

DECEMBER 2019

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 Eanair

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

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS:

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

FINANCE:

Report to the 31st December 2019 – Appendix 1

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

OFFALY ARTS GRANTS CALL NOW OPEN

Closing date for all schemes is Friday 31 January 2020. Guidelines and Application forms can be downloaded from the Offaly County Council website

LOCAL ENTERPRISE WEEK 2020

Save the Dates! From 2nd - 6th March there will be a range of free events on throughout the county. You won't want to miss out so mark your diaries now!

2020 COUNTY ENTERPRISE AWARDS – OFFALY BUSINESSES CHANCE TO SHINE!

Applicants must employ 10 or less employees on a full time equivalent basis as at 31/12/2018. Complete the application form and submit with a copy of the business accounts, and any other supporting information such as sales brochure, photographs, business plan. Closing date is Wednesday 5th February 2020 at 4pm.

REPORT AT A GLANCE

Housing

33 houses at Blundell Wood, Edenderry were completed in early December 2019. Houses were allocated, pre-tenancy training course held and keys were distributed to tenants on 12th December 2019. The official opening of the estate will be arranged over the coming weeks.

Public Participation Network

On the 4th – 5th December 2019, Green Offaly hosted a “Future Farming Forum” event in the Bridge House Hotel, Tullamore. The event was well attended by members of the farming community in Offaly and Guest Speakers explored the impacts, challenges and opportunities of the changing climate to farming.

Built Heritage Investment Scheme & Historic Structures Fund 2020

The Built Heritage Investment Scheme seeks to encourage the leveraging of private capital to invest in a number of small scale, labour intensive projects to repair and conserve Protected Structures and Proposed Protected Structures and in certain cases, for the conservation of structures. Closing date for all schemes is Friday 31 January. Guidelines and Application forms can be downloaded from the Offaly County Council website.

PLANNING

	To end Dec 2019	To end December 2018	Total 2018
Planning Applications	628	597	597
Extensions of Duration Applications & Assessments	12	13	13
Warning Letters and (Enforcement Notices) issued	14 (6)	35(2)	41 (8)

Grand Canal Greenway

- Works are continuing on the Ballycommon to Kilbeggan link of the Grand Canal Greenway. This relates to a 4km stretch from Ballycommon to the Wood of O Bridge. This stretch will be complete by the end of January. A decision is awaited regarding further ORIS funding to allow further works towards Kilbeggan.
- A contractor has been appointed in respect of 6kms of the Grand Canal Greenway from Digby Bridge to Ballycommon Bridge. This section is funded under the National and Regional Greenway Fund. (Department of Transport Tourism and Sport, (DTTAS))
- Works on the Grand Canal Greenway in the Tullamore Environs from Cox's Bridge, Tullamore to Srah Bridge, Ballydrohid (2km) are also expected to commence in early 2020. This section is funded under the URDF for Tullamore.
- The Part 8 for the extension of the Grand Canal Greenway from Turraun to Shannon Harbour (16km) is at an advanced stage of preparation and is expected to be published in February 2020.

HOUSING**Housing Update**

- 33 houses at Blundell Wood, Edenderry were completed in early December 2019. Houses were allocated, pre-tenancy training course held and keys were distributed to tenants on 12th December 2019. The official opening of the estate will be arranged over the coming weeks.
- At the end of December 2019 there were 25 single people and 6 families in emergency accommodation. The Peter McVerry Trust were awarded the Housing First Tender for the midland counties of Offaly, Laois, Westmeath and Longford. The tender documentation is currently being finalised.
- 148 allocations were completed in 2019 - 106 allocations to Local Authority units; 24 allocations to RAS/Leasing units; and, 18 nominations to Approved Housing Bodies.
- 13 Mortgage to Rent applications were finalised in 2019.
- 30 Rebuilding Ireland Home Loans applications were received to date; 15 RIHL have been approved; 8 loans paid to date.

