

**DECEMBER
2022**



Comhairle Chontae Uíbh Fhailí
Offaly County Council

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 2023 Monthly Meeting.

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS:

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

FINANCE:

Finance Report– Appendix 1

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

EDENDERRY LOCAL AREA PLAN

The draft Edenderry Local Area Plan 2023-2029 was published on 15th December 2021. Submissions are invited from 15th December 2021 until **4pm on 3rd February 2023** inclusive.

LIBRARY DATES

Chinese New Year - Art and Craft sessions on
Saturday 21 January

International Lego Day **Saturday 28 January**

REPORT AT A GLANCE

Climate Action & Energy

Offaly County Council Cathaoirleach and Chief Executive signed the EU Mission Charter on Climate Adaptation as one of the first 5 local authorities in Ireland, and the first midland local authority.

Town and Village Renewal Scheme

On 14th December, 2022 Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD announced details of the projects that have been approved for funding under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2022. A total of €1.2m was secured for Offaly's Towns and Villages, the largest grant amount proportioned to any county in the Country for 2022. Details in full report.

SICAP

Ukrainian Response budget of €100,842 has been allocated to Offaly SICAP for 2023.

PLANNING

Development Management

	To end December 2022	To end December 2021	Total 2021
Planning Applications	684	831	831
Extensions of Duration Applications & Assessments	15	13	13
Warning Letters and (Enforcement Notices) issued	158 (15)	30 (2)	30 (2)

During the month of **December 2022**, the following large planning applications were received:

JOHN FLANAGAN DEVELOPMENTS LTD	PP CHANGE OF USES FROM GRANTED NURSING HOME (20/503) TO PRIVATE HOSPITAL, TULLAMORE.
BRIARLANE DEVELOPMENTS LTD	PP CHANGE OF USE OF FROM EXISTING DAY CARE CENTRE TO 4 NO. APARTMENTS, SHINRONE.
JOE BROPHY	PP 6 NO. SEMI-DETACHED HOUSES, BALLINAGAR, TULLAMORE.
SHANNONBRIDGE GAA	PP CHANGE OF PLAN TO PREVIOUSLY GRANTED PLANNING PERMISSION, DOWNSCALING THE FOOTPRINT OF THE NEW BUILDING PART OF THE DEVELOPMENT, AMENDING FLOOR

	LAYOUT, RETAINING LADIES TOILET AND REMOVAL OF PROPOSED MEN'S TOILET FACILITIES, REFEREES CHANGING ROOM AND LINK CORRIDOR TO EXISTING DRESSING ROOM
ST BRENDANS PRIMARY SCHOOL B.O.M	PP EXTENSION, DEMO EXISTING WALLS AND ROOF, BIRR.
ZOETIS BELGIUM SA	PP PHARMACEUTICAL PLANT EXTENSION, CAR PARKING, RECYCLING COMPOUND, TULLAMORE.

Forward Planning

The CE Report on the submissions received on the draft Birr Local Area Plan 2023-2029 issued to elected members for their consideration on 8th December 2021.

REGENERATION

Town and Village Renewal Scheme

Offaly County Council's successful project details are as follows:

Market Square Birr - €250,000

The development of a plaza at Market Square in Birr to create an outdoor meeting and recreational space in the town centre that can facilitate outdoor dining and where pedestrian activity will be a priority.



Kilcormac Fiesta Hall - €500,000

Refurbishment of a vacant building into a low carbon, energy efficient, multi-purpose space housing Green HQ, a green regeneration initiative devoted to climate action research, green business enterprises and sustainability training programmes.

**Shinrone Old Library Building - €250,000**

Refurbishment of the old Shinrone Library building that has been vacant for 13 years, into a modern multi-purpose community space.

**Clara Streetscape Enhancement Measure - €100,000**

Streetscape Enhancement Measure – 40 property owners will receive a grant to improve the front façade of their properties in Clara Town Centre.

