



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

RE: DRAFT 2021-2023 CAPITAL BUDGET - KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL

Section 135 of the Local Government Act 2001 requires a report on capital projects to be prepared by the Chief Executive and presented to the elected council annually. The report gives details of proposed capital projects for the following three years.

The details of the draft Capital Budget for the period 2021-2023 are set out in the attached report.

Delivering on Social Housing targets and driving economic development through the delivery of the Capital Programme is a key strategic objective for this Council. Whilst 2020 has been challenging we have continued to deliver significant projects and plan for delivery of important strategic projects across the City and County.

1. Social Housing

Rebuilding Ireland – Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness was published by the Government in July 2016. This Plan sets out a roadmap to achieve the Government’s goal to significantly increase and expedite the delivery of an additional 50,000 social housing units by 2021 at a cost of €6bn. As key drivers to deliver the Action Plan each local authority was given a target for delivery under the programme for the period 2018 to 2022. Kilkenny’s target to deliver 600 units of accommodation under build, acquisition and leasing was exceeded by the end of 2020 with 689 housing units delivered under Rebuilding Ireland.

Construction projects were impacted during 2020 and 2021 by Covid 19 restrictions with the closure of many sites. This has delayed the delivery of new build projects to 2022. While the acquisition of properties represented 44% of new housing delivery for the period 2018 – 2020 the construction of new build units will be the main delivery pipeline for the period 2021 to 2025 under the new government programme “Housing For All” to be launched in Quarter 2, 2021. At present there are 8 local authority construction projects on site in Kilkenny comprising 163 housing units. The total contract value of these projects is just under €38m and includes sites across the county in Ballyragget, Castlecomer, Mooncoin, Kilkenny City and Kilmacow. There are a further 15 projects at tender and planning stages which will deliver 222 housing units at an estimated contract value of just over €50m. A further 10 projects are under development for inclusion in the delivery pipeline during 2022.

These projects include greenfield sites, regeneration projects, adaptive reuse and the repurposing of vacant units where possible. Along with local authority construction and acquisition there are more than 26 active Approved Housing Bodies operating in Kilkenny with an additional 100 housing units to be delivered by AHBs in the next two years. Housing delivery represents a large capital investment in Kilkenny over the last 4 years and an even stronger investment for the period 2021 to 2025. Construction of new units is increasing year on year while acquisitions and leasing is reducing.

The introduction on new measures to provide affordable housing under the “Housing For All Programme” is likely to bring additional opportunities for the local authority to provide a wider range of supported housing options. While the affordable housing scheme has not yet been finalised there will be a requirement for Kilkenny County Council to provide funding for land acquisition and additional housing provision under this scheme. It is expected that this requirement will raise additional capital finance issues which will become clear when the affordable housing scheme is launched later in 2021.

At the time of preparing this Capital Programme there are 1,872 approved applicants on the Council’s housing list and 53% of these applicants have an expressed first preference for accommodation in Kilkenny City. Over 70% of the assessed housing need is for 1 or 2 bed accommodation units and the delivery pipeline will reflect this requirement. Of the 1,872 approved housing applicants on our housing list more than 840 are in receipt of social housing support under the Housing Assistance Programme (HAP) having secured suitable private rented accommodation to meet their housing need. The net assessed housing need in Kilkenny, including transfer applicants, is therefore 832. Whilst there are challenges in delivering the capital programme countywide the challenges are particularly acute in Kilkenny City due to a lack of available sites for construction. As our construction pipeline increases there will be a need to source and acquire suitable lands for future construction around the county and it will be challenging to source such sites in areas where necessary services are available. Land acquisition will form a critical element of the housing capital delivery programme in the next three years.

Kilkenny County Council has an ambitious capital programme to construct 501 units of social housing over the 3 year period, 2021 - 2023 at an estimated contract value of €150m. A further 100, newly constructed homes, will be delivered by Approved Housing Bodies in collaboration with Kilkenny County Council. Plans to provide additional homes through Repair to Lease, Vacant Homes, acquisition, leasing and Buy and Renew Schemes will also continue under the Housing Capital Delivery Programme.

