

CORPORATE PLAN

2010 – 2014



Longford County Council

Bongphort Uí Fhearghail





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MISSION STATEMENT

**LEAD THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION OF COUNTY LONGFORD AND
IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE THROUGH THE EFFICIENT DELIVERY OF INCLUSIVE,
CUSTOMER FOCUSED, LOCAL SERVICES.**



FOREWORD



The Longford County Council Corporate Plan 2010 – 2014 is prepared in an environment of great uncertainty and challenges all stakeholders to provide the leadership and services required in the most efficient, effective and economic way. The climate of diminishing resources both financial and human necessitates the focusing of scarce resources where they are most needed and in a manner that achieves the greatest value for money.

The Corporate Plan sets out the strategic priorities for Longford County Council over the next five years. Annual Operational Plans will identify and deliver specific actions to achieve the corporate objectives and will be closely monitored and reviewed.

The global economic environment will necessitate a rapid transformation in public services and increased flexibility from all stakeholders.

Longford County Council will face many challenges in meeting the needs of the people of Longford over the period of the Plan. The management, staff and elected representatives are committed to working together in delivering a quality service in the most efficient and effective manner.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peggy Nolan'.

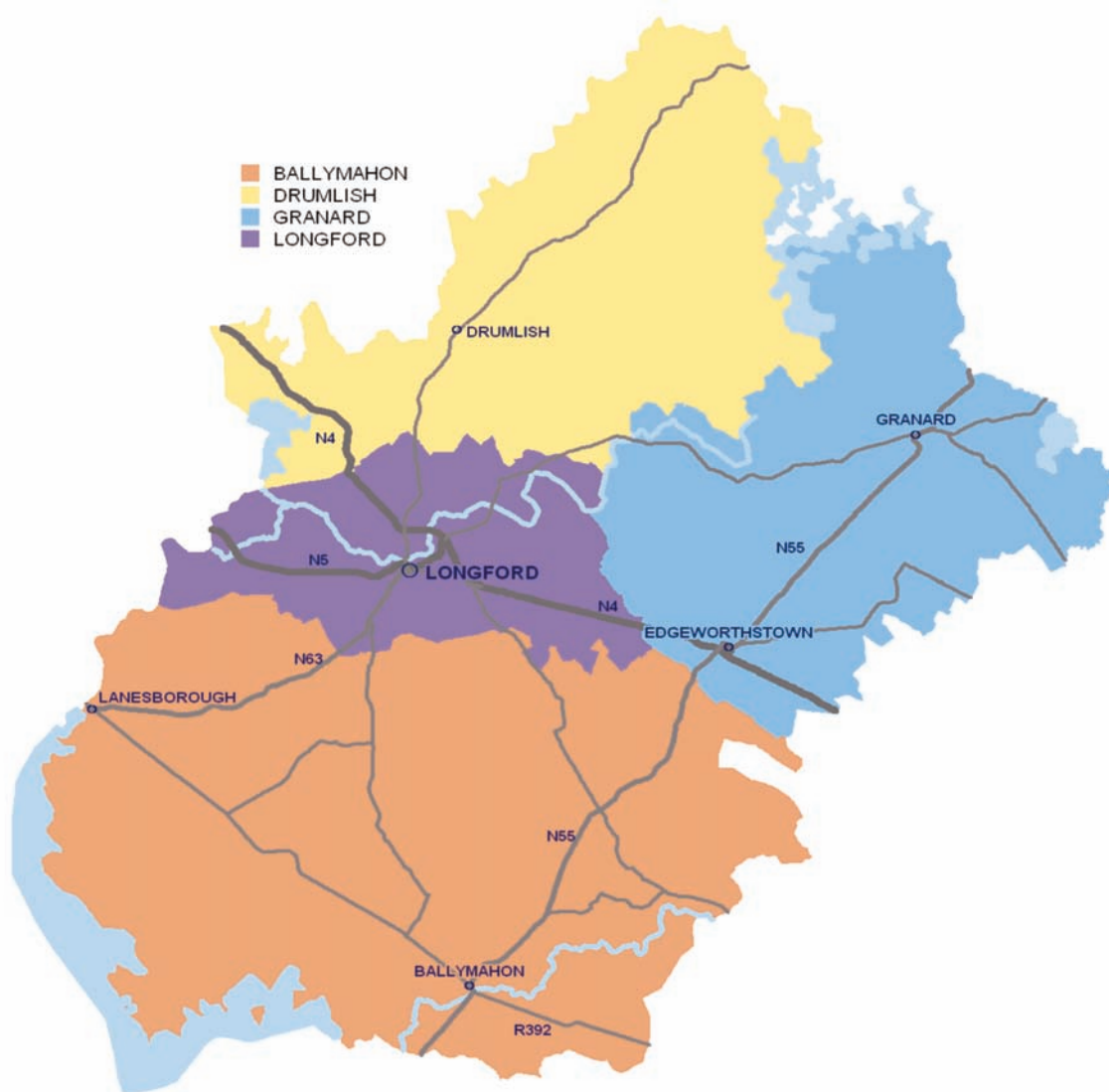
Peggy Nolan
Mayor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Caffrey'.

Tim Caffrey
County Manager

COUNTY LONGFORD – A PROFILE

Electoral Areas



County Longford is the second smallest county in Ireland with a population of 34,391 (Census 2006). Longford town is the county town with a population of 7622 (Census 2006) and the other main towns include Granard, Ballymahon, Edgeworthstown, Lanesboro and Newtownforbes.

The total area of the county is 109,116 hectares of which 73,764 hectares are farmland. Agriculture is the predominant economic activity accounting for over 20% of the labour force both directly and indirectly compared with a national average of 10%.

County Longford, located in the province of Leinster, enjoys a central location in the Heart of Ireland and is rich in culture, heritage and natural amenities. The river Shannon, Lough Forbes and Lough Ree form the County boundary to the west and south, while Lough Gowna forms much of the North eastern Boundary. It is strategically located on two national primary routes - the N4 from Dublin to Sligo and the N5 from Dublin to Mayo. It is, also, located on the Dublin to Sligo Inter-City railway line. Two important National Secondary Routes also cross the County, the N55 linking Athlone and Cavan and the N63 linking Longford with Lanesboro, Roscommon and Galway.

Longford Town, the administrative centre for the local authorities, serves a wide catchment area and has many developed and zoned industrial parks. There are several significant employers in the area including two Government Decentralised Departments employing over 500 civil servants and Abbott Diagnostics and Cameron Ireland who provide high-quality graduate opportunities.