Daingean Town Hall - €50,000

Project Development Measure – Updating of past detailed design proposal, costings and new planning for restoration and refurbishment of Daingean town hall to a more modern multi-functional space/hub for the community.

Moneygall Village - €50,000

Project Development Measure - Architect led design team to deliver a detailed design proposal and planning permission for refurbishment of a derelict property into a multi-purpose community space/hub

This is in addition to the new TVR Building Acquisition Measure Scheme which was introduced in May 2022 to facilitate the purchase of two Vacant/Derelict Buildings as follows:

Ballyboy Former Community Hall - €50,000

Purchase of the former Community Hall for use as a multi-purpose community space

**Moneygall 71 Church View - €175,000**

Vacant property to be converted into a multi-purpose community space/hub.



Tullamore Municipal District-Lloyd Park Improvements

Healthmatic Ltd have been appointed for the new caretaker's office & toilets in Lloyd Town Park, Tullamore. The new modular building will be installed on site in 2023 and is funded by the Tullamore MD GMA fund.



Larkin Engineering have been appointed for supply of a Bandstand in the park. The Bandstand will be installed in 2023

and available for music and entertainment in the park. Both projects are funded by the Department of Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media Outdoor Public Space Scheme and Tullamore MD General Municipal Allocation.

All 11 active TVR projects from 2019-2021 are progressing:

Birr MD	Edenderry MD	Tullamore MD
Shinrone phase II (2019)	Blundell Park (2019)	Mucklagh (2020)
Pollagh (2020)	Cloneygowan (2020)	Mount Bolus Phase II (2020)
Ferbane Fairgreen (2020)	Kilmalogue (2020)	Killeigh (2021)
Ballyboy (2021)	Clonbullogue (2021)	

ROADS

Roads Programme 2022/2023

Works have now commenced on the formulation of the 2023 Annual Roads program. The Roads Department are currently engaging with our funding partners in the TII, NTA and Department of Transport in order to secure funding for a number of schemes across the County in 2023.

Corporate Fleet Management

The current corporate fleet within Offaly County Council consists of 87 number vehicles. Our Corporate fleet vehicles are managed from the Roads Department and are essential in ensuring delivery of many of our organisational services that we provide to the communities to whom we serve. We have now commenced the process of identifying a number of vehicles that we can migrate over to Zero Emission Electric Vehicles in 2023. A critical step in the process of migrating towards a Zero Emission vehicle fleet is assessing whether the current vehicle type in operation is required or relevant when compared with;

- The type of works we do
- The method or way in which we carry out the works
- Compliance with our Statutory Responsibilities (Health and Safety/Chapter 8)
- The role of the vehicle in our emergency response plan

Winter Service Plan 2022

Our winter Service Plan commenced in October 2022. This service is managed by the Roads Department and the service is delivered from the Tullamore Machinery Yard and Birr Depot. There are 4 duty Engineers rostered across the season who

assess real time data from the Road Networks in order to establish whether treatment is required and the associated rate of spread of rock salt. Since October 2022, we have mobilised our winter service response across 21 nights and treated the road surfaces across the county with approximately 1,548 tonnes of rock salt.

Edenderry Inner Relief Road Phase 2

Based on ongoing discussions with our colleagues in the Department of Transport we have approval in principle to proceed towards tender stage and award for Phase 2 of the Edenderry Inner Relief Road in 2023.

Birr North Distributor Road

Works are ongoing on the Birr North Distributor Road project and based on ongoing discussions with our colleagues in the Department of Transport approval in principle has been received to proceed to the Detailed Design and Contract Documentation formation in 2023.

Grand Canal Greenway

Approval to proceed to award for the next phase of the Grand Canal Greenway has been received from the TII. This phase of the scheme is approximately 4km in length and commences at Turraun/Pollagh and terminates in the Falsk townland approximately 3km east of Ferbane Town. Works are scheduled to commence onsite in Mid-February 2023.

