

Longford County Council Chief Executive Report February 2022

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February Highlights

Welcoming our new Director of Service



A warm welcome is extended to Samantha Healy who has recently joined Longford County Council to take up her role as Director of Services for Infrastructure, Housing and Innovation. All employees wish her every success going forward.

Good sports at the Sports Bursary Awards!

Our sporting future is bright with six sportspeople awarded Longford County Council Sports Bursary for 2021. The winners are: athlete Fumni Talabi; rugby player Charlie Byrne; basketball player Caolán Lynch; triathlete Ciarán Madden; soccer player Melissa O’Kane and Longford’s Olympian swimmer Darragh Greene.



Official openings take place as Minister Humphreys visits

Edgeworthstown Community Library was officially opened by Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD on 24 February. Minister Humphreys also officiated at unveilings of walkways and upgraded facilities at Aughnacliffe, Ballinalee and Dromard.



Service Delivery Plan 2022

The Service Delivery Plan 2022 was adopted by the elected members at the February meeting of Longford County Council.

The Plan sets out the Council’s service delivery objectives and performance standards, which it intends to achieve over the year ahead.



SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN 2022

LONGFORD COUNTY COUNCIL

Community & Enterprise

Community Development

Local Community Development Committee

A meeting of the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) took place on Tuesday, 8 February.

Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme

At the LCDC's February meeting, the Annual Performance Review 2021 and the Annual Plan of 2022 was approved.

Longford Community Resource CLG will receive €584,865 in 2022 to deliver the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) targeted at disadvantaged individuals and groups.

Community Activities Fund

The new Community Activities Fund to help community groups with their running costs, as well as facility improvements and equipment costs, closed to applications in February.

The scheme was oversubscribed with a significant increase in the amount of applications received. Applications were validated by Longford LCDC support staff.

Eligible applications were evaluated at a sub-committee meeting on Monday, 28 February. Recommendations for grant awards were forwarded to Longford LCDC for consideration and approval at the March meeting. Applicants will then be advised of decisions.

Comhairle na nÓg

The Comhairle na nÓg steering committee held a meeting on Tuesday, 15 February.

Longford Comhairle na nÓg members participated in a consultation event on the Local Community Safety Partnership held on Tuesday, 22 February.

Longford Comhairle na nÓg member Ashley Kiernan was selected to participate on the National Climate Assembly for an 18-month term. Ashley attended a preparation meeting in February and will be attending an assembly meeting at the start of March.

Three Comhairle members attended an EU Just Transition Fund consultation meeting in February. This was run by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications.

Sláintecare Healthy Communities

The second meeting of Sláintecare Healthy Communities Longford-Westmeath implementation group was held in February. Discussion centred around the terms of reference, grant agreements, training, key performance indicators for 2022, and the employment of a Local Development Officer.



Sláintecare.
Healthy Communities

Community & Enterprise

Community Development (Contd)

LGBTI+ Dormant Accounts Funding
Funding of €21,500 was secured for specific projects in 2022. The groups allocated this funding to deliver these projects are:

Group	Allocation
Bridgeways Family Resource Centre	€5,000
Lus na Gréine Family Resource Centre	€6,500
Longford Community Resources CLG	€10,000

Projects will be aligned to an action from the National LGBTI+ Strategy to “Take measures to ensure that existing community infrastructure is inclusive and welcoming to LGBTI+ people and consider the provision of pop-up LGBTI+ services.”

Intercultural Grants Scheme

At the February meeting of Longford County Council, €2,000 was allocated to the Midlands Polish Community CLG to run an integration event in Longford on International Women’s Day.

Women of different ethnicity and backgrounds will be invited to showcase their culture, traditions, food, music, dance and to hear local female speakers and motivators.

Library, Heritage & Archives

Edgeworthstown Community Library officially opened

On Ireland Reads Day, Edgeworthstown Community Library was officially opened by Minister for Rural and Community Development Heather Humphreys TD.



Creative Ireland Programme

A guide to all creative and cultural events taking place in County Longford over the next six months is being compiled.

The new Iora Nua sculpture at the gates of Castle Forbes in Newtownforbes was unveiled by Longford County Council Cathaoirleach Cllr Peggy Nolan.



Community & Enterprise

Library, Heritage & Archives (Contd)

Longford Live and Local

Longford Live and Local: Spring into Summer is now underway with many events planned. One event which took place this month was Faoin Spéir's The Light Brigade, an art installation by artist Tom Meskell. It was unveiled at Connolly Barracks on the last weekend in February and was attended by over 1,400 people.

Longford Age Friendly programme

Longford Memories is a book of older people's stories from interviews undertaken during the pandemic, was launched on Friday, 24 February.



A pilot inter-generational project with Foróige, where younger people assist older people with technology, is due to start shortly in Longford and Edgeworthstown libraries.

Archives

The Decade of Centenaries 2022 programme continued in February and included 'The Dáil Courts 1920-22' lecture with Dr Heather Laird. It was held in Longford Library.

Heritage

World Wetlands Day, held at the start of February, included an online talk on the 'Birds of the Boglands of Longford' with John Lusby from Birdwatch Ireland.

Minister for Heritage and Electoral Reform Malcolm Noonan TD formally published Heritage Ireland 2030, Ireland's new national heritage plan in February.