County Longford is located within the Border, Midlands & Western Region (BMW) and with EU designated status it has succeeded in attracting sustainable inward investment in recent years contributing in a positive manner to the local economy and overall development of the county.



Ardagh, Co. Longford.

Elected Members of Longford County Council – by Electoral Area



LARRY BANNON



PADDY BELTON



MICK CAHILL



BARNEY STEELE



MARK CASEY



SEAN FARRELL



JOHN DUFFY



GERRY BRADY



LUIE MCENTIRE



MARTIN MULLEADY



THOMAS VICTORY



FRANK KILBRIDE



• Granard



MICHEÁL CARRIGY



P.J. REILLY



DENIS GLENNON



MAE SEXTON



ALAN MITCHELL



PADRAIG LOUGHREY



• Longford



PEGGY NOLAN



VICTOR KIERNAN



PAUL CONNELL



Core Values

This Corporate Plan was prepared on the basis of an organisation wide strategic approach and was drafted in consultation with the Elected Members, Management Team, Corporate Policy Group, external stakeholders and staff. The Plan builds on the considerable progress achieved over the life of the previous Corporate Plan 2005 - 2009 while recognising the impact of the current economic situation and the principles of the general public service reform agenda that include a greater focus on outputs, outcomes and value for money.

In implementing the Corporate Plan 2010 -2014 the members and staff of Longford County Council will be guided by the following broad themes and core values:

- The sustainable development of County Longford
- Value for money in public procurement and the delivery of services
- Maximising organisational efficiency, effectiveness and economy
- Equality and Social Inclusion
- Flexibility and willingness to change
- Highest standards of conduct and probity by elected members and staff
- Transparent and accountable service delivery and decision making
- Courteous, impartial, efficient customer care
- Consultation and partnership with the local community

The Customer Care Plan commits to engage with customers in accordance with the principles of courtesy, fairness, openness and transparency.

Annual operational plans to implement the Corporate Plan's strategic objectives will be prepared and include a monitoring and review process.

Operating Environment

In considering the corporate objectives outlined in this Corporate Plan it is necessary to relate them to current economic, social and environmental conditions and the increasing expectations of customers. The return to sustainable economic growth is a daunting challenge for all. In addition, the Council is subject to the Government Embargo on Recruitment and Promotions that severely impacts on staff numbers within the organisation. It is against this broad framework of constraints that the capacity of Longford County Council to achieve the corporate objectives will depend, in particular, on the availability of finance, staff and other resources. It is therefore imperative that realistic, focused objectives inform the approach to the Corporate Plan.

Critical information in the Council's own plans - Development Plan, Housing Strategy, Waste Management Strategy and the County Development Board (C.D.B.) strategy were considered in the preparation of this document. An indicative list of plans/strategies/documents that were consulted is set out in Appendix B.

Due to the economic downturn the dynamic environment in which Longford County Council operates has altered dramatically in the past year. In determining future strategies, the effects of rapidly changing economic conditions will shape and influence the activities of the Council.

External Environment

The following external factors impact upon and influence the manner in which the Council operates:

- Global and National Economic Environment
- National and European Union (EU) Legislation
- Dependence on funding from Central Government and the limited capacity of the Council to generate additional income locally
- The National Development Plan; The National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines
- Effects of Climate Change
- Social Change
- Changing demography of population
- Social Inclusion and Equality Issues
- The Council's Stakeholders, including state and local agencies



- Increasing expectations of customers and citizens
- Advances in information and communications technology (ICT) including the emergence of an online world as a core part of society.

Internal Environment

Critical to the delivery of the objectives of this Corporate Plan are the following:

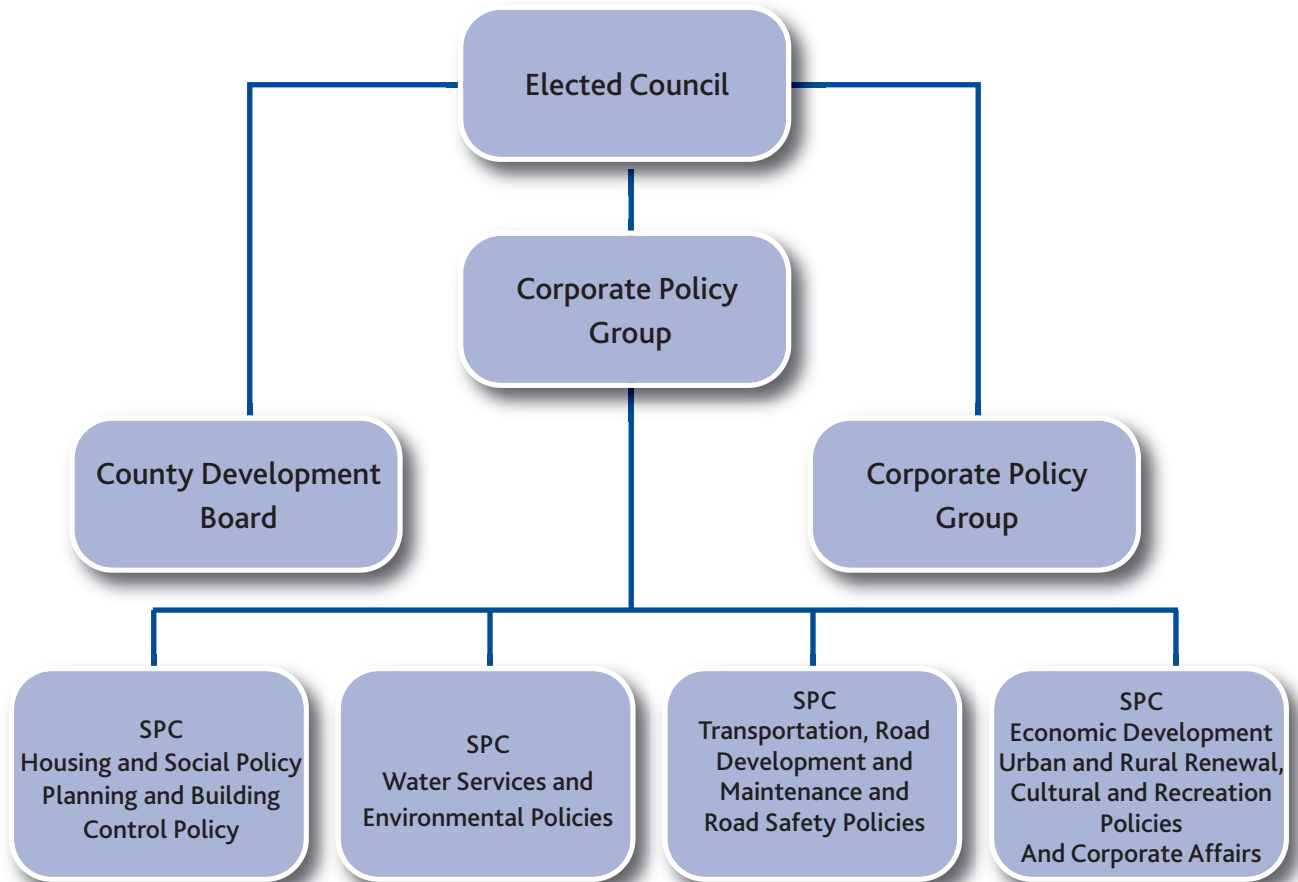
- The 21 Members elected by Longford County Council in June 2009 who were given a democratic mandate to make representations on behalf of the people
- The Strategic Policy Committees (SPC's) comprising both Councillors and Sectoral/Community interests who advise the Council on policy issues bringing a wider perspective and context to policy formulation
- Longford County Development Board leading a partnership approach to social, economic and cultural development of the county as outlined in the Documents "The Way Forward" and "An Implementation Plan", covering the period 2002-2011.
- A skilled and committed staff supported by the Management Team, efficient work practices, relevant training and development and enabling technologies is a key to the achievement of the stated objectives
- Effective communications
- Workplace Partnership which has considerable capacity to lead to improvements in service delivery while creating a better working environment for all
- Transforming Public Services (TPS) agenda
- Process Management – necessary review of internal systems, structures and processes.