ENVIRONMENT AND WATER SERVICES

Climate Action & Energy

EU Mission Charter on Climate Adaptation

As a charter signatory, Offaly County Council will become part of a community of practice on adaptation to climate change, having the opportunity to network, and share with other regions and communities in Europe. The charter is an offer for

collaboration on projects dedicated to working on adaptation to climate change while accessing EU funding.



Offaly County Council acted as the contracting authority for the 5 CARO sub-regional Midlands & Eastern counties of Offaly, Laois, Westmeath, Longford and Roscommon for the procurement of Climate Action Plan evidence based assessment reports. OCC appointed consultants to carry out countywide Baseline Emission Inventory assessments (BEI), which have been issued from our consultants and are currently under review. Climate change risk assessments and Decarbonisation Zone BEI assessments for each of the 5 local authorities continue to be progressed.

Litter Management

The Anti-Dumping Grant for 2022 for the amount of €79,000 was received in December. This money funded clean ups, solar compaction litter bins, media campaigns and litter provisions.

Rural Water Programme - Multi Annual Rural Water Programme (MARWP) for Capital Works

The total allocation to the successful projects under the 2019-2021 programme is €1,839,625.00 for 19 projects. Two extra projects have been added to the programme during its lifetime. Seventeen of these projects are completed and the other 4 are at various stages of progress with all projects expected to be completed in q1/23.

The circular to roll out the next Multi Annual Programme is due in quarter 1 of 2023.

Veterinary

The number of dogs being surrendered has increased since May 2022. In 2022 Control of Dogs team has cared for 284 dogs - more than in either 2020 or 2021. In December, 24 more dogs were surrendered / seized / picked up as strays, and the team rehomed 14 dogs through dog rescue charities and 5 were rehomed directly from the pound.

Burial Grounds

Kilcoursey cemetery extension construction works are substantially completed and we have landscaping and planting remaining to be done over the winter.

We are commencing the Part 8 Planning Process to extend St. Mary's Cemetery, Edenderry and we are planning to have this completed during 2023.

Water Services

Arden, Birr & Clonaslee WTP

The three new water treatment plants at Arden, Birr and Clonaslee are all commissioned and are Offaly County Council staff are currently being trained in their operation, prior to hand over from the Design Build Contractors Murphys.

The new reservoir at Arden has also been commissioned.

HOUSING

To assist us in streamlining the delivery of Housing Services we encourage the use of the following email addresses:

Service	Email Address
HAP Enquiries	hap@offalycoco.ie
Rebuilding Ireland Home Loans	homeloans@offalycoco.ie
Housing Inspections – HAP, Leased, Private, etc.	standards@offalycoco.ie
General Enquiries, Maintenance Issues, etc.	housing@offalycoco.ie
RAS & Leasing Enquiries	RAS@offalycoco.ie
Housing Adaptation Grants for Older People and People with a Disability Scheme	HousingAidGrants@offalycoco.ie
Anti-Social Behaviour	ASB@offalycoco.ie

Housing Update

- There are 445 on the Social Housing List awaiting housing support at the end of December 2022.
- A further 574 active tenancies are currently being supported under the Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) Scheme, 11 signed up for HAP and 12 exited from HAP in December.
- At the end of December, 23 single people and 15 couples and families were being supported in emergency accommodation.

- The annual rent review of Local Authority Tenants has commenced. Rent Assessment forms and cover letter to Local Authority Tenants on 10th January and Tenants are requested to complete the Rent Assessment form and return these to the Housing Section by Thursday 26th January 2023. Any queries from tenants can be directed to our email RentReview@offalycoco.ie

Housing Stock – Number, Maintenance & Repair

- Total housing stock at end of December 2022 is 2,031.
- 347 maintenance calls were logged in December.

