



14th November, 2022.

**TO: AN CATHAOIRLEACH
& EACH MEMBER OF KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL**

RE: LOCAL AUTHORITY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2021

Dear Councillor,

The National Oversight and Audit Committee [NOAC] has published a full report on the Local Authority Performance Indicators for 2021 on the 4th November, 2022. Each Local Authority reported on 42 indicators which covered a wide range of the services carried out in the areas of:

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| ▪ Housing [6] | ▪ Library/ Recreation [2] |
| ▪ Roads [3] | ▪ Youth & Community [2] |
| ▪ Water [2] | ▪ Corporate [5] |
| ▪ Waste/Environment [6] | ▪ Finance [4] |
| ▪ Planning [5] | ▪ Economic Development [4] |
| ▪ Fire Service [3] | |

The Performance Indicators for all Local Authorities which includes the 42 Indicators in respect of Kilkenny County Council is available for viewing on the NOAC Website. www.noac.ie.

These indicators bring together a wide range of information about how all the local authorities perform in delivering services to local communities. The data on performances was collected from Local Authorities by the Local Government Management Agency [LGMA].

NOAC was established under the Local Government Reform Act 2014 to provide independent scrutiny of local government performances in fulfilling national, regional and local mandates. Its function is to independently oversee the local government sector by reviewing the financial and operational performance of bodies within its remit, overseeing implementation of national local government policy and identifying opportunities for best practice. It allows for the examination of processes and procedures with a view to improving performance and providing a more effective and efficient service to the community.

NOAC selects a number of local authorities for review/validation each year. Kilkenny County Council was part of that Review for 2021.

It needs to be recognised that delivery of a wide range of services to a diverse population, within available staffing resources and finances can have positive or negative effects on indicators. Diversity within local authorities can also impact on the performance measurement. This will depend on the geographical area being served, density of population, social economic profile, resources and demand for the service. Therefore, caution should be taken in the use of the performance indicator to compare one local authority to another.

The delivery of all services were challenging in 2021 due to continued Covid-19 restrictions. Despite Covid restrictions all of our services were delivered by our staff who were either working in our offices remotely or directly.

The Covid pandemic also presented an opportunity for the public to embrace online Motor Tax. The Motor Tax Office was closed on occasions throughout 2021. Staff continued to be available to deal with queries over the phone and by e-mail and by appointment where necessary.

The percentage of online transactions for Motor Tax increased to 86.35% during 2021. The percentage for 2020 was 83.07%. The national average for online Motor Tax transactions in 2021 is 86.18% and Kilkenny has exceeded this percentage.

The annual publication of the NOAC Performance Report will assist in policy and organisational decision making by the Elected Member, Executive and Audit Committee.

Kilkenny County Council's performance has been mixed, above the national average in some service areas and this is a credit to all staff. Kilkenny County Council will strive to deliver a high standard of service and will maintain and improve upon where possible within the available staff and financial resources and the regulatory environment.

In particular, Kilkenny County Council has over the last few years increased or maintained the percentage collection levels in housing rents and housing loans. Despite the closure of many businesses due to Covid, Kilkenny County Council had a collection in rates of 87% in 2021. Improvement in the collection of housing loans and rents has been achieved over the last five years and was maintained in 2021. The commitment of staff in achieving these high levels of collection must be recognised and acknowledged. Due to the limited areas available to bring in additional income, the Council will continue to focus on reducing the arrears on rates, housing rents, housing loans and other income during 2022/2023.

The following table sets out the collection rates over the last five years:

COLLECTION OF INCOME - KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL						
Year	Rates	National Average	Rent	National Average	Housing Loan	National Average
2017	95%	82%	92%	89%	85%	74%
2018	93%	86%	93%	89%	88%	75%
2019	94%	87%	95%	90%	90%	78%
2020	83%	77%	96%	90%	90%	80%
2021	87%	84%	97%	91%	90%	82%

Performance Indicators are a managerial tool for the Local Government Sector and the data provides a national standard in service delivery within the sector. Data provides accountability to stakeholders and it is a means of assessing performance across the region and all Local Authorities.

It is equally important that we respond to changes in the public, policy and political environments. Therefore, we must annually review our performance and target areas for improvement in all service delivery areas.

Areas targeted for improvement do not include demand led services where client circumstances and regulatory requirements dictate the data reviewed. For example, it would not be considered appropriate to set targets in the provision of homeless services where the

response of the Local Authority will be commensurate on demand presented and the associated social issues. However, this does not mean that the Council will not continue to provide a quality service to the clients who are experiencing difficulties in their lives. The number of homeless varies from month to month and circumstances such as shortage of accommodation will affect the number of homeless presentations.

The 2021 indicators have been reviewed by the Council's Management Team.

Due to the high demand for social housing we will continue to minimise the reletting period of our own stock. Our average time in 2021 was 22.68 weeks. The turnaround time will be continually monitored with a view to further reducing this despite being below the national average (34.44 weeks).

With the opening up of the economy post Covid, all businesses have now fully re-opened, we will need to continually adapt to deliver our services within some limited form of restrictions. There are now new challenges facing us all such as increased inflation, rising energy costs etc. These are impacting on the Council in delivering many worthwhile projects and ongoing maintenance work across all our services.

Kilkenny County Council will continue to seek to review the performance of the organisation and strive to make improvements within the available resources.

I attach, herewith, statement issued by Mr. Michael McCarthy, Chairperson of NOAC on the publication of the 2021 Report.

