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# January Highlights

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# January Highlights

All-Ireland Annual Occupational Safety Awards recognise Longford County Council as Consistent High Achievers with Outstanding Workplace Standards.



Get to know your 5K with new EZxploring Trails in Granard, Edgeworthstown, Ballymahon, Longford and Lanesborough.



# International Data Protection Day Celebrated on 28 January.



Longford Libraries Helping with Homeschooling, in Partnership with 39 Primary Schools Across the County.



# Community & Enterprise

# Community Development

### Local Community Development

Committee (LCDC)

The next meeting of the LCDC is due be held on 9 February 2021.

# Supporting Women and Diversity in Local Government

A meeting of the working group was held on 7 January to plan the Programme's roll-out. Contact was made with key stakeholders to identify women who may be interested in local government and in engaging in politics. An information booklet for women on local government is also being worked on.

## SICAP Monitoring Committee

SICAP will hold a meeting on 1 February to undertake an Annual Performance Review of the SICAP Programme and make recommendations to LCDC for consideration.

## Longford Comhairle na nÓg

The Council, on behalf Longford Comhairle na nÓg, put forward a request to the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications to be considered for hosting a consultation session on the Climate Action Plan.

## Intercultural Working Group

A meeting was held on 14 January, to share information and network in supporting the participation of ethnic minorities in services.

# Communications

## Keeping Longford Informed

Longford County Council continues to keep the people of Longford informed on matters related to them, most especially regarding COVID-19. The primary focus and objectives for these communications include:

- Up-to-date on national and local COVID-19 information, especially focusing on Level 5 Restrictions
- Promoting the work of all of the Council in supporting people during COVID-19
- Promoting national and local campaigns of #KeepWell and Longford Community Call
- COVID-19 section on the Council's website Longfordcoco.ie continues to be updated

### Social Media

Social media continues to create authentic, Longford-specific messaging, frequently updated and aimed at increasing engagement and positioning Longford County Council as a Council here to inform and support Longford.

Focus remains on tailoring COVID-19 communications to a Longford audience and ensuring up-to-date, relevant information is available:

- Posted 64 messages on the Council's Facebook, now with 3,852 followers. Our Posts were seen 108K times
- Tweeted 47 messages on the Council's Twitter, now with 2,641 followers. The tweets earned 28K impressions

# Community & Enterprise

# Sports Partnership

## Longford Sports Clubs Getting Grant Ready Workshop

The Getting Grant Ready Workshop was held at the end of January. This workshop supports clubs and groups looking to apply for 2020 Sports Capital and Equipment Programme (SCEP).

Over 55 individuals and clubs logged into the workshop, with all gaining an insight and advice on the grant application process.

The 2020 Sports Capital and Equipment Programme (SCEP) deadline for registration is 15 February and the application closes on 1 March 2021.

If any club or groups need further information or support, they can contact the LSP Office.

### Operation Transformation Virtual 5K

The OT Virtual 5K takes place 18-20 February. Join the Longford LSP Team in their pledge to run, walk or jog the 5K! It can be all done in one go or across the three days.

Prior registration is essential. Contact the Sports Partnership Office if you require further information. Call (043) 334 3493 or send us an email to sports@longfordcoco.ie.



SPÓRT ÉIREANN SPORT IRELAND (hi)

Athletics Ireland

# Community & Enterprise

# Corporate Services

- Corporate Services COVID-19 Business
  Response Plan continues to be implemented
- Community Call Helpline continues to reach out to vulnerable citizens in our County
- Work is ongoing on preparation of the Live Register for 2021/2022

## Register of Electors 2021/2022

Due to the United Kingdom leaving the European Union on 1 January, British citizens will no longer be entitled to vote in European elections. The Register of Electors 2021/2022 will be appropriately updated.

## Electoral Reform Bill

The General Scheme of the Electoral Reform Bill 2020 was published on 8 January. The Bill will be the most significant development for our electoral system in decades, strengthening our electoral system and enhance the electoral and democratic process.

Electoral reforms include the:

- Establishment of a statutory, independent Electoral Commission for Ireland
- Modernisation of the electoral registration process
- Regulation of online political advertising in the run-up to electoral events
- Amendments to electoral law to assist in holding of electoral events, if COVID-19 restrictions are in place.

