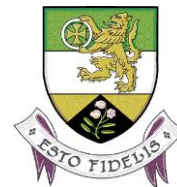


APRIL 2020

MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT



Do: Baill Comhairle Chontae Uíbh Fhailí

To: Each Member of Offaly County Council

Tuairisc mhíosúil bainistíochta a bhreithniú i gcomhair tionóil mí aibreán

Monthly Management Report for consideration at the May 2020 Monthly Meeting.

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS:

A schedule of Chief Executive Orders is included with the Council Agenda.

FINANCE:

Report to the 30th April 2020 – Appendix 1

COVID 19 UPDATES

Roads Programme 2020

In line with Public Health Measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 road works are currently restricted to essential services: *repair/construction of critical road and utility infrastructure*. The service has continued with minimum disruption and planning, design and procurement of schemes for 2020 have progressed as normal with the following schemes to commence on site after the 18th May:

- N52 Tullamore bypass resurfacing works;
- N52 Eglish and N52 Ballindown & Ballynaguilsha TII Capital Maintenance Works;
- TII HD28 NS Pavement Renewals;
- TII HD28 NS Retexturing;
- GeoApp capital works;
- Fencing Retrofit;
- Offaly Greenway Fund Digby Bridge to Ballycommon Bridge (6km) works;
- Low Cost Safety scheme Erry Mills, Clara.

18TH MAY 2020

COVID 19 UPDATES

Planning

A Ministerial Order resulted in an extension of time for a range of specified/appropriate periods and timelines under the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended). In total, such periods were extended by 56 days (8 weeks from March 29th to May 23rd inclusive).

On the assumption that the implementation of Phase 1 of the Roadmap for Reopening Society and Business proceeds as planned, and taking into account national and sectoral Return to Work Protocols, it is expected that this will be the last such Order as sufficient measures will be in place to enable public participation in the planning process to recommence in accordance with planning legislation.

Planning Administration has continued to receive Planning applications and record all correspondence and deal with regular queries. Approximately 100 Applications will commence simultaneously after lifting of Covid 19 restrictions.

The Development Management Planners are assessing/undertaking: planning applications, planning compliance matters, minor pre-planning requests (via email) and planning queries (via email), which can be processed in light of the current Covid 19 restrictions and in accordance with the updated Government guidance.

Please note that works on the construction of the Grand Canal Greenway from Digby Bridge to Ballycommon Bridge (6km) which were due to start on March 30th 2020 were temporarily postponed due to the Covid 19 Emergency Restrictions announced on the 27th of March. This project is funded under the National and Regional Greenway Strategy Fund, 2019 and it is envisaged works will get underway as soon as restrictions are lifted.

Offaly County Council is continuing to deliver the rejuvenation of the retail core of Tullamore town under past funding received from Urban Regeneration Development fund. Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government announced a call for 2020 URDF applications on 13th January 2020. Closing date extended due to Covid 19 restrictions until May 29th, 2020.

The Department of Rural and Community Development has advised that the Town and Village Renewal Programme 2020 has been put on hold and it is anticipated that the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme may also be deferred.

Dates to note;

- | | |
|---|--|
| May 18 th | Planning Site Visits may recommence |
| May 25 th | Partial opening of Public Counters to begin with planning counters in accordance with the sectoral roadmap for reopening. This may be by appointment only to comply with return to work protocols. |
| May 29 th | New closing date for URDF application for Tullamore |
| May 25 th – June 4 th | Time window in which the draft County Development Plan 2021-2027 will issue to members of Offaly County Council |

COVID 19 UPDATES***Environment & Water Services***

All staff from Environment & Water Services have been working throughout the Covid 19 pandemic. A roster has been operating in the Aras to ensure the phones and emails are being answered and processed, and everyone is pitching in, while all remaining staff are working remotely.

All Civic Amenity Sites, bottle banks and Derryclure waste transfer station continue to see increased levels of usage over the past month. All these facilities presently remain open at their normal working hours during the current Covid-19 crisis. Servicing of bottle banks has experienced some pressure points, but we continue to work with our service provider to keep capacity at each location.

The launch of the National Spring Clean week due to take place on Wednesday 1st April was postponed due to the current restrictions in place around Covid-19.

Water Framework Directive sampling programme has been suspended during the current restrictions in place for Covid-19.

The Part 8 process for the Tullamore River Enhancement Project has been extended by Circular Pl 05/2020, the third such order extending planning time periods due to the Covid 19 emergency, this in effect adds an additional 8-weeks public consultation time, up to and including the 23rd May 2020.

The NWCPO continues to provide support to the High Level COVID-19 Waste Management Advisory Group. Given the concerns surrounding the collection and management of waste during the current crisis and the negative impacts that could potentially arise, this group was established by the DCCAE and consists of key stakeholders in the sector. This group monitors issues as they arise and aims to develop appropriate contingency arrangements where possible.