Additionally, over the period of this Capital Programme, Kilkenny County Council has a duty to provide accommodation for and to oversee the community integration of additional families under the Irish Refugee Protection Programme as well as an Energy Retrofit Programme to achieve improved BER ratings in existing housing stock in line with government policy on Climate Action.

The Traveller Accommodation Programme (TAP) 2014 -2019 targeted the delivery of 13 units of accommodation annually for the period of the TAP, this gave an overall target for the delivery of 65 units of accommodation.

This target was exceeded with 90 units of accommodation provided during the five year period of the last TAP. A new TAP was adopted in 2019 for the period 2019 to 2024 and has assessed a requirement to provide 66 units of accommodation over the five year period to 2024. While the majority of these units will be delivered by way of acquisitions and allocation of existing housing stock, the Council will be required to develop and deliver Traveller Specific projects to meet existing and emerging housing need in specific areas.

2. Roads

2.1 Western Environs Phase 1 Infrastructure Scheme

Planning consent was obtained for this scheme in 2005 and a CPO for lands required to deliver same was confirmed in 2007. The scheme provides for the construction of a 1.3km Western Environs distributor road from the N76 Callan Road to the R695 Kilmanagh Road (via the Circular Road), along with a 1.1km upgrade of the Kilmanagh Road. Also included in this project is the construction of 3 No. conventional roundabouts, 2 No. bridge structures.

In October 2016, the Council submitted an application for funding to the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government under the Rebuilding Ireland Programme via the Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF), to deliver this scheme. The Council ultimately secured grant aid of €6.545m from the Department. The remaining costs estimated at €8.8m, are to be funded by Kilkenny County Council. Construction of the scheme by SIAC Construction Limited commenced in March 2019 and is due for completion in August 2021.

2.2 Loughmacask Link Road

Kilkenny County Council proposes to undertake the construction of the Loughmacask Link Road from the existing R693 Kilkenny to Freshford Road at Talbotsinch, to west of the existing Dunningstown Road at Lousybush, approximately 400m in length, to include a new roundabout at the junction between the new road and the Freshford Road. It is planned that this proposed road will connect directly to the proposed Kilkenny CBS school access road. The construction of the school and both sections of road are planned to run concurrently. Planning application for this scheme under the Part 8 planning process was published on April 23rd 2021 with a final decision expected in July 2021. This scheme is expected to cost Kilkenny County Council €2.4m with balance being funded by Department of Education.

2.3 Breagagh Valley Link Road

This road is approximately 850m in length and is designed to connect the existing Waterbarrack roundabout at the western end of Dean Street, to the new roundabout at the junction of the Circular Road and the Kilmanagh Road (constructed as part of the Western Environs Phase 1 Infrastructure Scheme). The estimated cost of this road is €4.0m. The planning process for this scheme is continuing. Environmental Impact Assessment and Appropriate Assessment Stage 1 screening reports have been completed. A Natura Impact Statement is currently being prepared with an expected completion date of June 2021 (*the screening outcome determined that while a Natura Impact Statement is required for the scheme, a full Environmental Impact Assessment Report was not warranted*).

Subject to the outcome of the Natura Impact Statement report, a preliminary scheme design (including route selection), land purchase, and submission of a Section 177 planning application to An Bord Pleanála for scheme approval is expected during 2022.

2.4 Kilkeny Northern Ring Road Extension

This Scheme provides for the construction of approximately 1.5km of new road which will link the N77 Ring Road at the Castlecomer Road Roundabout, with the R693 Freshford Road, and the northwest of the City to the existing Ring Road. The Scheme will include a new crossing of the River Nore.

Planning approval had been granted for this scheme by An Bord Pleanála in 2014, however a High Court judicial review of this decision was taken by a number of landowners affected by the scheme. The outcome of these court proceedings is that the original grant of approval decision was quashed in late 2018.

