



# Chief Executive Report March 2025

Longford County Council

# Contents

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## **Economic Development**

Corporate Services .....	3
--------------------------	---

## **Finance, Innovation and IT**

Finance .....	8
---------------	---

## **Social Development**

Human Resources .....	12
-----------------------	----

## **Physical Development**

Roads and Transportation .....	14
--------------------------------	----

Planning .....	17
----------------	----

# Corporate Services

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## Corporate Management Supports and Customer Services

The customer services desk received over 3,500 calls in February and March. There were also 145 emails received through the customer relationship management system and many in-person customers.

## Register of Electors

Longford County Council are processing applications received through [CheckTheRegister.ie](https://www.longfordcoco.ie/CheckTheRegister) as they are received.

A national project is underway involving all 31 local authorities who are preparing to migrate their electoral registers from iReg to one central database called Voter.ie. This combined database will contain data on 3.7+ million electors. There will be enhanced functionality and security, and consistent data standards implemented across all local authorities. One combined system will reduce duplication of electors across multiple electoral areas or constituencies and make it easier for electors to keep their details up to date.

The new system will contain complete addresses for townlands and polling stations in both English and Irish in compliance with the Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021. Clear duplications will have been identified and removed. This work involves the translation of over 1,500 townlands, polling places, electoral divisions and polling districts. Other work includes removal of duplicate voters and updating of Eircodes and dates of birth of electors. The Franchise team hope to have completed and returned the first set of data checks by Easter.

Work continues to improve the accuracy of the Register. Please remember:

- If you have changed address recently, you must change your details on [CheckTheRegister.ie](https://www.longfordcoco.ie/CheckTheRegister) to ensure that any correspondence issues to the correct address and that you are registered at the correct address for electoral event purposes.
- Even if you are already registered to vote, you need to add your date of birth, Personal Public Service (PPS) Number and Eircode. This ensures the accuracy of the Electoral Register.
- Everyone aged 16 and 17 years can now pre-register online and will be automatically added to the Register when they turn 18 years.
- The easiest way to add or update your details is to go to [CheckTheRegister.ie](https://www.longfordcoco.ie/CheckTheRegister).

## Official Languages Act

Work continues to meet our obligations under Section 10A of the Official Languages Act (Amendment) 2021. Longford County Council has submitted the 2024 report under Section 10A of the Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021 on An Coimisinéir Teanga. Both requirements of the act with respect to advertisements were exceeded:

- 35% of advertisements were in the Irish language, above the 20% required.
- 5.4% of the advertising budget was spent on advertising in Irish media, above the 5% required.

# Corporate Services

## FOIs, AIE and Office of the Ombudsman complaints

See below table for details of the number of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, Access to Information on the Environment (AIE) requests and the Office of the Ombudsman complaints received.

	February	March	Year to Date
FOI requests received	8	3	14
AIE requests received	0	0	2
Office of the Ombudsman complaints received	0	0	1

## Data Protection

There was one data breach since January 2025. This data breach related to an email containing personal data which was sent to the wrong person in error.

There was one Data Subject Access Request where an individual was seeking access to all their personal data held by Longford County Council. This data subject access request was completed within the statutory deadline of one calendar month.

There was one Data Protection Impact Assessment completed relating to a new app used to collect data taken from online farm surveys.

There were no complaints received.

The Data Protection and Information Compliance Officer received 77 data

protection queries since the beginning of January 2025. Common themes of queries received were in relation to:

- Sharing personal data
- Releasing personal data
- CCTV
- Representations from Elected Representatives
- Consent
- Photographs

## Meetings Administration

Meetings and events which took place in February and March detailed below:

<b>6 February</b>	Ballymahon Municipal District In Committee
<b>12 February</b>	Longford County Council
<b>17 February</b>	Social Development Strategic Policy Committee (SPC)
	Physical Development SPC
<b>19 February</b>	Economic, Enterprise and Rural Development SPC
	Governance SPC
<b>12 March</b>	Longford County Council
<b>24 March</b>	Granard MD In Committee
	Granard MD
<b>25 March</b>	Longford MD In Committee
	Longford MD
<b>27 March</b>	Ballymahon MD In Committee
	Ballymahon MD



# Corporate Services

In addition to the above meetings, Strategic Policy Committee training took place for elected members and sectoral representatives who sit on these committees. This was held in the Council Chamber on 10 February.

