



MAY 2017

To: Each Member of Kilkenny County Council

Monthly Management Report to Members of Kilkenny County Council for consideration at the May 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

- 17th May, 2017: Closing date for Expressions of Interest on the 2017 Town and Village Renewal Scheme.**
- 20th May, 2017: Open Day on Abbey Creative Quarter Site.**
- 1st June, 2017: Special Meeting of Environment SPC to discuss the draft River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021. All members welcome to attend.**
- 9th June, 2017: Closing Date for applications under the Community and Cultural Facilities Capital Grant Scheme 2017**
- 9th June, 2017 Gum litter Taskforce - The Parade Kilkenny**
- 13th June, 2017: Final Kilkenny Public Meeting on "What your river means to you" – public consultation and engagement on the draft River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021 in The Boathouse Graiguenamanagh**
- 30th June, 2017: Closing Date for applications under the Communities Facilities Grant Scheme 2017**

REPORT AT A GLANCE

ROADS: *PAGE 2-3*

HOUSING: *PAGE 3-4*

PLANNING: *PAGE 4-5*

ENVIRONMENT: *PAGE 5-6*

HERITAGE: *PAGE 6-7*

TOURISM: *PAGE 7-8*

LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE: *PAGE 8*

COMMUNITY & CULTURAL *PAGE 8-10*

LIBRARY *PAGE 10-11*



MAY 2017

ROADS:

N24 Tower Road Junction – Piltown Fiddown Bypass – Low Cost Safety Improvement

In November 2016, the Council engaged Consultants to carry out a critical review of the existing low cost road safety scheme layout at the N24 Tower Road Junction. The Preliminary Feasibility Report arising out of this review was submitted to Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) for approval and funding. The recommendations within this Report included the following:-

- Improve advance warning signage for junction, consisting of fixed Vehicle Activated Signage, to include illuminated ‘SLOW’ text under solid-state junction ahead warning signs.
- Installation of additional distance countdown plate signage.
- Retro-fitting of roadmarkings to increase the distance between the eastbound lane drop-merge and the junction, this will simplify decision making process for motorists.
- General road marking and signage enhancements to improve safety for motorists and cyclists.
- Minor localised widening of the hardshoulder to enable cyclist’s ease of access to designated cycle-route.
- Provision of hardstanding area either side of junction to facilitate road side speed enforcement. (Note this will be undertaken by GO SAFE and An Garda).

TII has recently approved the proposed works and provided a funding allocation of €87,700 for design and implementation of same. The detailed design and subsequent Road Safety Audit will be completed shortly and the works are programmed for June.

The above works will increase driver awareness of the junction layout and subsequently reduce the

accident risk. However, it is acknowledged that these works are interim measures and the overriding objective is the construction of the Tower Road Overbridge.

N24 Tower Road Overbridge and Ink Bottle Link-road

Discussions are ongoing with TII with respect to the advancement of this Project. It was agreed some months ago that the 2013 Project Appraisal Report prepared for this Scheme would be updated by Tramore House Regional Design Office. This review is ongoing and will take into account recent road collisions, revisions in standards, costings etc. It is expected that a draft report on this review will be finalised in the coming weeks. Once the Council is in receipt of same it will be discussed with TII to determine the options available to advance this Scheme to detail design and construction.

Kilkenny Northern Ring Road Extension

Mr Justice Humphries issued his judgement on 4th May, 2017 in relation to the High Court Judicial Review proceedings in the case of Holohan, Guilfoyle and Donegan v An Bord Pleanala.

The outcome is the direction of a number of questions for determination to the Court of Justice in Europe in relation to (amongst others):

- The rules concerning Natura Impact Statements
- The rules concerning Environmental Impact Statements,
- The degree to which construction details can be left to post decision
- Whether a planning authority should conduct an Environmental Impact Statement on alternative designs

It should be noted that the Council is only a notice party in this case and the proceedings in Europe will be conducted by the lawyers for the Applicants and An Bord Pleanala.