COVID 19 UPDATES

Housing

During this period of Covid-19 the Housing Section has continued to provide critical essential services as set out by the Government during the period of lockdown. We have modified a number of our processes to enable services to continue and ensure that essential repairs, emergency housing allocations, HAP, rent reviews and continued work with persons presenting as homeless and Traveller welfare issues are addressed.

Our housing allocation process was modified, to allow us continue to allocate and conduct pre-tenancy courses, and during March and April 13 allocations, to Council properties, AHB and RAS units, have been completed.

We are continuing pre-letting works on a selective number of properties under the heading of “essential works”. The pace at which houses can be completed has been severely affected due to the restrictions that are required but a number of properties continue to be made available.

During this period Housing staff have successfully assisted many to secure accommodation and have completed 18 HAP tenancies during March and April. Staff continue to provide guidance and support to tenants and, where appropriate, households’ differential rents, for both Council and HAP tenancies, have been recalculated.

Housing have continued to secure additional leased accommodation and are in the final stages of securing a number of leasing properties in both Tullamore and Edenderry.

Working in partnership with the Gardaí, Housing have continued to investigate anti-social behaviour complaints in line with Council policy and tenancy agreements.

In line with essential works, we have assisted contractors to finalise turnkey houses in Cloneygowan and Moneygall and 5 houses will be ready for allocation in the coming days. The Council has also enabled works on 3 houses to be finalised in Crinkle, and have made nominations to the AHB.

We advertised for Expressions of Interest for the provision of Turnkey Developments for Social Housing purposes. Submissions must be received by 12pm on 28th May 2020.

Housing are establishing the AHB Forum and have initiated an *AHB Register of Social Housing Opportunities*.

COVID 19 UPDATES

**Offaly Covid-19 Community Response Helpline**

A call centre was established and has been running from the 30th March 2020. The free phone helpline operates between 8am and 8pm, 7 days per week and is staffed by members of the Community & Culture section alongside Library staff. The helpline receives approximately 100-140 calls per week with most queries resolved within 24 hours. The nature of calls to the helpline are wide-ranging and consist for example, of cocooning members of the community seeking assistance with food, medicine and fuel deliveries; social support & contact and members of the community volunteering their services.

Offaly Community Response Forum

Following the announcements on 27/3/20 by the Taoiseach and the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government, the Offaly Community Response Forum was established. The forum met weekly during April and actively implemented its role of co-ordinating the community supports for vulnerable members of the community or those living alone to get deliveries of groceries, medicine and fuels and to have social contact during the crisis. The forum is made up of over a dozen agencies including An Garda Síochána; Offaly GAA; Offaly PPN; Tusla; OLDC; IFA; HSE; ALONE; SVP; Local Link; Clara Family Resource Centre; An Post; Citizens Information Centre; Civil Defence; Tullamore Family Resource Centre; Offaly Traveller Movement; Kildare Volunteer Centre alongside the Community, Housing, Library and Emergency sections of OCC.

Covid-19 Emergency Fund

On the 11th April 2020 the Department of Rural and Community Development allocated €65,553 in COVID-19 Emergency Funding to Offaly County Council. The grants are for current or capital expenditure and priority is given to locally based community and voluntary groups in disadvantaged urban and rural areas of Offaly dealing directly with the COVID crisis, such as Meals on Wheels and other similar activities. To date a total of 28 groups have received this grant aid totalling €56,950 with further applications in progress through approval and payment stages.

Local Enterprise Office

The Local Enterprise Office Offaly Team are working remotely since 18th March. With the help of Offaly County Council IT and Finance Departments, LEO Offaly has successfully transitioned to remote working. All of our training courses have moved online. Mentoring is being conducted by phone and clients are being contacted by phone, email and video conferencing. There have been two Evaluation & Approvals Committee Meetings enabling grant approvals. Virtual grant inspections are in place, and a range of new products and supports have been launched for Offaly Businesses.

PLANNING

	To end April 2020	To end April 2019	Total 2019
Planning Applications	157	193	628
Extensions of Duration Applications & Assessments	1	7	12
Warning Letters and (Enforcement Notices) issued	2(1)	4 (0)	14 (6)

Planning Administration

Enforcement Officer retired from Service at the beginning of the month after long service.

Forward Planning

The pre-draft Offaly County Development Plan will be submitted to elected members for their consideration in May unless otherwise delayed based on additional Covid-related legislation

REGENERATION

Rural Regeneration Development Fund: (RRDF)

On the 13th December, 2019, the Minister launched a call for proposals under Category 2 of the Government's RRDF, Category 2 of the RRDF supports the early preparatory work of projects. A maximum of 3 projects were allowed per Local Authority and the following projects were submitted by the closing date on the 31st March, 2020.

