



# Longford County Council

## Chief Executive Report

### May 2022

# Contents

## May Highlights

Volunteers recognised	3
Moroccan Ambassador visit	
Robotics in Mullinalaghta	
#ClickintoGear for Bike Week 2022	

## Infrastructure, Housing & Innovation

Roads	8
Environment	9
Civil Defence	10

## Community & Enterprise

Community Development	4
Local Sports Partnership	5
Tourism	6
Human Resources	6

## Planning & Project Delivery

Housing Capital	11
Climate Action	11

## Finance & IT

Information Technology	7
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# May Highlights

## Volunteers recognised

Local volunteers were recognised at a celebratory event for people and groups who helped during the COVID-19 pandemic. The event was part of National Volunteer Week.



## Moroccan Ambassador visit

Longford County Council was delighted to welcome His Excellency Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco Lahcen Mahraoui to Longford. His visit was part of local celebrations ahead of Africa Day.



## Robotics in Mullinalaghta

Mullinalaghta Broadband Connection Point continued to run their VEX IQ robotics programme. For this, primary school children are encouraged to learn about problem-solving and technology.



## #ClickintoGear for Bike Week 2022

Bike Week 2022 took place with loads of events, including many different cycles along the Royal Canal Greenway and a bikers lunch.



# Community & Enterprise

## Community Development

### Local Community Development Committee

A meeting of the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) is scheduled for 14 June.

### Community Activities Fund 2021

The Community Activities Fund aims to enhance facilities in disadvantaged communities with grants for community groups. Under this fund, 36 applications were evaluated, with €29,944.05 in funding awarded.

Applications received under this round of funding were made by community groups who applied under a previous round of funding which was oversubscribed. Longford LCDC administers this fund on behalf of the Department of Rural and Community Development.

### CLÁR 2022

Longford County Council has submitted 15 proposed projects to the Department of Rural and Community Development for funding under CLÁR Measure One: Developing Community Facilities and Amenities.

Measure One will support capital interventions that enhance or develop accessible community recreation facilities. Decisions on grant allocations is expected in July 2022.

### Intercultural Grants 2022

Longford County Council has allocated €20,000 in funding to several organisations and community groups for the support of local integration initiatives. This funding will support migrants to actively

participate in their local communities while also maintaining their own cultural identity.

### Africa Day 2022

Funding of €7,500 was secured from Irish Aid at the Department of Foreign Affairs towards events to celebrate Africa Day.

On 21 May, Longford African Network held events in the Temperance Hall in Longford Town. Cathaoirleach Cllr Peggy Nolan addressed the event and welcomed guests. Guests included the Dean of the African Diplomatic Group and Ambassador of Morocco, His Excellency Mr Lahcen Mahraoui. Ambassadors for Nigeria, Kenya and South Africa were also in attendance for the celebrations.





# Community & Enterprise

## Local Sports Partnership

### Volunteer Training

In May, training sessions took place: Autism in Sport and Disability Inclusion Training.

For this training, sports coaches, fitness instructors, club leaders, parents, teachers and volunteers in sport were upskilled in the area of inclusion. On completion, participants were armed with practical information on how to make their sessions more fun and accessible to all.

Participants also received a CARA Sport Inclusion certificate endorsed by Sport Ireland. CARA is a national pan-disability sport organisation aiming to increase sport and physical activity opportunities for people with disabilities.

### LIFT: Longford Inclusive Fitness Trails

Longford Local Sports Partnership hosted an open day on the outdoor gym equipment and Longford Inclusive Fitness Trails (LIFT) programme.

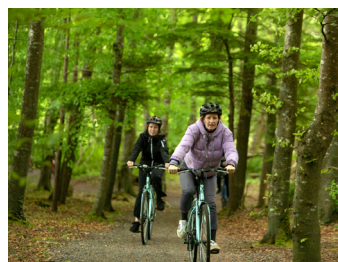
Event participants learned how to use the machines. They also learned about a QR code system in place which links user to video demonstrations for each piece of equipment. These videos are accompanied by instructions in English, as well as Irish Sign Language and closed caption instructions.

LIFT is also available in Leebeen Park, Aughnaclyffe and the Green in Edgeworthstown.

### Bike Week 2022

Bike Week 2022 took place in May. Celebrating and promoting the benefits of cycling, several cycling events took place bike-themed events organised by local authorities, community groups and cycling groups are taking place, including:

- Granard Convent on the Canal attended by 40-50 students
- Bikers Lunch with 20 attendees taking part in a cycle and a post-cycle lunch
- St Mel's College cycling along the Royal Canal, with two groups of 20
- Moyne Community School cycling along the Royal Canal, with one group of between 40-50 students
- Ballymahon Convent cycling along the Royal Canal, with two groups of 20-25
- Ballymahon Vocational School cycling along the Royal Canal, with two groups of 20-25
- 13km and 30km cycle along the Royal Canal Greenway, with 40 people attending



# Community & Enterprise

## Tourism

### Canva for tourism businesses

Longford Tourism held a Canva workshop for businesses working in the tourism sector in County Longford. This course allows businesses to upskill, gaining skills in producing professional online content to promote their business. Feedback on the course was positive.