MAY 2017

Maintenance

The Roads Section has recently secured a €153,000 allocation under the TII B.1.2. Maintenance Programme. This funding will be targeted at works that fall outside the ordinary maintenance regime on the National Road Network.

HOUSING:

Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)

As of the 1st March 2017, HAP is now available to all eligible households in all 31 local authority areas. As of 30th April, 769 households are signed up to HAP.

The Department has now extended the availability of HAP to facilitate inter-county movement with effect from 4th April 2017 and will only be facilitated across local authorities with income bands that are equal or higher. Where households who are eligible for HAP have found suitable accommodation in another local authority area, a **formal** protocol is now in place to facilitate clients as outlined under Circular Housing 15/2017.

HAP tenants are still eligible to apply for a transfer or remain on the transfer list for their originating local authority even if availing of the inter-authority movement.

21 Apartments, Logan Square, Logan Street, Thomastown

21 Apartments were acquired by Oaklee Housing Association in April 2017 following an extensive refurbishment of the derelict unfinished estate in the centre of Thomastown. The Council are making nominations to Oaklee AHB who will be managing the scheme.

Repair to Lease Scheme (RLS)

This Scheme targets owners of vacant properties as a possible source of social housing, enables funding to support necessary repairs to vacant properties and also provides the property owners with an income stream that may, otherwise, be unavailable.

The maximum cost of repairs to a vacant property under the Scheme is €40,000.

The Scheme has a number of specific requirements including:

- The property has to be vacant for at least 12 months
- There must be a social housing demand for the property
- The property must be assessed as being viable to provide social housing
- The minimum lease term is 10 years, 15 years or 20 years depending on the cost of the repair works
- The lease payment is based on 80% (85% for apartments) of the current market rental rates in the property location.
- A further adjustment to the lease payment is made to off-set the cost of the repair works until the cost of the works has been repaid.

Despite extensive media coverage there has been a low number of enquiries, with only 12 expressions of interest. The main reason for applications not advancing is the level of capital required to complete the properties to a minimum standard which exceeds the €40,000 limit.

Homeless Presentations

Details of homeless presentations for each month of 2017 along with the comparative monthly presentations for 2016 are set out below:

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MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT
MAY 2017



MAY 2017

Breakdown: 2016		Breakdown: 2017	
Jan	37	Jan	29
Feb	30	Feb	26
Mar	18	Mar	26
April	26	April	25
Sub Total	111		106

There were 81 Homeless/Potentially Homeless presentations to 29/03/2016. Of the 81, 5 were couples and are counted as individual presentations.

Tenant Handbook

The revised Tenant Handbook was discussed at the Housing SPC on 30th March 2017 and a number of recommendations/amendments were made by the members for inclusion.

The purpose of updating the Handbook will restate the legal relationship between the tenant and the Council, give important advice on maintaining their tenancy and estate, outline alternative housing options and details on taking an active part in their community in co-operation with Kilkenny County Council.

The benefits of updating the handbook and restating clearly the tenant and landlord's responsibility for maintenance will contribute to greater efficiencies resulting in additional monies being available for planned maintenance. This in turn will benefit all tenants.

Housing Statics for April, 2017

Number awaiting social housing support at 30 th April, 2017	2,172
Number of assessment interviews carried out	18
LA/RAS/Leasing allocations (offers made)	10
Number of HAP tenancies at 30 th April, 2017	769

Number of LA tenancies surrendered 4

Anti social behaviour cases 13

New Homeless Presentations: 25

Maintenance Calls 373

Maintenance Calls to 30th April, 2017 1726

No. Housing Loans Approved to 30th April, 2017 (Annuity/Construction) 12

Amount of Loans Approved to 30th April, 2017 €1,458,916

PLANNING:

Planning Summary	Total to April, 2016	Total to April, 2017
Planning Applications Received	259	268
Planning Applications Granted	282	258
Planning Applications Refused	16	19
Complaints Received	29	35
Warning Letters Issued	19	43
Enforcements Notices Issued	13	12

Forward Planning:

- A well attended (approximately 60) and successful public consultation event was held by the Council in conjunction with Loci Consultants on the 19th April in the Ormonde Hotel regarding the "Urban Design Criteria and Recommended Development Code for the



MAY 2017

Implementation of the Abbey Creative Quarter Masterplan". The closing date for submissions to this was the 5th May. Fourteen submissions have been received.

