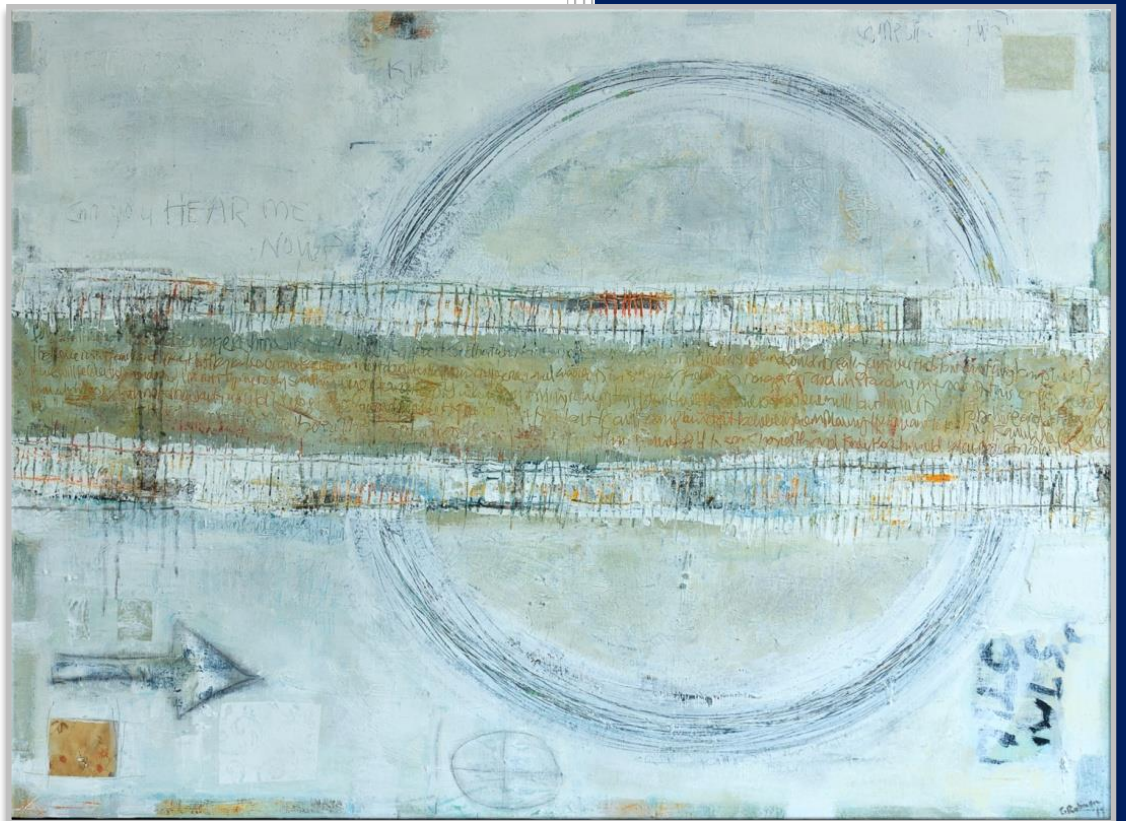


2018

Longford County Council Annual Report





AN LONGFORT

Comhairle Chontae An Longfoirt
Longford County Council

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ELECTED MEMBERS OF LONGFORD COUNTY COUNCIL

BALLYMAHON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT



Cllr. Mick Cahill
Fianna Fáil



Cllr. Mark Casey
Independent



Cllr. Gerard Farrell
Fine Gael



Cllr. Colm Murray
Fine Gael



Cllr. Pat O'Toole
Fianna Fáil



Cllr. Paul Ross
Fine Gael

GRANARD MUNICIPAL DISTRICT



Cllr. Paraic Brady
Fine Gael



Cllr. Micheál Carrigy
Fine Gael



Cllr. John Duffy
Fine Gael
(resigned March)



Cllr. Gerry Hagan
Fine Gael
(Co-opted April)



Cllr. Luie McEntire
Fianna Fáil

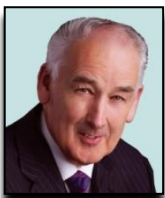


Cllr. Martin Mulleady
Fianna Fáil



Cllr. P.J. Reilly
Fianna Fáil

LONGFORD MUNICIPAL DISTRICT



Cllr. John Browne
Fine Gael



Cllr. Seamus Butler
Fianna Fáil



Cllr. Joe Flaherty
Fianna Fáil



Cllr. Peggy Nolan
Fine Gael



Cllr. Mae Sexton
Independent



Cllr. Gerry Warnock
Independent

INTRODUCTION FROM AN CATHAOIRLEACH AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE

We welcome the publication of Longford County Council's Annual Report 2018. The Annual Report outlines the scale and diversity of the activities within the Council and demonstrates Longford County Council's commitment to serving, representing and leading the communities of our County.

In 2018 we experienced evidence of economic growth and community empowerment in County Longford as well as continued Central Government focus on our County. A number of local and national initiatives saw significant activity in County Longford in economic, tourism and community development throughout the year.

Locally based companies Red Seal and Avery Dennison made major jobs announcements and work continued on the Center Parcs project outside Ballymahon. Government funded programmes such as the Urban and Rural Regeneration Programmes, Town and Village Scheme, CLAR, LIS and Rural Recreation Scheme, which required co-funding by Longford County Council brought benefits to communities throughout the County in 2018.

In 2018 County Longford made significant progress in developing tourism with investment in projects such as the Royal Canal Greenway, Cairn Hill Trail and the Granard Interpretative Centre. We also continued to collaborate with our neighbours and state agencies to develop regional tourism projects and to promote the Midlands as a tourist destination and we welcomed the launch of the new tourism brand for our region, Irelands Hidden Heartlands.

The year also saw the arrival of the Natural Gas Network to County Longford.

Among the other noteworthy achievements during the year were –

- *The Housing Summit, Rebuilding Ireland which set out targets for social housing delivery was held in January*
- *The Council's response to Storm Emma was acknowledged locally and nationally as excellent. Despite extremely challenging conditions our response was organised and implemented in a safe and effective manner during March.*
- *Druid Theatre brought their masterful production of Samuel Beckett's "Waiting for Godot" to Backstage Theatre Longford as part of their 2018 tour in March.*
- *Longford won the Award for the Crime Prevention Ambassador Programme at the National Age Friendly Awards in April.*
- *The launch in April of a €2 million initiative "Ireland's Hidden Heartlands" by Fáilte Ireland, to boost tourism across the Midlands region.*
- *Two IDA client companies, Red Seal Cups and Avery Dennison made significant jobs announcements in May, with the announcement of 300 jobs for Longford.*
- *Minister Eoghan Murphy opened a new housing scheme in Ballymahon and turned the sod at a housing scheme in Lanesboro, in July.*
- *The launch of free public wi-fi in Lanesboro, following a successful funding application through the Town & Village Renewal Scheme was held in July.*
- *The Longford Section of the Royal Canal Greenway, offering a first-class multi-purpose off-road walking and cycling link from the river Liffey in Dublin, was completed in August.*
- *The Cathaoirleach, Councillor Luie McEntire was elected President of the Association of Irish Local Government (AILG) in September.*
- *The visit of a group of distinguished visitors from the French towns of Saint Nabord (the birthplace of General Humbert) and the re-enactment of the Battle of Ballinamuck, as part of their 1798 tour, took place in October.*
- *Funding announcement of €1 million for the Longford Connected project through the Urban Regeneration Development Fund, in November.*
- *The Inaugural Albert Reynolds Memorial Lecture, at which The Rt Hon Sir John Major KG CH, former Prime Minister of the UK, was guest speaker, was held in December.*

These achievements reflect a County whose County Council is providing the leadership for our communities. They also reflect a County whose communities are empowered to improve the quality of life for themselves and for our County.

The achievements outlined in this Annual Report could not have been accomplished without the collective input of the Elected Members, the Cathaoirleach, the Corporate Policy Committee, Municipal District Committees, Members of the Strategic Policy Committees, the Management Team and Employees of Longford County Council, together with the many voluntary and community organisations with whom the Council interacts. It is only through their continued commitment that the organisation can face these challenges with confidence and their support and co-operation is gratefully acknowledged.



KEY FUNCTIONAL AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

The principal services of Longford County Council are provided within the following Directorate Structure. The three Directorates cover the areas of -



Barbara Heslin, Director of Services

with responsibility for

- Economic, Enterprise and Tourism Development
- Community Development
- Libraries, Culture and Heritage
- Human Resources and Corporate Services
- Health and Safety
- Planning
- Regeneration
- Ballymahon Municipal District



John Brannigan, Director of Services

with responsibility for

- Housing and Building Control
- Roads
- Water Services
- Environmental Services
- Fire and Emergency Services
- Granard Municipal District



John McKeon, Head of Finance

with responsibility for

- Finance
- Information Systems
- Compliance and Procurement
- Facilities Management
- Longford Municipal District



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BALLYMAHON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT ANNUAL REPORT

Cathaoirleach

At the Annual General Meeting of Ballymahon Municipal District held on 21st June, 2018, Councillor Paul Ross was elected to the position of Cathaoirleach and Councillor Pat O'Toole was elected to the position of Leas Cathaoirleach. These positions are filled until the Local Elections in 2019.

Meetings Held

Meetings were held on 25th January, 12th March, 22nd March, 3rd May, 21st June, 26th July, 1st October, 5th November and 19th December.

Items discussed at these meetings included –

- Ballymahon-Landevant Twinning Event
- Schedule of Municipal District Works 2018
- 2019-2021 Multi-Annual Restoration Improvement Programme
- Speed Limit Review
- Community Grant Support Scheme 2018
- Funding of Burial Grounds and to Cemetery Committees
- Proposed projects to be funded from Capital Reserves
- General Municipal Allocation 2019



Presentations made to the Ballymahon Municipal District included –

- Lanesboro Tourism Co-Operative.
- Primary School's Digital Project
- County Longford Tourism Promotion

Items Adopted

The Chief Executive's Report, in accordance with Part VIII of the Planning & Development Regulations, was adopted in respect of the following development: -

- Construction of a footbridge over the River Inny at Clooneen and Newcastle, Ballymahon, Co. Longford

Estates Taken In Charge

The following housing estates were taken in charge during the year –

- Shannon Park, Edgeworthstown
- Corncrake Meadows, Abbeyshrule



Community Grant Support Scheme 2018

Grants totalling €56,150 were allocated to 40 Community Group applications supporting activities/projects for the Active Elderly, Arts, Community Involvement, Environment, Events, Heritage and Sport and Recreation.

GRANARD MUNICIPAL DISTRICT ANNUAL REPORT

Cathaoirleach

As agreed by the members following the 2014 Local Elections, at the Annual General Meeting of Granard Municipal District held on 22nd May 2018, Councillor PJ Reilly was re-elected to the position of Cathaoirleach and Councillor Gerry Hagan was elected to the position of Leas Cathaoirleach.

Meetings Held

The Members of Granard Municipal District held meetings on the following dates during 2018 - 30th January, 27th February, 27th March, 22nd May, 24th July, 25th September and 27th November.

Items Adopted

The Members of Granard Municipal District adopted the following during the year –

The Schedule of Granard Municipal District Works 2018

Community Facilities Scheme 2018

2018 Community Grant Support Scheme

Speed Limit Review

2019-2021 Multi-Annual Restoration Improvement Programme

2019 General Municipal Allocation

Part 8 Report (Planning & Development Regulations 2001) in respect of proposal to construct 6 x 2 Bed Single Storey Dwellings at Ballinalee.

Estates Taken In Charge

The following housing estates were taken in charge during the year -

Clos Naomh Padraig, Ballinamuck

Loughan Hill, Drumlish

Higginstown Wood, Granard

Other Items Considered

Items that were highlighted and discussed by the Members were –

- Place names Sub Committee
- Local Improvement Schemes
- Driver Feedback signs
- Sculptures
- Footpaths
- Low Cost Safety Schemes
- Signage
- Irish Water Works
- Cleaning of Rivers
- Cutting of Trees and Hedges
- Speed Ramps
- Bridges
- Ballinamuck/Essert Twinning 2018
- Pedestrian Crossings
- Dolmen Aughnacliffe
- Granard/Ballymore U14 Team All Ireland Feile Finalists
- Amenities
- Playgrounds
- Car Parking
- Traffic Calming
- Boomerang Hickstead Trophy
- Noxious Weeds

Presentation was given on the following:-

- Primary Schools Digital Project

Mayoral Receptions

Reception 27th July 2018 on the 21st Anniversary of the Ballinamuck and Essert de Belfort Twinning Agreement.



French Guests In Ballinamuck

On Friday 26th October, Ballinamuck welcomed a group of distinguished visitors from the French towns of Saint Nabord and Remiremont as part of their 1798 tour. Saint Nabord was the birthplace of General Humbert, who led the ill-fated French expedition to Ireland in 1798. He and his men were joined by Irishmen and they marched eastwards and stopped at Ballinamuck where they were defeated by a vastly superior British force.

At this special re-enactment of the Battle of Ballinamuck visitors included Aude Schifferling (General Humbert's Descendant), Jean Hingray (Mayor of Remiremont) and Victoria Mirayantz Albert Henry (Mayor of Plombieres) and Mrs Henry Daniel Sacquard (Mayor of St. Nabord).



Cathaoirleach

At the Annual General Meeting held on 27th June 2018, Councillor Seamus Butler was elected to the position of Cathaoirleach and Councillor Mae Sexton was elected to the position of Leas Cathaoirleach.

Meetings Held

Meetings were held on 24th January, 7th February, 7th March, 28th March, 2nd May, 27th June, 26th September, 24th October and 28th November.

Items Adopted

The following items were adopted by the Members in 2018 -

- The Municipal Works budget for 2018.
- Municipal District GMA Allocation.
- Amendments to Speed Limits within Longford Municipal District.
- A Civic Reception to honour Veronica Naughton and Marie Hand.
- A Reception for the Volunteers of the Longford Tidy Towns Group.
- Funding for capital expenditure in amenities.
- Naming of the Mill Bridge, Bridgeway Business Park Athlone Road, Providers Hub LIADH and Ballyminion Link Bridge.
- Grants for residents groups to purchase lawnmowers to maintain green areas within their estates.
- Extinguishment of Right of Way at Dun Darrach.
- Amendments to Coach & Disabled Parking Bye Laws
- Electric Vehicles to be exempt from parking charges while using electric charging points.
- Works under Capital Reserves which includes civic space on the Market Square, refurbishment works at the Longford Centre car park and lighting of 3 Camlin river bridges.
- Multi Annual Road Restoration Plan 2019 to 2021.
- Free parking in off-street car parks in the lead up to Christmas 2018.
- Nominations for the Cathaoirleach Awards.
- Voluntary Contributions and Community Grants.
- Funding for St. Patrick's Day, Halloween and Longford Summer Festivals.

Works Completed In 2018

Roadworks Programme

Road improvement works were carried out in the following locations -

- N63 Ballinalee road
- Main St Newtownforbes
- N4 Lackan
- N63 footpath at Churchlands
- N63 junction with R397
- Road maintenance works including road drainage and patching works

Road Restoration Works

- Teffia Park construction works
- Flancare road completed
- R198 Melview
- L1005 road strengthening works at Lamagh
- Footpaths at Killashee Street
- Low Cost Safety Schemes were carried out in Ardnacassa Avenue

Other Works

- Disabled and Age Friendly Parking bays relined
- Provision of additional coach parking bays
- Construction works on extension at Ballymacormack Cemetery
- Grass Cutting Programme
- Christmas Lighting which included the purchase of new lights for Killashee Street and New Street.

Estates Taken In Charge

The following housing estates were taken in charge during the year –

- Rockview, Clondra
- Cartrun Breac, Longford

Other Items Considered

Other items that were highlighted and discussed by the Members were -

- Parking at the Department of Social Protection Offices on the Ballinalee Road.
- Parking facilities for buses and coaches in Longford.
- Paid Parking
- Local Electoral area Boundary Review
- Salting of footpaths in Longford Town
- Consideration to moving salt barn to a more suitable location
- Ardnacassa Regeneration Plan
- Antisocial behaviour in the Ardnacassa Avenue/ Cluain Ard estates
- The Regeneration Programme
- Town and Village renewal scheme
- Free Wi Fi service in Longford Town
- Right of Way at Dun Darrach
- Installation of Speed Ramps at St. Michael's Road
- Speed ramps at the Hollows and St. Emers
- Footpaths at Foynes Court
- Subsidised Scheme for waste collection similar to Limerick City
- Extension of Sewer network for the Ferefad/ Knockahaw area
- Low Cost safety measures at Lisbrack Road
- Public Lighting at Eden Court, Killashee Road
- Provision of Pedestrian Crossing at Park Road
- Public Lighting in Clondra and Farnagh Hill
- Lighting at Glebe/ Lisduff Hill
- Provision of IDA Land bank in the Longford Town area
- Making Longford an Age Friendly Business Town
- Proposal to locate Coffee Container at the Leisure Centre in the Mall complex
- Ban on all motorised vehicles on walkways in the Albert Reynolds Peace Park
- Consideration to introduce Bye Laws for Horse Drawn carriages in Longford Town
- Possible additional locations for CCTV cameras
- Primary School Digital Project
- Reviewed Cemetery Bye Laws
- Ballymacormack Cemetery - Online records, Memorial Wall

Mayoral Receptions

- Reception on 30th November in recognition of Veronica Naughton and Marie Hand who have tirelessly volunteered for Irish Cancer Society for 30 years.



STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEES 2014-2019 REPORTS

Economic Development and Enterprise SPC

COUNCILLORS

- Seamus Butler (Chair)
- Joe Flaherty
- Colm Murray
- Peggy Nolan
- Pat O'Toole

SECTORAL REPRESENTATIVES

- Fintan McGill (Business/Employers)
- Louise Lovett (Community & Voluntary)
- Ray Hogan (Environmental/Conservation)
- Mona Considine (County Tourism Committee)

The SPC met 4 times during 2018, on 12th February, 28th May, 18th September and 12th November. The following were considered at the meetings:

- Further Education and Training
- LEO plan 2018
- Retail Strategy
- Business Expo
- Creative and Innovation Hubs
- Regeneration
- Ballyminion Master Plan
- Camlin Quarter Master Plan
- Draft Development Contribution Scheme
- Economic Fora proposals and plans
- Business Incentive Scheme
- Business Parks and Industrial Estates Signage
- Action Plan for Jobs
- Ireland's Hidden Heartlands Opportunities
- Tourism Strategy Implementation Plan
- Funding Streams - Clar, Failte Ireland, Town & Village Renewal, Outdoor Recreation Scheme
- Community Support Scheme 2018

Housing Services SPC

COUNCILLORS

- Cllr P.J. Reilly (Chair 1st Term)
- Gerry Warnock (Chair 2nd Term)
- John Browne
- Martin Mulleady
- Paul Ross

SECTORAL REPRESENTATIVES

- Derek Scanlon (Development/Construction)
- Tess Murphy, Stephanie Igoe (Community & Voluntary)
- Eileen Finan (Social Inclusion)

The SPC met 4 times in 2018, on 13th February, 1st May, 4th September and 4th December. The following matters were considered at the meetings:

- Presentation by Irish Green Building
- Heating Project in Park Villas Longford
- Replacement of Storage Heaters
- Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan
- Management of Waste at Local Authority Houses
- Income Thresholds for Housing Support
- Housing Maintenance Policy
- Midlands Simon Community
- Rent Deposit Scheme
- Differential Rents Scheme
- Fire Service Costs
- Voids Programme
- Housing Waiting Lists

Infrastructure and Environment SPC

COUNCILLORS

- Micheál Carrigy (Chair 1st Term)
- John Duffy (resigned March 2018)
- Mick Cahill
- Gerry Farrell
- Luie Mc Entire
- Gerry Hagan

SECTORAL REPRESENTATIVES

- Andrew McHugh (Agriculture and Farming)
- Teresa Kearney (Community & Voluntary)
- Michael Spillane (Trade Union)
- Niamh Moran (Environment/Conservation)
- Maria Keelty (PPN)

The SPC met 4 times during 2018, on 15th February, 6th June, 20th September and 5th December. Councillor Micheál Carrigy continued as Chair for the 2nd Term following the resignation of Councillor John Duffy. The following matters were considered at the meetings:

- CCTV
- Temporary Flashing Speed Signs
- Speed Limits Review
- Draft Policy on Vehicle Activated Signs
- Bye-law on Waste
- Burial Grounds
- Climate Change Adaptation Strategy
- River Basin Management Plan
- Flood Risk Management Plan
- Hedgecutting
- Disability Access
- Draft Litter Management Plan
- Waste collection
- Dog Fouling and muzzling of dogs in public places.
- Draft Policy on Fire Service Charges
- Draft Section 26 – 5 year Operational Fire Service Plan
- Civil Defence Charges for attendance at public events

Planning and Development and Cultural SPC

COUNCILLORS

- Mae Sexton (Chair 1st Term)
- Mark Casey (Chair 2nd Term)
- Paraic Brady
- Gerry Farrell
- Gerry Warnock

SECTORAL REPRESENTATIVES

- Pat O'Rourke (Agriculture and Farming)
- Noreen McLoughlin (Environment/Conservation)
- Patricia Murphy, Paddy Howe (Community & Voluntary)

The SPC met 4 times during 2018, on 19th February, 21st May, 16th October and 11th December. The following matters were considered at the meetings:

- National Planning Framework
- Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy
- County Development Plan
- Draft Development Contribution Scheme
- ePlanning Project
- Creative Ireland – Longford Culture and Creative Strategies 2018-2022
- Longford Culture and Creativity Strategy - Implementation and Action Plan 2018
- Longford Age Friendly Programme
- Edgeworthstown Community Library Project
- Intercultural Strategic Plan
- Regeneration
- Camlin Quarter Master Plan Update
- Ballyminion Master Plan
- Creative and Innovative Hubs
- Arts Programme 2018 - Implementation and Action Plan
- Funding Schemes including, CLAR, Town & Village Renewal Scheme, Outdoor Recreation Scheme, Failte Ireland

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT and RECREATION, CORPORATE & HUMAN RESOURCES, LIBRARIES CULTURE & HERITAGE, PLANNING

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Comhairle na nÓg

The Annual General Meeting was held on Thursday 25th October 2018 in the Longford Arms Hotel. A large number of young people attended aged between 12 and 18 years representing their schools and clubs from all over County Longford. The topics for discussion were selected by the young people. This year a questions and answers session was held with representatives from Longford County Council, Tulsa, Longford Westmeath Education and Training Board and Longford's Dail na nÓg representative. The young people were also given an opportunity to nominate new representatives for the next term of Comhairle na nÓg.



Comhairle na nÓg AGM 2018: Members of Longford Comhairle na nÓg with Avril Gilchrist Coordinator



Comhairle na nÓg AGM 2018: Laura McPhillips, Grainne Reid, Moira Casey, Micheal Carrigy, Luke Casserly, Joe Flaherty

Longford Intercultural Strategic Plan 2018-2022

Cathaoirleach Luie McEntire officially launched Longford Intercultural Strategic Plan on Tuesday the 18th of December in Longford County Council. Ciaran Murphy Chairperson of Longford Intercultural Working Group welcomed everyone to the launch. The Intercultural Working Group provided a platform to raise issues across the agencies and the community for the Plan. Uruemu Adejinmi spoke about her role as a member of the group and Eric Ehigie a student of Moyne Community School and a member of the national executive of second level students in Ireland spoke of his vision for the future and the benefits of all communities working together. The CEO of Longford County Council Paddy Mahon thanked and acknowledged the role played by Dr. Shelley Deane of Brehon Advisory in preparing the Plan. Students from Moyne Community School provided a range of musical entertainment at the event representing traditional Irish and African music.



Mary Carlton Reynolds, Adrian Greene, Paddy Mahon, Luie McEntire, Eric Ehigie, Lionel Mullally, Laura McPhillips, Ciaran Murphy, Uruemu Adejinmi, Tony Gibban (D.E.A.S.P.)



Mick Cahill, Slavek Kazek (Midlands Polish Comm. Ass.) Paul Ross, Gerry Warnock, Joe Flaherty, Paddy Mahon, Eric Ehigie, Lionel Mullally, Ciaran Murphy, Laura McPhillips, Barbara Heslin, Siobhan Cronogue, Luie McEntire, Uruemu Adejinmi, Sinead Mullally, Graham Kane FAI Dev

Playgrounds 2018

In 2018 a suitable site was identified in Killashee for a new playground and a local committee was set up to select a suitable design. The children in Killashee were asked to take part in an art competition to paint and draw their ideas for a new playground. The new play facility is expected to open in May 2019.