## Elected Members Supports and Meetings Administration

Due to COVID-19, Longford County Council Meetings, were held remotely, via MS Teams, including:

- Corporate Policy Group Meeting (19 January)
- January Council Meeting (20 January)
- Granard MD Meeting (26 January)
- Longford MD Meeting (27 January)
- Ballymahon MD Meeting (28 January)



## Data Protection

- DPO attended Regional DPO Network and the LGMA National DPO Network
- Standard Operating Procedures approved and uploaded include the Management of a Personal Data Breach and the Management of a Data Subject Request to Exercise their Rights
- Data Protection Awareness continued throughout January with our employees

## Freedom of Information

	January	YID
FOI requests received	3	3
AIE requests received	0	0

FOI Disclosure Log available on Longfordcoco.ie.

# Community & Enterprise

# Human Resources

## Health & Wellbeing

- Health & Wellbeing Calendar for January issued to all employees
- Completion of Flu Vaccination Programme
  for employees
- Longford County Council Virtual Choir registered with Choirworks Programme

## Learning & Development

Roll-out of Climate Action Training

### Recruitment

- The Recruitment Programme progresed, with online interviews held using MS Teams
- Pre-recruitment checks taking place for 13 new employees
- Employee inductions are now held online

## Core HR

- End of year management of Time and Attendance completed.
- Preparation for transition to CoreHR V28 in progress

## Management Systems Upgrade

 Commenced implementation of Mako Data, the data analytics platform as part of CoreHR transition

## FOI / Data Access Requests

Completed Document Discovery

# Health & Safety

#### Health & Safety Inspections There were 7 Safety Inspections completed by Health and Safety and the Management Team.



## NISO/NISG Annual Occupational Safety Awards

Longford County Council has again been recognised for its outstanding workplace standards. For the second year in a row, Longford County Council won the Local Authority/Council Award and was recognised as a Consistent High Achiever at the All-Ireland Annual Occupational Safety Awards.

Run by the National Irish Safety Organisation, in conjunction with Northern Ireland Safety Group, the results were announced in an online ceremony which took place on 22 January. These awards are a testament to the dedication of all of the Local Authority employees who consistently work hard to comply with the high level of workplace Health and Safety Standards.

# Community & Enterprise

# Local Enterprise Office

### Measure 2

Training and Development Programmes Programmes 1 Participants 27

#### Mentoring Participants 15

#### Brexit

Group Workshops 1 Participants 15 1-to-1 Brexit Advisor Businesses 7

# Trading Online Vouchers

Applications 1 Approvals 11 Value of Approvals €27,350

## National Enterprise Awards

Lanesbourgh entrepreneur Vincent English and 5Global will represent Longford in the National Enterprise Awards Final on 11 February. Watch the Final at localenterprise.ie/awards.



# Tourism

### Walking Brochure

Work commenced for a new Walking Brochure to feature 13 popular trails throughout Longford.

### The Royal Canal Greenway

Continuing work on 11 storyboards for the Royal Canal Greenway, to be in place in early 2021.

### Longford Town Audio Trail

The Longford Town Walking Trail now has audio guides in English, Irish, French and German. Works are also ongoing on an accompanying video using both drone footage and old pictures of Longford.

### Longford.ie

Longford.ie, the new Tourism website, will go live in early February.

### Longford in the Irish Independent

Pól Ó Conghaile, Travel Editor with the Irish Independent worked with Longford Tourism to publish an article for the Independent (print and online) highlighting new walks to discover in Ireland. The Royal Canal Greenway and Newcastle Woods both feature.

### Spring Tourism Video

Harp Media, a Midlands-based company have completed the Spring Tourism Video, to be launched in February.

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# Community & Enterprise

# Library, Heritage and Archives

## Longford County Library Service

While closed, staff continue to provide services by telephone, online, collection and delivery. Longford Civil Defence have continued to assist with book deliveries. Online spring events for adults, especially aimed at those isolated or living alone, are being delivered through the Community Forum Network, social media and local media. In partnership with 39 local primary schools, events promoting creativity in education are being delivered weekly.

#### Edgeworthstown Library

The site is closed due to Level 5 restrictions.