Heritage continues to manage the administration of various Built Heritage Grants around County Longford. These include:

- The Historic Structures Fund for large-scale repairs to significant structures, which had two applications: James Gandon-designed agricultural yard at Carrickglass Demense, and the Oldtown House, near Ardagh.
- Built Heritage for Essential Conservation of Protected Structures has eleven applications including two new applicants this month.
- Community Monuments Fund for archaeological monuments received three applications. These are: conservation works to Abbeyshrule Abbey tower house on behalf of Longford County Council and the Abbeyshrule Abbey Preservation Committee (Stream One), Rosduff Castle (Stream One), and a conservation management plan for the medieval church ruin at St Brendan's in Clondra (Stream Two).

Community & Enterprise

Local Enterprise Office

Longford at Showcase Ireland 2022

Wendy Louise Designs represented Longford at Showcase Ireland 2022, exhibiting at the Local Enterprise stand. The local milliner brought her unique headwear to Ireland's largest international trade fair which started on 27 February.



Showcase Ireland hosts over 300 creative brands across fashion, jewellery, home and giftware presenting to over 3,000 retail buyers from across the world. The annual event is now in its forty-fifth year.

Virtual Job Fair

The Virtual Job Fair held on 23 February in partnership with Longford Local Enterprise Office (LEO), Upper Shannon Erne Future Economy (USEFE), and Leitrim and Cavan LEOs was a great success. With over 300 jobs available from the many businesses at the event, over 400 jobseekers attended.

Business Support

Start Your Own Business, Small Business Accounts and Best Use of your Online Trading Voucher courses had 68 attendees in February. A further 26 people availed of one-to-one guidance for their specific business issues.

Tourism

Farrell Clan brochure launch

Longford Tourism, with Longford County Council and the Farrell Clan launched a new tourist brochure. The brochure showcases the rich heritage and ancestry of Longford's Farrell Clan. It also comes ahead of the return of the Farrell Clan Rally to County Longford in July which is being prepared for currently.



Community & Enterprise

Local Sports Partnership

Sports Bursary Awards

Longford County Council and Longford Local Sports Partnership announced the Longford County Council Sports Bursary recipients for 2021.

Recognising the achievements of aspiring sportspeople who have potential to achieve success at nationally and internationally, the winners are:

- athlete Fumni Talabi,
- rugby player Charlie Byrne,
- basketball player Caolán Lynch,
- triathlete Ciarán Madden.
- soccer player Melissa O’Kane, and
- Olympian swimmer Darragh Greene.

Edgeworthstown Sports Hub

Sizzle School of Dance’s hip-hop and ballet classes are back for children aged 6 or older.

Spinning and circuit classes are back, and a six-week mother and baby class has started, which has proved to be very successful so far.



Pickleball has also returned. It takes place every Wednesday between 6 and 7.30pm, and is open to all ages and levels, with no equipment required. New players welcome!

A three-day FAI Futsal Camp also took place in February with Graham Kane.

Drumlish Sports Hub

Drumlish Sports Hub recently conducted an online survey to help inform future activities. This feedback has helped bring about a new four-week Operation Transformation bootcamp, a women’s self-defence class, kids’ basketball and hip-hop dancing classes.



Inclusive activity initiatives

People with disabilities took part in seated pilates and zumba in St Christopher’s. There are lots of exciting plans and further investments being made into similar future activities.

Volunteer and coaches training

The Sports First Aid Course trained 21 volunteers and coaches for common sport first aid emergencies.

An online safeguarding course also trained 13 volunteers and coaches.

Community & Enterprise

Corporate Services

Ongoing Corporate Services

- Corporate Services COVID-19 Business Response Plan continues to be implemented
- Customer Service desk responded to 970 calls
- General queries from the public continue to be received, monitored and dealt with at public counters and through a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. Customer Services emails are now received through this CRM system also. The system was trialled by Corporate, before going live in late-2021. It will be rolled out to other sections soon.
- The 2021 Annual Report is now being compiled.
- Irish language training is being rolled out to a interested staff members, with courses provided by Gaelchultúr at various levels.

Elected Members Supports and Meetings Administration

The February meetings of Longford County Council were held in context of COVID-19 public health guidelines. Meetings were hosted via Microsoft Teams.

Date	Meeting
2 February	Governance Strategic Policy Committee
3 February	Strategic Infrastructure Strategic Policy Committee
15 February	Corporate Policy Group
16 February	Longford County Council
23 February	Longford Municipal District

Franchise

The live Register of Electors was published on 1 February and came into effect on 15 February.

Data Protection

- A Data Protection Officer recommendations report on the Operation of CCTV within Longford County Council was prepared. This is based on the Data Protection Commission's recent inquiry report into Limerick City & County Council
- Data Protection update presented to Management
- Metacompliance introductory video issued to staff
- Data Protection participated in the Data Protection Officers Working Group
- Data Protection attended the first Information Security Committee meeting

Freedom of Information (FOI)

	February	YTD
FOI requests received	6	9
Access to information on Environment Request	0	0
Office of Ombudsman complaints received	0	2

See FOI Disclosure Log on [Longfordcoco.ie](https://longfordcoco.ie)

Health and Safety

Inspections

Five safety inspections were completed.

