

# Longford County Council

## Annual Report 2006



Tuarascáil Bhliantúil 2006  
Comhairle Chontae Longfoirt

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## Foreword

Councillor Paddy Belton • MAYOR



I am pleased as Mayor of Longford County Council to introduce the Annual Report detailing the activities of the Council during 2006.

**T**he activities outlined in this Annual Report reflect the extent and diverse nature of the work programme that the Council was involved in during 2006. It outlines the considerable progress that has been made with regard to all facets of the Council's activities.

The Corporate Plan adopted by Longford County Council covering the period to 2009 is in place and is the framework within which the Council is undertaking all of its activities. The County Development Plan is the template for the ongoing development of our County at this time of unprecedented growth and change.

The Council has been endeavouring to implement a multi-stranded approach to the development of infrastructure and services throughout the county. The reasoning for this is that it is necessary to develop in tandem both the economic and social infrastructure in the county in order for all the people of the county to derive benefit from the investment that is being made by the Council. It is deeply gratifying both for the Elected Representatives and the officials of the Council to witness the tremendous strides that are being made in this regard.

The Council is continuing to provide housing to those who require it and every opportunity is being availed of to ensure that qualified applicants can access the various housing options that are available to them and progress is being made with regard to implementing the measures that are contained in the Traveller Accommodation Plan 2005-2008.

The Council is to the fore in its support for the Arts, Sports and Leisure in the County. A wide range of activities in relation to the promotion of the arts, the provision of sporting and playing facilities have been engaged in. Efforts are ongoing with regard to involving the young people of our county in the activities of the Council. All of this valuable work will, it is hoped, contribute to the promotion of the ideal of Active Citizenship that will ensure that future generations can enjoy the benefits of a diverse and inclusive society. As may be seen in the report all sections of the Council played an important role in the provision of ongoing and quality services to our customers.

I am very grateful to the Members of the Council for their co-operation and support that has made my job easier to do. I extend my thanks also to the Management and employees of the Council for their loyalty and commitment both to me and the people of Longford, whom we all serve, in the delivery of a quality service. Finally I commend this report to the people of Longford as an excellent overview of the valuable work done by the Council in 2006.

*Paddy Belton*



## Introduction

Mr. Tim Caffrey • COUNTY MANAGER



It gives me great pleasure as County Manager to welcome the publication of the Longford County Council Annual Report for 2006

**T**he publication of the Annual Report provides an opportunity to review the performance of the Council and the quality of services provided by it in 2006. The report also records the key achievements of the Council in relation to the provision of infrastructure. It also provides an opportunity for the Council to publicise the various activities it engaged in, in the period covered by the report.

Since taking up my appointment as County Manager in March of 2006, I have had an opportunity to work closely with the Elected Representatives and the employees of the Council. I am satisfied that all parties concerned are entirely committed and focused on ensuring ongoing improvements in the delivery of the Council's services and the development of the county to its maximum potential.

There is an increasing demand for the expansion of water and sewerage networks and the construction of roads that will contribute to the economic development of the county. The Council has commenced work on the delivery of a number of social infrastructure projects including improved library facilities in Ballymahon, a new swimming pool in Longford and playgrounds in a number of towns and villages. By accessing funding that is available to it the Council has contributed to the enhancement of the visual appeal of many of the towns and villages throughout the county. The Elected Council is contributing to the

advancement of the Council's corporate objectives. The people of Longford are regularly updated with regard to the progress that is being made. In general satisfaction is being expressed to me with regard to the progress that is being made in relation to both the economic and social development of the county. The anticipated decentralisation of the Irish Prison Service in the coming months will result in a major contribution, both economically and socially, to the locality.

In 2006 the Council targeted an immense amount of time and resources at reorganising its structures in order that it might better serve the people of the county. This reorganisation is nearing completion. In addition the introduction of a Performance Management and Development System was commenced. This should result in improvements in the delivery of the Council's services, better use of the Council's resources and the provision of sufficient and appropriate training to the employees of the Council.

I look forward to continuing to work with the Council's employees, the Elected Council, other agencies and the community sector in order to facilitate the ongoing improvement of the living environment in County Longford.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Tim Caffrey". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.



# Members of Longford County Council

## Ballymahon Electoral Area



Larry Bannon



Paddy Belton



Mick Cahill



Sean Farrell



Adrian Farrell



Barney Steele

## Drumlish Electoral Area



Gerry Brady



Luie McEntire



Martin Mulleady

## Granard Electoral Area



James Coyle



Martin Farrell



Frank Kilbride



Maura Kilbride-Harkin



P.J. Reilly

## Longford Electoral Area



Denis Glennon



Victor Kienan



Alan Mitchell



Peter Murphy



Michael Nevin



Peggy Nolan



Seamus Butler





# Members of Strategic Policy Committees

## Longford County Council

### Housing, Building, Social Policy, Planning and Building Control

<b>Chairperson</b>	Councillor Alan Mitchell
<b>Longford County Council Representatives</b>	Councillor Maura Kilbride-Harkin Councillor Victor Kiernan Councillor Martin Mulleady Councillor Peter Murphy Councillor P.J. Reilly
<b>Longford Town Council Representative</b>	Councillor James Keogh
<b>Sectoral Representatives:</b> 1 Development/Construction: 3 Community & Voluntary:	Mr. Kevin Hughes, Construction Industry Federation Ms. Helena Doyle, Longford County Network for People with Disabilities Ms. Mary Kennedy, Schizophrenia Ireland (Longford Branch) Ms. Julia Mongan, Longford Traveller Movement

### Transportation, Road Development, Road Maintenance & Road Safety Policy

<b>Chairperson</b>	Councillor Adrian Farrell
<b>Longford County Council Representatives</b>	Councillor Larry Bannon Councillor Paddy Belton Councillor James Coyle Councillor Luie McEntire
<b>Granard Town Council Representative</b>	Councillor Edward Kelly
<b>Sectoral Representatives:</b> 1 Agriculture/Farming: 1 Trade Union: 1 Community & Voluntary:	Mr. Seamus Treacy, Irish Co-Operate Organisation Society Mr. Bernard Nolan, Irish Congress of Trade Unions Mr. Oliver Cassidy, Granard Area Action Group



# Members of Strategic Policy Committees

## Longford County Council

### Water and Environmental Services Policy

<b>Chairperson</b>	Councillor Martin Farrell
<b>Longford County Council Representatives</b>	Councillor Gerry Brady Councillor Seamus Butler Councillor Mick Cahill Councillor Peggy Nolan
<b>Granard Town Council Representative</b>	Councillor Carmel Fay
<b>Sectoral Representatives:</b> 1 Agriculture/Farming: 2 Community & Voluntary:	Mr. Albert Cooney, Irish Farmers Association Mr. Parvez Butt, Newtownforbes Development Ms. Gen Doherty, Irish Countywomen's Association

### Economic, Urban and Rural Development, Cultural and Recreational Policy

<b>Chairperson</b>	Councillor Barney Steele
<b>Longford County Council Representatives</b>	Councillor Sean Farrell Councillor Denis Glennon Councillor Frank Kilbride Councillor Michael Nevin
<b>Longford Town Council Representative</b>	Councillor Paul Connell
<b>Sectoral Representatives:</b> 1 Business/Commercial 2 Community & Voluntary	Mr. Brian Dillon, Longford Chamber of Commerce* Mr. Philip Dawson, LD Dance Trust Ltd. Mr. Terry McKenna, Ballinamuck Community Enterprise Ltd.
	<small>* Mr Brian Dillon replaced Mr Noel McKiernan as the Longford Chamber of Commerce Representative in 2006.</small>



# Report on Working of the Strategic Policy Committees during 2006

Longford County Council

## Housing, Building, Social Policy, Planning and Building Control

The Strategic Policy Committee met ten times during 2006.

The dates of the meetings held were as follows:-

- 23rd January, 2006
- 27th February, 2006
- 27th March, 2006
- 24th April, 2006
- 29th May, 2006
- 26th June 2006
- 24th July 2006
- 25th September 2006
- 16th October 2006
- 27th November 2006

The following is a list of the various issues considered by the Committee in 2006:-

- Tenancy Agreement
- Differential Rent Scheme
- Waste Management Survey
- Draft Housing Report
- Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS). Housing Standard Regulations.
- Disabled Persons & Essential Repairs Grant Schemes – Claw back provision.
- Scheme of Letting Priorities – Part V Affordable Housing
- Wind Energy Development Guidelines for Planning Authorities
- Taking in Charge Policy for Private Housing Developments
- Anti Social Behaviour Document
- Greener Homes – Grants Available





# Report on Working of the Strategic Policy Committees during 2006

Longford County Council

## Transportation, Road Development, Road Maintenance & Road Safety Policy

The Strategic Policy Committee met on three occasions during 2006 with a core objective of ensuring that infrastructural transportation policies and investment assist the economic and social development of County Longford, and preserve and improve the particular attractiveness of the county and its background environment.

### The days and dates of the meetings were:-

- Wednesday 1st March, 2006
- Tuesday 30th May, 2006
- Tuesday 24th October, 2006

### The main items for discussion and consideration were:-

1. Identification of issues for consideration at future SPC meetings.
2. Prioritisation of National and Non-National roads in line with the Regional Planning Guidelines and the National Spatial Strategy.
3. Consideration of the Guidelines for the Application of Special Speed Limits.
4. Policy regarding qualification criteria for Local Improvement Grants.
5. Development of a revised policy in respect of Road Opening Licences.



# Report on Working of the Strategic Policy Committees during 2006

Longford County Council

## Water and Environmental Services Policy

The Strategic Policy Committee met four times during 2006. The following matters and recommendations were considered.

### 21st March 2006

- Environmental Awareness Programme 2006 & Large Goods Collection 2006.
- Presentation on the Operation of the Litter Pollution Act 1997 – 2003.
- Consideration of the Combat Poverty Report entitled 'Implementing a Waiver System'
- Amended Customer Charter of Service – Water Supply and Waste Water Treatment (non-domestic customers)

### 26th June 2006

- Joint meeting of the Water Services and Environmental Services S.P.C, the Housing and Social, S.P.C and the Planning and Building Control S.P.C.
- Position Paper on Refuse Collection Arrangements relating to Council Housing Tenants

### 2nd October 2006

- Assessment of Needs – Water Investment Services Programme.
- Draft Bye Laws on Cemeteries.
- Update in relation to Longford Jobs Initiative.
- Update in respect of the implementation of the Metering Project.
- Bring Facilities and Civic Amenity Sites.

### 13th November 2006

- Consideration relating to the development of a policy in respect of flooding
- Water Services Capital Investment Programme
- Update on the preparation of Draft Bye-Laws on Cemeteries.
- Update outlining the progress being made in respect of the Metering Project.
- Extension of Bring Facilities.



# Report on Working of the Strategic Policy Committees during 2006

Longford County Council

## Economic, Urban and Rural Development, Cultural and Recreational Policy

The Strategic Policy Committee met on 5 occasions in 2006.

The committee discussed the following issues: -

- Longford Broadband Project
- Group Broadband Scheme
- Clár and RAPID Schemes
- Play Policy
- Longford Swimming Pool
- Cultural Services
- Grass Cutting Policy
- Tourism Development Policy
- Pride of Longford Competition
- Social & Community Facilities Capital Scheme 2006
- Three-year Amenity Programme – Development Contribution Scheme
- Local Area Plans
- State owned Cut Away Bogs
- Ardagh Heritage Centre
- National Disability Strategy
- Longford Museum Project





# Key Functions

## Longford County Council

The principal services of Longford County Council are now provided within the following Directorate structure.

The five Directorates cover the areas of: -

- Transportation, Road Development, Road Maintenance & Road Safety Policies
- Water Services & Environmental Policies
- Housing, Social , Planning & Building Control Policies
- Finance
- Economic Development, Urban & Rural Renewal, Cultural & Recreation Policies



## Transportation, Road Development, Road Maintenance & Road Safety Policies



Cllr. Adrian Farrell



Mr Jack Kilgallen  
Director of  
Services



# Transportation, Road Development, Road Maintenance & Road Safety Policies

## Longford County Council

It is a core objective of Longford County Council that infrastructural transportation policies and investments assist the economic and social development of the county. A further core objective is that the physical attractiveness and background environment of the county is preserved.

Longford is strategically located near the centre of Ireland and is traversed by the National Primary Routes N4 and N5 and National Secondary Routes N55 and N63. These routes give rise to significant traffic flows throughout the county

Fundamental to the proper development of County Longford is a requirement that the road network meets current and projected traffic volume and safety requirements. Strengthening economic activity requires the support of a good quality road network. It is recognised that for Longford to benefit effectively from current growth in industry, agriculture and tourism and the attractions of its lakes, rivers and scenic beauty, the road network, and particularly the regional and county roads, must be of an appropriate standard, inviting, and safe for visitor and locals alike.

Except for a limited number of roads under the authority of Longford Town Council, Longford County Council is responsible for the provision, improvement and maintenance of the public road network within the County. Currently the breakdown of roads under the authority of the County Council is as follows:

Classification	National Primary	National Secondary	Regional	Local	Total
North Area (km)	-	13	53	654	<b>720</b>
Mid-Area (km)	33	18	20	224	<b>295</b>
South Area (km)	15	25	78	452	<b>570</b>
<b>Total Kilometers</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>1331</b>	<b>1585</b>



# Transportation, Road Development, Road Maintenance & Road Safety Policies

Longford County Council

Finances available to the Council in 2006 were as follows:

## 1.National Roads (National Roads Authority Grants):

Major Planning & Design:	€550,000
Major:	€5,500,000
Other Improvement Works:	€3,300,000
Safety Barrier Program:	€50,000
Maintenance Works:	€814,003
Traffic Calming:	€460,000
Safety Improvement Works:	€565,000

**Total: €11,239,003**

## 2.Non-National Roads (Department of the Environment & Local Government Grants):

Specific Improvement Works:	€1,750,000
Restoration Improvement Works:	€3,715,000
Restoration Maintenance Works:	€1,235,000
Discretionary Improvement Works:	€400,000
Discretionary Maintenance Works:	€473,000
LS, LT & NS Lights/Bridges (Clár):	€224,284
Low-cost Safety Improvement Works:	€103,600
Local Improvement Schemes:	€792,432
Local Improvement Schemes (Clár):	€253,771
Regional Road Signposting:	€50,000
Training Programme:	€22,000

**Total: €9,019,087**

**3. Non-National Roads (Council Contribution): €950,000**

**TOTAL BUDGET: €21,208,090**

# Transportation, Road Development, Road Maintenance & Road Safety Policies

## Longford County Council

The design of National Road Infrastructural Projects has progressed with the assistance of the National Roads Authority Regional Design Office as follows:

- Part 8 (Planning & Development Regulations, 2001) proposals in respect of the Longford N5 Bypass were adopted by the Council in October, 2006. Approval to proceed to the publication of the necessary Compulsory Purchase Order is awaited.
- Edgeworthstown N4 Inner Relief Road has been substantially completed;
- Longford to Edgeworthstown N4 Improvement is at Preliminary Design Stage. A Feasibility Study for dual-carriageway is in progress.
- Phase 1 of Longford to Rooskey N4 Improvement is under construction. Preliminary design of Phase 2 and Newtownforbes Bypass is in progress;
- National Secondary Roads Atkins/McCarthy Plan is continuing implementation stage.

All other Improvement and Maintenance Works were implemented and facilitated by the two Area Engineering Offices and the Council Design Office.

## Water Services & Environmental Policies (including Emergency Services)



Cllr. Martin Farrell



Mr Roger Timlin  
Director of  
Services



## Water Services & Environmental Policies (including Emergency Services)

Longford County Council

**T**he aim of Longford County Council is to provide an adequate and safe supply of potable water for domestic, agricultural, and other use. In addition the Council endeavours to provide a safe and adequate system for collection, treatment and disposal of sewage effluent. This is achieved by the operation of existing schemes and the planning and provision of new schemes to extend the services to areas which are not already connected to the Council's networks.

### WATER SERVICES INFRASTRUCTURE

There are five regional water schemes serving County Longford. It is estimated that 85% of the population receives a piped water supply that is treated to EU standards.

The Schemes are: Ballymahon, Lanesboro/Newtowncashel, Longford Central, Lough Gowra and Granard.

Drinking Water Quality is monitored independently by the Health Services Executive – Midlands Area, in accordance with the E.C. (Quality of Water Intended for Human Consumption) Regulations, 2000. The results are reported quarterly to the County Council. They are also reported annually to the Environmental Protection Agency and a report is published by it.

The Council has prepared a Strategic Rural Water Plan, a Network Appraisal and Renewal Plan. A GIS Spatial Database/Complete Information System of the water and sewer networks in the county has been developed.

There are nine public sewerage schemes in the County: Ballymahon, Kenagh, Lanesboro, Longford, Newtownforbes, Drumlish, Granard, Edgeworthstown and Legan.

