

## Quality Assurance – In Depth Check

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### Section A: Introduction

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This introductory section details the headline information on the programme or project in question.

Programme or Project Information	
<b>Name</b>	Kilkenny County Council's Community Involvement Scheme on Regional & Local Roads 2024
<b>Detail</b>	Kilkenny County Council's Community Involvement Scheme funds the maintenance and road works on Local Roads.
<b>Responsible Body</b>	Kilkenny County Council
<b>Current Status</b>	Revenue expenditure being incurred annually
<b>Start Date</b>	Ongoing Annual Budget
<b>End Date</b>	Ongoing Annual Budget
<b>Overall Cost</b>	€519,657.29 for 2024

## **Project Description**

Kilkenny County Council's Community Involvement Scheme (CIS) is an opportunity for communities to have road repair work carried out at relatively modest cost on local roads and cul-de-sacs that would not normally be included on the Council's main roadworks programme. Projects are funded by the Department of Transport and are managed and delivered by the Local Authorities. The Department of Transport Circular RW 13/2023 sets out the requirements that apply to the CIS in 2024/2025. The statutory basis for the CIS is contained in Section 13(6) of the Roads Act 1993.

The Department of Transport advised Kilkenny County Council in July 2023 that it intended to continue with CIS in 2024 & 2025. The Council prepared an application for funding for CIS projects for the relevant years and submitted it to the Department. CIS is based on a minimum community contribution of either 10% or 20%. Where the local community contribution is monetary a minimum contribution of 10% will apply, 20% applies when the community contribution comprises of works.

While it is envisaged that the CIS will relate to mainly local roads, projects may be carried out on a regional road where the local community contribution is monetary only. Kilkenny County Council is required under the CIS to assess the condition Pavement Surface Cracking Index (PSCI) of any local roads for which they intend to apply for funds. Roads are assessed using the Paving Rating Manual (rating is 1 to 10 with 1 being very poor and 10 being excellent). When schemes are approved and proceed the "after" PSCI condition must be subsequently rated. Kilkenny County Council records the road length and width and the number of dwellings along the roads under consideration.

Kilkenny County Council estimate the overall cost of the scheme taking account of material, labour, machinery and traffic management costs. The community contribution may be monetary or in kind (labour/machinery). This will determine the percentage contribution. Records are kept of the community contribution and the Department of Transport may request this information in relation to each scheme.

Eligible road works under the scheme are detailed in Circular RW 13/2023 and include general road works, drainage, pavement works, repair of footpaths and construction of new footpaths. The submission of applications for CIS to the Department of Transport for funding are submitted on MapRoad. There is also a requirement on Kilkenny County Council to export the application from MapRoad into an excel sheet for submission electronically to the Department.

Community groups are invited by the Council to apply for inclusion in the CIS. CIS applications are progressed in date order. The community contribution is an integral part of the CIS. Kilkenny County Council must ensure that all community contributions are paid before any works commence. There is no monetary cap on the community contribution.

In February 2024 Kilkenny County Council received notification of their 2024 Regional and Local Road Grant Allocations from the Department of Transport. This allocation was €17,795,040 in total and included €440,100 for the CIS. Kilkenny County Council adhered to the Memorandum on Grants for Regional and Local Roads issued by the Department of Transport in January 2024. This Memorandum provides information on and defines the conditions governing the allocation and payment of monies to Local Authorities in respect of all grant programmes for Regional & Local Roads. Local Authorities

in receipt of State Grants from the Department of Transport must follow the procedures and comply with the conditions contained within this document.

Kilkenny County Council completed 9 projects under the CIS in 2024. The total expenditure on these projects were €519,657.29. This was funded by the Department of Transport CIS Grant in the amount of €471,545.99, local contributions amounted to €48,111.30. There was an overspend of €31,446 due to inflation, rising cost of material and an increase in wages cost as per National Pay Agreements. A request was submitted to the Department for this overspend which was approved and paid to Kilkenny County Council in addition to its original 2024 Grant Allocation.

### Section B - Step 1: Logic Model Mapping

As part of this In-Depth Check, Internal Audit have completed a Programme Logic Model (PLM) for Kilkenny County Council's Community Involvement Scheme. A PLM is a standard evaluation tool and further information on their nature is available in the [Public Spending Code](#).