Internal Audits

Health and Safety internal audits were completed for Libraries and Buildings Facilities Management. Audit schedule is in place for other sections.

Community & Enterprise

Corporate Services (Contd)

Communications

- Media queries received: 20
- Media queries responded to: 11
- Publicity campaigns commenced: 10
- Advertisements and features prepared: 8

Highlights included:

- Preparation and publication of communication campaigns including:
 - ◊ Brochure launch with Longford Tourism as Farrell Clan Rally set to return
 - ◊ Longford's Ireland Reads Day
 - ◊ Sports Bursary Award presentations
 - ◊ Unveiling first public art instalment of the Iora Nua Project
 - ◊ Spring Walking Series and Operation Transformation 5K take off
 - ◊ €100k for local digital and assistive technology project
 - ◊ Commemorating the handover of Longford Barracks 100 years ago
- Coordination and support for the Sports Bursary Award presentations with Longford Local Sports Partnership
- Coordination and support of promotion of Faoin Spéir The Light Brigade event
- Support for the visit of Minister Heather Humphreys TD to officially open Edgeworthstown Community Library
- Support and planning of future visits of dignitaries to Longford County Council and associated projects

- Continued work on Longford County Council website to enhance end-user experience
- Commenced roll-out of communication strategy and policy updates to all staff alongside coordination of organisational Comms Working Group

Social media

Longford County Council continues to use social media to communicate with Longford people.

In February, the Council shared updated opening hours for public service counters.

Location	Service	Hours
Great Water Street	Reception	Monday-Friday 10am-1pm and 2-4pm
	Planning	
Market Square	Housing	Monday-Friday 10am-1pm and 2-4pm
	Tourism	
Carrin Court	Cash Office	Monday-Friday 10am-1pm Friday Only 2-3pm
	Environment	
	Water	
	Motor Tax	

Events related to World Wetlands Day, #IrelandReads Day, Faoin Spéir and the Decade of Centenaries were also communicated through social media. The various Met Éireann weather warnings seen across February, as well as related public safety advice, were also shared on Council social media platforms.

	Facebook	Twitter	Instagram
Posts	84	78	46
Stories	10	-	10
Reach*	90K	-	12.5K
Impressions**	82K	26.3K	16.5K

*Reach: number of people who had a post enter their screen

**Impressions: number of times a post entered a person's screen

Community & Enterprise

Human Resources

Employee Numbers

Longford County Council had a total of 382 employees as of February 2022. These include:

- Managerial: 5
- Administrative: 169
- Technical: 69
- Outdoor: 97
- Retained Fire Fighter: 42

Recruitment

- Competitions completed: 5
- Candidates interviewed: 16
- New starters: 5
- Existing employees commenced new roles: 15
- Employee ceased employment: 1

Learning and Development

Training held throughout February include Business Skills training and Health and Safety training.

Business Skills training included:

- Performance Management
- Customer Services
- Communications Policy Overview

Health and Safety training included:

- Chapter 8 Traffic Management Guidance Manual
- Temporary Traffic Management and Design
- Safe Pass
- Winter Service Operator
- Certificate of Professional Competence

Health and Wellbeing

The following programmes were made available to employees in February:

- Pilates for Beginners eight-week programme continues
- Information video to celebrate St Brigid's Day
- Online health awareness talk on Understanding your Hormones
- Choirworks 2022 started
- The Walk the Length and Breadth of Ireland steps challenge started



COVID-19 Response

COVID-19 employee updates continue to keep employees aware of public health advice, any changes nationally, as well as locally, and any decisions from the Management Team.

Finance & IT

Finance

Year to Date to Quarter End 30/09/2021

	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	7,315,016	9,292,019	79%	1,977,003	7,756,433	10,522,822	74%	2,766,389	441,417
Roads	12,349,771	19,991,409	62%	7,641,638	8,753,448	15,078,605	58%	6,325,157	(3,596,323)
Water Services	3,194,637	3,906,342	82%	711,705	2,787,703	3,679,017	76%	891,314	(406,934)
Development Management	7,433,648	10,100,980	74%	2,667,332	3,104,054	5,078,053	61%	1,973,999	(4,329,594)
Environment	4,466,994	5,863,098	76%	1,396,104	647,063	507,244	128%	(139,819)	(3,819,931)
Recreation & Amenity	3,296,463	4,272,545	77%	976,082	558,656	647,068	86%	88,412	(2,737,807)
Agri, Health & Welfare	371,832	474,695	78%	102,863	223,772	217,012	103%	(6,760)	(148,060)
Miscellaneous Services	6,045,150	3,328,889	182%	(2,716,261)	6,275,061	3,480,440	180%	(2,794,621)	229,911
Local Government Fund					6,931,723	9,242,297	75%	2,310,574	6,931,723
*Commercial Rates					7,515,834	8,777,418	86%	1,261,584	7,515,834
	€44,473,511	€57,229,977	78%	€12,756,466	€44,553,747	€57,229,976	78%	€12,676,229	€80,236

These figures were submitted to the Department on Tuesday 16th Nov 2021.