- Members were briefed at the April meeting on proposals being formulated on the Urban Design Strategy for the Hebron Road. Amendments suggested by the members are being integrated into the draft proposals which will be published and put on public display shortly.
- Survey work has been completed for the Vacant Sites Register.
- The final text and mapping for the Draft Ferrybank/Belview LAP is now being prepared for publication. Members of the Piltown & Tramore & Waterford City West Municipal Districts were briefed on the 3rd May. There will be a briefing to members at the May Council meeting.
- Work is continuing on the preparation of the Draft Castlecomer Local Area Plan for publication through the statutory environmental assessments and compilation of the written plan.
- Briefs are being prepared for consultants to carry out reviews of the Thomastown and Callan Local Area Plans.
- Proposed Variation 3 in relation to active land management in the City & Environs is being prepared in support of the Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund and will be published in May for statutory public consultation.

Conservation:

Kilkenny County Council was successful in receiving approval to a number of grant applications for works to built heritage.

1. Structures at Risk Fund 2017

Two projects to be supported as follows:

- a) Remedial work to Water Tank structure in Woodstock Garden - **€11,000**

- b) Remedial work to White Bridge, Ballylinch Stud, Thomastown, Co. Kilkenny - **€15,000**

2. Built Heritage Investment Scheme 2017

€138,270 allocated to support 17 projects throughout Kilkenny City and County

3. Heritage Council Grant 2017

€4,000 awarded for the design, illustration and installation of Kilkenny City Wall signage at the former James Gate site, which is located on present day James Street.

ENVIRONMENT

Roadside Litter Survey

The Environmental Education Unit completed a roadside litter survey. The results will form a basis of a campaign this summer. A summary of findings will be visually displaced in the Council Chamber prior to the Council meeting, come a few minutes early to the meeting and see what was found on the roadside.

Green Schools

23 local schools will receive a green flag award this month. A full list of schools will be circulated to the elected members after An Taisce Awards Ceremony later this month.

National Spring Clean

Over 100 groups participated in the National Spring Clean this April. The Environment Section will continue to provide assistance to groups who complete litter picks throughout the summer.

Tidy Towns

Windgap, Freshford and Glenmore received a visit from a retired tidy towns' adjudicator in April to provide advice on how to progress in the competition. Ferrybank Tidy Towns will receive similar support in May.



MAY 2017

Anti Litter Murals

- Millennium Court Family Resource Centre completed environmental murals in their community gardens in April,
- an anti-litter themed mural is set to be completed this month by a youth group from the Mill Family Resource Centre in Urlingford, this mural will be located in the local playground.



April Statistics - Environment	
Inspection Type	No.
Complaints Investigated	87
Litter Patrols	33
Litter Fines issued	2
Waste Facility inspections	4
Waste Collection inspections	7
Coal Distributors	21
Bring Bank Surveillance	34
Commercial Food Waste inspections	2
Farm Inspections	28
Tyre Inspections	2
Regulation	
Planning Reports	55
Monitoring	
Historic Landfill monitoring	2
WWTP Ambient Monitoring	12
Priority Site Monitoring	14
Operational & Surveillance Monitoring	41
Groundwater Monitoring	3
Small Stream Risk Assessments	6
Monitoring for Water Services	52

HERITAGE

Crowds Gather at Creative Ireland Event

An enthusiastic crowd of over 120 people involved in heritage, arts, libraries and the cultural and creative industries in Kilkenny attended a meeting on 27th April in the Ormonde Hotel to voice their suggestions and ideas for the new Creative Ireland programme in Co. Kilkenny. Creative Ireland is a new national 5 year programme which supports culture and creativity, and which is being rolled out in partnership with Local Authorities. The Kilkenny County Council Cultural Services Team is responsible for its implementation in Kilkenny, and the County Co-ordinator is Dearbhala Ledwidge, Heritage Officer. Feedback from the public meeting will inform a new 5 year strategy to be prepared in late 2017. For more information see <http://creative.ireland.ie/>