## Civic Reception for Longford Minor Football Team

County Longford's U-17 GAA team, winners of the 2024 Leinster Minor Football Championships, were honoured at a civic recognition hosted by Longford County Council on Friday, 7 February.

Longford County Council Cathaoirleach Cllr Mark Casey officiated at the event and made a presentation to the team, acknowledging their achievement

and the pride they have brought to County Longford. Longford County Council Chief Executive Paddy Mahon, County Longford GAA Chairperson Derek Fahy and Longford Minors Manager Enda McGahern also spoke at the event.

## Daffodil Day

Daffodil Day was launched locally in Áras an Chontae on 12 March. Every Spring, on Daffodil Day, Ireland turns yellow as people stand together against cancer – to bring hope, provide support and drive progress. This Daffodil Day, the Irish Cancer Society are urging people to stand with cancer patients and survivors and to go all in against cancer.



# Corporate Services

## Communications

### Press releases

Seventeen press releases were issued in February and March. Some of these headlines were:

- Book launch of Out on Our Own by Benny Reid takes place in Longford Library
- Longford, Leitrim and Westmeath Local Enterprise Offices celebrate International Women's Day
- All you need to know for Longford's St Patrick's Eve festivities
- Full line up of what's in store for Longford Lights 2025 announced

### Social Media

	*Reach or Impressions	Follower Count
Facebook	38.1K	8,084 (+139)
Instagram	4.3K	2,335 (+109)
X (Twitter)	**	3,617 (+6)
LinkedIn	3.2K	1,266 (+26)
TikTok	100	569 (+87)
Total	46.6K	15,871 (+367)

\* Reach: Number of people who had post enter their screen. Impressions: Number of times post entered a screen.

\*\* Analytics are no longer available on the non-paid for version of X.

### Media Queries

Throughout February and March, 27 media queries were received and dealt with in collaboration with the sections related to the subject of each query.

### Websites

Longfordcoco.ie had 25,542 visits in February and March. The most popular sections were:

- Planning (9K page views)
- Housing (6.1K page views)
- News (5.7K page views)
- Other Council websites had 15,403 visits in the same period.

### Annual Report 2024

The Communications team have been working on the Annual Report 2024 which details the work which took place across the entire Council for the previous year.

## Health and Safety

### Health and Safety Inspections

There was eight health and safety inspection completed by the Health and Safety section and the Management Team.

### Health and Safety Training

Ongoing risk assessment briefing sessions are held with each section of the council.

# Corporate Services

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## Internal Audit

Health and safety internal audits were completed in the following section:

- Civil Defence
- Environment
- Information Technology
- Longford Local Enterprise Office
- Fire and Emergency Services.

Health and safety audits also took place with Uisce Éireann.

Audit schedule in place for other Council sections.

## Health and Safety Authority

There were two inspections from the Health and Safety Authority (HSA):

- Camlin Court on 14 January
- Town Hall on 15 January

## Event Management

Event management plan and risk assessment were completed for Longford's St Patricks Eve Parade.

## Awards Nomination

Longford County Council is delighted to announce that it has been shortlisted in the Health and Safety Excellence Awards under the Public Sector category. We are shortlisted with Bord na Móna and Uisce Éireann.