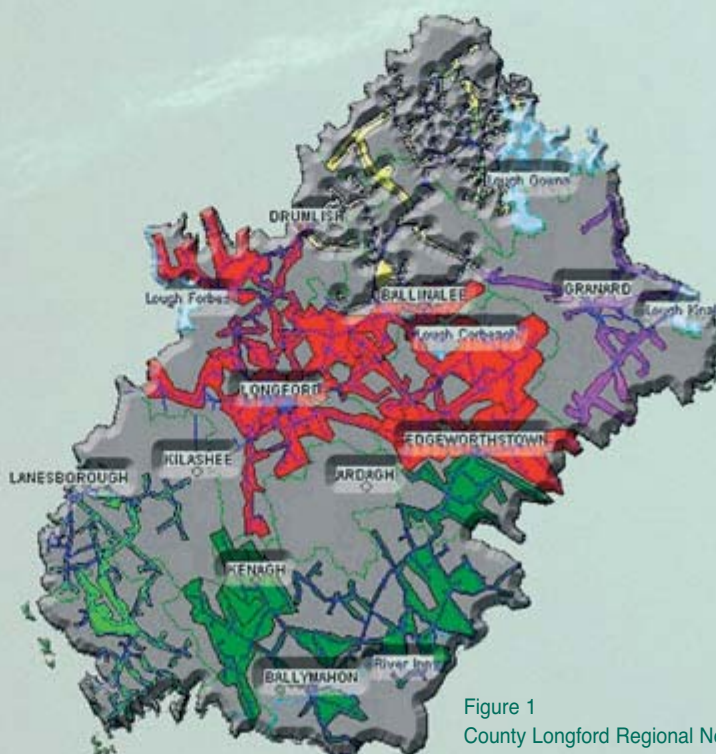


Figure 1  
County Longford Regional Network Map

## Water Services & Environmental Policies (including Emergency Services)

Longford County Council

### WATER SERVICES INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2005 – 2007

Schemes	Status	Estimated Cost €
<b>Schemes completed in 2006</b>		
Clondra Sewerage Scheme	Completion date June 2006	1,400,000
<b>Schemes to start in 2007</b>		
Longford Central Regional Water Supply Scheme	Construction to commence July 2007	7,205,265
<b>Stage 6 – Reservoir &amp; Pipelines</b>		
Water Conservation Stage 2 & Water Network Rehabilitation Stage 3	Water Conservation project completed Network Rehabilitation works to commence construction in 2007	1,672,362 5,505,896
Edgeworthstown Sewerage (Nutrient Reduction & WWTP Refurbishment)	Construction to commence June 2007	411,309
<b>5 Villages Sewerage Scheme Bundled DBO Scheme Status</b>		
Ardagh, Ballinalee & Aughnaclyff	Construction to commence December 2007 DBO Treatment Plants to follow in April 2008	3,905,937
Drumlisk & Newtownforbes	Construction to commence April 2008, DBO Treatment Plants to follow in April 2008	4,406,941
Longford Town Sewerage Scheme - Network & Waste Water Treatment Review	Approved to go to Contract Document Stage for Works expansion & Sludge Hub Centre only. Preliminary Report to be prepared for Network System	9,010,000
Longford Sludge Management	Approved to go to Contract Document Stage – Linked to above Capital Project	1,530,000
Lanesborough Regional Water Supply Stage 1	At Contract Document Stage	6,000,000

# Water Services & Environmental Policies (including Emergency Services)

Longford County Council

## WATER SERVICES INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2005 – 2007

Schemes	Status	Estimated Cost €
<b>Schemes to Start 2007 - Advance through Planning Phase</b>		
Ballymahon Regional Water Supply Scheme Strategic Review	Preliminary Report submitted to DoEHLG	4,217,819
Granard Regional Water Supply Scheme Strategic Review	Preliminary Report submitted to DoEHLG	6,259,042
Longford Central Regional Water Supply Scheme Strategic Review	Preliminary Report submitted to DoEHLG	17,996,964 If full groundwater treatment is required
Longford Sewerage Scheme Phase 2	Preliminary Report submitted to DoEHLG Local Area Plan to be compiled by Longford County Council	4,600,000
Longford Grouped Towns and Villages Sewerage Scheme Feasibility Study - Abbeylara, Abbeyshrule, Ballinamuck, Barry, Killashee, Ennybegs, Legga, Moydow, Moyne, Newtowncashel, Stonepark and Taghshinny	Feasibility Report submitted to the DoEHLG	9,600,000

### WATER CONSERVATION

Work commenced on Stage 2 of the Water Conservation Programme in 2006. This involved the establishment of the district metering zones, the installation of telemetry for flow monitoring purposes, and the establishment of leakage detection and repair teams. €700,000 was spent in 2006 and the projects will be progressed further in 2007.

Final approval for Phase 3 was received from the DEHLG in December and the design of the network rehabilitation system has commenced. The value of the contract will be of the order of €4.2 million.

Water main replacement work was undertaken in Dublin Street, Longford in 2006 as part of the Street Renewal Project.

The Non-Domestic Water Metering Project reached substantial completion in November 2006. To date, 4,500 meters have been installed. All non-domestic customers will be billed in respect of water consumption in 2007.



# Water Services & Environmental Policies (including Emergency Services)

Longford County Council

## Rural Water Programme

### LONGFORD COUNTY RURAL WATER MONITORING COMMITTEE

The Rural Water Monitoring Committee met in June 2006 to review progress on the implementation of the Programme.

### WORK PROGRAMME 2006

- New Group Water Schemes under construction in 2006 were Gowlan, Ballywalter, Freehalam, Carrickduff, Camagh, Derrynabuntle, Carrickmoyragh and Esker Cloncowley.
- Clár funding was applied for in respect of the following schemes, Carrickduff, Camagh, Derrynabuntle and Esker Cloncowley.
- Upgrade works continued on the following group water schemes – Ardagh and Moydow.
- The Gowlan Scheme was of particular significance as it permitted the connection of the Longford and Lanesborough Regional Water Supply Schemes. This connection is essential in order to meet increasing demand from new development in the Longford Town area.
- The Esker Cloncowley scheme similarly allowed the Gowna Regional Water Supply Scheme to connect to Longford RWSS and Gowna now supplies the town of Drumlish with water.
- Nine Group Water Schemes claimed subsidies towards their running costs in 2006. The total amount paid out was €23,649.77
- The Longford Block Grant Allocation in 2006 for the various measures being undertaken as part of the Rural Water Programme amounted to €2,570,000.

### SMALL WATER AND SEWERAGE SCHEMES

Extensions to the sewerage schemes at Granardkille and Carragh in Granard were progressed during the year. It is expected that these schemes will be completed by summer 2007.

In November 2006 the Council submitted proposals to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government for additional Block Grant funding in respect of new and ongoing works in respect of 20 Group Water Schemes. Funding applications were also submitted in preparation for the Taking in Charge of 10 other schemes.

Funding was sought from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government for the completion of extension works to the Carragh and Granardkille Sewerage Schemes, water main replacement at Dublin Street, Longford, plant upgrades at Lough Forbes Water Treatment Plant and supply augmentation for Longford Central.

### WATER / SEWER CONNECTION LICENCES

During 2006, 195 licence applications were processed for connections to public sewerage, water and group water schemes. The revenue receipted totalled €602,000.

### LAND DRAINAGE

Work continued during 2006 on the maintenance of the Camlin River.

# Water Services & Environmental Policies (including Emergency Services)

Longford County Council

**T**he Environment Section provides a diverse range of functions and services on behalf of the Council. The principal areas of activity are :

- Pollution Control and Water Quality Management
- Litter Management
- Waste Management
- Street Sweeping
- Fire and Emergency Services
- Veterinary Services
- Dog Control
- Civil Defence
- Burial Grounds

## **POLLUTION CONTROL AND WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT**

Pollution control legislation covers areas such as water pollution, air pollution and noise nuisance. Specific activities undertaken in relation to pollution control include investigation of water pollution incidents, licensing of discharges to waters, and the monitoring of water quality in rivers and lakes.

## **WATER POLLUTION AND PHOSPHORUS REGULATIONS 1998**

According to the most recent E.P.A. data, 40% of all the rivers in Longford are classed as unpolluted. 28% of rivers are classed as slightly polluted. 30 % are classed as moderately polluted and 2 % are classed as being seriously polluted.

Under the 1998 Phosphorus Regulations there is an obligation on the Council to achieve a significant improvement in the river water quality by 2007. This will be achieved through a programme of farm inspections, licensing of industry and the ongoing upgrading of Sewerage Treatment Plants, which is carried out by the Water Services Section. A programme to identify unlicensed commercial and industrial effluent discharges was ongoing during 2006.

## **RIVER BASIN MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS**

In addition to the above all counties bounding the Shannon and Erne rivers are involved in the River District Basin Management Systems. In accordance with the Water Framework Directive, the aim of the project is to set up a monitoring network to identify the pressures and water quality in the region and to formulate a programme of measures to tackle the various sources of pollution. This project has assessed the entire Shannon and Erne Catchments from their sources to their respective estuaries.

All water bodies are in the process of being examined including surface waters, ground waters, estuaries and wetland habitats. A Water Characterisation Report was published in late 2004.

The River Basin Management System will take approximately four years to establish at an estimated cost of eight million euro. Fundamental to the success of the project will be the involvement of all the sectoral interests including fisheries, forestry, industry, agricultural, local authorities and state agencies.

# Water Services & Environmental Policies (including Emergency Services)

## ENVIRONMENT

Longford County Council

### **CAMLIN RIVER FISHERIES RESTORATION PROJECT**

The Shannon Regional Fisheries Board, in conjunction with Longford County Council and Camlin Angling Club has undertaken a joint work programme on the River Camlin and its tributaries on a phased basis. This involved Longford County Council assigning machine time to a fisheries rehabilitation programme, in place of carrying out arterial drainage maintenance. The SRFB undertook the construction of vortex weirs, deflectors and gravel beds in the river. The Board also carried out tree planting and fencing where necessary. The Camlin Anglers assisted with stocking the river where necessary. The works carried out over the past three years have resulted in a considerable increase in trout stocks.



### **ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORY**

The County Council Environment Laboratory is located at Park Road, Longford. It provides support to the Water Services and Environment Sections. The principal areas of activity are:

- Water pollution monitoring and control.
- Monitoring County Council Urban Wastewater Treatment plants.
- Landfill monitoring.
- Monitoring industrial effluent discharges
- River and lake monitoring

### **LITTER MANAGEMENT**

Enforcement of the Litter Pollution Act, 1997 – 2003 is one of the key mechanisms in tackling litter pollution problems in County Longford. Litter Control is conducted primarily by the Council's three Litter Wardens assisted by the Council's Dog Warden and Longford Town Council's Litter Warden and Traffic Wardens.

In 2006 Longford County Council issued 411 "On the Spot" Litter Fines. This was an increase of approximately 49% over 2005. This is a reflection of the increasing problem of dumping and fly tipping that is being experienced at present in modern society.



# Water Services & Environmental Policies (including Emergency Services)

Longford County Council

## **ANTI LITTER AWARENESS GRANTS**

Anti Litter initiatives, funded by a DoEHLG grant of €15,330 were enacted during 2006 both in Longford Town Council and the County Council.

## **ASSISTANCE IN VARIOUS FORMS WAS GIVEN TO THE FOLLOWING INTERESTS**

Longford Tidy Towns Committee, Litter Bin Sponsorship Scheme; Schools Waste Recycling Competition; Purchase of litter pickers, bags, gloves and other material to assist in clean-ups undertaken in the county.

## **LOCAL AGENDA 21 ENVIRONMENTAL PARTNERSHIP FUND**

The fund is a grant aided scheme funded by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government and Longford County Council to support innovative, community-based environmental projects. A total of €9,070 was distributed to the following organisations during 2006. - Longford Tidy Towns Committee, Irish Peat Land Conservation Council, Longford Environmental Alliance, Kelvin Moore, Edgeworthstown Tidy Towns, The Envirobus Mobile Aquarium, School Book Exchange, Jumbletown.ie, Lough Ree Summer School, Cnoc Mhuire Secondary School Granard.

## **STREET SWEEPING**

In 2006 the Council carried out a regular programme of Street Sweeping in the towns and villages of County Longford. This involved the utilisation of manual sweeping of litter and the servicing of litter bins in accordance with the County Longford Litter Management Plan. Total expenditure on street sweeping during 2006 was €303,363.56.

## Waste Management

### **WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN 2005–2010**

During 2006 the Replacement Waste Management Plan for the Midlands Region was ratified by Offaly Co. Council, Laois Co. Council, Longford Co. Council, Westmeath Co. Council and North Tipperary Co. Council in accordance with the Waste Management Act 1996-2005 and the Waste Management (Planning) Regulations, 1997.

The Waste Management Plan sets out a framework for the sustainable management of waste within the five local authority areas and covers all non-hazardous waste arising in the region. The Plan also has regard to the management of hazardous waste in accordance with the National Hazardous Waste Management Plan, prepared by the EPA.

### **PROVISION OF FACILITIES**

There are 26 Bring Banks in County Longford. The most recent Bring Bank became operational in August 2006. Green, brown and clear glass and aluminium cans are accepted at all 26 sites.

Over 440 tonnes of glass was collected in 2006 at the Bring Banks. This amounted to an increase of 50 tonnes over the amount collected in 2005. Approximately, 27 tonnes of aluminium cans were collected in 2006, which was an increase of 2 tonnes over the amount collected in 2005.

Overall there was an increase in the use bring facilities in 2006 with a 13% increase in the tonnage of glass collected and an 8% increase in the tonnage of aluminium cans collected over the tonnage collected in 2005



## Water Services & Environmental Policies (including Emergency Services)

Longford County Council

### ENFORCEMENT

Longford County Council has an active Waste Enforcement Team combining both technical and administrative disciplines. The Enforcement Team deals with areas such as Waste Facility Permits, Collection Permits, Packaging Regulations, Farm Plastics and all Unauthorised Waste Activities. During 2006 the Waste Enforcement Team received 514 complaints all of which were investigated with appropriate enforcement actions being taken where possible.

Longford County Council's Policy in the area of Waste Management is to increase awareness and improve compliance with Environmental Legislation.

### ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

During the year continued progress was accomplished in the following areas:

- National Spring Clean
- Green Schools
- Composting
- Large goods collections
- Farm Film Plastics collections



Farm Film Plastics collection Dromard, Co Longford 14th December 2006

### NATIONAL SPRING CLEAN

The Council participated in the National Spring Clean Campaign during 2006. Community

Clean-ups were assisted in 55 areas by Longford County Council. Approximately 1.8 tonnes of litter was collected. Litter Pickers, gloves, bibs and colour-coded bags were provided for the community cleanups.

Five temporary Civic Amenity Collections were organised during the Spring and Autumn months and a total of 54.21 tonnes of waste was collected. These took place in Granard, Longford, Ballinallee, Ballymahon and Lanesboro.

## Water Services & Environmental Policies (including Emergency Services)

Longford County Council

### **GREEN SCHOOLS**

Longford was once again very successful in increasing activity in Green Schools in 2006.

A total of eleven schools have received the Green Flag. During 2006 four schools were awarded Green Flags for the first time while two other schools had their Green Flags renewed. The schools that received Green Flags during 2006 were:-

Name: Cnoc Mhuire Secondary School Granard March 2006.

Name: Ballymahon Vocational School March 2006.

Name: Scoil Brid Glen May 2006.

Name: Ardscoil Phadraig Granard May 2006.

Name: St Mary's National School, Drumlish May 2006.

Name: Scoil Mhuire Newtownforbes May 2006.

### **COMPOSTING**

2006 was a very good year for the sale of composters. As part of Longford County Council's commitment to recycling the public were given the option of purchasing home composting units at a subsidised price of €25. The Council also offered Compost Bins to the holders of pension books at a discounted rate of €15. In order to promote the sale and use of compost units each school received a complimentary composting unit.

# Water Services & Environmental Policies (including Emergency Services)

## ENVIRONMENT

Longford County Council

### BURIAL GROUNDS

There are a total of 74 cemeteries in Longford. 10 of these are closed. Longford County Council through its wholly owned subsidiary, Longford Jobs Initiative Ltd. received approval from FAS to extend its existing Community Employment Scheme during 2006. The Scheme now employs a total of 10 participants. The purpose of the Community Employment Scheme is to maintain and undertake simple improvement schemes in cemeteries.

During 2006 Longford County Council continued with the scheme of providing financial support for cemeteries in the county. 19 parishes/cemetery committees received grant assistance towards cemetery maintenance during 2006.

Draft Bye-Laws for Cemeteries were drawn up and will go for public consultation early in 2007.

Longford County Council secured funding from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government as part of the National Disability Scheme to provide wheelchair accessible facilities at designated sites. As part of its work programme, new footpaths were constructed at Rathcline, Barraghmore and Kiltycreevagh, Legga, Aughaboy, Killashee, Cashel and Foxhall cemeteries. This programme of works is to be extended in 2007, if funds permit to other designated burial grounds under the control of Longford County Council.



New Wheelchair Accessible footpaths at Barraghmore Cemetery



## Water Services & Environmental Policies (including Emergency Services)

Longford County Council

### VETERINARY SERVICES & FOOD SAFETY

The main responsibility of the Veterinary Department relates to the delivery of services provided by Longford County Council, as an "Official Agency" under contract to the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, in the area of Food Safety and Public Health. In this regard, food premises and business activities in the following categories were supervised with a view to ensuring compliance with food safety legislation: -

- Small Slaughterhouses.
- Low throughput meat manufacturing establishments.

A total of 1,344 cattle and 5,471 sheep were processed for human consumption in four domestic abattoirs in Longford in 2006. This amounted to a net increase in throughput when compared with the 2005 figures. Each animal is inspected before and after slaughter. A sampling and analysis programme for the detection of harmful substances and bacteria in meat is operational.

Two stand-alone meat manufacturing plants in Longford Town which are monitored by the Council, achieved the new standard for approval in 2006.

The Council keeps a register of liquid milk plants operating within its functional area. All herds were inspected in 2006 and were in compliance with the regulations.

The Veterinary Services Department of the Council also participates in investigations and research surveillance on pathogens of public health significance and liaises with other public health agencies through the Zoonoses Committee.

### DOG CONTROL

Longford County Council provides a full time Dog Warden Service in the county. It operates a Dog Pound at Little Water Street, Longford. A total number of 1,621 dog licences were issued in 2006. 29 fines were served under the Control of Dogs Legislation during 2006.

A total of 172 strays or unwanted dogs were handled at the Council's Dog Pound in 2006.