Objectives	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
<p>To administer the Community Involvement Scheme in its functional area.</p> <p>To carry out improvement work on local roads and cul-de-sacs that would not normally be included on the Council's main roadworks programme.</p>	<p>Department of Transport grant funding of €471,545.99.</p> <p>Local Contributions from beneficiaries in the amount of €48,111.30.</p> <p>Kilkenny County Council Roads Staff.</p> <p>Department of Transport Memorandum on Grants for Regional &amp; Local Roads.</p>	<p>Kilkenny County Council assesses the condition (PSCI) of any local roads for which they intend to apply for funds.</p> <p>Submission of CIS applications to the Department of Transport for review.</p> <p>Municipal District Offices send letters of offer to community groups and collect community group contributions.</p> <p>Complete projects in line with Memorandum on Grants for Regional &amp; Local Roads &amp; Circular</p>	<p>To manage and deliver road repair work in its functional area under the CIS.</p>	<p>The CIS projects provide communities the opportunity to have road repair work carried out at relatively modest cost on local roads and cul-de-sacs that would not normally be included on the Council's main roadworks programme.</p>

		Letter RW 13/2023 & RW 02/2024.  Submit all required documents to draw down funds from Department.		
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## Description of Programme Logic Model

### *Objectives:*

Kilkenny County Council is responsible for the administration of the Community Involvement Scheme in Kilkenny. The Community Involvement Scheme funds the carrying out of improvement works on local roads and cul-de-sacs that would not normally be included on the Council's main roadworks programme.

### *Inputs:*

The primary input to the programme is the grant funding of €471,545.99 from the Department. Local Contributions from beneficiaries of the projects amounted to €48,111.30 in 2024. Kilkenny County Council Staff in the Road's Directorate undertake the administration and operational work associated with the Scheme. The Memorandum on Grants for Regional and Local Roads issued by the Department of Transport in January 2024 provides information on and defines the conditions governing the allocation and payment of monies to Local Authorities in respect of the CIS. Funding for the Community Involvement Scheme is allocated to Local Authorities for a 2-year period, with a view to giving the Authority more flexibility in delivering the scheme.

### *Activities:*

Kilkenny County Council is required under the CIS to assess the condition (PSCI) of any local roads for which they intend to apply for funds. The Council estimate the overall cost of the scheme taking account of material, labour, machinery and traffic management costs. Once this assessment is complete the applications for CIS are submitted on MapRoad to the Department of Transport for review. The Department of Transport issues its Regional & Local Road Grant Allocations which includes the funds for CIS. The Council is then in a position to progress the CIS applications.

Letters of Offer are issued to the relevant community groups. Once these are accepted and the community contribution is paid work on the projects can commence. The Local Authority is provided with a defined period of time in which to complete the works and submit their funding drawdown requests. The Roads Department in the Council arrange for the drawdown of grant funding from the Department for the CIS.

### *Outputs:*

Kilkenny County Council completed 9 projects under the CIS in 2024. The Council undertook eligible road works under the scheme as detailed in Circular RW 13/2023.

### *Outcomes:*

The 9 CIS projects provided communities with road repair work carried out at relatively modest cost on local roads and cul-de-sacs that would not normally be included on the Council's main roadworks programme.

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## **Section B - Step 2: Summary Timeline of Project/Programme**

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The following section tracks the Community Involvement Scheme 2024 from inception in terms of major project milestones.