Kilkenny County Council has commenced a new planning and design process for the project and are currently liaising with the Department of Transport with respect to same.

2.5 National Road Schemes:

Schemes on the National Road Network are funded 100% by Transport Infrastructure Ireland. Schemes currently at design stage under Transport Infrastructure Ireland's Programme include:-

2.5.1 N24 Waterford to Cahir Scheme

The N24 Waterford to Cahir Project forms part of the N24 national primary route, a strategic transport corridor between the cities of Limerick and Waterford. The route connects major ports as well as a number of urban centres between Limerick and Waterford dispersed along the N24 corridor. The section of the N24 being considered by this project is approximately 60km in length. It extends from the M8 Junction 10 Cahir North Roundabout, north of Cahir in Co. Tipperary, to the southern terminal of the M9 Dublin to Waterford motorway at the Quarry Roundabout, north of Waterford City in Co. Kilkenny.

Phase 1: Concept and Feasibility, of the project was completed in February 2021.

Phase 2: Options Selection has now commenced. Phase 2 is scheduled to take 24 months.

2.5.2. N25 Glenmore to Waterford Scheme

The N25 Waterford to Glenmore Road Scheme is located between two major By-Pass schemes at Waterford City and New Ross. This proposed scheme will link the upgraded N25 New Ross By-Pass and the N25 Waterford By-Pass and is likely to consist of approximately 6.5km of dual carriageway national primary route linking these two existing upgraded sections of the N25. A route corridor has now been selected for the scheme. The scheme will progress through the Stage 3 Design and Environmental stages in 2021 and up to Q2 2022 with advancement through the statutory processes from Q2 2022 to Q1 2023.

2.5.3. N24 Tower Road Junction Improvement Scheme

Planning Approval and Compulsory Purchase Order Confirmation have both been secured for this scheme. The scheme entails works to a 1.8km section of the existing N24 near Piltown. When constructed it shall provide a compact junction at the Tower Road, the closure of the Ink Bottle junction and the provision of a link road between both junctions. The scheme is at advanced tender documentation preparation stage.

Subject to approvals, the tender process for the construction contract will be undertaken in Q3 2021. On completion of this process it is anticipated that construction works are likely to commence on site in Q1 2022 with a construction period of 15-18 months to complete the Scheme.

2.5.4 N24 Carrick Road Improvement Scheme

The proposed N24 Carrick Road Improvement Scheme located near Mooncoin, Co. Kilkenny is approximately 2.2km (northwest - southeast) in length. The scheme involves both offline and online works, approximately 950m of the road scheme will run along the existing N24 and the remaining 1.25km of the scheme requires realignment.

It extends westward from the speed limits in Mooncoin Village to the start of the N24 Piltown 2+1 Scheme at Clonmore. It is expected that the scheme will be submitted to An Bord Pleanála for both Planning approval and Compulsory Purchase Order Confirmation in early Q3 2021.

2.5.5. N77 Ballyragget to Ballynaslee Improvement Scheme

This development will consist of the realignment of a 2.44km section of the N77 to remove a bend immediately to the north of the Glanbia Plant at Ballyragget, County Kilkenny. The proposed development will commence c. 250m south of the Glanbia Plant at Ballyragget and extend northwards to tie in to the recently completed N77 Ballynaslee Realignment Scheme. The works will consist of 1,740m of online realignment and 700m of offline realignment works, with associated drainage, including attenuation pond and swales, fencing, safety barriers, kerb line, signage, and all site development and landscaping works. Compulsory Purchase Order Confirmation was made by Kilkenny County Council in May 2021 and the planning decision under Section 177AE of the Planning & Development Acts is awaited from An Bord Pleanála. It is expected that a planning decision will be made in July 2021.

2.5.6. Pavement Improvement Schemes to be undertaken in 2021

N76 Riversfield to Ahanure North Pavement Improvement Scheme - works will consist of a structural overlay of a combined length of carriageway of 2.55km, drainage improvements, roadmarkings, signage and other associated works. This scheme is at tender evaluation stage and subject to the necessary approvals works are expected to commence in early Q3 2021.