# Finance

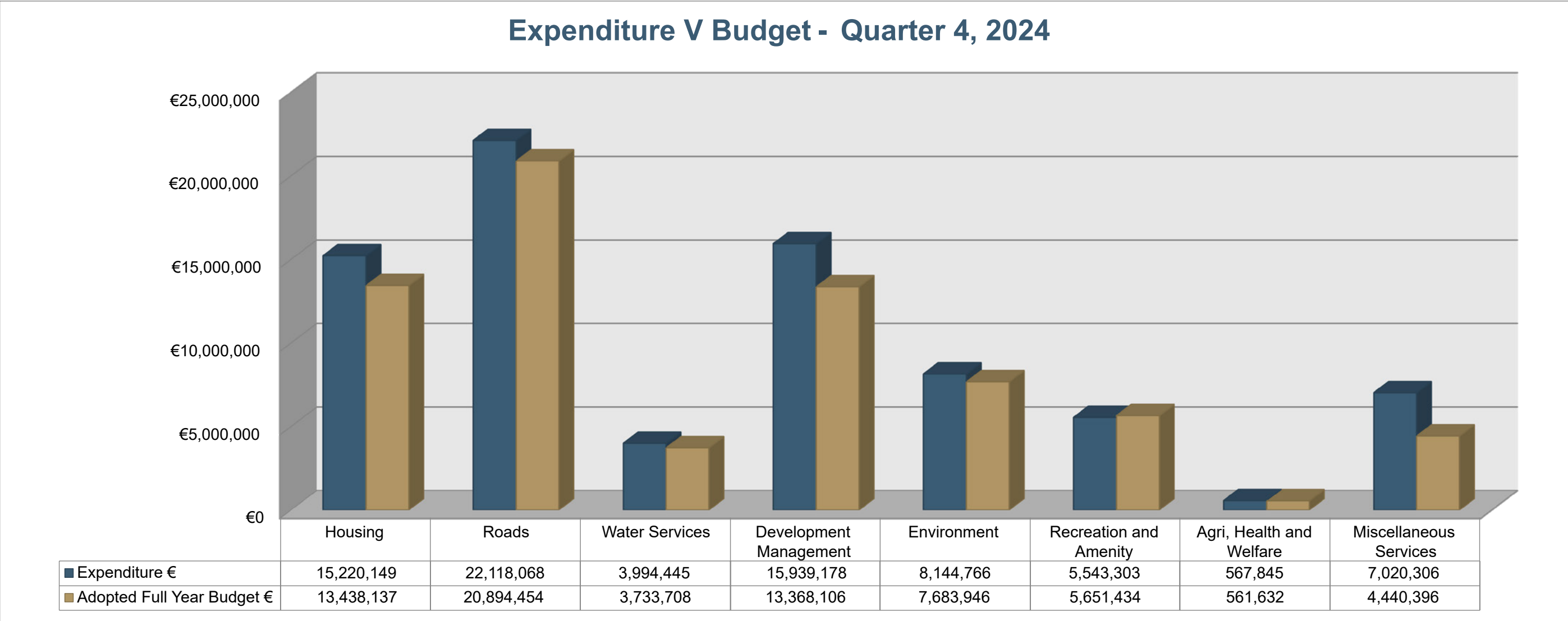
## Revenue Account Income and Expenditure Summary by Service Division