### Hidden Heartlands Networking Event

Longford Tourism attended a networking event hosted by Fáilte Ireland's Hidden Heartlands team. The event allowed Longford Tourism to network and meet with the many businesses working within the tourism sector in the Midlands region.

At the event, County Longford was well represented with members of Knights and Conquests heritage centre, the Maria Edgeworth Centre, Fiona Egan Cloughan Farm and Cookery School and Lough Ree Distillery also in attendance.

Longford Tourism hopes to work with some of the many businesses who came to the event in the future for the promotion of the Midlands, and County Longford specifically.

## Human Resources

### Employee Numbers

The Council had 386 employees as of May 2022:

Managerial	6	Outdoor	99
Administrative:	170	Retained Fire Fighter	43
Technical:	68		

### Recruitment

Competitions complete	6	Employees in new roles	5
Candidates interviews	60	Leavers	5
New starters	5		

### Learning and Development

Training held in May included:

Business skills training:

- Disability Awareness Training
- Certificate in Professional Irish
- Court room skills
- Basic Excel course
- Recruitment shortlisting workshops from the Local Government Management Agency and Institute of Public Administration
- Graduate mentoring

Health and safety training:

- Electrical Awareness
- Safe Pass
- Ride on roller
- Manual handling practical

### Health and Wellbeing

The following programmes took place in May:

- Choirworks 2022
- Planning for Retirement programme
- Bike Week including lunch and after work cycles

# Finance & IT

## Information Technology

### Town WIFI

This month, 875 new guest and 2,001 returning guests used the free Town WIFI in Longford, Ballymahon and Drumlish. There was an average usage time of seven minutes per user.

### Broadband Connection Points

This month, 58 new guests and 242 returning guests used the Broadband Connection Points (BCPs) available in County Longford.

Our Kids Code initiative started in the Latin School Community Centre BCP. This is a joint-project between Trinity College Dublin and the National Parents Council. It aims to support parents and guardians as they engage with their children's interest in computing.

Mullinalaghta BCP continue to run the VEX IQ robotics programme for primary school children, as well as a Basic Digital Skills facilitated by the Longford-Westmeath Education Training Board.



### Digital Services

Longford Text Alert, an app providing updates on crime and safety, and initiatives and more, continues to be rolled out across County Longford.

There has been continued progress and support of several digital services projects, including:

- eDocument management project
- Customer Relationship Management app
- A housing inspection app
- ePerformance Management Development Scheme (ePMDS) software
- eService Plan project

### Technology Infrastructure

ServiceDesk dealt with 558 enquiries in May.

Security improvements to core infrastructure and multi-year security plan has been developed. A cyber security training plan has progressed and infrastructure upgrade is now complete.

There has been continued progress and support of several infrastructural projects, including:

- Patching of client and server systems
- Hybrid meetings
- Review, updating and implementation of security policies
- Mobile phone administration and support

### Geographic Information Systems

Electoral register mapping exercise was undertaken to support proposed polling scheme amendments.

Data was collated and supplied to consultants on the Lanesborough Turf and Surf project.

Work on the Roads Programme 2022 map viewer was completed.



# Infrastructure, Housing & Innovation

## Roads

### Bike Week 2022

County Longford primary schools were all invited to take part in a Road and Bike Safety Poster Competition for Bike Week 2022, which took place in May.

This campaign aimed increase road safety awareness among students. This year's theme for the poster was Cycling Safe in County Longford. This theme is based on the Road Safety Authority's Rules for Safe Cycling. Winners will be chosen from a number of different age categories.

### Municipal district works

Road maintenance, including drainage, footpath repairs and pothole repairs, continued in each municipal district in May.

Restoration improvement and maintenance works on regional and local roads has started Municipal Districts (MDs). This programme of works will continue throughout the summer.

Bridge improvement and maintenance works are ongoing in the Granard MD.



### National road schemes

N63 Majors Well Road works continued. This work includes construction of footpaths and a cycle track. Realignment of Blind Man's Walk junction is ongoing. Due to delays and additional works required, it is envisaged that work will not be completed before September.

N4 Garryandrew Pavement Scheme is at tender stage, with the contract due to be awarded in the coming weeks.

Works on the N63 Lanesborough Pavement Scheme continued with works on footpaths progressing. Road Pavement Works are due to start shortly.



### Local Improvement Schemes

Local Improvement Schemes fund construction and improvements of non-public roads. €351,880 was allocated to the Council for this scheme in 2022.