211 dogs were picked up by the Dog Warden bringing the total number of dogs handled to 383. Of these 71 were re-homed and 25 were reclaimed by the owners. Unfortunately, 287 were disposed of by the Council's Veterinary Surgeon. The Dog Pound was refurbished during 2006 at a cost of €100,000 and it was officially re-opened on 2nd October 2006. Pound fees were introduced in 2006 to offset the costs of providing the Dog Warden services. €1,258 was collected to year end 2006.



## Water Services & Environmental Policies (including Emergency Services)

Longford County Council

### CIVIL DEFENCE

Civil Defence is part of a global organisation with the primary role of saving lives and the alleviation of suffering in time of war. Its peacetime role is to assist at natural disasters and accident scenes. At local level Civil Defence is responsible for the recruitment and training of volunteers and the provision of training centres in the community.

The main activities, programmes, events and developments during 2006 were:

- Attendance at the Advance and Intermediate refresher course run by Westmeath Civil Defence Instructors
- Two members passed a Search Management course run by the Civil Defence School
- A Radiation Monitoring, Reporting and Communications course was conducted locally.
- The Annual training Camp in Mullingar featured training in GPS, Map Reading, Search and Rescue Activities, Communications, Manual Handling Training and Driving Skills.
- Training camp was attended by the Chairman of the Civil Defence Board, Mr. Joe Meagher
- Civil Defence assisted at 53 local community events during 2006.
- The Civil Defence School transferred from Ratra House in the Phoenix Park to Benamore, Roscrea. In 2006 the New Civil Defence School was officially opened with a standing down Parade being held at the old Civil Defence School in May and the Official Opening of the New School taking place in September.
- A Flood Management Course was held in the new Civil Defence School in November.
- A new initiative was launched in the Athlone Institute of Technology during 2006 which involved the introduction of a Civil Defence Course involving Civil Defence Officers from the Region are participating in the delivery of this course.

## Water Services & Environmental Policies (including Emergency Services)

Longford County Council

The Fire and Rescue Service has stations in the following locations:-  
Ballymahon, Edgeworthstown, Granard, Lanesboro and Longford

These stations are manned by 48 Retained Fire-Fighters who respond to both fire and rescue incidents. The Fire Department was active in promoting Fire Safety in communities during Fire Safety Week. One activity conducted was a Fire Safety Competition on Shannonside Northern Sound Radio over a three day period with cash and smoke detectors been offered as prizes.

The Fire Department processed a total of 135 Fire Safety Certificates, 23 Planning Referrals and 40 Court Licence Application Referrals during 2006. Up to 50 Inspections of Places of Entertainment and Residential type premises were carried out during 2006.

A new Fire Station in Granard is almost complete and will be opened in early 2007.

Submissions were made to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government during 2006 for the provision of a new fire station in Edgeworthstown and the provision of an extension to Longford Fire Station.

Road traffic accident equipment to the value of €112,000.00 was purchased during 2006. An articulated tractor unit and two trailers with water tankers were purchased during the year. Lanesboro Fire Brigade got its first Class B Fire Appliance during 2006. Capital funding from the Department of Environment and Local Government was provided for all the above equipment.

Mr. Vincent Mulhern retired as Chief Fire Officer on the 1st January 2007 having provided almost 22 years of dedicated service. Mr. Declan Kilcline has since been appointed Chief Fire Officer.

## Housing & Social Policy, Planning & Building Control Policy



Cllr. Alan Mitchell



Mr James Clarke  
Director of  
Services



**T**he mid term review of the Action Plan for Social & Affordable Housing 2004-2008 which sets out Longford County Council's requirements for Social and Affordable Housing took place in May 2006. While the 2005 Housing Needs Assessment had shown a drop in applicants to 247 households on the housing lists, this figure steadily increased to over 400 in 2006.

## SOCIAL HOUSING

The review confirmed that Longford County Council had been very successful in meeting the Social Housing needs of the County. Approximately €19m was spent on the Housing Construction Programme in 2006. This included a number of turnkey developments the purchase of individual houses, the construction of single rural cottages and various works under the Scheme of Improvements in lieu of Local Authority Housing.



Social Houses at River Crescent,  
Ballinalee, Co. Longford

The following schemes were in progress at the end of the 2006- Ballinamuck (16), Streamstown, Colehill (20), Killashee (23), St. Johnstown, Ballinalee (20), River Crescent, Ballinalee (5), Mosstown, Kenagh (12), Kenagh (41), Lisbrack, Longford (3), Edgeworthstown Road, Ballymahon (6), Church Quarter, Granard (21).

The following schemes were completed in 2006 at - Church View, Drumlish (8), Aughnacliffe (14), Farnagh, Longford (38), Foxhall, Legan (7), Kelleher Court, Drumlish (5), Mart Road, Ballymahon (20), Church St., Edgeworthstown (6), Currabawn, Drumlish (12)

31 individual houses were purchased and 8 rural houses were completed. Four social houses were also acquired at Drumlish under the provision of Part V of the Planning Act. 129 allocations of tenancies were made by the Council in 2006.

## LOAN APPLICATIONS

To facilitate house purchasers, a range of loan options continued to be offered throughout the year. The types of loans on offer included Annuity, Affordable, Caravan, Reconstruction, Shared Ownership and Tenant Purchase. A combined total of 76 loan applications were received in 2006 with 36 loans being approved and 40 loans being advanced.

Recent interest rate increases are affecting potential borrower's ability to borrow as monthly payments continue to rise.

#### **AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

At the end of 2006, 10 Affordable Houses had been allocated at Stonepark. These houses were acquired under Part V of the Planning Act. The Council continued to gauge the demand for Affordable Housing and to date the main need identified has been in the Longford Town area. It is anticipated that this need will be met by the provision of Affordable Housing under the provisions of Part V of the Planning Act. As a result of ongoing negotiations in 2006, several units are due to come on stream in 2007. The Part V provisions will also be used to supplement the Social Housing Programme as appropriate.

#### **VOLUNTARY HOUSING**

To supplement the rental option, the Council continued to encourage further involvement by the Voluntary Housing Sector particularly in the area of Special Needs. Negotiations are ongoing with a number of Approved Bodies in relation to the provision of sheltered housing at a variety of locations.



OPD's, Woodview, Newtownforbes

#### **HOMELESS FORUM**

In association with Longford Town Council, the Health Service Executive and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, the provision of accommodation for homeless persons continued throughout 2006. A National review of the implementation of the Homeless Strategy was published in 2006. A report commissioned by Longford Town Council on Homeless Services in Longford, was made available to the Homeless Forum in the summer of 2006.

#### **MAINTENANCE/REFURBISHMENT**

In 2006, a sum of €630,000 was provided for the maintenance and repair of Local Authority Housing. Every effort will be made in order to ensure that Best Practice and Value for Money is achieved at all times.

The Refurbishment Scheme for the replacement of doors and windows ended in 2006. Longford County Council continued its Central Heating Installation Programme. However, due to contractor unavailability and high tender prices, this programme proved very difficult to implement throughout 2006. In an effort to be innovative and progress the programme, Longford County Council piloted the use of wood pellet burners in St. Matthew's Park, Ballymahon. This allowed the Council to avail of additional funding from Sustainable Energy Ireland. This project proved very successful and a full feasibility study will be carried out to see if it can be replicated in other estates in 2007. In addition, Longford County Council has re-advertised to determine if there are other contractors willing to tender for the carrying out of central heating works.



Curraghrua, Lanesboro – Winner of the "Best Kept Estate" 2006



**ESTATE MANAGEMENT**

The Housing Liaison Officer and the Social Worker continued to work with Tenants and Residents Associations throughout 2006. Compulsory pre-tenancy courses are in place for all new tenants. The 'Best Kept Estate' competition piloted in Longford in 2005 was held again in 2006. The competition was very successful. Awards were presented in September 2006 to the Residents Associations that were successful.

Throughout 2006, Longford County Council increased its implementation of the Anti Social Behaviour Policy. At the end of the year there were four cases pending hearing within the courts system.

A Renewal Plan for MacEoin Park/Farnagh was under consideration by the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government in 2006. A decision on funding for same is expected in 2007. A detailed plan for the rejuvenation of Tromra Road, Granard was prepared following comprehensive consultations with the residents. The plan was approved by the Council and submitted to the Department in 2006. In addition, through funding sourced under the Department's Estate Management Initiative, an Estate Manager was employed for Tromra Road. A house on Tromra Road was refurbished to provide an office base for the Estate Manager.

**DISABLED PERSONS (DPGS) AND ESSENTIAL REPAIRS GRANT (ERGS)**

The maximum Disabled Persons Grant that is available is €20,315. The maximum Essential Repairs Grant that is available is €9,530. As a result of increased building costs, the amount of grant to which a claw back provision is applicable has been increased from €5,000 to €10,000. A combined total of 256 applications were received during 2006. Grants were awarded in respect of 191 of these applications. The total of grant aid awarded in 2006 amounted to €755,331.



Disability Friendly Rural Cottage at Colehill, Co. Longford

**TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION**

In 2006, the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee met on a quarterly basis. The committee continued to monitor the progress that was being made towards meeting the targets set out in the Traveller Accommodation Plan 2005-2008. Plans for the refurbishment of the Willow Park Halting Site, to include the construction of 4 transient bays, were agreed by the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee. By the end of 2006, these plans had progressed through the Part VIII Planning Process with Longford Town Council. It is hoped to go to tender with the works in early 2007.

**RENTAL ACCOMMODATION SCHEME (RAS)**

In 2006, Longford County Council put a staff structure in place to implement the Rental Accommodation Scheme. It is intended that this scheme will be self financing and this has been reflected in the estimates prepared by the Council in respect of the operation of the scheme.

**HOME**

HOME which is the integrated computer housing system was commissioned in Longford County Council in 2006. This system has been designed to provide a modern and integrated solution to the Housing Sections of all Local Authorities. Whilst initially the implementation of the package added to the workload within the Housing Section, in the medium to long term it should ensure the availability of up to date and quality data in respect of all housing applicants.



In 2006 the Planning Department witnessed continued sustained busy trends similar to those experienced in recent years. The responsibility, work programme and level of activity of the department continued to expand. Significant activities during 2006 are outlined below together with the Planning Agenda for 2007.

While it was envisaged that the overall level of Planning Applications would decline in 2006, a substantial increase in applications submitted actually occurred. There is no evidence to suggest that the rate experienced in 2006 will not continue throughout the 2007 period.

#### PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

The Development Management Section is responsible for processing all Planning Applications in accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000 and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

A reduction in the numbers of Planning Applications submitted to the Development Management Section had been expected during 2006 in the aftermath of the Rural Renewal Tax Incentive Scheme. However, the high numbers of applications being processed was sustained in 2006. The introduction of a grant scheme in 2006 by the Department of Agriculture in a bid to assist farmers in meeting the new storage demands required by the Nitrates Directive led to an unprecedented level of farm building applications being processed during the year.

The total number of applications received in 2006 was 1,144. Comparably this was higher than the number of applications received in 2003 and 2005 which had been 727 and 744 applications respectively. The exception to this trend was 2004. In 2004, 1,401 applications were submitted. Many of these were directly attributed to the ending of the Rural Renewal Tax Incentive Scheme in that year.

Substantial areas of legislation introduced in 2006, were the Planning and Development (Strategic Infrastructure) Act 2006 and S.I. No. 685 of 2006, which come into force in January and March 2007. These legislative changes will add to the workload of the Development Management Section in 2007 and future years.

The workload in Development Management remains at a high level, arising from the sustained level of Planning Applications being received. A consistently high number of compliance submissions are being received. These are in respect of developments for which Planning Permissions which have been granted over the past number of years but which are now only commencing. The assessment and agreement of compliance submissions will contribute to an increasing workload in 2007. This will require substantial resources having to be targeted to meet the requirements of developers.

Pre-Planning meetings are an integral part of the Development Management process and are utilised on an ongoing and increasing basis. These meetings are held to provide a higher quality and more transparent planning service to the general public. In 2006 over 300 Pre- Planning meetings were held to facilitate discussion with potential applicants on the issues associated with their proposals. A new system was implemented in 2006 which allows for the online recording and storing of Pre - Planning discussions.

The continued registration of quarries under Section 261 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, and the processing and issuing of license applications under Section 254 of the Act, principally in respect of roadside signage, has also become a regular feature of the work carried out in section.

**DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS**

Development Contributions are levied in accordance with the scheme adopted by the Council under Section 48 of the Planning and Development Act 2000. Each grant of Planning Permission contains a condition requiring the payment of a relevant Development Contribution which becomes payable if and when the development commences. There are many cases where permissions granted have been superseded by alternative permissions on the same site and where permissions granted have not yet been activated. This can sometimes give an inaccurate impression of the amount actually due and owing to the local authority.

The total number of commencement notices received in 2006 was 335. The contributions collected amounted to €5,822,171. Facilities are available for the phased payment of contributions for larger developments where necessary.

**FORWARD PLANNING**

The Forward Planning Section is responsible for the research, preparation and production of all Development Plans and initiatives. The 2006 period was a very industrious phase in the arena of Forward Planning with a wide range of projects which had commenced in 2005 being completed. Yet another port folio of plans will be instigated during 2007. The following activities are representative of the main projects completed in 2006 and those for which the foundations have been laid.

**LONGFORD COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN, 2003-2009**

The review of the current Longford County Development Plan 2003 – 2009 will commence in April 2007. Substantial preparation work has been carried out in 2006 to facilitate this process. This review is essential in order to manage the changing physical environment which has evolved as a result of the 10% population growth experienced in Longford over the period of the current plan and the resultant physical implications for the future development of the county.

The review County Development Plan encompasses a wide range of interlinked project reviews. The next County Development Plan will cover the period 2009 – 2015. The work involved will among other elements involve:

- Conducting a review of the current Housing Strategy for Longford.
- The compilation of an updated list of structures worthy of protection within the county.
- A review of the Ballymahon Local Area Plan.
- The production of a landscape assessment for County Longford in order to provide guidance on development design, siting and locational issues.
- The formulation of a detailed set of Design Guidelines for rural, urban and village areas.

The preparation of Strategic Environmental Assessments was introduced in respect of certain plans and programmes in Ireland in July 2004. This applies to plans and programmes that exceed stated thresholds or those that are likely to have significant environmental effects. It is mandatory to prepare a Strategic Environmental Assessment when reviewing the County Development Plan.

The SEA in respect of the County Development Plan will be carried out in tandem with the review of the County Development Plan. The work on the SEA, which has been conducted in consultation with the Environmental Protection Agency is now at an advanced stage and it is envisaged that it will be completed in 2007.

The introduction of recent Government Guidelines provides for a much more extensive process when reviewing the Development Plan than was previously the case. The following are some of the guidelines that are now taken into account as part of the review process:

- Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines
- Development Plans-Consultation Draft Guidelines for Planning Authorities
- Implementing Regional Planning Guidelines- Best Practice Guidance
- Landscape and Landscape Assessment - DRAFT
- Quarries and Ancillary Activities
- Retail Planning Guidelines
- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)
- Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines
- Wind Energy Development Guidelines

Under the 2000 Act, regard must be had to the relevant Regional Planning Guidelines. The Regional Planning Guidelines for the Midlands Region were adopted in May 2004. These guidelines address issues such as population growth, strategic infrastructure and regional identity.

#### **MATERIAL VARIATIONS**

In March 2006 four Material Variations of the Longford County Development Plan were made relating to:

1. The provision of ancillary agricultural uses to unzoned land.
2. The promotion of renewable energy and low energy/passive houses and the support of initiatives that encourage energy conservation.
3. The provision of new houses in accordance with the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities, April 2005.
4. The favourable consideration of micro wind turbines producing below 20 kilowatts for domestic purposes.

A review of the Longford County Retail Strategy is currently underway. Any guidance resulting from the findings of the Retail Strategy will require a variation of the current Longford County Development Plan 2003 – 2009 to allow for the inclusion of any emerging changes in policy.



## LOCAL AREA PLANS AND VILLAGE POLICY STATEMENTS

Local Area Plans facilitate the planned growth of designated towns and villages, through which development can be promoted to support existing communities particularly in rural areas.

In 2006 a number of Local Area Plans were adopted for various designated settlements within Longford. The plans adopted are as follows.

- Newtownforbes Local Area Plan (May 2006).
- Drumlish Local Area Plan (June 2006).
- Kenagh Local Area Plan (September 2006).
- Ardagh Local Area Plan (September 2006).
- Granard Local Area Plan (October 2006).
- Ballinalee Local Area Plan (October 2006).

Local Area Plans are currently at an advanced stage for the towns of Edgeworthstown and Clondra. It is envisaged that a plan setting out a framework for the future sustainable and orderly development of the South East Environs of Longford Town will be completed during 2007.

## URBAN AND VILLAGE RENEWAL

Longford County Council has had marked success in its implementation of the Urban and Village Renewal Scheme. 2007 marks the final year of the scheme and a number of projects have been fully completed during 2006, including environmental improvement works at Granard, Abbeyshrule, Ballymahon and Longford Town. Works are also ongoing at Ballinalee and Drumlish. A new decorative public lighting programme is currently being implemented at Lanesboro.

These schemes have provided an attractive and welcoming appearance to the many towns and villages in the county. This will potentially provide economic benefits and add to the vitality of the towns and villages.



Environmental Improvement works in Abbeyshrule and Granard.

## ENFORCEMENT AND BUILDING CONTROL

During 2005, the Council continued to take a pro active role in the area of planning enforcement. A total of 147 cases came to the attention of the Council during 2005. During the year the Council issued 72 Warning Letters and 75 Enforcement Notices. Legal proceedings were commenced in respect of 4 cases. The majority of the remaining cases were settled to the satisfaction of the Council or are the subject of ongoing negotiations.