Consultative Process

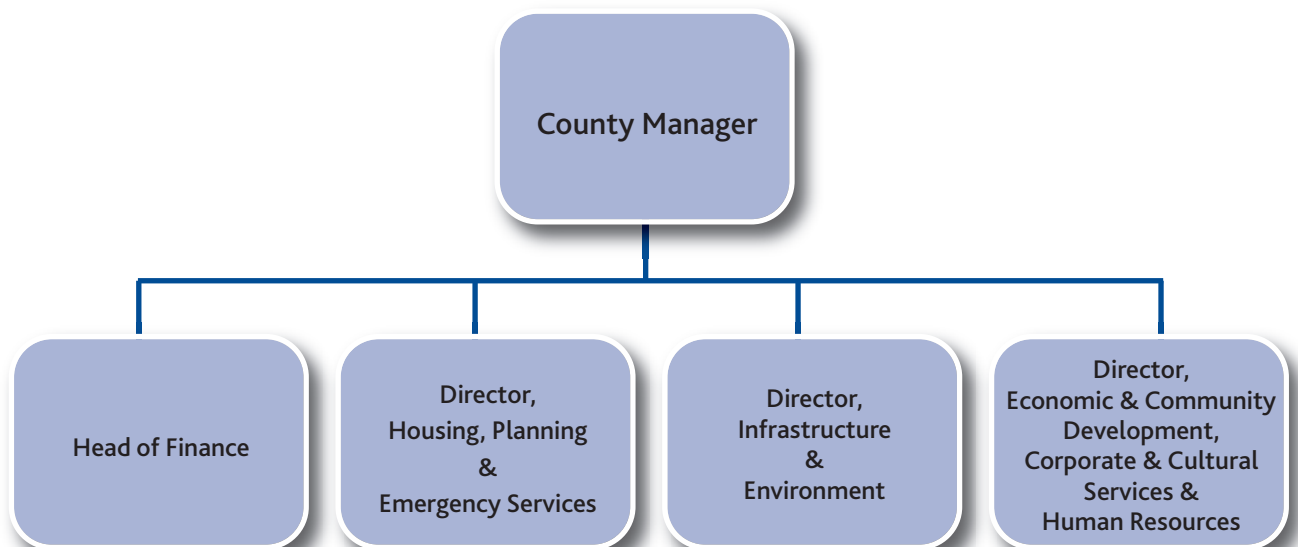
This Corporate Plan was informed by consultation with elected members, staff, stakeholders and the public. An outline of the consultative process is set out in Appendix A.



How the Council Functions



Management Structure



INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Core Objective

Provide, improve and maintain a quality water and wastewater infrastructure throughout County Longford and maximize the protection of the environment in promoting the social and economic development of the County

WATER SERVICES

The public water supply network in Co. Longford services an estimated population of 25,000, some 85% of the total population of the county, plus commercial and other users. The county has several groundwater and surface water sources and delivers treated water through five regional schemes. This network includes 160 group water schemes that are extensions of public water mains.



Longford Central Regional Water Supply Scheme stage 6



Water Meter Box Operation & Maintenance

Strategies	Actions
Operate and maintain the drinking water infrastructure to ensure an adequate supply of quality water.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect all Drinking water sources. • Monitor and improve compliance with Drinking Water Regulations. • Develop Performance Management Systems at all treatment Plants. • Promote water conservation and minimize water wastage and unaccounted for water through the implementation of a water conservation programme.
Ensure wastewater is treated to the required standard before it is discharged to receiving waters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operate and maintain the wastewater infrastructure to maximize environmental protection. • Licence facilities in accordance with wastewater Authorisation Regulations and operate plants in accordance with licence conditions. • Develop Performance Management Systems at all treatment plants.
Provide new and upgrade existing water/ wastewater infrastructure projects that target environmental compliance issues and facilitate sustainable economic development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement multi-annual Water Services Investment Programme. • Implement the Rural Water Programme. • Implement the Sludge Management Plan.



ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

The areas of waste management and environmental protection demand ever higher levels of environmental management to maintain an acceptable level of sustainable development. It will be a key challenge to promote ownership of environmental issues amongst every person, business, household, farm and organisation within the county.

Strategies	Actions
Review the Waste Management Plan for Midlands Region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-operate with the private sector in the development of waste prevention, minimisation, recycling and recovery of waste. • Provide and service Bring Banks. • Support the provision of civic amenity facilities, including large goods collections. • Apply Polluter Pays principle.
Reduce environmental pollution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement appropriate National and EU Environmental Legislation and Directives. • Enforce Waste Management Acts in accordance with Council's Enforcement Policy on Illegal Waste Activity. • Improve surface and ground water quality through control of agricultural and industrial discharges. • Enforce the Water Pollution Acts. • Adopt and implement River Basin Management Plans. • Adopt and implement a Litter Management Plan. • Enforce legislation on Dangerous Substances, Dangerous Buildings, Derelict Sites, Air Pollution and Litter Pollution.
Reduce impact of flooding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to improve catchment drainage and maintenance works. • Ensure that developments being carried out in the county do not cause flooding.
Develop environmental awareness and education strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operate National Litter Monitoring System. • Promote Environmental Partnership Fund and Litter Initiatives Scheme. • Advise on eco friendly housing and business initiatives.