Housing Capital Programme Update

- Raheen, Clara development (38 units) – Revised Stage 4 approval was granted on the 18th October 2022. Letters to Tenderers have issued including Letter of Intent to Preferred Tenderer. Project scheduled to start on site in Q1, 2023.
- Dargan Drive, Chancery Lane (20 Units) – Part 8 approved at the May council meeting. Stage 3 to be submitted to the Department once ESB lines on the site are undergrounded.
- Moneygall (4 units) – Contractor commenced works on site on 31st January 2022. Due for completion in Q4, 2022.
- Beechgrove, Belmont (7 units) – Project commenced on site on 10th November 2021. Due for completion in Q1, 2023.
- Sr. Senan, Edenderry (4 no. Older Person's dwellings) – Stage 4 approval was granted on 11th April

2022, contractor appointed and has started on site.

- Banagher, Kylebeg (18 Units) – Stage 4 approval received on 25th June 2021. Project is due for completion in Q1, 2023.
- Circular Road, Daingean (9 units) - Stage 4 approval was received on 8th March 2022 and works were due to commence on site in May 2022. However, the scheme had to be re-tendered and tenders were received on 12th September 2022. Letters to Tenderers have issued including Letter of Intent to Preferred Tenderer. Project scheduled to start on site in Q1, 2023.
- Circular Road, Daingean, Site 2 (10 Units) – Stage 1 approval application was granted on 3rd August 2021 for the site adjoining the OCC housing site on Circular Road. Consultants are appointed and Surveys are complete. Stage 2 is due to be lodged in Q1, 2023.
- Sycamore Drive, Ballycumber (10 Units) – Stage 1 approval was granted by the Department on 11th May 2021. Design Team have been appointed and all surveys completed. Stage 2 approval received 30th Nov 2022. Part 8 to follow in Q1 2023.
- 1 Newbridge Street, Birr: Works are now complete and the dwelling allocated.
- 4 Holly Park, Birr: Consultants have been appointed; Enabling works have been completed. Works tender will issue with brief based on these opening up works following combined Stage 2/3 application in Q1 2023.

Approved Housing Bodies Schemes

- Oaklee: Clonminch, Tullamore (19 units) – Completion in Q1 2023
- Oaklee: Kearney's Field, Tullamore (41 Units) – Completion in Q2, 2023
- Sofia Housing: Stage 2 approved (39 units) at Presentation Lands, Portarlinton. Planning Application to be lodged
- Sofia Housing, Clonamore, Tullamore – Contractor has been appointed and works are progressing well.
- Circle Housing: Kilcormac (3 units) – Completion in Q1 2023

Turnkey Developments/Part V

- Woodfield, Birr, 35 units - Completions Q4 2022
- Bog Road, Portarlinton, 28 units - Under Construction, completion in Q1, 2023
- Walsh Island, 4 units - Under Construction. Complete in Q4 2022
- 2 x Part V units under construction at Ard na Carriage, Edenderry. Completion in Q4 2022
- Part V units in Redwood & Silverbrook, Tullamore under construction

Housing Grants (Private)

€1.6m was awarded to the Local Authority for Housing Adaptation Grants for Older People and People with a Disability Scheme; 80% is met by exchequer with the balancing 20% being provided from Offaly County Council's own resources.

Working with approved applicants and contractors Housing progressed the 2022 works programme and sought the full drawdown of funds before year end.

Disabled Person's Grants (Social Housing)

On 31st March 2022 Housing were advised that the allocation for Disabled Person's Grants for Social Housing Units is €658,800 (representing 90%), with €65,880 matching local authority funding (representing 10%) is to be added from Offaly County Council's own resources.

Retrofit Programme

- 31 Units Complete to date under National Retrofit Programme
- 50 Units to date complete under the Midlands Retrofit Programme including 2 Shinrone; 1 Kilcormac; 1 Clara; 3 Crinkill; 32 Birr; 7 Tullamore; 2 Edenderry; 1 Portarlinton; 1 Bracknagh
- Lot 3 & 4, Tullamore: Tender analysis is complete. Subject to funding approval from the DHLGH the preferred Tenderer will be appointed to carry out the works.
- Lot 5 & 6, Edenderry, Daingean, Clara, Ferbane, Shannonbridge, and Cloghan: Tender analysis is complete. Subject to funding approval from the DHLGH the preferred Tenderer will be appointed to carry out the works.