In 2006, 255 Building Control Inspections were carried out marking a substantial increase on the level of activity over the previous year. Compliance with Building Regulations continues to be monitored in new developments by the Building Control Officer, who also offers advice and answers queries on a daily basis from the general public.

## Finance



Tommy McDonald  
Head of Finance



### **FUNCTIONS**

The main functions of the Finance Department of Longford County Council are to:

- Achieve the financial objectives of the Council's Corporate Plan.
- Manage the financial affairs of the Council.
- Ensure that adequate internal controls are in operation to safeguard the assets of the organisation, and to ensure, the accuracy and reliability of the accounting records.
- Ensure as far as possible that Value for Money is achieved throughout the organisation.

### **SERVICES**

- Motor Taxation
- Rates
- Higher Education Grants
- General Office – processing payments to suppliers and payroll and supporting the Financial Management System.

### **PAYMENT PRACTICES**

During 2006 the Council implemented an Electronic Funds Transfer system for suppliers. This facilitates the making of payments to creditor's payments directly to a nominated bank account.

The provisions of the Prompt Payment of Accounts Act, 1997 and the European Communities (Late Payment in Commercial Transactions) Regulations, 2002 applies to Longford County Council and Longford Town Council. Both Local Authorities have systems in place to ensure that interest penalties are not incurred. However, in a small number of cases, late payments occurred in 2006, as follows:

#### **LONGFORD COUNTY COUNCIL**

Total number of late payments in excess of €317 each	218
Total value of late payments in excess of €317 each	€617,121
Value of all late payments as a proportion of total payments to suppliers	0.8%
Total amount of interest penalties	€6,839
Average delay in late payments	70 days

#### **LONGFORD TOWN COUNCIL**

No interest penalties were paid in 2006.

Every effort is made to ensure compliance with the Act and Regulations and to avoid the incurring of interest penalties. However, the procedures can only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance against material non-compliance with the legislation.

### **INTERNAL AUDIT**

Internal Audit is an independent appraisal function which reviews activities across all areas within Longford County Council. It objectively examines and reports on the management of risks, the adequacy of internal controls, the achievement of proper, efficient and economic use of resources. An Internal Audit Charter sets out the role and responsibilities of the Internal Auditor.



### HIGHER EDUCATION GRANTS

**P**rior to 1968 County Councils and County Borough Corporations awarded grants to students pursuing second and third level courses. The Local Authorities (Higher Education Grants) Act, 1968 abolished the making of grants in respect of second level education and revised the system of grants for third level education. Grants are paid on a graduated basis and may contain a maintenance element as well as fees where exemption from fees does not apply. The bulk of the cost is recouped from the Department of Education with the Local Authority being responsible for a sum equal to the value of the grants awarded by the Council in the 1967 financial year.

#### ACADEMIC YEAR 2006/2007

Number of new awards issued	75
Number of renewals issued	204
Total number of students in receipt of Higher Education Grants	279
Number of students attending Irish colleges	270
Number of students attending UK colleges (including Northern Ireland)	9

### MOTOR TAX

**T**he Motor Taxation Office issues Vehicle Licences (Tax Discs), Driving Licences and associated documents such as Certificates of Roadworthiness, Vehicle Licensing Certificates, Trailer Licence Cards, Receipts, etc. The income derived is transferred to the Local Government Fund, which is under the control of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

In 2006 total receipts amounted to €6,309,321.

BREAKDOWN OF MOTOR TAXATION INCOME - 2006	No. of Transactions	Amount €
Vehicle Licences	29,957	6,030,759
Driver Licences	4,668	70,340
Road Worthiness Certificates	2,879	21,354
Trade Licences	86	22,642
Miscellaneous Receipts	3,158	164,226
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40,748</b>	<b>6,309,321</b>

#### VEHICLE LICENCES ISSUED 2006

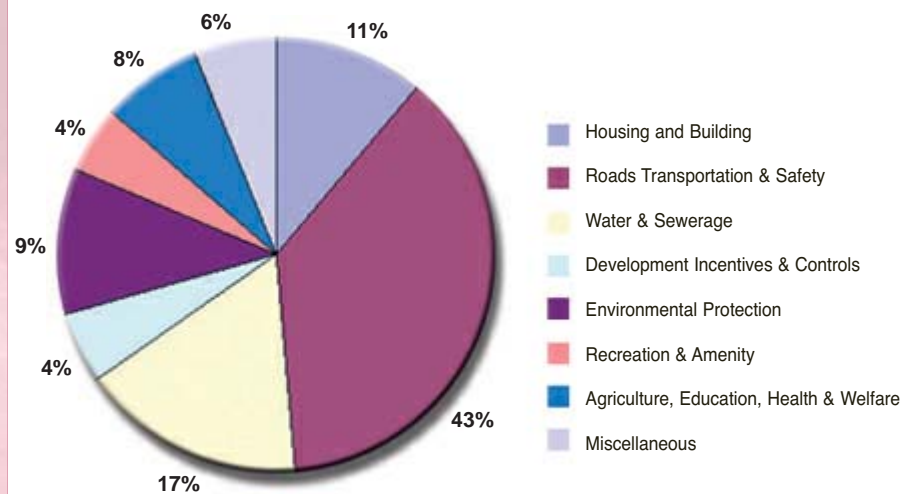
Private	23,353
Goods	4,704
Cycles	119
Tractors	1,050
PSV	202
Other (incl. duplicates)	529

### DRIVING LICENCES ISSUED 2006

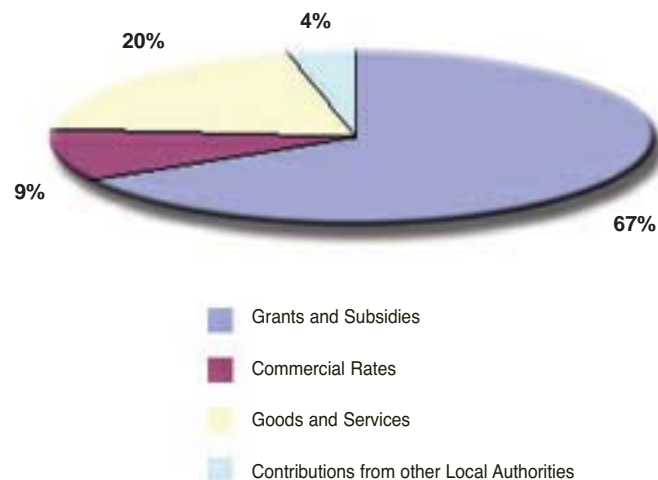
1 Year Driving Licence	43
3 Year Driving Licence	605
10 Year Driving Licence	1,328
1 Year Provisional	548
2 Year Provisional	1,679

In addition 4,236 Vehicle Licences were issues by the Motor Tax Online Service during 2006. These were issued directly from the Vehicle Registration Unit in Shannon, Co Clare.

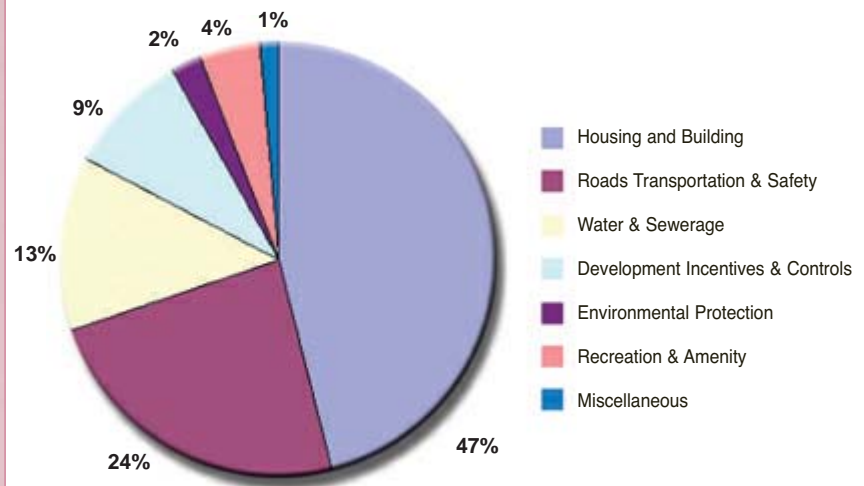
### REVENUE EXPENDITURE



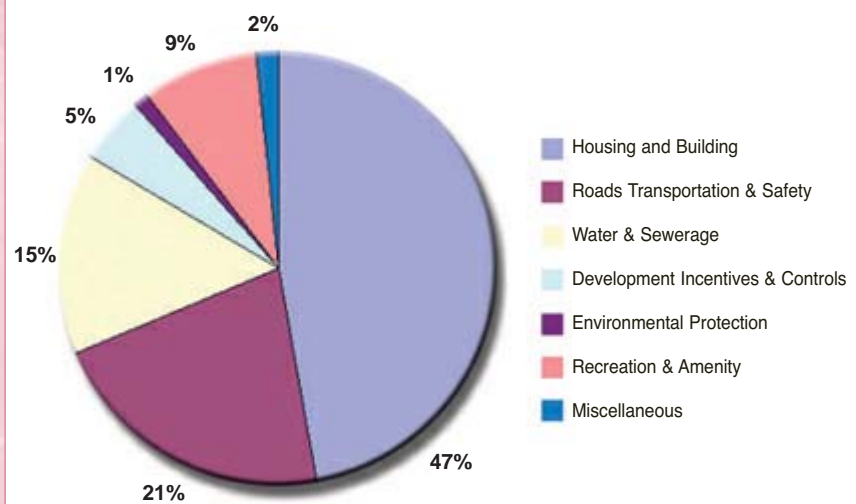
### SOURCES OF REVENUE INCOME



### CAPITAL EXPENDITURE



### CAPITAL INCOME





## LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSE COMPLETIONS AND ACQUISITIONS 2001 - 2005

	COMPLETIONS					ACQUISITIONS					Total
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	
<b>COUNTY COUNCILS</b>											
Cork	303	209	270	168	167	111	87	60	113	114	1602
Donegal	181	549	181	164	306	28	11	5	13	29	1,467
Kerry	169	160	253	106	215	4	6	1	55	58	1,027
Wexford	144	278	151	185	128	26	21	9	21	19	982
South Dublin	140	93	61	244	261	55	15	3	20	9	901
Fingal	107	132	248	175	95	30	5	0	0	7	799
Louth	90	156	172	126	137	25	6	2	44	27	785
Kildare	179	148	107	104	170	13	7	27	11	15	781
Meath	164	138	160	99	183	6	4	5	1	7	767
Wicklow	122	151	130	88	163	45	25	4	5	8	741
Cavan	93	210	100	196	57	27	4	2	4	0	693
Laois	107	54	54	203	162	21	9	3	21	30	664
Galway	113	103	85	93	129	13	22	14	26	25	623
<b>Longford</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>590</b>
Limerick	58	134	155	53	89	30	14	4	15	17	569
Sligo	68	66	94	127	65	40	22	15	33	28	558
Clare	71	49	84	19	112	34	55	19	53	37	533
South Tipperary	56	69	123	78	138	0	5	0	10	3	480
North Tipperary	71	97	65	131	69	17	4	2	10	8	474
Offaly	61	110	127	29	82	12	11	3	11	24	470
Mayo	108	25	64	97	134	2	0	1	2	4	437
Dun Laoghaire - Rathdown	63	59	180	50	15	35	26	4	1	1	434
Waterford	50	152	74	54	25	22	0	0	19	38	434
Westmeath	39	54	100	113	27	40	10	1	25	25	434
Carlow	99	12	111	54	48	19	18	6	16	40	423
Kilkenny	70	26	40	51	62	13	16	9	40	23	350
Roscommon	36	78	105	22	46	18	11	4	5	12	337
Monaghan	104	38	40	56	47	16	9	13	5	1	329
Leitrim	53	52	25	80	20	4	5	0	2	3	244
<b>CITY COUNCILS</b>											
Dublin	311	500	531	278	583	505	180	157	219	116	3,380
Cork	69	148	62	172	168	95	24	53	109	95	995
Galway	47	77	320	25	52	5	0	0	9	2	537
Waterford	21	156	164	26	72	26	3	1	0	17	486
Limerick	153	13	16	32	62	19	16	17	26	25	379
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,622</b>	<b>4,403</b>	<b>4,516</b>	<b>3,539</b>	<b>4,209</b>	<b>1,400</b>	<b>671</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>971</b>	<b>918</b>	<b>24,705</b>

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUND ALLOCATION

	2006	2007	Change	Census*	Per head of population	
			%	2006	2006	2007
<b>COUNTY COUNCILS</b>						
<b>Longford</b>	13,296,084	14,657,063	10.2%	26,749	497	548
Leitrim	<b>14,168,597</b>	<b>15,465,369</b>	<b>9.2%</b>	<b>28,837</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>536</b>
South Tipperary	21,643,602	23,696,915	9.5%	54,612	396	434
Waterford	20,618,871	22,848,496	10.8%	54,336	379	421
Sligo	16,617,403	17,723,150	6.7%	42,969	387	412
North Tipperary	17,775,415	19,357,349	8.9%	49,135	362	394
Mayo	35,170,634	38,012,273	8.1%	97,633	360	389
Roscommon	20,706,902	22,198,317	7.2%	58,700	353	378
Monaghan	14,363,459	15,718,151	9.4%	44,408	323	354
Carlow	11,791,970	12,536,458	6.3%	36,573	322	343
Cavan	18,075,814	19,526,749	8.0%	60,007	301	325
Donegal	38,547,272	41,556,957	7.8%	134,948	286	308
Westmeath	19,562,134	21,387,695	9.3%	72,433	270	295
Offaly	14,662,707	16,230,539	10.7%	55,600	264	292
Laois	17,019,082	18,336,335	7.7%	67,012	254	274
Kerry	25,497,932	27,600,743	8.2%	102,037	250	270
Kilkenny	19,226,389	20,827,594	8.3%	78,769	244	264
Louth	12,083,486	13,390,136	10.8%	52,990	228	253
Galway	35,296,907	38,490,666	9.0%	153,001	231	252
Wicklow	18,791,404	20,311,251	8.1%	80,789	233	251
Dun Laoghaire - Rathdown	37,109,051	39,451,937	6.3%	193,688	192	204
Limerick	24,160,987	26,101,406	8.0%	131,303	184	199
Wexford	20,163,308	22,172,296	10.0%	114,700	176	193
Meath	26,089,431	28,583,173	9.6%	155,045	168	184
Clare	14,741,484	15,672,190	6.3%	87,936	168	178
Cork	51,554,596	54,809,504	6.3%	322,925	160	170
Kildare	23,893,115	26,476,801	10.8%	158,145	151	167
Fingal	30,317,184	32,231,264	6.3%	239,813	126	134
South Dublin	24,638,923	26,194,505	6.3%	246,919	100	106
<b>CITY COUNCILS</b>						
Cork	24,267,960	26,892,180	10.8%	119,143	204	226
Limerick	11,025,361	11,721,449	6.3%	52,560	210	223
Dublin	93,847,042	100,310,537	6.9%	505,739	186	198
Waterford	8,030,490	8,537,496	6.3%	45,775	175	187
Galway	8,765,669	9,357,649	6.8%	71,983	122	130

Note: \* Provisional Figures

**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT STATEMENT****for the year ended 31st December 2006**

The Income and Expenditure Account Statement brings together all the revenue related income and expenditure. It shows the surplus/(deficit) for the year

	Gross Expenditure	Income	Net Expenditure	net Expenditure
	€	€	€	€
<b>EXPENDITURE BY PROGRAMME GROUP</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2005</b>
Housing & Building	4,306,164	3,872,321	433,843	236,846
Roads Transportation & Safety	14,677,932	10,468,251	4,209,681	3,867,259
Water & Sewerage	6,483,777	2,542,709	3,941,068	3,367,810
Development Incentives & Controls	2,096,698	1,129,698	966,999	1,029,697
Environmental Protection	4,166,801	961,965	3,204,836	3,397,411
Recreation & Amenity	1,959,311	222,763	1,736,548	1,480,378
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	2,973,096	2,450,026	523,071	491,459
Miscellaneous	2,338,255	1,092,897	1,245,359	1,245,359
<b>Total Expenditure / Income</b>	<b>39,002,036</b>	<b>22,740,631</b>		
<b>Net Cost of Programmes to be funded from County Rates and Local Government Fund</b>			<b>16,261,405</b>	<b>15,273,114</b>
Rates			3,782,333	3,746,626
Local Government Fund - General Purpose Grant			13,296,084	12,508,061
County Charge			1,106,400	1,106,400
<b>Surplus / (Deficit) for Year before Transfers</b>			<b>1,923,412</b>	<b>2,087,973</b>
<b>Transfer to / from Reserves</b>			(1,896,911)	(2,374,535)
<b>Overall Surplus / (Deficit) for Year</b>			<b>26,501</b>	<b>(286,562)</b>
<b>General Reserve at 1 January 2006</b>			1,240,908	1,527,470
<b>General Reserve at 31 December 2006</b>			<b>1,267,409</b>	<b>1,240,908</b>



**BALANCE SHEET at 31st December 2006**

	2006	2005
	€	€
	2006	2005
<b>Fixed Assets</b>		
Operational	133,188,414	113,664,524
Infrastructural	867,579,930	860,755,212
Community	165,001	184,296
Non Operational	5,830,740	9,630,609
	<b>1,006,764,086</b>	<b>984,234,641</b>
<b>Work in Progress and Preliminary Expenses</b>	<b>17,958,999</b>	<b>29,473,515</b>
<b>Long Term Debtors</b>	30,036,530	27,814,107
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Stock	58,200	71,108
Trade Debtors and Prepayments	16,726,658	5,629,385
Bank Investments	19,000,036	8,600,036
Cash at Bank		
Cash on Hand	111,690	124,968
Urban Account		
	<b>35,896,583</b>	<b>14,425,496</b>
<b>Current Liabilities – Amounts falling due within one year</b>		
Bank Overdraft		
Creditors and Accruals	1,975,711	2,764,667
Finance Leases	7,951,603	5,172,154
	<b>9,927,314</b>	<b>7,936,821</b>
<b>Net Current Assets / (Liabilities)</b>	25,969,269	6,488,675
<b>Creditors - Amounts falling due after more than one year</b>		
Loans Payable	33,861,507	36,089,807
Finance Leases		
Refundable Deposits	463,143	482,146
Other		
	<b>34,324,649</b>	<b>36,571,953</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>1,046,404,235</b>	<b>1,011,438,985</b>
<b>Financed By</b>		
Capitalisation Account	1,006,764,086	984,234,641
Income Work in Progress	122,630,364	31,037,961
Specific Revenue Reserve	17,750	17,750
General Revenue Reserve	1,267,409	1,240,908
Other Balances	15,724,626	(5,092,276)
<b>TOTAL RESERVES</b>	<b>1,046,404,235</b>	<b>1,011,438,985</b>

# Economic Development, Urban & Rural Renewal, Cultural & Recreation Policy



Cllr Barney Steele



Mr. Frank Sheridan  
**Director of  
Services**

# Economic Development, Urban & Rural Renewal, Cultural & Recreation Policy

Longford County Council

## **LONGFORD COUNTY DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

There are 29 members on the Board drawn from four sectors as follows:

### **Local Government (7 Representatives)**

Cllr. Alan Mitchell, Chairperson of the Board, Cllr. Paddy Belton, Cllr. Martin Farrell, Cllr. Barney Steele, Cllr. Adrian Farrell (all Longford County Council). Cllr. Fintan Flood, Granard Town Council, Mr. Tim Caffrey, Longford County Manager.