Strategies	Actions
Assist Tidy Towns/Local Development Groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Tidy Towns awareness through local authority funding and supports. • Work with Local Communities and Tidy Town Groups on Local Enhancement Projects.
Develop a strategy for provision of new cemeteries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist local communities in maintenance and improvement of local cemeteries.
Promote Energy Awareness and Local Agenda 21.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Longford County Council as a Local Agenda 21 Centre of Excellence.
Promote and safeguard animal health and welfare.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain facilities at the dog pound. • Increase awareness of pet owners responsibilities and control stray and unwanted dogs. • Promote re-homing of dogs from the pound including through the use of www.longfordcoco.ie • Implement Control of Horses Act.
Promote public health and safety and plan for major emergency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review plan for major emergencies with other emergency services. • Train and equip personnel to deal with major emergencies in accordance with Major Emergency plan.



Launch of Farm Waste Prevention Booklet



Farm Plastics Collection as part of the Farm Plastics Recycling Initiative.

VETERINARY PUBLIC HEALTH, FOOD SAFETY AND ANIMAL WELFARE

Longford County Council provides agency services to the Food Safety Authority of Ireland in the areas of Food Safety and Public Health, including the inspection and monitoring of food premises and operations.

Strategies	Actions
Assure the veterinary public health considerations and safety of locally produced food of animal origin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement contract with the Food Safety Authority of Ireland through vigorous inspection of food and meat facilities. • Provide advice as appropriate.
Maintain animal health and welfare.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and Animal Welfare organizations. • Provide controls, advice and education.
Control animal by-products.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure safe disposal of animal by-products.
Safeguard public health.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control zoonoses /public health infections contactable from animals.
Support Sustainable Development through local food development initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with regional development organisations.



Re-opening of Dog Pound

ROAD SAFETY, ROADS AND TRANSPORT

Core Objective

Ensure that infrastructural policies and investments assist and enhance the economic and social development of County Longford, and preserve and improve the physical attractiveness of the county and its environment.

The roads programme is highly dependent on the National Roads Authority (NRA) and Department of Transport providing adequate resources. The Council will pursue efficiencies through implementing best project management practice and performance measurements ensuring value for money and effective return on finance invested.

In consultation with the NRA, the Council will implement plans for improvements to National Routes including the following:

- Longford N5 Bypass
- Granard N55 Bypass
- Mullingar to Longford N4 (Roosky) Route Improvement
- National Secondary Routes N55 and N63 Restoration and Improvement
- Longford Streets Restoration and Improvement
- Granard Streets Restoration and Improvement

In consultation with the NRA and Department of Transport the Council will continue the programme of Specific Grant Schemes, including:

- Richmond Bridge at Clondra L01171
- Fihoragh Bridge L50611-0
- Cleenrath Bridge L10421-0
- Corragarrow Bridge L10180-0
- Derryharrow Bridge L5046-0
- Gneeve Bridge L51701-0
- Various other Bridge Restoration and Improvement Projects
- Forgney Road Realignment R392
- Ballymahon Road Lanesboro R392
- Longford to Arva at Gaigne Cross R198
- Saints Island Causeway, Newtowncashel LP 01140



Clondra Bridge



The Council will implement low cost safety measures and traffic calming at critical locations including at:

- Edgeworthstown on the N55
- Longford Town on N5 and N63 approaches
- Granard on the N55
- Ballymahon N55 and R392
- Carrickboy N55
- Lisnamuck to Killeenaturan R194
- Other identified high accident locations on National Routes

Strategies	Actions
Continue forward planning on all national and non national routes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement road improvements in accordance with current government policy. • Prepare and implement road improvement schemes to be financed from development charges. • Enter into cooperative arrangements including Section 85 Agreements with other Local Authorities as appropriate.
Plan and implement road improvements to the highest design standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhere strictly to national design and implementation standards. • Liaise closely with all utilities in planning road development.
Prepare new multi-annual non-national road restoration and surface dressing plans for implementation and with periodic subsequent review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare and implement multi-annual Road Restoration and Surface Dressing Programmes to national guidelines
Promote and improve road safety.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to participate with Gardai, school management boards, teachers, parents, children and Road Safety Authority in nurturing the Junior School Warden service. Provide Road Safety Training at all levels. • Implement traffic route and public lighting multi-annual programmes. • Introduce cycle lanes as appropriate in new road construction and also at existing road location. • Implement the European Communities commercial vehicle testing regulations. • Liaise with Planners to provide consistent road safety standards in all development schemes. • Promotion of Longford's Road Safety Strategy.

Strategies	Actions
Promote social inclusion by consulting with and encouraging participation by the community in road development programmes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage, facilitate and implement Local Improvement and Community Schemes. • Provide liaison staff to effectively communicate between stakeholders in Co. Longford and the NRA design teams.
Facilitate access for all citizens, including the disabled, to public services through optimum use of public transport.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and encourage development of rural public transport facilities. • Provide access for the disabled where appropriate in road/footpath design.
Continue to explore opportunities for Public Private Partnerships (PPP) in development of transportation links.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify road projects suitable for realization through PPP's and pursue implementation through appropriate variations of this approach in consultation with the NRA.
Enhance the links between Longford and other hub and gateway towns within and external to the county and region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan and implement road improvements to enhance strategic transportation links. • Welcome and support the large investment in the rail network.
Consult with Longford Town Council and other neighbouring local authorities to further common interests.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver agreed services on behalf of Longford Town and other Councils. • Actively participate in the Steering and Technical Groups of the NRA Regional Design Office serving Longford, Leitrim and Roscommon, primarily and other Road Design Offices as appropriate.
Develop appropriate traffic management measures for our road network.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As appropriate, prepare, review and implement traffic management plans for the towns of Longford, Granard, Ballymahon, Lanesboro and Edgeworthstown. • Implement the annual road signage programme on non national roads in the county. • Provide and encourage the provision of adequate car parking facilities where appropriate.

HOUSING, PLANNING & EMERGENCY SERVICES

HOUSING

Core Objective

Provide a quality housing service that promotes social inclusion and enables the people of County Longford to meet their housing need in a planned environment.

The Housing Department carries out a variety of activities which impact on the daily lives of the citizens of Longford. These range from the delivery of an appropriate mix of social and affordable housing measures to the promotion of strategies to counteract poverty and achieve an inclusive society.