### Longford Age Friendly

Longford Age Friendly's Keep Well weekly events are helping older people stay connected, eat well, mind their mood, switch off and be creative. Programmes with Shannonside Radio on the these topices are also being delivered. The Basic Digital Skills for Older People Course is also online, with eight adult learners.

### Creative Ireland

The annual open call for grant application has been issued, inviting submissions for innovative creative projects. Closing date is 1 March. All programmes for Q1 will take place online, with the first, a programme for secondary schools, starting 8 February.

#### **Clonfin Centenary Commemoration**

A full programme of events throughout the year for Longford Decade of Centenaries, starting with the Commemoration of the Clonfin Ambush, 2 February 1921. Taking place online on 7 February, view on Longford County Library, Heritage and Archives Services YouTube or Facebook pages.



#### Heritage Programme

The Heritage Office is administering the DHLGH Built Heritage Grants, the Built Heritage Investment Scheme 2021 and Historic Structures Fund 2021. Closing date is 22 February. On 13 January, the Heritage Office hosted a webinar on these grants, as well as the GLAS Traditional Farm Buildings Scheme, with testimonials from previous participants.

Funding has been sought to undertake the following projects under the County Heritage Plan 2019-24: Longford Heritage Awareness & Engagement Programme, Conservation Plan for the Plaster Oliver Goldsmith Statue (Pallas) by John Henry Foley, Longford Wetlands Survey 2021, Longford Popular Music Research Project.

# Finance & Regeneration

# Finance

	EXPENDITURE				INCOME				NET
	Expenditure	Adopted Full	%	Budget	Income €	Adopted Full	% Budget	Budget	Actual
	€	Year Budget	Budget	Remaining €		year Budget	Raised	outstanding	Overall
		€	Spent to			€		€	Surplus/
-			date						(Deficit) €
Housing	4,924,371	9,531,177	52%	4,606,806	5,422,374	10,415,527	52%	4,993,153	498,003
Roads	5,960,964	11,455,775	52%	5,494,811	3,214,307	6,455,754	50%	3,241,447	(2,746,657)
Water Services	2,034,368	3,769,218	54%	1,734,850	1,968,435	3,569,405	55%	1,600,970	(65,933)
Development Management	4,605,086	9,487,625	49%	4,882,539	2,416,954	4,954,354	49%	2,537,400	(2,188,132)
Environment	2,978,635	5,802,869	51%	2,824,234	311,460	534,239	58%	222,779	(2,667,175)
Recreation & Amenity	2,037,569	4,207,740	48%	2,170,171	219,899	563,739	39%	343,840	(1,817,670)
Agri,Health & Welfare	210,678	449,029	47%	238,351	74,788	204,768	37%	129,980	(135,890)
Miscellaneous Services	2,091,384	3,335,187	63%	1,243,803	1,693,549	2,820,018	60%	1,126,469	(397,835)
Local Government Fund					4,612,356	9,224,711	50%	4,612,355	4,612,356
* Rates					4,337,747	9,296,104	47%	4,958,357	4,337,747
-	€24,843,055	€48,038,620	52%	€23,195,565	€24,271,869	€48,038,619	51%	€23,766,750	(€571,186)

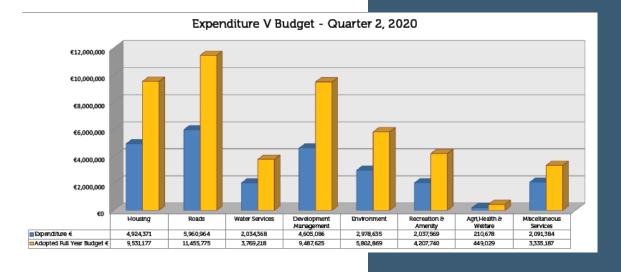
#### Year to Date to Quarter End 30/06/2020

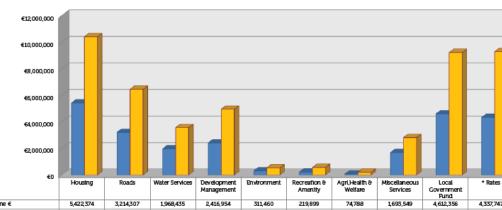
above figures <u>do not</u> take into account the Covid-19 related lost Rates Income, these will be accounted for at the end of 2020 Estimated lost rates income for full year 2020 currently amounts to circa €5.5m Estimated lost rates Goods & Services income for full year 2020 currently amounts to circa €2.7m Estimated extra Covid-19 related expenditure for full year 2020 currently amounts to circa €815k

