Comhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh
Halla an Chontae, Sráid Eoin, Cill Chainnigh, R95 A39T.

Kilkenny County Council
County Hall, John Street, Kilkenny, R95 A39T.

Fónamh don Phobal - Caomhnú don Oidhreacht

Serving People – Preserving Heritage

15th October, 2019.

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

RE: **LOCAL AUTHORITY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2018**

Dear Councillor,

The National Oversight and Audit Committee [NOAC] has published a full report on the Local Authority Performance Indicators for 2018 on 14th October, 2019. Each Local Authority reported on 37 indicators which covered a wide range of the services carried out in the areas of:

- Housing [6]
- Roads [3]
- Water [1]
- Waste/Environment [4]
- Planning [5]
- Fire Service [3]
- Library/ Recreation [2]
- Youth & Community [2]
- Corporate [5]
- Finance [2]
- Economic Development [4]

The Performance Indicators for all Local Authorities which includes the 37 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 overview of local government performances in fulfilling National, Regional and local mandates including performance in respect of its financial resources. Its mission 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.
In 2019, Kilkenny County Council was selected as one of the local authorities for review of the performance indicators data by NOAC. 7 Indicators were reviewed during a validation

process in June 2019. The review team had a general discussion with service area staff on overall performance issues and experiences with the indicators. The following is extracted from the published report:

"Kilkenny explained the Performance Indicators are a useful tool enabling it to focus on areas that need attention and are helpful in planning. They discussed the investment made recently in IT but noted that further work is required. Kilkenny has found the new rates valuation process extremely challenging and the appeals process has resulted in some significant reductions for ratepayers. The process has negatively affected its ability to budget for the year ahead. It would like to see a recognition of work done on behalf of Government departments such as climate change, flood relief schemes and public lighting captured in the indicators report. It hopes new waste regulations will enable it to increase the uptake of the three-bin service. It is continuing work on targeting properties on its vacant sites register. Kilkenny confirmed its Audit Committee review the NOAC reports"

However, local authorities need to recognise 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 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 above the national average or medium presented in the Report in the majority of service areas and this is a credit to all staff. Kilkenny County Council will continue to deliver a high standard of service and will maintain and improve upon where possible within the available staff and financial resources.

In particular Kilkenny County Council has over the last few years increased the percentage collection levels in commercial rates, housing rents and housing loans. Kilkenny County Council has the second highest percentage level of collection in Rates in the country. Improvement in the collection of housing loan collection has been achieved over the last five years. In 2014 the collection rate was 77%, this has increased to 88% in 2018. 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 is continuing to focus on reducing the arrears on housing rents and housing loans during 2019.

Performance Indicators are a managerial tool for the Local Government Sector and the data provides a national practice 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 we have seen a reduction in these numbers over the last year which is greatly welcomed.

The 2018 indicators have been reviewed by the Council's Management Team. There was a focus on further improvements in the performance of Kilkenny County Council during 2018 in the following areas:

- *Cost of housing maintenance*: The average cost incurred by Kilkenny County Council in repair and maintenance on LA housing in 2018 was €882.55. The average cost across all local authorities was €1,147.45. In 2018 we indicated that would review these costs as they were higher than average in the year 2017. It is essential that we deliver an efficient service to our tenants while also achieving value for money within the budget provided.
- *3 bin service:* The percentage of households availing of a 3 bin service in County Kilkenny in 2018 is 15.9%. The national average is 43.91%. As this service is privatised, Kilkenny County Council will continue to encourage the provision of the 3 bin service with the service providers. The new Waste Regulations and Bye Laws will also assist us in achieving a higher percentage in the next few years. We have already begun meeting the authorised waste collectors and the issue of the 3 bin service has been raised at these meetings.

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

In particular the Council will focus on increasing our inspections regime on new buildings notified. Responsibility for compliance with the Building Control Regulations rests with the owner of the building or works, and with any builder or designer engaged by the owner. It is regrettable that we only achieved a 5.9% inspection rate in 2018. This was the lowest in the Country. However it should be noted that we carried out the same number of inspections in 2018 and 2017 with the same staffing resources. The number of buildings notified to the Council increased significantly by 76% from 221 to 390. The increase in building activity is a good sign and welcomed and we are reviewing our inspection programme for 2019 and for future years.

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

Tim Butler
Director of Services
Corporate Services

Performance Indicators 2018

Collection levels	Kilkenny	Average	Highest		Lowest	
Rates	93%	86%	96%	Fingal	76%	Laois
Rents/Annuities	93%	89%	97%	Westmeath	75%	South Dublin
Housing Loans	88%	75%	101%	Fingal	51%	Kildare

Cost per Capita	Kilkenny	Average	Highest		Lowest	
Planning	€ 25.74	€ 29.24	€ 43.94	Longford	€ 17.15	Cavan
Library	€ 30.78	€ 33.98	€ 62.07	Cork City	€ 23.02	Kerry
Fire Service (Part -time)	€ 58.26	€ 48.93	€ 68.14	Leitrim	€ 31.56	Meath

Others	Kilkenny	Average	Highest		Lowest	
LA houses vacant on 31/12/2018	1.14%	2.77%	5.02%	Kerry	0.75%	South Dublin
Average time to relet house **(in weeks)**	21.59	27.75	71.39	Cavan	8.06	Westmeath
Average Expenditure per house on maintainance	€ 882.55	€ 1,147.45	€ 2,450.44	Dublin City	€ 409.90	Carlow
No homeless adults in emergency accomodation	46		4018	Dublin LA's	1	2 LA's
Service Online Motor tax transactions	70.82%	69.15%	85.63%	Dublin LA's	54.68%	Roscommon
Compliance -Drinking water private schemes	96.13%	97.06%	100%	Cork City	92.55%	Waterford
Planning enforcement cases received in 2018	101		1158	Dublin City	44	Longford
Building Control - New Buildings inspected	5.90%	23.47%	69.70%	Dublin City	5.90%	Kilkenny
No of households - 3 bin service	15.90%	43.91%	84.89%	Waterford	2.81%	Donegal
Average time to mobilise fire brigade **(in minutes)**	6.16	5.34	6.19	3 LA's	3.42	Sligo
Fire Certs - % issued within 2 months	91.53%	56.37%	100%	Cork Co	9.30%	Cavan
No of Library visits per head of population	2.62	3.58	6.01	Cork City	2.01	Louth
No of WTE staff	549.56		5510.45	Dublin City	258.7	Leitrim
Page views on website	2,761,552		18,346,827	Dublin City	283,414	Carlow
No of Job created (assistance from LEO)	103		343	Dublin City	24	Leitrim