- **Ferbane Town Regeneration** – public realm enhancements to Fairgreen, Main street and Ballycumber Road, repurposing of St Marys Parochial Hall to library use, cycling and pedestrian paths around Ferbane.
- **Banagher Regeneration Projects** –redevelopment of existing vacant

building into library, digital hub and other civic uses, redevelop existing Marina, public realm works to Central Square and Main Street, masterplan for derelict Royal Shannon Hotel

- **Birr Creative Court** –restore and re-purpose Birr Courthouse into Birr Creative Court, a centre for creative artists in visual, performing and digital arts.

Urban Regeneration Development Fund

The Regeneration team in conjunction with Tullamore Municipal District and other sections are currently working on an application for Tullamore Town Centre to complement the existing successful funded projects.

Outdoor Recreational Infrastructure Scheme: (ORIS)

The Department of Rural and Community Development on 21st February, 2020 published details of projects to be funded under the ORIS. The following 3 projects were successful for Offaly:

- Clara Bog Trail - Connection footpath from Clara to Living Bog Project, Boardwalk
- Derrycastle Lakes and Trails - Development of Derrycastle Lakes and Trails
- Ballycommon to Kilbeggan - Extension to Greenway

Birr Tourism Destination Town

An offer of funding from Fáilte Ireland to develop the tourism potential of Birr as a destination town was received in March, 2020. The project includes

- Orientation & signage
- Street furniture
- Public realm enhancement

ROADS

Local Improvement Scheme 2020

Offaly County Council received an allocation of €278,871 for Local Improvement Schemes from the Department of Rural and Community Development. The scheme was advertised on 29th April and the closing date for receipt of Applications is the 8th May. We have a number of schemes on our list from the 2018 applications and these will be prioritised in the 2020 list.

N52 Tullamore to Kilbeggan Link

Road TII Major Capital scheme is in Phase 2: Option Selection. The first phase Public Consultation through the website, brochures and letter drop will commence in May 2020.

ENVIRONMENT & WATER SERVICES

Water Services

Works on the upgrade of the Tullamore, Birr and Clonaslee Water Treatment plants are due to recommence on a phased basis from May 18th. IW are currently preparing the design for replacement reservoir at Clonbullogue and considering a replacement reservoir at Walsh Island. Dunkerrin Water Treatment Plant Upgrade has reached Practical Completion and is going through its proofing phase at present.

Wastewater

Cloghan and Shinrone storm tanks: The contract has been awarded for both projects, however it will probably be 2021 before the work commences on the ground.

Rural Water Multi Annual Programme 2019-2021

Circular L2/19 was received from the Department on 14th October, 2019 approving funding of €1,839,865 for Offaly. A number of the GWS have completed their works and have received their payment, these include: Eglish, Rath,

Drumcullen GWS, Ballykilkeen GWS, Mount Lucas GWS, Ballinagar GWS, Ballyboy GWS, Mount Lucas GWS works commenced but stopped due to Covid 19, and the Derries Rahan were allocated funding of €51,0000 to extend the public mains with works ongoing.

GWS Subsidies

The amount of €1,167,513.00 has been paid out to the GWS for subsidies in 2019. Annual subsidies amounted to €585,643.00 and advance subsidies €581,870.00.

All GWS were written to in April advising them to complete their subsidy for 2019 and apply for their advance subsidy for 2020, closing date for receipt of applications is 30th June.

Environment

A total of 515 complaints in relation to Environmental issues were made to date in 2020, this is slightly up on the number of complaints received this time last year.

Illegal Dumping

The Regional Waste Management Offices have launched a National and Regional radio ad campaign aimed reducing the levels of illegal dumping. Environment Section continue to investigate all instances of illegal dumping and will issue fines and instigate prosecutions where there is sufficient evidence.

An application has been made to the DCCA for funding under the Anti-Dumping Initiative to clean up some very littered areas and to provide funding for CCTV at bottle banks.

National Spring Clean Week

Offaly County Council continue to support communities and individuals who require assistance. The Council have supported approx. 25 community clean ups and litter picks involving individuals or small groups observing social distancing over the past month.

Water Quality

Detailed submission has been returned to the EPA regarding the 3rd Cycle Characterisation of local rivers under the EPA's River Basin Management Plan.

Tullamore Low Smoke Zone

Environment Section are working with the DCCAE with regards to the geographical extend of the Tullamore Low Smoke Zone which is due to come into effect from September 2020.

Burial Grounds

The cemetery at Kilcoursey, Clara has been subject to a Part 8 process under the Planning and Development Act 2000, (as amended) and is before the May meeting for the approval of the members.