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# Finance & Regeneration

# Finance (Contd.)





311,460

534,239

219,899

563,739

74,788

204,768

1,693,549

2,820,018

4 337 747

9,296,104

9,224,711

Nater Services

1,968,435

3,569,405

2,416,954

4,954,354

5,422,374

10,415,527

∎Income € Adopted Full year Budget € 3,214,307

6,455,754

Income V Budget - Quarter 2, 2020

# Finance & Regeneration

# Finance (Contd.)

SUMMARY OF MAJOR REVENUE COLLECTIONS - QUARTER 1, 2020								
	Opening Arrears	Billed	To be Collected	Collected	Closing Arrears	Collected		
Quarter 1, 2020	€	€	€	€	€	%		
Rates	€1,033,827	€8,681,974	€9,715,085	€1,386,944	€8,328,141	14%		
Rents (inc. RAS)	€736,999	€1,772,479	€2,509,478	€1,758,440	€751,038	70%		
Housing Loans	€624,595	€239,661	€864,256	€222,567	€641,689	26%		
	Opening Arrears	Billed	To be Collected	Collected	<b>Closing Arrears</b>	Collected		
Quarter 1, 2019	€	€	€	€	€	%		
Rates	€1,410,968	€8,187,639	€9,563,752	€1,113,489	€8,450,263	12%		
Rents (inc. RAS)	€415,696	€1,381,063	€1,795,626	€1,408,462	€387,164	78%		
Housing Loans	€672,732	€220,392	€893,124	€208,410	€684,714	23%		
	Opening Arrears	Billed	To be Collected	Collected	<b>Closing Arrears</b>	Collected		
VARIANCE YOY	€	€	€	€	€	%		
Rates	(€377,141)	€494,335	€151,333	€273,455	(€122,122)	3%		
Rents (inc. RAS)	€321,303	€391,416	€713,852	€349,978	€363,874	-8%		
Housing Loans	(€48,137)	€19,269	(€28,868)	€14,157	(€43,025)	2%		

# Finance & Regeneration

# Regeneration

Town & Village Renewal Scheme

€403,388 in funding under the Town & Village Renewal Scheme was announced, assisting Longford towns and villages, to respond to the challenges of COVID-19, to aid economic recovery and to make them safer places to live and work. Projects to be implemented include the development of remote working facilities, walking and cycling tracks to support recreational amenities and public-realm work on footpaths, lighting and signage to enhance town centre streetscapes. The Regeneration Team, along with community groups and town teams, look forward to working on these projects in 2021.



#### Aughnacliffe Walkway

The construction of a footpath to link residential and services areas in Aughnacliffe is underway. The walkway will connect to the Waterfall Trail, a trail developed by the local community, as well as connecting to Lebeen Park and the local playground. This will help to improve economic activity and tourism in the village.



## Edgeworthstown Library & Public Realm

Work had progressed well on Edgeworthstown Library, with the structural timbers installed prior to Level 5 Restrictions. The Library is now watertight, due to an accelerated effort in advance of current COVID-19 Restrictions. Work on the car park and the plaza have progressed. Undergrounding of services are complete and street lighting is operational along Edgeworthstown's Main Street. This project will be completed later in 2021.

#### **ORIS Funding Announcement**

€122,745 funding has been announced by the Department of Rural and Community Development, to be utilised for walkway trails, signage and footfall counters to quantify the number of users and impact of investment in trails. These projects will be progressed in 2021 by the Regeneration Team throughout Longford.