Strategies	Actions
Prepare and implement an ongoing programme for delivery of social and affordable housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide and facilitate provision of quality and value for money social and affordable housing. • Provide for vulnerable groups such as the elderly, special needs and lone parents within the Housing Programme. • Maximise benefits through implementation of Housing Strategy (Part V).
Promote a range of options to assist citizens to meet their housing need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) to meet long term housing needs of rent supplement recipients. • Implement Scheme of Grants of Housing Aid for the Elderly and for People with a Disability on a priority basis. • Provide loans for house purchase and reconstruction.
Promote involvement of tenants in home improvement and estate management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review housing maintenance function to ensure value for money. • Provide appropriate resources and support structures for tenant participation in estate management. • Prepare and implement anti-social behaviour strategy.

Strategies	Actions
<p>Promote and assist the development of the Voluntary Housing sector in the county.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist the voluntary sector to maximise its contribution to social and affordable housing provision.
<p>Promote a multi agency integrated approach to tackling social exclusion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain strong linkages with local partnership and other area based development initiatives. • Implement Traveller Accommodation Programme 2009-2013. • Implement Homeless Action Plan 2010-2012.



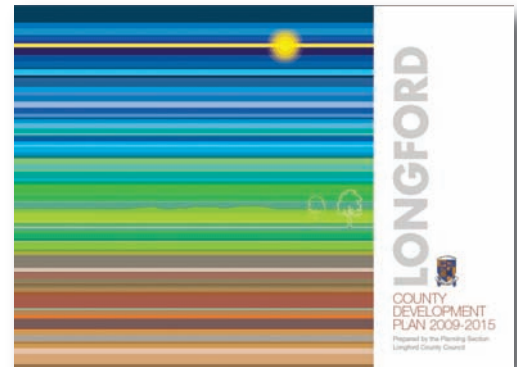
Rural Cottage, Tully

PLANNING & BUILDING CONTROL

Core Objective

Continue to provide a flexible framework for the guidance and control of development within County Longford which will contribute to the growth of the county while protecting and improving overall environmental quality.

The Planning Control Department will endeavour to ensure that the substantial growth which has occurred throughout the county in recent years will be completed in a manner that promotes and enhances the economic, social and infrastructural development of the county. Given the difficult economic development environment it is important for the Council to assist in the process of completing developments in the public interest.



The Longford County Development Plan was adopted in 2009 and will have effect until 2015.

Strategies	Actions
Continue to modernise the planning system to ensure the provision of high quality services to the customer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the use of Geographic Information Systems to access and yield valuable information in terms of the staff, the elected members and public assimilation of planning data. • Continue to review the effectiveness and efficiency of the planning administration systems including the application of ecommerce. • Strengthen enforcement of planning control legislation. • Continue the programme of building control monitoring and enforcement. • Monitor unfinished housing estates to promote their regularisation and completion.
Improve service delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate publication of performance measurement indicators for service delivery.
Promote innovative and active urban design measures for town, village and rural development throughout the county.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the control policies set out in the County Development Plan. • Provide planning advice through pre-planning clinics and in relation to forward planning. • Promote appropriate controlled development in the towns and villages. • Ensure that environment protection issues and concerns are properly assessed and monitored, as appropriate. • Provide appropriate planning services to Longford Town Council.

FORWARD PLANNING

Core Objective

Provide a forward planning service that contributes to the growth of the economy of County Longford and provides for the diverse needs of its population, while improving the level of environmental quality in a sustainable manner.

Longford County Council has a statutory forward planning function in the preparation of the six year County Development Plan. The County Development Plan aims to promote and allow for the provision of employment opportunities in agriculture, industry and services that will retain population within the county and contribute to a rising of incomes. Longford County Council also actively participates in long term planning through its lead role in the County Development Board process and the development of a shared vision for the county over a ten year period.

Strategies	Actions
<p>Pursue the objective of balanced and sustainable growth ensuring the county participates and shares appropriately in national and regional economic growth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the policies set out in the County Development Plan. • Co-ordinate the County Development Plan with the Development Plan of Longford Town Council and the County Development Board Strategy. • Progress the forward planning schedule, including the development of Local Area Plans and village policy statements for the designated settlements as resources permit.
<p>Pursue the objective of sustainable economic development through the development of appropriate measures for the growth and expansion of residential, commercial, office, industrial, agricultural and tourism sectors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage and assist infrastructure providers in enhancing their networks. • Assist in the completion of a computerised system which will provide access to geographically referenced information to the public. • Work closely with all sections of the council to ensure that infrastructural capacity is matched with development needs.
<p>Promote Longford's strategic position within the Midlands Region.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster and encourage participation in the forward planning system amongst the general public and planning related sectoral groups. • Consult with our neighbouring local authorities in the context of regional planning and other issues that have a wider impact on neighbouring authorities.



PUBLIC SAFETY - LONGFORD FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Longford County Council provides a fire and rescue service and maintains five Fire Brigade Units with fire stations in Ballymahon, Edgeworthstown, Granard, Lanesboro and Longford.

Strategies	Actions
Maintain a Fire Service that will respond speedily and efficiently to emergency calls.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider, adopt and implement the Draft Fire Service Operations Plan 2010-2014. • Develop and maintain fire fighting and rescue capabilities.
Provide equipment and training necessary to meet changing demands of local Fire Service Units.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide ongoing training for fire service personnel. • Upgrade fire stations and fire equipment.
Provide Fire Prevention advice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise the Planning Authority on all commercial applications. • Advise Building Control Authority on all Fire Safety Certificate Applications. • Advise the courts on all licence applications. • Continue community fire safety programme. • Inspect fire safety standards in buildings and venues.
Enter agreements with other fire authorities for the delivery of services inside or outside the county.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update agreements with other fire authorities.
Framework for Major Emergency Management (2006).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the Major Emergency Plan and facilitate the co-ordination of Major Emergency Planning and Training for Longford Local Authority annually.
Business Continuity Planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate the updating of the Business Continuity Plan for Longford Local Authority.

CIVIL DEFENCE

Longford Civil Defence represents a significant voluntary contribution on the part of the people of Co. Longford towards the aims of saving lives and alleviation of suffering, helping local communities in managing events.

Strategies	Actions
<p>To develop plans for dealing with emergencies.</p> <p>To develop plans for dealing with Major Emergencies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade Civil Defence equipment, training and capacities. • Encourage recruitment into Civil Defence. • Provide the necessary training and equipment to cover tasks assigned in New Framework Document.
<p>Continue to support community activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide assistance and expertise to local communities in the organisation of events.