Cullyfad Community Development also received funding for a new playground in 2018 under the CLÁR Programme. A suitable site has been selected and Longford County Council are rolling out the creation of this new village playground with the support of the local community. It is hoped this playground will be open by June 2019.

Under the Healthy Ireland Fund a number of playgrounds had additional inclusive play equipment installed. Longford County Council has introduced quiet zones in some of the county playgrounds.

National Recreation Week.

Three youth groups took young people on three adventure trips, these included surfing in Sligo, Ziplining in Loch Key Forest Park and a visit Tayto. These events were part funded by Dept of Children and Youth Affairs and supported by Longford County Council. A great time was had by all.



*Derrycassin Playground Opening
12 October 2018*

Green Flag Award 2018

Longford Mall (Albert Reynolds Peace Park) retained the Green Flag Award in 2018, an international standard benchmark recognized throughout the world for publicly accessible parks and green spaces and managed in Ireland by An Taisce. The Green Flag Award Scheme was introduced in Ireland in 2015 and rolled out nationally in 2016.

This Award was achieved thanks to Longford Town Suburbs Ltd. who manage the Mall in partnership with Longford County Council. Thanks also to the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection, the Community Employment Supervisor and all the participants whose hard work was vital to gaining this Award. An Taisce chose the Mall as the location to run its national judges training event. There is now a strong emphasis on encouraging biodiversity in the park and creating a habitat for pollinating insects.

Longford 'Dead of Night' Halloween Festival

On Halloween evening, the dark streets of Longford came alive with a riot of colour, music and noise as the 13th Annual 'Dead of Night' festival swung into action. This year again there were some fantastic floats that came from Castlerea Festival Committee, which gave a real carnival atmosphere to the event. The parade made its way down St. Mel's School Avenue and up New Street. A very large number of children took part in the parade with their self-made lanterns. There was a great attendance again with lots of fun stalls, entertainers and large inflatables. The Halloween evening festival is the final part of the bigger 'Dead of Night' project which joins the resources, manpower and expertise of Longford County Council, the HSE, An Garda Síochána, Longford Volunteer Centre, Longford Tidy Towns and includes safe talks in schools, art competitions and lantern making.

Turning on Christmas Lights 2018

Santa arrived in Longford on Friday 30th November 2018 and travelled by open top car he does not feel the cold visiting local childcare centres. He also called into the school in St Christopher's where he got a great welcome. Santa could not be kept in the car and jumping out and dropping into local businesses. He then arrived by sledge to a packed Market Square. He was welcomed by the Chair, Cllr Seamus Butler and Members of Longford Municipal District. Santa with the help of local children turned on the lights at 7pm. He sang loads of Christmas songs and had the whole crowd singing along. Santa stayed late having his photo taken with all the children.

The Christmas Lights were organised by Longford County Council and supported by Longford Chamber of Commerce, The Longford Volunteer Centre, Longford Tourism Office, Community Garda unit, Longford Tidy towns, Longford Civil Defence.

Springlawn Childcare Service

Springlawn Community Childcare Group Ltd received a grant to expand the community childcare facility from The Dept of Children and Youth Affairs. Longford County Council who have been involved in this project since its inception supported the project to allow a two-story extension to be constructed to meet the demands of the childcare centre, situated in Springlawn. The service had waiting lists for its preschool and afterschool services. The expanded centre can cater for up to 70 children from 2 years and nine months to 13 years of age and is presently running to capacity.

CLÁR 2018

A total of 12 applications were approved for funding under the CLÁR 2018 Programme, 10 under Measure 1 (Support for schools & community safety measures), and 2 under Measure 2 (Schools/Community play areas). The grant aid for Longford under this Programme is €414,180.50. Work is ongoing on a number of projects and all projects expected to be completed by mid 2019.

LONGFORD JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE

The Joint Policing Committee (JPC) was established under the Garda Síochána Act 2005 to serve as a forum where local authority representatives, Oireachtas members and community and voluntary interests work together with senior Garda Officers to discuss and make recommendations on matters affecting the policing of the County. Councillor Gerry Warnock is the Chairperson of County Longford JPC.

Meetings Held

The Committee held 4 meetings in 2018 - 5th March, 11th June, 10th September and 3rd December. A Public meeting was held on 5th November on the theme of "Crime Prevention".

Issues Considered

At each meeting the Committee was updated on **Garda** activities in the county including –

- public order and anti-social issues
- statistics on crime levels in Longford

The JPC was also updated at each meeting on **local authority** matters including –

- details of various funding schemes that became available during the year.
- progress in relation to various community projects and areas of economic development including the Council's Regeneration programme, the Longford Tourism Strategy and the Center Parcs development.
- the Public Participation Network, the Intercultural Strategic Plan, the Resettlement Programme and the Housing Programme.

The Committee welcomed the improved success rates of Gardai in tackling crime. The JPC noted that additional resources were required to provide an appropriate service to communities and requested the Minister for Justice and Equality to receive a deputation from the Joint Policing Committee on this matter. In September 2018 the Committee was advised that additional resources had been allocated to Edgeworthstown, Granard and Longford Garda stations.

Other issues discussed included Road Safety, the Text Alert Scheme, the supply and sale of drugs, community policing and increased Garda visibility at festivals and sporting events.

CCTV continued to be an ongoing topic of discussion during the year. Following a request by the JPC for a briefing from the Community Engagement Unit on the CCTV Programme, the Committee was advised that Data Protection issues regarding access to information recorded on CCTV had been resolved. The JPC welcomed the setting up of a special steering committee between Longford County Council and An Garda Síochána to progress the enhancement and expansion of the CCTV system for Longford town.

Patrick Clavin, Chief Bureau Officer, Criminal Assets Bureau, attended the June meeting and gave a comprehensive presentation on the functions and operations of the Criminal Assets Bureau in County Longford. The meeting noted that the CAB was working closely with local Gardaí to identify the suspected proceeds of criminal activity and were targeting a number of people in County Longford suspected of amassing assets as a result of criminal activity.

Joint Action Plan

At the JPC meetings, the Gardai and Longford County Council detailed progress in relation to the Joint Action Plan in the Ardnacassa area of Longford town. The Committee welcomed the ongoing focussed approach and improvements in the area particularly in relation to public lighting, CCTV, litter/dumping issues, dog control/animal welfare, neighbourhood watch, estate clean up day and managing vacant houses. At the end of the year the Committee was advised that most of the actions identified in the Plan had been addressed, completed or were in progress.

Public Meeting on 'Crime Prevention'

The JPC public meeting on 5th November 2018 in Ballymahon Community Library was very well attended. Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Luie Mc Entire welcomed and addressed the audience on the theme of "Crime Prevention". An excellent panel of speakers was engaged for the event including special guests Ms. Josephine Feehily, Chairperson of the Policing Authority and Garda Commissioner Drew Harris. Other speakers included Mr. Conor O'Leary, representing Muintir na Tíre in relation to the Community Text Alert Programme, Ms. Kitty Hughes, Chairperson of Longford Older Persons Council and Crime Prevention Ambassador and Ms. Martina Dunne from the Midlands Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force.

An Garda Síochána was also represented by a number of other contributors including Chief Superintendent Tony Healy, Superintendent Jim Delaney, Inspector Blaitheín Moran, Sergeant Lionel Mullally and Sergeant Paul Mc Dermott, Crime Prevention Officer. The final part of the meeting involved a Question and Answer session with the audience in relation to crime prevention and different aspects of policing in Longford.

Best wishes and tributes were also extended to Superintendent Brian Mohan from the Granard District on his impending retirement.

Mr. Paddy Mahon, Chief Executive of Longford County Council in closing the meeting, referred to the importance of Community, the Council and the Gardai working together for the benefit of all and thanked the speakers and the audience for their valuable input.



LONGFORD COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Meetings

Ten meetings were held in 2018:

Dates	21 Feb	21 Mar	18 Apr	16 May	19 Jun	31 Jul	4 Sep	9 Oct	20 Nov	11 Dec
Numbers in attendance	11	11	15	10	13	16	13	11	12	12

Membership

There are 19 Members on the LCDC, with 3 changes to membership during the year -

- **Local Authority Elected Members** - Cllr. Joe Flaherty replaced Cllr. Gerry Warnock.
- **Other civic society or local community interests** - The vacant position from the resignation of Joe Flaherty (Longford Business Forum) in December 2017 was filled by Oliver Cassidy from the Granard Traders Association.
- **State Agencies** - Anne Naughton replaced Grainne Nic Gabhainn as the HSE representative.

Sector	Members
Public - Statutory Interests 9	
Local Authority Elected members <i>min 2 on min 3 on 19 person LCDC</i>	Councillors Joe Flaherty, Colm Murray, Seamus Butler and P.J. Reilly
Local Authority Officials (<i>minimum 2</i>)	Paddy Mahon Chief Executive, Michael Nevin Head of Enterprise
State Agencies (<i>minimum 2</i>)	Anne Naughton, HSE (<i>approved at LCC Monthly meeting May 2018 to replace Grainne nic Gabhainn</i>) Aine Bohan, Dept. Social Protection Shauna Doherty, LWETB
Private – Non Statutory Interests 10	
Local Community Development	Adrian Greene, CEO Longford Community Resources Clg.
Social Inclusion	Seamus Orr, PPN - Spring Lawn Residents Group Louise Lovett, PPN - Longford Women’s Link
Community & Voluntary	Tess Murphy, PPN - Ballinamuck Community Enterprise Society Joe Murphy, PPN - Dromard Rural Development Association
Environmental Interests	Ray Hogan, PPN - Longford Environmental Alliance
Other civic society or local Community interests	Niamh Donlon, Business/Employers sector Sean Hannon (IFA), Farming/Agriculture sector Seadna Ryan, County Longford Tourism Oliver Cassidy, Granard Traders Association

Support Staff

Mr Ciaran Murphy is the Chief Officer of the LCDC. Ms Laura Mc Phillips, Ms Janine Bartley, Ms Linda Higgins, Ms Karena Connelly and Ms Jacqueline McKeon provide administrative support to the LCDC, including meetings administration and financial management. The Support staff also manage the day to day operations of the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) and LEADER Programmes, as well as other issues as they arise on behalf of the LCDC.

Programme Oversight and Management Activities

Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP)

SICAP provides funding to tackle poverty and social inclusion at local level through local engagement and partnerships between disadvantaged individuals, community organisations and public sector agencies. The LCDC awarded Longford Community Resources clg the contract to implement the Programme in County Longford. Their task as Programme Implementer (PI’s) is to use the Programme funding to target the most disadvantaged using a community development approach to strengthen communities and improve people’s lives.

The Department of Rural and Community Development channels funding to the LCDC as the contracting authority through the Local Authorities. The Programme budget for 2018 was €511,559 which was paid to the Programme Implementer on a quarterly. The budget is broken down between administration costs and action costs. Pobal acts as an agent of the Department with respect to the national management and oversight of the Programme. Their main functions include monitoring programme data and preparing progress reports for the Department. This is aided by IRIS which is an integrated reporting and information system for the planning and monitoring of SICAP. Pobal carry out technical checks as part of performance reviews and the annual planning process.

The LCDC established a SICAP Monitoring Subcommittee to monitor the implementation of the Programme and to make recommendations on the Annual Planning and Performance Reviews. The Subcommittee held eight meetings during 2018.

Rural Development Programme (LEADER) 2014-2020

The LEADER Programme is administered by the Local Action Group (LAG) i.e. Longford Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) in partnership with the Financial Partner (Longford County Council) and the Implementing Partner (Longford Community Resources clg.).

The LEADER Programme progressed in 2018 from a relatively slow start in 2017. A consolidated version of the Programme's Operating Rules was issued at the end of 2017, and this together with Circulars issued, the review of local policies and other changes led to a less bureaucratic process for Promoters (applicants) to follow.

In Longford the progress of applications in 2018 was as follows:

Targeted Calls 2018

There was one Targeted Time Limited Call (TTL) in 2018 and two Expressions of Interest (EOIs) were received under this. The TTL was for EOIs to undertake comprehensive audits of available enterprise spaces in the county. Both EOIs were approved for progression to application stage with a closing date of 19th October, 2018. In early 2019, these two applications will be forwarded to the LEADER Independent Evaluation Committee for recommendation and subsequently to the LAG for funding decision/approval.

Rolling Call EOIs & Applications 2018

During 2018 eighty-six EOIs were received by Longford LCDC. Seven of these EOIs were deemed ineligible, and twenty-five withdrew from the process – some finding other sources of funding or not being able to raise the required private match funding. Some of the remaining EOIs progressed to Application Stage prior to year-end.

In late 2018/early 2019 an 'open call' was held for EOIs from Sporting Organisations. Community groups could apply for projects or activities that have a specific community focus, or that will assist in the increase of participation from minority/disability groups/social inclusion. EOIs for standalone Carparks or Floodlighting would be ineligible.

Cooperation Projects

Longford Community Resources Clg. are working on a cooperation project (The Shannon-Erne Pilgrim Way Baseline Study) with 13 other partners, being led by West Limerick Resources. An EOI for preparatory funding for this project was approved by Longford LCDC in December 2017, and this project was approved by the Department in October 2018. Longford LCDC approved LEADER funding of €5,537.39 towards this cooperation project.

Project funding

During 2018 thirty-three projects were approved for LEADER funding by Longford LCDC, for grant aid totalling €940,762.83. Following payment by the Department of Rural & Community Development (DRCD) Longford County Council processed LEADER grant payments totalling €51,397.84 to nine Promoters in 2018.

HEALTHY IRELAND

Healthy Ireland is a Government-led initiative which aims to create an Irish society where everyone can enjoy physical and mental health, and where wellbeing is valued and supported at every level of society. It has come about because of concerns that the current health status of people living in Ireland – including lifestyle trends and health inequalities – is leading us towards a future that is dangerously unhealthy, and very likely unaffordable.



In 2016 the Government approved the creation of a Healthy Ireland Fund to establish and support the implementation of Healthy Ireland programmes and projects in a variety of settings. The primary aim of the fund is to support innovative, cross-sectoral, evidence-based projects and initiatives that support the implementation of key national policies in areas such as obesity, smoking, alcohol, physical activity and sexual health.

The funding has been allocated in two Strands to date, with Longford LCDC receiving €100,000 in the First Strand and €75,000 in the Second Strand (currently running until 30th June, 2019). Actions approved for funding are as below:

► Strand 1 Round 1:

- Longford Healthy County Plan (LCDC/LCC)
- Cross Sectoral Initiative (CYPSC)
- Accessible Playgrounds & Public Amenities (Access Officer, LCC)
- Resourcing for life-innovative initiatives (LSP)

- Promoting Health & Wellbeing
 - Teen Swim, (Attic Youth Club)
 - Teens on the Move (LCRL)
 - Teens Traveller Men's Health (LCRL)
 - Information Outreach Initiatives
 - Healthy Relationships Programme (Longford Women's Link)
 - Positive Parenting (Longford Library)
 - Longford Walking & Cycling Strategy (LCC)
 - Healthy & Wellbeing Initiatives for Young People (Foroige)
- **Strand 1 Round 2**
- Increase Participation in Athletics in the County (Longford Athletics Club)
 - Healthy Relationships Programme (Longford Women's Link)
 - Healthy Wellbeing Outreach – Community Initiatives
 - Positive Wellbeing for Men (Bridgeways & Lus na Greine FRCs)
 - Easy Healthy Living (Employment Development Information Centre)
 - Killoe Healthy Club
 - Health and Wellbeing Initiatives for Young People (Foroige)
 - Disability Initiatives / Accessible Playgrounds & Public Amenities (LSP/LCC)

Community Enhancement Programme 2018

The Community Enhancement Programme (CEP) is a new programme for 2018. It builds on and replaces the Communities Facilities Scheme and the recast RAPID programme. The CEP is funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development (the Department) and administered by the Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs) in each Local Authority area.

An allocation of €132,385 was made available to Longford LCDC, an extra allocation of €7,246 was given for the affiliated Men's Shed Association Sheds in Longford and a further general allocation of €94,525 was made available.

In total €234,156 was received from the Department for the programme and a total of 90 applications were received.

Information / Grant Roadshows

The LCDC and the Community Development team held Grant Information sessions in each of the Municipal Districts (21st May-Ballymahon, 22nd May- Longford, 23rd May Granard). The presentation outlined advice for groups in selecting the funding scheme to apply for, writing the application and documentation required for i) application & ii) claiming the grant. A handout of many of the funding schemes available to groups via the Local Authority (and some national bodies) was also circulated. Over 70 groups/individuals attended the sessions over the 3 days, and the information was well received.

Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP)

The Local Government Reform Act, 2014 provides that each Local Authority shall devise a six year Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) for its area. The purpose of the LECP is to identify and implement actions to strengthen and develop the economic and community dimensions of the County.

The plan consists of two parts:

- Economic Elements in respect of local economic development, and
- Community Elements in respect of local and community development

The two elements were prepared in parallel and adopted by the Local Authority as a unified plan in May 2016. This single, integrated economic and community plan will provide the basis for a more coherent, streamlined and co-ordinated approach to service planning and delivery locally.

The LECP has now entered the implementation phase, with the LCDC taking responsibility for the coordination and oversight of delivery for the community elements of the Plan, while the Economic Development and Enterprise Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) has responsibility for the economic elements of the Plan.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK



In 2018, an additional 78 new community groups registered with the County Longford Public Participation Network (PPN) bringing the total membership to 303. The Secretariat consisting of 9 voluntary members, held 8 monthly meetings in relation to the PPN Workplan and 2 workplan review meetings. The Financial subgroup met 7 times to oversee the PPN budget and financial transactions. Members of the Secretariat attended regional and National meetings and one Secretariat member sat on the National PPN Advisory Group Committee Q1 & Q2. The Secretariat is supported by a full time Development Officer employed by Longford County Council since April 2016.

Key Achievements during 2018 were:

- In Feb 2018 the PPN Disability Network developed Disability Awareness Training with Disability Federation Ireland (DFI) who delivered it to approx. 20 Council Staff (engineers, planners, roads, housing etc.)
- PPN Development Officer along with other council staff attended a reception held by An Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar to honour the great collaboration between frontline staff and the community in response to both Storm Ophelia and Emma (March 2018)
- Recruited a part- time administrator who commenced employment in April 2018. SLA drawn up between PPN Secretariat and Longford Warmer Homes who host the contract.
- Moved office in May 2018 to Aras an Chontae, Great Water Street. Longford PPN chosen as 1 of 4 out of 31 PPN's to pilot and develop a National initiative "Community Wellbeing Vision Toolkit".
- Longford PPN was the first in the country to develop their County and 3 Municipal District Wellbeing Vision Statements and get approval at the County Plenary Meeting June 2018
- The PPN and Longford Sports Partnership collaborated and delivered GDPR training to members in June 2018
- Based on the Wellbeing Visions the PPN Development Officer worked with Dr. Harriet Emmerson (consultant) to develop and roll out a training programme to enable PPN reps to bring community priorities to the boards/committees they sit on. Training delivered Nov 2018.
- PPN Disability Network collaborated with An Garda Síochána and brought Operation Enable (tackles the misuse of disabled bays and badges) to Longford in Dec 2018
- PPN Disability Network collaborated with Longford Chamber of Commerce and developed a disability awareness quiz which was rolled out to all national schools in the county Nov 2018. LCC held a reception for winning classes in Dec 2018.(organised by PPN).
- PPN supported the Regeneration Team in the establishment of the 3 Town Teams, Drumlisk / Ballinamuck, Ballymahon and Edgeworthstown.



Some of the PPN members developing their Wellbeing Visions



Asset Mapping at Wellbeing Vision Consultation

Committees and Number of PPN Representatives

Committees	Number PPN representatives
Longford Sports Partnership	4
County Heritage	1
Longford Volunteer Centre	1
County Longford Childcare Committee	1
County Longford Drug and Alcohol Forum / Midlands Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force	1 (same person for both committees)
Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)	5
Economic Development & Enterprise Strategic Policy Committee	2
Housing Strategic Policy Committee	3
Infrastructure & Environment Strategic Policy Committee	3
Planning and Development and Cultural Strategic Policy Committee	3
Joint Policing Committee	1

Older Persons Council	2
Longford Community Resources Ltd	2
County Longford Tourism	3
URBACT Local Group	5
LEADER Evaluation Committee	2

- Induction training delivered to new reps and groups by the PPN Development Officer Jan – Nov 2018
- PPN Development Officer supported groups with filling out funding applications
- PPN Groups collaborated with the Arts Office to create the Urban Forest project , trees made out of recycled materials to showcase at the Cruthu Arts Festival July 2018
- Weekly newsletters were circulated in 2018 as part of the PPN Communication Strategy as well as growing the PPN Facebook page which currently stands at 2006 followers. A PPN Twitter page is also active and Salesforce is used for on-line registration and mass e-mailing/texting
- County Longford PPN has established itself as the main hub around which information is distributed and received e.g. groups activities/events, training/workshops, consultations, funding opportunities etc.



Minister Ring, elected Councillors, Council Officials and PPN community group members



Winners of PPN/ Chamber of Commerce Disability Awareness Quiz



PPN Stand National Ploughing Championships 2018

LONGFORD SPORTS PARTNERSHIP



In 2018, Longford Sports Partnership ran 64 initiatives, 133 programmes under those initiatives and 5,090 people participating in this wide range of sports and physical activity programmes. Groups were supported through our small grants scheme and capacity built through a suite of training and education initiatives.

Highlights in 2018 included securing continued from Dormant Account Funding for the Community Sports Hub in Edgeworthstown with its official Launch. Other significant developments included the launch of new Strategic Plan by John Treacy at our inaugural Ganly's Sports Awards in conjunction with the Longford Leader. The LSP secured funding for a full time Community Sports Development Officer and Sports Inclusion Development Officer.

Resourcing and Funding

The LSP was successful in securing €394,000 in funding from a number of providers during 2018:

- Sport Ireland Core Funding
- HSE: SIDO programming, Plus approx. €20,000 from Healthy Ireland
- Age and Opportunity Ireland, Department Of Health & Children-Sports, Dept of Agriculture and Food, Waterways Ireland and Canoeing Ireland
- Dormant Accounts funding:
 - ❖ Community Sports Hub
 - ❖ Community Coaching
 - ❖ Sports Leadership
 - ❖ Urban Outdoor Adventure Initiative



LSP Board

Longford County Council: Councillors John Browne, Mark Casey and Martin Mulleady; Paddy Mahon, Chief Executive.

Sporting Representatives: Stephen Coy, Field Sports; Shirley Maloney, Minority Sport; Paul Clancy, Aquatics; Peter Reilly, Field Sports.

Other agency representatives: Cllr. Peggy Nolan, ETB; Clodagh Armitage, HSE; Martin Tarmey, Disability, James O'Brien, Facilities; Cllr. Mae Sexton, LCR clg; Michael Belton, An Garda Síochána; Joe Quinn, Youth Services, Frank Horne, RAPID, Breda Greaves, Older Adults.

The AGM of the Board was held on 20th March 2018.

Developing of Local Sports Infrastructure

Through our funding work, the LSP supported 13 clubs in securing grant aid to support their junior structures, coach and education initiatives and target group programming. Other club development work included support in relation to committee roles, governance and child protection issues.



Delivery of Sport Ireland Programmes



Operation Transformation walks kicked off 2018 in Aughnaclyffe, Edgeworthstown, Longford Town, Ballymahon, Granard and Ballinamuck. These weekly walks lasted 6 weeks.

To date 4,470 school children in 36 schools have received the *Buntús* programme, with follow up refresher training available on request.

The LSP delivered training and education courses, workshops and seminars along with partner agencies. These included 6 Safeguarding Level 1 courses and 2 Safeguarding Level 2. In total, 89 people representing sports throughout Longford participated on these training courses.

Programme Delivery



Schools Programmes - Sportshall Athletics were rolled out around the County with over 432 pupils taking part through 12 schools. *Garda Community Sports day* is a multi-agency effort with 421 children taking part from across the county. *Daily Mile* saw over 700 children from 8 schools without wasting time to change into kit, every child in a school goes out each day in the fresh air to run, jog or walk for 15 minutes. It is not competitive and most children average a mile, with some doing more and some doing less.

Pony Riding, Welfare and Control Programme saw 16 young people from within the travelling community and participants from low income backgrounds learn about horses, further careers and importance of responsibility in this 6-week programme.

320 people took part in activities as part of national *BikeWeek*. Clubs and local groups supported events which included Longford Bikers' Brunch, Clondra Family Cycle, the Tarmonator Triathlon, Kidathon and the Longford Cycle Tour.