### **Local Development (7 Representatives)**

Ms Monica O'Malley, Ms Tess Murphy, Mr. Oliver Cassidy (all Longford Community Resources Ltd.), Mr. Michael Nevin, Ms Beatrice Cunningham, (both Longford County Enterprise Board). Ms Josephine Stroker, Longford Acorn Project, Ms. Patricia Harrison, Longford County Childcare Committee.

### **State Agency (10 Representatives)**

Supt. Dave Dowling (Garda Siochana), Ms. Frances Flynn (Midland East Regional Tourism), Ms Gillian Maunsell (IDA Ireland), Mr. Simon Cavanagh (Enterprise Ireland), Mr. Donie Murtagh (Health Service Executive), Ms. Marie Cullen (Department of Social Welfare), Mr. Gerry Johnson (FAS), Mr. Michael Lennon (Teagasc), Ms Josephine O'Donnell (County Longford VEC), Mr. Seamus Murray (Department of Education & Science)

### **Social Partners (5 Representatives)**

Mr. George Shedwell (Irish Congress of Trade Unions), Ms Edith Durojaiye, Mr Parvez Ahmed Butt (Community & Voluntary Sector), Mr. James Brady (Farming Sector), Vacant (Business Sector).

## **LONGFORD COUNTY DEVELOPMENT BOARD ACTION PLAN 2006-2008**

Arising from the review of the CDB Strategy in 2005, the Board agreed an Action Plan in 2006, which prioritises 13 key issues, and subsequent actions for the period 2006-2008. Task groups have been established and a lead agency has been identified for each issue.

## **ENDORSEMENT OF LOCAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY PLANS BY THE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

A key role of the County Development Board (CDB) is to bring about a more co-ordinated delivery of public and local development services. Central to this co-ordination role is the overseeing of the implementation of a 10 year strategy including local development plans. To facilitate better co-ordination the plans of the local development agencies were considered by the Social Inclusion Measures Working Group (SIMWG) and on the recommendation of the Group, the plans were endorsed by the CDB.

## **IMPROVING CO-ORDINATION OF LOCAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRUCTURES AND PROGRAMMES- COHESION FUNDING ROUND 2**

In 2005 a submission was prepared by the local development agency in conjunction with the SIMWG and endorsed by the County Development Board. In July 2006 funding of €110,000 was allocated for a number of projects. As part of this submission an application was made to employ a part time Volunteer Co-ordinator. €50,000 was secured on the 7th of December that will part finance this employment.



# Economic Development, Urban & Rural Renewal, Cultural & Recreation Policy

## Longford County Council

### LONE PARENTS INITIATIVE

In 2006, Longford County Development Board made an application to develop a project for lone parents in County Longford. In October, €100,000 was secured from the Gender Equality Unit of the Department of Justice Equality & Law Reform. An interagency steering group was established and a lead agency identified to develop and implement the project. The project aims to identify and respond to the diverse needs of young lone parents. The project will provide a range of individual and group supports to enable young lone parents to engage with and benefit from existing welfare, health and educational services.

### LOCAL SPORTS PARTNERSHIP

Longford County Development Board secured a Sports Partnership in 2006. The LSP will be established as a subcommittee of the Board. Under the Dormant Accounts Fund, Sports Measures for Disadvantaged Young People, €16,000 was allocated in the form of grants to local groups for sports equipment and skills development to increase participation in sporting activities by disadvantaged youth.

### INTERAGENCY CO-OPERATION IN THE DELIVERY OF SERVICES AND SUPPORTS TO THE TRAVELLER COMMUNITY

In April 2006, the County Development Board was requested to initiate the process of developing a strategic plan for Travellers. An interagency group of key stakeholders was established to agree how best this could be accomplished. Following a consultation process, an Action Plan was agreed prioritising a number of key actions. Lead agencies for the delivery and implementation of the agreed key actions were identified.

### LONGFORD COMMUNITY & VOLUNTARY FORUM

The Community and Voluntary Sector is one of the Social Partners and is represented on the County Development Board by 2 members. 141 organisations throughout the county are affiliated to Longford's Community & Voluntary Forum. A democratically elected Umbrella Forum of 25 members operates as a Steering Group at county level and provides a key link between the Board and the wider community. The steering group held 10 meetings in 2006.

#### Membership of the Committee of the Steering Group is as follows:

<b>Chairperson</b>	Connie Gerety
<b>Vice Chair</b>	John Channon
<b>Secretary</b>	Josephine Stroker
<b>Assistant Secretary</b>	Teresa McNerney
<b>Treasurer</b>	Nini Stevenson
<b>Public Relations Officer</b>	Parvez-Ahmed Butt

#### Members of the Steering Group are nominated onto the following structures:

- Longford County Development Board.
- County Childcare Committee
- Regional Drugs Taskforce
- Strategic Policy Committees of the Local Authority
- Longford Community Resources Ltd
- County Longford Youth Service
- Citizens Information Service
- County Heritage Forum

# Economic Development, Urban & Rural Renewal, Cultural & Recreation Policy

## Longford County Council

The Community and Enterprise Section resources and supports the Community and Voluntary Forum. The section, also, maintains a database of registered Community and Voluntary organisations in the County. From September 2005 to September 2006, Longford County Council employed a full-time Support Worker to work with the Forum.

### POST PRIMARY PRINCIPALS' FORUM

The Post Primary Principals' Forum facilitated by the Department of Community & Enterprise held a meeting on the 9th of May 2006.

Areas addressed were as follows:

- Whole School Education
- School Transport
- Comhairle Na nÓg
- Education Welfare Board
- County Development Board Action Plan 2006-2008

### COMHAIRLE NA nÓG

The National Children's Strategy has as its first goal that "Children will have a voice in matters which affect them and their views will be given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity". The County Development Board has responsibility for organising the Comhairle Na nÓg. This year's event was held in Longford Golf Club on Tuesday the 24th of October. Young people, aged 12-17 years from around the county participated at the event, at which the following themes were discussed: health, education, environment, sport, public transport, road safety, IT communications and negative stereotyping. A number of key recommendations were made to government. Five young people were elected to represent County Longford at the Dáil Na nÓg, which will be held on February the 17th 2007 in Croke Park.



Comhairle na nÓg Participants

# Economic Development, Urban & Rural Renewal, Cultural & Recreation Policy

Longford County Council

## LONGFORD REPRESENTATIVES FOR DÁIL NA NÓG FEBRUARY 17TH 2007

Laura Heneghan, Administrative Officer, Community & Enterprise.  
Siona Cahill, Mercy Secondary School Ballymahon.

Alison Kenny, Moyne Community School. Ruairi Barrins, St. Mel's College. Jacinta Feeney, Scoil Mhuire, Longford. Shane Kiernan, Mercy Secondary School  
Mayor Councillor. Paddy Belton.



## YOUNG CITIZEN AWARDS CEREMONY

2005 was the European Year of Citizenship through Education. The President of Ireland, Mary McAleese marked this important year by endorsing and presenting the Young Citizen Award. This award is aimed at young people aged 12-25 who are involved in their local communities through Active Citizenship projects, such as undertaking environmental work or caring for people with special needs. The award was organised in conjunction with the Department of Education and Science and Development Co-Operation Ireland. This initiative was supported locally by Longford County Development Board. The Board oversaw the local co-ordination and assessment of applications. The Young Citizen Awards Ceremony took place on Tuesday night the 28th of February 2006 in Aras an Chontae. Twelve awards were presented on the night by the then Mayor of Longford County Council, Councillor Frank Kilbride, Councillor Alan Mitchell, Chairperson of Longford County Development Board and Sandra Gowran Co-ordinator Citizenship 2005.

Certificates signed by the President were presented to the following:

- Longford Young Investors (LEAP Project, Earl St, Longford)
- Pen Friends (Creative Writing, St. Christopher's Resource Centre, Ballymahon, Longford)
- Transition Year Class 2005, Moyne Community School
- Student Leader Group, Cnoc Mhuire Granard
- Third Year CSPE Class, Ardscoil Phadraig Granard
- Third years of Ballymahon Vocational School
- Muintearas – Lanesboro Community College
- Greenschool Committee – Lanesboro Community College
- Student Council – Lanesboro Community College
- Healthy Eating Initiative – Lanesboro Community College
- Mentoring – Lanesboro Community College
- Keith McDonagh – Acorn Community Development Project, Richmond St, Longford.



# Economic Development, Urban & Rural Renewal, Cultural & Recreation Policy

## Longford County Council

Everyone who received an award was entered into a lottery draw for a chance to attend a special event in Aras an Uachtarain, where they would meet the President and be presented with a specially designed pin to mark the 2005 European Year of Citizenship through Education. Lanesboro Community College and Ballymahon Vocational School were selected from the lottery draw. This award provided an opportunity to recognise the immense contribution that young people make to their local community.



LONGFORD YOUNG INVESTORS – LEAP Project, Earl St., Longford.

### **NATIONAL PRIDE OF PLACE COMPETITION**

Pride of Place is a competition which recognises the contribution that is made by communities in creating civic pride in their area. The all island competition is hosted by Co-Operation Ireland in conjunction with the Local Authority Steering Forum comprising of officials from authorities in both parts of Ireland. The aim of the “Pride of Place” competition is to encourage best practice, innovation and leadership in providing vibrant sustainable communities that improve the quality of life for all. Pride of Place provides a unique opportunity for community groups to be officially recognised, on an all island basis, for the valuable work undertaken by them. The nomination process to the all island competition is undertaken through the Local Authorities. Five areas were chosen in different categories to represent County Longford in the National Competition in 2006. They were: Granard, Mullinalaghta, Lanesboro, Newtowncashel and MacEoin Park Estate. They were judged on Wednesday the 19th and Thursday the 20th of July, 2006. Each area made a presentation highlighting the range of projects undertaken by the community and the judges were shown around the area. A National Award Ceremony took place in Tullow County Carlow on the 14th of October 2006.

# Economic Development, Urban & Rural Renewal, Cultural & Recreation Policy

Longford County Council

## PRIDE OF LONGFORD COMPETITION

The Pride of Longford Competition was launched on Monday the 6th of March, 2006 by Longford County Council. This pilot initiative is an action under the CDB Action Plan 2006-2008, addressing the issue of building local communities. The competition is modelled on the National Pride of Place Competition. 14 towns and villages entered the competition and were visited by a panel of judges on Monday the 31st of July and Tuesday the 1st of August. This competition aims to acknowledge and recognise the voluntary work and commitment of local groups to enhancing their local communities.



Lanesboro

Community representatives informed the judges of the various activities and projects undertaken in their areas varying from sports and leisure to heritage and from environment to social inclusion projects. A Local awards ceremony was held in Longford on the 26th of September 2006.

## CLÁR

CLÁR is a national programme addressing population decline and lack of services in rural areas. The CLÁR programme will fast track National Development Plan spending in selected rural areas and provide top-up funding to support projects that would not otherwise proceed. In 2006 the CLÁR area was increased by over 33% to include all but five D.E.D's in the mid Longford area. The County Development Board is assisting the Department in administering this programme locally. Throughout 2006 the Clár programme has delivered additional monies that have made significant impact in areas of lower population densities.

## RAPID

RAPID is the Revitalisation of Areas through Planning, Investment and Development. All of Longford town was selected for this programme. The Area Implementation Team (AIT) oversees this social inclusion programme locally and the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs directs the programme nationally. The AIT consists of statutory agencies, development agencies that have a service remit in the town and community representatives. The RAPID programme was evaluated nationally by Fitzpatrick's Associates for the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. It was recommended that a long term commitment be made to the continuation of RAPID. The programme is part of the new NDP and €67 million has been allocated nationally. Locally in 2006 RAPID was granted €200,000 from the Dormant Accounts Fund. The programme received €200,000 in leverage for estate enhancement and traffic calming and Playgrounds 2007 and 2008. RAPID supported an application for the renovation of the existing Mall Complex and received €150,000 from the Sports Capital Fund and €45,000 RAPID top up grant. The programme is involved in supporting the opening of two new community houses on Local Authority estates in the county.

## ARTS OFFICE REPORT

### OUR GOAL

The goal of the Arts Office is to enhance the quality of life of the individual citizen and the community as a whole by promoting access to, participation in and awareness of the Arts in Longford.

### 2006 PROJECTS

The following is a broad profile of the kind of art-form based projects undertaken by Longford County Arts Office in 2006:

#### Visual Arts:

Completed the preparation of a set of Visual Arts Development Guidelines – Completed the Edgeworthstown Inner Relief Road Public Art Project – Established the Dept. of Ed. FETAC Level 4 Photography Course in partnership with Co. Longford VEC.

#### Music & Dance:

Assisted the establishment of the Midlands Musicians Club – Supported the Kindermusik Project for pre-school children in Kenagh, Granard and Ballymahon.

#### Drama:

Supported the Dolman Club children's performance group – Supported the Aisling Festival 3-2-1 Drama Project – Established the "Dead of Night" street theatre production.

#### Festivals:

Prepared the 1st National Writers Groups Literary Festival – Established the Halloween "Festival of The Dead" – Supported the Aisling Children's Festival – Supported the continuing development of the Lough Ree Environmental Summer School – Provided on-going financial, organisational and programming supports to the various cultural festivals in Longford.

#### Community Arts:

Supported the St. Christopher's Arts Mentoring Project – Supported St. Michael's & St. Joseph's after schools project – Participated in The Midlands Arts Officers & Midlands Health Authority Music in Health Care Centres Project.

#### Literature:

Developed the [www.virtualwriter.net](http://www.virtualwriter.net) literary website – Appointed a Creative Writing Development Specialist – Completed the Describe children's literature pilot programme and published the Describe user manual and CD-rom – Established a children's creative writing advisory Focus Group – Researched and published "From Harry....to Beatrix" guidelines for the future development of children's creative writing in Longford. – Established a county-wide creative writing umbrella group.



# Corporate Services

Economic Development, Urban & Rural Renewal,  
Cultural & Recreation Policy

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

### Freedom of Information Requests 2006

A total of 10 FOI requests (7 Non-Personal and 3 Personal) were received during 2006 from a mixed source of business, journalists, staff and clients. There were no appeals externally to the Information Commissioner.

## FRANCHISE

### Conditions for Registration:

A person must be at least 18 years of age on the day the Register comes into force (15th February). A person may be included on a Supplement to the Register if the person reaches 18 years of age between the 16th February and the day on which an Election or Referendum is held.

Every resident, irrespective of their nationality who is 18 years or older, is entitled to be on the Register of Electors.

The numbers registered to vote on the 2006/2007 Register of Electors were as follows:-

Local Electoral Areas	No. Of Electors
Ballymahon	8,089
Drumlisk	3,721
Granard	6,281
Longford	9,505
<b>Total</b>	<b>27,596</b>

Section 4 of the Electoral (Amendment) Act, 2001 amends Section 13 of the Electoral Act, 1992 in relation to the Register of Electors. It provides for the preparation of an "edited" version of the Register of Electors. The Edited Register contains only the names of persons who have no objection to their names being used for purposes other than Electoral or other Statutory Purposes. The Statutory position since the 1st of November 2004 is that it is an offence to use details contained in the Register of Electors for anything other than Electoral or other Statutory Purposes.

## SAFETY HEALTH AND WELFARE AT WORK

The following activities aimed at ensuring the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work of Council Staff were carried out in 2006: -

- The Corporate Safety Statement was revised in line with the provisions of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005.
- Ancillary Safety Statements were revised and circulated
- A manual on the managing of construction projects was published and circulated to relevant staff.
- Safety Policies and Procedures were revised.
- Scheduled inspections took place on site activities, the Machinery Yard and office buildings and reports were issued to relevant staff.
- The Safety Management Committee and Safety Monitoring Committees in the various directorates met at regular intervals throughout the year.