Regional group taking part in the Advance Coxswains course in Westport.

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, CORPORATE & CULTURAL SERVICES AND HUMAN RESOURCES

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Core Objective

Longford County Council will in collaboration with appropriate agencies lead the economic development of County Longford.



Longford Swimming Pool

Strategies	Actions
Develop and maintain an economy of sustainable competitive advantage encouraging inward and indigenous investment in Longford.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in a comprehensive and modern infrastructure creating a highly desirable business environment. • Facilitate the provision and availability of serviced lands/business parks. • Develop a single point of contact proactively supporting business needs.
Provide balanced and sustainable economic development in collaboration with National, Regional and Local Development Agencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead a County Longford Economic Development Forum to effectively maximize economic development opportunities. • Realise the potential of modern information technologies to position and market Longford as an investment location.
Support and develop a culture of entrepreneurship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with enterprise agencies in appropriately supporting micro enterprises. • Develop a forum for business engagement.
Develop Longford’s tourism potential.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-operate with agencies in developing niche tourism products. • Develop a structure to maximise the collaboration of all tourism interests. • Develop a range of innovative actions focused on increasing visitor numbers. • Maximise the utilisation of new technology in effective marketing. • Collaborate with other agencies in developing all aspects of the tourism infrastructure.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Strategies	Actions
Co-ordinate improved delivery of public services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the CDB and its substructures to implement their Action Plan 2009-2012. • Support the establishment of a Children Services Committee.
Co-ordinate community development activity in the county.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support services to the Community and Voluntary Forum. • Support community groups to build sustainable and inclusive communities in County Longford.
Lead the effective delivery of social inclusion policies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordinate the implementation of the Anti Poverty Strategy 2009. • Support the activities of the Social Inclusion Measures Working Group by targeting resources to those most in need. • Co-ordinate the work of the Traveller Interagency Working Group. • Promote equal opportunities policies across all departments of the Council.



Mayor Peggy Nolan with members of the 'East Meets West Women's Group' winners of the National Pride of Place Competition Integration category, at the National Awards Ceremony 2009.



HUMAN RESOURCES

Core Objective

Develop an adaptable organisation that maximises the potential of employees and responds to the dynamics of the external environment.

Strategies	Actions
Develop our Human Resources to deliver organisational business objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop within the constraints of the staffing moratorium the optimum number of employees with the required skills and competencies. • Ensure organisational structures meet evolving business needs within the financial constraints.
Develop a responsive Human Resources function compliant with the regulatory environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure policies and procedures are in full compliance with statutory regulations. • Implement HR technology solutions to ensure we maintain an environment of continuous improvement. • Deliver a customer focused response to all customers.
Create an organisational culture that facilitates employees realise their full potential.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and Guide Line Managers through targeted interventions. • Plan and provide a relevant and equitable Training Programme to ensure employees are equipped with the necessary expertise. • Implement the Performance Management system in the HR Department. • Instill a culture of Health & Safety in the workplace and in the delivery of services.
Develop an effective organisation in partnership with all stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with employees in consultation in any process of organisational change, through the Partnership Committee. • Promote a culture of employee feedback. • Manage transformation and change within the organisation.



CORPORATE SERVICES

Core Objective

Promote Longford County Council as an inclusive organisation with a democratic mandate that is customer focused, performance driven and delivers efficient, effective, quality services.

The Corporate Services Department supports the democratic role of the elected members and facilitates Local Elections and maintains the Register of Electors. Corporate Services disseminates information on the activities of the Council and promotes the delivery of quality services to customers across the full range of the Council's activities. It is responsible for the provision and maintenance of office accommodation and in that regard has a broader responsibility in accessibility to public buildings and public places.

The Corporate Services Department proactively manages the communications occurring between the Council and its customers and is responsible for the promotion of best practice in Health and Safety matters. It provides advice and services on procurement across the full range of Council activities.

Strategies	Actions
Enable the elected members to fulfill their democratic mandate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide appropriate, targeted training and support to elected members.• Support the elected members of the Council, the Corporate Policy Group and members of the Strategic Policy Committee in policy formulation.• Facilitate effective and efficient communication with the elected members.
Facilitate the democratic process and the participation of citizens in the decision making processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conduct Local Elections and communicate the Council's activities to the widest possible audience.• Publish and maintain the Register of Electors.• Support the elected members in the performance of their duties.• Facilitate the operation of the Strategic Policy Committees and assist the sectoral representatives on the committees.

Strategies	Actions
Promote the provision of customer focused, performance driven efficient, effective and economic quality services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operate the Customer Services Desk effectively and efficiently. • Communicate with all stakeholders on the Council's activities. • Produce corporate publications detailing the activities of the Council and its commitment to serve the people of Longford.
Promote best practice in Health and Safety activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish and maintain the Corporate Safety Statement and provide support to Council employees responsible for Health and Safety matters.
Maximise value for money in the procurement process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the implementation of the Corporate Procurement Plan. • Advise and assist in best procurement practice.
Provision of accessible public buildings and public places.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the implementation of the Disability Implementation Plan. • Provide assistance and advice on the provision of accessible public buildings and public places.



Official opening of Customer Service Desk

LIBRARY

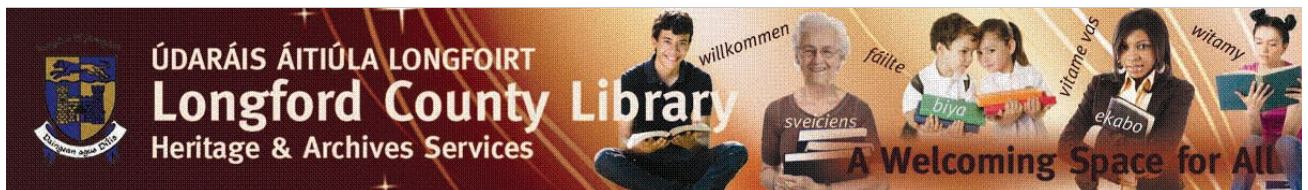
Core Objective

Longford County Council's objective is to enrich the lives and sense of identity of every person in County Longford by increasing their social and cultural opportunities and developing a vibrant cohesive library, arts, archives and heritage service

Strategies	Actions
<p>Develop the library service as a welcoming space for all and as a key resource in promoting an inclusive information society.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a Library Development Plan as a framework document to determine and prioritise key areas of library service development over the next 5 years. • Continue to build strategic partnerships with key service providers and to deliver a more socially inclusive service to all customers. • Continue to celebrate cultural diversity in the community by supporting and welcoming new ethnic minorities into the library.
<p>Develop a quality infrastructure of buildings and services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proceed with the refurbishment of Ballymahon Library in early 2010 with completion by December 2010. • Progress the Granard Market House project with the Department of the Environment. • Identify a suitable premises in Edgeworthstown for a new library.
<p>Continued investment in ICT so as to realise the potential of the library service as a centre for information, access to resources and life long learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop network connectivity at all library service points. • Expand the provision of online resources through the library network. • Promote and support online e-learning initiatives for the community such as the " FAS eLearning at the Library" throughout the library branches. • Expand and develop the library website as a key access point for all library services.