The LSP in 2018 increased their participation for older adults, with training in *Go for Life Games*, attending a *Go for Life Regional Blitz* and sending a team to the *National Go for Life Blitz* in DCU.

Under the **Urban Outdoor Adventure Initiative** Longford LSP chose to develop the sport of *Parkour*. We facilitated 13 local coaches were trained as level 1 Parkour coaches through Parkour UK. Indoor equipment was purchased to compliment the Ireland's First Outdoor Parkour Park in Longford and create further opportunities for the sport to grow in Longford. So far 22 students took part in a Parkour Taster session, with the aim to roll it out to all schools in 2019 and official launch the programme.



Community Sports Hub in Edgeworthstown has really made a difference in its local community by purchasing functional gym equipment and making this a useable space, getting floor covering and much more. The numbers of people into the community centre has really increased. 322 people benefited from programmes ran by the Hub included Couch to 5km Programme, Zumba, Go for Life Games, Yoga, Chair Pilates for PWD, Intercultural Family Fun Day, Sports Evening and Intercultural Soccer Tournament, with exciting plans for 2019.



2018 saw a number of programmes implemented using the beautiful natural resources that Longford has to offer. These included *Paddles Up*, *Women on the Water*, *10K Blueway Kayaking Programme*, *10K Blueway Event*, *Day Time Walking Groups*, *National Play Day* and *Clondra Splash*, 244 people took part in these programmes and soaked in the beautiful sunshine we had in 2018 in County Longford.



Sports Inclusion Disability Programme

SNAG Programme start new at Golf programme was introduced. *Kurling, Boccia and Pickeball Programme* continued to be implemented for pan disabilities, to become part of Inclusive Games. Longford LSP Continued to work with FAI and IRFU Development Officers to run *Kickstart to Recovery, Walking Football, Football for All, Catch me if you can, Twilight Programme and Tag Rugby* to people with disabilities or mental health difficulties, with continued partnership with St Christopher's Services and CAMHS, for children/young adults and parents to participate in sports based in community.

Football in the Community



The **Late Night Soccer League** saw over 200 young people engage. In addition, the women's game saw girls from Longford town schools take part in the *FAI Primary Girls Futsal, Glow Football and Soccer Sisters* also went down a hit with the girls in Longford.

Walking Football taster sessions happened in the 16 Men's Shed throughout Longford with the main issue being trying to stop the men from running, a league hopefully starting in 2019.

KOWELS programme for migrants to improve English language theory and practice through the ETB and the coach looks to reinforce it through football training and much more soccer took place throughout the county.



Rugby Community Coaching

2018 saw a new CCRO in Longford. The mini's programme in the schools was ongoing with over 500 children benefiting since September. In October there was a Blitz day held with over 200 children attending from around Longford. There was a summer camps held for everyone and 60 children enjoyed the sun while playing rugby.



GAA Community Partnership

The development officer post for the GAA has been filled and we are looking forward to seeing the programmes and initiatives delivered. During this absence the GAA rolled out on a number of initiatives including national school coaching, indoor hurling blitz, work in DEIS schools, Gaelic4Teens, TY coaching in Mean Scoil Mhuire and fundamentals coaching for ladies' clubs. Training was also provided in the areas of refereeing, first aid and foundation level awards.

A summary of the LSP and Sport Ireland target groups engaged during this period:

- Unemployed people
- Children of primary school age
- Men aged 18-50
- Coaches
- People with mental health difficulties
- People with a physical disability
- People with a sensory disability
- People with an intellectual disability
- Disadvantaged Communities
- Women aged 18-50
- Sports club volunteers
- Youth at risk
- Migrant communities
- Secondary school girls
- Secondary school boys

Building and Sustaining Partnerships

The community partnerships with the National Governing Bodies of Sport and Longford County Council, Westmeath Sports Partnership and Leitrim County Council continue to contribute significantly to creating opportunities for sports participation, particularly in areas of disadvantage. The LSP works closely with these agencies on the planning and monitoring of annual work plans.

Our annual sports fora and sports ability forum continue to work with clubs and groups to build capacity within areas and identify priorities.

As part of our awareness raising and committee work, the LSP had representation on several committees including the Healthy Ireland Steering Committee, Longford Tourism, Intercultural Committee, Sports Hub Steering Committee and Longford Volunteer Manager Forum.

Other working partners over the period included:

- Age and Opportunity
- Disability Organisations
- HSE
- Gardaí
- Government Departments
- Local Authority
- Dormant Accounts
- Local Community Development Committees
- Cara Centre
- Public Participation Network
- Registered Sporting Organisations
- Other LSPs
- Sport Ireland
- Tourism Agencies
- Primary Schools
- Education and Training Board
- Youth Services Organisations
- Pobal/ LEADER/ Area Based Partnerships
- Post-Primary Schools
- Community Organisations

Information Delivery

The LSP strategic planning saw the new 2018-2021 strategy launched. The LSP continues to use its social media platforms, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter to communicate with clubs and groups in the County, enjoying a strong following on both. In addition, a new website was completed. Longford Sports Partnership has a good relationship with sports section of the Longford Leader, and distribution lists for schools, sports clubs, local businesses and other agencies.

Finally, the **Ganly's Longford Sports Star Awards 2018** took place. Longford Pony Club were crowned overall 2018 winners, with fourteen other awards given on the night, including Volunteer of the Year and an Exceptional Service to Sport Award. The results were dominated by female and junior athletes across several minority sports. The partnership with the Longford Leader and Ganly's ensured great publicity, sustained throughout the year.



Longford Sports Partnership continues to be very thankful to Longford County Council, Sport Ireland, HSE, other funders, local agencies and representatives on the Sports Partnership board.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENTERPRISE

The local economy continued to grow in 2018 on the back of strong performance from many local firms, strong infrastructural spend from the local authority and a growing sense of confidence that the economic outlook for County Longford is very positive.



County Longford Diaspora Launch Feb 2018

The only dampener on economic outlook was the whole uncertainty around Brexit, a situation that pertained all through 2018 and made firms cautious about capital investment decisions. This was particularly the case for those firms with international exposure. The Government through its different agencies has done its best to help firms prepare for Brexit and it is hopeful that through good planning and a hopeful soft Brexit in 2019 that the potentially negative impact on the SME sector can be minimised.

In County Longford local firms continued in expansion mode in 2018. The development of the biggest single tourism project in the history of the state, the Center Parcs resort outside Ballymahon continued during the year with over 750 construction workers on site at any one time. It remains on track to open during the Summer of 2019 and to put county Longford on the map as a tourism destination.

Our largest plant, Abbott Ireland, a SHINGO award winning plant continued in expansion mode during the year and is now one of the most advanced Medtech plants in the country. Panelto Foods opened its latest extension to its production facility and is now one of the most advanced food processing plants in Europe. A number of I.D.A. announcements during the year confirmed new owners of the former Cameron Ireland facility with the promise of manufacturing jobs and the formal acquisition of the Finesse Medical plant by Avery Dennison, a large American multi-national that will result in future expansion in Longford and increased local employment opportunities.

The local LEO office continues to support the needs of the micro-firm's sector and to support the efforts of the economic development unit in Longford County Council in promoting the County as a viable location for business investment.

The Local Authority's Regeneration team coordinated several funding applications during 2018 to a range of Government Regeneration Programmes. This regeneration effort which will bring about infrastructural improvements and public realm enhancement has the potential to improve the economic fabric and living environment for the Counties' citizens. These regeneration works should also help the different authorities strengthen their efforts in promoting the county as a good location for inward investment.

The Local Authority continued to work closely with neighbouring counties to promote the region as a good place to live work and invest. Working with Westmeath, Laois and Offaly under the Regional Action Plan for Jobs and with Cavan, Roscommon and Leitrim under the UESFE programme the local authority realises that there is strength in collaboration and an agreed approach to bring about economic growth and development to the whole region. Several joint initiatives and events were run during 2018 to support these aims.

The Business Incentive Scheme introduced in 2015 continued to be available to help firms moving into vacant units and the volume of vacant industrial stock greatly diminished during 2018.

The Local Authority has been proactive in establishing direct communication channels with its key employers, its business associations and with its economic diaspora. It met with its Dublin based diaspora group and representatives from its New York diaspora during 2018 and that group continues to provide advice and practical supports in the efforts to attract investment to the County.



Opening of the Longford Business Expo 2018



Business Breakfast at the Longford Expo

During 2018, Longford County Council made several submissions to National and Regional plans that will determine the future economic shape of rural Ireland and it continues to work in partnership with all the key support and development agencies and this partnership approach to economic growth should reap rewards going forward.

Longford Business Expo

In co-ordination with Longford Chamber of Commerce, the LEO Office co-ordinated a Business Expo on 28th & 29th September, showcasing 100 local enterprises over two days in the Riverside Shopping Centre. The Expo included a business seminar that incorporated a business networking element and a fashion event. The event attracted in excess of 2,000 visitors over the two days



Digital Marketing



LEO Longford hosted Regional National Women's Enterprise Day event in Backstage Theatre. Over 100 women in business attended from across the region, counties Laois, Longford, Offaly and Westmeath

LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE

Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) were established in April 2014 as a function of local government. They act as the primary reference point for all queries related to business start-up and small business growth and offer a 'First Stop Shop' service to persons seeking information, advice, guidance or support in relation to micro-enterprise development.

The LEO office works in partnership with a range of other agencies to ensure that people can quickly access the most relevant supports linked to their needs at a particular time and it strives at all times to promote the value of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship in helping to grow local economies.

The LEO Longford works closely with its target audience to drive the development of local enterprise, placing local small firms at the heart of job creation. It delivers a diverse range of supports in a focused manner, building close professional relationships that result in clients repeatedly using the LEO office as a resource.

2018 was a constructive year for LEO Longford with proactive engagement with hundreds of small firms across the County. Job numbers in firms supported directly by the LEO Longford office grew by 70. LEO Longford approved 26 projects for direct financial assistance during the year, compared to 23 the previous year.



LEO Longford ranks high in customer care score and satisfaction ratings surveys and it strives to deliver high quality and multi-varied services and supports to its ever-expanding customer and client base throughout Longford.

The LEO continued to roll-out its range of soft support measures to include training, mentoring and in-company supports. In 2018 over 58 participants availed of mentoring support while 682 participants availed of some form of structured training.

Supports are designed to be delivered in a flexible manner and tailored specifically to meet the needs of new and growing enterprises. Tailored programmes are designed to support target groups such as Back to Enterprise clients, individual sectors such as food and under-developed sectors such as women in business.

The LEO Longford continued to promote Government initiatives designed to stimulate local enterprise particularly Employer Job Incentive Schemes and Access to Credit Schemes. Of particular importance in 2018 was support offered to small firms concerned about the impact of Brexit. Longford LEO was a key local support channel helping the government to roll out its dedicated range of supports designed to support SMEs through the Brexit process.



In the area of education, the LEO Longford continued to support the Student Enterprise Programme as a primary vehicle for instilling an understanding and appreciation of enterprise into our young people.

It also continued to support the National Enterprise Awards as a high profile opportunity to highlight the achievements of small businesses and entrepreneurs.

The LEO worked closely with all local media to promote local enterprise, to highlight successes and raise concerns that impact on this sector. It continued to promote its services on its dedicated website www.localenterprise.ie/longford and made increasing use of social media to get its message out to its client base.



Regional Final of Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur hosted by Donegal. Longford were represented by Warren Belton for a new gym concept, Lorna Halligan of Nine Arches in Ballymahon and Tess Gillen of Longford Fitness.



TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

2018 was another year where the tourism sector in Longford continued to make positive strides in tourism related infrastructural improvements, in the development of attractions and facilities and in the promotion of Longford as a tourism destination.



A key announcement in 2018 was Failte Ireland's decision to establish a new Regional Brand that would include County Longford in its promotional efforts. The launch of the Hidden

Heartlands brand has given the region a timely boost and will hopefully see it being marketed on a par with the other branded regions which should result in a significant rise in visitor numbers.

All the relevant authorities including Longford County Council recognise the potential for tourism to become a much more significant economic driver for the County. Of course, the opening of the landmark Center Parcs Resort in Longford Forest, Ballymahon in 2019 will have a transformational impact on the Region and automatically give the County destination status. The challenge for everyone involved in tourism is to maximise the potential from the large number of extra visitors expected to visit Center Parcs into the future.



Longford County Council is at the heart of almost all this effort and works closely with County Longford Tourism Committee on the implementation of its strategic objectives for tourism in the County.

The recruitment of a dedicated Tourism Officer in early 2018 has greatly helped the Local Authority in the implementation of tourism plans and actions. This new resource provides the focal point through which new tourism initiatives and events can be planned and coordinated. It also helps to ensure that our tourism product is presented to the market in an informative, relevant up-to-date manner.

In 2018 all bodies involved in tourism continued to develop infrastructure projects such as the Royal Canal Walkway, cycling trails and community backed projects. The availability of Government funds was a tremendous catalyst for the instigation and progression of different projects and all corners of the County have been able to progress tourism projects during the year. The opening of the community developed Knights & Conquests visitor experience Centre in Granard is a tremendous example of what can be achieved when local groups are supported by Central Government and the Local Authority in their ambition to promote their local area.

The Tourism Committee continued to work on a marketing strategy for the County to increase the County's appeal as a tourism destination to identified target market segments. In 2018 work continued on a new website www.visitlongford.ie, an active social media presence, new promotional materials, along with maps and brochures designed to inform and educate visitors on the wide variety of tourism experiences available in County Longford.

As well as acting as a promoter of all local festivals and events, County Longford Tourism Committee also facilitated the delivery of training to tourism providers and has sought to increase the investment in tourism locally by accessing funds from as many funding sources as possible.

The Local Authority also continued to work with community and specific interest groups in 2018 on initiatives and events designed to build tourism products. In addition, the LCDC committee has a vital oversight role in the implementation of the current LEADER programme and its associated heavy emphasis on local tourism development.



LONGFORD ARTS OFFICE

The primary Arts Office achievements of 2018 was to be awarded the **Excellence in Local Government Award**



Category; Supporting the Arts
Project; Longford Schools Photography Programme

Activity and Description	Corporate Plan 2015 -2019 Strategic Functional Objectives
<p>Drama League of Ireland Summer School Bursary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provided financial support to Longford actor to attend the Drama Summer School. ○ Provided support for Director to attend Directors Course. 	<p>Facilitated creative capacity development among the young</p>
<p>Joint Projects with Backstage Theatre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Support the development costs of the Dance Artist in Residence, Catherine Young’s new work State of Exception in March 2018. ○ Supported the costs of engaging theatre facilitators and production costs of a co-production of a new play ‘Beetroot in collaboration with Backstage Youth Theatre ○ Supported the delivery of school workshops in Creative Writing and the development costs of a stage adaptation of ‘The Velveteen Rabbit’ by Maisie Lee. ○ Supported the costs of ‘Playmaking’, a community arts project involving a programme of workshops with children in playwriting, facilitated by Artist in Residence, Maisie Lee, which will culminate in performances of short plays written by the children and performed by professional actors in the Aisling Children’s Arts Festival 	<p>Facilitated creative capacity development among the young</p>
<p>Mid Street Theatre Company</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Supported workshop and performances of this fledgling street theatre company 	<p>Facilitated creative capacity development among the young. Promote access to and increased participation in the Arts. Develop public awareness and appreciation of the value of the arts.</p>
<p>Mid Samba Band</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Supported the ongoing development of the Samba Band 	<p>Facilitated creative capacity development among the young. Promote access to and increased participation in the Arts. Develop public awareness and appreciation of the value of the arts.</p>

Music/Dance

<p>School of Rock</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support this innovative initiative for young rock musicians aged 10 to 18 years old 	Facilitated creative capacity development among the young
<p>Longford Live & Local Recordings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported a series of live music events in various genres to try to re-vitalise the live music scene in Longford 	Promote access to and increased participation in the Arts. Develop public awareness and appreciation of the value of the arts.
<p>Lassus Choral Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organised a recital of internationally renowned choral group Lassus in Longford Cathedral 	Develop public awareness and appreciation of the value of the arts.
<p>Ardagh Folk Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organised the filming of the national award group for www.longfordmusic.ie 	Promote access to and increased participation in the Arts
<p>Longford Classical Club</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organised classical concerts to raise public awareness 	Develop public awareness and appreciation of the value of the arts.
<p>Dance Residency Backstage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported Dancer – in - Residence in partnership with Backstage Theatre 	Facilitated creative capacity development among the young
<p>Longford Choral Activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported various Longford Choirs 	
<p>Recorded Edgeworthstown Choirs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recorded both the children’s choir and adult folk group for broadcast on www.longfordmusic.ie 	Promote access to and increased participation in the Music. Develop public awareness and appreciation of the value of the Music.

Creative Writing

<p>Longford Writers Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Longford has five active writers groups we supported the activities of Longford, Goldsmith, Lasrai, Under the Motte and Lanesborough Writers Groups through the year. 	Promote access to and increased participation in literature.
<p>Literary Evenings/Poetry Slams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported a series of literary events in Backstage Canal Studio, Ardagh Creativity Centre, and Market Bar Longford. See www.virtualwriter.ie 	Facilitated creative capacity development among the writers. Promote access to and increased participation in the Literature. Develop public awareness and appreciation of the value of the literature.

Visual Arts

<p>Longford Schools Photography Programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ireland’s largest and longest running Schools Photography Programme. Involves students in all secondary schools in the county as well as Mullingar and Mohill. Emphasis photography as art developing the student’s visual and aesthetic awareness teaches students to view the subject not just as a visual and physical object but also from a conceptual perspective. See: http://www.longforddigitalarts.ie/schools-photography-program/overview 	Facilitated creative capacity development among the young
<p>Schools Programme Exhibition, Awards & Project launch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LSPP culminates each year with an exhibition of students work , awards presentation and the launch of the project for the year usually a publication of the students’ work on typical social issues drug abuse, mental illness – depression etc. helped fund, promote and organise the event 	Facilitated creative capacity development among the young
<p>Expressions International Portrait Photography Competition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> International art portrait photography competition. 50% submissions Irish 50% international. This year enlarged 50 short listed entries mounted them on all weather material and exhibited them on lamp posts walls and temporary hoardings around the town turning the town into an open air gallery of photography during Cruthu. 	Promote access to and increased participation in photography.

<p>Joint Exhibition Programme with Atrium Gallery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sponsored and helped to organise exhibition of seven painters and photographers: Phil Atkinson/Angela Tuite/Mary Grey/Lar McGuire/Josephine Guilfoyle/ Mary Reilly/Phil Atkinson/Shelley Corcoran/ Angelika Sowul/Eibhlin Crossan/Alisa Rey/ Sean Considine see: www.visuallongford.ie 	<p>Facilitated creative capacity development among the photographers.</p>
<p>Mercy Convent Ballymahon Public Art Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Funded imaginative glass art project for the above schools. The students visited the studio of glass artist Michelle O'Donnell where they each designed and help to fashion a unique avian image which was cast in glass and erected as a flight of birds along the wall of the student's canteen. See: www.longfordvisualarts.ie 	<p>Facilitated creative capacity development among the young.</p>

Festivals

<p>Cruthu Multi-disciplinary Arts Festival</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Established the original festival. Funded this year's festival. Worked closely with the committee to deliver this year's programme. Placed special emphasis on a community art project: The Temporary Public Art Project. Engaged seven community groups e.g. Men's Sheds to create seven pieces under the guidance of a professional artist each piece was exhibited in a prominent location in Longford Town during Cruthu. 	<p>Facilitated creative capacity development among the arts. Promote access to and increased participation in the arts. Develop public awareness and appreciation of the value of the arts.</p>
<p>Ardagh Fright Fest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Annual Halloween-themed children's arts & fun festival run by Ardagh Creativity Centre. 	<p>Promote access to and increased participation in the arts. Develop public awareness and appreciation of the value of the arts.</p>
<p>Aisling Children's Festival</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Long established and excellent county-wide children's arts festival. A truly community based festival event both in committee composition, programming, geographical spread and insistence on free events or lowest possible ticket costs to ensure maximum social and economic inclusion. We financially support the committee and work with them at festival time. 	<p>Facilitated creative capacity development among the young.</p>
<p>Edgeworth Literary Weekend</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Well organised weekend of poetry and prose the contemporary element of which is supported by the A. O. However a heavy emphasis on cultural heritage and tourism objectives means that it is of limited value to the literary development of the county. 	<p>Promote access to and increased participation in the arts. Develop public awareness and appreciation of the value of the arts.</p>
<p>Lanesborough Lough Ree Monster Festival</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ New community festival. Provided Mide to perform and funding towards' Monster' float 	<p>Promote access to and increased participation in the arts. Develop public awareness and appreciation of the value of the arts.</p>

Publishing

<p>Midland Arts & Culture Magazine</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Published two editions of this popular and successful magazine. 	<p>Develop public awareness and appreciation of the value of the arts.</p>
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Requests for Information

	Number
Freedom of Information (FOI) Requests	95
Number of Internal Reviews on FOI Requests	1
Number of appeals to the Information Commissioner on FOI decisions	0
Number of Information on the Environment Requests	2

Protected Disclosures Act

Longford County Council received no protected disclosures

Franchise

The 2018/2019 Register of Electors came into force on the 15th February 2018 until 14th February 2019. The numbers registered to vote on the 2018/2019 Register of Electors were –

Local Electoral Area	Number
Ballymahon	10,594
Granard	10,864
Longford	9,667
Total	31,125

During 2018, two Supplements to the Register of Electors were prepared in advance of the –

- Thirty Sixth Amendment of the Constitution Bill 2018 on 25th May 2018
- Presidential Election on 26th October 2018

Official Languages Act

Longford County Council's first Irish Language Scheme previously agreed with the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht following the passing of the Official Languages Act, is still in operation. It was determined in 2016 that it was prudent in the context of information available and the expected publication of further legislation to delay the preparation of further language schemes. The Irish Language Commissioner, Rónán Ó Domhnaill, has indicated that his office will no longer be engaged in the supervision of the implementation of Local Authority Language Schemes following report completed by his office in 2017 in relation to the efficacy of such schemes.

The new Bill relating to the Official Languages Act has not yet been passed in the Dáil. It is hoped that the new Bill will allow for the introduction of reasonable measures for the promotion of the Irish language across all local authorities. It is expected that the new Bill will set out a new set of standards/duties which all public bodies will be required to comply with and penalties will be imposed in situations where these standards are not achieved. It is envisaged that expected standards may incorporate the following:

- Recruitment (% to be determined of new recruits to the service will have proficiency in Irish)
- Public body websites
- Signage in towns and heritage sites etc
- Assessment of the accessibility of an Irish language services in a public body

The Irish Language Officer carried out the following activities in 2018 to promote the Irish language -

- Two courses of 6 classes each in Irish at basic to intermediate level were held in the main branch library.
- An Irish language conversational group held weekly lunchtime gatherings for 8 weeks on two separate occasions during the year and marked Seachtain na Gaeilge by holding a special celebratory Irish poetry reading and music session in the main branch library
- Seachtain na Gaeilge was celebrated by holding quizzes in Irish and facilitating Irish storytelling events for local schools in a number of branch libraries. New Irish books for both children and adults were displayed in all branches.
- In May, the Irish Language Officer attended a network meeting for local authority Irish Language Officers.
- In June, to celebrate Bliain na Gaeilge, the Irish Language Officer organised a week-long series of Irish language events supported by grant funding from Creative Ireland.

- Supported by the Council, the Irish Language Officer attended an Irish Course from the 2nd to 6th July in University College Dublin, to maintain her standard of Irish and carry out Irish Language Officer duties in a competent manner.
- In October, following a competitive application process, the Irish Language Officer secured a grant of €2,800 from Foras na Gaeilge towards funding of Irish Language events for the Children's Book Festival.
- The Irish Language Officer working with relevant departments ensured that any complaints received from the Irish Language Commissioner's Office were handled and dealt with.

Implementation of the Council's obligations under Official Languages Act will continue to be monitored throughout 2019. The co-operation of the Elected Members in the ongoing implementation of the Council's obligations under the Official Languages Act is hereby acknowledged.

Meetings of Longford County Council

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

11th April 2018

Barry Kenny, Corporate Communications Manager with Iarnrod Eireann addressed the members regarding rail services. Mr. Gerard Hagan was elected to the vacancy for the Granard Electoral Area, occasioned by the resignation of Councillor John Duffy.

9th May 2018

Kitty Hughes, Chairperson of County Longford Older Persons Council and Des Skelly, Vice Chairperson gave a presentation regarding the Older Persons Council. The Cathaoirleach launched the "What's On Guide to County Longford"

AGM 21st June 2018

Councillor Luie McEntire was elected Cathaoirleach of the Council until the 2019 Annual Meeting. Councillor Mae Sexton was elected Leas Cathaoirleach of the Council until the 2019 Annual Meeting.

