



# KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE CHILL CHAINNIGH

## QUARTERLY MANAGEMENT REPORT

OCTOBER 2018

TUARASCÁIL BHAINISTÍOCHTA MÍOSÚIL

To: Each Member of Kilkenny County Council

Quarterly Management Report to Members of Kilkenny County Council for consideration at the September Monthly Meeting.

### EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS

A list of Orders made in the last month will be available in the Council Chamber for inspection by the Elected Members.

### FINANCE:

**Chief Executive Financial Report** [Appendix 1].

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**3<sup>rd</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> October**  
Mental Health Week

**9<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> October**  
Bookville

**17<sup>th</sup> October**  
Launch date of "Mark My Words"

**26<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> October**  
Savour Kilkenny Events at Library  
Phase 2 of Healthy Ireland at Library

**2<sup>nd</sup> November:**  
Premiere of 'The Whispering Fields' Film  
Lisdowney National School at 8.15pm.

**23<sup>rd</sup> November**  
Closing date for submissions on The County Kilkenny Waste Management Bye-laws.

**25<sup>th</sup> November**  
Any changes/corrections to the Draft Register must be submitted to Corporate Affairs

**November** [Date to be Confirmed]  
Winners of Kilkenny County Council Tidy Estates 2018 will be announced.

## REPORT AT A GLANCE

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#### CORPORATE

##### REGISTER OF ELECTORS

Supplement to the register for the forthcoming Presidential Election & Referendum has now been published.

Any changes/corrections to the Draft Register must be submitted to Corporate Affairs by 25<sup>th</sup> November, 2018. The Draft Register will become the Live Register on 14<sup>th</sup> February, 2019. This Live Register will be used for the forthcoming Local & European Elections in May, 2019.

##### Promoted Social Media Campaigns

During the week 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> October the Council also ran a promotional campaign for #CheckTheRegister which received 19,878 impressions on Facebook and 5,027 impressions on Twitter.

##### REPORT ON FOI REQUESTS RECEIVED IN 2018:

As at 8<sup>th</sup> October, 2018, 145 FOI Requests have been received by Kilkenny County Council in 2018. The breakdown of these requests is as follows:

Type of Request:	
Non-Personal Request:	137
Personal Requests:	8
Source of Requests:	
Journalists:	23
Business Interests/Groups:	9
Oireachtas/Public Representatives:	4
Staff:	1
Clients:	3
Others:	105

#### ROADS

##### NATIONAL ROADS

##### N25 New Ross Bypass

The design and construction phase of the PPP Contract is over two-thirds complete, and the

scheme remains on programme to open in June 2019.

The very informative project website [www.n25newross.ie](http://www.n25newross.ie) is available for updates on progress and the elected members are encouraged to view this.

##### Pavement Schemes.

**N78.** The N78 pavement overlay scheme with a contract value in excess of €2million is approximately 85% complete and will be complete before the end of November. This scheme involves repairs to the existing pavement, a structural overlay, road markings, drainage and footpath works over an extent of approximately 6.0 km between Castlecomer and Crettyard. The works are being completed by LAGAN.

**N25.** The N25 pavement scheme over two sections totalling approximately 4.5km, Gaulstown to Graiguenakill and Luffany to the Rhu Glenn is within tender award stage with a contract value of approximately €2million. This scheme is expected to commence shortly and will conclude in Q1 2019.

In addition to the works above on the N25 other proposed pavement schemes for 2019 are currently under consideration by TII and a decision on what schemes will proceed to more detailed design, tender and construction during 2019 will be made shortly. The schemes being looked at are on the N76 and N25.

##### Kilkenny Minor Schemes

Several schemes are progressing through various stages in conjunction with TII on the national road network.

These include the N24 Tower Road, N77 Ballyragget to Ballinaslee Improvement Scheme, N24 Carrick Road Improvement Scheme. The N25 Glenmore to Waterford Improvement Scheme which is a major scheme is also being progressed.





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### OTHER PROJECTS:

#### Castlecomer Pedestrian Bridge

Kilkenny County Council has entered a Section 85 agreement with Kildare County Council and specifically the bridge design office attached to Kildare RDO to progress this scheme. RPS consultants have been appointed. The project is within the early stages with consultations ongoing to develop an options report which will determine a preferred solution. The options report should be completed before the end of Q4 2018.

#### B12 Maintenance

The Municipal District Offices log defects on the national roads via the NRA Geo App. Kilkenny County Council was successful in obtaining funding of a total of €208,681 from TII to address defects identified at 7 defects locations on the N24, N78 and N77. The Municipal District Offices are progressively addressing these defects and all will be completed by the end of November.

#### HD28

HD28 locations are where TII have identified issues with skid resistance. Once identified immediate interim solutions are implemented pending full works. 15 locations were identified as having issues in 2018. Full works involving retexturing or pavement renewals at 10 of those sites are now complete with the final sites to be completed before the end of November. The total funds for this work in 2018 is €258,619.

#### Capital Maintenance

The Municipal District Offices log defects on the national roads via the NRA Geo App.

Kilkenny County Council has been successful in obtaining funding of a total of €313,500 from TII to address defects identified at Kilbride, Kilamery and Kiltallaghan on the N76 Callan to Clonmel Road. The works at each location will involve planning out the existing wearing course, laying a regulating course, reinstatement with HRA and replacement of road markings

and studs. These works shall be completed via an external contractor before the end of November.

### NON NATIONAL ROADS

#### CLAR Works:

**Overall grant value: €300,000.**

Works at Kilmaganny, Kilmanagh, Tiscofin, Listerlin, Windgap (Kilamery), Kilmacar (Conahy), Knockroe (Kilamery), Muckalee and Cross Patrick are on going. The works are being completed through the local Municipal District Offices. The works at each location are varied and include provision for car parking, footpaths, driver feedback signs and public lighting.

#### Low Cost Safety:

**Total Value: €282,000**

There are 10 locations listed for works as per Roadworks Scheme 2018. These works are being completed through the local Municipal District Offices principally but some works will be undertaken by contractors. The works are low cost interventions to address specific road safety issues or hazards. The works involved are varied involving signage, road markings, footpaths etc. This work should be completed by the end of November.

#### Restoration Improvement

**Grant allocation: €5,284,797**

49.27 km of road restoration schemes are completed to date at a total cost of €4,513,537

#### Restoration Maintenance

**Grant allocation: €1,584,500 [includes supplementary grant]**

60.1 km of road maintenance schemes are completed to date at a total cost of €1,523,167

#### Discretionary Works

**Grant allocation: €3,326,703**

A substantial number of Discretionary road improvement works have been undertaken to date and will continue. A total of €2.4m of expenditure has been incurred to date.

#### Community Involvement Scheme

**Grant allocation: €400,000**

A total of eight schemes were completed in 2018.





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### Local Improvement Scheme

Grant allocation of €315,000

A total of nine schemes were completed in 2018.

### Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund Schemes (LIHAF)

#### Kilkenny Western Environs Phase 1 Infrastructure Scheme

The procurement process for the construction of the Western Environs enabling infrastructure has been completed and the successful contractor identified. Approval to proceed with the contract on the basis of the lowest tender received is currently being sought from the Department of Housing, Planning, and Local Government (co-funders of project with Kilkenny County Council). As the lowest tender price is higher than the original estimated cost used in the LIHAF application process, the Department has requested Kilkenny County Council to develop proposals to mitigate the disparity between the tender costs and the available funding. The Department have also requested that Kilkenny County Council submit additional information relating to housing proposals in the Western Environs area served by the enabling infrastructure. The information requested by the Department is currently being prepared by Kilkenny County Council for submission.

#### Ferrybank Neighbourhood Park

A preliminary design for the park prepared by the appointed designers Cunnane Stratton Reynolds Landscape Architects was initially approved by Kilkenny County Council in June 2018. Subsequently, detailed costings prepared for the preliminary design indicated construction costs greater than the available funding.

