

**DECEMBER
2021**



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 Eanáir

Monthly Management Report for consideration at the January 2022 Monthly Meeting.

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

FINANCE - Appendix 1

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

The "Local Authorities (Traffic Wardens) Act 1975 (Fixed Charge Offences) (Amendment) Regulations 2021"

This comes into operation on the **1st day of February, 2022**. This legislation relates to fixed charges as follows:

- €80 charge for parking a vehicle on a footway, a grass margin or a median strip,
- €80 charge for parking a vehicle in a cycle track where traffic sign number RUS 009, RUS 058 or RUS 059 is provided.
- €80 charge for parking a vehicle in a bus lane or on a bus only street.

Community Activities Fund

Offaly LCDC is currently inviting applications for funding under the 2021 Community Activities Fund (CAF) The closing date for applications is **12 noon on Friday 11th February 2022**.

The Draft River Basin Management Plan 2022-2027

The plan is now open for public consultation until **31st March 2022** and is available at www.gov.ie/draftRBMP.

REPORT AT A GLANCE

IBAL, Irish Business Against Litter Survey results

Tullamore: 20th out of 40 towns / cities surveyed. Clean to European Norms. This was another strong showing by Tullamore. Further information in the Environment Section.

Arts Grants & Awards

The call for the Arts Acts Grants and Professional Artists Support Scheme has been sent out, the deadline for applications is 20th Jan 2022. A call for Festival Arts Grants has also been posted with a deadline for submissions by 17th Feb 2022. All applications are now being processed through Submit.com which enables the Arts Service to collect and process information more effectively which will assist future planning

Ireland Reads- 25th February 2022

Following from the huge success of Ireland Reads in 2021, this national reading campaign will take place once again in 2022! Everyone in the country will be invited to take some time to experience the pleasure of reading and to share their experience with family, friends, bookclubs or online, culminating with national communications and events on 25th February. Watch this space!!!!



PLANNING

	To end December 2021	To end December 2020	Total 2020
Planning Applications	831	674	674
Extensions of Duration Applications & Assessments	13	11	11
Warning Letters and (Enforcement Notices) issued	30(2)	14(2)	14 (2)

Development Management

Planning applications continued to increase during 2021 despite lockdowns due to COVID-19. The figures above represent an annual increase of 23% on the 2020 figures and a 40% increase on 2019.

The Planning Department has assessed a wide range of large-scale developments including; large residential developments, retail, commercial, industrial and mixed use developments. In addition, the Planning Department has seen a marked increase in the number of ‘Green Energy’ applications submitted in 2021 including several Solar Farm and Wind Farm applications.

In excess of 300 pre-planning consultations were carried out during 2021. With respect to planning applications received by the Planning Department over the past year, the following has been observed:

Housing Developments

The high volumes of the level of pre-planning meetings undertaken has resulted in a significant increase in the number of large housing developments and schemes lodged to the Planning Department. In addition, there has been a marked increase in the volume of ‘multiple unit housing development’ planning applications submitted to the Planning Department in

2021. Towards the end of 2021 these applications increased significantly

Forward Planning

The Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027 was adopted 10th September 2021 and came into effect 6 weeks later on 22nd October 2021. The Forward Planning Team commenced preparing Local Area Plans at the end of 2021. Each LAP will require an Area Based Transport Assessment.

Regeneration

Outdoor Recreational Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS)

On 29th November, 2021 The Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys announced details of approved funding under the 2021 Outdoor Recreational Infrastructure Scheme for Offaly as follows:

€200,000 grant for Clashawaun River Walk, Clara with match funding of €23,000 from Offaly County Council. (Measure 2 project) This project consists of creating a new 400m river walk amenity along the banks of the River Brosna at Clashawaun, Clara, to help restore connections to the river for the community and visitors.

€50,000 grant for Derrycastle project development with match funding of €20,000 from Offaly County Council (new project development category) This grant will provide for a development plan for the expansion and new complimentary uses at the already successful Derrycastle Lake and Trails.

Town and Village Renewal Scheme

The Department of Rural and Community Development announced a call for TVR 2021 funding on 3rd May, 2021. 6 applications were submitted. Announcements of successful applications is still pending, due shortly.

On 18th November, 2021 the Department of Rural and Community Development announced a call for Town Centre Masterplan Initiative (Phase 1). Under Phase I, a town selected by the Minister from Offaly County Council's nominated towns will be funded up to €100,000 to develop a Master Plan. Clara was the priority town selected for the phase I stage. It is envisaged that Clara's Town Centre Master Plan can reimagine the potential of the town and focus in particular on its centre and immediate surroundings. The plan will identify specific interventions including tackling dereliction and vacancy, de-carbonisation, maintaining a strong local economy, creating high value job opportunities and promoting compact growth.