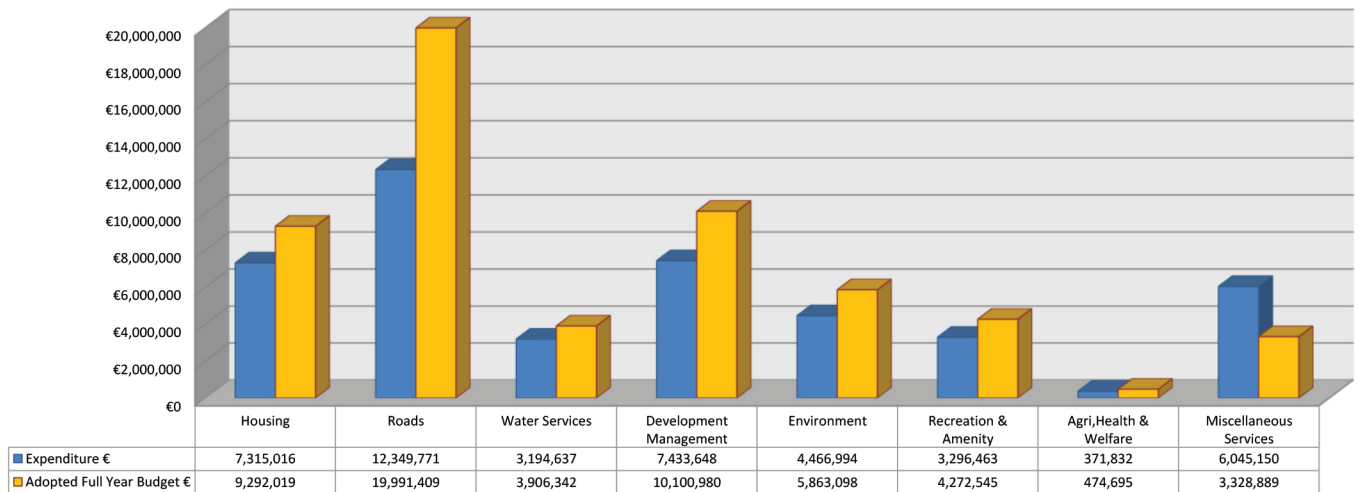
Where Covid-19 related expenditure has been incurred, corresponding Deferred Income from Central Government has been accounted for.

*The amount of Commercial Rates waived under the 2021 9-month waiver scheme for Q3, 2021 was €2,616,522

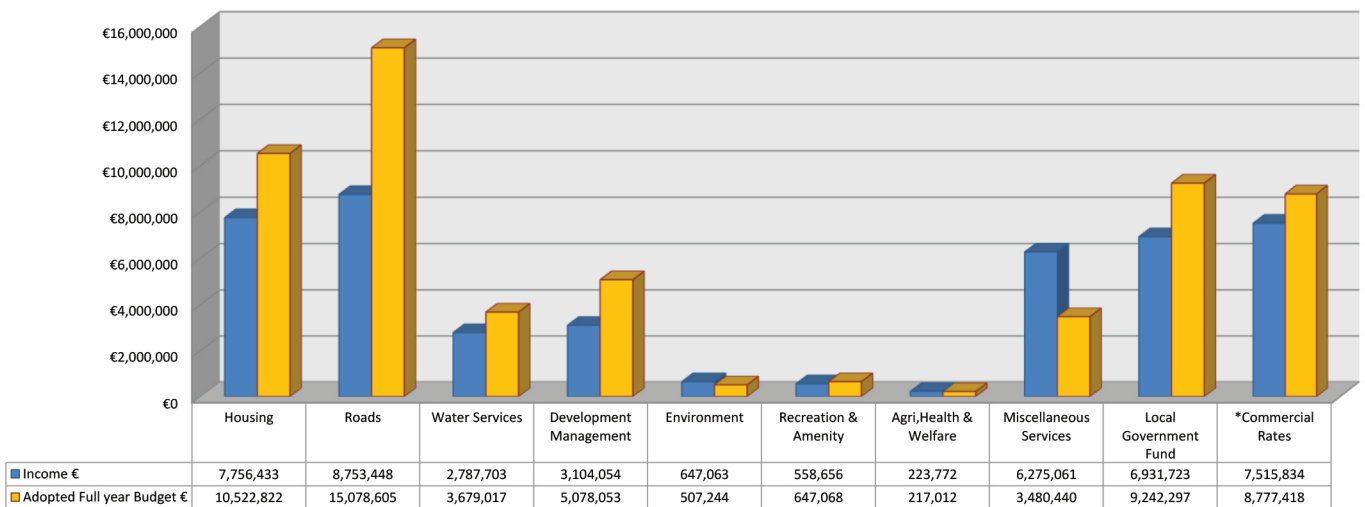
Finance & IT

Finance (Contd)

Expenditure V Budget - Quarter 3, 2021



Income V Budget - Quarter 3, 2021



Finance & IT

Finance (Contd)

SUMMARY OF MAJOR REVENUE COLLECTIONS - QUARTER 3, 2021

	Opening Arrears	Billed	To be Collected	Collected	Closing Arrears	Collected
Quarter 3, 2021	€	€	€	€	€	%
*Rates	€1,124,618	€10,021,112	€8,526,659	€4,398,415	€4,128,244	52%
Rents (inc. RAS)	€839,673	€5,428,702	€6,266,455	€5,367,992	€898,463	86%
Housing Loans	€481,344	€717,407	€1,198,751	€719,299	€479,452	60%