In May, priority list one and secondary list two was submitted to the Department of Rural and Community Development, who provide this funding.



# Infrastructure, Housing & Innovation

## Environment

### Green Schools

Twelve County Longford schools were awarded green flags status in May. For this, the schools completed work under different environmental themes including energy, water, travel, biodiversity, and global citizenship.



The schools recognised as Green Schools are:

- St Columba's National School in Dring
- Mercy Secondary School in Ballymahon
- Templemichael College in Longford Town
- Ard Scoil Phadraig in Granard
- Gael Scoil in Longford Town
- St Dominic's National School in Kenagh
- St Patrick's National School in Coolaherty
- Fermoy National School in Lanesborough
- Scoil Samhthann in Ballinalee
- St Guasacht's National School in Bunlahy
- Colehill National School in Ballinamuck
- St Patrick's National School in Ballinamuck

### Water Conservation

Congratulations to students from Mercy Secondary School in Ballymahon who have won a National Green Schools competition for a video on the theme of water conservation.

### Anti-litter and graffiti funding 2022

Longford County Council was awarded €16,000 in funding for anti-litter and graffiti projects across the county. The Council have made an additional €6,800 available also.

This total funding of €22,800 will be made available for community groups and tidy towns committees. It will be used to promote responsible dog ownership, community clean ups, interactive workshops and anti-litter competitions.

### Anti-dumping initiative

Anti-dumping initiative funding of €84,000 has been approved for the following projects:

- Environmental clean ups in Longford Town and Granard
- Replacement of litter bins in Ballymahon
- Large goods and hazardous waste collection
- Environmental awareness project

# Infrastructure, Housing & Innovation

## Civil Defence

### Duties & Taskings

Civil Defence provided medical cover at:

- Two Longford Town soccer matches
- Darkness into Light
- HYPE youth festival



### Training and Operations

- Two Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) students passed the practical element of their course in May
- Two missing person search instructors attended requalification training
- Emergency First Responder (EFR) recertification training continues for three volunteers.
- Volunteers decommissioned an emergency rest centre
- Longford Civil Defence attended and were recognised at a Volunteer Week event to recognise the contribution of volunteers during the COVID-19 pandemic



# Planning & Project Delivery

## Housing Capital

### Housing Capital Programme

Project	Units	Status
O'Hara's Site, Richmond Street	14	On site, due for completion June-July 2022
St Patrick's Court, Ballinamuck	8	On site, due for completion December 2022
Alderfield, Farnagh	1	On site (23 complete) due for completion June-July 2022
Campbell's Drive	2	On site (21 complete) due for completion June-July 2022
Cranleymore, Abbeylara	3	Stage 3 approved. Tender drawings being prepared.
St Rita's Park Road	8-12	Redesign in progress
24 Congress Terrace	2	Part 8 Planning approved. Stage 3 submitted for approval.
Woodland Path, Keenagh	4	Design progressing. Stage 2 to be submitted shortly.
Radharc na Muileann, Lanesborough	22	Design progressing. Stage 2 to be submitted shortly.
Drynan, Ballymahon	13	Design progressing. Stage 2 to be submitted shortly.
Cnoc na Gréine, Granard	6	Design progressing. Stage 2 to be submitted shortly.
2 Woodview, Newtownforbes	2	Part 8 advertised.
2 Legion Terrace	4	To be submitted for Stage 1 Single Stage approval shortly
Lettergeeragh, Drumlisk	1	Part 8 advertised.

## Climate Action Initiatives

### Human Resources

Climate Action is included in all recruitment competitions and contracts of employment issued.

### Information Technology

Several paperless projects are having a positive impact in Longford County Council and its environmental footprint. These include the ePMDS app and the Digital Divide project.

Efforts continue work with other sections to roll new schemes out on a 'digital-first' basis. This reduces paper usage.

### Housing

Under the Midlands Retrofit Programme work is ongoing on the retrofitting of four Council estates in Ballinalee, with River Crescent and Camlin View completed, while Cois na habhainn and Hill View ongoing.

Tender in progress for St. Matthews Park, Ballymahon and assessment of works required are being considered on 46 local authority houses in the estate.

Under the National Energy Efficiency Programme, work is complete on 16 houses in Sli na Mona, while works are ongoing on the four houses at Sli na Mona, Ballymahon

### Roads

Several Roads employees are to undertake training in green public procurement with a view to reducing the Roads carbon footprint.

# CONNECTED

People • Place • Opportunity

Management Report for May 2022 prepared in accordance with Sec 136 (2) of the Local Government Act 2001, as inserted by Sec 51 the Local Government Reform Act 2014. The report outlines key aspects of our service delivery and performance in May 2022 in securing the objectives set out in the Council's Corporate Plan.

Signed:   
Paddy Mahon  
Chief Executive







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