Rural Regeneration Development Fund (RRDF)

On 6th January, 2021 The Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys announced details of approved funding under the 2021 Category 2 Rural Regeneration Development Fund for the following 2 landmark projects in Offaly:

- €2,149,408 grant for Edenderry Regeneration Phase II project and will require match funding from Council funds bringing the total to almost €2,686,760. This project will continue the regeneration of the Blundell Master Plan area including demolition works of the Old Tesco Site and enabling works to allow for further development of a new Community Library on the site. It will also fund the design team for the new library building and further appraisal of sites in the Blundell Master Plan area for leisure, community, cultural and services provision with a further Category 1 RRDF application in the future.

- €546,400 grant for Ferbane Regeneration which will require match funding from Council funds bringing the total to €683,000. This project is the first phase of regeneration for Ferbane through the redevelopment of key buildings in particular St Joseph's Convent as a multi-purpose community/enterprise hub. This grant will form the foundations of a future Category 1 RRDF application in the future.

Summary of the 2021 Regeneration projects approved to date

Scheme Year	Name /description	Grant from Department
ORIS 2021	Clashawaun River Walk, Clara	€200,000
ORIS 2021	Derryounce Project Development	€50,000
TC Master Plan 2021	Clara	€100,000
RRDF 2021	Edenderry Regeneration Phase II	€2,149,408
RRDF 2021	Ferbane Regeneration	€546,400

Architecture and Conservation

- **BHIS and HSF for 2022** advertise and assist owners with possible applications, increased allocation for Offaly to €126,400, note 55 combined applications received in 2021, 25 grants.
- **Architectural/Conservation Report for Planning Applications and Pre Planning**, note significant increase of 119 reports in 2021 v 66 reports in 2020
- **Urban & Village Renewal, Outdoor Dining Schemes** etc: Preparation of documents, site visits, design proposals etc. to assist Regeneration Team with funding applications.
- **Creative Ireland** – Part of reporting group and Annual Follies Project €10k, work and guide owner, consultant, site visits reports etc. Additional Vernacular Architecture fund €14.5K, average 3 projects as above.

- **Birr Courthouse** – Continued conservation works, consider most suitable scheme HSF, HTI or RRDF, immediate repairs to render and RWG required, further extensive works, through Planning Permission for internal works c.€2million.

ROADS

Roads Programme 2022

Planning, design and procurement of schemes for 2022 are ongoing. Offaly County Council received the 2022 National Roads Allocation of €2,744,000 from the TII and we are awaiting the grant allocation for the Regional and Local roads in the County. The 2022 Roads Programme will be prepared for March 2022.

N52 Tullamore to Kilbeggan Link

Public consultation stage 3 (emerging preferred corridor) has concluded. The conclusion of the Route options selection process is now scheduled for early in Q1 2022.

Active Travel and Outdoor Infrastructure

The NTA schemes are progressing throughout the County. The Roads section and MDs are continuing to engage with the NTA to plan and deliver additional active travel projects in Offaly in 2022.

TII Fencing Retrofit

Upgrading of fences comprising horizontal rail elements bounding National Roads recommenced in November. Works will be ongoing this month to conclude the works. c.700m of existing post and rail fencing will be upgraded to the TII's approved Tension Mesh Fence near Derrinlough on the N62.



Edenderry Town Inner Relief Road
Works on this project commenced in October 2021. Works resumed following the Christmas break on Jan 4th and continue to progress well. Construction works to deliver the scheme will be ongoing into Q2 2022.

Winter Service

The winter service period commenced in October 2021. The weather has continued quite mild for the time of year but salting has occurred on a limited number of cold nights. The Winter Service plan covering the 2021/2022 period is available on Offaly.ie to be viewed by members of the public.

RSA Report

RSA Report of road fatalities in 2021 has been published. No road fatalities were recorded in Offaly in 2021



RSA Report extract

Light Up for Road Safety

Communities asked to 'Light up for Road Safety'. The council asked Offaly individuals and communities to shine a light for road safety on World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims, 21st November 2021.