LOCAL & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)**

Offaly LCDC held their monthly meeting on Thursday December 15th. Main agenda items included the Rural Development LEADER Programme 2014 – 2020 & Transitional LEADER Programme 2021 – 2022, New LEADER Programme 2023 – 2027 and Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme 2018-2023 (SICAP) Annual Plan 2023. LEADER Projects:

Fifteen LEADER Projects were approved to the value of €609,678.52.

SICAP

Members were informed that the 2023 SICAP budget allocation for Offaly has been increased by 3% on the 2022 budget by the DRC and the SICAP Members were provided with a comprehensive presentation and overview of the content of the proposed 2023 SICAP Annual Plan and briefed on a vast range of key actions and programmes to be delivered in 2022. The Emerging Needs Target Group for 2023 was agreed as ‘New Communities’. Members welcomed and approved in principle the 2023 SICAP Annual Plan.

Members were advised that a new funding scheme, the Community Support Fund 2022, would open for applications in January.

Members were given an update in relation to the ongoing work of the Community Response Forum in response to the Ukrainian crisis.

Public Participation Network

Offaly PPN held a number of events before year end including meeting in the three Municipal Districts. The locations were Mucklagh, Kilcormac and Ballycommon. Stephen Keogh, the PPN Rep on the Housing SPC and a member of ODEN, presented on the findings from the county wide Disability Survey. These meetings were an opportunity for PPN reps to meet with the PPN membership.



The Plenary took place in the Tullamore Court Hotel and again this proved a valuable exercise in assisting membership to get to know the representatives of the PPN on various Boards and Committees. Round table discussions took place to feed into the 2023 Work plan.



Comhairle Na nÓg

In December, 2 members meetings were held. 31 young people were in attendance at the first. Hazel the Comhairle Na nÓg co-ordinator, gave feedback to the group from the last Offaly Disability Equality Network – maintaining a strong link between the groups. The group are focusing on transport issues in Offaly for young people with disabilities.

ARTS MUSIC GENERATION

Music Generation Offaly Westmeath held the second part of our Singfest choral trail in October 2022 with Patrick Barrett, Irish Conductor based in London who specialises in choral music and opera, and members of MGOW musician team. This time it was a 5 day event in Belvedere House & Gardens.



Erasmus+ KA2 Exchange

Four representatives from Music Generation Offaly Westmeath took part in an exchange project – ‘KA2 Music & Drama in youth work’ in Logroño, Spain. This was run in conjunction with Youth Work Ireland and included representatives from Youth Work Ireland also. During the trip, the team visited a Youthwork service offering training and



support to young people in the Rioja region to help them secure employment. They also took part in Drama classes for adults with Down's syndrome and met with a group offering support to young adults with Autism. The Spanish group will travel to Ireland in February and visit Music Jam and Mullingar EYE youth Project.



Christmas Concerts

Following the break from Christmas performances over the past 2 years due to Covid-19, all our schools



were delighted to be back performing Christmas carols and Christmas concerts so we had a very busy December with performances throughout Offaly & Westmeath. Music Jam ended the term with a Christmas Concert in Columb Barracks which was organised in partnership with the YoYo youth café and Mullingar EYE.

HEALTHY OFFALY

Work has continued on preparing the Healthy Ireland fund round 4 local strategy and deciding on two outcome indicators to determine the Healthy Offaly Health & Wellbeing policy for the next three years and the lifetime of round 4 of the programme. A countywide consultation is currently ongoing incorporating all relevant

stakeholders and service users. The consultation involves asking respondents to complete a survey asking where it is felt the greatest health and wellbeing challenges are, listing the 27 outcome indicators and asking for the top two outcome indicators.