Housing Capital Programme Update

- Council staff continue to work with the Contractors to finalise Chancery Lane, Tullamore (18 units), completion is due in March 2020.
- The Council are processing the successful tender for an architect led Integrate Design Team received for the Raheen, Clara development.
- Design Team consultants, Malone O'Regan Consulting Engineers; Hayes Higgins Partnership M&E; and, Kane Crowe Kavanagh Quantity Surveyors were appointed for the development of Church Street, Clara

(3 OPD units); Beechgrove Belmont (7 units); Moneygall (4 units) & Sr Senan, Edenderry (4 Units). An Initial Design Team meeting was held on 4th December 2019 to progress the projects.

- 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 Council has forwarded nominations to the AHB.
- Oaklee: Clonminch, Tullamore - 19 units, Part 8 Planning approved by the members at the July Council meeting, stage 3 (approval to go to tender) to be submitted in January 2020.
- Oaklee: Kearneys Field – 41 Units, Part 8 Planning approved by the members at the April Council meeting, project will proceed to a 2 stage tender process when transfer of lands to Oaklee conclude in January 2020.
- Cluid Housing: Scurragh, Birr - 6 units substantially completed and the Council has forwarded nominations to the AHB.
- Tuath: Killane Drive, Edenderry - 27 units, construction commenced in September 2019, delivery Q4, 2020.
- Sofia Housing: 32 units at Presentation Lands, Portarlinton, Stage 1 approval was received in January 2019, their design team is appointed and meetings with the Department have been held. Stage 2 will issue in early 2020.

Housing Grants

The Department provided approval in the sum of €1,600,000 for 2019 Housing Grants. Accordingly, Offaly County Council's 2019 contribution towards the grants increased to €320,000. 81 Housing Aid for Older Person grants, 19 Mobility Aid grants, and 70

Housing Adaption grants were paid out. 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 will be implemented from 1st February 2020. Revised guidance documents for the scheme, will also issue.

ROADS

The Roads Programme 2019 is complete throughout the County with all grant claims successfully submitted to the TII and Departments.

Offaly County Council received the 2020 National Roads Allocation of €3,150,855 from the TII. The allocation includes funding for the N52 Tullamore to Kilbeggan Link major scheme and N62 Cloghan to Derrinlough minor works scheme. €1.5m has been allocated for pavement schemes and €500,000 for Road Safety Improvement Schemes.

We will be notified of the grant allocation for the Regional and Local roads in the County in January. The 2020 Roads Programme will be prepared for March 2020.

ENVIRONMENT & WATER

Environment

A total of 964 complaints in relation to waste and litter were investigated in 2019.. Legal proceedings were instituted in 9 cases resulting in 4 convictions with the remaining cases ongoing. A new bottlebank has been put in place at Kilclonfert, opposite the Community Centre.

Water Quality

Water Framework Directive – EPA meeting with Local Authorities was held on 9th January to review the outcomes of the 2019 programme and roll out the National River Water Monitoring Programme for 2020.

Water Services Capital Projects

Works are progressing at Tullamore, Birr and Clonaslee.

Rehabilitation works at Clonin will proceed in 2020 while Croghan & Newtown are at design stage.

IW are currently preparing the design for replacement reservoir at Clonbullogue.

FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

Fire Service Operations

Revised Monthly Operational Incidents attended by Offaly County Council Fire & Rescue Service in 2019:

Fire Station	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Apr-19
Tullamore	24	13	19	24
Edenderry	19	21	15	14
Clara	11	4	7	3
Birr	13	9	12	11
Ferbane	2	8	7	3
Total	69	55	60	55

Fire Station	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19	Aug-19
Tullamore	14	10	14	19
Edenderry	11	4	12	19
Clara	5	5	5	4
Birr	7	6	8	6
Ferbane	5	0	8	3
Total	42	25	47	51

Fire Station	Sep-19	Oct-19	Nov-19	Dec-19
Tullamore	17	27	18	7
Edenderry	12	14	12	15
Clara	3	7	4	5
Birr	10	5	7	7
Ferbane	2	2	4	0

Total	44	55	45	34
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Fire Station	Total 2018	Total 2019
Tullamore	223	206
Edenderry	216	168
Clara	79	63
Birr	114	101
Ferbane	58	44
Total	690	582

Fire Prevention & Building Control

Applications Received	Total 2018	Dec 2019	Total to date 2019
Fire Safety Certificates Received	55	0	61
Planning Referrals Received	95	1	99
Disability Access Certification Received	31	7	45
Fire Services Act Inspections	99	6	144
Commencement Notices Received	172	6	197
Building Control Inspections	53	12	207
Certificates of Completion of Compliance Issued	45	8	33