OCC Buildings, fire stations and individual homes 'lighting up for Road Safety' in November

ENVIRONMENT AND WATER

Climate Action

Offaly County Council have successfully meet their 2020 energy efficiency targets of 35%, however, these targets have increased to 50% by 2030 which makes the capture/M&R of energy usage across the entire organisation all the more important. A significant shift towards decarbonisation is evident in the new Climate Action Plan, with a target of 50% carbon emission reduction again by 2030 required. This will require significant input by all within the organisation backed up by the required investment.

Offaly County Council continues its engagement and membership of the Midlands Energy Agency. Each LA within the MEA is encouraged to identify an "Exemplar" project to put forward for "Pathfinder" funding (50% SEAI funding of capital works or consultancy fees).

Environment Burial Grounds

Fifteen Community Burial Ground Grants, totaling €24,500.00, were paid in 2021 supporting the upkeep and maintenance efforts and special projects being carried out by voluntary burial ground committees around the county. We will continue to engage with these committees, and are planning to set up more, in 2022.

Kilreghan cemetery extension has been completed, and works continue on the tender documents for Kilcoursey cemetery extension. It is hoped to have the tender issued in early 2022 with works to commence in 2022.

Litter & Waste Management IBAL, Irish Business Against Litter Survey

Tullamore - Top ranking sites included O'Connor Square / associated car parking and Tullamore Town Park – both of these were exceptionally well presented and maintained. Columcille Street was a very freshly presented shopping street with all aspects of the area surveyed in very good order. However, the Bring Centre at Daingean Rd was in a very poor state and subject to significant dumping. Meath Lane was also identified; both these areas will be inspected by our Litter Wardens to identify actions.

Court Cases

17 prosecutions were initiated in 2021, all of which were successful. Some of those were settled outside court and a couple currently working their way through the court system.

Litter Management Plan

Every 3 years a LA has to write and publish a Litter Management Plan. Our previous Plan expired in 2018 and was extended for 3 years in accordance with the legislation – Litter Pollution Act, 1997.

The draft plan was presented on the 15th of December to the SPC members. They were advised of our intention to go forward to the full Council in January 2022. Following this we go through a public consultation process before final adoption of the LMP.

Feasibility study: Rahan Village, flood relief

Environment Section are completing a feasibility study to carrying out flood relief works at Rahan Village in conjunction with the OPW. The proposal would include approximately 220m of embankment to protect the rear of College View, protection of the Waste Water Plant and a flood defence to tie in to the bridge. It is intended that the flood relief works project to be fully funded by OPW under Small Schemes funding.

Water Quality

The *Draft River Basin Management Plan 2022-2027* was published on 27th September 2020. The document sets out the current situation in relation to water quality in Ireland, which despite focus and progress in recent times, the overall water quality is again in decline in Ireland, primarily due to nutrient pollution. The plan is now open for public consultation until 31st March 2022 and is available at www.gov.ie/draftRBMP. The RBMP was presented to the SPC on the 15th December 2021.

Water

Works on the upgrade of the Tullamore, Birr and Clonaslee Water Treatment plants are on-going. The three plants have now begun their 1 year operation phase, after which time they will be returned to OCC staff to operate. Watermain rehabilitation works are completed in Newtown Rahan and are ongoing in Tullamore. Works are due to commence on the Agall-Holmshill rising main and a section of watermain in Fahey, Rhode. Design work is ongoing on 12km of watermain in the Pollagh area.

Draft Regional Water Resources Plan

Irish Water are now seeking feedback through public consultation on the draft RWRP: Eastern and Midlands and

associated SEA Environmental Report and Natura Impact Statement.

A thirteen-week statutory consultation is running from the 14 December 2021 to 14 March 2022 during which time the draft RWRP Eastern and Midlands and associated environmental reports can be viewed and downloaded from the website and at your local authority's planning office during their normal opening hours. Information on the consultation can be viewed at www.water.ie

HOUSING

Covid-19 – 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
Housing Leasing Enquiries	leasing@offalycoco.ie
Anti-Social Behaviour	ASB@offalycoco.ie

October Housing Update

- There are 489 on the Social Housing List awaiting housing support at the end of December 2021.
- A further 803 active tenancies are currently being supported under the Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) Scheme, 18 signed up for HAP and 6 exited from HAP in December.
- At the end of December, 19 single people and 6 families were being supported in emergency accommodation.
- 29 Rebuilding Ireland Home Loans applications have been received in 2021. 11 have been approved, 14 declined, 2 ineligible and 2 withdrawn. Overall 15 RIHLs have been drawn down since the commencement of the programme.
- [Following a competitive tendering process, a consultant has been appointed to carry out Private Rented House Inspections to ensure that the property complies with the Minimum Housing Standards Act.](#)

Housing Stock – Number, Maintenance & Repair

- Total housing stock at end of December 2021 is 1969.
- 275 maintenance calls were logged in December. Maintenance of non-emergency works is continuing with Covid-19 precautions in place.