The closing date for the survey was originally set for 5th December 2022, however, due to the level of extensive engagement by individuals, the Healthy Ireland coordinator made the decision to leave the survey open until 6th January 2023 when Dr. Diane Cooper, (our Healthy Ireland fund consultation facilitator), will produce an extensive report listing the two priority outcomes. This report will assist in informing the HIF local strategy and round 4 application to Pobal. Once the HIF local strategy has been completed and the application has been made, groups will be invited to apply for funding to deliver actions based on the two agreed outcomes. As of Thursday 15th December, 104 completed survey submissions have been received.

LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE

Get in touch!

We ended the year with a reminder that we are here to help with business ideas to develop or boosting efficiencies in existing businesses. We can help navigate through the opportunities and challenges of business start-up and growth, and can help to build a sustainable business. We have a large number of training programmes and workshops scheduled for the start of the year and look forward to engaging with new and existing clients in Offaly.

In November we welcomed Dermot Shortt, Senior Enterprise Development Officer to the team. Dermot previously completed the Graduate Programme with LEO Offaly and

worked in other LEOs before returning to Offaly.

Co-Working Hubs

Weekly meetings are held with Business Development Managers of Offaly Innovation & Design Centre CLG to assist with the running of the co-working hubs in Birr, Edenderry and Tullamore.

Midlands Regional Enterprise Plan: Development of Midlands ICT Cluster

Throughout December, LEO Offaly participated in a number of focused workshops with stakeholders across the Midlands to formulate the Midlands ICT Cluster Action Plan. The vision for the Midlands ICT Cluster is: To be Europe's leading ICT cluster in Digital Innovation, creating opportunities for people and business in regional growth sectors, driving knowledge creation, sustainability and resilience. The focus on digital innovation grounds the ICT Cluster on the ultimate value of digitisation which is in its application, and with this the full potential of ICT can be realised for the businesses and people in the Midlands.

Early Funding Mechanism Workshop Series- Innovation Boost & Acumen

A number of LEO Offaly clients are expected to attend the Early Funding Mechanism Workshop on 19 January in Technological University of the Shannon (TUS): Midlands Midwest (Athlone Campus). This series of workshops is an initiative of the Midlands ICT Cluster R&D and Eco-system development working group. The focus of this workshop was on the two programmes administered by Inter-Trade Ireland, namely Innovation Boost and Acumen.

Innovation Boost

Provides support by helping to fund a high calibre science, engineering or technology graduate and partnering the client with a third level institution with specific expertise. The graduate is employed by the business and is based in the company throughout the project (12 – 18 months) with mentoring from the academic partner and InterTradeIreland Innovation Boost consultant.



Acumen

Acumen is Inter-Trade Ireland's programme that seeks to develop cross-border trading as an important 'stepping stone' towards exporting into markets off the Island of Ireland. As such, the Acumen programme aims to enhance the capacity and capability of SMEs to take the first formal steps onto the export ladder by helping to fund an experienced and skilled sales resource to help businesses to identify new opportunities and win new sales in the cross-border market. There are two funding options available under the Acumen programme, full time and part time sales support. The Acumen team will work closely with the client to help them decide which option is most suitable for their business needs

White Paper on Enterprise 2022 – 2030

[The White Paper on Enterprise](#) was launched by government on 7 December. The White Paper sets out the Government's enterprise priorities to 2030 and an ambitious vision for Ireland's enterprise policy, to protect Ireland's strong economic position, and respond to challenges and opportunities that have emerged as a result of the pandemic.



One of the key economic priorities set out in the paper is enabling locally trading sectors to thrive. Given the importance of the locally trading sectors to employment, regional development and placemaking, the Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) will continue to enhance their advisory services for locally trading firms, helping them to improve productivity through digitalisation and reducing energy and carbon emissions.

One of the operational changes addressed in the White Paper is the introduction of a pilot whereby training, consultancy, and mentoring services will be made available through the Local Enterprise Offices to more locally trading business with over 10 and up to 50 employees. Previously these supports were available to business with up to 10 employees.

[More about the White Paper](#)

Tender for LEO Offaly Training Courses

A competition for tenders for training courses was undertaken and completed in Q4 2022. There is a wide range of new courses for 2023 that are designed to assist with the establishment and/or growth of

local businesses and are tailored to meet specific business requirements.