Veterinary Services

Following an approach by Westmeath County Council seeking Offaly County Council to provide a shared service for Veterinary Food Safety Controls in Westmeath an agreement was reached and agreed by senior management and presented and agreed by the Chief Executive to implement this. The section 149 agreement is intended to provide efficiency and effectiveness in the service areas covered. It provides for reviews and will ensure the provisions of food law standards are upheld in both Local Authority areas in the face of cuts to the service budgets in both Local Authorities in 2019 and advised budget cuts for 2020. An advisory function regarding matters concerning legislation around the Control of Dogs and Control of Horses will be provided as part of the agreement under a costed item in the agreement.

NWCPO

Applications Processed and Projections

The NWCPO continues to process waste collection permit applications during the COVID-19 emergency through remote working measures and online

communication tools. The Team are to be commended in their efforts as there has been no significant reduction in service to date. As of 30th April 2020, there are **2,008** granted waste collection permits on the NWCPO register and **210** applications pending. 2020 as projected will be a busy year for the office.

Public Consultation on the "Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy"

The NWCPO is represented on the National Advisory Group on a 'Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy'. This working group is hosted by the DCCAE and consists of a diverse group of stakeholders.

The group aims to assist the DCCAE in formalising national waste policy and a waste action plan. The group has met on seven occasions to date via online video conferencing to explore waste thematic areas such as Market Structure, Food Waste, Waste Enforcement and Construction and Demolition waste. It is envisaged that a new waste policy will be in place in 2020.

HOUSING

April Housing Update

- There are 679 on the Housing Waiting List awaiting housing support at the end of April 2020.
- A further 852 live tenancies currently being supported under the Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) Scheme, 9 signed up for HAP in April 2020.
- At the end of April 2020 there were 19 single people and 6 families in emergency accommodation.
- 5 Rebuilding Ireland Home Loans applications were received in 2020 to date and 2 RIHL have been approved.

Housing Stock – Number, Maintenance & Repair

- Total housing stock at end of March 2020 is 1,896.
- 1,026 maintenance call logged from 1st January to the 1st May 2020

Housing Capital Programme Update

- Chancery Lane, 18 units' works are suspended until further guidance issue from the department.
- An architect led Integrated Design Team has been appointed for the Raheen, Clara development. First draft of design is under review by design team and consultation with council departments is ongoing prior to planning
- Offaly County Council will act as Architect with Design Team consultants who are appointed for the development of Church Street, Clara (3 OPD units); Beechgrove Belmont (7 units); Moneygall (4 units) & Sr. Senan, Edenderry (4 Units). Site investigations on all sites completed.
- Dargan Drive, Chancery Lane (near new Chancery scheme): Consultants to be procured by Offaly County Council as part of new consultant framework for 16-20 units; OCC are acting as Architects; Stage 1 granted on the 5th March 2020.
- Banagher, Kylebeg 18 Units, a second stage 3 submission was made in April 2020
- Circular Road, Daingean 9 units - Stage 2 approval was approved on the 4th December 2019 with a request to increase the number of units. The Part 8 drawings are well progressed and have been revised to take account of the department's request.
- Rectory Lands, Birr – options for consideration are being developed.

Approved Housing Bodies Schemes

- Mid Offaly Housing Association: Mountbolus - 4 units are substantially completed and the AHB have informed the successful nominees when the units will be made available. Works on concluding the houses has been delayed due to Covid 19.
- Oaklee: Clonminch, Tullamore - 19 units, stage 3 approved on the 26th of March. AHB has sought expressions of interest from contractors but tendering of full design may be subject to the lifting of covid restrictions.
- Oaklee: Kearney's Field – 41 Units, AHB has sought expressions of interest from contractors but tendering of full design may be subject to the lifting of covid restrictions
- Cluid Housing: Scurragh, Birr - 6 units – tenants allocated in February 2020.
- AHB - Killane Drive 27 units – Construction halted (delivery was on track for December 2020)
- Sofia Housing: Stage 1 approved for 32 units at Presentation Lands, Portarlinton. Stage 2 submission will issue in May with an additional 7 units.
- Cluid Housing Association are finalising a Turnkey development, of 26 Units, on Rahan Road, Tullamore. Construction was scheduled to start in April 2020.

Turnkey Developments

- MacGregor, Birr: 12 Units – Works currently stopped due to Covid 19, 8 units will be delivered in 2020.
- Advertisement for expressions of interest for further Turnkey schemes issued with a closing date for receipt of applications by 12 noon on 28th May 2020

Housing Grants

A new streamlined single Application Form to cover the three grants available under the Housing Adaptation Grants for Older People and People with a Disability Scheme has been implemented from 1st February 2020. Revised guidance documents for the scheme, have been issued and are available on the Council's website.

The Department advised, in February 2020 that Council's should operate on the same level of funding, as in 2019, which was €1,320,000.

Grants are currently on hold due to COVID 19 and a procedure for reinitiating grants is currently being finalised.

total of 4 LEADER grants were paid out totalling €230,834.93; 4 grants were approved for payment by the Department totalling €172,236.25 and a further 4 grants have passed Article 48 checks totalling €7,934.44.