Housing Capital Programme Update

- Raheen, Clara development (38 units) – The Stage 4 approval application was submitted to the Department on 21st December 2021. Works will commence on site in Q1, 2022 subject to department approval.
- Dargan Drive, Chancery Lane (20 Units) – Stage 2 was approved on

17th November 2021. The Pre-Part 8 process is in progress and Part 8 consultation will be advertised in January 2022. Stage 3 submission is due to the DHLGH on 23rd March 2022.

- Moneygall (4 units) – Stage 4 approval was granted on 15th November 2021. Contracts were signed on 12th January 2022 and works will begin on site by 21st January 2022.
- Circular Road, Daingean (9 units) - Stage 3 approval was received in March 2021. Works Tender was advertised on etenders on 9th November 2021 with a closing date of 10th December 2021. Upon identification of the preferred Tenderer Stage 4 will issue to the Department in Q1, 2022.
- Sycamore Drive, Ballycumber (10 Units) – Stage 1 approval was granted by the Department on 11th May 2021. Design Team have been appointed and Stage 2 will be lodged in Q1, 2022 on completion of site surveys and investigations by appointed contractors.

Vacant Houses Initiatives

- 1 Newbridge Street, Birr: Stage 4 approval was granted on 21st October 2021. The Contractor has been appointed (Ridge Road Construction) to carry out the works which commenced on 16th December 2021.
- 4 Hillview, Holly Park, Birr: Progressing as an acquisition.
- 121 Lakeview, Clara: Stage 1 submission will be submitted to the Department in Q1, 2022
- 3 x Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs) completed in 2021.

Approved Housing Bodies Schemes

- Sofia Housing: Stage 2 approved (39 units) at Presentation Lands, Portarlinton. Stage 2 submission was made in October. Sophia Housing have lodged a planning application for the development – further information is being sought from the AHB.
- Sofia Housing, in a joint initiative with Midlands Simon Community, acquired Clonamore Hotel in Q3, 2020. The facility will be developed as an enhanced centre for the provision of supported accommodation for homeless people. Under the terms of a landmark agreement Midlands Simon Community will operate the facility, with a team of qualified social care workers providing support on a 24/7 basis. Following refurbishment, the facility will provide professional supports for up to 17 people. Permission to proceed to tender approved in December 2021.

Turnkey Developments/Part V

- 6 Turnkey Schemes (82 units) which received departmental approval in December 2020 are progressing as follows:
 1. Mucklagh, 8 units - Under Construction
 2. Woodfield, Birr, 34 units - 5 completed in 2021 and due for allocation in January 2022
 3. Bog Road, Portarlinton, 28 units - Under Construction
 4. Walsh Island, 4 units - Under Construction
 5. Tullamore, 5 units – discussions ongoing

Housing Grants

The total allocation in 2021 towards private housing grants, i.e., Housing Adaptation Grants for Older People; People with a Disability Scheme and Mobility Grants was €1,600,000. 20% of this funding is provided from the Council's Housing resources. Housing staff are liaising with all applicants who have been approved for works in an effort to ensure that all works are progressing and to facilitate the drawdown of funds.

Disabled Person's Grants

The Council received notification from the Department for a significantly increased funding for Disabled Persons works on Local Authority housing units for 2021. A number of adaptations and extensions are progressing and finalising on a number of our housing units.

Retrofit Programme

The Council received notification on 22nd October 2021 of an increase in their allocation under 'Just Transition for the Midlands Region' programme to €4.2m. Lot 1&2, Birr: The Contractor for the works has been appointed (Retrofit Design Ltd.) and works are in progress on the Birr houses.

Lot 3&4, Tullamore: The closing date for the Works Tender for the 42 houses in Tullamore was 24th November [2021. 4 no. tenders were returned. The preferred Tenderer will be appointed to the works once all due diligence required by the contract is completed. Works should begin in Q1, 2022.](#)

Lot 5&6, Edenderry, Daingean, Clara, Ferbane, Shannonbridge, Cloghan: The appointed consultants have surveyed the 43 houses and are preparing the works tender which will be advertised on www.etenders.gov.ie in Q1, 2022.