	Opening Arrears	Billed	To be Collected	Collected	Closing Arrears	Collected
Quarter 3, 2020	€	€	€	€	€	%
*Rates	€1,033,827	€8,666,050	€4,763,300	€4,612,208	€151,092	97%
Rents (inc. RAS)	€736,999	€5,329,478	€6,067,092	€5,174,128	€892,964	85%
Housing Loans	€624,595	€683,257	€1,307,851	€664,309	€643,542	51%

	Opening Arrears	Billed	To be Collected	Collected	Closing Arrears	Collected
VARIANCE YOY	€	€	€	€	€	%
*Rates	€90,791	€1,355,062	€3,763,359	(€213,793)	€3,977,152	-45%
Rents (inc. RAS)	€102,674	€99,224	€199,363	€193,864	€5,499	0%
Housing Loans	(€143,251)	€34,150	(€109,100)	€54,990	(€164,090)	9%

*** Covid-19 Commercial Rates waivers amounted to €2,616,522 in Q3,2021.
These have been taken account of in the 'To be Collected' figures above.**

Finance & IT

Information Technology

Town WI-FI update

- This month, 910 new users and 1,177 returning users used the free WI-FI in Longford, Ballymahon and Drumlish.
- The average usage time was 8 minutes per user.

Digital Services projects

- ePerformance Management Development Scheme (ePMDS) software is being used daily by all indoor employees

Performance Management and Development System



Select Year

2022

2023

2024



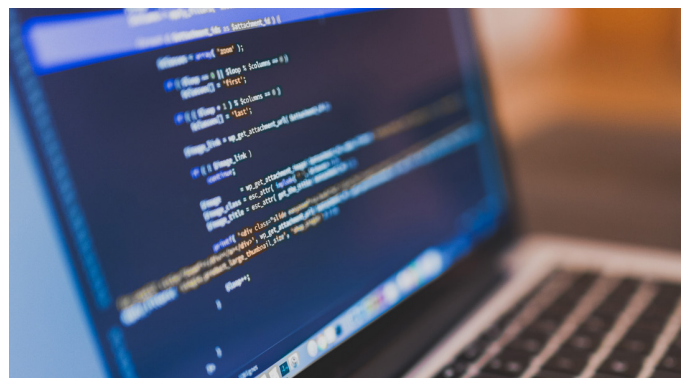
- eService Plan project is now fully live and being used by all senior staff for annual service reports
- eDocument management project progressed
- Customer Relationship Management (CRM) app is in progress
- Housing inspection app is in progress
- Development is ongoing on the Longford Text Alert system which includes a smartphone app. This will unify community updates from initiatives and groups across the county and is part of the Our Rural Future Digital Innovation programme

IT Infrastructure

- ServiceDesk for February: 486 tickets
- Regular patching of client and server systems
- IT support for statutory and Teams hybrid meetings
- Security policies continue to be reviewed, updated and implemented
- Security assessment is underway
- Hybrid meeting software continues to be installed in three meeting room locations
- New library management system progressed
- Ongoing deployment of a new device encryption software to all devices

Geographic Information Systems

- Work is ongoing on the development of a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Property Registration application to facilitate the reconciliation of a fixed assets register
- Sports Ireland National Database of Sports and Recreation Amenities has started with the collation of soccer club data
- Roads GIS viewer with 2022 Roads programme is being updated
- National Broadband Ireland pole drop date for Section 253 Application is being supported
- Winter gritting maps were updated



Infrastructure, Housing & Innovation

Housing

Housing under new Director of Services

The Housing Section is glad to welcome our new Director of Services, Samantha Healy.

As part of the overall restructuring with the Council, the new Director will have responsibility for Social Housing within the new Directorate: Infrastructure, Housing & Innovation.

Director of Services John Brannigan will have responsibility for the delivery of the Housing Capital Programme under the new Planning and Project Delivery Directorate.

Traveller-specific accommodation funding

A circular on funding for Traveller-specific accommodation was issued by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage to all local authorities. This accommodation includes group housing, and halting and transient sites for Traveller families. Nationally, €18 million has been allocated to this fund for 2022.

Local authorities must make a formal application for this funding to the Traveller Accommodation Unit. Approval must be sanctioned before starting any projects.

As one of the targets set out in the current Local Traveller Action Plan, the Local Authority Traveller Accommodation Committee are exploring the

development of a group housing scheme in County Longford. The Committee will undertake a site visit to a new group housing scheme recently opened in County Offaly.

McEoin Park community facility refurbishment

Refurbishment work on the McEoin Park community facility is now complete. Longford Community Resources Ltd (LCRL) will be responsible for the management and operation of this facility.



In consultation with the Housing Liaison Officer, plans are underway to set up the necessary community supports which are required in the local area.