12th September 2018

The September 2018 Monthly Meeting was adjourned as a mark of respect to Councillor Mark Casey on the death of his wife, Bernadette.

18th September 2018

A Special Meeting of the Council was held on the 18th September 2018 to consider requests received from applicants seeking the nomination of Longford County Council to contest the Presidential Election on the 26th October.

- Presidential Candidate John Groarke addressed the members.
- Sarah Louise Mulligan addressed the members by video.

The members unanimously agreed not to endorse any candidate for the 2018 Presidential Election.

10th October 2018

Paddy Matthews and Mark McGovern from Ireland's Hidden Heartlands gave a comprehensive presentation to the members regarding the Ireland's Hidden Heartlands Campaign.

14th November 2018

James Cawley gave a presentation regarding the work of Independent Living Movement Ireland.

Attendance of Representatives from IDA Ireland.

Denis Curran, Divisional Manager, Corporate Governance & Legal, EIT and Regional Business Development, Anne-Marie Tierney Le-Roux, Department Manager, Regional Development and Ken Whitelaw, Midlands Regional Business Development Manager, attended the meeting.

26th November 2018

Budget for the Financial Year ending 31st December 2019 was adopted by the members.

12th December 2018

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Luie McEntire, launched The Garda Youth Achievement Awards.

Cathaoirleach's Awards Ceremony – 30th May 2018

- **Chris Cullen**, nominated by Ballymahon M.D. in recognition of his community work in Lanesboro.
- **Eimear Caslin**, nominated by Longford M.D. in recognition of her outstanding business achievements.
- **Fr. Michael Campbell**, nominated by Granard M.D. in recognition of his pastoral work in the Parish of Abbeylara and surrounding areas.
- **Mick Flavin**, Overall Award in recognition of his outstanding contribution to Country & Western Music in Ireland.



Fr. Michael Campbell, Granard MD



Eimear Caslin, Longford MD



Chris Cullen, Ballymahon MD



Mick Flavin, Overall Award

Civic Receptions

16th July 2018 - 7th International Farrell Clan Gathering



27th July 2018 - 21st Anniversary of The Ballinamuck & Essert De Belfort Twinning Agreement



21st June 2018 - St. Mel's Musical Society 40th Anniversary



14th November 2018 - Presentations to staff from St. Christopher's Services Ltd. who carried out cleaning duties in the County Council buildings over the years



Audit Committee

The Audit Committee provides an independent expert review, assessment and advice on financial management and reporting processes, internal control systems and procedures, risk management and audit matters. The Committee's role is primarily an advisory one and the Committee is not vested with any executive powers or any statutory powers of investigation or enquiry. The statutory functions of the Audit Committee are set out in Section 122(2)(a) to (f) of the functions of the Local Government Act 2001 and in S.I. 244 of 2014 entitled Local Government (Audit Committee) Regulations, 2014.

The Audit Committee met on the 9th February, 9th March, 20th April, 27th July, 28th September and 7th December 2018. The Committee examined a number of issues within its remit and issued recommendations where appropriate.

HUMAN RESOURCES

The Human Resources Department supports the Management Team in the strategic management of its most valuable resource – its employees. The work of the Human Resources Department includes recruitment, implementation of policies and procedures, payroll processing, attendance management, training and development, performance management, compliance with statutory legislation and industrial relations. The principles and operating framework for 2018 continued to be guided by Government Policy decisions in relation to Public Services.

Key highlights of the activities undertaken by the HR Department in 2018 are outlined below:

Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment and selection procedures are operated in an open and fair manner, in line with good practice recruitment and selection standards, employment legislation and relevant Departmental Circulars and guidelines. Significant recruitment activity continued in 2018 with statistics outlined below –

Competitions advertised	Interview days	Applicants invited for interview	Applicants attended for interview	Appointments	Retirements
29	41	322	282	29	5

Workforce Planning

The Council's Workforce Plan & Strategy 2016-2021 was finalised and submitted to the Department in March 2016. Human Resources continues to actively participate in the decision making process and assessment of staff requirements and projections for future workforce to enable Longford County Council response to the Public Service Reform Agenda, having due regard to the priorities identified in the Council's Corporate Plan.

Attendance Management

Longford County Council is committed to creating and maintaining a healthy and supportive work environment for employees and recognises the impact of absence on the work of the Council and on work colleagues. The Council is therefore committed to managing absence and where possible, to reduce and maintain the impact of absences and continued in 2018 its implementation of the Attendance Management Policy. The policy is underpinned by procedures to manage absence, in keeping with relevant statutory provisions, Sick Leave schemes and best practice. The Council is working to achieve the Public Service wide target for a reduction of time lost to absenteeism in line with Public Service Reform. Time & Attendance for employees is managed using the CORE (integrated HR system). This enables HR to provide up-to-date management reports on employee attendance.

National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012-2016

The National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012-2016 enacted in 2016 provides a legislative basis for the vetting of persons who seek positions of employment relating to children or vulnerable persons. This Act makes vetting mandatory.

Longford County Council as a 'Relevant Organisation' for the purpose of the Act is required to ensure that employees who it deems are engaged in activities encompassed by the Act are the subject of Garda Vetting. An assessment of the roles and activities undertaken by employees was conducted and based on this, employees in particular roles and service areas are subject to Garda Vetting. Human Resources continue the process of vetting employees in accordance with the requirements under the Act.

Employee Training and Development

The Council recognises the key role of its employees and is committed to their training & development. Human Resources developed an Employee Training & Development Policy and following a consultative process with the employee representative bodies and the Senior Officers Group this Policy was agreed with the Management Team and implemented in 2017.

This policy provides for the delivery of an annual training programme not only to ensure that all employees undertake mandatory training in accordance with legislative requirements but also to provide employees with opportunities to develop their skills and competencies to enhance service delivery and to further the strategic objectives of Longford County Council. The policy provided for support to employees who wished to undergo third-level education to promote both their professional and personal development.

Human Resources actively support's Health & Safety in the identification of training gaps, sourcing and provision of relevant workplace safety training and the maintenance of Health & Safety training records.

In 2018, Human Resources delivered a substantial training programme, using both internally and externally sourced trainers, and focussing on a wide range of areas including health & safety, information technology, leadership and change management. A total of 135 training programmes were delivered to 969 participants over 135.425 days across all disciplines in the following disciplines

- Abrasive wheels
- Confined Spaces
- Core
- Excel
- Dealing with Violence and Aggression in the workplace
- Fire Safety
- Health & Safety
- Manual Handling
- IOSH Refresher
- Managing safely in construction (IOSH)
- Safe lift passenger release training
- Driver CPC
- Procurement
- Safety representative training
- Safety statement induction training
- Safepass
- Signing, Lighting & Guarding

Industrial / Employee Relations

Industrial and Employee Relations forms a significant part of HR activities as employee concerns encompass a wide range of issues. Maintaining good industrial relations through ongoing interaction and engagement with all stakeholders serves to strengthen the employer /employee relationship. The main areas of engagement in 2018 related to Workforce Planning and matters covered under the revised Public Service Stability Agreement 2013-2018, Lansdowne Road Agreement (previously Haddington Road Agreement).

Moving Forward

In moving forward, the Human Resources Department will continue to target its operational work programme and initiatives to positively contribute to the accomplishment of the goals and objectives identified in the Council's Corporate Plan.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE AT WORK

Achieving workplace safety across a business as diverse as Longford County Council is a challenge. Managing health and safety can only be accomplished through the commitment of all employees. Longford County Council is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace through continuous improvement and includes health and safety as an integral part of business.

Certification to OHSAS 18001:2007

In 2014, Longford County Council was awarded certification of registration of the Occupational Health and Safety Management System to OHSAS 18001:2007 by the National Standard Authority of Ireland (NSAI).

OHSAS 18001:2007 is an internationally recognised standard for the management of Occupational Health and Safety. It is intended to assist Longford County Council to:

- Provide a safe place of work for all employees
- Comply with legal requirements and
- Control and manage health and safety risks associated with the work activities of the Council.

Longford County Council is recommended for certification to OHSAS 18001:2007 for cross organisational processes. The following departments were included within the scope of the audit.

- Facilities Management
- Corporate Services
- Housing
- Human Resources
- Libraries
- Roads
- Water Services
- Regeneration
- Environment
- Planning
- Community & Enterprise
- IT
- Finance
- Local Enterprise Office
- Arts
- Rapid
- Sports Partnership



In October 2018, the National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) completed a successful recertification audit.

This is a very important certification for Longford County Council and demonstrates the commitment to the management and continuous improvement of health and safety to make Longford County Council a safer place for all employees.

Regulatory Inspections

There was one inspection carried out by the Health and Safety Authority in 2018.

Summary of Accident/Incident Reports for 2018

The reporting of accidents and incidents is an important element of the safety management system and is used as a tool for identifying areas for continuous improvement.

A total of 39 accidents and incidents were reported during the year 2018.

There greatest number of incidents were reported in relation to Violence and Aggression and Driving for Work

Safety Statement/Risk Assessments

The Safety Statement is a document that every employer and County Council is legally obliged to have and must specify how the County Council manages health and safety.

The Longford County Council safety statement was updated during 2018 and obtained the 'Plain English' mark from the National Adult Literacy Agency. Plain English is a way of presenting information that helps someone understand it the first time they read or hear it. Longford is the first County Council in the country to receive the 'Plain English' mark for the Safety Statement.

Risk Assessments require completion for all work activities and buildings owned and/or operated by Longford County Council employees. A continuous programme for the completion, review, update and communication of risk assessments is in place for implementation within all sections of Longford County Council.

Safety Inspections

In 2018, Longford County Council continued with the Safety Inspection Program which sets out a programme of work for safety inspections to be completed at fixed and mobile work locations. The Inspections are carried out by each Directorate and a report is provided to the Management Team on a quarterly basis. The Inspections are a useful tool for determining compliance with Health and Safety requirements within the organisation. Any non compliance or issues identified in the Safety Inspections are added to an electronic action tracking system to ensure that all actions identified are addressed and satisfactorily closed by each section.

Health and Safety Auditing

In 2018, Longford County Council continued auditing of the health and safety management system. 16 days of auditing were completed in 2018. Auditing is an independent, systematic and thorough review of all elements of the safety management system. This involved an external auditor collecting information to determine the reliability and effectiveness of the safety management system. This is a useful process and assists the County Council achieve its objectives of legal compliance by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to improve the effectiveness of health and safety management through continuous improvement

Health and Safety Training

Training is a key element of promoting a positive safety culture and developing good safety procedures on the job. The training courses held included Safe Pass, IOSH Managing Safely in Construction, Driver CPS, Chain Saw, Asbestos Awareness, Manual Handling and Locating Underground Services training.

Communication and Consultation

The Council consults and communicates with employees using the following methods:

- Preparation of Risk Assessments and Standard Operating Procedures
- Monthly safety reports;
- Safety representatives;
- Safety Monitoring Consultative Committee meetings (in each department);
- Safety Management Committee meetings; and
- Management Team meetings.

The Safety Monitoring Consultative Committee Meetings were held in each Directorate on a quarterly basis. Each Committee is chaired by the Director, and includes elected Safety Representatives, Line Managers and the Health and Safety Officer. This process allows for specific safety issues within each Directorate to be discussed. It is a legal requirement to have this process in place for addressing health and safety issues and giving safety representatives an opportunity to raise safety issues on behalf of their work colleagues.

Safety Management Team Meetings were held four times during the year to address issues raised at the Safety Monitoring Consultative Committee Meetings. This meeting is also used evaluate compliance with the health and safety legislation and to review progress on the Annual Programme of Works. The intranet is used as a communication tool for up to date content of the Safety Management System.

The Health and Safety Officer attends the Management Team meeting each month and provides an update on accidents and incidents, operational issues and national developments in Health and Safety.

The Safety Report is prepared each month by the Health and Safety Officer and circulated to all employees. This is an effective way of communicating relevant information in relation to Health and Safety matters to all employees and contributes to the development of a positive health and safety culture with all employees.

Contractors

Longford County Council continues to assess Contractors that work on their behalf in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations, 2013. Every Contractor completes a Health and Safety Questionnaire and this is assessed by Longford County Council to determine their competency and compliance with Health and Safety requirements.

2018 – Workforce Fatalities in Ireland

There were 37 people fatally injured in work related accidents last year. Longford County Council remains fully committed to managing health and safety and will continue to develop the Safety Management System to ensure a safe place of work for all its employees and members of the public.

Health and Safety Awards 2018

In 2018, Longford County Council submitted an application for the National Irish Safety Awards (NISO). The Council won the best Local Authority Award, making it the fourth year in a row for Longford County Council to win one of the top prizes.



NISO have held safety awards for the last 27 years and these awards have become very important for all companies in Ireland. This year more than 120 companies entered the awards including three other Councils. To enter the awards, the Council had to make a submission under 11 sections and provide evidence of compliance with each of the sections. There were four categories of awards and the council were short listed for the top category. Winning the award would not have been possible without the commitment and input of all employees.

Annual Health and Safety Programme of Works – 2018

The 2018 annual programme of works takes account of this annual report, accidents and incidents, HSA inspections, outcomes from safety inspections and audits, safety meetings, legal requirements and any documents issued nationally for implementation.

LIBRARY, CULTURAL, HERITAGE AND ARCHIVES SERVICES

Longford County Library has six branch libraries: Longford, Ballymahon, Edgeworthstown, Granard, Drumlish and Lanesboro. Our branch libraries are a valued community space open and accessible to everyone and are increasingly being used as community hubs for a wide range of community and cultural events e.g. community meetings, readings, lectures, book launches, exhibitions, workshops etc. This is reflected in our library usage statistics which shows that 20% of the population in Longford are members, higher than the national average of 16% and over 230,000 visits were recorded to our libraries in 2018, the highest ever numbers of visits recorded in the county.

A number of important developments occurred this year -

- In January 2018 free library membership was introduced across all public libraries in the country.
- Customers of the library service in Longford are now able to request any item online or through their local branch library from any part of the country. These are delivered to their local branch library within 3 to 5 working days through a new national delivery service.
- A new public library strategy **Our Public Libraries 2022** Inspiring, Connecting and Empowering Communities was launched during the year setting out the vision for public libraries going forward.
- The local library membership card is now universal across Ireland and can be used in any of the 333 branch libraries in the country.

Digital Libraries present and Future

Longford County Library Service availed of Department of Rural and Community Development grant aid with matched funding support from Longford County Council to implement a programme of ICT upgrades and developments. Our aim is to maximize usage of libraries as Digital Learning centres providing customers with access to the latest technologies while also supporting and encouraging those less confident or familiar with technology.

Elements of this technology upgrade included -

- enhanced Wifi in all 6 branch libraries,
- an additional suite of ICT devices including Laptops and Ipads to support digital learning for citizens programmes,
- audio conferencing kits in Longford and Granard Libraries to support business and employment through the Work Matters Programme,
- digital display screens in Longford, Ballymahon and Lanesboro Libraries with content management to support and promote our monthly events programmes.

My Open Library

Work continued on the preparation of Ballymahon Library as an Open Library with a number of ICT upgrades and enhancements taking place including the installation of barcode scanning readers, self service printing and scanning service, CCTV and security upgrades. The My Open Library initiative offers extended opening hours by providing library access to Open Library Members from 8am to 10pm 7 days a week, 365 days per year with regular staffed hours continuing on the normal opening hour schedule to ensure optimum delivery of the service. It is envisaged that this new service will open early in 2019.

Edgeworthstown Community Library

Edgeworthstown District Development Association (EDDA) acquired a brownfield site on the Main Street, specifically for the provision of a new library for the local community. Longford County Council is working in partnership with them to deliver a new state of the art community library. Approval of €1.25 million for the project was granted by the Department of Rural and Community Development in 2017. A further €1.2 million was granted this year and an application under the Rural Regeneration fund has also been applied for as this project is part of Longford County Council's overall plan for the regeneration of the town. The tendering process is underway and it is hoped, with departmental approval, to progress to Stage 4 Build in 2019.



Paula Mulry, Longford Library, Minister Michael Ring and Chief Executive, Paddy Mahon at the launch of Our Public Libraries 2022

Branch Library Programme

Longford County Library's ethos for the library service is to make our libraries 'a welcoming space for all'. The library service maintains an ongoing programme to support reader development, literacy and learning for adults and children. Through this programme, over 200 events were run in branch libraries across the county this year. These events were promoted on the library website, on social media, in the local press and radio. Each branch library programme is tailored to meet the needs of the local community.

The library service also continues to nurture key partnership links with other statutory and community service providers and agencies, including: local schools, Longford Women's Link (LWL); Longford Older Persons Council, Longford Westmeath ETB, Longford Mental Health Association, Community Gardaí; HSE, and a host of local community groups.

Strategic National Programmes delivered by Longford County Library

Right to Read: An interagency collaborative working group has been established and an annual action plan has been rolled out which includes programmes such as Spring into Storytime, Summer Stars Annual Children's Book Festival, author visits, book promotions etc. During the Summer Stars reading programme children who signed up for the programme read 8,019 books and awards ceremonies was held in branch libraries throughout the month of September. A photographic competition *Love Longford* was run throughout the summer where children chose their favourite place in the county and a Calendar of the Children's work was produced at the end of the year.

Healthy Ireland At Your Library: This is a national health information/awareness programme promoting health and wellbeing in all communities. A selection of books, online health information, and a series of talks and workshops on various topics relating to all aspects of health and wellbeing were run in all branch libraries throughout the year. These events were very well attended with the most popular topics being on mental health and nutrition. Mobile clinics provided free by the Irish Heart Foundation were also in big demand.

Work Matters: This programme provides support to people seeking employment or developing small businesses. The key elements of the programme are bookstock and online resources to support employment, broadband, wifi, printing, scanning and photocopying facilities, events and programming. The programme is run in partnership with LEO, Chamber of Commerce, EDI, Longford Women's Link and Center Parcs. This year in particular, Center Parcs hosted a number of information meetings and 4 recruitment days in Ballymahon Community library.

Staff

Progress has been made on the Library Workforce Plan, which will ensure a better staff structure for the service and more opportunities to develop existing services and to rollout more new and innovative approaches to service delivery. A new staff workforce plan has been approved by the Management Team and will be submitted for approval to the Department early in 2019.

The Council acknowledges the cooperation, flexibility and commitment of the library service team in increasing usage of the service and ensuring that all service points remained open throughout the year, despite severe staff shortages.

Creative Ireland Programme

Creative Ireland is a culture based programme designed to promote individual, community and national wellbeing. The core proposition is that participation in cultural activity drives personal and collective creativity, with significant implications for individual and societal wellbeing and achievement. Running from 2017 to 2022, this programme is now ending its second year and here in Longford, Creative Ireland has contributed 112,500 euro to encouraging greater participation and engagement at local community level with all aspects of creativity and our rich cultural heritage. A Culture Team made up of representatives from key sectors of the local authority including Enterprise, Community, Heritage, Archives, Education is coordinated by the County Librarian and led by Director of Services Barbara Heslin. The national launch of the first 5 year County Culture and Creativity Plan by Taoiseach Leo Varadkar took place on 12th September.



Author John Connell speaking at the launch of 'The Cow Book' in Longford Library

Programme Highlights

In May 2018, we celebrated the **Edgeworth Literary Festival** and the 250th anniversary of the birth of renowned writer, Maria Edgeworth. Creative Ireland Longford funded **'Maria in Mind'**, a drama piece celebrating the life and work of Maria Edgeworth – it was written and directed by theatre director, Johnny Hanrahan. A special adaptation of **'Castle Rackrent'** with a large cast of local actors performed to full houses over three nights at the Backstage Theatre in November 2018.

The celebrations of Maria's birth also included an Irish Independent **newspaper supplement** which was funded by Longford County Council in partnership with the Edgeworth society and distributed free with the Irish Independent.

This year we also celebrated the second very successful **Padraic Colum Gathering** in September. It was a three day event exploring the life and work of one of Longford's best known writers and included the inaugural **Padraic Colum Gathering Poetry Competition** which received almost 100 submissions from around the globe in both the adult and young person's categories.

Longford Writers' Group undertook four projects in collaboration with Creative Ireland. These projects were a novella titled **'Let Him Lie'**, a one day workshop in playwriting and production, an exhibition of poetry and photographs titled **'A Place for Poetry'**, and a children's literature writing competition which was held as part of the Aisling Children's Arts Festival.

Children and young people are a priority of the programme with weekly coding workshops being run in all branch libraries throughout the county, creative writing, art, drama, and storytelling in schools and libraries and a number of special events most notably the first national **Cruinniú na nÓg** June 23rd, 2018. Twenty two separate events were held around the county including a day with the fairies in the Ardagh Heritage and Creativity Centre which featured as part of the national publicity campaign.



Cruinniú na nÓg Creativity Day for Children

This year also saw the revival of the **Granard Harp Festival** the oldest harp festival in Ireland with a packed three day programme of events celebrating the best of traditional harp and Irish music. This festival was organised in partnership with John Dungan Branch of **Comhaltas Ceoltoirí Éireann** and included traditional music and singing workshops, lectures, traditional busking, concerts, a Market day and much more.

The first **TedX Longford** (Changemakers) was also launched this year with 6 speakers addressing a range of topics to a full and appreciative audience in Backstage Theatre.

The **Donlon International Dance Company** from Germany led by Longford ballerina Marguerite Donlon captivated audiences with their performances of 'Heroes', an interpretation of a Longford woman's experience of the Titanic and a modern piece entitled 'To the Moon and Back'.



Granard Harp Festival 2018 at Granard Community Library

The **Still Voices International Film Festival** in Ballymahon had its best year yet, with over 500 films submitted from 53 countries, representing an increase of 60% on 2017. Attendance figures were also up for screenings, talks and film features that took place over the course of the four day festival with a special category for Midlands filmmakers.

Decade of Commemorations: This year was also the first year of the Decade of Commemorations and a number of events were delivered including a series of lectures in partnership with Longford Historical Society and exhibitions on **'Longford Women in Public Life'** and **'World War 1'**, and the **Armistice Day** Remembrance.

A huge thanks is due to the Culture Team set up by Longford County Council to deliver this exciting initiative which will run for the next three years.

The Inaugural Albert Reynolds Memorial Peace Lecture

Longford County Council was delighted to host the Inaugural Albert Reynolds Memorial Lecture in Backstage Theatre, Longford. We are honoured that The Rt Hon Sir John Major KG CH, former Prime Minister of the UK, accepted our invitation to be guest speaker at this inaugural event celebrating Albert Reynolds the Politician, Statesman and Peacemaker. The evening was a great success with a very appreciative audience both at Backstage Theatre and online, via Facebook Live.

Philip Reynolds, son of the late Taoiseach Albert Reynolds, presented a beautiful piece of bog oak art by artist Michael Casey, on behalf of the Reynolds family, to The Rt Hon Sir John Major KG CH, at the Inaugural Albert Reynolds Memorial Lecture. Philip Reynolds, son of the late Taoiseach Albert Reynolds, gave a touching tribute at the Albert Reynolds Memorial Lecture.



County Longford Age Friendly Strategy

Age Friendly programme: Work is progressing on a number of actions in the Age Friendly Strategy with a strong focus on social inclusion. Two members of Longford Age Friendly Alliance were invited to speak on the Longford Crime Prevention Ambassador programme at the national launch of the Healthy & Positive Ageing Local Indicators Report by Minister for Older People Jim Daly. Sgt. Lionel Mullally and Kitty Hughes gave an excellent account of the pilot programme which many other counties are now interested in replicating.

The key achievements this year include:

- A Walkability Audit of Longford Town.
- The Crime Prevention Ambassadors Programme was nominated for the National Age Friendly Recognition and Achievements Awards and at the ceremony in Monaghan on 11th April was overall National Winner of the Age Friendly Ireland Safety and Security Award.
- The Chair of Longford Older Persons Council (OPC) was invited to address Joint committee on policing in Ballymahon in November which was attended by the new Garda Commissioner Drew Harris.
- A Local Services Information leaflet highlighting the key services for older persons was launched and was replicated by other OPCs including one in Belfast.
- Bealtaine Festival held over the month of May with the theme *Be my Guest* was a county wide festival with over 500 people taking part in events.
- On 9th May the Chair of Longford OPC addressed Longford County Council appraising them of the work and objectives of OPC.
- A number of Digital Literacy and Health and Wellbeing programmes were run throughout the year
- At the Launch of the HaPAI survey (Health and Positive Ageing Initiative) by Minister Jim Daly in Dublin on the 20th June, 2018 Kitty Hughes and Sgt. Lionel Mullally were both invited to address this meeting on the area of security and the work of Longford OPC. Sgt Mullally was singled out by the Minister for special mention for Crime Prevention Programme in Longford.
- Rural transport scheme: a number of requests and improvements to public transport service was forwarded including access to Buses, timetables, high steps and wheelchair access.