Strategies	Actions
<p>Provide an Education and Outreach Programme that supports education and life long learning for all.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement an ongoing library programme of events and activities and participate in nationally co-ordinated events such as Library Ireland Week and Children’s Book Festival. • Promote a love of literature, books and reading and develop a range of programmes for children, parents and schools. • Promote and support Longford Bookclub and encourage and facilitate bookclubs in other library branches.
<p>Engage in research and development in partnership with the An Chomhairle Leabharlanna Research Programme that will enhance the quality and delivery of services to customers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote positive mental health in the community through the Healthy Reading Working Group in partnership with key service providers such as the HSE, Longford Mental Health Association and others. • Seek funding to commission a non-user survey within the community.



ARTS

Strategies	Actions
<p>Enhance the professional and creative capacities of Longford artists.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support professional training and development opportunities for local artists. • Develop strategic partnerships with national arts development organisations. • Work to improve the available infrastructure in County Longford for both professional, amateur and community arts activity. • Work to increase the commissioning opportunities and community engagement possibilities presented by the Percent for Art programme.
<p>Promote access to, and participation in, the arts in county Longford.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage greater access and engagement with the arts for children and young people the arts throughout County Longford. • Provide support for individuals and groups engaged in arts activity. • Develop and enhance partnerships with other agencies and organisations to broaden engagement with the arts. • Programme arts activities and events in a strategic and developmental manner throughout the county. • Support the strategic development of community based activities.
<p>Develop public awareness and appreciation of the value of the arts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a comprehensive arts information service. • Programme arts events and initiatives to maximise exposure to the broadest possible range of arts practices for public audiences. • Presents art in a variety of accessible settings to encourage public interaction. • Generate appropriate publications and documentation to inform public awareness of the variety and quality of art created in Longford and create a public record of activity.



Marie Edgeworth



Camlin Wheel

RECREATION & AMENITY SERVICES

Strategies	Actions
<p>Promote and support the provision of both active and passive recreational facilities throughout the county.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support voluntary and community organizations that are involved in promoting recreational activities. • Assist organisations that are actively involved in developing and maintaining amenities that are generally available for use to individuals and groups. • Ensure that sporting facilities are accessible for people of all abilities. • Evaluate the existing amenity assets. • Deliver the projects contained in the current and future Environmental Development Levies Programme. • Continue to develop planning policy to ensure adequate provision of recreational space.
<p>Encourage 'volunteerism' generally in sporting and community activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively promote and support participation in sporting and community activities.



Buntas Generic Training conducted under the Sports Partnership of Longford County Council

FINANCE AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

FINANCE

Core Objective

The management of the finances of Longford County Council in an efficient and effective manner while achieving value for money.

The Finance Directorate plays a central role in the management of the financial resources of Longford County Council. The Council's current revenue budget is €45m and its capital budget €28m.

Strategies	Actions
Ensure that Longford County Council has sufficient funds to provide cost efficient quality services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government continues with the policy of equalisation in the distribution of the Local Government Fund. • Continue to review funding sources.
Provide timely relevant and accurate Financial and Management Information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead the ongoing development of Management information and reporting systems. • Promote the concept of devolved budgets to promote accountability, efficient delivery of services and financial control.
Continue to improve internal control procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that proper procedures operate for the income and expenditure systems, including the procurement and tendering process for goods and services. • Commit to strengthen the Internal Audit function within existing resources.
Promote Value for Money.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement recommendations of Value for Money Reports that will benefit Longford County Council. • Promote the principle of value for money at all levels throughout the organisation.



INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Core Objective

The effective utilisation of Information Systems in supporting the organisational goals and the delivery of a wide range of public services to the citizens of County Longford.

Strategies	Actions
Build a secure and robust infrastructural platform to deliver the business needs of Longford Local Authorities and meet the demands of the E-Government Agenda.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in partnership with LGCSB to procure the most cost effective communication infrastructure to achieve a seamless exchange of electronic information for Mobile Services, Remote Sites and external bodies.
Provide enhanced e-Democracy through the provision of online access to planning information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Automate the Planning Administration process using: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Data Application System > Document Management System > GIS mapping of applications • Provide on-line access to planning information using ePlan (online) enquiries.
Support the delivery of GIS (Geographic Information Systems) spatial systems and data to all staff and to the wider public using internet technology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress the capture of extensive data in all Business areas and develop a corporate GIS for the Local Authority via the Intranet using standard Web Browser.
Contribute to e-inclusion and address the digital divide through the County Portal Site www.longfordcoco.ie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and enhance the County Portal site and assist the community and voluntary groups in creating and maintaining websites.



IMPLEMENTATION, EVALUATION AND MONITORING

The Corporate Plan is a strategic assessment of what is considered achievable over the next five years. The Plan is prepared in an environment of great uncertainty and it is inevitable that many of the underlying assumptions that inform the Plan will radically alter. The speed of change occurring is unprecedented and presents further challenges in ensuring the influences of the rapidly altering external environment are constantly monitored and reviewed.

A framework for monitoring and reviewing progress is set out hereunder. This will be achieved through the publication of:

- (a) Annual Operational Plans
- (b) An Annual Progress Report
- (c) Service delivery indicators
- (d) A Customer Care Plan to monitor progress and ongoing review.

Modernising our services and delivering quality services to all our customers are key objectives of Longford County Council. The objectives in the Corporate Plan will support the broader CDB strategy and in particular the important issues of social inclusion, the requirement of sustainable development and community leadership.

The strategies outlined will act as a framework for action by the County Council and serve as guidance for performance management targets at both the individual and Management Team levels. Regular reviews will be conducted by the Management Team and feedback will be actively sought from staff, elected members and customers.

The Council will use the new financial management system to identify the costs of the provision of individual services and thus be able to relate input costs to outputs. We are, therefore, committing ourselves to value for money reviews, to set specific targets for attainment and to benchmark ourselves against best practice nationally.