Most of our courses are **FREE OF CHARGE!** Whether it is starting a business or growing a business there is something suitable for everyone. Full details and links to book are here: <https://bit.ly/3B5LTku>

Upcoming Events		See All Events >
13/01/2023	How to Plan a New Website for your Business	Book online
25/01/2023	Start Your Own Business Course Evenings	Book online
25/01/2023	Free Digital Marketing and Social Media Mentoring ...	Book online
26/01/2023	Free Digital Marketing and Social Media Mentoring ...	Book online
02/02/2023	Financial Management for Entrepreneurs	Book online
23/02/2023	Trading Online Voucher Webinar	Book online
07/03/2023	Digital Marketing Programme	Book online

LIBRARY SERVICES



First Fortnight: Supporting Mental Health at Offaly Libraries

First Fortnight aims to make the beginning of each year synonymous with **mental health awareness**, by challenging prejudice and ending stigma around mental health issues.



It runs for **the first two weeks of January** and library branches will display some recommended book titles to **support mental wellness** in children, young adults and adults.

Our colleague Claire also shares her blog on First Fortnight featuring a selection of useful and inspiring books. You can read it [here](#).

New Year, new.....genre?

It's that time of year when there's lots of pressure for a 'new year, new you'. Why not ADD something new and fun this year, like a **reading challenge?**



Choose a number of books you would like to read by the end of the year and stretch those literary legs!

'Finding Joy' Art Exhibition Extended in Tullamore Library

We are happy to report that Catherine Leavy Hickey's beautiful exhibition, **'Finding Joy'** will **remain on display** at Tullamore library for the month of **January!**

Launched on Monday, 5th December, **Rahan native Catherine** said "growing up in the countryside in the midlands has given me a deep appreciation of landscape, nature and authenticity."



All paintings displayed are for sale with 20% of the proceeds going to the local branch of **Family Carers**.

Celebrating Winnie the Pooh Day

We will honour everyone's favourite Pooh Bear this January with special **Winnie the Pooh** themed story times for Toddlers in our library branches across the county on Wednesday 18th January.



Readings from AA Milne's beloved classics will be accompanied by songs and dances inspired by Tigger, Eeyore and Piglet. All are welcome to come and join in on the fun. For more information, please contact your local branch. Contact information for each branch can be found [here](#).

International Lego Day

Tullamore Library is looking forward to **International Lego Day**, Saturday 28th January. Did you know? Godtfred Kirk Christiansen patented the original 2x4 LEGO brick on this day in 1958. **Happy 65th birthday to the humble LEGO brick!**

Tullamore Library will host a **LEGO Freeplay** session on **Saturday, 28th January from 11am – 12.30pm** and all are welcome. For more information, please contact Tullamore Library on 057 93 46832 or email tullamorelibrary@offalycoco.ie



Welcoming the Lunar New Year with Art and Craft Sessions

Chinese New Year 2023 is a **Year of the Rabbit**, more specifically, the Water Rabbit, starting from January 22nd, 2023, and lasting until February 9th, 2024



Offaly Libraries will be ringing in the Chinese New Year with some **Art and Craft sessions on Saturday, 21st January!** Children aged 4+ are invited to register their interest with their local branch in advance of promotions.

Contact details for each branch can be found [here](#).

Christmas Family Time at Offaly Libraries!

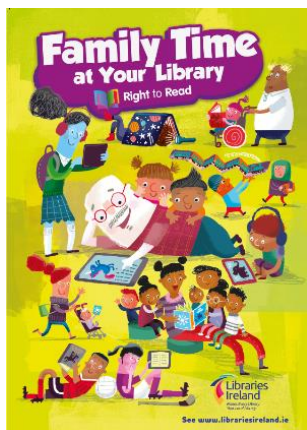
Library staff were kept busy this past



December, delivering **54 events to 1,867 participants** as part of our **Family Time at Your Library** celebrations in the run up to the festive period!