LOCAL & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

The LCDC met on 12th December 2019. Agenda items included Rural Development LEADER Programme 2014 – 2020 and Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) 2018 – 2022. The SICAP Annual Plan 2020 was presented to the members and agreed and approved in principle. The 2019 SICAP Case Study was presented to the members in video format and demonstrated the difficulties encountered by persons with disabilities and members of the wider community from dog fouling. The outcomes of the project showed excellent collaboration between the community and the agencies involved with a commitment by the Council to follow up on issues identified.

Age Friendly Strategy

Creating a great place in which to grow old is the aim of the World Health Organisation (WHO) inspired movement to cater for an ageing population, with Ireland leading internationally in rolling out the programme. On Monday 16th December 2019, the Cathaoirleach of Meath County Council, Wayne Harding, welcomed the Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar TD and Alana Officer, WHO, to Slane Castle to formally recognise the response of all 31 Local Authority led Age Friendly Programmes with a presentation of charters. Bridie Costello- Hynes, Offaly Age Friendly Coordinator accepted the charter on behalf of Offaly Age Friendly Alliance.



Public Participation Network

On the 4th – 5th December 2019, Green Offaly hosted a “Future Farming Forum” event in the Bridge House Hotel, Tullamore. The event was well attended by members of the farming community in Offaly and explored the impacts, challenges and opportunities of the changing climate to farming. Guest speakers on the day included Alastair McKinstry – Climate Scientist at the Irish Centre for High End Computing (ICHEC) in NUIG; Donal Sheehan – The BRIDE Project – Biodiversity Regeneration in a dairying Environment; Sean O’Farrell – Farming for Nature – Ambassador Farmer; Ailbhe Gerrard – Brookfield Farm – Winner of the RDS Sustainable Farming, Sustainable Living Awards 2019; and Richard Scally – IFA – Farming in a Changing Environment.

Noel Gavigan, Executive Officer – Irish Bioenergy Association who spoke about the role of Anaerobic Digesters and BioGas as a potential income source in farming.

Comhairle na n’Óg

The last meeting of the year was held for Comhairle na n’Óg on the 4th of December 2019. The members reflected on a busy year some of the high lights being attending the Dáil as part of the Dáil na n’Óg and also a successful AGM held on the 15th of October. The Agenda for next year was also discussed and the group are looking forward to hard work and fun in 2020 with some exciting topics to work on. A meeting was held on the 11th of December 2019 for new members to join Comhairle na n’Óg. Existing members took the time to introduce them to what Comhairle na n’Óg is all about and discuss the agenda for next year.

Music Generation Offaly/Westmeath

In total MGOW musicians were involved in over 70 performances across 10 days in the run up to Christmas Eve 2019. Some of the highlights of the programme included the Tullamore intergenerational ukulele group performing with the choir of St. Joseph’s NS in Tullamore Hospital and local schools were again invited by Tullamore Parish to be part of their annual Carol Service.

DES Innovation Week

We were delighted to be invited to perform as part of the Department of Education and Science’s new initiative, Innovation Week. Over the course of a week, employees of the DES have the chance to find out more about the DES’s work through a range of activities and events. As part of the programme, an invitation was issued to Music Generation and in turn to MGOW. We brought a school to perform in the DES Tullamore office and members of our Mullingar Music Jam were bussed down to perform in the DES Athlone office. (See <https://bit.ly/2s19zH0> for further details.)



Singfest

Planning is underway for Singfest 2020. We are planning a small expansion to the Singfest programme of events with the introduction of a day planned specifically for our youngest participants. We will be working with the Sage, Gateshead on introducing the *Big Sing for Little Voices*.

Sinfonia

Sinfonia developed in partnership with Maynooth University met for its last rehearsal of 2019 in Athlone IT.

Arts

The Arts Office continued to progress a very busy programme through December.