The launch of the Age Friendly Information Leaflet with staff and committee members of Longford's Older Persons' Council



National Age Friendly Awards Presentation in Monaghan

- As part of Positive Ageing Week an Information Day including all the key service providers was attended by 120 people in the Longford Arms Hotel. This year the focus was on Health and Wellbeing and the keynote speaker was Anne Griffin of the Sage Advocacy Service.

Town Twinning

20 years of Longford Town twinning: The twentieth anniversary of Longford town twinning with Noyal Chatillon sur-Seiche took place in Longford on St. Patrick's Day with a delegation of 28 people from Noyal taking part in the Longford parade and visiting local schools over a three day visit. On the weekend of 14th June a delegation of 26 people representing different aspects of Longford life including 8 of our best young traditional musicians attended a Celtic festival in Noyal. Finally, the Mayor of Noyal presented a sculpture to the people of Longford to mark the friendship and appreciation of the twinning between our two towns in December when he joined the Mayor of Longford for the switching on of the Christmas lights. The sculpture has been erected in the Remembrance Garden and a similar piece has been erected in Noyal.



The unveiling of a sculpture presented by the Mayor of Noyal Chatillon sur-Seiche to mark the 20th anniversary of the twinning, in the Longford Remembrance Garden

COUNTY ARCHIVES SERVICE

The Archives Service had another busy year of activities, including large projects in digitisation and the completion of some projects in records management. It was also involved in public events and outreach.

Archives Management

Microfilming/digitisation

The first phase of the microfilming and digitisation of the minute books of Granard Poor Law Union was completed, involving 43 volumes.

Other items digitised were as follows: the manuscript books of the County Longford Grand Jury, 1759-1907; the burial registers of Moatfarrell and Ardagh Cemeteries; the Longford Militia Book, 1793-1855; and the Drumming/Mosstown/Carriglass rent book (1822-43).

Deposits

The following archives were deposited:

- Papers of the MacHugh family, Longford town, early 1900s
- Papers of George Montgomery, Longford, solicitor, early 1900s
- Notebooks of the Reynolds family, Drumnacrehir, Granard, c. 1870-1930s
- Photographs from Frances Forster, Ballinalee, c. 1870-c.1920
- Two notebooks from the Peyton family, Drumlish, early 1900s
- Forbes family papers, 1869-1920
- Minute book, Irish Unionist Alliance, Longford, 1913-18
- Notebook of Joseph Smyth, Ballymahon, early 1900s
- DVD of Albert Reynolds's tour of Longford after his election as Taoiseach, 1992
- Abstracts of accounts, Granard Town Council, 1970s
- Papers of Patrick Greene NT
- Expenses, Ballymahon Poor Law Union, 1890-1920

Records management

Work progressed on the records in a number of departments –

Human Resources: a policy on the retention of recruitment files was drafted. This is an interim measure, pending the approval of the revised National Retention Policy for Local Authority Records, which will address the area fully. Files were also identified for disposal.

Housing: The Archivist met senior staff in the department prior to its relocation to discuss record-keeping. Files were identified and destroyed prior to the department's transfer to the Market Square.

Finance: The Archivist went through records in the Internal Audit office prior to its relocation and authorised the disposal of a quantity of items. Files were also identified for disposal in the Higher Education Grants office.

Longford Town Council: The Archivist completed the first phase of work on the town council files including assisting in the disposal of records designated for destruction and assisting in the transfer of records from offices to storage.

Queries from staff: The Archivist dealt with several queries from staff about records retention and undertook searches for records.

Outreach

- Talk on 'Researching your family history' to the Longford Active Retirement Group on 15th February.
- Exhibition to mark the centenary of the South Longford by-election, 1917, and a talk at its opening on 24th May.
- Walking tours of Longford town, with transition year classes, Meán Scoil Mhuire on 13th and 26th September.
- Talk on 'Longford 1917-23' to Leaving Certificate history classes in Mercy Secondary School, Ballymahon on 11th October.
- Talks about archives to all 1st year classes in Moyne Community School on 23rd October.
- 'Explore Your Archives Week': an open afternoon on 22nd November in which members of the public were introduced to a selection of archives in County Library HQ.

Commemorations and events

- The Carrickedmond First World War Commemoration, which involved a project for primary schools and the unveiling of a stone to the dead on 11th June (including a short talk at the event).
- Launching the St Paul's Historic Graveyard Project in Newtownforbes on 17th June.
- Talk at the Thomas Ashe Commemoration, Newtowncashel, 13th July.
- Walking tour of Ballymahon on 14th July as part of the Leinster Fleadh Cheoil programme.
- The Padraic Colum Cruinniú, 8th to 9th September, including a talk at St Joseph's Care Centre.
- Talk at unveiling of a plaque in Ardagh Cemetery on 13th October.
- Drafted the wording of information boards/plaques for Legan village and the Remembrance Garden, Great Water Street.

Membership of Committees/Groups

The Archivist is a member of Culture Team which is overseeing the Creative Ireland Programme. The Archivist was one of the guides on the county tour to mark Cruinniú na Cásca, 17 April and a facilitator during the 'Day of the Imagination', 14 June.

The Archivist is also a member of the URBACT Local Group, which is working on the MAPS Project concerning the re-use of Connolly Barracks, and of its sub-committee which is developing a walking tour of Longford town

LONGFORD HERITAGE OFFICE

The Heritage Officer Programme is a partnership arrangement between The Heritage Council and Longford County Council.

The County Longford Heritage Office continued its programme of works in 2018, to further the aims of the County Longford Heritage Office and to increase our knowledge and awareness of Longford's diverse heritage stock and potential threats to its long-term survival. These included:

Longford & the Great War Commemoration 1914 – 2014: The Americans & Armistice

The Longford & the Great War Commemoration is a 4-year programme to commemorate World War 1 and its impact on County Longford, at its heart is an online database of known WW1 soldiers, published on www.longfordatwar.ie, which was funded by the Heritage Council under the County Heritage Plan Scheme.

2018 was an important year in the commemoration of the Great War and its local impact, with a number of key events being commemorated. This included the sinking of the R.M.S. Leinster and the marking of the 100th anniversary of the Armistice on Sunday 11th November.

It had been hoped that the research of all of Longford's Great War dead would have been completed by November 2018, however the research into the United States soldiers was more



Longford & the Great War: Armistice exhibition, Armistice Centenary 2018, Temperance Hall

complex than initially thought, due to a lack of centralised army records resource. In addition, further sources came onstream in 2018, requiring additional research. This will, however, be fundamentally complete in the first quarter of 2019 and plans will be made to publicly record the known names of our Great War dead.

This project was part-funded by the Heritage Council and is an action under the County Longford Heritage Plan.

Connolly Barracks Research Project

In 2018, the Heritage Office sought to undertake a more in-depth historical research into the former Seán Connolly Barracks complex, to better understand the development of the complex and inform future changes and developments. Primary research in key collections, including the Irish Architectural Archive and the British National Archives revealed fascinating information, in particular a previously unknown map of the town of Longford, dated 1806 and itself a copy of possibly an earlier map. This shows the former cavalry officers mess (Main Block) in the context of the former artillery barracks and the town. This is the first plan showing the cavalry barracks before its enclosure. Research and analysis was carried out by Dr. Rory Sherlock, archaeologist and historic buildings specialist, and it is intended that some geophysical work will be undertaken in 2019, if feasible.

This project was part-funded by the Heritage Council and is an action under the County Longford Heritage Plan.



Graveyard Recording Training – Pilot

Working in partnership with the County Longford Archivist and the parish of Clonbroney, the Heritage Office undertook a pilot graveyard recording project with John Tierney of Irish Historic Graves (Eachtra Archaeology). The graveyards of St John's and St Emer's, Moatfarrell and St. James's Clonbroney were recorded over three weekends, by local volunteers under the guidance of John Tierney. The graveyards were plotted, individual markers numbered, and the photographs uploaded onto historicgraves.com. St. John's Ballinalee is searchable, however, further voluntary work is needed to transcribe the information on the headstones to fully complete these.

This project was part-funded by the Heritage Council and is an action under the County Longford Heritage Plan.



Biodiversity Awareness Programme 2018

This programme progressed in 2017 with support under the National Biodiversity Action Plan Fund. In 2018 a collaborative project took place between Longford County Council, (Ballymahon Municipal District, the Heritage Office and Environmental Awareness Officer) and the Goldsmith Literary Festival Committee and Longford Environmental Alliance at the site of the childhood home of writer Oliver Goldsmith. Practical works were undertaken to make the site more pollinator friendly: reducing the number of non-native cypress trees and improving the planting of native species, and partially re-watering the pond. This site was selected, as Goldsmith edited a periodical called *The Bee*. Other works to improve access to the site were also undertaken by Longford County Council.

Also, as part of this programme, training workshops were held by the Longford Environmental Alliance, to provide guidance to community groups, Tidy Towns and Rural Social Scheme workers on planting and making improvements to help biodiversity and pollinators. This work will continue into 2019.

Heritage Week 2018

2018 saw the continued Heritage Week programme in Co. Longford, held between the 16 and 28 of August. Nationally there were over 2000 events held, which attracted 450,000 visitors. In Co. Longford, a range of events took place around the county including

exhibitions, walks, talks, and family days. Highlights of the week included the Irish Cobs & the Traveller Way event at Devine Equestrian, the culmination of a project by the LCRL Traveller Health Project. The event attracted Irish Travellers from around the country, as well as other visitors including one from Kentucky who made a specific trip to Co. Longford to attend. The 100th anniversary of some women achieving the vote was marked by a special exhibition and talk at Ballymahon Library, whilst the Irish in the US Army in WW1 was highlighted in the last instalment of the Longford & the Great War exhibition series, and an afternoon of story, poetry and song with David Leahy, Sr Rose Moran, Larry Mitchell, Noel Carberry and the Longford Voices United Gospel Choir. Our musical heritage was also celebrated through events by Cumann Ceoil Chonmhaicne in Granard and Cruinniú na Píobairí at the Corlea Trackway Visitor Centre.



The LCRL Traveller Health Project with Devine Equestrian for the Irish Cobs & the Traveller Way event

Creative Ireland - Longford

The Heritage Office continued to work as part of the Creative Ireland - Longford team, to deliver the objectives and events of the year and assisted community groups and heritage organisations in Longford to produce their own events and projects.

URBACT - Military Assets as Public Spaces

The Heritage Office was pleased to be part of the Longford County Council-driven URBACT Military Assets as Public Spaces (MAPS) project, which concluded in February 2018 with the outputs published later that Summer. The Heritage Officer has remained on the Local Group as the next phase of regeneration of what is now called the Camlin Quarter commences.

Conservation Grants

The Heritage Office administered two conservation grants on behalf of the Department of the Arts, Heritage & Gaeltacht, later the Dept of the Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs: the Built Heritage Investment Scheme 2018 (BHIS 2018) and the Structures At Risk Fund (SRF) 2018.

The BHIS 2018 saw six structures supported, which were a mix of domestic, agricultural and ecclesiastical. This grant generated 268 days of labour, and over €41,000 of private investment in Longford's protected structures.

The SRF 2018, supported two structures in Co. Longford, including the iconic Porter's Lodge entrance gate to Carriglass Demense, designed by architect James Gandon. Also supported was the former Royal Canal ticket house at Clondra and St. Catherine's Church of Ireland, Ballymacormack. These three projects saw over €79,000 invested in their futures, and almost 130 days of skilled conservation labour created.

Other Collaborative Heritage Projects

To further awareness of heritage within County Longford, the Heritage Office undertook the following:

- Providing guidance and advice on heritage matters to Local Authority employees and departments.
- Providing support and advice to private individuals, local heritage and community groups in the care and conservation of their heritage.
- Providing ongoing support to the Planning Section and to owners and occupiers of historic buildings and protected structures and assessing relevant planning applications.
- Maintaining Social Media accounts to promote and advance Longford's heritage, including the development of a joint Twitter account with the Archives office.
- Supporting the Táin March 2018.
- Providing ongoing support for the Fáilte Ireland Ireland's Hidden Heartlands tourism brand, including participation in their training programme.
- Contributing to the Irish Independent Supplement on Maria Edgeworth and Longford's Literary Heritage.

Longford County Library Annual Statistical Report 2018

No. of Library Visits

Library Branch	Jan-Mar	Apr-June	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Total 2018	Total 2017
Ballymahon	5,539	7,220	5,935	6,174	24,868	36,173
Drumlish	1,005	1,212	1,193	1,030	4,440	4,059
Edgeworthstown	380	497	364	343	1,584	2176
Granard	4,170	4,106	4,455	4,042	16,773	17474
Lanesboro	3,769	5,076	5,544	5,601	19,990	16,500
Longford	35,954	42,068	41,470	45,381	164,873	150,721
Total No. of Library Visits	50,817	60,179	58,961	62,571	232,528	227,103

No. of Registered Members

Library Branch	Total 2018	Total 2017
Ballymahon	1,070	1,227
Drumlish	328	315
Edgeworthstown	206	278
Granard	836	900
Lanesboro	830	550
Longford	4,569	4,328
Total membership	7,839	7,598
Active Membership 2018	6,950	
Total membership as a % per head pop.=19.3%		

No. of Issues 2018

Branch	CKO's 2018	Renewals	Self Service CKO's/Ren	Total Issues	Total 2017
Ballymahon	9,953	4,800	4,010	18,763	18,144
Drumlish	4,811	1,378	-	6,189	7,141
Edgeworthstown	2,293	650	-	2,943	3,582
Granard	3,661	1,344	3454	8,459	8,053
Lanesboro	7,891	4,040	-	11,931	10,786
Longford	46,262	20,761	1,063	68,086	69,964
Total	74,871	32,973	8,527	*116,371	117,670

No. of Internet Sessions Used

Library Branch	Internet PC Jan-Mar	Internet PC Apr-June	Internet PC Jul-Sep	Internet PC Oct-Dec	Total 2018	Total 2017
Ballymahon	867	992	884	905	3,775	4,245
Drumlish	87	114	56	67	335	288
Edgeworthstown	74	78	55	58	282	273
Granard	568	612	663	585	2,538	3003
Lanesboro	684	844	894	867	3,234	2486
Longford	3,330	3,440	3,843	3,441	13,746	13,800
Total No. of PC Sessions Used	5,610	6,080	6,395	5,923	24,008	24095

Online Resources Usage Statistics 2018

Website Stats: www.longfordlibrary.ie	
No of page views:	71,553
Type of devices used	74% PC, 20% Mobile, 5% Tablet

RBDigital Online Magazine	
No. of CKO's	1,687
Most Popular Magazines 2018	"Hello" Magazine (89 CKO's) "Auto Express" (60 CKO's)

Bolinda/Borrowbox	
eAudiobook CKO's	1,328
No. of eAudioBook Active Users	112
eBook CKO's	1,320
No. of Active eBook Users	146

RBDigital Universal Class	
New Registrations 2018	40
New Courses Started 2018	45
Login sessions	598
No. of Lessons Viewed	325
No. of Lesson Video Watched	551
Student Submissions	220

Mango Languages	
Total Sessions:	661
Total Courses:	667
Mobile Courses:	547
Average session:	18.8 minutes
Total learning time:	12,428.5 minutes

Proquest Online Newspapers	
No. of online searches	364
No. of Cit/Abstract downloads	21

PLANNING

The County of Longford continues to thrive with increased activity at local level through the various Regeneration Projects. The focus of funding has shifted in recent years under the Programme for Government. This now involves a much closer relationship with Stakeholders/Elected Members and Community Groups to identify projects and secure funding under the various Government Initiatives. The Planning and Regeneration Department are committed to ensuring these projects are brought to successful completion within the timeframes as set out by the Department of Community and Rural Affairs. The implementation of the County Development Plan 2015-2021 in relation to tourism and trails projects is proving very successful and will be an asset in adding to the well-being of the County. New legislation, guidelines and the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) in particular have created ongoing challenges which are being successfully dealt with by the Planning and Regeneration Section to date. Significant activities undertaken by the Planning Department in 2018 are outlined below.

Development Management

The Development Management Section is responsible for the processing of all planning applications in accordance with the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and the Planning and Development Regulations. The size and complexity of individual applications has increased over 2018. This included a final decision on the planning applications for a number of industrial employment expansions including Panelto, Finesse and Tool & Plastic. Ongoing planning meetings and discussions are taking place to successfully implement projects in County Longford.

Planning Statistics	Number
Applications Received	307
Decisions to Grant	224
Decisions to Refuse	17
Appeals	15
Part 8 Applications Adopted	10

Pre-planning consultations are an integral part of the Development Management process and are utilised on an ongoing and increasing basis. These meetings are held to provide an informative, higher quality and more transparent planning service to the general public. Planning applications are screened for appropriate assessment as required by the Habitats Directive and in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG). Licence applications under Section 254 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, principally for roadside signage and planning questions for LEADER funding, are a regular feature of the work carried out in the Planning Department.

National and Regional Planning

The Forward Planning Section has a key role to play in National and Regional Planning and the staff members attend regular planning regional working groups. Regular submissions are made to national and regional guidance documents, which in 2018 included a significant number of detailed submissions to the RSES.

The Council's submissions to the RSES outlined the many strengths and opportunities that should be explored in order to facilitate the potential of County Longford and its role within the Midlands Region.

Forward Planning

The Forward Planning Section is responsible for the research, preparation and production of all Development Plans, Local Area Plans and forward looking initiatives. The forward planning work schedule is governed by the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), and the ongoing implementation of national and EU legislation in the planning and environmental arenas.

County Development Plan

Longford County Council's County Development Plan sets the planning framework for development in the County over the period from 2015-2021. The preparation of a new plan is required to statutorily commence in 2019, following the adoption of the RSES, however, preparatory background work has already commenced.

In 2018 Variation No. 4 of the Longford County Development Plan 2015-2021 was adopted. This consisted of the change of land use zoning of 0.39ha on lands at Knock, Lanesboro from the existing land use zoning from 'Established Residential' to 'Commercial/Residential'.

In addition, the Forward Planning Section is regularly involved with other projects that require substantial time allocation such as Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs), Route Corridor Studies and other projects from national to local level.

Tourism, Community and Regeneration Initiatives

The Planning and Regeneration Team worked closely with Fáilte Ireland, the Tourism Committee, LEO, Members and Community Groups on various Plans for Longford including the Hidden Heartlands during 2018, including:

Camlin River Pedestrian Bridge

'The Mill Bridge' was officially opened in 2018, providing alternative access to the Albert Reynolds Peace Park.



Corlea Trackway

Assisted Kenagh CoOp. and Wetlands Heritage Ireland to acquire and complete the 70 acres adjoining Corlea Trackway Centre for development as an Amenity and Biodiversity Park in association with Bord na Mona. The next phase of Corlea Bog Amenity Walk was designed in 2018.

Literary Trail

Covers Mid Longford and will be centred in Edgeworthstown. Work completed in 2018 included an application for funding to create signage and branding for the trail of National and International significance.

Mid Shannon Wilderness Plan

Covering South Longford, Lough Ree and the Royal Canal. A joint plan has now been prepared with Roscommon, Westmeath and Offaly County Councils called Lough Ree at the Spirit Level.

Newcastle Wood

Provision of new amenity paths in association with Coillte, due for completion in 2019.

North/South Shannon Pilgrim Way

Being considered for development between Limerick and Fermanagh – Longford will be the key intersection between these 2 major Pilgrim routes.

Outdoor Recreation Infrastructural Scheme 2017 (for completion during 2018/2019)

15 projects secured funding, 12 (Measure 1), 2 (Measure 2) & 1 (Measure 3) –

Drumlish, Longford, Bleanvoher, North Longford Rebel Trail, Cloonturk/Royal Canal, North & South Longford Mapping Trails, Aughnaccliffe, Royal Canal Website, Bishop O'Higgins Trail, Ballinamuck Mapping, Royal Canal (Greenway), White's Bridge (River Inny Bridge), Blueway's Carpark – Clondra.



Rebel Longford Trail

Covers the North County from Granard to Ballinamuck including Ballinalee and Longford Town. Signage for this trail was completed in 2018.

Royal Canal Greenway and potential Blueway Trail

Being developed as a major walking/cycling route from Dublin to Clondra and onto Westport. This route is also being considered now for the development of a Pilgrim Way route from Croke Park to Croagh Patrick. Substantial works were carried out on the Royal Canal greenway, the Longford Section was completed in 2018.

Town & Village Renewal Scheme 2017 (for completion during 2018)

10 projects secured funding - Longford Town, Ballymahon, Edgeworthstown, Ardagh, Granard, Lanesboro, Lisryan, Mullinaghta, Newtownforbes, and Newtowncashel.

There is no doubt that the development of various Tourism Product initiatives will increase tourism and business in the County. The Planning and Regeneration Team continue to engage with and attend meetings with Fáilte Ireland to explore how best to market Longford and the 'Mighty' Shannon region in the future.



Development Contributions

Development Contributions are levied in accordance with the Development Contributions 2018-2022 Scheme adopted by the Longford County Council under Section 48 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended).

Certain planning permissions 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 account of the amount actually due and owing to the Council.

The Development Contribution Scheme has had a very positive impact on the delivery of infrastructure in Longford since its introduction. It has generated funds for a wide variety of infrastructure, including the acquisition of land, provision of open spaces, recreational and community facilities, amenity and landscaping works, roads, car parks, footpaths, water and waste water facilities.

	€
Contributions Invoices	€629,445
Contributions Received	€1,117,258

County Longford Diaspora

The Planning Section in conjunction with the Local Enterprise Office worked on the preparation of the County Diaspora Strategy 2019-2023.

National Housing Policy

Planning and Regeneration worked with the Housing Section to identify suitable housing land to be developed under the New Housing Policy. This consisted of completing site assessments for a number of sites in terms of the planning merits for potential development.

REGENERATION

Since the establishment of the Regeneration Unit in 2015, the scope of the Unit has expanded, and the impact is visible county wide. The Regeneration Unit works extensively with local communities to enhance their local areas but also focuses on the regeneration of the County from a more strategic perspective, to build on the existing natural assets within the County and to make it a more attractive place to live, work and visit.

Funding

A primary focus of the Regeneration Unit is in the securing of funding to enhance existing amenities and develop new ones across the County. The table below details the number of applications submitted by the Regeneration Unit under the various schemes available, as well as the number of successful applications and the value of those funding streams. Funding of €7,041,835 has been obtained under various schemes. This money will be further enhanced by match funding to be provided by Longford County Council and contributions to be made by communities in certain instances, bringing the total spend on these schemes in excess of €10 million.

Funding Applications Submitted

In 2018, the Regeneration Team submitted applications for funding under a number of funding streams, as detailed below:

Funding Stream	No. of Applications Submitted	No. of Successful Applications	Grant Funding Secured
Town & Village 2018	12	8	€593,856
Outdoor Recreation 2018	12	6	€1,239,491
Faillte Ireland	1	1	€67,035
Rural Regeneration Development Fund	3	2	€4,141,453
Urban Development Regeneration Fund	2	1	€1,000,000
TOTAL	30	18	€7,041,835

Work has commenced on the implementation of these projects. 2018 also saw the completion of several projects where funding was approved under the 2017 Schemes.

Collaboration Groups / Town Teams

The Regeneration Unit have been working very closely with the local communities to identify what is needed to enhance their areas. In order to support this, the Regeneration Team have assisted communities establish Collaboration Groups/Town Teams across the county, namely -

- Lanesboro/Ballyleague Collaboration Group,
- Ballymahon Town Team,
- Drumlish/Ballinamuck Town Team and
- the process has been initiated for the Edgeworthstown Town Team.

Each area has developed Local Action Plans, which will inform future funding applications.



URBACT MAPS

Longford County Council was involved in a European project under the URBACT programme for 2 years, with the culmination of that work in 2018. The focus of this project was Connolly Barracks. Along with 8 other European partners, Longford County Council sought to identify new uses for former military sites to bring them back into active life of our towns and cities. In July the final output, an Integrated Action Plan, was launched by Minister Damien English. This Plan sets out a roadmap for the future development of the area and identified several actions to be put into place, which are now being pursued by the Regeneration Unit. As part of the launch of the IAP, there was a very successful discussion on urban regeneration, with approximately 100 attendees. As part of this project, the Regeneration Unit promoted the work of Longford County Council on the European stage, at a number of events hosted by URBACT.