LOCAL & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

COMMUNITY

Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

Offaly LCDC held their monthly meeting on Thursday 9th December, 2021. Main agenda items included the Rural Development LEADER Programme 2014 – 2020 & Transitional LEADER Programme 2021 – 2022, the Social Inclusion & Community Activation Programme 2018 – 2022 (SICAP), Local Economic and Community Plans Guidelines 2021 and the Community Activities Fund 2021. Members were informed that the 2022 SICAP budget allocation for Offaly has been increased by 15% on the 2021 budget by the DRCD. This is an acknowledgement of the crucial role of SICAP in tackling social exclusion, poverty, isolation and marginalisation. Members were given a detailed presentation on the new LECP Guidelines which were launched on the 12th November 2021 and advised that the new funding scheme, the Community Activities Fund 2021 would open for applications before Christmas.

Offaly Public Participation Network

Offaly PPN with Green Offaly hosted a Cop 26 Event in Charleville Castle hosting the Dingle Hub who were en route to Cop 26 in Glasgow. The event included key staff from Offaly Co. Co., the Cathaoirleach Cllr Declan Harvey who welcomed the contingent from Dingle Hub to Offaly.



Funding Information Meetings held in the three Municipal Districts were well attended. Facilitated by the PPN, Bridie Costello Hynes delivered a presentation on Community Enhancement funding and gave a summary on Covid funds. Olwen Cummins, AO Regeneration, presented on Town & Village Renewal, Outdoor Recreation Scheme, Rural Regeneration Development Fund & Urban Regeneration Development Fund. OLDC were represented by Roisin Lennon, Catriona Duggan and Cormac Mahon who delivered a presentation on LEADER Funding and the importance of Community Planning.

Public Participation Network Elections

took place with representatives now nominated for PPN seats on the Housing Strategic Policy Committee, Climate Action, Environment, Water and Transportation Strategic Policy Committee, Joint Policing Committee and the Heritage Forum. The PPN plans to hold further Elections in the spring to address the remaining vacancies.

Age Friendly Alliance

- The review of the Age Friendly Strategy 2018-2021 was finalised in December.
- The Winter issue of Connecting the Faithful Newsletter Winter/Christmas edition was circulated across the county in December.
- A further meeting took place with an Interdepartmental team with a view to developing Clara as an Age Friendly town in 2022 and Age Friendly input into the Town Centre Master Plan Initiative 2021 for Clara.

Community Activities Fund

Offaly LCDC is currently inviting applications for funding under the 2021

Community Activities Fund (CAF). This once-off fund will be allocated by the LCDC under the Department's Community Enhancement Programme. The closing date for applications is 12 noon on Friday 11th February 2022.

The CAF is funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development with €277,102 approved for Offaly. On this occasion Offaly LCDC has decided to ring fence up to €75,600 towards grants of up to €7,000 each to support established community playgrounds with replacement of equipment or running costs.

The Community Activities Fund will support not-for-profit community or voluntary groups:

1. With their non-pay running costs, e.g. utility bills (electricity costs, refuse charges, heating charges) or operating costs e.g. rental/lease costs, insurance bills). For grants towards operating/running costs, claims must be related to the period 1st July 2021 to 30th June 2022 in order to be eligible.
2. Groups will also be able to use the funding to carry out necessary repairs and improvements to their facilities, purchase equipment, for example tables and chairs, tools and signage, lawnmowers and training equipment etc.

Applicants must have completed all works funded under previous Community Enhancement Programmes, and have submitted the required documentation to Community Section to be eligible under this Fund.

Application forms, guidelines and further information is available at:

<https://www.offaly.ie/eng/Services/Community-Culture/2021-Community-Activities-Fund-CAF/>

Applications may be submitted online at <https://submit.link/Ah>

Comhairle na nÓg

Exhibition in Charleville Castle for COP 26 Delegates: On the 1st of November, Comhairle member Grainne Hannigan presented the Trash Talk app that Comhairle na nÓg have been working on in 2021, at an exhibition in Charleville Castle for COP 26 Delegates with Duncan Stewart. The Sacred Heart School joined Comhairle on the day as they had completed one of the workshops to help schools become Single Use Plastic Free. Comhairle na nÓg in collaboration with the Environment Section in Offaly County Council, organised and funded workshops in 8 secondary schools in Offaly to campaign to become single use plastic free.