Attached is a sample of indicators from the report showing Kilkenny County Council's performance and comparison with other local authorities.

Yours sincerely,



Tim Butler
Director of Services
Corporate Services

NOAC Performance Indicator Report 2021 finds varied results in Local Authorities

Report 50 Performance Indicator Report 2021 - 4 November 2022:

This annual report, by the National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC) the independent body with oversight of local government, has examined the performance of the State's 31 local authorities in 2021, across forty two separate indicators covering eleven areas.

NOAC considers that with access to such an extensive body of data and performance-based information, local authorities themselves can use the results to streamline their processes where necessary, monitor various areas of performance more accurately, and understand their results on a deeper, more individual level to enable a process of continuous improvement.

Michael McCarthy, Chair of NOAC said that "in this the eighth annual report the performance indicators are chosen and categorised to reflect local government core functions; housing, roads, water, waste/environment, planning, fire services, library/recreation, youth/community, corporate, finance and economic development." However, he noted that they do not reflect the full and wide range of services delivered by city and county councils throughout the State

NOAC found overall that in 2021 local authorities have shown improved performance in the following areas:

- Private rented inspection levels have increased,
- The percentage number of Planning Enforcement cases resolved, and the total number of planning enforcement cases closed, were found to be at an all-time high,
- Motor tax transactions conducted online have continued to increase,
- Certified and self-certified sick leave rates decreased,
- Housing loan collection levels increased,
- Revenue account deficits continue to decrease, and,
- While the number of local roads, strengthened, resurfaced and resealed has improved in most areas, it is in line with predictable increased costs.

While NOAC acknowledges improvements in service delivery, it also must fulfil its statutory obligation to highlight areas where it deems that performance has deteriorated or disimproved over the past year. The Commission accepts that in certain instances COVID-19 restrictions may have contributed to these results.

Some issues worthy of mention in 2021 include:

- Re-letting time and associated costs have again increased. Although COVID-19 has impacted here, NOAC notes that there has been a steady rise in re-letting costs since recording of these indicators began in 2014.
- Due to closures and restrictions imposed by public health measures, libraries experienced a significant drop in the number of in person visits in 2020 with a further decline in 2021.

However, usage of library services has transformed with significant increase in the borrowing/downloading of digital materials throughout the pandemic period.

- NOAC notes the increase in the number of long term homeless adults. However, it is also clear that there is a consistent throughput of people into homes through Housing Assistance Payment (HAP), Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS), social housing and other models.

NOAC would like to thank local authority staff, the LGMA, and all organisations who provided or reviewed data for NOAC's Local Authority Performance Indicator Report 2021.

-ENDS-

The full report can be downloaded from the NOAC website www.noac.ie

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About the NOAC

NOAC (the National Oversight and Audit Commission) was established under the Local Government Reform Act 2014 to provide independent scrutiny of local government performance in fulfilling national, regional and local mandates. One of its functions is to scrutinise performance of local government bodies against relevant indicators and this is the eighth annual performance indicator report published by NOAC in relation to that function.

Since its establishment, NOAC has examined a range of areas of local authority activity, resulting in the publication of 50 reports to date. For further information on NOAC, including all reports published to date, see www.noac.ie.

Performance Indicators 2021

Collection levels

	Kilkenny	Average	Highest	Lowest
Rates	87%	84%	95% Monaghan	67% Galway City
Rents/Annuities	97%	91%	100% Cork County	73% Dublin City
Housing Loans	90%	82%	105% Wexford	Dun Laoghaire Rathdown

Cost per Capita

	Kilkenny	Average	Highest	Lowest
Planning	€ 31.22	€ 33.37	€ 49.67 Cork County	€ 22.31 Galway County
Library	€ 31.41	€ 36.92	€ 55.86 Longford	€ 20.59 Galway County
Fire Service (Part -time)	€ 56.91	€ 44.65	€ 70.80 Leitrim	€ 30.38 Westmeath

Others

	Kilkenny	Average	Highest	Lowest
LA houses vacant on 31/12/2021	2.50%	3.16%	7.19% Longford	0.84% Monaghan
Average time to relet house (in weeks)	22.68	34.44	75.72 Cork City	13.5 Wexford
Average Expenditure per house on maintenance	€ 1,417.91	€ 1,150.13	€ 2,396.16 Dublin City	€ 273.11 Longford
Service Online Motor tax transactions %	86.35%	86.18%	92.64% Meath	78.54% Roscommon
Monitoring Private Schemes	100.00%	79.87%	100% Number of LA's	31.18% Cork County
Planning enforcement cases received in 2021	119		1,345 Dublin City	39 Leitrim
Building Control -% New Buildings inspected	22.69%	27.35%	73.81% Meath	3.98% Fingal
% of households with a 3 bin service	98.91%	89.36%	198.18% Clare	36.64% Westmeath
No of pollution cases investigated & closed	1,047		24,971 Dublin City	573 Monaghan
Average time to mobilise P/T fire brigade (in minutes)	6.04	5.19	6.49 Wexford	3.26 Sligo
Fire Certs - % issued within 2 months	77.78%	51.54%	100% Monaghan	20.97% Laois
No of Library visits per head of population	0.75	0.86	1.35 Wicklow	0.03 Carlow
Active membership per head of population	0.09	0.09	0.14 Wicklow	0.05 Donegal
No of WTE staff	569.3		5,571.65 Dublin City	305.7 Carlow
Page views on website per capita	21.42	13.60	41.12 Kerry	3.29 Louth