Kilkenny County Council identified the most appropriate elements of the Park to defer to bring the costs in line with current available funding. A revised detailed design with the necessary savings was agreed in September and contract documents based on the revised design are currently being prepared. Site investigations

have identified a number of previously unknown issues which are also currently being dealt with.

The objective remains to conduct the procurement process, obtain Departmental approval, and appoint a contractor for the Park construction prior to Christmas. This Park will be funded by a combination of Department of Housing, Planning, and Local Government LIHAF funding, and Kilkenny and Waterford County Councils.



Copy of plan for Ferrybank Park

## WATER SERVICES

### Inistioge Water Supply Scheme

This involves laying a new water main from Grennan in Thomastown to existing Plant in Ballygub south of Inistioge. It includes 18.5km of main, 3 No Reservoirs Project 90% completed. Delays were encountered with river crossing ground conditions. This Scheme will supply water from Thomastown to Inistioge before the end of the year. Value of project €10m.

### Kilkenny Drainage Area Plan

Works have commenced on compiling the existing network information. Advanced CCTV works to commence on the Breaghagh Sewer network in October to assess any capacity issues. The purpose of the project is to map and model the foul network and to identify any issues with existing or future capacity requirements. Works to be completed by the end of 2019 proposed budget of €1.1m





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### **Inistioge & Mullinavat WWTP**

Planning has been obtained for both projects. Site investigation and the tendering for the appointment of a Civil contractor are nearing completion. Appointment to be made before the end of 2018. The programming of the works is subject to land acquisitions/ wayleaves which are under way at present. Provisional cost is €5m.

### **Grit Removal, Purcellsinch**

Works have commenced on the installation of a grit removal system to remove the grits and gravels which enter the plant at Purcellsinch. These grits cause damage to pumps and other plant. Works commenced in October and are expected to be completed by Q3 of 2019. Value of works €0.8m

### **Kilkenny City RWSS 10001237**

An Oral Hearing was held on 28<sup>th</sup> May in relation to Planning appeals and Wayleaves. The ABP Inspector responded on 24<sup>th</sup> July requesting Further Information with respect to (1) the presence of the Demoulin's Whorl Snail in the Dunmore Fen Complex and (2) the recommendation to undertake trial pump tests to establish dewatering requirement where significant excavations are required.

It was confirmed by Dr Maria Long Ecologist that the Demoulin's Whorl Snail was present in the Dunmore Northern Fen. We will now require to install piezometers (8 no.) between the north and south fen to determine what is the groundwater level regime between the fens and its relationship with the fen hydrology.

The installation of the piezometers and trial pump testing is due to commence next week by Priority Drilling.

The tendering process has been suspended until the ABP decision has been made. The date for contract commencement has now gone out to November 2019. The contract duration is 18 months.

Estimated cost of project €10m incl vat.

### **Kilkenny Water Conservation and Network Management Project:**

This project involved the replacement of water mains at four locations throughout County Kilkenny as follows:

- Cherrymount Knocktopher
- Graiguenamanagh
- Newrath
- Leggetsrath

The total length of mains replaced is approx 10km. The work is substantially completed and the Substantially Completion Certificate should be issued before the end of October.

There are still 2 small sections to be completed:

**Granny Bridge** -laying new main in new footpath across the bridge - 30m approx.

**Fairview** -laying 160m of watermain.

We expect both sections to be completed before the end of October. The overall cost of works is €1.95 m excl. VAT.

### **Upgrade to Gowran Regional Water Supply Scheme**

The purpose of this Scheme is to increase the capacity on this supply from 1000m<sup>3</sup>/day to 1500m<sup>3</sup>/day. A new treatment plant and additional 1180m<sup>3</sup> storage are being provided as well as new rising mains. Site investigation is due to commence in November 2018. Land acquisition procedures are underway. Expected to go to tender in December 2019 with construction complete 30 months later.

### **Ongoing works in Rural Water 2018**

**Rising Main Castlewarren GWS:** This work consists of the replacement of approximately 1700m of defective rising main on the Castlewarren GWS. Phases 1 and 2 are complete and additional funding has been acquired to finish Phase 3 in Oct/Nov 18. Total cost in the region of €100,000.

**Newtown Ballinerna GWS Taking in Charge by Irish Water:** The works on Newtown Ballinerna GWS are now complete and this work included





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the replacement and upgrading of their water distribution main. This works were required as part of the taking in charge process and cost €130,000. It is envisaged that the formal taking in charge process will commence in Nov/Dec 2018 and it is hoped to have the scheme taken in charge by April/May 2019.

**Metering Programme:** The metering programme of 13 GWS is commencing in October 2018 which involves the installation of water meters on domestic customers on GWS's.

Approximately 300 meters will be installed on various schemes over the coming weeks and this will allow schemes to charge for water (if the use is over 160m<sup>3</sup>) and help with water conservation. The estimated cost of same is in the region of €110,000.

### **Disinfection and pH Control Programme**

The appointed contractor working on the Disinfection and pH Control programme covers sites in Kilkenny/Carlow and Wexford. There are 18 WTP sites on the programme in Kilkenny. Civil works are complete on 80% of sites. Mechanical and Electrical installations is progressing on 11 sites, with 3 sites at commissioning stage. Estimated completion and hand over of last site in Kilkenny will be late 2019. Value of project over the 3 counties is in excess of €10m approx.

### **Telemetry Up-grade Programme**

Up-grade of the Telemetry (Scada) equipment at Water Treatment Plants and Reservoirs which are involved in the Disinfection and pH Control programme. Currently 50% of sites completed. Expected completion date Q2 of 2019. Value of project in excess of €300k.

### **Treated Water Storage Programme**

Glenmore Reservoir almost complete, new reservoir to be commissioned and old reservoir to be decommissioned by end of 2018.

Two further sites in Kilkenny [Callan & Jamestown, Piltown] have been chosen for new

reservoirs due to lack of 24 hours storage at the current reservoir sites. Consultants are working on a preliminary design at present. No completion date or budget has been fixed for these works yet.

### **Reservoir Cleaning & Minor Repairs Programme**

Currently we are carrying out a Reservoir cleaning programme on 32 reservoirs within the County. Almost 40% complete to date, programme had been suspended due to the drought conditions. Minor crack repairs to be carried out in conjunction with cleaning works. Ancillary works such as new pipe work, fittings and improvement of access roads to reservoirs being completed in conjunction with the main works. Completion of programme by Q1 of 2019. Value of works €650k

### **Castlecomer Ice Pigging Programme**

Over 40km of Castlecomer water network has just undergone ice pigging works (ice pigging is the use of ice to scrub debris build up from the inside of pipes) to remove manganese deposits from the pipes. This is the first time IW has used this method of cleaning in Ireland. Ancillary works such as installation of new hydrants, valves, magnetic meters, etc was required to facilitate the works. As part of the manganese removal process, the manganese filter media at the WTP is to be up graded. Completion of works by Q4 2018. Value of works €330k

### **Access to Heights and Edge Protection programme**

Kilkenny County Council is currently working with IW and the appointed contractor engaged to carry out works. The programme will address the risks associated with falling from heights and ensure the safety of personnel working at both Waste Water and Water sites. Assessments complete on 90% of sites. Detailed design to start very soon. Completion of sites on Block 1 of programme by Q3 2019. Value of works in excess of €500k.





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### Water Network Programme

Kilkenny County Council is currently working with IW and the appointed contractor to reduce leakage by fixing and replacing old and damaged pipes and removing lead pipes from the network in Kilkenny. The programme is broken down into a number of projects with the main ones being - Mains Rehab, First Fix, Lead replacement, Find and Fix and Non domestic Meter replacement.

### Mains Rehab works

Currently 3 schemes at construction stage.

- **Patrick's Street** mains replacement works 250m in length. Completion of works by the end of October 2018.
- **Tubrid DMA** mains replacement 2.8km in length. Completion of works by the end of October 2018.
- **Bohercrussia Street**, Back yard service replacement of 6 houses. Completion of works by the end of October 2018.
- **Mill Road and Kilkenny Street, Freshford** mains replacement, 800m in length. Completion of works by the end of Feb 2019.