Ted X event in Dun Laoghaire: On November 19th three of our Comhairle members gave very engaging talks on the world-wide platform, TEDx Junior, which was recorded on stage at the dlr Lexicon, Dun Laoghaire. Kenneth Bracken, gave a talk on his experience in Comhairle and how young people really can have influence. Sarah Meacle, gave a very engaging talk on the value and importance of community while Saul Whelan gave an

insightful talk on mental health and how we can all help if we listen.



Comhairle na nÓg AGM: The Annual General Meeting was held on the 25th of November online. The core programme of Comhairle na nÓg centres on young people identifying, prioritising and progressing topics important to them. The top 6 potential work topics as prioritised by young people was identified as follows: Mental Health (42%); Facilities for young people (9%); Unbalanced home/school life (10%); Discrimination (6%); Social media issues (10%); Wi-Fi/Internet problems (15%).

Comhairle na nÓg concluded the year with a final meeting on the 16th of December and Kenneth Bracken gave a presentation at the Community SPC Meeting on the 15th of December 2021.

ARTS

Arts Office Planning 2022

Planning for the Arts Office programming 2022 began with the completion of the Arts Service Delivery Plan.

Continuing Programming

In the Open / Faoin The programming is underway with a series of events planned for Birr, Lough Boora and Tullamore to take place until April



Creative Places

This ambitious three-year funding stream is being led by Creative Lives in partnership with Offaly County Council Arts Office and Edenderry Municipal District. The programming and PR are underway with initial events planned to take place in Feb 2022.

Lough Boora - Art in Landscape Seminar

Work for the Art in Landscape seminar continues, it is planned to take place in May 2022.

Tullamore Art Centre

Work continues with regards to the opening of the Arts Centre in 2022. The Arts Office are continuing to develop a series of arts as part of the In the Open | Faoin Spéir project. This programme will aim to re-engage an audience / local community participation in advance of the Art Centre opening.

Edenderry Library and Arts Space

The Arts Office will be continuing to work in collaboration with the county librarian in the development of plans for a multi-purpose arts space to be incorporated into the planning of the new library for Edenderry, this will include developments as part of the Creative Places Edenderry project.

OFFALY SPORTS PARTNERSHIP

Strategic plan 2021 – 2025

- Offaly Sports Partnership's newest strategic plan was launched online on Wednesday, 15th December by John Treacy, Chief Executive Officer, Sport Ireland.
- Copies of the plan can be requested by emailing sports@offalycoco.ie or by downloading the plan from the website at <https://www.offalysports.ie/custom/public/files/offaly-sports-partnership-strategic-plan-active-offaly-2021-to-2025.pdf>

AGM

The AGM of Offaly Sports Partnership was held on Wednesday, 15th December.

Offaly Sports Partnership Management Committee

Following the publication of Offaly Sports Partnership's newest strategic plan as noted above, the management committee of the sports partnership for the following five years will consist of representation from: -

- Offaly County Council – Ann Dillon
- Offaly County Council public representation – Cllr Clare Claffey (Birr MD), Cllr Robert Mc Dermott (Edenderry MD) and Cllr Danny Owens (Tullamore MD)
- Health Services Executive – Clodagh Armitage
- Technological University of Ireland Midlands / Midwest (Athlone Campus) – Joe Meegan
- Voluntary representation – Sean Campbell, Jude Feehan, Van Gillessen, Breege Loftus, Ciara Ní Cheilleachair, Eileen O'Neill, Carol Scott and Ray Spain

The first meeting of the new committee takes place on Wednesday, 16th February 2022.

Funding schemes

Offaly Sports Partnership will be launching two funding schemes in the new year:

- i. Covid19 return to sport supports
- ii. Club development grant scheme

Schemes will be notified by email to the sports partnership's distribution lists; and promoted via www.offalysports.ie and on our social media channels.

Sports Inclusion Development Programme

Various programmes ongoing including: -

- physical activity supports for day care centres catering for people with disabilities.
- physical activity supports for special education needs units in primary schools.

HEALTHY OFFALY



As the final quarter of the Healthy Ireland Fund approaches significant progress with regard to completing actions has been achieved. The Community Engagement, Community Mental Health Fund Small Grants Scheme and HIF Action 1 Fit Class have now been completed. Healthy Offaly received approval from Pobal in December to fund a series of 'Social Hubs' where older/vulnerable people can meet up and socialise in a Covid guidelines compliant manner to combat social isolation. The 'Hubs' will become live in early 2022. Activities to take place are supervised walks, nutrition and Health

& Well-being talks. Kilcormac Development Association will lead the initiative and report back to the Healthy Offaly Coordinator on progress.