July 2023	Issue of Circular RW 13/2023 from Department of Transport confirming the continuation of the CIS for 2024/2025
July 2023	Request from Department of Transport to Kilkenny County Council to submit its CIS applications for funding for 2024/2025
Aug 2023	Clarification from Department of Transport on funding model for CIS for 2024
Oct 2023	Kilkenny County Council submits CIS applications for 2024/2025 and this submission is acknowledged by the Department
Jan 2024	Department of Transport issues Memorandum on Grants for Regional & Local Roads
Feb 2024	Department of Transport issues Circular RW 02/2024 to Kilkenny County Council with details of Roads funding for 2024
April 2024	Municipal Districts issue Letter of Offers for CIS to community groups including amount of contribution due and date for payment
May 2024	Contributions paid by community groups to the value of €48,111.30
July – Oct 2024	Municipal Districts Roads Section undertake works on 9 CIS Projects
Nov 2024	Kilkenny County Council return Drawdown Request and associated documents to Department of Transport for CIS 2024 including request for overspend
Dec 2024	CIS funding received from Department of Transport in the amount of €471,545.99 including the amount of €31,446 for the overspend

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## **Section B - Step 3: Analysis of Key Documents**

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The following section reviews the key documentation relating to appraisal, analysis and evaluation for the Community Involvement Scheme.

Project/Programme Key Documents	
Title	Details
Circular RW 13/2023	Provides details from the Department of Transport confirming the continuation of the CIS for 2024/2025
Request from the Department of Transport to Kilkenny County Council	Kilkenny County Council is requested to submit its CIS applications for funding for 2024/2025
Kilkenny County Council submission to Department of Transport	CIS submission to Department of Transport
Department of Transport Memorandum on Grants for Regional & Local	Provides information and defines the conditions governing the allocation and payment of CIS funds
Circular RW 02/2024	Details of Kilkenny County Council Roads funding for 2024
Letters of Offer to community groups for CIS	Letters of Offer to confirm funding is available for CIS applications and details of contribution required
Community Group required documents	Required documents from community groups of CIS
Drawdown Request & Associated Documents	Kilkenny County Council's Drawdown Request and Associated Documents to Department of Transport
Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021 - 2027	The City & County Development Plan details the overall strategy of the Council for the proper planning and sustainable development of the County over a 6-year period.
Climate Action Plan 2023	The plan implements the carbon budgets and sectoral emission ceilings and sets out a roadmap for taking decisive action to halve our emissions by 2030 and reach net zero no later than 2050.

#### Key Document 1: Circular RW 13/2023

Circular RW 13/2023 confirms the continuation of the CIS for 2024/2025. The document details the

requirements for the Community Involvement Scheme and details the work that can be completed under the scheme.

**Key Document 2: Request from the Department of Transport to Kilkenny County Council**

The Department of Transport requested Kilkenny County Council to submit its CIS projects for 2024/2025.

**Key Document 3: Kilkenny County Council submission to Department of Transport**

Kilkenny County Council submits its list of CIS for 2024/2025 on MapRoad and in electronic excel format to the Department of Transport.

**Key Document 4: Department of Transport Memorandum on Grants for Regional & Local Roads**

The Memorandum on Grants for Regional and Local Roads issued by the Department of Transport in January 2024 provides information on and defines the conditions governing the allocation and payment of monies to Local Authorities in respect of the CIS.

**Key Document 5: Circular RW 02/2024**

This document from the Department of Transport details Kilkenny County Councils grant allocations in respect of the maintenance and improvement of regional and local roads for 2024.

**Key Document 6: Letters of Offer to community groups for CIS**

The Municipal Districts issue Letters of Offer to community groups to advise that funding is available for their CIS application. It also details the amount of the monetary contribution payable by them.

**Key Document 7: Community groups required documents**

The community group submit their required documents and their monetary contribution to the scheme. The contribution must be paid in advance any work proceeding.

**Key Document 8: Drawdown Request & Associated Documents**

Kilkenny County Council must have all road works completed and the drawdown request submitted in advance of the deadline as set out in by the Department. The drawdown to the Department also includes the Agresso Financial Management Expenditure, MapRoad details and Spreadsheets with details of all roads completed under the Scheme.

**Key Document 9: Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021 – 2027**

The City & County Development Plan details the overall strategy of the Council for the proper planning and sustainable development of the County over a 6-year period.

**Key Document 10: Climate Action Plan 2023**

The plan implements the carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings and sets out a roadmap for taking decisive action to halve our emissions by 2030 and reach net zero no later than 2050.

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**Section B - Step 4: Data Audit**

The following section details the data audit that was carried out for the Local Improvement

Scheme. It evaluates whether appropriate data is available for the future evaluation of the project/programme.

