applications – Decision Making

Category	No. of Applications Determined	% of complete applications determined within 8 weeks	Average length of time taken to determine an application where further information is sought	% of grants	% of refusals	% of cases where the decision was confirmed by An Bord Pleanála	% of cases where the decision was varied by An Bord Pleanála	% of cases where the decision was reversed by An Bord Pleanála
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Individual Houses
Housing Development
Other: not requiring EIA
Other: Requiring EIA

P.2 Planning Enforcement

- Total number of cases subject to complaints that are investigated, and number dismissed
- Number of enforcement procedures taken through warning letters
- Number of enforcement procedures taken through enforcement notices
- Number of prosecutions

P.3 Public Opening Hours

- Average number of opening hours per week

P.4 Average length of time from request for consultation with local authority planner to actual formal meeting for pre-planning consultation

P.5 Buildings inspected as a percentage of new buildings notified to the local authority