SICAP (Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme): European Social Fund Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning (PEIL) verification checks have been finalised and submitted to Department of Rural and Community Development as part of the requirements of ESF reporting on the SICAP Programme. The core focus of the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme remains on the most vulnerable groups and individuals in society. The Programme continues to be fully operational with local responses and supports being provided to meet increasing demands. Flexible approaches are being adopted to ensure SICAP resources are utilised effectively in response to the crisis. Collaborations are taking place with all relevant agencies to ensure there is no duplication of resources. Many new activities and actions have been put in place in addition to the SICAP Annual Plan 2020.

LOCAL & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

COMMUNITY

Most members of the Community & Culture Section have been working remotely since lockdown was implemented. However, the team have been very involved in the Community Call response to the crisis and have regular team meetings via Zoom.



Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

No LCDC meeting was held in April however LEADER projects approved at a previous stage are progressing as normal through claim stage to payment. In April, a

Age Friendly Strategy

Following consultation with the Age Friendly alliance in terms of Covid-19, it was agreed that the publication of a newsletter entitled "*Connecting the Faithful*" both in print format and an online version, would prove beneficial in particular to those cocooning and most socially isolated. Members of the Alliance including Library services and Sports Partnership contributed to the publication. Cathaoirleach Peter Ormond launched the Newsletter virtually on 29th April. It is available on the Offaly CoCo. website. An Post agreed to deliver the 4,000 copies across the county free of charge every fortnight. Caillene Loughnane and Emma

McLoughlin are busy compiling material for future issues. Age Friendly Ireland forward daily updates which we distribute via email to a broad range of contacts in Offaly.



Public Participation Network

Offaly PPN has been busy from the onset of Covid-19, compiling information for the Call Centre Master sheet which is an ongoing process. This provides the Call Centre staff with access to contact details for a broad range of supports and services across the county while being mindful of GDPR. The PPN supports the Call Centre by covering as a Team leader on a weekly basis, supporting call centre staff. The PPN worked with BHP insurance to provide cover for Voluntary groups who are providing services in conjunction with the Call Centre. The PPN are represented as a member of the Community Response Forum participating in weekly Zoom meetings. Membership are kept up to speed on developments and new information as it appears via emails, Facebook and Twitter from both a local and national perspective.

Comhairle na nÓg

Short Film: Throughout the year 2019 Comhairle Na nÓg researched and prepared for the creation of a short film produced by Offaly Comhairle Na nÓg in relation to their topic on 'Exam stress and anxiety'. The short film was launched in April 2020

named 'Stress Points'. It was launched online due to current restrictions, and received a positive response due to students being particularly stressed and unsure in relation to exams this year.



Members have been keeping in contact through Zoom and held their first meeting using the available technology. All members were delighted to be able to keep in contact and watch the short film together over Zoom before it was launched.

Offaly Tidy Towns Network

On the 21st April 2020 Minister Michael Ring announced the cancellation of the 2020 Tidy Towns competition in the interests of public health and safety. Tidy Towns volunteers in Offaly are complying with public health guidelines by staying at home and practising social distancing.

Pride of Place 2020

The deadline for receipt of entries for the IPB Pride of Place 2020 competition in association with Co-operation Ireland has been postponed to Tuesday, the 30th of June 2020. Community groups that enter the IPB Pride of Place 2020 competition will be asked to develop and upload a PowerPoint presentation to the POP

website and this will replace the judges visit to the community. Further details will be circulated, regarding presentations and judging in the coming weeks. The Pride of Place awards ceremony is due to be held on 21 November in Kerry.

ARTS

Music Generation Offaly Westmeath

MGOW Tuition moves on-line

MGOW had to stop all person to person tuition as a result of the COVID-19 restrictions and so set about exploring new ways to maintain our connection with our musician team, partners and of the course the many children and young people we work with.

Extensive work has already taken place and now we have Google drives for our primary and youth work teams where they are compiling and gathering resources including videos, worksheets and guides. These are assembled into weekly music letters and circulated. We are also linking in with our Singfesters using this method. In addition, some of our tutors have been conducting virtual instrumental lessons.

Song-writing Workshops

We were due to hold our song-writing selection event on the 12th of March but are now looking to connect with our songwriters and prepare online versions of their songs. This has prompted the preparation of revised child protection and safeguarding statements to include the new scenario of working with young people



virtually.

Quality Framework

Along with all Music Generations, MGOW is in the process of implementing the Quality Framework – a flexible, non-prescriptive Framework which we use as a tool for the consideration and planning for Quality in our own particular context(s). The Quality Framework includes tools and templates that can be used to stimulate discussion about the goals of our work, to explore where we are achieving on our objectives and where we want to develop and grow.