Infrastructure, Housing & Innovation

Housing (Contd)

Housing Capital Programme

Project	Units	Status
O'Hara's Site, Richmond Street	14	On site
St Patrick's Court, Ballinamuck	8	On site
Alderfield, Farnagh	1	On site (23 complete)
Campbell's Drive	2	On site (21 complete)
Cranleymore, Abbeylara	3	Stage 3 approved. Tender drawings being prepared.
St Rita's Park Road	11	Stage 2 approved. Due to go for Part 8 Planning.
24 Congress Terrace	2	Stage 2 approved. Part 8 Planning advertised.
Woodland Path, Keenagh	4	Stage 1 approved
Clough Dillons, Keenagh	4	Stage 1 approved
Radharc na Muileann, Lanesborough	22	Stage 1 approved
Drynan, Ballymahon	13	Stage 1 approved
Cnoc na Gréine, Granard	6	Stage 1 approved
2 Woodview, Newtownforbes	2	To be submitted for Stage 1. Single Stage approval
2 Legion Terrace	4	To be submitted for Stage 1. Single Stage approval
Lettergeeragh, Drumlisk	1	To be submitted for Stage 1. Single Stage approval

Infrastructure, Housing & Innovation

Roads

Regional and local road allocation

In mid-February the Council was notified of the 2022 regional and local road grant allocations, with the Council's Roads Programme being prepared.

Longford County Council allocation is up 8.25% on the previous year, with the 2022 allocation detailed below:

Grant	2022 Allocation
Restoration Improvement	€4,599,000
Restoration Maintenance	€709,500
Supplementary Restoration Maintenance	€557,500
Discretionary Grant	€1,309,000
Bridge Rehabilitation Grant	€480,178
Specific Improvement	€650,000
Safety Improvement Works	€245,000
Speed Limits: Housing Area Signage	€15,600
Speed Limits: Rural Speed Limit Signage	€2,800
Cycle Signs	€2,000
Former National Roads	€300,000
Active Travel	€15,040
Climate Adaption	€295,000
Training Grant	€34,000
Community Involvement Scheme	€273,900
Drainage Works	€332,089
Pavement Surface Condition Index (PSCI)	€12,000
Survey Support	
Total	€9,832,607

National road schemes

N63 Majors Well Road works continued in February with the installation of underground services and drainage installation.

Work also continued on the N4 at Newtownforbes with undergrounding of overhead services and erection of public lighting.



Municipal District works.

Works continue in each municipal district on footpaths, drainage, pothole repair and general road maintenance.

Road crews were also busy dealing with damage caused by the numerous storms which occurred during the month.

Preparations for the Roads Programme of Works for 2022 also continued.

Infrastructure, Housing & Innovation

Water Services

Capital Network Schemes

The Water Services capital section continues to liaise with Irish Water to progress two capital network rehabilitation schemes, improving security of supply and reducing leakage. These works, which are funded by the Irish Water's National Leakage Reduction Programme, include:

- Ballywillan to Creevy, Granard: replacement of approximately 500 meters of problematic watermain is now substantially complete. Water Services have recently secured a further 2.5km of watermain replacement in this area and this work is due to start in March
- Rathcline Road, Lanesborough: replacement of approx 2.5km of problematic watermain between Lanesborough and Carrowroe Reservoir. This work is progressing well with over 1km of new 250mm watermain laid on the Rathcline Road. Design for Phase 2 to Carrowroe Reservoir is currently progressing.



Longford to Lanesborough Network
The Water Services capital section continues to liaise with Irish Water to deliver network upgrades to enable water supply from Longford Central Supply Zone into the Lanesborough Supply Zone.

This work includes the design and installation of a pump station and other infrastructural works. This will improve the resilience of the water network and provide security of supply to the Lanesborough area.

Find & Fix Programme

Longford County Council Find & Fix team are operating in the Longford Town-South and Longford West district metered areas. Teams have found and fixed leaks in the network with associated water savings of approximately 30,000 litres of drinking water per day so far in 2022.



Find & Fix teams are also making significant progress with the identification and reporting of 'apparent losses', such as unmetered connections, unmetered non-domestic properties, replacement of defective medium to large non-domestic meters, metering or logging of private developments, as well as IDA and other business parks.

Infrastructure, Housing & Innovation

Environment

EPA Submission

Environment submitted its Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections 2022 plan to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on 11 February. The plan reports on environmental work carried out in 2021 and sets out the plan for 2022.

Waste

Major clean up organised in Palace Crescent and Ardnacassa Avenue in February. Environment organised coordination meetings between Housing, Community and Enterprise.

Two locations of large-scale illegal dumping of commercial and domestic waste were detected. Following enforcement measures both sites were cleaned up by the offenders

Five Green Schools inspections were carried out in February where it was emphasised to students the need for waste prevention and recycling.

Litter

A total of 11 litter fines were issued in February.

A major clean up of the N5 bypass took place in February following a spate of dumping in green bags around that location. No evidence was found as to the identity of the "Green Bag Offender".

Users of the bypass are encouraged to be vigilant and to please report any suspicious activity to the Litter Control Hotline on 1800 434 450.

Air, Water & Noise

One round of river sampling for the Water Framework Directive River Monitoring Programme was completed and samples sent to the EPA for analysis.

Quarter 1 groundwater and surface water monitoring was carried out in February for the historic landfills at Ballymulvey and Cartron Big.