Currently there are 8 schemes at Preliminary Design stage, with most schemes based in Kilkenny City area. These schemes are a mixture of back yard service replacement and Mains Rehab works.

## HOUSING

### Capital Delivery 2018

The Minister for Housing by letter dated 18<sup>th</sup> April 2018 notified Kilkenny County Council of its revised delivery targets under Rebuilding Ireland i.e. 599 units for the period 2018 to 2021 and a specific target of 133 units for 2018.

Up to September 2018 a number of schemes advanced as follows;

- Conversion of Greensbridge B&B and adjoining house to 5 self contained 1 bed units to be completed in October 2018.

- Kilkenny County Council Purchased 32 houses -17 completed and 15 at sale agreed stage.
- AHB Purchase of 69 houses/Apartments - 30 completed and 39 at sale agreed stage.
- 4 units at Smyth's Road, Ballyragget to be completed in early October 2018 (Oaklee AHB).
- 'Broguemaker' site, Castlecomer Road (18 units)- PART 8 expected to be advertised in October.
- 4 Units at Cloghabrody, Thomastown - Part 8 approved at September Council Meeting
- Department approval sought for 9 units in Ogenty, Gowran.
- 50 units at Nuncio Road to commence as a 3 phased development (Respond AHB).
- 27 Units at Walkin Street, Kilkenny commenced 18th September (Oaklee AHB).
- 2 units at O'Loughlin Road, Kilkenny commenced renovations 28<sup>th</sup> September (Respond AHB).
- 40 units approved by the Department at Margaretfield, Callan Rd, Kilkenny (Respond AHB).
- Kilkenny County Council has received funding approval from the Dept of Housing for a further 18 Houses at Togher Way, Urlingford. These units will be completed in Q 4 2018.
- 33 units at Donaguile, Castlecomer - tenders received and under review.
- Piltown (17 units) tenders received and under review.
- Blackstaff House- tenders received and under review.
- Station Avenue, Ballyragget (22 units) expected to go to tender in October 2018.
- Crokershill (80) - Part 8 expected to be advertised in Q4 2018.





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#### 18 Units under Construction at Togher Way, Urlingford



#### Homeless Update

Details of homeless presentations for the months of 2018 along with the comparative, monthly presentations for 2016 and 2017 are set out below. There were 217 Homeless/Potentially Homeless presentations to 30/09/2018.

	2016	2017	2018
Jan	37	29	37
Feb	30	26	32
Mar	18	26	21
April	26	25	18
May	34	28	29
June	31	24	20
July	31	34	15
August	32	27	26
September	27	24	19
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>217</b>
October	30	27	
November	32	29	
December	21	19	
<b>Total</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>319</b>	

#### Rent Review 2018

Tenants have been notified in writing of the rent review and completed income forms were received

- 2,808 letters were issued to tenants.
- Up to a month ago, we received approx. 88% of all completed forms.
- Some forms were incomplete and had to be returned in order to comply with GDPR.
- A reminder letter issued notifying tenants of

penalty if completed forms not returned on time.

- Proposed date for implementing the new rent increases/decreases will be late October.

#### Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019 – 2023

Kilkenny County Council, in accordance with Section 8 of the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998, is currently in the process of preparing a new Traveller Accommodation Programme in respect of the period beginning July 1<sup>st</sup> 2019.

A draft of this Programme will be available for inspection in April 2019 at which time another advertisement will be published. Submissions must be made in writing to The Housing Section, Kilkenny County Council, County Hall, John's Street, Kilkenny by January 31<sup>st</sup> 2019.

#### September 2018 Housing

Number awaiting social housing support at 30 <sup>th</sup> September, 2018	2071
Number of assessment interviews carried out in September:	38
LA/RAS/Leasing allocations (offers made):	9
Number of HAP tenancies to 30 <sup>th</sup> September:	872
Number of LA tenancies surrendered:	4
Anti social behaviour cases:	9
New Homeless Presentations:	19
Maintenance Calls for September, 2018	542
Maintenance Calls year to-date	3692
No. Housing Loans Approved to-date (Annuity/Construction)	15
Amount of Loans Approved to 30 <sup>th</sup> September, 2018	€1,847,830

#### Estate Management

- National Pride of Place Awards judging to took place in Kilkenny on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of August in Kells, Slieverue, Thomastown and the Open Circle project in Kilkenny City. The announcement of the national Pride of Place





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awards will be take place on the 17 November 2018 in Cork City.

- 7 Large Estate Enhancement projects applications were approved for funding in July they include:

Hebron Park;	€4,000
Chapelfield;	€3,500
Brandon Crescent;	€2,000
Woodland Estate;	€2,425
Shamrock Grove;	€2,000
Fairview;	€4,000
Newpark Lower;	€4,000
Church Avenue;	€4,000

- Issue 10 of the Kilkenny County Council Community interactive e-newsletter was promoted over the summer months and issue 11 will be out in October 2018.
- Tidy Estates competition - Judging of the Kilkenny County Council 2018 Tidy Estates took place in August/early September. Announcements of the winners will be in November 2018.

- Housing in progress
- Housing delivered
- Building communities
- Quality and Innovation
- The housing context.

This campaign included online activity and the following are the statistics in relation to the social media platforms for the week:

#### FACEBOOK

28,998 people reached over the 7 day period and 146 new page likes.

20 #HousingFocus Facebook posts. #HousingFocus Posts had 65,189 impressions.

#### Top 5 #housingfocus posts:

Houses at Callan 7533 impressions

54 Houses at Golf Links Rd. 6938 impressions

#### 1st #housingfocus Press

Release 6482 impressions

House at Barna 6232 impressions

Togher Way 6063 impressions

#### TWITTER

Tweets earned 57.6K impressions over the 7 day period.

No. of Tweets issued by the Council: 22

#### Top 5 Tweets:

2,274 impressions

1,917 impressions

1,897 impressions

1,783 impressions

1,565 impressions



#### HOUSINGFOCUS CAMPAIGN

The Council ran an awareness campaign during the week commencing 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018, to highlight the progress made by the local authority together with Approved Housing Bodies, Elected representatives and other agencies in the provision of housing supports. The week long campaign showcased activities under five themes:

#### PLANNING

PLANNING SUMMARY	Total To September	
	2017	2018
Planning Applications Received	644	644
Planning Applications Granted	565	526
Planning Applications Refused	42	51
Complaints Received	92	79
Warning Letters Issued	66	56
Enforcements Notices Issued	35	38





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**FORWARD PLANNING:**

**County & City Development Plans:**

The Council published the statutory notice on the 20<sup>th</sup> April signifying the commencement of the review of the County and City Development Plans. The public consultation stage included publication of an Issues Paper and three public consultation meetings in addition to other meetings. Fifty three submissions were received and a Chief Executive's report has been prepared and was presented to the members at the September Council meeting. The members agreed to consider the report further along with the next steps in the process at a Development Plan workshop to be held in October.

It is anticipated that the section (i.e. S12) of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2018, which is to suspend the making of the Development Plan pending the publication of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) will commence shortly. As a result, the Council will be required to suspend the process of making the Development Plan until 13 weeks after the adoption of the RSES. A draft RSES is expected to be published by the Southern Regional Assembly in October. Notwithstanding, the Planning Section will continue preparatory work connected with the Development Plan. This will include scheduling of internal meetings with the various sections of the Council to seek their input.

**Variation 6**

Variation 6 to the Kilkenny City and Environs Development Plan, to change the zoning on a site (of 0.39 hectares) adjacent to the Parc na Gowan housing estate in Smithland South, from Community Facilities to Phase 1 Residential was on public display from 10<sup>th</sup> August to the 7<sup>th</sup> September 2018. Four submissions were received and a report was prepared for the September Council meeting where the variation was made by the Elected Members.

**Local Area Plans:**

Work continues on the pre-draft stages of both the Callan Local Area Plan (LAP) and Thomastown LAP. An update on the progress of both LAPs was presented to the Kilkenny Municipal District meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> September.