URBACT MAPS project – transnational visit to Longford

Policy

It is recognised by the Regeneration Unit that the regeneration of the County must be plan-led, and a strategic focus must be taken. Therefore, there are a number of plans commenced in 2018:

- Ballyminion Masterplan
- Camlin Quarter Urban Design and Economic Framework

Projects Completed

Significant work was carried out in the completion of several projects during 2018, that have a significant impact on the people and economy of Longford. These include the

- opening of the Mill Bridge in Longford Town
- opening of the Knights and Conquests Interpretative Centre in Granard and
- the launch of free Wi-Fi in Lanesboro.



Vacant Site Levy

In accordance with the provisions of the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015, the relevant provisions were incorporated into the planning framework over the course of 2016 to facilitate the application of the Vacant Site Levy and a Register was established in January 2017. This Register currently has 5 entries and work is ongoing on remaining sites that are in various stages of notice and procurement. Work is ongoing, and sites have been prioritised in order to progress specific objectives contained within the adopted Longford Town and Environs Local Area Plan.



Planning Enforcement

The role of the Planning Enforcement Section involves investigating complaints from the public with regard to unauthorised developments and non-compliance with planning permissions. The Section conducts site visits and issues Warning Letters, Enforcement Notices and institutes legal proceedings as appropriate. The Section continues to achieve success through negotiation and resolution at pre-warning letter stage resulting in the minimisation of enforcement notices and legal proceedings. Hereunder are some details of Planning Enforcement activity during 2018:

Planning Enforcement	Number
New Cases	43
Warning Letters Issued	31
Enforcement Letters Issued	9
Referred for Prosecution	8
Number of Files Closed	50

Unfinished Estates

Longford County Council continues to place a high priority on tackling problems and issues associated with unfinished housing developments. The dedicated team established to specifically deal with the issue of unfinished housing developments in County Longford continues to work through issues on the ground, using an array of technical, procedural, and legislative mechanisms in developing solutions in conjunction with residents, developers, financial institutions, receivers and other relevant stakeholders.

During 2018 the Unfinished Estates Team continued with its programme of works which included:

- Reducing the number of remaining unfinished developments,
- The process of preparing, overseeing and implementing site resolution plans,
- Pursuing enforcement action where necessary,
- Calling in financial securities and bonds in order to access funding to complete public infrastructure within developments and,
- Taking in charge of completed developments.

Overall Unfinished Estates Statistics	
Number of Unfinished Estates Identified	128
Number of Estates Certified Compliant/Taken in Charge	106
2018 Statistics	
Estates Taken in Charge 2018/ number of estates certified compliant with Planning Permission	17

The Unfinished Estates team has negotiated Site Resolution Plans for the remaining estates and work will continue these during the coming year.

The Planning and Regeneration Section looks forward to continuing working positively and enthusiastically with the Executive, the Elected Members, Stakeholders and various Communities of County Longford to continue to provide its citizens with the superior quality of service and dedication they deserve.

FINANCE AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

FINANCE

The main functions of the Finance Section 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/Housing Rents/Housing Loan Payments/ NPPR Compliance
- General Office – processing payments to suppliers and payroll

Payment Practices

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. Systems are in place to ensure that interest penalties are not incurred. Total amount of interest penalties:

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

Expenditure

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 – SECTION 142 EXPENDITURE	
Mayor and Other Allowances	€66,000
Entertainment and Associated Expenses	€24,883
Representational Payments, Expenses of Members and Representation at Conferences	€406,911
Total	€497,794

Income Generation Unit

The Income Generation Unit (IGU) is responsible for the collection of the main income streams for the Council. This includes rates, housing rents, housing loans and RAS rents. The unit also operates the cash desk which facilitates customer payments for Council goods and services. Certificates of compliance are issued by the unit in respect of payment of the Non-Principal Private Residence (NPPR) charge. The housing loans function moved from Housing to this unit in late March 2018.

Below is a summary of our revenue collection performance for 2018 with comparatives for 2017 and 2016.

Category	2018 % Collected	2017 % Collected	2016 % Collected
Rates	89%	89%	84%
Rents	93%	92%	90%
Housing Loans	55%	60%	57%

Rates

The level of commercial activity in the County improved in 2018 and the commercial property vacancy has significantly reduced from 2017. The Council operates a Vacant Commercial Premises Incentive Scheme to encourage occupation of vacant premises by businesses. Progress continued in reducing the level of arrears owed to the Council and targets in relation to percentage collection were achieved.

Housing Rents and Loans

IGU is responsible for collecting rents, which are set by the Housing Section, loan charges and managing rent and loan accounts that are in arrears. The housing loans function was transferred from Housing to IGU in March 2018. There has been a marked increase in the applications for loans for private purchases since the introduction of the Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan. There has also been a continued demand for loans to purchase Council properties under the Tenant (Incremental) Purchase Scheme 2016.

Housing Loans	Number
Applications	28
Approved	19
Refused	11
Advanced	21

Rent collection percentages again improved slightly to 93% during 2018.

Tenancy Warning Notices were issued to tenants who were in breach of their rent related obligations to the Council and who did not engage with the Council to resolve their arrears. In a very small number of cases orders for possession for non-payment of rent were obtained.

The Council implements the Mortgage Arrears Resolution Process (MARP) for loan customers in financial difficulty. This provides a framework for the Council and borrowers to manage loan arrears and restructure their loans in some circumstances. The Council continued the restructuring of some shared ownership loans where the borrower was in arrears. This process will continue to be rolled out in 2019 for shared ownership loans and annuity loans in arrears which require restructuring.

Motor Tax

There were no significant developments in motor tax legislation during the year. Receipts for motor tax locally were again down from 2017 (€3,846,914). The increase in online motor tax transactions continued during the year and this led to the 9% decrease in motor tax receipts locally in Longford.

Transactions 2018	Number	Amount
Vehicle Licences (Discs)	18,680	€3,256,468
Miscellaneous Transactions (Vehicle Registration Certificates, Trade Plates etc.)	3,861	€ 238,383
Total Motor Tax Transactions	22,541	€3,494,851

The Information Systems Department provides operational and strategic ICT services for the Council. The department is responsible for the ICT infrastructure and also for planning the future ICT requirements of the organisation. In an operations capacity, the department has responsibility for multiple ICT systems spread across the County in a Wide Area Network (WAN) infrastructure.

During 2018 Longford County Council's IS Department delivered several significant infrastructural, digital and software projects and delivered improvements in IS Security and enhancement of the ICT architecture.

A significant investment was made in several key application areas such as internal web systems, Corporate WIFI, Library Service IT, Security Software, GDPR Compliance, Virtual Infrastructure as well as awareness of the National Broadband Plan and other Digital Projects. The ongoing operational support work in IT continued to consume considerable resource time and effort particularly in the areas of Community CCTV, IT security, and general IT applications support. The following were the key areas of focus in 2018:

Network Infrastructure

Longford County Council's ICT network is made up of several complex components which require on-going management, maintenance and monitoring.

Notable improvements to our infrastructure during 2018 were:

- Implementation of updated Corporate WIFI solution to remote offices and branch libraries.
- Implementation of the Digital Library Project
- Review of communications media for WAN.
- Upgrade of Virtual Infrastructure.
- Commencement of mobile voice & data tender
- Upgrade of Corporate Intranet
- Review of all voice and data communication lines

IT Applications and Development

Supporting service delivery across Longford County Council is a suite of software applications requiring constant management and support. These systems include iPlan, iHouse, Agresso, ePayments, the various websites, several social media platforms, iDocs, GIS and mobile data apps. There is also a limited amount of bespoke application development and support. The key projects in this area in 2018 included:

- Strategic review of all social media channels used by the Council.
- Upgrade of Backup software
- Update of Database Administration Processes.
- Implementation of conference and group working facilities on IP Phone system

GIS Systems

The Council's GIS System continued to play a fundamental role throughout our business areas in 2018, with the most notable developments being:

- Development of a mobile device application to facilitate paperless inspections by the Housing Section.
- Design and implementation of a Planning Enquiry Application which included over 45 planning spatial datasets.
- The development and use of a severe weather mapping application to facilitate the local authority response to Storm Emma.
- Design and implementation of a mobile application to facilitate the Age Friendly Longford Accessibility Survey.
- Design and implementation of a roads maintenance application to record calls relating to road issues.
- Design and implementation of mobile Playground Inspection application.
- Review and production of mapping for the local electoral area boundaries, polling districts and polling stations in keeping with the changes proposed by The Local Electoral Area Boundary Committees.
- The development of mapping applications to support digital projects such as strategic highspeed broadband and the mobile phone blackspot survey.

Digital and National Broadband Plan

The Council's IT Section continued to play a major role in the promotion of digital infrastructure and awareness within the County. During 2018, the most notable developments being:

- We continued our work to facilitate consideration of High Speed Broadband provision options between Center Parcs and the local community adjacent to the development so that local residents could as a result of the Center Parcs development, benefit from High Speed Broadband.
- Our applications for funding from the Dept. of Rural and Community Development Digital Initiative Programme were very successful with two digital projects approved; the Schools Digital Project and the update of the Explore Longford App. Work on both projects commenced in 2018.
- We continued our work on mobile voice and data problem areas within the County, working with telco operators and local representatives to find solutions to improve coverage in the areas highlighted
- We were successful in receiving funding in the WIFI4EU programme to provide Town WIFI in designated areas within the County.
- We supported EU Code Week with two events held, one in Ballymahon and the other in Aughnaclyffe
- We also worked with schools in the County and the Dept of Rural and Community Development to promote the School Digital Champion Programme. The event was a great success with a number of schools from Longford engaging.
- We continued our preparations for the National Broadband Plan, working with our Roads and Planning Sections to help facilitate a fast and efficient rollout of High-Speed Broadband in the County.



The launch of free public wi-fi in Lanesboro in July following a successful funding application through the Town & Village Scheme.

IT Security

IT Security is of paramount importance given the proliferation of ICT malware, viruses and Phishing attacks etc. To this end the IT Department spends considerable time and effort implementing, upgrading, monitoring and managing the range of security measures on the network, email platform and devices, including mobile and tablet devices. In 2018 we replaced our web filtering software and completed a security audit of all applications.

Data Protection

The 'General Data Protection Regulation' (GDPR) (EU) 2016/679 came into effect on the 25th May 2018 and was transposed into Irish Law by way of the Data Protection Act 2018. During 2018 a Data Protection and Information Compliance Officer joined the ICT department to help ensure the organisation's compliance with all obligations pursuant to the Data Protection legislation.

The Council commenced a Data Mapping exercise within all sections to identify and map the flow of personal data within the organisation, thereby ensuring Longford County Council processed personal data in a lawful, fair and transparent manner. A review of all third-party Service providers was also commenced, ensuring compliance with all aspects of the new legislation when personal data is processed by 3rd parties on the Councils behalf.

Website Visits

NUMBER OF WEBSITE HITS		
WEBSITE	2017	2018
longfordcoco.ie	78,089	120,897
longfordlibrary.ie	16,391	39,533
longford.ie	-	4,642
Longfordppn.ie (went live in Qtr 3 2018)	-	918

HOUSING & BUILDING CONTROL, ROADS, WATER SERVICES, ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES, FIRE & EMERGENCY SERVICES

HOUSING

Introduction:

There are a range of Social Housing options available to approved housing applicants who cannot provide accommodation from their own resources as follows:

- Social houses
- RAS Leases
- Leases
- Housing provided by Voluntary Housing Bodies
- HAP (Housing Assistance Payment).

A statutory assessment of housing need was undertaken in 2018. The next housing needs assessment will be carried out in 2019. The number of approved housing applicants at 31st December 2018 was 897.

Choice Based Lettings commenced in 2017. No dwellings were allocated under Choice Based Letting in 2018.



Minister Eoghan Murphy turning the sod for new Lanesboro development

Social Housing Provision

The following are the targets for social housing support published by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government. Also outlined is performance at 31st December 2018.

	Published Target	Total Output	Difference	% of Target Achieved
ACQUISITIONS	10	28	18	280%
LEASING	15	35	20	233%
BUILD TARGET	44	54	10	122%
HAP & RAS	152	209	57	138%

From the above you will note that the overall delivery from all streams is 326. The target was 221. This represents over achieving the target by 48%.

Vacant Housing Repair and Leasing Scheme

This scheme commenced in 2017. It is a key component of Rebuilding Ireland Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness. If a property requires repairs to bring it up to the Standards for Letting, Longford County Council or an Approved Housing Body will pay for repairs work up front in return for the property being available for social housing through a lease for a period of at least 10 years. There is criteria to be adhered to. Dwelling must be vacant for at least one year. There must be a demand for housing in the area. The maximum funding allowable is €40,000 incl. VAT, furniture and fittings. 23 applications have been received for this scheme. 6 apartments were leased in 2018 under this scheme.

Buy Renew Scheme

This scheme commenced in 2017. It is to support Local Authorities and Approved Housing Bodies to purchase and renew housing units in need of remediation and make them available for social housing use. The Buy & Renew Scheme should complement the Repair & Leasing Scheme, as LAs and AHBs can approach owners of vacant, privately-owned houses in need of repair/remediation, with the option to either lease/repair the housing unit, or to buy and repair/remediate the unit. 3 properties have been acquired under this scheme.

Homelessness

72 persons presented in 2018. Homelessness is dealt with on a regional basis. Westmeath County Council is the lead agency for counties Laois, Longford, Offaly and Westmeath. In addition, each county has a Homeless Action Team. This team meets every 2/3 weeks.

Tenant (Incremental Purchase) Scheme

The Tenant (Incremental Purchase) Scheme commenced on 1st January 2016. 25 tenants applied for this scheme in 2017. The scheme is being reviewed by Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.

Housing Loans

Approval and advancement of housing loans continued in 2018. 29 applications were received. 19 were approved and one (21) loan was advanced.

Voluntary Housing

Longford County Council has a long association with the Voluntary Housing Sector and a substantial contribution has been made by the Voluntary Housing Sector in the provision of Social Housing in the County. In 2017 Longford County Council supported Cluid Housing Body in a CALF application for the provision of 7 no. units at Cartrun Breac, Longford.

Maintenance and Refurbishment

In 2018, a sum of €876,000 was provided in the Budget for the maintenance and repair of Local Authority Housing. This area is continuously examined to ensure that best practice and value for money is achieved at all times.

Energy Retrofitting Scheme/Windows and Doors

Works on Phase 1 of the Energy Efficiency Programme was completed in 2016. No allocation was received in 2018 under Phase 11 of the scheme.

Estate Management

The Housing Liaison Officer and Estate Manager continued to work with tenants and Residents Associations during 2017. Compulsory pre-tenancy courses are attended by all new tenants.

Housing Grant Schemes

In 2018, a combined total of two hundred and one (201) applications were received under these schemes. 144 applications were approved under the three Grant Schemes:

- Mobility Aids Grant Scheme
- Housing Adaptation Grant Scheme
- Housing Aid for Older People Grant Scheme

The amount approved was €571,692.

In addition, disability works were carried out to 24 social houses in order to address the medical needs of the occupants. The cost of these works was €135,650.

Traveller Accommodation

The Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014-2018 continued to be followed by Longford County Council. This programme sets out a 4 year strategy in relation to the programme and type of accommodation to be provided for Travellers. The Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee meets and monitors the progress in relation to targets set out in the plan.

Housing & Disability Steering Group

The Strategic Plan for Housing People with a Disability in Longford is complete. The Disability Steering Group met 3 times in 2018. Longford County Council is to allocate 5% of their annual allocations to people with a disability.

Private Rented Accommodation Standards

The Local Authority is responsible for implementation and enforcement of accommodation standards in the rental sector. Funding is made available to the Local Authority based on the number of inspections carried out. 72 inspections were completed in 2018 and landlords were advised of non compliance issues.

Better Estates Awards

Overall Winner Parkside, Ballymahon

Best Improved Estate Hazelwood, Colehill

BALLYMAHON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT	
Estates less than 20 years old	1 st Parkside 2 nd Curraghrua 3 rd Foxhall Crescent
Estates Over 20 years old	1 st Smithfield Crescent 2 nd Cartron Road 3 rd Churchview, Lanesboro
Highly Commended	Sli na Mona
GRANARD MUNICIPAL DISTRICT	
	1 st River Crescent, Ballinalee 2 nd Churchview, Drumlish 3 rd Devine Crescent, Edgeworthstown
LONGFORD MUNICIPAL DISTRICT	
Small Estates	1 st St Emer's 2 nd Park Villas
Large Estates	1 st Annaly Park 2 nd Springlawn 3 rd Teffia Park
GARDEN COMPETITION	
Best Individual Ballymahon MD Granard MD Longford MD	12 Curraghrua, Lanesboro 22 Churchview, Drumlish 16 Annaly Park, Longford
Overall Winner	St Emer's, Longford

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

In 2018 the Environment Directorate carried out a wide range of activities under inspection, monitoring and environmental awareness programmes.

This section covers a diverse range of functions and services. The principal areas are -

- Pollution Control and Water Quality Management
- Litter Management and Street Cleaning
- Waste Management and Regulation
- Environmental Awareness
- Burial Grounds
- Veterinary Services and Food safety
- Dog Control and Horse Control
- Dangerous structures
- Derelict sites

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, farm inspections, licensing of discharges to waters and the implementation of a monitoring programme for rivers, lakes, septic tanks and closed landfills.

River Basin Management

The EU Water Framework Directive was transposed into Irish law by the European Community (Water Policy) Regulations, 2003 under which a number of River Basin Districts were established. This was altered in 2014 whereby Ireland is now regarded as a one River Basin District. In addition, the EU Policy (Water Policy) Regulations 2014 places new obligations on local authorities in co-ordinating the public participation element of the Water Framework Directive. The new national governance arrangement requires Longford County Council to co-ordinate our work in this area with the newly set up national Local Authority Water Community Office (LAWCO) in Kilkenny. Longford County Council continues to monitor water quality in rivers and lakes in line with the relevant River Basin Management Plans.

Environmental Laboratory

The County Council Environment Laboratory is located at Park Road, Longford. The principal areas of activity are

- Water Pollution monitoring and control
- Landfill monitoring
- Monitoring industrial effluent discharges
- Water Quality Monitoring in rivers and lakes

Litter Management

Enforcement of the Litter Pollution Act, 1997 – 2009 is one of the key mechanisms in tackling litter pollution in County Longford. Litter Control is conducted primarily by the Council's Litter Wardens.

The Council works closely with local Tidy Towns Committees and acknowledges the great work being done by them throughout the county.

The Council continues to prosecute litter offenders and seek full cost recovery where cases proceed to court. A total of 19 prosecutions were initiated in 2018 for non-payment of fines under the Litter Pollution Act 1997. Fines and costs awarded by the Courts amounted to €9,670 in 2018.

Street Sweeping

The Council continued its programme of street sweeping and servicing of litter bins in the County's towns and villages, in accordance with the County Longford Litter Management Plan. Expenditure on this service was €516,652 in 2018.

Waste Management Plan 2015–2021

The current waste management plan for County Longford is the Eastern-Midlands Regional Waste Management Plan 2015–2021, available for viewing at <http://emwr.ie/>. Longford is one of the 12 local authorities affiliated to the Eastern-Midlands Waste Region. Dublin City Council acts as the lead authority for plan implementation. Longford County Council works with the National Waste Enforcement Steering Committee (NWESC) and three Waste Enforcement Regional Lead Authorities (WERLAs) on waste enforcement and the implementation of agreed national priorities as identified by the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government.

Waste Management Enforcement

Local authorities have a wide range of statutory functions under National and European waste legislation.

The work of the Local Authority Waste Enforcement team includes investigating illegal dumping incidents, taking prosecutions and enforcement measures, enforcing producer responsibility regulations for a wide range of wastes (including Electrical and Electronic Equipment, Batteries, End-of-life Vehicles, Tyres, Packaging, Food Waste, Farm Plastic and Construction & Demolition Wastes). During 2018, 1581 new waste and litter complaints were received and investigated, and 1,516 complaints were resolved (including complaints outstanding from 2017).

During 2018, the Council's routine waste inspections focused on 3 priority areas. These were: -

1. Waste
 - Waste Tyres
 - Illegal Dumping including Construction & Demolition Waste
 - Household & Commercial Waste Management Compliance
 - Unauthorised Sites of Concern which require a Multi-Agency response
 - End of Life Vehicles Pilot Compliance Project
2. Water
 - Farm Inspections
 - WFD Inspections addressing 'At Risk' water bodies
3. Air
 - Solid Fuel Regulations – preparation for National Smoky Coal Ban

During 2018, four Regulation 10 Notices were issued to Food Waste Collectors and enforcement is ongoing. The number of businesses registered under Tyre Regulations increased by 42% to a total of 41 in Co. Longford. Enforcement action was taken against two unauthorised end-of-life sites, which ceased operation.

In 2018, 19 prosecutions were initiated under the Litter Pollution Act in relation to illegal dumping incidents. Illegal dumping of household waste in rural areas and on vacant properties remains a significant problem and the Council has had to expend significant resources cleaning up such sites.

In addition, Local Authorities permit and regulate waste facilities, ensure the authorised collection and transport of wastes in their functional areas, appraise planning applications in relation to waste management proposals, oversee the management of wastes in the construction and business sectors and, enforce producer responsibility regulations in relation to several waste streams such as packaging, farm plastics and tyres. Environmental inspections are carried out in accordance with the Council's annual inspection plan. A mandatory reporting regime to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is in place for all environmental inspections and the Council's environmental inspection plan. The Environment Directorate also has significant reporting obligations and must annually compile an inventory of all waste data for County Longford which is then submitted to the EPA.

Local Authorities must comply with the European Communities (Access to Information on the Environment) Regulations 2007. Subject to certain exceptions, information relating to the environment held by, or for, a public authority must be made available on request to any person. Advice and guidance on waste management is provided to members of the public upon request.

Longford County Council's "Enforcement Policy on Illegal Waste Activity" can be viewed on the Council's website at www.longfordcoco.ie.

The Council operates a "Litter Complaints Hotline". Anyone observing the illegal dumping of waste may report the matter, in confidence, by calling 1850 434 450.

Anti-Dumping Initiative 2018

As part of the Anti-Dumping Initiative 2018, Longford County Council undertook a CCTV programme over 12 weeks focusing on urban and rural black spots.

Eight cameras were supplied and operated by TSS Ltd and were deployed in August, September and October 2018. Four were used at urban locations and four at rural locations. The cameras yielded 90+ detections.

Longford County Council has continued with CCTV in the urban areas and the rate of detection is still significant.

In addition, Longford County Council advertised a Mattress Amnesty early July 2018. The collections took place on 14th & 21st July 2018. Over the two days, 487 mattresses were collected and recycled.

Waste Management Provision of Facilities

There are currently 25 bring bank sites in County Longford. Green, brown and clear glass, as well as aluminium cans, is accepted at all sites. Total tonnages collected for re-processing in 2018 were 772 tonnes of glass and 24 tonnes of aluminium cans.

Derelict Sites

Longford County Council take a multi-agency approach to tackle indiscriminate vandalism and illegal dumping at abandoned properties. Notification, in writing, is sent to property owners requesting them to secure their properties and remove all waste deposited on site.

A total of 13 properties were placed on the Derelict Sites Register in 2018. A decision was made by Management to acquire 4 properties by Compulsory Purchase Order, using their powers under the Housing Act 1966. The C.P.O. process began in October 2018. To date, one of the C.P.O.'s has been confirmed.

Energy Usage

Longford County Council is required, in line with national policy, to reduce our energy consumption in 2020 by one third. As the organisation is a significant energy consumer this presents a significant challenge and each year a focus is placed on achieving an incremental improvement in energy efficiency. As of the end of 2018 Longford County Council remains on target to meet the 33% reduction in energy usage by the end of 2020. In 2018 Longford County Council spent €758,000 on energy and released 1,768 tonnes of Carbon Dioxide into the atmosphere.

Longford County Council is affiliated to the Midlands Energy Agency (MEA). In conjunction with the MEA Longford County Council completed a programme of energy audits of all Council Facilities in 2018. From this it developed an investment strategy for energy improvement projects for the coming years. In 2018 a project on public lighting upgrades using LED at number of locations was completed.

An Energy Management initiative is in progress and where practical measures are being taken to reduce energy consumption by the Council. And as part of a public awareness programme Information relating to energy conservation measures is included in Information Packs that are distributed in schools and at meetings that take place in communities.

Longford County Council has made improvements in energy monitoring by the use of "Energy Elephant" which is an online service that facilitates the analysis of all utility bills (gas, oil, electricity etc.) in terms of cost, amount consumed, and tonnes of CO2 released into the atmosphere.