We had already made a good start on selecting an area for review and introducing the musician team to the process and purpose of the exercise. We have been able to refocus our efforts during this time and collectively reflect on our progress, identify needs and next steps.

Sinfonia & Singfest

Sadly, we were unable to hold our Sinfonia concerts, and due to restrictions have already taken the step of letting our participants and musicians know that Singfest will not take place in May as planned. As soon as we can safely start to plan, we will look into how we hold aspects of these events later in the year.

Arts Grants

We are currently assessing the arts grants, with a view to find out if these are going to be taken up by artists / groups etc. In most cases the response is that the group will be rescheduling from Sept. But this may change, and we will reassess the situation in June / July. Working with festival to try to find alternative / online solutions if possible

Exhibition Programme

The exhibition programme for the Atrium has been suspended but we are looking into ways of hosting a virtual gallery space.

FilmOffaly Programme**FilmOffaly Award 2019**

The filming of this award has been postponed until Sept/Oct

FilmOffaly Award 2020

- Applications have been received (80 in total)
- Scripts have been sent to the Script Reader
- Selection approved
- Shortlist completed
- Currently arranging an online workshops and interview process

FilmOffaly Mentoring Programme

New mentoring programme that can be conducted online has been initiated with a call out for mentors and mentees. This project is in conjunction with partner / advisors; Screen Skills Ireland, LEO and ETB.

Culture Night

A call to artists and venues has gone out for Culture Night (Sept 18th) – Responses have been received and are currently awaiting assessment. The Arts Office are considering 2 alternatives for this programme – restricted physical workshops – pending approval or an online response, we will reassess the situation in June / July.

Hullabaloo!

A call to artists for proposals for Hullabaloo! (Oct)) Responses have been received and are currently awaiting assessment. The Arts Office are considering 2 alternatives for this programme – restricted physical workshops – pending approval or an online response, we will reassess the situation in June / July.

Event Co-Ordinator

A call / brief for an event organiser for Culture Night/Hullabaloo! (Oct) was sent out, currently awaiting responses in for

assessment – assessment will be made by the Arts Office, Birr Theatre, and Clare Resource Centre representatives via an online meeting.

Mini-Movies

Has been postponed as conducted in schools – the Arts Office will review as situation progresses

Midland Arts Magazine

Production suspended- working with other partners to see if we can organise an online review. Also looking at possibility of producing an online newsletter (Offaly only) with contributions from artists / arts organisations.

Youth Arts

Working with youth arts facilitator Oisín Robbins to consider on-line solutions, which will include contact with young people through the school's network to include:

- Questionnaire / resource packs for young people – has been distributed via class teachers as an assignment
- Arts Quiz
- Application to join a Youth Arts Forum (when things are back to normal)

The report *The Makings Fostering Youth Creativity* is with the editor – quotes requested to design and print with publication 2nd half of the year, or early next year.

Anam Beo

The intergenerational music project with Andy Spearpoint is currently on hold as engagement for this project is with older people and young people (between 16 – 24 years) and a focus on the mental health and well-being of each demographic. Will work with Andy to see if there are any ways we can progress the project.

Public Art

Jessica Traynor who was awarded the Banagher Public Art Literature Commission continues to develop links within the community to develop her oral history recording project, schools' writing and choral workshops, mentorship opportunities for local writers and events in conjunction with the That Beats Banagher Festival



Due to the restrictions Jessica is trying to contact people who attended her first workshops to see if these can be continued as online workshops.

Lough Boora

The Deep Mapping project is nearing completion – the final report will be available shortly



The funding from the Arts Council (ITC) for a research project with Mayo County Council and Visual Artists Ireland is progressing – currently finalizing the tender document in conjunction with the other

partners. Call out for researcher will be sent out shortly.

Creative Edenderry

Working with Voluntary Arts Ireland to develop an online solution to progressing project. Currently planning an online group meeting with people who attended the first meetings, with a view to set up online workshops, mentoring sessions and network.



Birr Writer's Retreat

Programming continuing – call out for writer's was sent out – residency postponed until Sept.

Tullamore Community Arts Centre

Exploring operational planning plus plans for initial programming for the Arts Centre ASAP.

Online Communication Strategy

We continue to engage the public and artists through our online and social platforms, Facebook, twitter and our extensive email distribution databases, some topics covered in April include:

- Offaly Artists encouraged to share their work to Offaly Arts – Visual & Music
- National Poetry Day - Offaly Arts Facebook – Offaly Poets Work shared for the day.