# Corporate Services

## Economic Development, Urban & Rural Renewal, Cultural & Recreation Policy

- Inspectors of the Health and Safety Authority carried out a number of site inspections during the year.
- Additional Fire Wardens were appointed and fire drills were carried out in the Council Offices at Aras an Chontae, Camlin Court and Library Headquarters
- A fire audit was undertaken of Aras an Chontae, Camlin Court and Grafton Court
- A number of Visual Display Unit assessments were undertaken with office staff.
- A programme of First Aid training, Manual Handling, Safety Awareness training and Tool Box Talks was undertaken with staff during the year.
- The Council also carried out a comprehensive review of Health and Safety training and commenced the process of rolling out a programme of statutory Health and Safety training to staff.

## SPORT & LEISURE

### PLAY POLICY

Longford County Council worked with the Lanesborough Development Association to develop a proposal to provide a playground in the town with the aid of funding of approximately €51,000 from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government. Longford County Council provided the balance of funding of approximately €60,000 to the project. On the 9th June 2006, Mayor Frank Kilbride officially opened the new playground in Lanesborough.

### LONGFORD SWIMMING POOL PROJECT

In February 2006 Mr. John O'Donoghue, Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism notified Longford County Council of his Department's approval to the acceptance by Longford County Council of the lowest returned tender for the construction of a new swimming pool at the Mall Complex, Longford. The Minister also notified the Council of a grant of €3.8 million towards the cost of the project. The signing of the contract with Glenman Corporation Ltd, Galway to construct a new pool took place in Aras an Chontae, Longford on the 10th April 2006 in the presence of Councillor Frank Kilbride, Mayor of Longford County Council, Councillor Christy Warnock, Mayor of the Town of Longford, Mr. Peter Kelly, T.D., Ms. Mae Sexton T.D., and Senator James Bannon. Work commenced on the project shortly after Easter 2006 and is expected to be completed by August 2007.

### LONGFORD TOWN BROADBAND PROJECT

On the 25th July 2006. Mr. Noel Dempsey, T.D., Minister for Communications, Marine and Natural Resources launched the construction phase of the new Longford Metropolitan Area Network. The contract was signed by Longford County Council and Laing O'Rourke, the main contractor in the presence of Cllr. Paddy Belton, Mayor of Longford County Council, Cllr. Alan Mitchell, Mayor of Longford Town Council and Mr. Tim Caffrey, Longford County Manager. Construction subsequently commenced on the new network in the town of Longford and is expected to be completed by the middle of March 2007. The cost is estimated at €2.2 million with 90% of the funding being provided by the Department of Communications, Marine & Natural Resources and the E.U. Under the National Development Plan 2000-2006 Longford County Council will fund the remaining 10% cost of the project. At the launch, the Minister stated that the Broadband Infrastructure would be a key enabler for Longford in attracting inward investment and in developing indigenous industry.

# Corporate Services

Economic Development, Urban & Rural Renewal,  
Cultural & Recreation Policy

## DISABILITY ACT 2005 – DISABILITY STRATEGY

The Disability Act 2005 is a positive action measure to advance participation by people with disabilities in everyday life. The Disability Act 2005 places significant responsibilities on public bodies to ensure, over time, that public buildings and services are accessible to people with disabilities.

The Council established an Action Team which has prepared an Action Plan for the implementation of the Disability Strategy. The plan makes provision for:

- Consultation with Groups representing people with disability in Longford.
- Training of Staff in Disability Awareness and Accessibility Auditing
- Accessibility Auditing of local authority buildings and facilities
- Developing policies on accessible services and information

Longford County Council received an allocation of €300,000 in 2006 from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government under the National Disability Strategy. Works carried out to date include

- The provision of improved physical accessibility at Longford Branch Library
- The provision of improved accessibility at cemeteries at Ballymacormack, Rathcline, Barraghmore and Ballinamuck.
- The provision of wheelchair parking spaces in Longford Town Centre
- The carrying out of an accessibility audit at Aras an Chontae
- The training of staff in Disability Awareness
- The provision of assistive technology in the Branch Library Network

Proposals are also in hand to improve physical access to Aras an Chontae, Camlin Court Offices and Longford Town Council Offices and the Branch Libraries including hearing induction loops, redesign of reception desks and modifications to internal doors. Work is also proposed to improve access to additional graveyards, roads, pavements, pedestrian crossings and parking spaces. Provision is also being made to ensure that the new Longford Swimming Pool Project is fully accessible.



# Corporate Services

Economic Development, Urban & Rural Renewal,  
Cultural & Recreation Policy

## COUNTY COUNCIL MEETINGS

Meetings of the County Council were held monthly, with the exception of the month of August.

At the Budget Meeting held on the 11th January 2006, the Members adopted the Budget for the Financial Year ending 31st December 2006.

At the Monthly Meeting of the Council held on the 18th January 2006, the Members accepted a recommendation from the Public Appointments Service for the appointment of Mr. Timothy Caffrey as County Manager. Mr. Caffrey subsequently took up duty on the 7th March 2006.

Also, at the Monthly Meeting held on the 18th January 2006, Councillors Adrian Farrell, Gerry Brady and P.J. Reilly were elected to the Regional Health Forum for the Dublin-Mid Leinster Region. The Annual Meeting of the Council was held on 28th June 2006 at which Councillor Paddy Belton was elected Mayor and Councillor Victor Kiernan was elected Deputy Mayor.

### PRESENTATIONS/DEPUTATIONS:

Assistant Commissioner Dermot Jennings, Chief Superintendent William Ryan and Inspector Joe Mullarkey addressed a Special Committee Meeting on the 15th February 2006 regarding policing in County Longford.

Mr. Jim Reilly, Local Health Office Manager and Mr. Joe Martin, General Manager, Acute Hospital Services addressed a Special Committee Meeting on the 20th February 2006 regarding health issues. Mr. Reilly also addressed a Special Committee Meeting held on the 31st July 2006.

Cunnane Stratton Reynolds made a presentation at the March Monthly meeting on the redevelopment of Tromra Road, Granard.

Mr. Pdraig McNamara, Postmaster, Granard and Mr. Paddy McCann, Postmaster, Fairymount, Castlerea addressed the March Monthly meeting on the demise of the Rural Post Office network in Ireland.

Ms. Brid Moody, I.D.A., Mr. Pat Byrne, Enterprise Ireland, Mr. Joe McGuinness, FAS and Mr. Michael Nevin, Longford County Enterprise Board addressed a Special Meeting held on the 27th March 2006 regarding redundancies announced at C & D Foods following from the fire which took place at the premises on the 15th January 2006.

Mr. John Byrne, Area Manager, Mr. Tom Guckian, Construction Supervisor, Mr. John Clarke, Customer Services Supervisor and Mr. Gerry Mooney, Customer Services Manager – E.S.B. Networks addressed the April Monthly Meeting of the Council.

A Special Meeting of the Council, incorporating a Seminar on the activities in each of the Directorates of Longford County Council, was held in the Atlantic Coast Hotel, Westport on the 7th and 8th April 2007.

Mr. David Ryan, Dublin City Council and Mr. Gerry Geoghegan, RPS Consulting Engineers, addressed the September Monthly Meeting on Dublin City Council's plan to pipe water from Lough Ree to the greater Dublin Area.

Mr. Mike Magan, Chairman and Mr. Michael Hanley, Chief Executive Officer, Lakeland Dairies Co-Operative Society Ltd. addressed a Special Committee Meeting on the 28th November 2006 regarding the proposed closure of the Society's Longford Store.

# Human Resources

Economic Development, Urban & Rural Renewal,  
Cultural & Recreation Policy

## HUMAN RESOURCES

The Human Resources Department plays a key role in supporting evolving corporate goals. Advisory and advocacy support is provided in the form of Human Resource development, industrial relations assistance and policy implementation. The Human Resources Department continued in 2006 to further develop and adapt to meeting organisational requirements and encouraged participation by staff to building a well performing organisation.

### RECRUITMENT

Recruitment and selection is central to ensuring continued effective performance. The following statistics demonstrate the continuing high levels of activity in this area in 2006.

#### Recruitment Statistics 2006

Number of Competitions Advertised	24
Number of Interview Days	31
Number of applications received	705
Number of Applicants invited for interview	380
Number of Applicants who attended for interview	281
Number of staff appointed	32

### TRAINING

Training and Development of staff is crucial to maintain high levels of performance and during 2006 the Council demonstrated its commitment in this area. The Council ensured through the work of the Training Officer that equitable provision of training and development activities for all staff was provided.

An extensive Training Needs Analysis was conducted in April. This combined with the PMDS process identified training needs and informed the development of the Training Programme. A total of one hundred and ninety five training programmes were provided. To maximise the effect of training provided and to facilitate cost efficient practices and sharing of expertise, the Council whenever possible, engaged with neighbouring Local Authorities in delivering training programmes.

In addition to the training courses referred to, a comprehensive review of Health and Safety (H&S) training also took place during 2006. The Council commenced the process of rolling out a programme of statutory H&S training to staff in response to legislative provisions in this area. The review will assist also in formulating the H&S training plan for 2007, which will complement the Council's general training plan.

Following on from the introduction of the Council's Retirement Policy, a Retirement Planning Seminar was developed and delivered to a number of staff approaching retirement. This seminar covered a number of areas including managing the changes the employee can expect to encounter in retirement, pension and investment opportunities, social welfare entitlements and other relevant health and social activities. Further seminars will continue to be delivered periodically to coincide with retirement dates.

Development of staff was provided for through the Council's Training and Development Support Scheme, during 2006. A total of twenty members of staff received support under this scheme to pursue part time 3rd level courses which are relevant to their role in the organisation.

# Human Resources

Economic Development, Urban & Rural Renewal,  
Cultural & Recreation Policy

## SERVICE INDICATORS:

- % spent on Training and Development as a percentage of total payroll costs: 7.99 %
- % of working days lost due to sickness absence
  - Certified leave 3.66
  - Uncertified leave 0.58

## EQUALITY / DIVERSITY

Longford County Council fully subscribes to the principles of equality as set out in the Equality Acts of 1998 and 2004. The Equality Action Team was re-established in 2006 and worked closely with the Council's Equality Officer in the development and implementation of equality policies.

During 2006, through the Equality Action Team a confidential Employee Assistance Programme was launched. This is an advisory, counselling and referral service, designed to give staff a resource to contact for guidance and help with problems which are impacting on their job performance and affect their well-being and enjoyment of life.

An important area of activity for the Equality Action Team is the development and review of policies and procedures to ensure implementation of the Council's commitment to Equality. In 2006 the Equality Action team reviewed the Council's Dignity at Work Policy.

Workforce diversity is increasing and strategies and policies need to reflect and be capable of dealing with the different individuals that are employed and seeking employment.

The Equality Action Team in their activities focus on workforce diversity as a strength of the organisation and as a means of optimising potential and productivity.

## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT SYSTEMS (PMDS)

The Social Partnership Agreements "Sustaining Progress" and "Towards 2016" provide for the implementation and embedding of a Performance Management Development System in every Local Authority nationwide.

Longford Local Authorities substantially completed in 2006 the full implementation of Performance Management Development System within each Directorate. This involved the training of all staff and Line Managers on the Performance Management Development System process and division of all sections into practical working teams. In addition opportunities were afforded to all staff to participate in Personal Development Planning (PDP) by means of one-to-one conversations with their Line Managers.

The embedding of the Performance Management Development System into the organisation is now part of the role of every member of staff, cascading the Corporate Plan objectives through every Team Plan down to the Personal Development Plans.

Ongoing communication, dialogue and timely feedback are fundamental elements of the Performance Management Development System process. These are critical elements that will contribute to the successful embedding of the Performance Management Development System within the organisation into the future.



# Human Resources

Economic Development, Urban & Rural Renewal,  
Cultural & Recreation Policy

## **WORKPLACE PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES**

### **Return to Learning Initiative:**

The Return to Learning Programme proved very successful in 2006 with sixteen staff completing the course. Certificates were presented to all who completed the course. This programme allows staff members to 'get back ' to education and is sponsored by the Department of Education & Science and the National Adult Literacy Association in conjunction with the Local Authority National Partnership Advisory Group (LANPAG ).

### **Staff Integration Seminar:**

The Partnership Committee was very successful in organising a Staff Integration Seminar. This Seminar consisted of Partnership Awareness, Stress Management and the launch of the Employee Assistance Programme. This project proved to be a huge success for all involved. The success of the seminar demonstrated that the partnership process was working well in Longford County Council.

### **Pensions & Superannuation Seminars:**

The Finance Department in co-operation with the Partnership Committee held a very informative seminar for staff in relation to their entitlements under current Superannuation legislation.

# Information and Communications Technology

Economic Development, Urban & Rural Renewal,  
Cultural & Recreation Policy

The Council's ICT Department supports approximately 300 internal clients. The Department provides and supports diverse systems including

- mail, Internet, Intranet and Extranet
- Web based systems
- Agresso Financial systems that support the local authorities' financial management information systems and transaction processing.
- Geographical information systems that provide essential information on roads, water mains and other infrastructure in the county.
- Planning administration systems
- Housing administration systems
- Various small database systems.

## NETWORK INFRASTRUCTURE

The network is made up of several complex components which require on-going management, maintenance and monitoring. The Department provides security through virus guards firewalls etc and manages both a backup and redundancy policy. In 2006 the existing radio communications link was upgraded and extended to the Town Council, Stores building and Waste Treatment Plant in Lisbrack. With more geographic and multimedia content there is a need for additional capacity through high bandwidth Local area networks and wide area networks. Improvements in this area are continually being made. In 2006 all the Branch Libraries were upgraded to broadband DSL (digital subscriber line). At the heart of the information infrastructure are the computers (servers) that support the applications. Approximately 25 servers are located in Aras an Chontae. In 2006 the Council replaced its email server and anti virus server and purchased a new server for the Housing System (Home) which was activated in June.

## NEW SYSTEMS AND ENHANCEMENTS

A new AntiVirus system was installed in the course of 2006. An Online system to process expenses was introduced during the year also. Work also commenced on the introduction of a system for managing content on the Council's websites during the year.

## GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS

### • Data Capture

Longford Local Authorities continue to capture and validate data in relation to Planning, Roads, Sanitary and Environment.

### • Electoral Register

During 2006 the electronic mapping of data in Respect of activities which are associated with the Register of Electors was completed.

### • Longford County Council & An Garda Siochana Road Accident Project

Longford County Council and the Garda Traffic Corp are working in partnership to identify accident sites and accident clusters around the county as part of a National Road Safety Campaign. In 2006 colour-coded maps were produced which mapped the location at which road accidents occurred between 1999 and 2005. The Garda Traffic Corp use these accident maps produced by Longford County Council to inform their enforcement activities with the aim of reducing casualties on the roads.

# Longford Cultural Services

Economic Development, Urban & Rural Renewal,  
Cultural & Recreation Policy

## LONGFORD COUNTY LIBRARY

Six branch libraries are located at Longford, Ballymahon, Lanesboro, Edgeworthstown, Drumlish and Granard.

### IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS 2006

Over the past year the main focus of library service development has been on delivering a better service to all customers. A comprehensive review was carried out of opening hours in all part-time branches which has resulted in extended opening hours being introduced at every branch. The introduction of Saturday opening for the first time in Granard Library also occurred in 2006. Broadband access has been provided in five branch libraries. Strong partnership links have been forged with the Adult and Community Education Department of Longford VEC, Longford County Childcare, Longford Women's Link, Longford Older People's Network, Global Longford and Longford Community Resources Ltd. This has assisted greatly in targeting the library service at specific sectors of the community.

### CULTURAL DIVERSITY/SOCIAL INCLUSION

The Library service has responded to the needs of the growing immigrant community in Longford by developing a number of new services.

- A Plain English Guide to all library services has been developed by the staff and is now available in five languages: English, Irish, French, Polish and Russian.
- One simplified and enlarged Library Membership Form has also been drafted in English and Irish to replace the three existing forms and will be available in the branches from the beginning of 2007.
- A special Language Learning section has been developed over the last year with the addition of English grammar and vocabulary books and exam preparation materials. A selection of CDs and DVD-ROMs have been acquired which can be accessed through the medium of 28 different languages.
- Books in Polish, Russian, Lithuanian, Latvian and Slovenian for both children and adults have been acquired on a rental scheme from "Bright Books" which may be exchanged on a regular basis. The Polish books are extremely popular and there is a steady demand for items in the other languages.
- A Polish Mother and Toddler group has been established in Longford Branch Library in partnership with Longford VEC. The group meets weekly for one and a half hours and is facilitated by a bilingual Polish woman and a member of the library. Meetings consist of a very relaxed and enjoyable mixture of English lessons, general advice on a variety of issues such as work, education and childcare and stories and drawing for the children.





# Longford Cultural Services

Economic Development, Urban & Rural Renewal,  
Cultural & Recreation Policy

## DISABILITY STRATEGY

Assistive Technology software is now available in each of the 6 Branch Libraries.

A plain English guide to adaptive technology has been developed by a visually impaired Longford Library user with the assistance of library staff. The guide, which was developed as part of Longford Local Authorities Disability Strategy, is used in training sessions on accessibility software for staff and users of the service.

## LONGFORD LIBRARY EVENTS 2006

An ongoing programme of events promoting awareness of the many services offered by the library and encouraging all sectors of the community to use the service was organised throughout the year.

### • Events for Young People:

- 6th-12th March LIBRARY IRELAND WEEK  
Writers Workshops delivered to 200 Primary and Secondary school students and their teachers.
- 10-21st July: SUMMER FESTIVAL OF EVENTS  
Theme: **The Environment**  
Magic and puppet shows, nature walks, storytelling, arts and crafts sessions were conducted in all of the branch libraries
- 1st -3rd Oct. BECKETT CELEBRATION  
In celebration of the 100th anniversary of the birth of Samuel Beckett working in partnership with Poetry Ireland, three days of performances of Beckett's work for secondary school students was delivered.
- 16th.-1st Nov. CHILDREN'S BOOK FESTIVAL  
Workshops which were attended by children's authors Liam Farrell, Michael Carroll and Aubrey Flegg and local storyteller Chris Thompson were held. Halloween party and Spooky Storytime paired with writing sessions for children and adults were facilitated, EU quizzes and competitions, storytelling sessions and regular class visits were held.