Environmental Awareness

This aspect of the Department's work includes:

- National Spring Clean
- National Tree Week
- Large Goods and Hazardous Waste Collections
- Green Schools
- Green Christmas
- Local Environmental Partnership Funding
- Anti-Litter Awareness Grants
- Tidy Towns
- Invasive Species

National Spring Clean

National Spring Clean 2018 took place during the month of April. Litter pickers, gloves, bibs and colour-coded bags were provided for the community clean-ups. Over 40 groups and schools signed up and took part in clean-ups across the County.

National Tree Week

National Tree Week, which is organised by the Tree Council of Ireland and supported by Coillte and Longford County Council, took place from 4th to 11th March 2018. Community Groups, Tidy Towns Organisations, Schools and other organisations in the County were offered the opportunity to obtain young trees. Over 200 free saplings were given out to more than 30 community groups and schools during this week.

Large Goods/Hazardous Waste Collections

Two large goods collections and two hazardous waste collections were held during 2018. The collections took place at Longford Slashers and Granard Mart. General and recyclable waste amounted to 8.26 tonnes while 3.86 tonnes of hazardous waste was collected.

Green Schools

Longford was once again very successful in increasing activity in Green Schools during 2018. During 2018 fourteen schools renewed their green flags while St John's N.S. Battery Road and Forgney N.S. both got their first green flags. The flags cover themes such as litter & waste, energy and water conservation, Travel, Biodiversity and Global Citizenship.

Green Christmas

The Council provided two drop-off points in Longford and Drumlish where householders could deposit their trees for shredding, free of charge. Old Christmas cards could also be dropped off at local libraries throughout the County.

Anti-Litter Awareness Grants

Longford received an anti-litter awareness grant during 2018 of €16,000 from the Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government (DECLG). The Council supplemented this funding by €6,857 bringing the total budget to €22,857. The Anti-Litter and Anti-Graffiti Awareness Grants are used to support clean-up initiatives, fund advertising campaigns and school recycling projects and provide materials support to local community clean-up initiatives.

Local Agenda 21 Environmental Partnership Fund

The Council received an allocation of €8,050 under this Scheme from the DECLG. The Council provided 50% matching funds bringing the total grant funding to €16,100 to support innovative, community-based environmental projects.

Longford Tidy Town/ Community Groups

Longford County Council had another successful year working with Tidy Towns and Community Groups throughout County Longford and groups received funding through both the anti-litter grants and local environmental partnership grants. Groups were also allocated litter pickers, gloves, and specially coloured bags on request. The County Tidy Towns forum was held in Longford town during March 2018.

Invasive Species

The treatment of Japanese Knotweed continued during 2018 with €16,000 of Local Authority Funding being granted for a countywide treatment programme. Over 250 sites have now been treated and it is hoped to continue the treatment programme during 2019 and 2020.

Burial Grounds

Routine cemetery maintenance is largely carried out by Rural Social Scheme staff and local cemetery committee volunteers. Longford County Council makes a direct contribution to Longford Community Resources Ltd, who oversees the Rural Social Scheme. The Council also operates a cemetery support scheme under which local groups undertaking cemetery maintenance receive a grant from the Local Authority.

FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Fire and Rescue Service have fire stations in Ballymahon, Edgeworthstown, Granard, Lanesboro and Longford. These stations are manned by 48 retained firefighters who respond to both fire and rescue incidents. The Fire Department was active in promoting fire safety throughout the year.

The Fire Department assessed Fire Safety Certificates, Planning Applications and Court Licence Application Referrals. Fire Safety Inspections of commercial premises were also carried out.

		Number
OPERATIONS	Total number of Callouts – January to December 2018	379
BUILDING CONTROL	Number of Fire Certificates processed in 2018	36

Construction of the new Fire Station Extension in Longford Town commenced in February 2018 and is scheduled for completion in April 2019.

Granard Fire Brigade received a New Class B Fire Engine in November 2018 at a cost of approximately €320,000 under the National Allocation Scheme for 2016.

Longford Fire Service cost €2,200,000 to operate for 2018 for both its operational response and mitigation work streams.

The following policies were proposed through the Environmental SPC in 2018 and subsequently adopted by the full Council -

1. Revised Fire Service Billing Policy and Procedures
2. New 5 Year Section 26 Fire Service Operational Plan.

A vacant firefighter’s position was advertised 5 times for Lanesboro. The Service recruited 2 suitable candidates following the last competition.

Station Officer P.J. Hynes retired from Lanesborough Fire Service in August 2018 after 35 years of service.

Firefighters Hugh Devine resigned from Edgeworthstown Fire Brigade in June 2018 after 18 years of service and Shane Matthews resigned from Granard Fire Brigade in July 2018 after almost 3 years of service.

Sanction was approved to recruit the vacant Senior Assistant Chief Fire Officer.



The recently completed extension to Longford County Fire Service Headquarters



The new 2018 Fire Tender which was allocated to Granard Fire Brigade



B.A. Refresher Training 2018

The Firefighter Training/Drill Programme was completed in accordance with the Fire Service Annual Operational Plan 2018.

10 Fire Fighters were trained as Chainsaw Operators.

Emergency Service Driver Training was undertaken by 8 Drivers in accordance with Road Safety Authority Guidelines.

CIVIL DEFENCE

Civil Defence is a Volunteer based organisation that supports the Principle Response Agencies (An Garda Síochána, the HSE & Local Authorities) Government Departments and State Agencies during national, regional and local emergency and non-emergency events. Volunteers are recruited and trained locally, with more advanced training undertaken in Civil Defence College in Roscrea, Co. Tipperary. Civil Defence volunteers in Longford are trained in casualty, radiation monitoring, search & rescue, welfare, severe weather emergencies and communications.

2018 Activities

Longford Civil Defence provided First Aid cover at 59 local and community events including soccer and GAA matches; cycles & road races; agricultural shows; local authority & charity events; festivals; welfare at Blood Bank clinics and the Longford Marathon.

Cardiac First Responder training was provided to the 2nd Year Committee of the Attic House, following their purchase of a Defibrillator.

For the first time, 2 volunteers from Longford Civil Defence travelled to Lourdes as part of the 60th International Pilgrimage.

CPR Awareness training was held in Longford County Council as part of the European Restart a Heart day. Over 40 employees participated in CPR demonstrations provided by Civil Defence volunteers.

Volunteers assisted the Fire Service in the extrication and treatment of a casualty at the AXA Road Show held on 5th December.

Longford Civil Defence were represented at the Peter Keenan, O.N.E, Longford branch, remembrance mass and Remembrance Sunday events.

A Presentation Ceremony was held at the end of 2018 and volunteers were presented with certificates attained from courses undertaken during the year. Long Service medals were presented to volunteers who completed 10 and 20 years' service with the Civil Defence.



Training

- First Aid training that took place for Volunteers in 2018 included; Cardiac First response Certification and Recertification, Cardiac First Responder Advanced, First Aid Responder, and the commencement of Emergency First Responder. First Aid courses were delivered locally by our trained Casualty instructors. EMT's completed their Clinical Practice Guidelines Upskilling programme & Instructors took part in recertification courses of their First Aid Disciplines.
- 2 Volunteers were trained in the new Missing Person Search Instructor course which took place in Belvedere House, Co. Westmeath with members of Civil Defence from other counties.
- 14 Volunteers completed Water & Flood Awareness training.
- A local training exercise took place in Pearse Park. The purpose of this exercise was to plan for casualty extrication from a confined space and to show awareness of the importance of access and egress points.
- Radiation Monitoring training was held in Roscrea and 3 Volunteers took part in a national Radiation exercise in November. Volunteers took Radiation readings, grass and soil samples and these were transported to a regional centre for delivery to the Environmental Protection Agency.
- A volunteer completed a Manual Handling Instructor Course and we hope she will be able to begin providing this training to Volunteers in 2019. 11 Volunteers completed Manual Handling and People Moving.
- The new Child Protection was published by Civil Defence and 2 volunteers were trained as Designated Liaison Persons. 10 Volunteers completed the Tusla online course.
- 4x4 Severe Weather Driver training was provided by Terra Firma for 12 Volunteers.
- Our CISM (Critical Incident Stress Management) peer mentor gave a presentation on dealing with and managing stress.
- Health and Safety Support Officer Amanda Cullen has started training on Risk Assessments, SOP & Safety Statement training with all volunteers.
- New policies Introduced this year by Civil Defence included, Volunteers Code of Conduct and Volunteer Policy.

Equipment and Fleet

A new Defibrillator was purchased to replace the older model. A new Combi – Scoop Stretcher was purchased. These are now being introduced across the health service to replace the traditional spinal board as they can be used as both a scoop stretcher and spinal board combined.

ROADS, TRANSPORTATION AND ROAD SAFETY

Longford is strategically located near the centre of Ireland and is traversed by National Primary Routes N4 and N5 and National Secondary Routes N55 and N63. These routes give rise to significant traffic flows throughout the County. Longford County Council has a network of National, Regional and Local Roads within the County. Currently the breakdown of roads under the authority of Longford County Council is as follows: -

CLASSIFICATION	NATIONAL	REGIONAL	LOCAL	TOTAL
Ballymahon Municipal District (km)	42.25	72.15	504.36	618.76
Granard Municipal District (km)	18.95	68.09	707.56	794.60
Longford Municipal District (km)	37.37	12.31	157.72	207.40
Total Kilometres	98.57	152.55	1369.64	1620.76

The following specific works were completed in 2018 –

National Road Pavement Improvement Schemes

National Pavement schemes are selected on the basis of recent condition surveys of the network with the following specific works carried out in 2018

N4 Lackan Phase 2 - Ballygoshen to Shroid

Resurfacing of road pavement over 4 kilometre section of the N4 National Primary Route From Ballygoshen to Shroid. Works included placing new HRA surface course, Road Marking, Road Studs, Drainage, Safety Barrier Installation and Accommodation works

N55 Ardagullion Pavement Resurfacing Scheme.

Resurfacing of road pavement over a 3 kilometre section of the N55 National Secondary Route at Ardagullion. Works included placing new HRA surface course, Road Marking, Road Studs, Drainage, Safety Barrier Installation and Accommodation works.

Capital Maintenance Pavement Repairs were carried out at the following locations:

Category A

- Ballymacormack Junction on the N63
- N55 Lisdreenagh
- N55 Corrabola
- N55 Cloughchurnel
- N63 Killashee/Ballyclare
- Footpath Repairs at Barrack Street Granard

Category B

- N63 Knockanboy
- N55 Carrickedmond
- N63 Killashee Village

Local and Regional Road Improvement

The Road Management Office is a Local Authority shared service set up in late 2014. The Office's current functions include developing and providing supports to Road Authorities in the development of best practise and supporting ICT tools for Road Pavement Management and Road Licensing. The RMO has also recently become involved in Public Lighting.

During the year Local & Regional Roads were improved and maintained under the Restoration Programme. This Grant is in two forms –

- The Restoration Improvement element is designed to meet expenditure on surface restoration and road reconstruction.
- The Restoration Maintenance aims to protect the structural integrity of the road by way of surface dressing.



Bridge Rehabilitation Works

Bridge Rehabilitation Works were carried out at the following locations

- Ardagh
- Clonart North
- Derryneel/Lislea

Low Cost Safety Schemes

The Low Cost Safety Improvement Grant enables low cost safety improvement works on Regional and Local Roads. Low Cost Safety Schemes were carried out at the following locations –

- R198 Kilnashee sightline improvement
- N55 Carrickedmond Cross Sightline improvement
- R198 Bridge St Lower Main St Junction Improvement
- Aughnaclyffe Junction improvement
- Grian Ard, Ardnacassa Traffic Calming (Ramps)

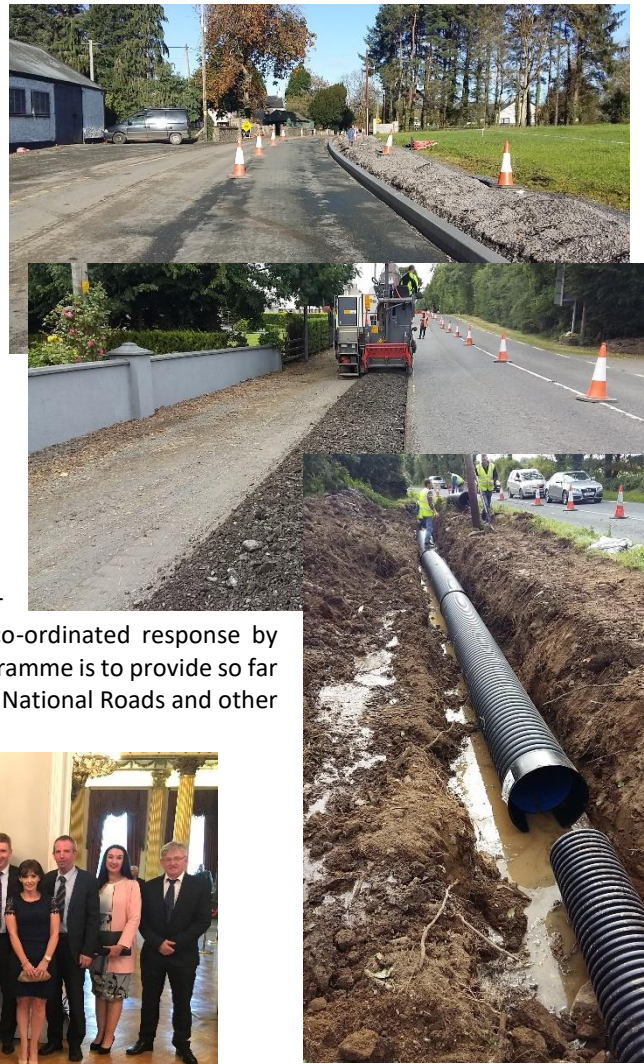
Winter Maintenance Programme

The Winter Service plan provides the framework for dealing with Winter Weather conditions on the roads and provides for a planned and co-ordinated response by Longford County Council. The objective of the winter maintenance programme is to provide so far as it is reasonably practical for the safe movement of road users on the National Roads and other strategic routes identified during adverse weather conditions.



Storm Emma in March and attendance by employees of Longford County Council at An

Taoiseach's Reception in Dublin Castle in April 2018 to acknowledge the Local Authorities' response.



Expenditure

National Road Grants are received from Transport Infrastructure Ireland to carry out maintenance works on the National Roads and Bridges in County Longford and State Grants are provided to road authorities to supplement the provision made from their own resources towards a road programme for the improvement, maintenance and management of the regional and local roads network. Expenditure on National and Non National Roads in 2018 was as follows –

National Roads Grants (TII)	
Improvement Works	€2,642,033
NP & NS Maintenance	€269,770
HD Pavement Renewals & Surveys	€263,259
Winter Maintenance	€148,130
Total:	€3,323,192

Non-National Roads (Council's Contribution)	
€806,617	

Non-National Roads Grants (DHPLG)	
Specific Improvement Grant	€448,476
Restoration Improvement Works	€3,205,082
Restoration Maintenance Works	€778,267
Discretionary Maintenance Grant	€1,140,435
Low-Cost Safety Improvement Works	€147,774
Drainage	€167,278
Bridge Rehabilitation	€139,920
Severe Weather	€495,953
Comm Schemes	€88,909
Training Programme	€24,000
Local Improvement Scheme	€472,217
Total:	€7,108,331
TOTAL BUDGET	€7,914,928

Road Safety Promotion and School Warden Service

The Road Safety role of Local Authorities is wide and ranges from Road Construction to Safety Promotion to School Warden Schemes. The Local Authority now has an expanded role in promoting road safety by developing more initiatives at local level such as:

- Longford Road Safety Working Together Committee consists of the following agencies: - TII, Road Safety Authority, Longford County Council Sports Coordinator, An Garda Síochána, Longford County Council Road Safety Officer, Longford County Childcare Member, Councillor Mark Casey and Members of Longford Fire Services.
- Co-ordination with the Road Safety Authority – advertising, promotions, and media campaigns.
- Promotion of Road Safety in Secondary Schools through the “Drive for Life Programme”. In 2018 training took place in Mean Scoil Mhuire Secondary School Longford and St. Mel’s Secondary School.
- The Junior School Warden Service is designed to provide safe crossing facilities for children in the vicinity of primary schools in provincial towns and villages. The Roscommon/Longford/Westmeath Regional Final was held at St. Etchens Secondary School, Kinnegad and 11 schools participated in the event. Scoil Mhuire National School, Newtownforbes won the Regional Final of the School Warden Competition 2018. Longford County Council has two Schemes in operation at Scoil Mhuire National School, Newtownforbes and St. Mary’s National School, Drumlish. An adult warden is provided at Lanesboro National School.
- Road Safety awareness was promoted in National Schools throughout the county.
- In conjunction with The Road Safety Authority “Check it Fits” visited Nally’s Toyota Garage, Athlone Road, Longford. Unfortunately, in Ireland, fitting child car seats is still a significant cause for concern and as many as 3 out of 4 child car seats may be fitted incorrectly.
- National “Slow Down” Day was held on 20th October 2018 in conjunction with An Garda Síochána.

- The AXA Roadsafe Roadshow was held in the Backstage Theatre on Wednesday 21st February 2018, Wednesday 5th and Thursday 6th December. The following schools attended the event; Moyne Secondary School, Ard Scoil Phadraig Granard, Scoil Mhuire Secondary School Longford, St. Mel’s College, Lanesboro Community College, Mercy Secondary School Ballymahon, Scoil Mhuire Secondary School Strokestown and Youth Reach Longford. Between all the shows 1,500 pupils attended. Longford County Council delivered a hard-hitting road safety to all students in attendance. The AXA Roadsafe Roadshow is aimed primarily at Transition Year and Fifth Year Students in Secondary Schools and is based on an award-winning format and depicts graphically how a night out, can end in tragedy. Using a backdrop of contemporary music, video clips and television advertisements; the story was told by Garda Martin McGowan, Paramedic Fiona Kenny, Fire Officer Ray Hussey, A&E Nurse Sean O’Ceallaigh, Daire O’Muirí, Paramedic Eamonn Mc Loughlin and Richie Geoghegan A&E.



The show concluded in a presentation by Peter Reynolds who tragically lost his brother Joe in a road traffic collision in 2016 after the car he was a front seat passenger in crashed into a tractor. Joe was 18 years old and Peter told the students about the raw grief he and his family have had to suffer since that terrible day.

A staged road traffic collision took place at the show on the 5th December with thanks to our colleagues in the Fire Services.



VETERINARY SERVICES

Food Safety

The Veterinary Section of Longford County Council services a contract between Longford County Council and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland regarding food safety and veterinary public health issues.

The small slaughterhouses and low throughput meat manufacturing establishments in the county are statutorily supervised to ensure there is full compliance with food safety legislation.

Locally produced cattle, sheep and pigs, deer and poultry were processed in small local slaughterhouses in County Longford in 2018. Each animal slaughtered was ante-mortem and post-mortem inspected by a Veterinary Inspector. A sampling programme which is intended to detect harmful substances such as microbes, chemicals and hormones in meat is carried out. The Local Authority Veterinary Service ensures that animal health and welfare is maintained in accordance with legislative provisions. All owners and staff in small slaughterhouses in Co. Longford now have Certificates of Competence in Welfare at time of slaughter.

During 2018 the low throughput meat manufacturing establishments and slaughterhouses in Co. Longford continued to work to EU approved standards. The meat products produced in the County are under official veterinary controls. The Local Authority Veterinary Service regulates and, at the same time, affords appropriate flexibility to low throughput premises. The County Veterinary Officer is a member of the Interdepartmental Working Group to provide guidance to small food producers and regulators in relation to appropriate flexibility acceptable to national and international auditors. Enterprise and development continue on an ongoing basis within premises and the sector, as businesses react to changing commercial demands. New entrants are encouraged to consult with the Council's service and to become involved in the sector. 2018 saw a maintaining of the throughput of small slaughterhouses in County Longford.

The section, through supporting food production in County Longford, is in keeping with our Corporate Plan for promoting enterprise and development in this important area of commercial activity. The Veterinary Section, in cooperation with Longford County Council Local Enterprise Office, assisted individuals with an interest in the sector in 2018.

Professional Development and training in food safety and animal health and welfare continued in 2018 and the Veterinary Service has an Internal Audit System.

Longford Local Authority Veterinary Service carried out internal audit for the national service, was subject to internal audit for standards, and had External audit by the Food Safety Authority of Ireland.

Activities relating to the disposal of Animal By-Product continued to be an important area of work in 2018.

Meetings of the Regional Zoonosis Committee provide the forum for formal liaison between Longford County Council Veterinary Public Health Service and other agencies, e.g., Department of Agriculture and HSE. Longford County Council Veterinary Service liaised through bilateral meetings with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine locally and nationally in 2018.

Dog Control

Longford County Council provides a full-time Dog Control Service in County Longford. The Local Authority employs a Dog Warden and operates a Dog Shelter at Little Water Street in Longford Town. Pound Fees are charged.

Online Dog Licensing was introduced in 2018. Dog Licenses can now be purchased at www.licenses.ie

The Service dealt with 311 cases of unwanted/stray dogs in 2018. Of these, 64 were re-homed, 13 were reclaimed by their owners, 217 were transferred to dog welfare groups and 13 were put to sleep.

Longford County Council's policy is to re-home all dogs suitable for re-homing. In many cases the dogs which were re-homed were selected by their new owners with the aid of the Council's Longford Dog Control Service Facebook page.

Longford County Council maintained a low number of dogs put to sleep in Longford Dog Pound in 2018. This is as a result of the strategic plan implemented by the Dog Control Service assisted by other stakeholders and volunteers, to whom we are grateful.

In order to combat the problem of unwanted dogs, Longford County Council continues to advocate responsible animal ownership through education and awareness. The Council operates a scheme for subsidised neutering for dogs and has also formed a strategic alliance with Dogs Trust.

Inspections of Dog Breeding Establishments continued in 2018 under the Dog Breeding Establishment Act. The Council also works hard on its core responsibility of preventing sheep worrying.

Longford County Council continues to promote the need for dog owners to purchase a Dog Licence. Currently a Dog Licence costs €20 and can be purchased from any Post Office or online at www.licenses.ie. Purchasing a Dog Licence is an important aspect of responsible dog ownership. In 2018, some dog owners also purchased a “Lifetime of Dog” Licence at a one-off cost of €140.

Horse Control

In 2018, 13 horses were seized under the Control of Horses Act 1996. Longford County Council’s Control of Horse Bye Laws regularise detention and disposal requirements, as per the Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, as well as controlling access and activities of horses in public places.

Longford County Council cooperated with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine on a plan for an Urban Horse Project, and in addition, had a Pony Riding and Animal Welfare project for training of young people in responsible horse ownership during 2018. The activities may be viewed at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H_QsCRH6j8g



Pony Riding and Animal Welfare project



WATER SERVICES

The Irish Water / Longford County Council Service Level Agreement (SLA) defines the operational relationship with respect to water and wastewater Operations & Maintenance activities and Water Services Capital Works projects. The 2018 Annual Service Plan (ASP) is based on both parties working collaboratively to ensure service continuity to the customer and to work within the approved annual budgets. This includes achieving efficiencies, value for money and continuous improvement to meet customer expectations and the targets set by the economic and environmental regulators.

Operation and Maintenance

In 2018 Longford County Council acting on behalf of Irish Water spent over €6 million on the Operation and Maintenance of all water and waste water infrastructure in the County. A further €1.3 million was spent by the Water Services Engineering team on directly procured and managed upgrade works on water infrastructure throughout the county. This funding is separate from the capital funding assigned to mains rehabilitation projects. Each project was carried out to provide efficiencies in the delivery of service while also removing Health & Safety risks and allowing the implementation of better working practices for employees coupled with increasing the capital value of the asset or location. Under the SLA, Irish Water issue a scorecard which measures Longford County Council's performance and delivery of all aspects of Water Services. Overall in 2018 the Council's Water Services achieved a performance rating of 97%. This was achieved against a backdrop of decreased funding and headcount.