- Artists Advice – How to guide – i.e. How to hold classes on zoom, how to apply for supports etc.
- Public Interest – i.e. Sharing of online virtual tours, drama shows, dance shows, creative writing forums, arts activities for children

SPORTS

Funding

Dept. of Children & Youth Affairs – playground capital (€26,250k across three locations)

Sport Ireland Dormant Accounts – 2020 application submitted. Six streams applied for:

1. South Offaly sports hub (€20k);
2. Daingean sports hub (€60k);
3. Urban outdoor adventure (BMX/mountain bike programme for Birr Outdoor Education Centre - €45k);
4. Youth leadership (€15k);
5. Community volunteer supports (swim instructor qualifications for people working with people with disabilities - €15k);
6. Sports inclusion disability programme capital supports (€15k)

Healthy Offaly

Delivery of a number of the actions outlined within the work plan have been impacted as a result of Covid 19 measures: -

Action 1 - fit class (Offaly SP): in school delivery of action deferred; however online fit class resource developed

Action 2 – building healthier communities (Offaly Local Development Company): 12 of 14 action elements commenced

Action 3 – grow your own (Offaly Local Development Company): three of six action elements commenced. Remaining three action elements amended to reflect the impact of Covid 19 measures

Action 4 – eco places as spaces of health and wellbeing: one of 14 actions commenced. Delivery of remaining 13 actions deferred

Community engagement –

- quotes for merchandise sourced and reviewed; however, purchase of merchandise deferred
- web page under development
- two community transformation programmes supported
- sites identified to pilot Healthy Ireland Offaly community retail branding scheme
- action element relating to LGBTI deferred

Community mental health fund –

- service level agreement to be signed between Offaly LCDC & family resource centres in relation to delivery of community mental health supports for disadvantaged families
- delivery of therapeutic physical activity programmes for people with disabilities via Offaly Sports Partnership's sports inclusion development programme deferred
- delivery of parenting supports deferred
- delivery of Mojo supports deferred

Programmes

Staff of the Sports Partnership, the South Offaly sports hub and partner agencies (FAI and Leinster Rugby via their development officers) continued to deliver sport and physical activity programmes across the county until Covid 19 measures were enacted. Key programmes delivered prior to the enactment of Covid 19 measures included: -

Community Sports Development Officer Programme

- Recreational sport programmes for older adults – chair volleyball and pickleball
- Recreational sport programmes for women – basketball and ladies football



Action from the community sports development programme

Sports Inclusion Development Programme

- Six-week activator pole programme for older adults
- Six-week multi-sport programme for people with intellectual disabilities
- Gym programme for people with sensory disabilities
- Rock steady boxing for people with Parkinson's
- Boccia blitz for people with disabilities



Action from Sports Inclusion Development Programme

LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE

Trading Online Voucher (eCommerce) Grants Available

The voucher is a financial incentive to small businesses to develop or enhance their ability to trade online. Under the scheme a qualifying business may apply for funding to a maximum value of €2,500 or 90% of eligible expenditure (exclusive of VAT), whichever is the lesser. Following approval of their application, a successful applicant can engage suppliers and upon completion of the work, submit a request for payment to the LEO in line with the terms and conditions of their voucher. One to one mentoring and information seminars are available online or by conference call to prospective applicants to support them in their application process and it will be a condition of applying for the vouchers that applicants participate in one of these mentoring sessions or seminars. The mentoring attendees will be informed of the purpose of the scheme and how best to use and get value from the application of the voucher. The application process for the vouchers will be a competitive process.

The vouchers are targeted at businesses with the following profile:

- Limited or no e-commerce presence;
- 10 or less employees;
- Turnover less than €2m;
- Applicant business must be trading for at least 6 months;
- Business are located in County Offaly.

Continuity Voucher

The new Business Continuity Voucher is now available through Local Enterprise Office Offaly and is open to sole traders and companies across every business sector locally that employ up to 50 people. The voucher is worth up to €2,500 in third party consultancy costs and can be used by companies and sole traders in Offaly to develop short-term and long-term strategies to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic. The goal is to help business owners make informed decisions about what immediate measures and actions should be taken to protect staff and sales.

The scheme is open to all types of businesses, across all industries and sectors that employ up to 50 people. To apply, companies or sole traders fill out a short application form and submit it directly to Local Enterprise Office Offaly by e-mail. When a company is issued with a voucher for third party consultancy, they begin working directly with a qualified expert, selected from existing Local Enterprise Office and Enterprise Ireland panels.

Remote Spring Business Training Courses

The Local Enterprise Office Offaly has launched the COVID 19 Business Training Courses. Booking is now available for a number of courses such as Remote Start your Own Business Course, Remote Digital marketing for Business, Remote Training - Forecasting and risk management in an

uncertain world, Vat Returns and Submissions, A Beginner's Guide To Using Instagram To Market Your Business, How to plan a new website for your business, How to create marketing videos on a budget, How to create marketing videos on a budget and Remote Training Marketing Strategy ReBoot Camp.