Lough Boora

Environmental artists Tim Collins and Reiko Collins from Scotland continued to conduct research in consultation with stakeholders of the sculpture park. The public presentation and



discussion which was held on Friday Nov 29th at St Joseph's Community Centre, Kilcormac, will form part of the community feedback for a deep-mapping project and seminar. The writing up and editing of the report continued throughout December

Anam Beo

The Arts Office working in partnership with Anam Beo, the HSE and Music Generation, commissioned musician Andy Spearpoint to develop an intergenerational music project. Engagement with older people and young people (between 16 – 24 years) is a prerequisite, with a focus on the mental health and well-being of each demographic. Andy continued to make contact with groups in Clara, for programming to begin early in 2020. It is also planned that this initiative will also have an outcome that will be able to link into the Bealtaine Festival 2020.



FilmOffaly Programme

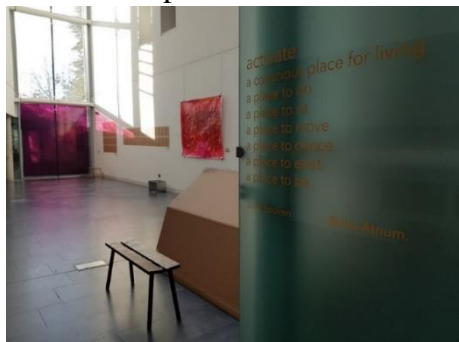
On Location - Two films were on location during November/December. The Arts office continued to support enquiries with regards location and information pertaining to FilmOffaly.



Wormhole in the Washer by local filmmaker—Padraic Keane on location at Loughton House Estate & Gardens – Photo Kenneth Cassidy)

Exhibition Programme

The exhibition for October –December was ‘A Conscious Place for Living’ by Julie Spollen. The exhibition uses themes of Places, Engagement, Personal & Community Narratives to promote access to artistic



expression that enables societal inclusion. The exhibition forms one element of a collaboration with visual artist Rowena Keaveny into the research of a Creative Charter by Older People for Older People; Spaces – Identity Participation Equality, in partnership with individual Offaly Active Age Groups and relevant support networks.

Public Art

Jessica Traynor who was awarded the Banagher Public Art Literature Commission hosted a free public creative writing workshops in November and 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.

Creative Edenderry

Creative Edenderry facilitated by Voluntary Arts Ireland has continued to progress the Open Conversations held with individuals and local community groups in Edenderry. A report and recommendations for next steps has been finalized by VAI, for a progression plan to be developed early 2020.

Capital Projects

Tullamore Community Art Centre Committee continue to meet to discuss further operational plans and fundraising.

Edenderry Library and Arts Space

The Arts Office worked in collaboration with the county librarian to develop a specification for a multi-purpose arts space to be incorporated into the planning of the new library for Edenderry.

LIBRARY SERVICES

More Magic Tables for Offaly Libraries

Offaly Library Service have been successful in securing funding from the Department of Rural and Community Development for the installation of four more magic tables for the County. 25%



matched funding was provided by Offaly County Council. These projectors are designed to support those living with dementia and for children with specific additional learning requirements. The existing Magic Table situated in Tullamore Library has been fully booked since its launch in September.

DRCD Funding Opportunity for Sensory provision in Libraries

The Department of Rural and Community



An Roinn Forbartha
Tuaithe agus Pobail
Department of Rural and
Community Development

Development has just recently announced a funding opportunity of €20,000 for public libraries for the provision of sensory facilities and equipment. This is an area that Offaly Libraries have been actively researching and delivering staff training and community engagement in through our recent Dormant Accounts Funding Project, *Autism Friendly Offaly Libraries*. Good foundations in this area have already been laid through our very successful sensory

story-time programme and lecture series of 2019. Offaly Libraries look forward to submitting an ambitious proposal for sensory facilities and equipment for the benefit of Offaly communities.

Healthy Ireland at Your Library

Phrase 3 of the national library programme *Healthy Ireland at Your Library* is currently being rolled out in Offaly Libraries. An extensive programming schedule is planned and additional stock recommended by Healthcare professionals is on its way to each of our eight libraries. The health focus for this year will be sexual health. Quality book stock will support individuals and parents to open discussions on this topic, in a confident and well informed manner.

The full programme of events in all libraries will be posted on our website at www.offaly.ie/libraries.



Libraries in the Media: Watch this space!