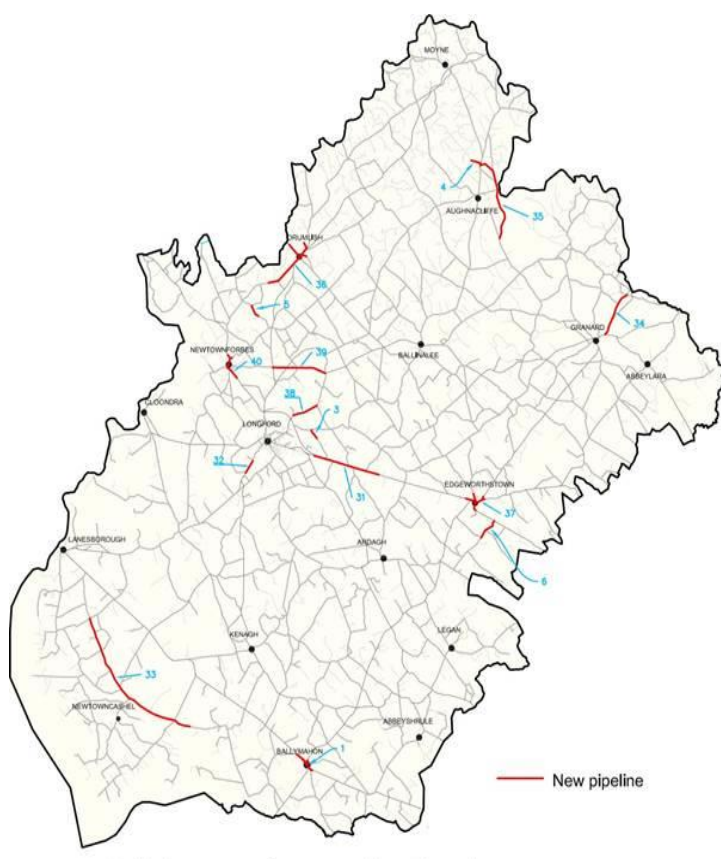
Capital Works Schemes

In 2018 the Water Services Section on behalf of Irish Water completed a number of Capital Works schemes. The following is a summary of the main Capital Schemes;

1. Water Conservation Water Mains Rehab Scheme (Rehab Scheme) – this scheme is completed. A total of 34km of new watermain was laid with all connections completed.
2. Water Conservation Advanced Contract (Water Con. Scheme) – At Drumure (from Kiernan's Forge) works completed and testing of mains was also carried out. Works on the Dublin road at Shroid are also complete. Under this scheme the laying of watermain at Briskill was also completed. 500m of water main remains to be completed on the N63 in 2019.
3. Ballymahon Water Networks Programme (WNP) - Approximately 600m of new watermain was laid in Ballymahon along with the associated connections, which amounted to 3,000m in total. The new watermains are a combination of trunk mains and distribution mains.

The locations and lengths of these schemes is outlined in the map and table below -

Map No.	Location	Length (m)
1	WNP (Ballymahon)	3,000
2	WNP (Corbaun RM - Ballywilliam)	630
3	WNP (Whiterock)	580
4	WNP (Smear Hill)	720
5	WNP (Briskill)	750
6	WNP (Garryandrew)	1,450
30	Water Conservation Scheme (Drumure)	1,400
31	Water Conservation Scheme (Dublin Road)	4,100
32	Water Conservation Scheme (Athlone Road)	800
33	Rehab Scheme (Cashel)	9,300
34	Rehab Scheme (Carra)	1,700
35	Rehab Scheme (Pooldooley)	5,000
36	Rehab Scheme (Drumlish)	4,500
37	Rehab Scheme (Edgeworthstown)	3,000
38	Rehab Scheme (Carrickglass)	1,500
39	Rehab Scheme (Cahana)	3,300
40	Rehab Scheme (Newtownforbes)	1,800
Total length		62,049



APPENDIX 1: CORPORATE PLAN (2015-2019) REPORT

Longford County Council continues to progress specific actions to deliver on the 10 Strategic Objectives

1. Support and maintain safe, sustainable and active communities in our County through community engagement and empowerment.
2. Plan, provide and sustain the infrastructural development, the Regeneration Programme and the natural environment of County Longford.
3. Maintain a supportive business environment to support job creation and retention and work with relevant agencies to attract investment to County Longford.
4. Work with our communities to develop sustainable Tourism in the County, based on our quality natural environment, people, heritage and cultural assets.
5. Maintain and the health, safety and wellbeing of our workforce and support our employees in realising their potential.
6. Provide strong financial management, risk management, audit, corporate governance and control and compliance systems.
7. Support local democracy including the policy making and representation role of our Councillors and public participation in our decision making.
8. Develop and maintain appropriate internal and external communication channels that makes it easier for the Council to engage with each other, our communities and stakeholders and the outside world.
9. Support a high quality level of customer service by maximising the use of technology and providing the best possible customer experience.
10. Take a leadership role in social inclusion, equality, human rights and universal accessibility.

APPENDIX 2: COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES

COMMITTEES	COUNCILLORS
<i>Appointment of nominee of Longford County Council to attend annual meeting of Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurances Ltd</i>	Luie McEntire
<i>Association of Irish Local Government</i>	Mark Casey, Luie McEntire, Peggy Nolan
<i>Board of Backstage Theatre</i>	Directors: Mae Sexton, Michael Nevin, Mary Reynolds Members: Pdraig Loughrey, Peggy Nolan
<i>Creative Ireland Culture Team</i>	Paraic Brady, Mark Casey, Peggy Nolan, Mae Sexton,
<i>County Longford Heritage Forum</i>	Paraic Brady, Seamus Butler, Joe Flaherty
<i>Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly</i>	Mick Cahill, P.J. Reilly
<i>Health Service Executive Regional Health Forum, Dublin-mid Leinster</i>	Paraic Brady, Pat O'Toole, P.J. Reilly
<i>Joint Policing Committee</i>	Gerry Warnock (Chair), Paraic Brady, John Browne, Seamus Butler, Mick Cahill, Gerard Farrell, Joe Flaherty, Martin Mulleady, Colm Murray, Paul Ross, Peggy Nolan, Pat O'Toole, P.J. Reilly
<i>Local Authority Members' Association</i>	P.J. Reilly
<i>Local Community Development Committee</i>	Seamus Butler (Chair), Colm Murray (Vice Chair), P.J.Reilly, Gerry Warnock
<i>Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee</i>	John Browne, Seamus Butler, Joe Flaherty, Peggy Nolan, Mae Sexton, Gerry Warnock
<i>Longford Community Resources Ltd</i>	John Browne, Mick Cahill, Mae Sexton
<i>Longford County Council Audit Committee</i>	Michael Connellan, Denis Glennon (former Elected Members)
<i>Longford Enterprise Development Company Ltd</i>	Seamus Butler, Gerry Farrell, Gerry Warnock
<i>Longford Pool Construction Ltd</i>	John Browne, Joe Flaherty, Gerry Warnock
<i>Longford/Westmeath Education and Training Board</i>	Seamus Butler, Pat O'Toole, Peggy Nolan, Mae Sexton
<i>Longford/Westmeath Rural Community Transport Association</i>	Michéal Carrigy
<i>Lough Oughter, Gowna and River Erne Joint Drainage Committee</i>	Luie McEntire, Martin Mulleady
<i>Midlands Region Drugs and Alcohol Task Force</i>	P.J.Reilly
<i>Midlands Energy Agency</i>	Mick Cahill
<i>North Western International River Basin District Advisory Council</i>	John Duffy, Luie McEntire
<i>Rural Water Monitoring Committee</i>	Seamus Butler, Pat O'Toole, Paul Ross
<i>Shannon River Basin District Advisory Council</i>	Mick Cahill, Pat O'Toole
<i>Sports Partnership Board</i>	John Browne, Mark Casey, Martin Mulleady
<i>Steering Committee for the promotion of the Irish Language</i>	All Elected Members of Longford County Council
<i>Tender Committee</i>	The Cathaoirleach, John Browne, Pat O'Toole.

APPENDIX 3: CONFERENCES ATTENDED BY ELECTED MEMBERS

Conference, 2018 Dates and Attendees	
<i>IBAL Presentation Awards, Dublin, 3rd Jan</i>	Mae Sexton
<i>Entitlement to Health Services, Clonakilty, 19th-21st Jan</i>	John Duffy
<i>LCDC Workshop, Tullamore, 31st Jan</i>	Seamus Butler
<i>IPI Planning Awards, Dublin, 8th Feb</i>	Seamus Butler
<i>Longford Association in London, London, 9th-11th Feb</i>	Gerry Warnock
<i>LAMA Spring Training Seminar, Donegal, 5th-7th Apr</i> Micheál Carrigy, Gerard Farrell, Luie McEntire, Colm Murray, Peggy Nolan, P.J. Reilly, Paul Ross, Mae Sexton	Paraic Brady, John Browne, Mick Cahill, Mark Casey, Mae Sexton
<i>AILG Annual Conference, Dungarvan, 12th-13th Apr</i> P.J. Reilly, Paul Ross, Mae Sexton, Micheál Carrigy, Gerry Hagan, Gerard Farrell, Luie McEntire, Peggy Nolan	Paraic Brady, John Browne, Mick Cahill, Colm Murray, P.J. Reilly, Paul Ross, Mae Sexton, Micheál Carrigy, Gerry Hagan, Gerard Farrell, Luie McEntire, Peggy Nolan
<i>Irish Planning Institute, Tralee, 19th-20th Apr</i> Peggy Nolan, Paul Ross, P.J. Reilly	Pauric Brady, John Browne, Luie McEntire, Colm Murray, P.J. Reilly
<i>Irish Public Bodies AGM, Dublin, 27th Apr</i>	Luie McEntire
<i>Meeting with Minister Zappone, Dail Eireann, 16th May</i>	Mae Sexton
<i>Annual Consultation with Chairs of JPC'S, Dublin – 4th Jul</i>	Gerry Warnock
<i>MacGill Summer School, Glenties, 22nd-27th Jul</i> Colm Murray, Peggy Nolan, P.J. Reilly, Paul Ross	Paraic Brady, John Browne, Gerard Farrell, Gerry Hagan, P.J. Reilly, Paul Ross
<i>IPI Energy in Agriculture, Gurteen, 21st Aug</i> Colm Murray, P.J. Reilly, Paul Ross	Paraic Brady, John Browne, Mick Cahill, Gerry Hagan, P.J. Reilly, Paul Ross
<i>IPI CPD Solar Farm Event, Belfast, 13th Sep</i>	Paul Ross
<i>LAMA Autumn Training Seminar, Castleisland, 28th-29th Sep</i> Gerard Farrell, Gerry Hagan, Luie McEntire, Colm Murray, Peggy Nolan, P.J. Reilly, Paul Ross, Mae Sexton, Gerry Warnock	Paraic Brady, John Browne, Mick Cahill, Micheál Carrigy, Gerard Farrell, Gerry Hagan, Luie McEntire, Colm Murray, Peggy Nolan, P.J. Reilly, Paul Ross, Mae Sexton, Gerry Warnock
<i>AILG Autumn Training Seminar, Monaghan, 25th-26th Oct</i> Gerard Farrell, Luie McEntire, Colm Murray, P.J. Reilly, Paul Ross, Mae Sexton	Paraic Brady, John Browne, Mick Cahill, Micheál Carrigy, Gerard Farrell, Luie McEntire, Colm Murray, P.J. Reilly, Paul Ross, Mae Sexton
<i>Workshop for Elected Members, Westport, 2nd Nov</i> Micheál Carrigy, Gerard Farrell, Joe Flaherty, Gerry Hagan, Luie McEntire, Martin Mulleady, Colm Murray, Pat O'Toole, P.J. Reilly, Paul Ross	Paraic Brady, John Browne, Seamus Butler, Mick Cahill, Micheál Carrigy, Gerard Farrell, Joe Flaherty, Gerry Hagan, Luie McEntire, Martin Mulleady, Colm Murray, Pat O'Toole, P.J. Reilly, Paul Ross
<i>Social Media & Effective Time Management, Carlingford, 9th-11th Nov</i>	Mark Casey, Mae Sexton
<i>Comhairle na Nog, Dublin, 22/11/18</i>	Mae Sexton
<i>Traveller Accommodation Programme, Tullamore, 26th Nov</i>	Mae Sexton
<i>Launch of Draft Regional Spatial Plan, Tullamore, 4th Dec</i>	Pat O'Toole
<i>Delegation to TII, Dublin, 13th Dec</i> P.J. Reilly, Mae Sexton	Micheál Carrigy, Seamus Butler, Colm Murray, Pat O'Toole, P.J. Reilly, Mae Sexton
<i>Entitlement to Health Service, Clonakilty, 21st-22nd Dec</i>	Micheál Carrigy

2018 AILG "In Service" Training for Elected Members	
<i>Carlow, 17th Feb</i>	Gerry Warnock, Peggy Nolan, Mae Sexton, Colm Murray, Mick Cahill, John Browne
<i>Mullingar, 22nd Feb</i>	Paraic Brady, Micheál Carrigy, Luie McEntire, P.J. Reilly, Paul Ross
<i>Lucan Co. Dublin, 15th May</i>	Mae Sexton, John Browne, Luie McEntire, Colm Murray, Peggy Nolan
<i>Westport, 19th May</i>	Mick Cahill, Paul Ross, Paraic Brady, Micheál Carrigy, P.J. Reilly, Gerry Hagan
<i>Dundalk, 23rd Jun</i>	Mick Cahill, John Browne, Peggy Nolan, Colm Murray, Gerry Warnock, Paul Ross, Paraic Brady, Luie McEntire, P.J. Reilly, Gerry Hagan, Mae Sexton
<i>Cork, 15th Sep</i>	John Browne, Peggy Nolan, Paraic Brady, Gerry Hagan, Colm Murray
<i>Birr, 21st Sep</i>	Mick Cahill, P.J. Reilly, Paul Ross
<i>Longford, 11th Oct</i>	John Browne, Mick Cahill, Luie McEntire, Colm Murray, Peggy Nolan
<i>Sligo, 13th Oct</i>	Paul Ross, Gerard Farrell, P.J. Reilly
<i>Limerick, 18th Oct</i>	Mae Sexton
<i>Leixlip Co. Dublin, 17th Nov</i>	Paraic Brady, John Browne, Mick Cahill, Gerry Hagan, Luie McEntire, Colm Murray, Peggy Nolan, P.J. Reilly, Paul Ross, Mae Sexton

APPENDIX 4: PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR		2017	2018
C1 & C2 & C4: Corporate			
Wholetime equivalent staffing number at year end		294.24	314.92
% of paid working days lost due to sickness absence through:	medically certified leave	3.38 %	2.98%
	self- certified leave	0.30 %	0.31%
Number working days lost to sickness absence through:	medically certified leave	2,634	2,389
	self-certified leave	199	233
Number unpaid working days lost to sickness absence through:	medically certified leave	378	256
	self-certified leave	0	0
All ICT Expenditure in the year divided by the WTE number		€2,423.13	€2,377.81
Total ICT Expenditure in the year		€712,983	€748,820.86
All ICT expenditure calculated as a proportion of Revenue expenditure			1.69
Total revenue expenditure in the year before transfers to or from reserves			€44,407,995
C3: Corporate			
Total page views of all websites operated by the LA		338,834	447,310
Number social media users following the LA on social media sites		12,307	25,496
Number social media accounts operated by the LA		19	17
E1: Waste			
A. Number households in an area covered by a licensed operator providing a 3 bin service (census)		4,110	3,483
% households that the number at A. represents		27.23 %	23.08%
E2: Environmental Pollution			
Number of pollution cases:	in respect of complaint during the year	1,152	1,581
	closed during the year	1,122	1,516
	on hand at year end	94	159
	carried forward from the previous year		94
E3: Litter Pollution			
Percentage of area:	unpolluted by litter	22%	1%
	slightly polluted by litter	64%	1%
	moderately polluted by litter	14%	1%
	significantly polluted by litter	0%	1%
	grossly polluted by litter	0%	1%
E4: Green Flag Status			
A. The % of schools awarded Green Flag Status (introduced 2018)			61.70%
F1: Fire Service			
AFS Programme E expenditure divided by Census population served by the Fire Service		€44.55	€50.99
AFS Programme E expenditure data consisting of E11 – Operation of Fire Service & E12 Fire Prevention		€2,132,540	€2,443,596
F2 & F3: Fire Service			
Average time (minutes) to mobilise fire brigades in:			
A. Full-Time Stations in respect of Fire		0 min	0 min
B. Part-Time Stations in respect of Fire		6.2 min	6.32 min
C. Full-Time Stations in respect of other (non-fire) emergency incidents		0 min	0 min
D. Part-Time Stations in respect of other (non-fire) emergency incidents		7.57 min	6.53 min
% of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at scene is:			
A. within 10 minutes		47.15 %	36.05%
B. after 10 & within 20 minutes		44.49 %	53.49%
C. after 20 minutes		8.37 %	10.47%
% of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance at scene is:			
D. within 10 minutes		21.92 %	21.05%
E. after 10 & within 20 minutes		61.64 %	68.42%
F. after 20 minutes		16.44 %	10.53%
Total number call-outs in respect of fires in the year		263	258
Number fire cases where first fire tender attendance at the scene is:			
within 10 minutes		124	93
after 10 & within 20 minutes		117	138
after 20 minutes		22	27
Total number of call-outs in respect of all other emergency incidents in year		73	57
Number non-fire cases where first fire tender attendance at the scene is:			
within 10 minutes		16	12
after 10 & within 20 minutes		45	39
after 20 minutes		12	6

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR		2017	2018		
H1, H2 & H4: Housing					
A. Number of dwellings in the ownership of the LA at 1/1/2018		1,878	1,903		
B. Number of dwellings added to the LA owned stock during the year (constructed or acquired)		32	51		
C. Number of LA owned dwellings sold in the year		7	26		
D. Number of LA dwellings demolished in the year		0	0		
E. Number of dwellings in the ownership of the LA at year end		1,903	1,928		
F. Number of dwellings planned for demolition under a DHPLG approved scheme		0	0		
A. % of total number of LA owned dwellings vacant at year end		4.78%	5.03%		
Number of dwellings within the overall stock not tenanted at year end		91	97		
A. Expenditure on maintenance of housing divided by number dwellings in stock at year end		€715.84	€933.37		
Expenditure on maintenance of LA stock incl. planned maintenance qualifying for grants		€1,362,251	€1,799,543		
H3 & H5: Housing					
A. Average time taken from date of vacation of dwelling to date new tenancy commenced (weeks)		11.87	70.64		
B. Average cost expended on getting dwellings re-tenanted ready for re-letting		€7,571.27	€14,019.68		
Number dwellings re-tenanted on any date in year (excl. those vacant for estate refurbishment)		66	66		
Number weeks from date of vacation to date when the dwelling is re-tenanted		783.14	4662		
Total expenditure on works necessary to enable re-letting of the dwellings		€499,703.65	€925,299.03		
A. Total number registered tenancies at end June		2,859	2,790		
B. Number rented dwellings inspected in the year		72	233		
C. % of dwellings inspected found not to be compliant with the Standards Regulations		66.67 %	101.29%		
D. Number of non-compliant dwellings that became compliant		1	44		
Number dwellings inspected found not to be compliant with the Standards Regulations		48	236		
H6: Housing					
A. Number adults in emergency accommodation long-term as a % of total no. of homeless adults		31.25 %	100%		
Number adults classified as homeless and in emergency accommodation at year end, on PASS		16	1		
Number adults at year end who were in emergency accommodation for 6 months continuously or for 6 months cumulatively within the previous 12 months		5	1		
J1 to J3: Economic Development					
A. Number jobs created with assistance from the Local Enterprise Office		116	70		
A. Number trading online voucher applications approved by the Local Enterprise Office		15	13		
B. Number trading online vouchers drawn down		7	6		
A. Number participants who received mentoring		77	58		
L1: Library Service					
Number library visits during the year		226,546	232,528		
Number library visits per head of population		5.54	5.69		
Number items borrowed during the year		102,173	89,297		
L2: Library Service					
AFS Programme F data / by the population of the LA area per census		€42.19	€47.32		
AFS Programme F02 Operation of Library and Archival Service		€1,724,367	€1,933,927		
M1 & M2: Finance					
Cumulative balance in Revenue Account from the Income & Expenditure of the AFS:					
	A. 31/12/2014	B. 31/12/2015	C. 31/12/2016	D. 31/12/2017	E. 31/12/2018
	€126,465	€142,995	€174,151	€231,830	€233,046
F. Cumulative surplus or deficit at year end as a % of Total Income from the AFS statement				0.56%	0.51%
G. Revenue Expenditure per capita in				€966.98	€1,086.49
Total Income figure from Income and Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS				€41,532,197	€46,129,371
Total Expenditure figure from Income and Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS				€39,523,203	€44,407,995
Summary of % of collection levels for major revenue sources:					
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Rates	69.7 %	82 %	84 %	89 %	89%
Rent & Annuities	86.2 %	88 %	90 %	92 %	93%
Housing Loans	56 %	55 %	57 %	60 %	55%
P1: Planning					
A. Buildings inspected as a % of new buildings notified to the local authority				2.13 %	48.62%
Total number of new buildings notified to the local authority				611	109
Number of new buildings notified, subject of at least one inspection				13	53
P2 & P3: Planning					
A. Number of planning decisions subject of appeal to An Bord Pleanála determined by Board				3	14
B. % of the determinations which confirmed (with or without variations) decision made by the LA				66.67 %	64.29%
Number determinations confirming the LA's decision with or without variation				2	9
A. Total number planning cases referred to or initiated by the LA in year that were investigated				59	44
B. Total number of investigated cases that were closed during the year				46	54
C. % cases at B dismissed as trivial, minor or without foundation, or closed because statute barred or exempted development				45.65 %	35.19%

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR					2017	2018			
D. % of cases at B resolved to the LA's satisfaction through negotiations					10.87 %	12.96%			
E. % Cases at B closed due to enforcement proceedings					43.48 %	51.85%			
F. Total number planning cases being investigated as at year end					72	62			
Number cases at B dismissed under Section 152(2), Planning and Development Act 2000					21	19			
Number cases at B resolved to the LA's satisfaction through negotiations					5	7			
Number cases at B closed due to enforcement proceedings					20	28			
P4 & P5: Planning									
A. AFS Programme D data divided by the population of the LA area					€38.28	€43.94			
AFS Programme D consisting of D01, D02, D03 (inclusive of the central management charge)					€1,564,641	€1,796,035			
A. % of applications for fire safety certificates received that were decided (granted or refused) within 2 months of their receipt					92.45 %	88.89%			
B. % of applications for fire safety certificates received that were decided (granted or refused) within an extended period agreed with the applicant					5.66 %	5.56%			
Total number of applications for fire safety certificates received that were not withdrawn by applicant					53	36			
Total number of applications for fire safety certificates received that were decided (granted or refused) within 2 months of the date of receipt of the application					49	32			
Total number of applications for fire safety certificates received that were decided (granted or refused) within an agreed extended time period					3	2			
R1 & R2: Roads									
% road kilometres with a PSCI rating:									
Regional					99 %	100%			
Local Primary					41 %	97%			
Local Secondary					33 %	97%			
Local Tertiary					60 %	6%			
% Total Road Kms with PSCI Ratings		2017				2018			
		1 - 4	5 - 6	7 - 8	9 - 10	1 - 4	5 - 6	7 - 8	9 - 10
	Regional	0 %	15 %	74 %	11 %	2%	14%	38%	46%
	Local Primary	4 %	35 %	35 %	17 %	0%	16%	66%	17%
	Secondary	7 %	42 %	18 %	19 %	2%	27%	57%	12%
	Tertiary	13 %	22 %	12 %	13 %	7%	21%	22%	16%
A1. Kilometres of regional roads strengthened					3.5 km	5.4 km			
A2. Amount expended on regional roads strengthening work					€394,489	€701,641			
B1. Kilometres of regional roads resealed					4.4 km	5.1 km			
B2. Amount expended on regional road resealing work					€89,175	€124,524			
C1. Kilometres of local roads strengthened					42.8km	56.3 km			
C2. Amount expended on local road strengthening work					€2,314,963	€3,086,246			
D1. Kilometres of local roads resealed					36.5km	46.8 km			
D2. Amount expended on local road resealing work					€526,091	€653,745			
R3: Motor Tax									
% of motor tax transactions online					56.18 %	59.75%			
W1: Water									
% of Private Drinking Water Schemes in compliance with statutory requirements					1%	1%			
Y1 & Y2 Youth and Community									
A. Percentage of local schools involved in the local Youth Council/Comhairle na nÓg scheme					100%	100%			
Total number of 2 nd level schools in the LA area at year end					9	9			
No. 2 nd level schools from which representatives attended the Comhairle na nÓg AGM					9	9			
Number organisations included in the County Register and the proportion who opted to be part of the Social Inclusion College within the PPN					12.45	14.85			
Total number organisations included in the County Register for the local authority area					241	303			
Total number those organisations that registered for the first time					83	86			
Number organisations opting to join the Social Inclusion Electoral College when registering for the PPN					30	45			