Kilkenny County Council Cultural Strategies

The Cultural Services Team of Kilkenny County Council is commencing the preparation of a new 5 year County Cultural Strategy which will incorporate new County Heritage, Arts and Library Strategies. This will inform Kilkenny's input to the national Creative Ireland programme. A stakeholder working group will be held on 26th May and will be followed in June by a series of public consultation meetings. Details will be posted shortly. For further information contact Josephine Coyne (County Librarian), Dearbhala Ledwidge (Heritage Officer) or Mary Butler (Arts Officer).

Bat Recording and Training

The Heritage Office is delighted to work with Bat Conservation Ireland to sponsor and support a training course in the identification and recording of bats. County Kilkenny has a good population of bat species but we need to know more about them. The information gathered will inform the national BATLAS 2020 survey. Come along to this talk

MAY 2017

(SECTION 136 (2) OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001,
SECTION 51 OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM ACT 2014)

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE CHILL CHAINNIGH
KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL
MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT
MAY 2017



and practical bat walk on Monday 24th May at 8.30pm in the Rivercourt Hotel. For further information see

<http://www.batconservationireland.org/what-we-do/monitoring-distribution-projects/batlas>

TOURISM

- The grand opening of the **Medieval Mile Museum** was held April 4th, launch officiated by Minister Patrick O'Donovan Minister of State for Tourism



- Meetings of **Destination Kilkenny** sub groups were held throughout April
- Kilkenny County Council Tourism Presentation at **Dundalk Chamber of Commerce Conference** on 4th April.
- **Yulefest 2017** – a new Festival Manager has been appointed to Kilkenny's Christmas Festival – Yulefest – and plans are underway, with new steering committee and support network in place.
- In discussion with Coillte on potential partnership approach to **Woodstock/ Inistioge** business development plan.
- Commencement of **Woodstock House Winter Garden** refurbishment (REDZ development)
- Brian Tyrrell appointed to Board of **Trails Kilkenny**.
- **Regional Blueway/Greenways** office established based in New Ross, Co Wexford.

- Kilkenny Tourism's Communications company – TL Marketing have launched their summer promotional campaign for visitkilkenny.ie
- Development and publication of Kilkenny material for a regional (Waterford, Wexford, Kilkenny) collaboration with Stena Line, Tourism Ireland and Roslare Harbour, marketing the region to the UK market. <http://www.stenaline.co.uk/irelands-ancient-east>
- **New Agritourism marketing initiative launched - #tastekilkenny**
 - The launch of #tastekilkenny, a collaborative marketing drive funded by CEDRA and supported by KCC, LEO, Kilkenny Tourism and #tastekilkenny to elevate Kilkenny's profile as a food destination was held in Highbank Orchard and distillery on April 24th and generated substantial media coverage.





MAY 2017



- Kilkenny County Council Tourism Presentation at Armagh, Banbridge, Craigavon District Tourism Conference on 26th April
- Visit to our twin town **Moret sur Loing, France** 28th April to 30th April, with presentation on tourism opportunities

LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE

- The LEO approved (nett) support in the amount of €129,125 to 9 projects in Kilkenny- 2 Feasibility/Innovation Study Grants, 3 Priming Grants and 4 Business Expansion Grants;
- 11 Trading Online Vouchers have been approved totalling €22,524;
- Three businesses have been assisted with applications for the St. Canice's Credit Union Smart Options Loan Scheme;
- Three businesses have been assisted with applications to Micro Finance Ireland;
- 139 mentoring assignments were approved;
- 161 people have availed of one-to-one business advisory sessions;
- 5 businesses have been approved Micro Exporting Grant assistance;
- 1 business has transferred to the Enterprise Ireland portfolio;
- 1 outreach clinic took place in April in Graiguenamanagh Library with a further two planned for May; Graiguenamanagh Library May 19th and Ferrybank Library May 30th.