An Infrastructure Assessment for both LAPs is ongoing with the assistance of Irish Water and the Area Engineers. Once completed the Planning Section will again present the zoning proposals to the Municipal District meeting.

**Vacant Sites**

Work is continuing on the administration of the Vacant Sites Levy. There are now 18 sites on the Register. A further site has been removed from the Register following site activation by the developer in September. This brings the total number of sites that have been removed as a result of site activation to five. Section 11(1) notices were issued in May, with all the details of the sites currently on the Register. Six submissions were received to these notices. Following that, six Section 11(3) notices were issued in July, and there are currently three appeals with An Bord Pleanála on foot of these notices, for sites ref. VSR11 Callan Rd/Circular Road, VSR16 Chatsworth St, Castlecomer and VSR20 Oak Ridge, Ferrybank. Responses to the appeals have been forwarded to the Bord.

The Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2018 brought in three main changes to the Vacant Site Levy. The first was to increase the amount of the levy to 7% from 2019. The second was removing the provision for reductions in the levy for sites in negative equity. The third was clarification on agricultural land, that if the site is being farmed and was purchased prior to its designation as residential land, the owner cannot be levied. These changes will be reflected in the approach to be adopted by the Planning Section in the administration of the Levy.





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### Urban Regeneration & Development Fund (URDF)

- Kilkenny County Council are party to two applications under the URDF. The first application is in respect of a series of projects for the development of public amenity spaces and infrastructure within and around the Abbey Quarter site. These may be summarised as follows:
- The development of a riverside linear park (to include a skate park);
- The upgrade of Horse Barrack Lane and provision of public realm;
- The provision of public realm at the Brewhouse Courtyard;
- The provision of public realm at the Mayfair;
- The provision of a temporary Coach and Car Park (for 5 years);
- The restoration and refurbishment of the Tea House;
- The provision of a Cultural Hub (at the former squash court);
- The extension of the Medieval Mile along Parliament Street and completion of public realm works;
- The provision of improvement works on Vicar Street and Greensbridge Street;
- The provision of improvement works and off street connectivity along the approaches to the Abbey Quarter;
- The development of the "Lighting up the Medieval Mile" project; and
- The demarcation of routes and gateways into the City.

There has been substantial planning undertaken over the last 6 years in preparing the above projects. They are essential aesthetic and infrastructural developments required to complement the redevelopment of the Abbey Quarter (AQ). The AQ offers the challenge of extending a Medieval City in a manner that is both contemporary and forward looking, whilst also contextually sitting comfortably within the site setting of archaeological and industrial monuments. The estimated cumulative cost

involved in delivering the above projects is c€8.3m. If they all received approval the Council's co-funding contribution (at 25%) would be c2.2m.



The second application is led by Waterford City & County Council for funding towards the regeneration and redevelopment of the North Quays Strategic Development Zone (SDZ). There are four projects in this application that are within the administrative area of Kilkenny County Council. These projects have been identified and prioritised as they are all objectives within the Ferrybank-Belview Local Area Plan, and may be summarized as follows:

- (i) The provision of a link road from the Abbey Road to the Belmont Road (Objective 10F of the LAP)
- (ii) Improvement works to the N29 Port Road (Objectives 5D and 5E of the LAP);
- (iii) The provision of additional connection points to the proposed Kilkenny Greenway to provide for greater access and to facilitate smarter travel options for those living in the suburban residential developments of Ferrybank (Objective 8C of the LAP); and
- (iv) Improvement works to the Abbey Road & Belmont Road to enhance these approaches to the North Quays SDZ (Objective 10C of the LAP.)

The estimated cumulative cost involved in delivering the above projects is c€13.8m. If they all received approval the Council's co-funding contribution (at 25%) would be c3.5m. a decision on the URDF applications is expected before year end.





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#### ENVIRONMENT

##### Recycling Bring Bank Centres

Usage at the 44 individual Recycling Bring Bank Centres continues to be very active with the following quantity of materials collected for recycling this year up to the end of September:-

- 493 Tonnes of Clear Glass
- 441 Tonnes of Green Glass
- 303 Tonnes of Brown Glass
- 40 Tonnes of Steel
- 42 Tonnes of Aluminium

This gives a combined total of 1,319 tonnes of recycled material for the first three quarters of the year, materials that may have otherwise ended up in landfill.

The Environment Section will continue to assess the need for additional service locations and review the existing operation so as to determine if this free public service can be improved upon.

##### County Kilkenny Waste Management Bye Laws, 2018

Kilkenny County Council together with the 3 Waste Regions propose introducing a standardised set of waste Bye Laws for the Segregation, Storage and Presentation of Household and Commercial Waste throughout the Country.

These Bye Laws are designed to:

- encourage the correct segregation of waste at source
- cut out the increasing problem of illegal waste collectors
- help tackle the incidents of illegal dumping and
- reduce the need to take court action by having a fixed penalty option.

It was agreed at the Environmental Protection, Water Services & Energy SPC meeting in September to proceed to the public consultation

stage of the process. The County Kilkenny Waste Management Bye-laws went out to public consultant on the 26<sup>th</sup> September 2018 and submission and observations on same will be accepted up to 4.30pm of Friday the 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2018. Thereafter, following a review of any submissions received it is expected that the Bye Laws will go before the Members for decision at the full Council Meeting in December 2018.

##### Newpark Fen

Earlier this year Kilkenny County Council secured funding, from the Waste Enforcement Regional Lead Authority (WERLA), to tackle the ongoing problem of fly tipping of rubbish at Newpark Fen.

Clean up works where undertaken over the summer months via a joint initiative whereby the Kilkenny Probation Service assisted the Local Authority in removing the rubbish within the amenity.

The next phase of the works involves the provision of new fencing, the removal of overgrown vegetation to enhance the appearance of the area but also to allow passive surveillance and finally the installation of an access ramp at the viewing area. Following a recent tender process the contract for this work was awarded to a local company and works are due to commence in mid October.

##### Entente Florale

Kilkenny County Council is delighted to announce that Inistioge won a gold medal at the Entente Florale Awards held in Tullamore on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2018.

The Entente Florale is a European Tidy Towns competition and Inistioge was selected by the Department of Rural & Community Development to compete this year.

Woodstock while also contributing to the gold medal win took part in the Presidents Prize





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which was for the Restoration of a Public Open Space 2018 and was piped to the post by Veszprém Castle in Hungary.

This is a fantastic achievement for Inistioge & Woodstock and also highlights the important role Kilkenny County Council played in assisting the community to achieve the highest standard in this competition.



constantly being monitored by the Parks Department. A condition survey to ascertain these issues is currently being carried out with a view to targeting available budget in future years for full replacement costs.

Another new community led playground at Clogh is due to open shortly. Following successful certification, Kilkenny County Council will take this playground in charge for ongoing maintenance and it will be included in our weekly inspection regimes. This will bring to 27 the number of playgrounds in the County maintained by the Council in conjunction with local community groups.

#### RMCEI Update

Inspection Plan	Number of Inspections undertaken during September 2018
CRM Complaints	106
WEEE Inspections	11
Battery Inspections	11
Bottle Bank Visits	16
Environmental Planning Recommendations	30
Environmental Planning Site Inspections	8
Solid Fuel Regulations	2
Nutrient Management Plan Assessment	2
Petroleum Vapour Regulations	1
Historic Landfill Monitoring	2
Inspections in relation to authorised ELV Facilities	3
Waste Permitted Facilities	2
Discharge Licensed Premises	2
Solvent Regulations	3

#### Woodstock

Two new Woodstock Loop Walks with associated signage were developed connecting the village of Inistioge to the Woodstock gardens by means of the riverside walk along the River Nore. User information is provided at the trailhead in both Woodstock gardens and at the new car park in Inistioge.

Planting will continue in the Winter Gardens in the autumn months as the weather cools, having had to cease works due to the drought in late spring and summer. Works to the outdoor classroom have also been completed with the space available to any school group upon request. Weatherproof cover over this space will be provided to allow the classroom to be used throughout the winter months.