A national advertising campaign in celebration of public libraries will kick off on 20th January 2020. The campaign will comprise of national radio, cinema, digital and social media advertising. The fundamental objective is to get more people to visit, use, and join their library in the coming twelve months. And for them to tell their friends to do the same! Save the date of **29th February 2020** for follow-up library events.

LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE

Tullamore - Finalist at the Bank of Ireland



2019 National Enterprise Town Awards

Tullamore Chamber of Commerce, Offaly County Council, and LEO Offaly were well represented at the National Final held in Kilkenny. While unsuccessful on the night, the group had the opportunity to showcase many of Tullamore's strengths at the judging event that took place in October.

National LEO Network received the "Best Local Government Support to Business Award" at the 2019 InBusiness Recognition Awards

This award recognises the Local Enterprise Office efforts, supports and achievements in 2019.

China delegation from Luzhou, China

Orla Martin, Head of Enterprise in LEO Offaly presented an overview of economic and tourism opportunities in Offaly at the event for a delegation from Luzhou, China. The delegation from Luzhou, a city with a population of over four million, travelled to Tullamore Municipal District in order to discuss cooperation in the fields of economy, trade and tourism.

A memorandum of understanding was signed linking Tullamore with the city of Luzhou in China at Tullamore Municipal District offices by Mayor Linxing of the city of Luzhou and the Cathaoirleach of Tullamore Municipal District Councillor Frank Moran.

Upcoming Events and New Initiatives 2020 County Enterprise Awards – Offaly Businesses Chance to Shine!

In order to qualify to enter the County Enterprise Awards, Offaly business must have received funding from the Local Enterprise Office. Applicants must employ 10 or less employees on a full time equivalent basis as at 31/12/2018. Complete the application form and submit with a copy of the business accounts, and any other supporting information such as sales brochure, photographs, business plan. Closing date is Wednesday 5th February 2020 at 4pm.



Brexit Customs Workshop - Monday, 24 February 2020

The Customs Export & Import Procedures workshop will take place in the Tullamore Court Hotel on Friday 18th October. It covers how export and import customs procedures on trade with 'Third Countries' apply, how tariffs work and the need to correctly classify your goods.

Attendance is free but early booking is essential. These workshops are fully funded by DBEI, through Enterprise Ireland and are delivered by Export-Edge Training, on behalf of Local Enterprise Office Offaly.

Anna Marie Delaney, Chief Executive

Local Enterprise Week 2020



LOCAL
ENTERPRISE
WEEK 2020
Making It Happen
02-08 March

Save the
Dates!
From 2nd
- 6th
March

there will be a range of free events on throughout the county. You won't want to miss out so mark your diaries now!

LEO Outreach Offices: By Appointment

Birr: Thursday mornings
Edenderry: Tuesday afternoons
Ferbane: Wednesday mornings
Portarlington: First Wednesday morning of the month

Innovation Vouchers - open call

Open call for applications continues for 2020. Standard €5k vouchers are available to assist a company explore a business opportunity or problem with a registered knowledge provider.

Free Business Advice Sessions on eCommerce Grants

A 45 minute one-to-one sessions on how to set up an ecommerce website and avail of grants will be held on Thursday 30th January 2020. Up to €2500 available!

Appendix 1

Revenue Account Grant Income & Payroll Summary to 31st December 2019

	Full Yr Budget 2019 €m	Preliminary Value to December 2019 €m	% Year To Date
OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL			
Payroll costs	25.51	25.94	101.7 %
Grants and Subsidies Income	26.87	34.60	128.7 %

OCC to 31st December 2019

	<u>Rates</u> €m	<u>Rents</u> €m	<u>Loans</u> €m
Opening Balance Jan 1, 2019	2.21	0.92	0.39
Invoices/Adjustments	14.57	6.05	0.41
2019 Cash Collected to end of December	14.48	6.31	0.52
Closing Balance December 31st, 2019	2.30	0.67	0.28

2018 Cash collected to December

	14.72	6.05	0.50
% Collection at this point in 2018	98%	104%	105%

Bank Overdraft to 31st December 2019

Number of days Overdrawn in Bank year to date	101	28%
Interest and non-conforming charges to December 31st 2019 YTD	€19,338	
Bank Administration and transactional charges to December 31st 2019 YTD	€47,945	