### • Events for Adults

One hour Internet Training Sessions for the public were conducted on Tuesday mornings. Language classes in French, Irish and Spanish were also conducted.

### • Exhibitions

A large number of exhibitions as follows were organised during 2006.

- April: Community Arts Network Art Exhibition
- May: Roger Casement Exhibition
- July: ENFO exhibition on the flora and fauna in Ireland
- August: ENFO exhibition on landscape features in Ireland
- September: EU sponsored exhibition by Polish photographer Jolanta Cofta dealing with aspects of Winter in Finland
- October: Exhibition on the life of Samuel Beckett in conjunction with the Cultural Division of the Dept. of Foreign Affairs.  
Goal exhibition by local photographer Tiernan Dolan  
Exhibition of the work of local artists Terry Carroll and Gordan Farrell
- November: Exhibition of the work of local artist Anna Benson  
Exhibition on aspects of life and culture in Afghanistan
- December: Local art group "Reflections" Art Exhibition

# Longford Cultural Services

Economic Development, Urban & Rural Renewal,  
Cultural & Recreation Policy

## Public Access Internet Statistics for 2006

Library Branch	Computer Hours Used 2006	2005
Longford	16,132	14,173
Granard	1792	1,650
Lanesboro	2,292	1,891
Ballymahon	742	508
Drumlish	556	410
Edgeworthstown	763	347
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>22,277</b>	<b>18,579</b>

## Library Membership Figures for 2006

Library Branch	Adult	Junior	2nd Level Student	3rd Level Student	Other	TOTAL
Longford	2034	1172	361	202	35	3804
Granard	252	279	34	31	7	603
Lanesboro	203	202	41	11	1	458
Ballymahon	156	172	19	4	0	351
Drumlish	71	142	29	14	3	259
Edgeworthstown	113	107	25	4	2	251
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>2829</b>	<b>2074</b>	<b>509</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>5726</b>

## Library Membership Figures for 2005

Library Branch	Adult	Junior	2nd Level Student	3rd Level Student	Other	TOTAL
Longford	2003	1339	309	184	29	3864
Granard	244	303	54	28	11	640
Lanesboro	219	199	36	7	4	465
Ballymahon	142	160	24	3	2	331
Drumlish	56	85	18	3	0	162
Edgeworthstown	85	107	6	4	0	202
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>2749</b>	<b>2193</b>	<b>447</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>5664</b>

## Total Number of Items Borrowed 2006

Library Branch	Adult Fiction	Adult Non Fiction	Junior	Audio	TOTAL
Longford	21,236	17,958	19,638	3,650	62,482
Granard	3,069	1,585	3,504	93	8,251
Lanesboro	3,189	1,417	3,758	66	8,430
Ballymahon	2,446	1,001	3,009	54	6,510
Drumlish	1,145	572	1,843	37	3,597
Edgeworthstown	1,276	627	2,041	27	3,971
Issues to Primary Schools	-	-	6,945	-	6,945
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>32,361</b>	<b>23,160</b>	<b>40,738</b>	<b>3,927</b>	<b>100,186</b>

# Longford Cultural Services

Economic Development, Urban & Rural Renewal,  
Cultural & Recreation Policy

## Total Number of Items Borrowed 2005

Library Branch	Adult	Junior	A/V	TOTAL
Longford	42,491	23,055	2,980	62,526
Granard	4,918	3,994	53	8,965
Lanesboro	5,260	3,541	60	8,861
Ballymahon	4,141	2,834	49	7,024
Drumlish	1,471	1,132	49	2,652
Edgeworthstown	2,305	1,926	29	4,260
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>60,586</b>	<b>36,482</b>	<b>3,220</b>	<b>100,288</b>

### COUNTY ARCHIVES SERVICE

Longford County Archives Service had another busy year in 2006, with the completion of some projects, and the continuation of others.

### ARCHIVES

The Leavy Collection, consisting of the papers of the Farrell family, Tullyvrane, Lanesboro, was made available to the public. The collection includes some records of the Rathcline Parish Sinn Féin Court. The minutes of Granard Town Council, 1920-2002, were microfilmed.

The Magan Estate Maps (donated in 2005), dating from 1795, were digitised and are now easily accessible to researchers. Conservation work was undertaken on the Longford Militia book (1793-1855) and on an account book from the King-Harman collection.

The following donations were received:

- The papers of the late Paddy Whelan, Ballymahon (local historian);
- Three items of Lanesboro interest, 1922-1936;
- A register from Fardromin National School, 1887-1968;
- A Raffle ticket from 1889.

### RECORDS MANAGEMENT

The implementation of a records management system in the Corporate Services and Human Resources Departments of Longford County Council was continued.

### OUTREACH AND PUBLIC EVENTS

ICA Oral History Project: the Archivist has been working with an ICA group in compiling an oral history archive on women's lives in Longford over the past century, as part of the preparation of a book on the subject.

12-13 May: the Archivist participated in the organisation of the gathering (tionól) of the Folklore of Ireland Society in Longford.

19 May-7 June: The travelling exhibition 'Casement in Germany', was hosted in association with Clare County Archives.

28 July: The Archivist delivered a talk, and helped to mount an exhibition of archives and artefacts in Lanesboro Library, for the annual Lough Ree Summer School.

24 October-5 December: The Archivist delivered a course entitled 'An Introduction to Local History' in Longford Library.



# Longford Cultural Services

Economic Development, Urban & Rural Renewal,  
Cultural & Recreation Policy

## Longford Heritage Office

The aim of the Longford County Heritage Plan is: - "That our heritage will be part of life for everyone"

This is being achieved through the :

1. Establishment and management of the County Longford Heritage Forum
2. Co-ordination and Implementation of the Longford County Heritage Plan 2004-2009 which aims to:
  - Protect and enhance archaeological and architectural heritage
  - Promote interest and pride in the county's culture
  - Develop a heritage education and awareness programme
  - Provide heritage information which is available to all
  - Protect and enhance the natural heritage of the county

Lisa McDaniel and Shirley Markley managed the Heritage Office in 2006. A number of major projects were delivered which will contribute to ensuring the delivery of the Longford County Heritage Plan 2004-2009.

### 2006 ACHIEVEMENTS

#### • **Community Heritage Awareness Training:**

A series of informative talks and training sessions to promote best practice in community heritage initiatives and conservation of built and natural heritage were held during February and March in the Temperance Hall. Over 200 people attended the talks from tidy towns groups, community development groups, graveyard committees and the farming sector. Practical workshops on traditional methods of hedgerow management, repair and maintenance of stone walls and composting were held throughout the county. The Heritage Office supported the Annual County Ploughing Match by running a traditional hedgerow management demonstration at the event.

Following the training sessions, Longford County Council ran the 'Pride of Place' competition to recognise best practice in community heritage initiatives and raise awareness of the wider community's role in promoting and conserving the local heritage resource.

#### • **Hedgerow Survey:**

A survey of the hedgerows of the county was carried out to record the extent, species composition, structure, condition, and management of hedgerows within County Longford.

#### • **Peatlands Study:**

Minerex Environmental Limited (MEL) were commissioned to undertake a study to establish the nature, extent, location and conservation status of bogs, fens and cutaways in the county. Peatlands not re-designated under national and international legislation were the focus of this study. An inventory of all undesignated peatlands sites (raised bog, fens and cutaways) was created for County Longford and 201 individual sites were identified.

# Longford Cultural Services

Economic Development, Urban & Rural Renewal,  
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## **Guide to archaeological monuments in County Longford:**

A county archaeological guide was developed that:

- Gives a broad chronological overview of various field monument types found in County Longford
- Describes in detail specific monuments found throughout the county
- Illustrates historical periods in County Longford

## **• Audit of artefacts in St. Mel's Diocesan Museum:**

In collaboration with the Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnoise, the Heritage Office documented the collection of approximately 450 artefacts in the St. Mel's Diocesan Museum. This audit consists of a written and photographic description of all artefacts in the collection. The accompanying report outlines objects in need of conservation and makes recommendations in relation to the storage of artefacts.

## **• Heritage Awareness Posters:**

In collaboration with the NIAH (National Inventory of Architectural Heritage) and the ASI (Archaeological Survey of Ireland) a series of heritage awareness raising posters was designed to illustrate the built and archaeological heritage of County Longford.

## **• Radio advertisements:**

A series of heritage information advertisements were recorded and aired on Shannonside Radio throughout the year to raise awareness of the County Heritage Office and local heritage issues.

## **• Heritage Week:**

The Heritage Office co-ordinated a programme of events, which included walks, exhibitions, lectures and children's events for the people of Longford to participate in. A brochure highlighting these events was produced and distributed in July and August. The County Heritage information website [www.longfordlibrary.ie/heritage](http://www.longfordlibrary.ie/heritage) was regularly updated.

## **• Folklore Weekend:**

In collaboration with the County Archivist and Longford Historical Society, the Heritage Office hosted the annual weekend gathering of the Folklore of Ireland Society in May.

## **• Exhibitions:**

Environmental and heritage exhibitions were held in Longford Library throughout the year

## **• County Museum:**

The Heritage Office co-ordinated the submission of a capital funding application for €2.1million under the ACCESS II Scheme for the development of a County Museum and Regional Heritage Education Centre.

## **BUILT PROJECTS**

### **• Abbeyshrule Abbey**

Following the submission of funding applications in 2006, €17,000 was allocated from the DoEHLG – Urban and Village Renewal Scheme for conservation works. Specifications for the next phase of work, following on from work carried out in 2004 and 2005, have been forwarded for Ministerial Approval. It is hoped that work will proceed in early 2007.

# Longford Cultural Services

Economic Development, Urban & Rural Renewal,  
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- **Abbeylara Abbey**

Following the submission of funding applications in 2006, €17,000 was allocated from the DoEHLG – Urban and Village Renewal Scheme for conservation works. Specifications for the first phase of work were submitted for Ministerial Approval. It is hoped that work will proceed in early 2007.

- **Ballymahon Courthouse**

Following the submission of funding applications in 2006, €17,000 was allocated from the DoEHLG – Urban and Village Renewal Scheme for conservation works. The Heritage Council allocated a further €10,000 in November 2006. Two phases of work are now complete. Works undertaken include the replacement of all rainwater drains and the carrying out of repairs to the roof and chimneys.

The Heritage Office Programme is operated by means of a partnership arrangement between The Heritage Council and Longford County Council.



# Annual Progress Report on Corporate Plan

Longford County Council

## TRANSPORTATION, ROAD DEVELOPMENT, ROAD MAINTENANCE & ROAD SAFETY POLICIES

### CORE OBJECTIVE:

“To ensure that infrastructural transportation policies and investments assist and enhance the economic and social development of County Longford, and preserve and improve the physical attractiveness of the county and its background environment”

### MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT OF ROADS

A Part 8 (Planning & Development Regulations, 2001) proposal relating to the Longford N5 Bypass was adopted by the Council in October 2006, and is awaiting NRA approval to proceed to the CPO publication stage. The Edgeworthstown N4 Inner Relief Road has been substantially completed. Construction of Phase 1 of the Longford to Drumsna N4 Improvement Scheme bypassing Dromod and Rooskey and projecting 1km into County Longford has commenced.

Pavement strengthening was carried out on all national routes, and major restoration was carried out at Dublin Street, Longford on the N5.

EU Specific Schemes were advanced at Gigue on the R198, between Edgeworthstown and Lisryan on the R395, at Dublin Road, Longford on the R393, east of Carrickboy on the R393, and east of Ballymahon on the R392.

The Multi-Annual Road Restoration and Surface Dressing programmes are ongoing.

### ROAD SAFETY

Traffic Calming Schemes have been advanced and are at various stages of completion at Granard, Ballymahon, Lanesboro, Killashee, Edgeworthstown, and on the Ballinalee N5 and Dublin Roads, Longford.

Low-cost Safety Remedial Schemes have been advanced and are at various stages of completion at Carragh, Lissardowlan, Grillagh, Ballymacormack, Drumlish, Stonepark and Ardagh.

The making of recommendations in respect of Road Safety matters relating to applications for Planning Permission is continuing.

The implementation of the multi-annual Public Lighting and Non-National Roads Flashing Lights Plan at schools is ongoing.

The Council is continuing to promote, facilitate and participate with the Gardai, Schools and the National Safety Council in the operation of the Junior School Wardens Scheme.

The Council continues to monitor the effective implementation of the EU Commercial Vehicle Regulations in close consultation with the Authorised Test-Centres that operate in the county.

## **TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT**

Implementation of the multi-annual Non-National Road Signage Plan is ongoing.

Development of Off-Street Parking in Granard is ongoing.

Parking regulations were implemented in Edgeworthstown during 2006.

## **ACCESS TO PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION FOR ALL**

Implementation of the recommendations contained in the County Longford Rural Transport Audit adopted by the Council, is continuing.

## **CURRENT POLICIES:**

Quality Road Design Standards were developed and will be implemented.

Access for the disabled was promoted in accordance with recommended guidelines in consultation with stakeholders, as in the case of Drumlish and the N5 crossings.

Participation continued in the Steering and Technical Groups managing the National Roads Authority Regional Design Office.

Appropriate liaison was promoted between transportation development stakeholders such as public representatives, representative bodies, the general public, the Department of Transport, the National Roads Authority, the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, the Gardai, the National Safety Council, Iarnród Eireann and Waterways Ireland.

Implementation of Local Improvement Schemes and Community Schemes continued.

Exploration continued with financiers and others regarding the implementation of Public and Private Partnership Road and Transportation schemes.

# Annual Progress Report on Corporate Plan

Longford County Council

## WATER SERVICES POLICY

### CORE OBJECTIVE:

“To provide environmentally sustainable water services and environmental infrastructure to secure economic and social development and to lobby for increased capital funding.”

### CAPITAL SCHEMES PROGRESS 2006:

1. Clondra Sewerage Scheme – Construction completed Oct 2006.
2. Longford CRWSS - Reservoir and Pipeline – Construction expected to commence July 2007.
3. Edgeworthstown Sewerage Scheme (Nutrient Reduction) – Construction expected to commence April/May 2007.
4. Drumlish and Newtownforbes Sewerage Schemes - Preliminary Report approved by DoEHLG, now at Contract Document stage.
5. Longford Sewerage Scheme Phase 2 – Preliminary Report submitted to the DoEHLG. Local Area Plan to be compiled.
6. Longford Sludge Management – Approval to proceed to Contract Document Stage has been received.
7. Ballymahon Regional Water Scheme –Preliminary Report submitted to Dept of Environment and Local Government.
8. Granard Regional Water Supply Scheme – Preliminary Report submitted to Dept of Environment and Local Government.
9. Longford Central Regional Water Supply Scheme - Strategic Review completed.
10. Ardagh, Aughtnaclyffe, Ballinalee Sewerage Scheme – Construction expected to commence December 2007 – DBO plants to follow in April 2008
11. Lanesborough Water Supply Stage 1 – At Contract Document Stage.
12. Grouped Towns and Villages Sewerage Scheme – Feasibility Report submitted to DoEHLG.
13. Longford Sewerage Scheme - Network and Waste Water Plant Review – Approval to go to Contract Document Stage for works and sludge hub centre has been received.
14. Lanesboro Sewerage Scheme – Preliminary Report complete, now at Contract Document Stage.
15. Water Conservation Stage 2 – Conservation project completed. Network rehabilitation works to commence in 2007.



## ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

The Environmental Services Section has continued to expand its area of activity. The following measures were put in place to facilitate the delivery of the objectives set out in the Corporate Plan:-

1. The Midlands Regional Waste Management Replacement Plan was ratified in 2006.
2. Five Civic Amenity Collections were organised in the Spring and Autumn of 2006 as part of the Council's campaign to raise awareness of Environmental Matters.
3. During 2006 the Waste Enforcement Team received 514 complaints all of which were investigated and appropriate enforcement actions were taken with regard to many of these complaints.
4. Longford is one of the only counties in Ireland to have 100% participation from Secondary Schools in the Green School Programme. 94% of the Primary Schools in the county are participating in the Green School Programme.
5. An information campaign was undertaken to inform the commercial and industrial sector of the responsibilities that businesses have regarding the Packaging Regulations. Seminars and site visits were conducted as part of a process of raising awareness in this regard.
6. An initial survey of Derelict Sites in the county was undertaken during 2006. Work has commenced that it is hoped will result in improvements being made with regard to the visual impact of the sites that have been identified.
7. Cemeteries availed of financial assistance under the Cemetery Support Scheme during 2006. The remaining Council owned cemeteries continued to be maintained by Longford Jobs Initiative Ltd.
8. Construction commenced on the new Fire Station for Granard during 2006.
9. The Council is involved in the management of both the Shannon River Basin District and the Erne River Basin District as part of the Water Framework Directive.
10. Longford County Council continued to participate in the National Litter Monitoring System during 2006.
11. The refurbishment of the Council's Dog Pound was completed during 2006 and this facility is now in compliance with all of the relevant standards.
12. Phase 1 of the Farm Film Plastics Collection was completed in 2006. A total of 400 tonnes of material was collected at a cost of €90,607.

# Annual Progress Report on Corporate Plan

Longford County Council

## HOUSING, SOCIAL, PLANNING & BUILDING CONTROL POLICY

### CORE OBJECTIVE:

“To provide and maintain an acceptable standard of Social and Affordable Housing in a planned environment that meets the needs of the people of County Longford and promotes Social Inclusion.”