# Finance & Regeneration

# Information Technology

## General IT

- IT Service Plan 2021 approved
- IT 2021 Operational Plan approved
- First draft of IT Strategy 2021-2025 developed

## IT Infrastructure Section Works Completed

- Community CCTV County-wide CCTV
  Strategy commenced
- Draft contract prepared for Longford Town
  CCTV upgrade and extension
- HyperConverged Project commenced with fit out of hardware
- Testing started with new managed print service
- Teams meeting devices set up for elected members
- Remote working equipment configured and deployed for new starters
- ServiceDesk stats for January 2021: 621

## Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Works Completed

- Database Migration SQL 2008 to SQL 2016
  ongoing
- Made available online water quality results
- Noise mapping template
- Trails mapping validation
- Environmental viewer and derelict sites register application development

### Digital Services works completed:

- Longford's Broadband Connection Points and Community WIFI now connected are Moyne Latin School, Longford Aviation and Abbeyshrule Airfield and Corlea Heritage Centre
- WIFI4EU: free Wi-Fi in Longford, Ballymahon and Drumlish with 722 new users in January



- Eduroam Pilot Project completed in Longford, Ballymahon and Drumlish town centres and in Granard, Ballymahon and Longford libraries
- Longford libraries hunt group set up
- All websites are updated with accessibility software. This software provides text to speech capabilities, options to translate content into multiple languages and an option that includes assistive technology for people with disabilities

# Strategic Infastructure & Climate Action

# Housing

### Estate Management

The Estate Management Unit have acquired an Estate Management Van for high visibility, patrolling Longford County Council Housing Estates.

This positive approach not only contributes to increasing tenant awareness of our presence, but also helps prevent crime, promotes community engagement and offers a sense of reassurance.

A preventative method of dealing with Estate Management issues, this is an essential element of Longford County Councils Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy.



#### Housing Projects

During 2020, 45 new houses were constructed as part of the SHIP programme, with a further 25 new houses' construction commenced on site, consisting of both Direct Build and Turnkeys.

32 aditional houses were also aquired, with upgrading and pre-letting works carried out before handing the keys over to tenants.

Longford County Council also supported two AHBs to secure funding to acquire and upgrade 6 properties. These properties will provide accommodation and tenancy support services to allow independent living for the most vulnerable in the community.

Under new regulations issued on the 7 January 2021 and public health restrictions affecting the construction industry, work has stopped on the following projects:

- 6 units at Rose Cottage, Ballinalee
- 1 unit at Fairgreen View, Longford

Work is continuing on several essential designated status projects including:

- 1 unit at Cloonahard
- 8 units at Alder Field, Farnagh
- 5 units at Cartrons Kenagh
- 9 units at Sli Corglass, Legga

# Strategic Infastructure & Climate Action

# Planning

## Planning Applications and Enforcement

Statutory requirements maintained, including:

- managing various planning applications, housing, retail, industrial proposals, Part 8 Planning Schemes and CPOs
- Planning administrative office, public counter and technical advice and reports were also kept fully functioning
- Assisting in the implementation of the Housing and Regeneration Programme

### Development Plan

Statutory requirements maintained, including:

- Development Plan Review ongoing, setting out the template for county development up to 2027
- Second Phase Public Consultation on the Draft Plan is now complete
- Preparation of Chief Executives Report on the submissions are being prepared for presentation to members in March 2021
- Revised Plan is to be presented to members 21 June 2021
- Draft Plan is to be complete November 2021 for members adoption
- All aspect of Longford's future development potential has been analysed, with strategies, policies and GIS mapping developed
- Improving Longford citizens' wellbeing, climate change stratgies and enhancement of biodiversity, as well as clear actions are incorporated into the Plan

# Roads

#### **Essential Maintenance Works**

Due to Level 5 Restrictions, Roads focused on essential maintenance works on public roads to maintain the operational capacity and safety of the road network. Essential maintenance works included drainage, pothole repair, winter maintenance and emergency call outs.

### N4 Mullingar to Longford (Roosky)

The Second Public Consultation on the Route Corridor Options for the N4 Mullingar to Longford (Roosky) commenced on 29 January. Submissions can be made up to 19 March 2021.

#### Active Travel Measures Scheme

Preliminary Application for Active Travel Measures Schemes was submitted to the NTA.

#### Roadworks Programme for 2021

In partnership with Longford MDs, Roads are delivering the Roadworks Programme for 2021, including the delivery of the following grant-funded projects:

- Restoration Improvement Schemes
- Restoration Maintenance Schemes
- Bridge Rehabilitation Schemes
- Discretionary Grant Schemes
- Safety Improvement Schemes
- Specific Improvement Schemes
- Local Improvement Schemes
- Community Involvement Schemes

Preparation of the Programme is ongoing with Department of Transport allocations to Local Authorities, due to be announced in February.