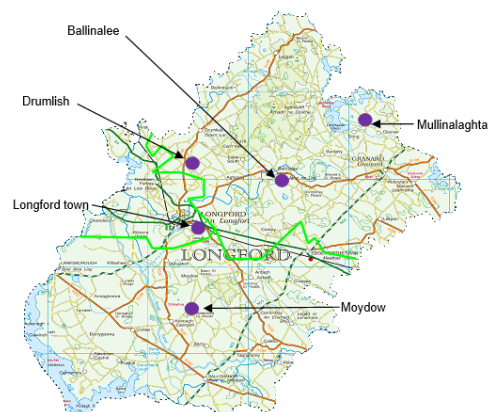
Burial Grounds

The charging structure for the Columbarium Wall at Ballymaccormack Cemetery was agreed at the February Council meeting. The cost per niche is €1,000 and this includes the cost of engraving the plaque.

Rural Water Programme

Longford County Council is responsible for ensuring small private supplies (SPS) and private group water schemes meet the requirements of drinking water regulations.

In line with this, all five SPS in County Longford that had water restrictions in place, have had a site audit in 2022. These include Ballinalee, Mullinalaghta, Longford Town, Moydow and Drumlish.



Infrastructure, Housing & Innovation

Environment (Contd)

Rural Water (Contd)

Longford County Council will continue to work with these suppliers in resolving the issues identified and hopefully remove all water restrictions.

Planned work also includes arranging the annual water quality meeting with the HSE; reviewing the register of private supplies to ensure accuracy and that it is up-to-date; and preparing a monitoring plan to include all regulated private water supplies in their area.

Well Grant

Household wells serve individual private homes, mostly in rural areas and are not covered by official drinking water regulations. The householder is responsible for managing this type of supply. There have been at least 807 individual well grant applications processed under the Rural Water Programme to date in County Longford. There are currently 13 active grants being processed.

Private Group Water Schemes (GWS) are set up by the local community. They manage the abstraction, treatment and distribution of treated water. They are generally supplied by springs or wells. There are currently two GWS trying to carry out upgrade works, for which 'Options Reports' are being prepared by Longford County Council for the Department.

Longford County Council is also processing individual well grant applications as they are submitted.

Veterinary

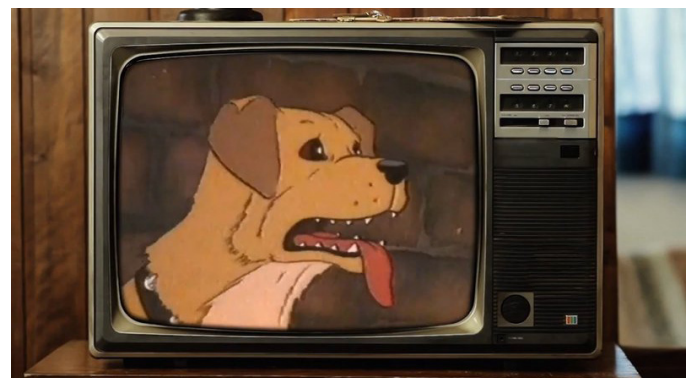
Longford County Council provided information to the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) to assist with a European 'ready-to-eat' meats audit of Ireland.

The information included results of Longford County Council official controls over food business operators sampling for the detection of *Listeria monocytogenes*.

This also included Longford County Council's evidence of verification of official controls, performed in the area of 'ready-to-eat' meats during 2020 and 2021.

In early February, Longford County Council Veterinary section, with the assistance of our Communications Officer, highlighted the responsibilities of Longford dog owners this lambing season.

It came as Minister for Rural and Community Development Heather Humphreys TD and Minister for Agriculture and the Marine Charlie McConalogue TD also released videos to highlight the issue on their national platforms.



The iconic "Bonzo the dog" ad of the 1980s was reimagined and re-released in recent years to support the need for vigilance among dog owners during lambing season.

Infrastructure, Housing & Innovation

Fire Services

Operations

- Total callouts in February: 18
- Callouts included two road traffic incidents
- All stations remained fully operational

Health and Safety

- No injuries or near misses to report

Training

- The drill training programme which was suspended in January due to COVID-19 concerns, recommenced in February
- An Emergency First Responder Course was completed in Granard Fire Station
- Longford Fire Service had an officer on the Fire Service Training (Delivery and Assessment) training course run by the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management in Ennis Fire Station
- Two new recruits completed their induction training and are started their three week fire-fighting skills course on 28 February in Castlebar

Major Emergency Management

- A Regional Working Group Meeting was held in February.
- The working group has setup a number of sub-groups.

Fire Prevention

- Two Fire Safety Certificates were processed

Recruitment

- As mentioned under training, two new recruits started with Longford Fire Service in February
- There are still vacancies in Granard and Lanesborough Fire Stations

Equipment

- The new van to carry road collision equipment at Lanesborough Fire Station is being fitted out as an emergency vehicle by coachbuilder HPMP Ltd.
- The annual Commercial Vehicle Roadworthiness Test of Fire Service vehicles, which began at the end of January, was completed in February.

Civil Defence

Duties & Taskings

Civil Defence provided medical cover at:

- two GAA matches
- one Longford Town soccer match
- and an Ardagh run.

Training and Operations

- Two Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) students and four First Aid Responder (FAR) students continued their training
- Four volunteers attended water and flood awareness training
- Three volunteers started their Emergency First Responder (EFR) recertification course

Planning & Project Delivery

Regeneration

The Yard Hub project, Abbeyshrule
Work is progressing well on The Yard Hub project in Abbeyshrule which involves the redevelopment of a derelict site in the village to create a rural working hub.