Family Time at Your Library aims to support a family-focused approach to reading with children, as part of the national **Right to Read** programme. It helps to increase awareness of the benefits of reading and promotes reading as a fun, recreational activity for children.



The Christmas 2022 programme saw library staff provide **seasonal story time sessions for local Primary schools**, both online and in branch. **Santa Letter Writing workshops, Art and Craft sessions** and festive **movie screenings** were also hosted by staff throughout the county.

Visitors to **Birr and Tullamore Libraries** were invited to browse our shelves while listening to **Carol Singers** from local schools. Pictured above are students from **St. Philomena's school** in Tullamore



Library. **Coffee mornings** were held throughout December and Tullamore Library patrons were treated to a special performance from the **Gramophone Society**, which spread some Christmas spirit.

Sensory Rooms at Tullamore and Edenderry Libraries

Tullamore Library's Sensory Room has welcomed **409 bookings** since it was first launched in April, 2022! We are pleased to announce that **bookings are open for 2023** via our online reservation system [here](#).



Edenderry Library's wonderful Sensory Room is available for bookings every Thursday from **10am – 4pm**. Bookings can be made by contacting Edenderry Library directly at 046 9731028 or by email: edenderrylibrary@offalycoco.ie.

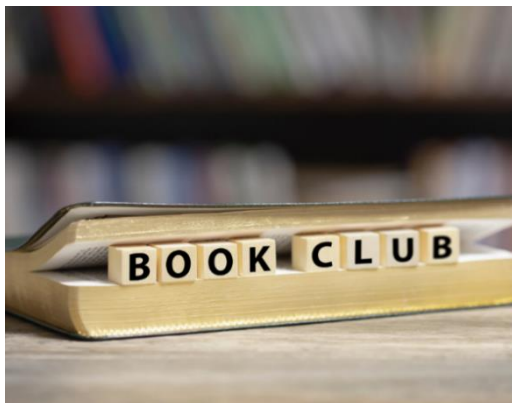
More information on *Sensory Offaly*, including our **Sensory Book**, **Sensory Equipment collections** and **Sensory Room facilities** [can be found here](#).

**2023 New Year's Resolution Suggestion:
Join an Offaly Libraries Book Club!**

Did you know that we have Book Clubs that meet both in person and online at Offaly Libraries?

Library staff are always happy to **help source and select books** for book clubs of all ages and tastes. If you would like to join any of our existing clubs, please check out the details for each below.

Alternatively, should you wish to **establish your own book club** in one of our libraries please get in touch by emailing askthelibrarian@offalycoco.ie and we will be happy to help!



Anna Marie Delaney, Chief Executive

Appendix 1

Revenue Account Grant Income & Payroll Summary to 31st December 2022

OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL	Full Yr Budget 2022 €m	Preliminary Value to Dec 2022 €m	% Year To Date
Payroll costs	29.81	28.90	97.0%
Grants and Subsidies Income	37.98	51.27	135.0%

OCC to 31st Dec 2022

	<u>Rates</u> €m	<u>Rents</u> €m	<u>Loans</u> €m
Opening Balance Jan 1st, 2022	2.77	0.48	0.13
Net Invoices & Adjustments, waivers	15.22	7.57	0.52
2022 Cash Collected to end of Dec	13.66	7.44	0.55
Closing Balance Dec 31st, 2022	4.32	0.61	0.10

2021 Cash collected to Dec 31st

	13.68 ***	7.36	0.56
% Collection at this point in 2021	100%	101%	99%

*** Collections impacted in 2021 and 2022 by waiver uncertainty and effect of lockdowns

Bank Overdraft to 31st Dec 2022

	-	-	% YTD
Number of days Overdrawn in Bank year to date		79	22%
Bank Interest and non-conforming charges to Dec 31st 2022 YTD		€6,254	
Bank Administration and transactional charges to Dec 31st 2022 YTD		€34,496	