### SOCIAL HOUSING

The mid term review of the Social and Affordable Housing Action Plan 2004 – 2008 took place in May 2006. The review confirmed that Longford County Council is continuing to be successful in meeting the social housing needs of the County. While the 2005 Housing Needs Assessment showed a drop in applicants to 247 households on the County List. This figure has since then increased and by the end of 2006 it had exceeded 400 once more.

Longford County Council's housing programme continued throughout 2006. 129 allocations of tenancy were made over the course of the year.

### HOUSING MAINTENANCE / REFURBISHMENT

The refurbishment scheme for the replacement of doors and windows ended in 2006. During the year, the Council continued its Central Heating Installation Programme. A Pilot Scheme has been commenced with regard to the use of wood pellets as a fuel for heating purposes.

### ESTATE MANAGEMENT

The Housing Liaison Officer and the Social Worker continued to work with Tenants and Residents Associations throughout 2006.

During the year the Council increased the level of action being taken under its Anti Social Behaviour Policy. At the end of the year there were four cases pending hearing within the courts system.

A renewal plan for MacEoin Park/Farnagh was under consideration by the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government in 2006 and a decision regarding the provision of funding is expected in 2007.

### VOLUNTARY HOUSING

The Council continued its association with the Voluntary Housing Sector. Negotiations are ongoing with a number of bodies in relation to the provision of sheltered housing at a number of locations.

### AFFORDABLE HOUSING

At the end of 2006, Affordable Houses had been allocated at Stonepark. These houses were acquired under the provisions of Part V of the Planning Act, 2000.

### LOANS / GRANTS

A combined total of 76 loan applications were received in 2006. 36 loans were approved and 40 loans were advanced. These figures do not include applications which were either refused or withdrawn.

### HOMELESSNESS

The Homeless Forum continued to meet on a quarterly basis. An integrated approach is being taken relating to the provision of care by the various statutory authorities and voluntary agencies which are active in the county.

### TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION

The Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee met on a quarterly basis. The Committee continued to monitor the progress being achieved in relation to the targets set out in the Traveller Accommodation Plan 2005-2008.

### RENTAL ACCOMMODATION SCHEME

A staff structure was put in place during the year which will be responsible for the implementation of the Rental Accommodation Scheme.

# Annual Progress Report on Corporate Plan

Longford County Council

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, URBAN & RURAL RENEWAL, CULTURAL & RECREATION POLICIES

### CORE OBJECTIVE:

“Longford County Council will lead the Economic Social and Cultural Development of County Longford.”

### ECONOMIC STRATEGY

The completion of Business Parks in Ballymahon, Lanesboro and Longford and the continuation of work on the Granard Industrial Park demonstrating the Council's commitment to delivering on the strategic objectives contained in the Council's Corporate Plan. Construction of the new decentralised Prison Services Headquarters progressed throughout 2006. Completion is scheduled for early 2007. Industrial employment in Longford continued to grow through the expansion of both inward investment enterprises and indigenous companies. Longford County Council facilitated a major mixed development at the rear of the Main Street in Granard. This was a further significant development aimed at repositioning Granard as a major town in the county. Longford County Council continues to play a pro-active lead role in co-operation with other agencies in contributing to a high level of economic growth in County Longford.

### SOCIAL

Longford County Council continues to implement the designated disadvantage CLAR and RAPID programmes. These programmes are designed to prioritise expenditure under The National Development Plan in disadvantaged areas. Longford County Development Board secured funding for a Lone Parents Initiative from the NDP Gender Equality Unit of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. Longford County Development Board lead the Traveller Interagency Group initiative and a number of actions were identified. The Social Inclusion Measures Working Groups secured funding for initiatives supporting improved cohesion. Funding was also secured by Longford County Council under its Disability Strategy and this funding will be used to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities.

### CULTURAL SERVICES

Longford County Council provides an integrated cultural service incorporating Libraries, Arts, Heritage and Archives in a customer centred manner. The Libraries provide a valuable support with the specific aim of promoting integration of the foreign national community. This is being achieved by providing Internet access and language training. Initiatives with schools include writing and poetry projects. The adopted Heritage and Arts Plans are being implemented in accordance with the agreed programme.

### SPORTS AND RECREATION

The joint local authorities Longford Swimming Pool Project commenced construction in the Mall Town Park in 2006. Completion is scheduled for mid 2007. The continued delivery of the Councils Play Policy resulted in a new playground being provided in Lanesboro. Preliminary work commenced on developing playgrounds in Edgeworthstown and Ballymahon. Longford County Development Board was approved to develop a Local Sports Partnership for County Longford. It is anticipated that this will become operational in September 2007.



# Service Indicators

Longford Local Authorities 2005 & 2006



A & C: ARTS AND CULTURAL SERVICE		2006	2005
<b>A &amp; C.1 Arts Grant</b>			
	number of arts grants allocated	45	45
	total value of arts grants allocated paid	71914.5	2687.89
<b>CP: COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND COOPERATION – YOUR LOCAL AUTHORITY</b>			
CP.1	Percentage of local schools involved in the local Youth Council/Comhairle na n-Og scheme	89%	56%
<b>C: CORPORATE ISSUES</b>		<b>2006</b>	<b>2005</b>
C.1	Percentage of working days lost to sickness absence through certified leave	3.66%	2.38%
	uncertified leave	0.58%	0.5 %
C.2	Expenditure on Training and Development as a percentage of total payroll costs	7.99%	6.20%
<b>E: ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES</b>		<b>2006</b>	<b>2005</b>
<b>WATER</b>			
<b>E.1 Percentage of river channel which is</b>			
	(a) Unpolluted		
	(b) Slightly polluted		
	(c) Moderately polluted		
	(d) Seriously polluted		
<b>E.2 Percentage of drinking water analysis results in compliance with statutory requirements with regard to</b>			
	public schemes	96.9%	96.7%
	private schemes (where appropriate)	98.7%	96.50%
<b>FIRE SERVICE</b>			
<b>E.3 Average Time, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in</b>			
	full time stations		No Full Time Fire Stations
	part time stations (Retained fire service)	4.11	4.22
<b>E.4 Percentage of attendances at scenes where</b>			
	first attendance is at scene within 10 minutes	33.99%	37%
	first attendance is at scene after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	52.52%	50%
	first attendance is at scene after 20 minutes	13.49%	13%

The LGMSB Obtains These Figures Directly From The EPA

# Service Indicators

Longford Local Authorities 2005 & 2006



E: ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES (continued)	2006	2005
<b>E.5 Fire Prevention – Total number of fire certification applications</b>		
received	135	107
processed	102	96
<b>WASTE MANAGEMENT</b>		
<b>E.6 Percentage of households provided with segregated waste collection</b>		
Waste Collection is privatised in Longford	Services Privatised in Longford	
<b>E.7 Household Waste Collected, which is sent for recycling</b>		
tonnage	4172.08	3891
percentage	57.9	51.28
<b>E.8 Household waste collected, which is sent to landfill</b>		
tonnage	3033.55	3697.5
percentage	42.1	48.72
<b>E.9 Recycling facilities</b>		
<b>GLASS</b>		
Number of Bring Sites	26	25
Number of Civic Amenity Sites	1	1
Total Number of Facilities	27	26
Total Number of Locations	27	4.03
Tonnage of waste collected for recycling	448.49	62.9
<b>CANS</b>		
Number of Bring Sites	26	25
Total Number of Civic Amenity Sites	1	1
Total Number of Facilities	27	26
Total Number of locations	27	4.19
Tonnage of waste collected for recycling	34.41	4.03
<b>TEXTILES</b>		
Number of Bring Sites	0	0
Number of Civic Amenity Sites	1	1
Total Number of Facilities	1	1
Total Number of locations	1	0.16
Tonnage of waste collected for recycling	15.96	0.91

# Service Indicators

Longford Local Authorities 2005 & 2006



<b>E: ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES</b> (continued)	<b>2006</b>	<b>2005</b>
<b>BATTERIES</b>		
Number of Bring Sites	0	0
Number of Civic Amenity Sites	0	0
Total Number of Facilities	0	0
Total Number of Locations	0	0
Tonnage of waste collected for recycling	0	0
<b>OILS</b>		
Number of Bring Sites	0	0
Total Number of Civic Amenity Sites	0	0
Total Number of Facilities	0	0
Total Number of locations	0	0
Tonnage of waste collected for recycling	0	0
<b>OTHERS</b>		
Number of Bring Sites	0	0
Number of Civic Amenity Sites	1	1
Total Number of Facilities	1	1
Total Number of locations	1	0.16
Tonnage of waste collected for recycling	779.55	28.01
<b>LITTER PREVENTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT</b>		
<b>E. 10 Litter – Number of Litter Wardens</b>		
Total number of full-time litter wardens	4	4
Total number of part-time litter wardens	5	5
Number of litter wardens (both full and part-time)	9	9
Number of on-the spot fines	630	563
Number of prosecution cases taken because of non-payment of on-the spot fines	25	40
Number of prosecutions secured	5	17
<b>Percentage of areas within the local authority that are</b>		
unpolluted (i.e litter-free)	6%	18%
slightly polluted with litter	62.5%	53%
moderately polluted with litter	27.5%	22%
significantly polluted with litter	4%	7%
grossly polluted with litter	0%	2%



# Service Indicators

Longford Local Authorities 2005 & 2006



<b>E: ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES</b> (continued)	<b>2006</b>	<b>2005</b>
<b>E.11 Environmental Complaints and Enforcement</b>		
total number of cases subject to complaints concerning environmental pollution (relating to waste, litter, water pollution, noise pollution, air pollution)	<b>1075</b>	<b>1042</b>
number of complaints investigated	<b>1075</b>	<b>1042</b>
number of enforcement procedures taken	<b>1075</b>	<b>765</b>
<b>E. Environmental Services</b>		
<b>Litter Prevention and Environmental Enforcement</b>		
<b>E.12 Percentage of Schools participating in environmental campaigns</b>		
primary schools	<b>92.5%</b>	<b>90%</b>
secondary schools	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>H: HOUSING</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2005</b>
<b>H.1 Housing Vacancies</b>		
Total number of dwellings in local authority stock	<b>1551</b>	<b>1488</b>
Overall % of dwellings that are let	<b>97.24%</b>	<b>96.64%</b>
Overall % of dwellings that are empty	<b>2.76%</b>	<b>3.36%</b>
% of empty dwellings subject to major refurbishment schemes	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>
% of empty dwellings unavailable for letting	<b>80.12%</b>	<b>80%</b>
% of empty dwellings available for letting	<b>19.88%</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>H.2 Average time taken to relet dwellings available for letting (in weeks)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>H.3 Number of repairs completed as a percentage of the number of valid repair requests received</b>	<b>88.37</b>	<b>73.75</b>
<b>H.4 Average time taken to inform applicants of local authority's decision on applications for:</b>		
the shared ownership housing scheme (in days)	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
housing loans (in days)	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
local authority housing (in days)	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>H.5 Traveller Accommodation</b>		
Total number of traveller families accommodated as a percentage of the targets set in the local traveller accommodation programme	<b>133.33%</b>	<b>125%</b>

# Service Indicators

Longford Local Authorities 2005 & 2006



L: LIBRARY SERVICES	2006	2005
<b>L.1 Public opening hours</b>		
average number of opening hours per week for full-time libraries	44.6	47
average number of opening hours per week for part-time libraries (where applicable)	18.6	18.8
<b>L.2 Number of registered library members as % of local population</b>	(5,726) = 18%	
<b>Number of items issued (county/city wide) for</b>		
(a) Books	(96,259) = 3.12%	
(b) Other items	(3,927) = 0.10%	
<b>L.4 Percentage of libraries that offer Internet access to the public</b>	100%	100%
<b>L.5 Number of Internet sessions provided</b>	22,277	610
M: MOTOR TAXATION	2006	2005
<b>M.1: Number of Motor tax transactions which</b>		
are dealt with over the counter	35,043	35,043
are dealt with by post	5,402	5,402
are dealt with in other ways (e.g. online, by telephone)	Awaiting figures	Awaiting figures
<b>Percentage of Motor tax transactions which</b>		
are dealt with over the counter	96.64%	96.64%
are dealt with by post	13.36%	13.36%
are dealt with in other ways (e.g. online, by telephone)	Awaiting figures	Awaiting figures
<b>M.2 Number of postal applications which are dealt with (i.e disc/driver licence issued) from receipt of the application</b>		
(a) On the same day	5402	5402
(b) On the third day or less	0	0
(c) On the fifth day or less	0	0
(d) Over 5 days	0	0
<b>% of overall postal applications which are dealt with (i.e disc/driver licence issued) from receipt of the application</b>		
(a) On the same day	100%	100%
(b) On the third day or less	0	0
(c) On the fifth day or less	0	0
(d) Over 5 days	0	0
<b>M.3 Public opening hours</b>		
average number of opening hours per week	35	35



P: PLANNING AND BUILDING CONTROL	2006	2005
<b>P.1 Planning Applications – Decision Making</b>		
<b>INDIVIDUAL HOUSES</b>		
No. of applications determined	440	551
No. of decisions, which were decided within 8 weeks	304	393
Number of decisions, which required the submission of further information	132	84
No. of decisions where an extension of time was agreed to by the applicant, under section 34(9) of the Planning & Development Act 2000	4	74
Average length of time taken to determine an application where further information is sought (in days)	77	78
% of grants	79.55 %	82.4 %
% of refusals	20.45 %	17.6 %
% of cases where the decision was confirmed by An Bord Pleanala	22.22 %	68.18 %
% of cases where the decision was reversed by An Bord Pleanala	77.78 %	31.82 %
<b>HOUSING DEVELOPMENT</b>		
No. of Applications determined	73	175
No. of decisions, which were decided within 8 weeks	49	60
Number of decisions, which required the submission of further information	23	66
No. of decisions where an extension of time was agreed to by the applicant, under section 34(9) of the Planning & Development Act 2000	1	49
Average length of time taken to determine an application where further information is sought (in days)	86	79
% of grants	80.82 %	87.43 %
% of refusals	19.18 %	12.57 %
% of cases where the decision was confirmed with or without variation by An Bord Pleanala	80 %	67.86 %
% of cases where the decision was reversed by An Bord Pleanala	20 %	32.14 %
<b>OTHER: NOT REQUIRING EIA</b>		
No. of applications determined	412	426
No. of decisions, which were decided in 8 weeks	314	274
Number of decisions, which required the submission of further information	97	99
No. of decisions where an extension of time was agreed to by the applicant, under section 34(9) of the Planning & Development Act 2000	1	53
Average length of time taken to determine an application where further information is sought (in days)	77	76
% of grants	95.15 %	95.31 %
% of refusals	4.85 %	4.69 %
% of cases where the decision was confirmed with or without variation by An Bord Pleanala	63.64 %	83.33 %
% of cases where the decision was reversed by An Bord Pleanala	36.36 %	16.67 %



# Service Indicators

Longford Local Authorities 2005 & 2006



P: PLANNING AND BUILDING CONTROL	2006	2005
<b>OTHER: REQUIRING EIA</b>		
No. of applications determined	2	12
No. of decisions, which were decided in 8 weeks	2	1
Number of decisions, which required the submission of further information	0	4
No. of decisions where an extension of time was agreed to by the applicant, under section 34(9) of the Planning & Development Act 2000	0	7
Average length of time taken to determine an application where further information is sought (in days)	0	90
% of grants	100%	75%
% of refusals	0%	25%
% of cases where the decision was confirmed with or without variation by An Bord Pleanala	100 %	100%
% of cases where the decision was reversed by An Bord Pleanala	0%	0%
<b>P.2 Planning Enforcement</b>		
total number of cases subject to complaints that are investigated	122	152
total number of cases subject to complaints that are dismissed	3	4
total number of cases subject to complaints that were resolved through negotiations	15	57
number of enforcement procedures taken through warning letters	105	77
number of enforcement procedures taken through enforcement notices	37	52
number of prosecutions	3	11
<b>P.3 Public opening hours</b>		
average number of opening hours per week	34.38	34.38
<b>P.4 Consultations</b>		
No. of pre-planning consultation meetings held	320	250
Average length of time from request for consultation with local authority planner to actual formal meeting for pre-planning consultation (in days)	9.93	15
<b>P.5 Buildings inspected as a percentage of new buildings notified to the local authority</b>		
	13.2 %	13.9 %

# Service Indicators

Longford Local Authorities 2005 & 2006



REC: RECREATIONAL SERVICES	2006	2005
<b>Rec.1 Number of Children's playgrounds</b>		
directly provided by the local authority	3	0.06
facilitated by the local authority	1	0.03
<b>Rec.2 Number of visitors to local authority facilitated by swimming facilities</b>	68,820	
REV: REVENUE COLLECTION	2006	2005
<b>Rev.1 House Rent</b>		
(a) Amount collected at year end as a percentage of amount due	91.96%	90.50%
(b) Percentage of arrears		
(i) 4-6 weeks old	10 %	6 %
(ii) 6-12 weeks old	12 %	12 %
(iii) more than 12 weeks old	66 %	64 %
<b>Rev. 2 Housing Loans</b>		
(a) Amount collected at year end as a percentage of amount due	83.37%	83.80%
(b) Percentage of arrears		
(i) 1 month old	13 %	9 %
(ii) 2-3 months old	3 %	3 %
(iii) more than 3 months old	78%	83 %
<b>Rev.3 Commercial Rates</b>		
Amount collected at year-end as a percentage of amount due	91.53%	93.80%
<b>Rev.4 Refuse Charges</b>		
Percentage of households paying refuse charges at year end	Service privatised in Longford	
<b>Rev.5 Non-Domestic Water Charges</b>		
Amount collected at year end as a percentage of amount due	60.11%	63.40%
R: ROADS	2006	2005
<b>R.1</b>		
Local and regional roads surface dressed per annum (square meters)	346,311.45	432,168.60
Percentage of local and regional roads surface dressed per annum	5.47 %	6.87 %