As mentioned last month an evaluation and review process of HIF Round 3 is currently underway. The online questionnaire was sent out to all Healthy Ireland Fund/Community Resilience Fund recipients for their experiences of the funds thus far. The deadline for completion of the survey is Friday 7th January 2022.

LIBRARY SERVICES

books to support mental health for children, young adults and adults.

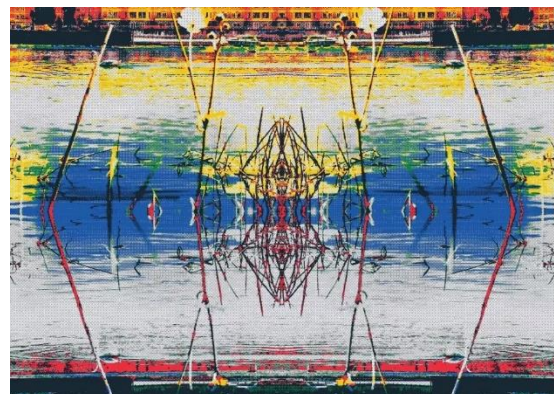
Check out the most recent [blog](#) in which our Ferbane Librarian, Claire, who has coordinated this campaign across our branches and during her research hand picked a selection of useful and inspiring books.

There are also great mental health resources on [Libby](#) and [BorrowBox](#).



Digital Exhibition in Tullamore Library

Caleb Rigney-Martin's artwork will be on display on our exhibition screen at Tullamore library for the month of January. Pop by and take a look at this wonderful art exhibition. Have a look at Caleb's website: <https://cableryge.wixsite.com/home> for more information.



2021 highlights in numbers

- 16% increase in items issues
- 20% increase in social media followers
- 27% increase in Freegal Music service users
- 53% increase in Beamafilm Movie service users
- 33% increase in eAudiobooks borrowed
- eduroam in all 8 branches
- 4,260 participants at 74 Children's Book Festival events
- 559 participants at 30 events in the Autumn Parenting Programme
- 1,448 children from 78 classes for online stories during Family Time at your Library

First Fortnight 2022

[First Fortnight](#) is a charity event that uses the arts to combat stigma and prejudice around mental health. It runs for the first two weeks of January.

Call in to your local library to view the great book displays with suggestions on

Christmas Family Time at Offaly Libraries

Our staff curated an excellent Christmas Family Time with 19 online videos and these postings reached **29,349 people** and had engagement of **4,907**.

Our Zoom to the Library! Christmas story-times programme to primary schools and creches was very successful. The response from teachers and pupils was very positive and staff were thrilled to continue this festive favourite!



Overall, **78 classes with 1,448** pupils zoomed to the library for storytime. Tullamore Library read Christmas Stories to 1,081 students from 61 Classes. Birr Library had a total of 335 pupils join from 16 classes for fun filled festive themed events.

Check out all the brilliant videos on [Facebook](#) containing lots of festive readings and songs.

History Lecture Series December 2021

Offaly Libraries' History Lecture Series final lecture 'Aspects of the Land War of the 1880s in Offaly' by Dr Ciarán Reilly was released online in December.

This four-part lecture series generated over **2,000 views online** and continues to be viewed on Offaly Libraries YouTube channel:

www.youtube.com/OffalyLibraries

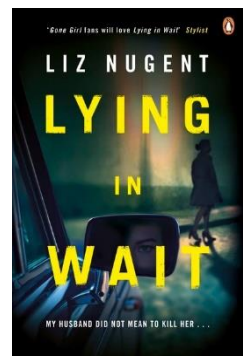


Sign up for our Library Newsletter

A quick reminder that the best way to keep up to date with all library programmes, developments and new services is via our Library Newsletter and through following our social media channels. Currently we have **1,285 subscribers** to the newsletter. The link to subscribe to our newsletter is here; [Offaly Libraries Newsletter](#).

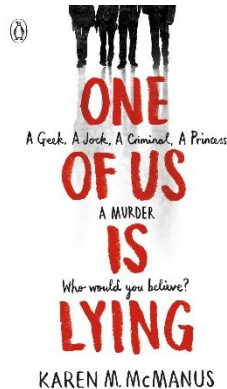
Adult Book Club

The next book club will take place on Thursday 1st February 2022 at 7pm. The book chosen to read for it is **Lying in Wait** by Liz Nugent. This book is available for collection at Tullamore Library. To register your interest in joining the Book Club, please email Tullamorelibrary@Offalycoco.ie



Young Adult Book Club

The last Young Adult Book Club took place on 6th Jan and the book discussed was *The Book of Dust* by Philip Pullman. The next Young Adult Book Club will be held on Thursday, 27th January and the book chosen is **One of Us is Lying** by Karen M. McManus. Available to borrow on [BorrowBox](#) and in your local library branch.