Doyle Construction Ltd started work on the project in November 2021.

Work completed to date includes the underpinning of foundations and the construction of the external blockwork and roofs to the south, middle and north barns. Civil works to facilitate the installation of site services are ongoing.

Stone to sub-floor level has been installed for construction of the building to facilitate a purpose-built unit for the Abbeyshrule Canoe Club. The final project will offer a mix of individual offices and co-working spaces.



Work is progressing well on The Yard Hub project in Abbeyshrule

Danes Hill, Ardagh walkway

Longford County Council, in conjunction with Longford Tourism and Ardagh Heritage and Creativity Centre, has recently delivered the Danes Hill, Ardagh walkway project.

It is part of a wider project linking the villages of Ardagh and Keenagh and the tourism assets in both, in particular the Ardagh Heritage and Creativity Centre and Corlea Trackway Centre.



Signage is provided at Danes Hill and Corlea, highlighting the area, links and connections between the sites.

The project also enhances connectivity, linking Ardagh village to Brí Leith and Ardagh Mountain.

Planning & Project Delivery

Regeneration (Contd)

Sports Capital Grant

The Regeneration team is delighted with the funding awarded to Longford County Council of €119,341 for the refurbishment of the changing rooms at Longford Sport and Leisure Complex in Longford Town.

The funding will be used to upgrade the changing rooms to better accommodate teams and to provide a dedicated exercise room, as well as a storage area for the users of the outdoor facilities.

Longford Sport and Leisure Complex offers a wide range of indoor and outdoor sporting facilities and is open to the public seven days a week. Significant upgrade works have been undertaken in recent years and this funding will further enhance the facilities available from within the Albert Reynolds Peace Park.

Town Centre First Plan

Funding of €100,000 was allocated to Longford town from the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) towards the development of a Town Centre Masterplan.

A core objective of the Department of Rural and Community Development is to support the revitalisation of Ireland's towns and villages, ensuring that they are vibrant and attractive places to live, work and socialise.

The move is welcome news for the future development of Longford town.

Planning

County Development Plan

Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 policies and strategies are being implemented. The basic draft has been published. Work on publishing the final document for March 2022 is ongoing.

Longford Town Plan

Work is ongoing on the review of the Longford Town Plan. This Plan includes climate adaptation, regeneration, employment, transport, including active travel, housing and coordination and implementation of development projects.

Specific design work on the draft Active Travel Plan for Longford Town's Main Street will be presented to councillors in March 2022.

Applications and Enforcement

Planning continues to assist the public with planning projects, applications, and by dealing with queries and planning issues for developments in the county. Planning also assists across various Council services, including the implementation of the housing, regeneration, environment and infrastructural programmes.

The statutory requirements are broad and include managing various applications for housing, retail, amenity, industrial, compulsory purchase orders, and enforcement among others. The planning office, public counter and technical advice including planning enforcement have remained fully functioning and busy at all times.

Planning & Project Delivery

Climate Action Initiatives

Libraries

Longford Libraries are partnering with colleagues in other midlands counties led by The Midlands Energy Agency in making an application under CCAP2 Community Climate Action Fund to raise awareness and deliver training to the community using the branch library network. Longford Library has agreed to be one of the pilots for the LGMA Libraries Unit submission under the Climate Action Fund, to make every library your local growing hub. The objective is to collaboratively develop supports, tools, know-how and approaches to assist local communities take climate action.

Human Resources

Climate Action Awareness training was completed during the month of February.

Housing

Work continues in Ballinalee on the Midlands Retrofit Programme. River Crescent and Camlin View are now completed, while work on Cois na hAbhainn and Hill View is ongoing.

The tender is in progress for St Matthew's Park, Ballymahon and assessment of works required is being considered on 46 local authority houses across the county.

Under the National Energy Efficiency Programme, work has been completed on nine houses in Slí na Móna, while works are ongoing on 11 others there.

Environment

- Environment organised the planting of 60 London Plane trees at Alder Field housing estate in Longford Town.
- Sean Burke, Climate Graduate, made a presentation to the Management Team on energy usage by Longford County Council covering the last four years.

Planning

Climate adaptation actions are being prepared and will include the following:

- Work on renaturing of bogs, woodland, amenity areas, walkways and cycleways.
- Compiling a baseline of all climate action works that are ongoing, planned and completed within Longford County Council, through meetings with a senior member of each department.
- Analysing housing Building Energy Ratings (BER) to see how many houses are up to standard
- Mapping BER ratings on council housing stock on GIS to analyse the BER of stock in any town/area
- Planting of 60 London plane trees at the new Alderfield estate. These can capture PM10, an air pollutant (Particulate Matter with a diameter of 10 microns or less) through the bark.

Roads

Longford County Council has received an allocation of €295,000 for 2022 Climate Change Adaption and Resilience works. This will facilitate rock armour works on the causeway road at Saints Island and drainage and embankment works on the R198 at Townagh and Gaigue.

Fire Services

The Longford County Council reusable keep cup is being used in the Fire Station.

CONNECTED

People • Place • Opportunity

Management Report for February 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 February 2022 in securing the objectives set out in the Council's Corporate Plan.

Signed:



Paddy Mahon
Chief Executive





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