N77 Oldtown to Ballyragget Pavement Improvement Scheme will consist of a structural overlay of a combined length of carriageway of 1.3km, drainage improvements, road markings, signage and other associated works. This scheme is expected to go to tender shortly. Subject to necessary approvals construction works are expected to commence in mid Q3 2021.

2.6. Castlecomer Pedestrian Bridge

Kildare County Council is managing the project on behalf of Kilkenny County Council under a Section 85 agreement. Kenny Plant & Civils Ltd have been appointed contractors for this project since mid Q2 2021. The main works will commence on site shortly and all works are planned to be completed by early December 2021.

2.7 Ferrybank (North Quays SDZ Projects)

2.7.1 Belmont Link Road

A link road is proposed to connect the Abbey Road to the Belmont Road. The construction of this road will assist in developing the potential of the area for future housing and the growth of the City north of the Suir in accordance with the National Development Plan 2040. It is expected that the scheme will go for Part 8 approval in Q3 2021.

2.7.2 Port Road (N29)

It is envisaged that there will be significant levels of growth at Belview Port in the Ro-Ro (*roll on roll off*) and Lo-Lo (*Lift on / Lift off*) sectors in the future. It is considered that the growth of warehousing and logistics service providers will also play a key role in growth of the port.

In recent years, a number of permissions have been secured by the Port of Waterford for wharf expansion and associated port services. However, road access to zoned lands at the present is extremely limited. The upgrade works of the N29 Port Road is an Objective of the Ferrybank-Belview LAP, namely: *Objective 5D To revise the speed limits on the N29 to allow for access to the zoned land south of the L3412; and 5E To provide a roundabout at the Rathculihean/L3412 junction to enable the development of the land in the vicinity, and north of this junction.*

The delivery of the proposed roundabout at the junction of the N29 and L3412 will remove access restrictions to zoned lands, thus open the way for inward investment. The delivery of this proposal is considered critical if Belview Port is to grow to its full potential into the future.

It is expected that the scheme will be brought through Part 8 planning process in Q4 2021.

2.7.3. Greenway Connectivity

The Kilkenny Greenway (from Waterford to New Ross) received Part 8 planning approval in March 2018. The provision of additional connection points to provide for greater access and to facilitate usage of the Greenway (within the environs of Waterford City) as a smarter travel option for those living in the suburban residential developments is an Objective of the Ferrybank-Belview LAP, namely: *Objective 8C: To complete the Greenway and investigate and encourage the creation of access points in any significant future development proposal adjoining the Greenway.*

The development of dedicated access points to the proposed Greenway will create a viable and safe smarter travel option for commuters and school students within the SDZ /Ferrybank area. This in turn will make for a more attractive area to live and work in and one that promotes a sense of community and place.

This will attract private sector inward investment in terms of residential and service sectors opportunities given the availability of lands, infrastructure investment and the pro-active plan led approach. Furthermore, connection to the Greenway in an urban setting will also create opportunities for small business enterprises, targeted at both domestic and overseas visitors, in terms of bike hire, cafes, shuttle bus, accommodation and parking.

It is expected that the proposals will be brought through Part 8 in Q3 2021.

2.7.4. Abbey Road and Belmont road Sustainable Transport Improvements

The proposed improvement works on the Abbey Road & Belmont Road will enhance these approaches to the North Quays SDZ and will fulfil an objective of the Ferrybank-Belview LAP, namely: *Objective 10C: Provide cycle lanes on the following routes (in accordance with the National Cycle Manual (www.cyclemanual.ie): Abbey Road; and R711/Urban Village.*

Abbey Road & Belmont Road Improvement Works will visually improve two of the key approach roads servicing the North Quays SDZ. The works will provide enhanced smarter travel facilities to link residential, commercial, educational and services areas. This will demonstrate that smarter travel is a key priority in the area's urban design, and will deliver an attractive, lived in, active and vibrant urban setting.