# Strategic Infastructure & Climate Action

## Water

## Water Service Continuity

Water Services are essential and a priority, continuing to provide services during COVID-19, including ensuring the continued provision of drinking water, particularly in areas with headroom or supply issues.

#### Find & Fix Programme

Longford County Council and Irish Water is continuing the Find & Fix Programme throughout Longford. This national project aims to deliver major water leakage savings.



Find & Fix Crews are currently operating in:

- Granard DMA (second sweep)
- Rathcline Road DMA
- Lanesborough Rural DMA

Utilising the data obtained from the Leakage Management System (LMS), Longford County Council's Find & Fix Team investigated, found and repaired major leaks. An example of this from this month is within the Rathcline Road area of Lanesborough, achieving a saving of 8 cubic meters of water per hour (192,000 litres per day).

## Capital Network Schemes

Irish Water, in partnership with Longford County Council, are currently progressing the installation of approximately 1400m of new watermain to replace the existing old problematic watermain at Ballymakeegan, as well as the installation of a new watermain and connections to Templemichael and Bannon Terrace, Longford. Both schemes will improve the water network and increase the security of supply to these areas and are due to be completed in early 2021.

## Early Contractor Involvement (ECI) Water Programme

Irish Water, in consultation with Longford County Council, is continuing the ECI Programme. This national programme aimed at carrying out improvement works at water treatment plants, will ensure the continued delivery of safe drinking water.

Theprogramme is currently at final construction stage at the Lough Kinale, Granard and Lough Gowna, Smear, water treatment plants. Works are due to commence in February at the Lough Forbes, Longford, water treatment plant.

Longford County Council Water Services continue to work closely with the appointed contractor to ensure the continued safe operation of the water treatment plants during the construction phase.

# Strategic Infastructure & Climate Action

# Environment

Climate Action Training

Championing Leadership Training provide for Elected Members and Senior Management on the 22 January. Climate Action Training will be rolled out to employees in the coming months.



# LOCAL AUTHORITY Climate Action Training Programme

## Recycling

Refurbishment Bring Banks Sites has commenced. Replacement units were installed at Cullyfad, Ballinamuck and Clondra (see below).



## Environment Clean Up

Environment cleaned up the Old Creamery site, beside Lakeland Town and Country Store Just under 14 tonnes of waste was removed.



# Veterinary Services

## Supporting Local Enterprise

Two new meat production businesses were registered by Longford County Council in January 2021, in keeping with our policy of supporting local food enterprises.

# Strategic Infastructure & Climate Action

# Fire Service

Operations Callouts in January: 37. All stations remained fully operational.

Health & Safety No injuries to report.

### Training

Training courses are been rescheduled on an ongoing basis due to COVID-19. No weekly drills took place due to COVID-19.

### MEM

Regional Working Group Meetings are now held weekly by teleconference due to COVID-19. Our ACFO MEM Resigned to take up a new post, after 12 years' service.

### Fire Prevention

Two Fire Safety Certificates were processed. Inspections and Community Fire Safety Activities are suspended due to COVID-19.

## **Business Continuity Planning**

Business continuity measures for operational personnel and HQ employees have been prepared and implemented. This is managed by the Longford Fire and Rescue Service Action Tracker Plan for COVID-19.

# Civil Defence

Book Deliveries Volunteers assisted Longford libraries with their book deliveries.

Training EMTs attended online CPC training.

Inspections and Stock Take Statutory inspections on vehicles and an equipment stock take were carried out.

## Covid-19 Community Response

Civil Defence attended the online COVID-19 Longford Community Response Forum to provide updates and offer support for the ongoing community response.

## Dormant Account Fund 2021

Funding granted under the Dormant Account Fund 2021 for fleet upgrade is currently in progress with a view to acquiring a new unit for Longford Civil Defence.

## Equipment Upgrades

Funding sought for equipment upgrades, as approved by Management, for Mapxx Software and supporting technology (for missing person search), training equipment and office supplies for HQ.

# CONNECTED People • Place • Opportunity

Management Report for January 2021 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 January 2021 in securing the objectives set out in the Council's Corporate Plan.

Signed: \_

Paddy Mahon Chief Executive





## Follow Us On:



Longfordcoco.ie

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