<b>Data Required</b>	<b>Use</b>	<b>Availability</b>
Kilkenny County Council CIS application to the Department of Transport	Details of funding applied for CIS Projects	Yes
Grant Allocation Circular	Details of Department of Transport funding for 2024	Yes
Letters of Offer to community groups for CIS	Letters advising community groups of terms and conditions of CIS	Yes
Contributions & required documents from community groups	Required documents and financial contribution from community groups	Yes
Individual files containing all information for audit	Required for future assessment and audit review if required	Yes
Agresso details on Scheme Expenditure	Financial monitoring of Scheme and compliance with grant allocation	Yes
Drawdown Request Form, MapRoad files & Excel spreadsheet	Required under the Scheme to facilitate drawdown of funds from Department of Transport	Yes
Progress Reports to the Municipal District meetings	Ensure the Elected Council Members are kept up to date with progress on LIS	Yes

### **Data Availability and Proposed Next Steps**

The necessary data is available on file to evaluate the Community Involvement Scheme. Kilkenny County Council completed 9 Community Involvement Scheme projects in 2024. The scheme is an opportunity for communities to have road repair work carried out at relatively modest cost on local roads and cul-de-sacs that would not normally be included on the Council's main roadworks programme. The financial management information is available from Agresso (Financial Management System). Adherence by Kilkenny County Council to the Community Involvement Scheme requirements is evident on the selection of files which were reviewed.

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## **Section B - Step 5: Key Evaluation Questions**

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The following section looks at the key evaluation questions for Kilkenny County Council's Community Involvement Scheme based on the findings from the previous sections of this report.

### **Does the delivery of the project/programme comply with the standards set out in the Public Spending Code? (Appraisal Stage, Implementation Stage and Post-Implementation Stage)**

The delivery of the Community Involvement Scheme complies with the broad principles of the



Public Spending Code. The Department of Transport Circulars RW 13/2023, RW 02/2024 and the Memorandum on Grants for Regional & Local Roads clearly defines the terms and conditions of the Scheme which are being adhered to by Kilkenny County Council. Kilkenny County Council Road Staff complete the projects, machinery is procured on LA Quotes with materials procured centrally. Climate Action measures were also implemented with the use of warm mix macadam and the re-use/recycling of materials used for the sub bases on projects.

**Is the necessary data and information available such that the project/programme can be subjected to a full evaluation at a later date?**

The necessary data and information is available on file should there be a requirement for a full evaluation of the programme in the future.

**What improvements are recommended such that future processes and management are enhanced?**

Kilkenny County Council works in collaboration with the Department of Transport to progress Community Involvement Schemes for County Kilkenny. Release of funding from the Department is dependent on projects adhering to the requirements set out in the Department of Transport Circulars and Memorandum on Grants for Regional & Local Roads. These procedures are intended to assist both the Council and the Department of Transport to secure effective delivery of quality projects to an agreed timeline and budget.

It is important that the Department of Transport can ensure that Kilkenny County Council can demonstrate that projects are well managed and deliver value for money. Kilkenny County Council must continue to ensure that the relevant staff in the Roads Section are aware of the need to apply the guidelines fully in order to ensure reimbursement of relevant costs. It is noted that there was an overspend on the CIS in 2024 of €31,446, while the Department of Transport did reimburse Kilkenny County Council for the overspend this may not be the case in future years. Therefore, Kilkenny County Council must ensure adherence to the given budget.

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### **Section: In-Depth Check Summary**

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The following section presents a summary of the findings of this In-Depth Check on Kilkenny County Council's Community Involvement Scheme.

#### **Summary of In-Depth Check**

Overall, I find that the Community Involvement Scheme in Kilkenny County Council complies with the broad principles of the Public Spending Code. Kilkenny County Council completed 9 CIS projects in 2024. The projects completed included road repairs on local roads and cul-de-sacs that would not normally be included on the Council's main roadworks programme.

Kilkenny County Council adheres to the requirements of the Department of Transport Circulars and the Memorandum on Grants for Regional & Local Roads. The terms and conditions as set out in these documents were implemented. The required data is available in the files in an orderly manner which will allow for evaluation at a late date if required.