- The Local Enterprise Office Kilkenny in conjunction with Enterprise Ireland and Network Ireland held the Fuelling Ambition "Steps to Success" roadshow event in Hotel Kilkenny on 6th April. This roadshow encourages, supports and drives the ambition of female entrepreneurs nationally by showcasing the 'Steps to Success' of thriving Irish business women and entrepreneurs. Guest speakers at the Kilkenny event included Clare Hughes CF Pharma Ltd.;
- To date 20 training programmes have been completed in the Kilkenny Spring training programme with 218 participants in attendance;
- The first workshop of the South East Micro Food Export initiative took place in Bord Bia Headquarters on the 10th April with 15 participants involved including Highbank Orchards and Lisduggan Farm from Kilkenny;
- As part of the South Eastern Creative Corridor programme, a competitive fund of €100,00 has been made available to participants. 2 Kilkenny based participants have been successfully awarded funding - Shane Hatton trading as Old Mill Pictures and Kevin Hughes, Wallslough Studio.

COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

Open Day on the Abbey Creative Quarter Site

Between **10.30am and 4.30pm on Saturday 20th May, 2017** Kilkenny County Council will host an open day at the Abbey Creative Quarter Site. The event is one of a range of cultural events being organised by Kilkenny County Council as part of the 2017 Creative Ireland Programme.

The open day event will represent an opportunity for members of the public to visit the Abbey Creative Quarter site and view the future development proposals for the site.



There will be opportunities to view memorabilia from the old Mayfair Ballroom Days. Various members of the old showbands will be in attendance on the day and some musical entertainment is being provided. There will be opportunities to enter and view St. Francis Abbey and to view Evan's Turret. An outdoor broadcast of the KCLR Edward Hayden Saturday Morning Radio show will be conducted from the site and Community Radio interviews will also be recorded. All are welcome on the day.

Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2017

The closing date for Expressions of Interest on the 2017 Town and Village Renewal Scheme is Wednesday 17th May, 2017. As a condition of the Scheme Kilkenny County Council must thereafter select **a maximum of 15 projects** to proceed through the application process to the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. The closing date for those applications is 30th June, 2017. Notwithstanding the numbers of Expressions of Interest and to allow for the preparation of detailed applications, shortlisting of the Expressions of Interest will need to be complete by Friday 19th May, 2017. For further details contact Cora Nolan at 056 7794931 or 056 7794920 or community@kilkennycoco.ie.

Community and Cultural Facilities Capital Grant Scheme 2017

As previously advised to Elected Members and advertised throughout County Kilkenny Communities, Kilkenny County Council's Community Section is now seeking applications under the above Scheme the closing date for which is **Friday 9th June at 4pm**. The Scheme is open to not-for-profit Groups operating in the Community Sector who are seeking to develop open spaces, walks, playgrounds, recreational facilities, community arts projects and/or conservation and heritage

projects. Approved grant funding through the Scheme is at a rate of 75% upto a maximum grant of €45,000 and to a minimum grant of €9,000. For further details contact Cora Nolan at 056 7794931 or 056 7794920 or community@kilkennycoco.ie.

Community Facilities Scheme 2017

This Scheme has been developed nationally by the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government and is targeted at community groups who are seeking to address disadvantage and enhance social inclusion. Elected Members have previously been advised of the Scheme and it has been advertised throughout County Kilkenny Communities. Applications will be assessed by the Local Community Development Committee and will be presented to Municipal District Committees for approval. Eligible proposals include renovation or refurbishment works to community centres, community amenities, youth clubs, community events sports/summer camps, town park/common area enhancements. In general grant aid available is to a level of €1000 but funding of upto €3000 may be provided. A total fund of €65,000 is available under this Scheme. The closing date for applications is **Friday 30th June, 2017 at 4pm**. For further details contact Cora Nolan at 056 7794931 or 056 7794920 or community@kilkennycoco.ie.