Remote Mentoring Sessions

The Local Enterprise Office Offaly has launched a number of free mentoring sessions to assist businesses through the Covid 19 crisis. Please book online to arrange a mentoring session. The types of mentoring available are Covid 19 - Remote Mentoring - Business, Finance, Banking Supports & Advice, Covid-19 Remote Mentoring on Human Resources, Covid 19 - Remote Mentoring - Business Planning, Covid 19 - Remote Mentoring - Social Media Strategy, Covid-19 Remote Mentoring on Microfinance Loans and Trading Online Voucher One to One Mentoring - Phone or Video Call,

Microfinance Ireland loans

The COVID-19 Business Loan from Microfinance Ireland is a government initiative to support small businesses with less than 10 employees through the current period of uncertainty and protect job creation or sustainment in Ireland. Loans from €5,000 – €50,000 up to 3 years. First 6 months – 0% Interest & Zero repayments. Reduced interest rate 4.5% APR for LEO applications.

If your business is impacted or may be impacted by COVID-19 resulting in a reduction of 15% or more in actual or projected turnover or profit, AND you are having difficulty in accessing finance from commercial lending providers, the MFI COVID-19 Business Loan may be able to help your business. Local Enterprise Office Offaly will provide assistance with MFI applications.

LEO Feasibility Grant Call

Feasibility grant towards prototype development & research available - Next closing date 30th June. Feasibility/Innovation Grants are designed to assist the promoter with researching market demand for a new product or service and examining its sustainability. It includes assistance with innovation including specific consultancy requirements, private specialists, design, and prototype development. Feasibility grant towards prototype development & research available.

LEO Financial Supports

Priming, Business Expansion & Feasibility grants are available for eligible businesses. Local Enterprise Office Offaly offers a wide range of financial assistance to help you start up your business or grow your existing business. We provide a free information and advisory service to new and existing entrepreneurs on all aspects of setting up and running a business. For further information, please visit www.localenterprise.ie/Offaly/.

Upcoming Events**Food Starter programme - Remote**

The Remote 'Food Starter programme' is a short four half day programme designed to help those with a food idea or those at a very early stage of starting up a food business (typically the first 24 months). The objective of the four half day is to provide the participants with a base knowledge of what is involved in setting up a food business.

The content is designed to provide you with information which will allow you to avoid the pitfalls normally associated with this journey. While certain aspects of the programme are relevant to those setting up cafes/restaurants, the core programme content is designed for those producing food to be sold through third parties i.e.

food producers. The workshops are run over four half days from 2.00pm – 5.30pm

- Wednesday, 20th May
- Friday, 22nd May
- Wednesday, 27th May
- Friday, 29th May

NEW ONLINE FOOD PROGRAMME SET TO GROW IRISH PRODUCERS

An innovative new online food programme, from the Local Enterprise Offices, is set to boost the number of Irish food start-ups. The Digital School of Food is the first of its kind in Europe and gives food entrepreneurs expert advice and guidance, from their home, office or kitchen.

The programme will give food entrepreneurs an education in planning a product journey and route to market, through thinking about finance and how to grow sales, right up to expanding the business. It includes support from experts in the field as each course has a real producer who contributes tips and advice throughout. The programme includes contributions from trade buyers in Supervalu, Musgraves and Spar.

New Frontiers Phase 1 2020 - OPEN FOR APPLICATIONS

New Frontiers is the national programme designed to develop entrepreneurs. It is delivered on behalf of Enterprise Ireland by Institutes of Technology and Universities across Ireland. The programme's primary purpose is to accelerate the development of sustainable new businesses that have strong employment and growth potential and contribute to job creation and economic activity in regional locations. It is open to business ideas from across all sectors including food & consumer products; information & communication technology; engineering & electronics; medical devices; biotechnology; pharma, digital media; cleantech/renewable energy; and eligible internationally-traded services.

Anna Marie Delaney, Chief Executive

Appendix 1

Offaly County Council
Revenue Account Grant Income & Payroll Summary
To 30th April 2020

OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL	Full Yr Budget 2020 €m	Preliminary Value to April 2020 €m	% Year To Date
Payroll costs	27.07	8.79	32.5%
Grants and Subsidies Income	34.94	8.35	23.9%

OCC to 30th April 2020

	<u>Rates</u> €m	<u>Rents</u> €m	<u>Loans</u> €m
Opening Balance Jan 1, 2020	2.43	0.73	0.32
Invoices/Adjustments	14.63	2.02	0.11
2020 Cash Collected to end of April	3.28	2.13	0.19
Closing Balance April 30th, 2020	13.78	0.63	0.24

2019 Cash collected to April

	3.77	1.97	0.17
% Collection at this point in 2019	87%	108%	113%

Bank Overdraft to 30th April 2020

	-	-
Number of days Overdrawn in Bank year to date	21	17%
Overdraft Interest and non-conforming charges to April 30th 2020 YTD		€10,564
Bank Administration and transactional charges to April 30th 2020 YTD		€12,505