#### PARKS

##### Playgrounds

The Parks Department have completed their annual repairs to the playgrounds around the county with the intention of maintaining the playgrounds in good condition and to be fit for use. As the playgrounds age, and the wear and tear becomes more significant, entire pieces of equipment may require replacement. This is



*Recent planting at the Winter Garden is establishing well*





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### Amenity Grants

The amenity grants are currently being processed with up to 60% of the grant aid being draw down by community groups to date. Remaining applicants are being contacted to send in their claims as soon as possible.

### River Nore Linear Park

New tourist information signage has been erected along the Canal walk, Lacken walk and at Bishopsmeadows to guide walkers and cyclists along the route. This was funded by a combination of grant aid from the Outdoor Recreational Fund and Healthy Ireland with match funding by Kilkenny County Council.



### Sports Capital Grants

Three sports capital grants which funded the development of outdoor gyms at Pocke, Bishopsmeadows and Fairgreen have now been drawdown from the Department of Tourism, Transport and Sport. The outdoor gyms are proving very popular and are complementing existing facilities at the above locations.



## COMMUNITY & CULTURAL

### Rural Regeneration & Development Fund

Kilkenny County Council has submitted applications for funding to the Department under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund.

The call for applications included both *Ready to Go* proposals and *Proposals requiring further development* as follows:

**Category 1:** "Ready-to-Go" proposals, or initial phases of projects which can be commenced in 2019, which have the necessary consents (e.g. planning) in place, are at an advanced stage of design and are procurement-ready;

**Category 2:** Proposals that have clear potential and quantifiable objectives but require further development to enable them to be submitted as Category 1 proposals in subsequent funding calls.

The applications submitted were as follows:

Location	Category
<b>Callan</b>	
Bridge Street/Mill Street Regeneration Strategy & Mobility Management Plan	2
Fair Green Redevelopment	1
Friary Complex Condition Survey & Conservation Plan	2
Motte Fields Amenity	1
<b>Thomastown</b>	
Community Centre Redevelopment	1
Public Realm Lowe / Logan Street	1
Sessions House Redevelopment	1
Quayside Car park Works	1
Maudlin Street Regeneration Design	2
<b>Castlecomer</b>	
Old Barracks Site	2
Linear Park/Connectivity	2
Bike Track	2
Adventure Park Activities	2
Feasibility Studies for:	2
▪ Tourism & Economic Plan	
▪ Traffic Management Plan & Car Park	
<b>Graigenamanagh</b>	
Access Road & Accommodation Works to Graigenamanagh Hub	1
Refurbishment Works Graigenamanagh Library	1
<b>Piltown</b>	
Enhancement Works and Traffic Management Main Street, Piltown	1
Playground & Associated Works	1





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#### 2018 Town & Village Renewal Scheme

The Council submitted seven applications to the Department of Rural and Community Development under the 2018 Town and Village Renewal Scheme. All seven were developed in collaboration with local communities.

Kilkenny has received €652,280 in total for five Projects.

<i>Ballyhale/ Knocktopher Castlecomer</i>	Build a 500m footpath with lighting	€100,000
<i>Coon</i>	Brand development for Castlecomer	€52,280
<i>Inistioge</i>	Completion of a parking area near playground & recreational area, & the rebuilding of 50m of heritage wall	€100,000
<i>Thomastown</i>	Restore and improve the appearance of The Square and the River Park in Inistioge	€200,000
	Conversion of an unused Community Hall into a custom built library with business incubation space with hot-desking facilities.	€200,000

The unsuccessful applications were Graiguenmanagh €100,000 for public toilets and car parking and Stonyford/Ennisnag €100,000 for a pedestrian walkway and signage scheme.

#### 2019 Town & Village Renewal Scheme

It is intended to invite expressions of interest shortly for feasible projects under the 2019 Town and Village Renewal Scheme so that applications may be developed with relevant community groups in a timely manner.

#### Town/Village Renewal Process

Health Check Reports have now been completed for Callan, Inistioge, Ballyragget, Freshford, Gowran and Mooncoin. The reports recommendations will be fed back to the communities from each location for their information and attention should they wish to prepare their own local actions plans and identify projects to be progressed. As the Council is directly involved in piloting Callan and Inistioge Town/Village Renewal Action Plans

the Council will work with both communities to develop their action plans.

The Health Check Workshop for The Rower will be held on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> October.

#### Kilkenny Local Community and Development Committee (Kilkenny LCDC)

#### Local Economic and Community Plan Implementation

The Kilkenny LCDC has met on four occasions to 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2018.

#### January Meeting.

- At the January meeting, held in Butler House, the theme was Family Resource Services. A presentation was made on behalf of the 4 Family Resources Centres -Newpark Close,(Kilkenny City), Fr. McGrath, (The Butts, Kilkenny City), Droichead Family Resource Centre (Callan) and The Mill Family Resource Centre (Urlingford). Members were presented with an overview of the Family Resource Centre (FRC) programme, background on the range of services being provided and an update on FRC LCDC Actions/Objectives. The hard work undertaken by the staff in all 4 FRC's was acknowledged.
- Members also discussed and agreed the LCDC Annual Report for 2017,
- The feedback from the LECP workshop held in November 2017 was noted, feedback from the Healthy Ireland LCDC Sub Group was noted, and the SICAP end of year process for 2017 was outlined.
- Members noted the short timeframe for the administration of the Department's 2017 RAPID Scheme and asked that a letter be sent to the Department on the matter.
- Members also agreed with the Chief Officers advice that the minutes of the LCDC meetings be made publically available on-line from January 2018.





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### March Meeting

- The theme for the March LCDC meeting was Youth Services. At the meeting, which was held in The Drum, McDonagh Junction, the Kilkenny LCDC heard 3 presentations from agencies which work with youth groups, KCETB - Youth Work Plan, Ossory Youth and Foroige- the Drum Youth. Very informative presentations were made by all three.
- The LCDC also heard from Kilkenny LEADER Partnership in relation to its 2018 SICAP work plan, which it approved.
- The Final LECP report on actions for the period June -December 2017 was also considered and noted.
- The draft LECP Community Implementation Plan 2018-2019 was also discussed. It was noted that the vast majority of the actions were now deemed to be business-as-usual which shows the progression of Agencies in including the LECP in its day to day business. It was agreed that a Sub Group will review the list of actions and identify the strategic actions which can be focussed on by the LCDC for 2018/19 while at the same time the business-as-usual actions will be reported on as normal.
- The mapping of funding and resource gaps, as discussed at the LECP Advisory group, was also discussed and the LECP Advisory Groups recommendation to take a multi-agency approach on this was agreed. It was decided to set up an LCDC Sub Group to assist on this piece of work.
- Members also noted the Departments response that it will announce the RAPID scheme earlier in 2018 and provide sufficient time to administer the scheme.
- It was agreed that the theme for the May meeting will be mental health, that presentations will be heard from Lifelink and Teach Tom who work with mental health and that it will be held in Teach Tom.

### May Meeting

- Presentations were made in advance of the scheduled meeting by Angela Hayes – Teach Tom and by Trish Finnegan – Chair- Lifelink Kilkenny. Both presenters were thanked for very informative presentations on two services which are of vital importance to Kilkenny.
- The Healthy Ireland Sub Group report and recommendation with regards to actions for inclusion in the Healthy Ireland Fund. Members were informed that following a call for expressions of interest seven expressions were received and of the seven, six were deemed eligible and one was ineligible. The Sub Groups recommended funding be awarded to the six and the LCDC approved of the recommendation which is to be submitted to Pobail for approval.
- Following a presentation by Lindsey Butler, Community Department on the Healthy Ireland Community Plan which was prepared by the HI Sub-Group, the Healthy Ireland Community Plan 2018-2021 was adopted by the LCDC.
- The implementation of the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) for 2018 was considered in the context of the 84 identified actions. It was agreed to focus the work of the LCDC on its more strategic actions. These will be identified and finalised at the July meeting of the LCDC.
- The Chief Officer briefed the LCDC on the Mapping of Funding task groups work to date and the progress made by the Council in identifying its funding streams. Each relevant Agency is to undertake a similar data gathering exercise and report back to the task group.
- The PPN update was given by Elizabeth Dermody. She highlighted that the PPN has now 237 members. It has agreed a 3 year Strategic Plan, which is to be published.
- A number of presentations had been given to the PPN on Kilkenny Tourism, GDPR





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training, Governance training via Libraries and Community Centres and on the roles and functions of the Councils SPC's and other committees.