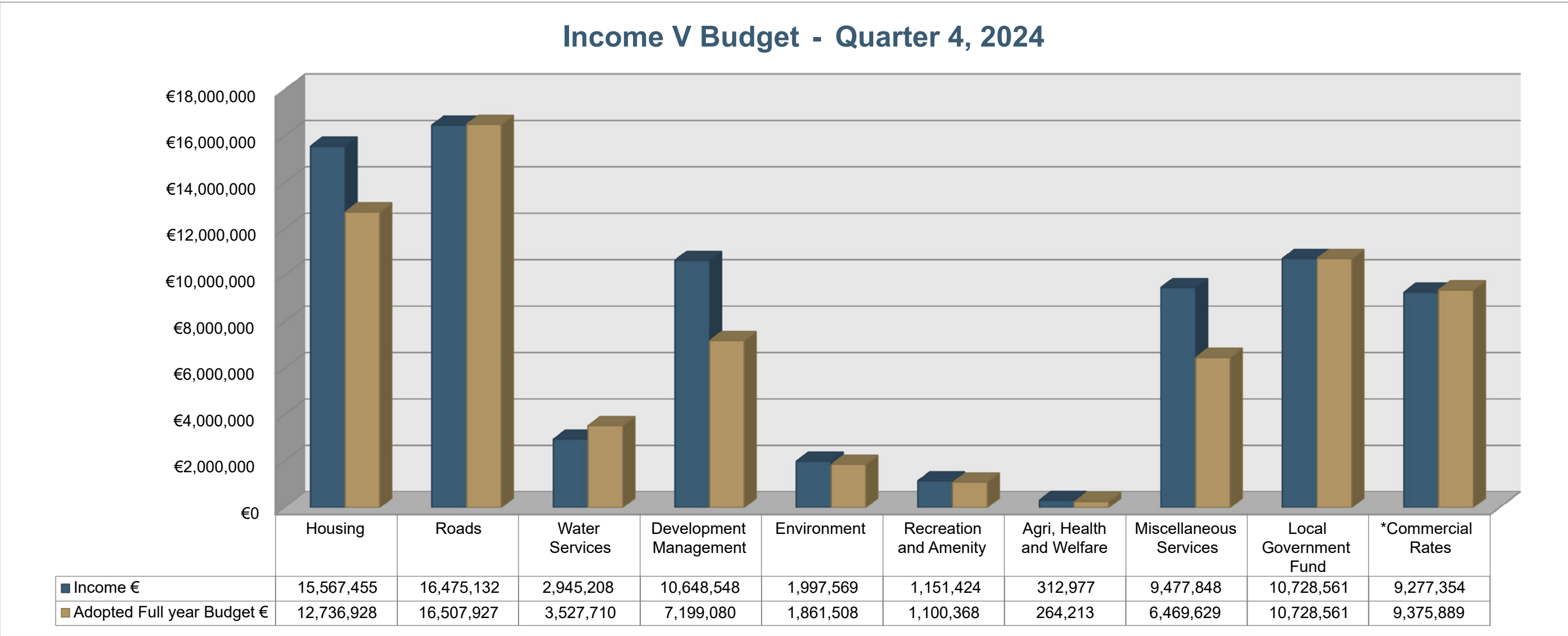
Year to Date to Quarter End 31 December 2024

	EXPENDITURE				INCOME				NET
	Expenditure €	Adopted Full Year Budget €	% Budget Spent to date	Budget Remaining €	Income €	Adopted Full year Budget €	% Budget Raised	Budget outstanding €	Actual Overall Surplus/ (Deficit) €
Housing	15,220,149	13,438,137	113%	(1,782,012)	15,567,455	12,736,928	122%	(2,830,527)	347,306
Roads	22,118,068	20,894,454	106%	(1,223,614)	16,475,132	16,507,927	100%	32,795	(5,642,936)
Water Services	3,994,445	3,733,708	107%	(260,737)	2,945,208	3,527,710	83%	582,502	(1,049,237)
Development Management	15,939,178	13,368,106	119%	(2,571,072)	10,648,548	7,199,080	148%	(3,449,468)	(5,290,630)
Environment	8,144,766	7,683,946	106%	(460,820)	1,997,569	1,861,508	107%	(136,061)	(6,147,197)
Recreation and Amenity	5,543,303	5,651,434	98%	108,131	1,151,424	1,100,368	105%	(51,056)	(4,391,879)
Agri, Health and Welfare	567,845	561,632	101%	(6,213)	312,977	264,213	118%	(48,764)	(254,868)
Miscellaneous Services	7,020,306	4,440,396	158%	(2,579,910)	9,477,848	6,469,629	146%	(3,008,219)	2,457,542
Local Government Fund					10,728,561	10,728,561	100%	0	10,728,561
*Commercial Rates					9,277,354	9,375,889	99%	98,535	9,277,354
	<b>€78,548,060</b>	<b>€69,771,813</b>	<b>113%</b>	<b>(€8,776,247)</b>	<b>€78,582,076</b>	<b>€69,771,813</b>	<b>113%</b>	<b>(€8,810,263)</b>	<b>€34,016</b>