It is anticipated that statutory processes and detailed design will be completed in 2021.

2.8 Kilkenny City Road Schemes

2.8.1 Kilkenny City - Active Travel

Kilkenny County Council has recently received funding for a number of active travel projects to increase the use of walking and cycling as a mode of transport within the City. Projects under consideration include improved and segregated cycle lanes on all approach roads, new bridge crossings of the River Nore for the use of pedestrians and cyclists, an inner orbital cycling route and improved connectivity of cycling routes. Ancillary works such as safe school zones, bicycle parking and wayfinding signage will also be provided.

2.8.2 Kilkenny City - URDF

Two tranches of funding have been received under URDF. Schemes outstanding from the first tranche include;

Vicar Street

A one-way inbound traffic flow system will be provided to facilitate widening of footpaths and a contra-flow cycle lane. The proposed works will include undergrounding of overhead services, provision of new public lighting and improved pedestrian crossing facilities.

Feature Lighting

As part of the Kilkenny City Sustainable Lighting Strategy, Kilkenny County Council will install external architectural lighting to highlight key historic buildings, attractive structures and natural features in our City and encourage evening exploration for the visitor.

Off-Street Connectivity

Provision of improved pedestrian and cycling infrastructure to link the Eastern Environs to the City centre via Lady Desart Bridge.

City Demarcation & Gateways

Provision of gateways entering the City centre area to act as a transition zones to drivers so that they reduce speed and pay greater attention to the needs of vulnerable road users.

The second tranche of funding relates to enlivening the City centre and includes;

City Centre Traffic Management Plan

Provision of a traffic management plan to reduce unnecessary through traffic while maintaining access critical to the economic viability of the City. Increased priority for pedestrians and cyclists to include enhanced crossing facilities. Such a plan may consist of one-way streets and either part time or full time pedestrianisation.

Improved Public Realm

Public Realm Enhancement of St. Mary's Lane, St. Kierans's Street, Barrack Lane and the area around Carnegie Library. Enhancement works to include pavement renewal, public lighting upgrade and improved outdoor amenity.

Ormonde Street

Works proposed will consist of improvements to the street and integration into the public realm bringing the area to a standard with existing infrastructure. A one-way system from Patrick Street to the multi-storey car-park and two-way from the car park to New Street is proposed.

2.9 Water Sports Hub Kilkenny City

Under the Platform for Growth funding for Water Based Activity Centres, Fáilte Ireland has a fund of €19m available nationally to assist Local Authorities to develop Water Sports Hubs and further enhance the Tourism offer in Counties. Kilkenny was successful in progressing to Stage 2 of the application process and are proposing to develop a facility on the grounds of County Hall that will also facilitate the large contingent of water based clubs using the River Nore in the City. The overall project cost is estimated to be in the region of €800k and with Fáilte Ireland funding and the previously committed Sports Capital grant there should be limited requirement for any funds from the Council's own resources.

2.10 Public Lighting Retrofit

Kilkenny County Council are the lead Local Authority for the Public Lighting Energy Enhancement Project (PLEEP) for the Eastern Region comprising of 9 Local Authorities. Substantial financial savings will accrue in addition to environmental

improvements, significantly better lighting and safety for all road users and pedestrians. The energy saving target for the project is a minimum of 55% reduction in energy consumption and associated CO² emissions

Consultants have been appointed for the Tendering Phase of the project and the Works Contract for the installation of the 83,500 lanterns is scheduled to be awarded in Q4 2021 with a completion date of 2024 (30-month duration) for the installation of the lanterns. Approximately 50% of the lanterns in Kilkenny have been changed to LED Lanterns and the remaining approximately 5,500 lanterns will be upgraded as part of the PLEEP project

3.0 Flood Relief - KCC Contribution to Minor Works Scheme

Over the course of the last Capital Programme the OPW published the Flood Risk Management Plans for Kilkenny for both the Nore and Barrow Rivers. A National €1 Billion Investment Programme for 118 Flood Relief Schemes was announced in May 2018. Six Flood Relief Schemes were announced for Kilkenny with a total of €29.8 million approved by the OPW. No Council funding is required from Kilkenny County Council. In 2019, an in-house Flood Relief Capital Office was established by Kilkenny County Council to deliver the schemes funded by the OPW.