APPENDIX A

Outline of Consultative Process

Following consideration by the Corporate Policy Group and the elected members the following consultative process was undertaken by Longford County Council in the preparation of this Corporate Strategy.

- Public participation invited through advertisements in local Press, on Longford County Council's website, at Customer Services Desk and Branch Library Network
- Participation of Management Team, Senior Officers and all staff invited by letter
- Participation by the following list of stakeholders invited by letter:
 - Impact, Mr. Peter Nolan, Local Government Division, Nerney's Court, Dublin 1
SIPTU, Liberty Hall, Dublin 1
 - HSE Dublin Mid – Leinster, CEO, Arden Road, Tullamore, Co. Offaly
 - Longford Town Council, Mr. Dan Rooney, Town Clerk, Municipal Offices, Market Sq., Longford
 - Longford Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Seamus Butler, Harbour House, Market Sq., Longford
 - Shannon Regional Fisheries Board, CEO, Ashbourne Business Park, Dock Rd., Limerick
 - VEC, Ms. Josephine O'Donnell, CEO, Battery Rd., Longford
 - EIRCOM, Chief Executive, 1 Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Rd., Dublin 8
 - NRA, Chief Executive Officer, St. Martin's House, Waterloo Rd., Dublin 4
 - IDA Ireland, CEO, Athlone Business Centre & Technology Park, Garrycastle, Athlone, Co. Westmeath
 - FAS, Regional Director, 7 Market Sq., Longford
 - MABS, Elaine Bawle, Church St., Longford
 - Environmental Protection Agency, Director, P.O. Box 3000, Johnstown Castle Est., Co. Wexford
 - Enterprise Ireland, The Plaza, East Point Business Park, Dublin 3
 - CIE, Heuston Station, Dublin 8
 - Garda Siochana, Superintendent Denis Shields, Garda Station, Battery Rd., Longford
 - Waterways Ireland, Somerview House, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim
 - Longford Enterprise Centre, Mr. Michael Nevin, Templemichael, Ballinalee Rd., Longford
 - IPA, Mr. Brain Cawley, Director, 57 – 61 Lansdowne Rd., Dublin 4
 - TEAGASC, Mr. Oliver Burke, County Agricultural Officer, Abbey St., Roscommon



- Midland Regional Authority, The Director, Bridge Centre, Bridge St., Tullamore, Co. Offaly
- County Development Board, Mr. Frank Sheridan, Director of Services, Aras an Chontae, Gt. Water St., Longford
- Longford Community Resources Ltd., Adrian Greene, Longford Community Enterprise Centre, Templemichael, Ballinalee, Longford
- BMW Regional Assembly, Mr. Gerry Finn, Director, The Square, Ballaghderreen, Co. Roscommon
- The Heritage Council, Chief Executive, Church Lane, Kilkenny.
- Fáilte Ireland, East and Midlands Regional Office, Clonard House, Dublin Rd., Mullingar, Co. Westmeath
- Bus Éireann, Chief Executive, Broadstone, Dublin 7
- An TAISCE, President, The Tailor's Hall, Back Lane, Dublin 8
- An Chomhairle Ealaíoin, Director, 70 Merrion Sq., Dublin 2
- Longford Travellers Movement, Gt. Water St., Longford
- CLUID Housing Association, Chief Executive, 37 Killarney St., Dublin 1
- Granard Town Council, Ms. Ann Glancy, Town Clerk, Longford County Council, Aras an Chontae, Gt. Water St., Longford
- THE IFA, Director, Irish Farm Centre, Bluebell, Dublin 12
- Engineers Ireland, Director, 22 Clyde Rd., Dublin 4
- Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Secretary General, Custom House, Dublin 1
- Department of Social and Family Affairs, Secretary General, Aras Mhic an Dhiarmada, Store St., Dublin 1
- Department of Education and Science, Secretary General, Marlborough St., Dublin 1
- Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, Secretary General, 29 -31 Adelaide Rd., Dublin 2
- Department of Transport, Secretary General, 44 Kildare St., Dublin 2
- Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism, Secretary General, Kildare St., Dublin 2

The Council acknowledges with gratitude the receipt of submissions.



APPENDIX B

Indicative List of Strategies, Plans and documents which have informed the Preparation of the Corporate Plan

- Guidelines for the Preparation of Corporate Plans (DOEHLG, 2004) and
- Circular LG19/09 – Preparation of Corporate Plans, 2010 -2014
- Corporate Plan 2005 – 2009 – Delivering Modern Local Services
- Draft Budget 2010 of Longford County Council
- Special Group on Public Service Numbers and Expenditure Programmes (2009)
- Transforming Public Services (TPS) – Report of the Task Force on the Public Service (Department of the Taoiseach, 2008)
- Green Paper on Local Government Reform – Stronger Local Democracy: Options for Change (DOEHLG)
- “The Way Forward” – Longford County Development Board Strategy for Economic, Social and Cultural Development in County Longford, 2002 – 2011
- Longford County Development Board Action Plan, 2009
- Longford County Development Board – Anti- Poverty Strategy, 2009
- Longford County Development Board – Poverty Profile, 2009
- Intercultural Strategic Plan for County Longford, 2008 - 2011
- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005
- Disability Implementation Plan, 2008 -2015 (Longford Local Authorities, 2008)
- Irish Language Scheme, 2008 – 2011(Longford Local Authorities, 2008)
- Longford County Council Procurement Plan (2008)
- Longford County Council Heritage Plan, 2004 – 2009
- Draft County Arts Development Strategy, 2009 -2014
- Longford County Development Plan, 2009 -2015 and associated National Guidelines
- Regional Planning Guidelines, 2004 – 2010
- National Development Plan, 2007 -2013
- National Spatial Strategy, 2002 - 2020
- National Action Plan against Poverty and Social Exclusion, 2003 – 2005
- National Action Plan for Social Inclusion, 2007 -2016



- Traveller Accommodation Plan, 2009 -2013
- Homeless Action Plan, 2010 -2012
- Water Services Investment Programme, 2007 – 2009
- Delivering Value for People – Service Indicators in Local Government (DOEHLG, 2004)
- Value for Money Reports (DOEHLG)
- BMW Regional Operational Programme, 2007 – 2013
- Towards Sustainable Local Communities – Guidelines on Local Agenda 21 (DOEHLG, 2001)
- Longford County Council’s Programme for Equality
- Performance Management and Development Systems
- Code of Conduct Guidelines for Elected Representatives and Employees
- The Report of the Tourism Renewal Group – Survival, Recovery and Growth: A Strategy for Renewing Irish Tourism, 2009 -2013 (Department of Arts, Sports and Tourism, 2009)