These figures were submitted to the Department on Friday, 28 February 2025







# Finance

## Summary of Major Revenue Collections: Quarter 4, 2024

	Opening Arrears	Billed	To be Collected	Collected	Closing Arrears	Collected
Quarter 4, 2024	€	€	€	€	€	%
*Rates	€1,200,532	€9,281,655	€9,573,491	€8,423,199	€1,150,292	88%
Rents (inc. RAS)	€907,238	€10,742,975	€11,621,626	€9,674,216	€1,947,410	83%
Housing Loans	€350,875	€1,141,938	€1,491,572	€1,215,997	€275,575	82%
	Opening Arrears	Billed	To be Collected	Collected	Closing Arrears	Collected
Quarter 4, 2023	€	€	€	€	€	%
*Rates	€859,492	€9,256,393	€9,225,188	€8,024,656	€1,200,532	87%
Rents (inc. RAS)	€882,623	€7,565,552	€8,419,840	€7,512,702	€907,138	89%
Housing Loans	€346,022	€1,168,696	€1,514,669	€1,163,794	€350,875	77%
	Opening Arrears	Billed	To be Collected	Collected	Closing Arrears	Collected
VARIANCE YOY	€	€	€	€	€	%
*Rates	€341,040	€25,262	€348,303	€398,543	(€50,240)	1%
Rents (inc. RAS)	€24,615	€3,177,423	€3,201,786	€2,161,514	€1,040,272	-6%
Housing Loans	€4,853	(€26,758)	(€23,097)	€52,203	(€75,300)	5%

# Human Resources

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## Learning and Development

The following business skills, health and safety and climate action training was arranged during February and March:

### Business skills training:

- A-Z In Local Government with the IPA
- Women in Leadership – Grade 7
- Courtroom skills
- PMDS reviewee
- Building defects in construction
- IAT sustainable road pavements
- Business writing skills
- Money and delay claims in construction
- QQI Level 6 Certificate in Coaching
- Public works contracts
- C1 Driver License
- Certified National Agricultural Inspection Programme (NAIP)
- Minute taking for meetings
- Artificial Intelligence in the workplace

### Health and safety training:

- First Aid Responder (Refresher)
- Driver CPC (Module 1)
- CSCS Mini Digger (Experienced Operative)

- Temporary Traffic Management for Roads Operatives
- Temporary Traffic Management Designer
- Road opening and re-instatement
- Abrasive wheels
- Chainsaw Operatives Refresher
- CSCS Locating Underground Services
- Operation and maintenance of bushcutters and strimmers
- Safe use of pesticides and herbicides
- Responding to a serious incident

### Climate action training:

- Planning for resilience
- Raising awareness

## Health and Wellbeing

### Physical Wellbeing

The following classes were delivered as part of our fitness programme for employees:

- Lunchtime Yoga
- Lunchtime Spinning
- After Work Spinning
- Lunchtime Running Group
- Lunchtime Circuits

# Human Resources

## Health Screenings

100 employees took part in staff health screening clinics, which were held in Áras an Chontae on 18, 19, 26 and 27 March and in Edgeworthstown Library on 21 March. The screenings included comprehensive checks such as blood pressure, cholesterol levels, and BMI measurements. Feedback from participants was very positive, with all appreciating the convenience of the onsite clinics.

## CIPD Ireland HR Awards 2025

Longford County Council was shortlisted in the Health and Wellbeing category at the CIPD Human Resources Awards 2025 held at Mansion House, Dublin on 28 February. The nomination was recognition of our efforts in embedding a culture of workplace wellbeing. This accomplishment recognises the Council's commitment to prioritising employee wellbeing through broad strategies and initiatives that support mental, physical, social and financial wellbeing.