The OPW fully funded flood relief schemes are listed as follows - Graiguenamanagh, Ballyhale, Thomastown, Inistioge, Freshford and Piltown. The Council commenced in 2020 with planning for the two schemes at Graiguenamanagh and Ballyhale. The Council are liaising with the OPW with a view to commencing planning for the four remaining schemes.

4. Abbey Quarter

Work on Phase 1 of Abbey Quarter is progressing. Mythen Construction Ltd. is on site and delivering the renovation of the Brewhouse to high environmental standards on behalf of Kilkenny Abbey Quarter Development Partnership. Work on the Riverside Park, including the skate park has now been completed and is open to the public. The delivery of significant public realm is required to enable the redevelopment of the Brewhouse and Mayfair in keeping with the Master Plan adopted by the Council. We were successful in attracting funding under the URDF scheme and work has commenced on Horse Barrack Lane and Brewhouse Square and same will be completed in tandem with the Brewhouse building in Q3 2021.

During 2020 we progressed planning for Phase 2 of the public realm in the Abbey Quarter, the urban street and a two and half acre urban park around St. Francis Abbey. A Part 10 planning application was submitted to and approved by An Bord Pleanála. An application for funding under the URDF round 2 call was also successful with total grant funding of €10.4m secured

Funding has also been secured to deliver the Board Walk under Greensbridge to connect the two existing riverside walks. This project is being progressed through the planning process.

5. Kilkenny Greenway

Wexford County Council is the lead authority for the delivery of the Kilkenny Greenway from Waterford to New Ross. This greenway traverses 3 Counties. Work has commenced on the lifting of the tracks and sleepers. The announcement of additional funding of over €7m for the project will enable the main works to be commenced in 2021 with the Kilkenny Greenway due to open in 2022. The potential of linking the Greenway to the villages of Slieverue and Glenmore is currently under investigation. Additional funding will be required when a route is agreed and planning obtained for the links.

6. Libraries

Ambitious plans for the delivery of expanded library services in Kilkenny in line with the national library strategy *Our Public Libraries 2022: Inspiring, Connecting and Empowering Communities*, are well under way. *Our Public Libraries 2022* is an ambitious strategy to develop the public library service over the next five years. Building on technological and service innovations of recent years, it focuses on improving access, use and visibility of the public library and establishing it as the go-to place for a range of sustainable, integrated public services.

The delivery of three capital projects in Kilkenny will support the implementation of this strategy by providing purpose built spaces for My Open Library access and services. The adapted reuse of the Mayfair Ballroom to transform it into a public library will provide a civic space anchor to the Abbey Quarter development. Works on this project will commence in 2021.

Library service delivery and improvement in Thomastown has been challenged by constraints with the library building in the town where opportunities for expansion did not exist. Approval has been secured in 2021 for the redevelopment of a disused community space as a civic library space adjacent to Thomastown's Community Centre and Concert Hall space. This library space will provide Town Centre Library and community facilities into the future for Thomastown and its surrounding areas. The Thomastown library project is at detailed design with construction to commence before year end with an overall project cost of €2.85m. This project will be 90% funded under the Rural Regeneration and Development fund.

Graiguenamanagh library has been referenced in previous Capital Programmes due to the need to refurbish the building. Roof and window replacement works are required here to allow the library service to implement increased service opportunities. Funding has been secured to part fund this project in the amount of €100,000 under the Libraries Minor Capital Works Programme with plans to carry out the required works to commence in 2021.

In all these three capital projects represent an investment of almost €10m in the improvement of facilities to delivery library and other community services in our county. This level of investment will transform our library services and place them at the heart of communities. The recent restrictions under Covid 19 brought into sharp focus the need for local support networks to reach people directly in all communities. Our library service increased activity dramatically during restrictions and will build on those local and on line services as a result of this capital investment.