- A presentation was made on the Facilities Audit and Mapping Report. The audit included the identification of Arts/Sports/Community Facilities in the county and an update on the previous audit undertaken in 2009. It was agreed that the online mapping/GIS elements be finalised and demonstrated at a future meeting.

#### July Meeting

- The LCDC considered the midterm review of the SICAP contract awarded to Kilkenny LEADER Partnership. The committee was satisfied with progress made and with the implementation of the contract to date.
- The LCDC awarded 47 grants under the Community Enhancement Programme to a total value of €136,300.
- The 2018/19 LECP Action plan had been considered and it was agreed to prioritise a number of strategic actions which will focus the work of the LCDC. The matter is to be finalised at the October meeting.
- The PPN update was noted. It was noted that Katherine Peacock PPN Development Officer will be vacating her post to take up the post of Civil Defence Officer with Kilkenny County Council.
- Members were given an update of various Kilkenny County Council funding schemes.

#### Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme Contract

The Contract for the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme for the period 2018-2022 was awarded to Kilkenny Leader Partnership clg following a competitive tender. The Programme aims to tackle poverty and social exclusion through targeted interventions with 26 community groups and 475+ individuals, mainly in areas of high deprivation but also on a county

wide basis. The work plan for 2018 was approved by the LCDC at its March meeting.

The **Mid Term review** process commenced on 27<sup>th</sup> June when the SICAP Sub Group met and reviewed the various reports and information from the reporting system and with the Programme Implementer. Pobail has also undertaken its review. Overall the programme is on target for 2018 and no issues of concern were noted.

#### Healthy Ireland Funding

The Department of Health and Pobail invited Kilkenny LCDC to apply for funding under Round 2 of Strand 1 of the Healthy Ireland Fund (1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019). Both Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs) and Children and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSCs) were eligible to apply. The maximum allocation to Kilkenny LCDC is €75,000. The maximum allocation to Kilkenny CYPSC is €37,500.

The primary aim of the Healthy Ireland Fund is to support innovative, cross-sectoral, evidence-based projects and initiatives that support the implementation of key national policies in areas such as obesity, smoking, alcohol, physical activity and sexual health.

Both Kilkenny LCDC and Kilkenny CYPSC submitted applications to avail of both allocations.

The following was awarded to Kilkenny LCDC:

**Castlecomer Discovery Park** - Natural Connections - Building resilience in young people through outdoor education €11,438.

**Buddy Bench-Little Buddies** project €7,500.

**St Patrick's Centre** - Community Dysphasia training for the Hospitality Sector €6,100.





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**Kilkenny Recreation & Sports Partnership - Healthy Inclusive Communities** €28,212.

**Foroige - Be Happy, be Healthy, Kilkenny** €16,250.

**CHO 5 & Wexford, Kilkenny, Waterford, Carlow, Tipperary LCDC's - Regional Health and Wellbeing Training and Awareness Programme** €5,500.

#### **Kilkenny LCDC Healthy Ireland Community Plan**

Kilkenny LCDC with significant assistance from its Healthy Ireland Sub Group has prepared its Healthy Ireland Community Plan. It is a high level strategy that distils Governments National Health Ireland Strategy in to a local plan with locally devised actions.

It aims to create a Kilkenny Community where everyone can enjoy and benefit from physical and mental health wellbeing. The plan will inform future allocation of grants under the Healthy Ireland funding stream. A copy of the Plan was circulated to Elected Members and a soft copy will be available to download from the Council's website.

#### **Tobacco Free Positive Message Campaign**

On Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> September the Carlow, Kilkenny, Tipperary, Wexford and Waterford Local Community Development Committees collectively launched a Tobacco Free Positive Message Campaign across the region. This campaign is a direct outcome of partnership working between the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), the HSE, Health and Wellbeing, Youth Reach and Youth Service from across the South East and was funded under Healthy Ireland Strand 1 funding.

The regional "tobacco free" action set out to increase awareness and knowledge of the benefits of being tobacco free through the provision of training and positive message campaign with young people from across the

region. The development of a stencil using the message "Reach out for Help" aims to reinforce the positive message of being tobacco free and is intended to be used across the 5 counties on the same day on key dates throughout the year. Within each county, participating partners are being invited to participate in the stencil campaign and are asked to use the stencil to display this positive message using spray paint on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2018, and annually thereafter on Ash Wednesday, World No Tobacco day, on May 31<sup>st</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> October. The stencils are available to youth, sports, and community and school groups.

#### **Community Enhancement Programme**

Kilkenny LCDC has received an additional allocation of €144,886 under the Community Enhancement Programme. The programme funds small and medium scale capital projects undertaken by community groups in the targeted areas, in line with the ethos of the Community elements of the Local Economic Community Plan. The extra allocation brings the total allocation to €281,205.

The terms of the increased allocation is that it is to be awarded to the existing eligible applicants that were partially funded/not funded in the previous round of awards. The LCDC will make its decisions shortly.

#### **Callan Socio Economic Plan**

In 2018 it is intended that the Council will facilitate the preparation of a Socio-Economic Plan for Callan. This will entail the identification of both Community and Economic actions as part of an Action Plan involving local consultations and inputs.

#### **Lone Parent Needs Analysis**

The Council is identified as Lead Agency for this Action in the LECP. It is intended to commence this action shortly.





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### Mapping of Funding & Resources

Kilkenny LCDC has agreed to undertake a mapping exercise that will analyse allocation of resources (services and funding), identify gaps and identify links between gaps and levels of need and of engagement.

Under the auspices of Kilkenny LCDC a Mapping Task Force was established and it met to consider the requirements. Each of the sub Groups partnering Agencies, and others, have now been tasked with the collection of the relevant grant/funding data from their own agencies and to feed that back to the Chief Officer over the next three months.

### Kilkenny Traveller Integration Group (KTIG)

The Kilkenny Traveller Integration Group (KTIG) is an Interagency Group of service providers and travellers, the purpose of which is to provide an integrated service delivery to Travellers. It is an action of the Local Economic and Community Plan-Kilkenny County Council being the lead agency.

KTIG was a sub group of the County Development Board (CDB) but ceased when the CDB was dissolved. KTIG re-convened recently. The group was well attended and there is a lot of interest in getting the KTIG operational again. The meeting dealt with terms of reference for the group, membership and key thematic areas to develop a plan. A second meeting will be held shortly.

## HERITAGE

### Tullahought wins a Local Authority Pollinator Award

Tullahought Tidy Towns won the South East Region Local Authority Pollinator Award at the National Tidy Towns Awards. 66 entries were received from 22 counties. The judges commended Tullahought on their pollinator audit of the village (funded by a Local Agenda 21 grant from the Environment Section of Kilkenny

County Council), pollinator-friendly mowing regime and planting of fruit trees.

The award is co-ordinated and funded by Local Authority Heritage and Biodiversity Officers in partnership with the National Biodiversity Data Centre. This project addresses Action 4.1.8 of the *National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017-2021*; Action A45 of the *All Ireland Pollinator Plan 2015-2020*; and Action 12.7.8 of the *Kilkenny Local Economic & Community Plan 2016-2021*.



*Pictured at the awards ceremony at the Helix on 24<sup>th</sup> Sept: Tom Egan, Kathleen Duggan, Richard Walsh, Paddy Egan, Eileen Grace, Mary Egan, Cllr. Peter Chap Cleere, Mayor Kilkenny, Eamonn Duggan, Juanita Browne National Biodiversity Data Centre, Dearbhala Ledwidge Kilkenny County Council.*

### Kilkenny Culture & Creativity Strategy

The Kilkenny Culture and Creativity Strategy 2018-2022, prepared by the Cultural Services Team of Kilkenny County Council, was launched by An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar and Minister Madigan



on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2018 in Dublin. This strategy is part of the national Creative Ireland programme.