# Roads and Transportation

## Regional and Local Road Allocations

On 14 February, Longford County Council were notified of the Regional and Local Road Grant Allocations for 2025. The Roads Programme is currently being prepared. Longford

County Council received an overall increase of €282,200 euro or approximately 2.8% on the 2024 allocation. The total allocation per grant is detailed in the table below:

Department Grant	2025 Allocation
Restoration Improvement	€5,382,000
Restoration Maintenance	€676,000
Supplementary Restoration Maintenance	€591,500
Discretionary Grant	€1,311,500
Bridge Rehabilitation Grant	€463,300
Specific Improvement	€200,000
Safety Improvement Works	€270,400
Speed Limits Review Signs	€188,500
Former National Roads	€260,000
Climate Adaption	€297,000
Training Grant	€34,000
Community Involvement Scheme	€273,900
Drainage Works	€299,000
PSCI: Survey Support	€12,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>€10,259,100</b>



# Roads and Transportation

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## National Road Schemes

Longford County Council has not received the allocation for National Roads Improvement and Maintenance Works 2025.

The Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) allocation for greenways and active travel for 2025 is €50,000 (N4 Roundabouts Severance Scheme).

The preferred option for the N4 Mullingar to Longford (Roosky) was announced on the 18 February 2025. The allocation for this scheme has not yet been confirmed.

Construction works on the N4 Newtownforbes to Cloniher Pavement Scheme continued in February and March.



## Municipal District Works

Works on footpaths, drainage, pothole repair and general road maintenance continued in each municipal district during February and March.

Area technical staff continued work on the preparation of the Roads Schedule for 2025 which will be presented to the members at the various Municipal District meetings by the end of March.

Procurement of plant and materials is ongoing.

## Climate Change Adaption and Resilience Works

Longford County Council have received an allocation of €297,000 for works under the 2025 Climate Change Adaption and Resilience Works allocation. This will facilitate the following works:

- Riverbank stabilisation works on the L-51611 Ringowney, R-392-1629 Foygh, L-1044 Carrickadorish and L-1151 Cloontirm
- Raising of road level and strengthening of road edge on the L-5007 Clooneen
- Drainage works on the L-1091 Bracklin Road.

## Speed Limits

The Rural Local Road Speed Limits Byelaws came into effect on the 7 February 2025. This coincided with the new national default 60km/h speed limit for rural local roads. All required signage has been erected.

# Roads and Transportation

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## **Local Improvement Schemes (LIS)**

The objective of the Local Improvement Scheme is to fund the construction or improvement of non-public roads. Eligible road projects are defined by the scheme and local contributions set at 10% or 15% depending on the number of beneficiaries.

Funding is provided from the Department of Rural and Community Development. Longford County Council has received an allocation of €373,479 for works under LIS scheme.

## **Climate Action**

Longford County Council propose to carry out a small number of warm mix and recycling projects as part of the 2025 Regional and Local Road Programme.

# Planning

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## **Planning Applications, Development Management**

ePlanning has been fully implemented and is running smoothly significantly reducing our paper waste. Currently we are receiving over 85% of our applications online.

A number of large-scale renewable energy applications have been received in relation to both solar and wind energy and will be assessed on their merits.

There have been numerous Part VIII applications processed from Town Centre First, Regeneration, and Active Travel.

The Waiver Scheme in relation to Development contribution has been extended, with a modest uptake in applications. The Planning Section will look to make as many people as possible aware of the scheme.

## **Office of the Planning Regulator review**

The Planning Department has been contacted by the Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) and informed that it is their intention to review Longford's Planning Section.

The OPR review process considers the systems and procedures used by authorities in the performance of their functions under the Planning and Development Act. The focus of the programme is on identifying good practice and achievements and promoting learning between authorities, as well as highlighting any areas for improvement.

Following the receipt of the requested written information, a very important part of the overall review process will be meeting with relevant officials at the Council's offices. This step in the process will facilitate our understanding of the Council's overall procedures through a series of workshop-style meetings. This format reduces the overall administrative burden for both the Council and the OPR, rather than engaging in extensive written procedure.

The meetings will include workshops with the various planning department teams, including the senior management team and the various internal teams with operational responsibility for the various statutory functions (for example, development management, forward planning, enforcement, land activation).

The precise timing of these engagements will be agreed at a later point, but we will be seeking to schedule for early May.