Under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund a further application will be made in 2021 for the adaptive reuse of the Callan Friary Complex with plans for the inclusion of a new library facility at the centre of that complex. Current library accommodation in Callan is small and restricted from the delivery of expanded library services. To address this need and to ensure the provision of civic services in town centres it is proposed to develop a new library facility at Callan Friary Complex in the next 3 to 4 years subject to the provision of funding for project development.

7. Tholsel Upgrade

The aim of the project is to create a new visitor attraction of scale on High Street in the heart of Kilkenny City by combining a new offering at the City's Town Hall on High Street with a reimagined offering at the Medieval Mile Museum (MMM) including the churchyard on the MMM site and in time the vacant Alms House.

The project involves the further development of the Medieval Mile Museum into a broader attraction incorporating the Town Hall and the Town Hall underground (dungeon) and the Clock Tower. It involves the development of a new visitor attraction of scale to draw more international visitors to the retail heart of Kilkenny, increasing footfall, visitor spend and the number of jobs sustained by the tourism sector in the centre of Kilkenny. A decision on grant funding from Fáilte Ireland is awaited.

8. Fire Services

The National Fire Services Capital Programme 2021 - 2025 has identified a need for the provision of two new fire stations in Kilkenny over the period 2021 to 2025.

Funding has been provided for the delivery of a new station at Urlingford to commence in 2021 at a project cost of €1.7m. A further allocation of €6m has been made to Kilkenny for the provision of a new fire station to service Kilkenny City and environs. Kilkenny County Council will advance plans for the delivery of this significant project for the city during 2021. An additional fire appliance will be provided for the county under the current investment programme in line with the multi-annual replacement of fire engines around the county representing ongoing investment in our emergency services.

The previous capital programme saw the provision of a new station at Graiguenamanagh and two additional fire appliances.

The National Fire Services Capital Programme 2021 - 2025 will support 18 new fire station projects and the provision of 35 fire appliances. Kilkenny will benefit from more than 13% of this national investment in the fire service with the provision of two fire stations and a fire engine. This large investment reflects confidence in our emergency services and will significantly enhance fire and rescue services in the county into the future.

9. Rural Development

Under Kilkenny County Council's capital programme financial provision is made annually to meet match funding requirements under a number of national delivery programmes implementing rural development projects. These funding programmes include Town and Village Renewal (T&VR), the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF).

Under the T&VR Programme for the period 2017 to 2021 funding in the amount of €3.3m has been secured to deliver projects in our rural towns and villages. Kilkenny County Council is required to provide 25% match funding under this programme which represents an amount of €650,000 over the period to 2021. During 2020 additional funding for Covid 19 specific measures to provide outdoor spaces was made available with Kilkenny County Council availing of a further €461,200 in grant allocations to deliver projects to the value of €520,790 for communities around the county. Health checks and project appraisals are being prepared for further works to be delivered in our towns and villages over the next three to five years. This process is done in conjunction with town teams, elected representatives and community and voluntary groups and represents essential investment in the rural areas of our county. Kilkenny County Council has been very successful in delivery under this programme and it is hoped to sustain the recent levels of activity under this programme. As a result, an annual provision in the amount of approximately €165,000 is required for match funding to meet the requirements of this programme and to deliver community infrastructure across the county.

Larger projects incorporating rural regeneration are also being delivered in our county under the RRDF. Since this fund was launched in 2019, Kilkenny County Council has secured support for projects in Thomastown and Callan including car parking, walkways, playgrounds, libraries and cultural buildings. The overall programme cost relating to projects already approved, complete or currently underway is €6.4m of which just over €5.2m is funded by grants under the RRDF with the balance requiring match funding from KCC and partner organisations. The delivery of works already approved and of future project development and delivery under this programme will continue over the next three to five years with a financial provision required to meet match funding requirements in the region of €500,000 per annum.