Community Based CCTV

This Scheme is being administered by the Department of Justice and Equality providing for 60% of the total capital cost of a proposed CCTV system upto a maximum grant of €40,000. The Scheme is a rolling 3 year programme with no application closing dates and a total of €3million available over the three year period. For further details contact Ronan Ryan at 056 7794928 or email community@kilkennycoco.ie.



MAY 2017

Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme 2017

Background

The Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme is part of the Government's Action Plan for Rural Development and will provide funding for the development of new outdoor recreational infrastructure or the necessary maintenance, enhancement or promotion of existing outdoor recreational infrastructure in Ireland. Funds are provided to projects where works have not yet commenced and will be released to successful applicants in tranches based on a specified level of works being completed.

Timeline for completion of works

For the most part, projects will be required to be completed in 2017. Large scale projects (see Measure 3 below) must be completed by the middle of 2018. A total of €1 million will be allocated to projects approved in 2017, with up to 60% of this (€7 million) available for draw-down in 2017; the balance will be available for draw-down in 2018.

Categories of Application

Applications will be accepted under three measures:

Measure 1: Small Scale

Maintenance/Promotional and Marketing

Measure 2: Medium Scale Repair/Upgrade and New Trail Development

Measure 3: Large Scale Repair/Upgrade and New Strategic Trail Development

Ineligible Activities

- Sports/play grounds
- Marked street trails within towns

Application Process

Applications will be accepted for:

1. **Measure 1 and 2:** by 5 pm on **Wednesday, 31st May 2017.**
2. **Measure 3:** by 5 pm on **Friday, 16th June 2017.**

Contact: Brian Tyrrell

LIBRARY



Programming:

Spring into Storytime

Spring into Story time is a national story-time initiative held in public libraries in April to celebrate the importance of families reading together, enjoying stories, and further developing children's creativity and imagination. Over 100

MAY 2017

(SECTION 136 (2) OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001,
SECTION 51 OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM ACT 2014)

**COMHAIRLE CHONTAE CHILL CHAINNIGH
KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL
MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT
MAY 2017**



children enjoyed stories & crafts in each of our 8 branches during the programme.





Appendix 1.
Kilkenny County Council
Finance Report – May 2017.

The expenditure by service division for four months to the end of April 2017 is set out in table 1. Total Expenditure for the period was €23m compared with the annual budget of €70.16m.

Table 1	Actual YTD April 2017	Budget Full Year 2017
	€'000's	€'000's
Housing & Building	5,284	15,962
Road Transport & Safety	5,245	17,093
Water Services	2,088	6,778
Development Management	2,460	7,894
Environmental Services	2,685	9,061
Recreation & Amenity	1,927	5,918
Agriculture, Education, Health, Welfare	214	798
Miscellaneous Services	3,134	6,661
Overall Total	23,037	70,165

The bank overdraft facility has not been utilized during the four months to the end of April.

The total Commercial Rates collected is up by 2 per cent compared with the four months to April 2016. This would indicate that more account holders are availing of the early payment grant scheme as agreed in the last two Budgets.

As part of the national revaluation programme The Valuation Office will issue the majority of the proposed valuation certificates for Kilkenny on Thursday May 11th. Property owners will then have 40 days to make representations to the Valuation Manager. The balance of the proposed certificates will issue on Thursday May 25th.

Ratepayers in County Kilkenny can calculate their estimated rates liability for 2018 by multiplying the “Proposed Valuation” (Net Annual Value), as advised by the Valuation Office, by the indicative ARV for Kilkenny. Details of the indicative ARV is available by logging on to www.kilkennycoco.ie or contacting **056-7794209**

The final Valuation Certificates are to be issued in late August 2017 with the new list scheduled to be published on 16th September 2017. The period for any further appeals to the independent Valuation Tribunal is 28 days from 16th September.

Ratepayers can obtain information on the process by contacting the Valuation Office at 01 8171199 or by sending an Email to ckReval2017@valoff.ie.

The next three year capital budget is being finalised and will be presented to Council at the June meeting. IPB has notified all Local Authorities that they intend making a capital distribution to all members over a three year period commencing in late 2017. Kilkenny's share will be €4.74m. This capital distribution will be required to fund our capital programme.