### Heritage Advice to Town & Village Health Checks

The Heritage Office reviewed and made submissions on heritage aspects of Town & Village Health Checks for Callan, Ballyhale/Knocktopher, Freshford, Inistioge and Ballyragget. This addresses Action 5.2 of the *Kilkenny Local Economic & Community Plan 2016-2021* to support regeneration of rural towns.



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**Kilkenny's Pollinator Awareness Campaign Launched**

Following Kilkenny County Council's adoption of the All Ireland Pollinator Plan at the July Council meeting, the Heritage Office has commenced a public awareness and information campaign. The first advertisement was placed in the Kilkenny People on 26<sup>th</sup> Sept 2018.

This project addresses Action 4.1.8 of the *National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017-2021*; Action A45 of the *All Ireland Pollinator Plan 2015-2020*; and Action 8.3 of the *Kilkenny Local Economic & Community Plan 2016-2021*. The initiative is funded by the Department Culture, Heritage and the Gealtacht under the National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017-2021.



**Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov: Premiere of 'The Whispering Fields' film** Lisdowney National School at 8.15pm. The film celebrates the recording of field names in the areas of Clontubrid, Gathabawn and Lisdowney.

**TOURISM**

**Visit to Formigine, Italy**

Mayor of Kilkenny, Cllr. Peter "Chap" Cleere led a successful visit to Kilkenny's Italian twin town of Formigine, Italy at the weekend. Formigine Mayor Maria Costa and her fellow Council members generously hosted a delegation from Kilkenny, including local Kilkenny based musicians - Paddy Cleere, Ger Moloney, Tommy Lanigan and Conan Doyle.



Mayor Costa and her colleagues organised a hugely successful weekend festival dedicated to Ireland and Kilkenny. The concert on Saturday night was the highlight of the event and Tommy, Ger, Paddy and Conan were the perfect ambassadors for Kilkenny, and impressed their hosts with their musical ability and the 2,500 strong crowd showed their appreciation by giving the band a huge reception.

Mayor Cleere who was accompanied by Cllr Malcolm Noonan and Brian Tyrrell had a full weekend of engagements to underpin the twinning and hopefully the contacts made over the visit will bear fruit in the next few years with exchanges in sport, music, culture and food.







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Mayor Cleere said "I thanked Mayor Costi and her team for their generous hospitality, and I was really impressed with their desire to strengthen the links with Kilkenny, and I fully intend to assist in any way to grow the engagement between Formigine and Kilkenny".

The visit comprised three full days in Formigine and included visits to some of Formigine's food and tourism attractions, as well as meeting with local Councillors to find areas of common interest so that learning and experiences can be exchanged.

One of the exchange highlights was the opening of a new Music Hall in Formigine, where Cllr Cleere joined Mayor Costi for the official opening of the venue. Our Kilkenny musicians then performed an impromptu concert where the locals were given a flavour of traditional Irish music by gifted musicians.

Contacts were made over the weekend with rugby, golf and music and food tourism interests and these are areas which it is hoped will provide further exchange opportunities, and Formigine is seriously looking at the idea of having a local community Parade on St. Patrick's Day.

Two Kilkenny distilleries, Highbank Orchard and Ballykeeffe Distillery donated some samples of their produce and the quality and flavour of the products went down very well with the locals. Samples of Apple Brandy, Gin and Poitín were well received and the Kilkenny delegation also took some time to explain the production values of the local distilleries, which will hopefully lead to an increase of Italian visitors to these fantastic establishments.

The visit was a success and will strengthen and deepen the ties between the twin towns and plans are already afoot for the next reciprocal visit.

**Welcome to Windgap**  
Kilkenny County Council's Tourism unit worked closely with the Windgap community recently to develop and produce a new Visitor Guide. The visitor guide is a step on the way to describing the visitor



experience and capturing the offer to visitors to Windgap. The guide follows on from the development of the beautiful woodland walks recently opened, and represents a good working relationship between Council and Community.

#### **Woodstock Estate**

Tenders for the development of a business plan for the entire Woodstock Estate are currently under consideration. The plan represents a joint initiative between Kilkenny County Council and Coillte, and will include consultations with both the local community and elected representatives.

#### **Destination Kilkenny**

The Destination Kilkenny Partnership Group met again on the 26th September to assess progress on the four pillar activities:

- The evening economy
- Development of the Medieval Mile
- Harnessing contemporary culture
- Developing linkages between city and county

#### **LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE**

#### **LAUNCH OF NATIONAL WOMEN'S ENTERPRISE**

On Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2018, Carlow & Kilkenny Local Enterprise Offices launched their 2018 National Women's



Enterprise Day Event which will be held in Mount Juliet on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2018. This





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year's event is designed to bring enterprises from local to global by building connections and is aimed at inspiring and educating the next generation of female business leaders to take their local ideas and make them a global success.

**KILKENNY RETAIL WORKSHOP**

On Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> September a Kilkenny Retail Workshop took place in Butler House organised by the Kilkenny Local Enterprise Office in conjunction with Kilkenny County Council Planning Department and the Chamber of Commerce. Denis Malone provided an overview of the Retail Strategy that will be a key component of the County Kilkenny Development Plan 2020-2026 and James Burke, James Burke and Associates provided retailers with an overview on retail trends and how it impacts on small business. The Local Enterprise Office have developed a Retail Support Programme designed to give consumer facing businesses expert advice and new ideas, which will facilitate sales growth within their business and help them to deal with the current changing retail climate.



**KEY STATISTICS FOR 2018**

€293,461 has been approved to 15 businesses linked to the creation of 82 jobs over a 3 year period;  
341 participants attended 4 Seminars ranging from GDPR Compliance to Brexit;  
344 entrepreneurs received one-to-one mentoring to assist them in relation to issues within their business;  
254 participants attended 22 core training programmes from financial training to management development programmes;

249 entrepreneurs attended Business Advisory Sessions with LEO executives to discuss starting a business or growing an existing business;  
101 participants attended 6 Start Your Own Business programmes which explores all the aspects encountered when starting up a new business;  
35 clients attended 6 Mentor Clinics to seek assistance in relation to issues within their business;  
32 Trading Online Vouchers were approved totalling €62,162 in order to assist businesses to trade on-line;  
10 businesses were approved Technical Assistance Micro Export Assistance Grants in order to assist them access overseas markets;  
8 businesses were assisted to make applications for the St. Canice's Credit Union Smart Options Loan Scheme;  
4 businesses were assisted to make applications to Microfinance Ireland Loan Fund;  
3 businesses participated on Lean for Micro in order to assist them to look at their competitiveness and innovation specifically in relation to Brexit;  
2 businesses are participating on the pilot Design for Growth programme in the South East. In August they were both approved Design Vouchers to assist them apply design principles to their business;

**LIBRARY SERVICES**

**Kilkenny Library Service  
July - September 2018**







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**Right To Read: 1,263 Kilkenny children to celebrate reading over 10,000 books this summer!**

Kilkenny County Library Service celebrated the culmination of our annual summer reading challenge over 2 Saturdays with 6 comedy shows delivered by RTE Junior's Reuben. The national summer reading challenge for 2018, "Summer Stars" ran in Libraries across Ireland, with children challenged to read 8 books each over the holidays to help maintain and improve reading skills.

The challenge was completed by 1,263 children in Kilkenny – an increase of 24% on 2017. Over the past 5 years, numbers completing the challenge have tripled, and with this year being our biggest ever success! This initiative is part of a national Right to Read Campaign, which actively supports & helps improve literacy.



**Culture Night at City Library: Mná na hEireann Roadshow**

Kilkenny County Library Service celebrated another successful culture night with a feast of history, stories and song with the nationally acclaimed Mná Na hEireann Roadshow. A double bill of lectures - Author of *Easter Widows*, Sinéad McCoole and RTE History Show presenter & author, Dr. Myles Dungan entertained us with compelling stories on the changing lives and roles of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Following this, The Brooks singers and Soprano Sandra Oman took us on a fascinating and lively musical journey on the *Paths to Freedom*. Along with traditional songs, we were treated to an

occasional amended version of songs, only to be heard in the back streets and pubs of the era.