Between the T&VR and RRDF programmes more than €9m of investment has been secured in our rural areas since 2017. It is our objective to work closely with communities and partner organisations to ensure the successful delivery of ongoing projects including the Sessions House in Thomastown, working with the Design and Craft Council of Ireland, the Motte Field in Callan and the adaptive reuse of the Thomastown Community building as a new Public Library. These projects all provide valuable public infrastructure in our county towns and we will continue to provide projects for consideration under these programmes to develop and support the vibrancy of our towns and villages.

10. Summary

The estimated expenditure on Social Housing, Road and Fire Services projects which are 100% grant funded is as follows:

	€m
Social Housing.....	135.0
Roads	828.0
Fire Services	<u>7.7</u>
Total Estimated Expenditure	970.7m

While all of these projects are 100% grant funded significant working capital facilities will be required to enable delivery of same.

The total estimated expenditure on other projects is €127m as set out in Table 1 below. The balance of funding to be provided for these projects is €32.7m. This figure is estimated based on the current estimated completion costs of the projects. We are currently seeing substantial cost inflation in construction contracts being tendered. Any increase over the estimates will have to be sourced from Council's own funds.

TABLE 1

All Projects Excluding Housing/Fire/Roads (100%)	Total Expenditure	Total Income	Balance to be Funded
	€'000's	€'000's	€'000's
LIHAF	16,154	(11,722)	4,431
AQ General	7,424	(7,045)	380
URDF 2019	9,069	(7,921)	1,148
URDF 2020 - App 1	15,341	(11,853)	3,488
URDF 2020 - App 2	8,854	(6,641)	2,214
URDF Ferrybank	13,826	(10,370)	3,457
Library	6,353	(3,511)	2,842
Tholsel	5,156	(3,397)	1,759
Public Lighting	3,571	(69)	3,502
Greenway	15,300	(15,300)	0
RRDF	6,402	(5,195)	1,206
City Other	3,972	(3,712)	260
ORIS	1,991	(1,612)	379
CIÁR	876	(883)	(7)
KLP Funded	1,435	(1,185)	250
Town & Village	3,332	(3,026)	306
Other - Unfunded	7,950	(850)	7,100
Total	127,005	(94,291)	32,714

Total match funding of €22.65m has been identified as set out in Table 2 below

TABLE 2

	€m
IPB Capital Distribution	4.7
Asset Sales/Other Provision	3.0
Development Contributions	6.45
Term Loan approved by Council not drawn down	5.0
Term Loan approved by Council For public lighting upgrade not drawn down	3.5
Total Match Funding	22.65

The income from development contributions of €6.45m is based on receiving income of €2.3m per annum over the next three years less an allocation of €250k per annum for the Community Capital Facilities Cultural Scheme. The average annual income over the last five years from Development Contributions was €2m.

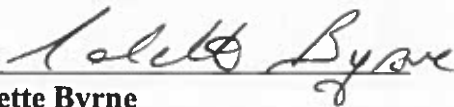
Term loans of €8.5m have been approved by Council but not drawn down. The loan approval of €5m has not been drawn due to Covid related delays on capital projects. The approval of €3.5m specifically relates to the public lighting upgrade and will be drawn down, when the project commences on site.

When these two loans are drawn down the total non-mortgage loan finance being serviced will amount to €27m.

We will focus on investments that are essential to generate and drive economic activity while protecting and promoting our social and cultural objectives and protecting our heritage. In delivering the Capital Programme, a balance is required between borrowings (mindful that every €1m borrowed requires a provision of €70,000 in the Revenue Budget), development contributions and provision in the Revenue Budget.

Once the Capital Programme is agreed this will determine the Council's capital spending plans for the next three years. Any project proposal not contained within the approved Capital Programme can only proceed if alternative funding source is identified and is available or alternatively projects already approved will need to be reviewed.

This three year capital budget will be reviewed on an annual basis having regard to changing circumstances. Should the budgeted funding not meet projections the Capital Budget will need to be adjusted accordingly and Members will be advised.



Colette Byrne
Chief Executive

16th June, 2021