**Heritage Week**

From screenings of *Hands – Archival films on traditional Irish* to talks on the Suffrage Movement in Ireland, Family Research Sources online to stories of life in the army service in *From Kilmaganny to Kolweizi* and Digitising Graveyard inscriptions to Bug hotel making and weaving for children, we had events for all ages. Our most popular events were Research Sources Online talk, given by Library staff, and Digitising Graveyard Inscriptions with Anne-Karoline Distel.

**ICT Grant**

Grant funding of €112,140 was awarded to Kilkenny County Council Library Service from the Department of Rural and Community Development to support the development of public library branches as digital learning centres.

Investment will be made in equipping the service with emerging technologies to meet user expectations and attract users of all ages.

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**ARTS**

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**Rhyme Rag Ensemble**

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> October is the launch date of *Mark My Words*, a collection of poems by the Rhyme Rag Ensemble which will take place in the Parade Tower, Kilkenny Castle. It will be



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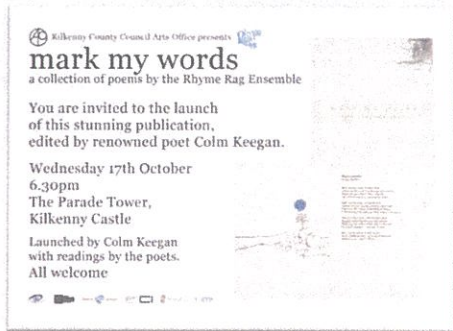
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officially launched by Colm Keegan. This publication was borne out of a residency programme which deepened this groups experience and strengthened the dynamics and overall confidence. This was a hugely rewarding experience for everyone involved. The book will be on sale in the Kilkenny city bookshops and in the library network.



### Culture Night

Once more Culture Night in Kilkenny saw a large number of people visiting the 11 venues hosting 26 events for the night. World War I films were shown in the Butler Gallery. Blackstack Studio invited visitors to get some ink and using different printing techniques on offer you could print your own tote bag. Comhaltas gave us a selection of Irish music, song, dancing and storytelling in Rothe House. Rothe House brought some unique artifacts out of storage to be viewed and the curator was on hand to speak about the collection.

The Arts Office Gig on the Parade included the Unity Singers, the Rhyme Rag Ensemble reciting their original compositions, Kairen Caine with friends sang a selection of her original songs and this was rounded off with the seven inch collective who brought their special blend of vinyl only singles to the street, spinning everything from soul, hip hop, dub, ska, punk and more – all tastes were catered for. The above is just a selection of what was on offer this year. 3,359 people engaged with Culture Night this year.



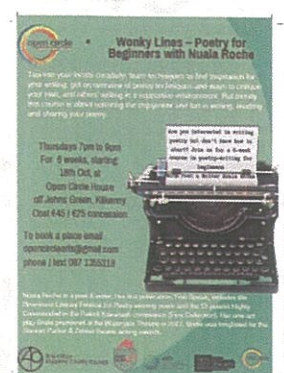
### Bookville

The joint Kilkenny Arts Office/Kilkenny Library children's book festival takes place in October.



### Open Circle

Open Circle rolled out two literature courses during September/October. Their Creative Writing 6 week course with Tara Heavey started in September. This course covered such topics as creating compelling characters and devising dynamic dialogue. They explored memoir, poetry and the short story and why we feel compelled to write in the first place.



Their second literature course, Wonky Lines – Poetry for Beginners with Nuala Roche commenced in October. Participants will learn techniques to find inspiration for their writing, get an overview of poetry techniques and ways





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to critique their own and others' writing; the course is also about nurturing the enjoyment and fun in writing, reading and sharing their poetry.

### Artlinks

As part of our programme of Continuing Professional Development, Kilkenny Arts Office and the ArtLinks partners, Carlow, Waterford and Wexford delivered a workshop in Managing Cultural Projects. This one day workshop was for individuals who deliver cultural projects as curators, project managers or producers. Whilst the workshop was focused on visual art projects the points discussed during the day could be applied in other disciplines/events.

The workshop explored planning, communication, meeting deadlines, securing funding + venues, contingency planning and the importance of leaving a good impression. This workshop would be of most benefit to individuals already involved in curating, project management or who are considering moving into one of those fields.

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## FIRE SERVICES

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### Community Engagement & Education

Visits by various groups to the Fire Stations were facilitated. Kells Scout Group visited Callan Fire Station. The Beaver Scouts saw some of the specialist equipment and learned more about home fire safety and the importance of safe travelling in cars.

### Regulating the Built Environment

We have received 69 Fire Safety Certificate Applications to-date, 57 have been granted and 12 are being assessed.

Kilkenny Fire & Rescue Service Fire Prevention Officers hold fire safety certificate/fire prevention clinics on a weekly basis in Fire Station HQ. This initiative has aided greatly in reducing (i) our Fire Safety Certificate

invalidation and (ii) our Fire Safety Certificate refusal rates.

To-date 106 licensing applications were processed by the Fire Service.

Two Fire Safety Notices and one Closure Notice were served on premises.

### Fire Service Operations

Kilkenny Fire & Rescue Service have attended 436 incidents (*376 incidents were attended for the same period last year*).

Picture below shows Freshford Fire Brigade carrying out Road Traffic Collision training as part of their weekly training.



Facilities & General News, New PPE, New Equipment, New Fire Station Approvals etc. Pump Operator training was also provided to members of Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service.

Training was provided to a Senior Fire Officer on Confined Space Instructor.

Training was provided by the National Directorate for Fire & Emergency Management to a junior fire officer on dealing with Hazardous materials incidents.

Training was provided on effective decision making for Fire Officers. This course is developed for experienced fire officers to discuss and explore critical decision making.

Delivery of Road Traffic Equipment has been delivered to each of the fire stations.





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The Flood Emergency Response Plan has been reviewed and updated.

The Severe Weather Plan (*excluding flooding*) has been reviewed and updated.

Firefighters from Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service have carried out further flooding first responder training on the River Barrow.



**National Fire Safety Week 2018**

The Council ran an awareness campaign during the week commencing 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018, to highlight the importance of fire safety in the home.

This campaign included online activity and the following are the statistics in relation to the social media platforms for the week:

**FACEBOOK:** Posts had 32,402 impressions. There were 32 #18FSW posts during this week  
**TWITTER:** 15 Tweets earned 5,464 impressions during this week





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**APPENDIX 1**

**FINANCE REPORT - OCTOBER 2018**

The expenditure by service division to the end of September is set out in table 1. Total Expenditure for the period was €61.33m compared with the annual budget of €74.15m.

Table 1	Actual YTD September 2018	Budget Full Year 2018
	€'000's	€'000's
Housing & Building	13,681	15,864
Road Transport & Safety	17,955	20,108
Water Services	5,139	6,579
Development Management	6,283	8,693
Environmental Services	8,071	9,722
Recreation & Amenity	4,837	6,022
Agriculture, Education, Health, Welfare	403	637
Miscellaneous Services	4,963	6,526
<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>61,332</b>	<b>74,151</b>

The bank overdraft facility was utilized for sixteen days during the nine months to the end of September 2018 and the maximum overdrawn balance was €2.291m.

Collection rates on all the main income streams are slightly higher than the comparable figures for the previous year. The Valuation tribunal has commenced assessing the appeals from property owners to the valuations issued from the full revaluation of all properties. A total of 196 property owners appealed their valuation.

The Council held a special meeting on September 24<sup>th</sup> last where it was agreed that there would be no change to the base rate of local property tax for 2019. An increase of 15% in the base rate would have yielded extra income of €1.1m for the Council for 2019. The absence of any additional income will make it very challenging to achieve a balanced budget for 2019 and reductions in discretionary expenditure will be unavoidable.