Looking ahead to 2022: STEAM

Offaly Libraries' School Steam programme for 2022 will highlight innovation in Engineering, Technology and Biodiversity. The programme will include workshops in the Science of Harry Potter, a virtual visit to Dublin Zoo, the Offaly space connection, 3D printer workshops, wildlife of Offaly and even rocket building. The brochure will be circulated to schools in Offaly during January.



LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE

LEO Supports for Tourism Industry

LEO Offaly has created a panel of specialist tourism mentors and in December 2021 provided dedicated training in Social Media and Wordpress for Tourism providers. In December, LEO Offaly also ran a Tourism Clinic, providing an opportunity for 6 people to have a one to one meeting to discuss their new Tourism Idea.

Look for Local

In the run up to Christmas, LEO Offaly promoted and supported the National Look for Local campaign. All 31 Local Enterprise Offices participated in the campaign, encouraging people to buy locally and so support their businesses and communities.

Upcoming Courses and Initiatives

Digital Marketing Course for Business

Don't get left behind - join our Digital Marketing course with Keith Feighery of Digital Insights Ltd will show you how to sell online. This subsidised course will take place over 12-morning sessions from March 8th - April 13th 2022. Find more course content and book at <https://lnkd.in/eDa4fgCD>.

Start your own Business Course

Join our START YOUR OWN BUSINESS online course starting next month. We will give clients the right guidance, mentoring and advice over 5 sessions from Tues 18th Jan to Tues 1st Feb 2022. Booking is available by following this link - <https://lnkd.in/gK9a36NW>. Priority will be given to Offaly participants.

WordPress Advanced Course

Are you aware of a WordPress user that's keen to improve their site design? Do they need to optimise their WordPress site SEO? Join our FREE & hands-on WordPress

Advanced Course taking place on Wednesday 16th Feb from 10.00am - 12.30pm. Book a seat at <https://bit.ly/OffalyWPadv>. Participants will also have the chance to voice any questions or issues that they are experiencing in the Q&A. Participants will also need to have access to their WordPress dashboard so they can follow the demonstration aspects of the workshop.

Grow your own Business Programme

There are just 3 spaces left at our subsidised 'Grow your Business Programme' kicking off next month. This new series of 8 webinars and workshops from Jan 19th to Mar 9th 2022, is designed for business owners/managers who have a real desire to grow their business. Participants will also receive 1-to-1 expert mentoring within the course. Learn more about the course and register for limited places at <https://lnkd.in/er7AfYNP>

Offaly Economic Development Strategy & Action Plan 2022 - 2027

Offaly County Council is seeking tenders for the development of an Offaly Economic Development Strategy & Action Plan 2022 - 2027. The plan seeks to frame an overarching strategy and an action-focused roadmap to build an inclusive economy of the future for County Offaly.

Full tender details are available on <https://lnkd.in/e4RcucNq>

In-Focus

Glenisk set to rebuild carbon neutral plant

With yoghurt production due to resume at the Glenisk factory in Killeigh by mid-January, the managing director of the company says they will rebuild a completely "carbon neutral" business. The Glenisk plant, which was damaged in a devastating fire on September 27 last, is to be rebuilt on the same site in Newtown

within the next 16 months, and Vincent Cleary says the new facility will be entirely carbon neutral. The move is part of an overall strategy that could see the entire supply chain for Glenisk becoming carbon neutral, which would make them world leaders in their field of operation. Are you aware of businesses who want to develop a greener policy? The Green for Micro programme - a new initiative from the Local Enterprise Offices, helps to prepare small businesses for the low carbon, more resource efficient economy of the future. The Green for Micro programme is suitable for all micro-enterprises with up to ten employees, but it is particularly suited to businesses in construction and the built environment, retail, manufacturing, textiles and fashion, food, electronics, plastics, and packaging. Click [here](#) to apply!

Economic Development Underway in Ferbane

Onwards and Upwards! – pictured below are four new industrial buildings currently under construction in Ferbane!





Anna Marie Delaney, Chief Executive

Revenue Account Grant Income & Payroll Summary to 31st December 2021

OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL	Full Yr Budget 2021 €m	Preliminary Value to December 2021 €m	% Year To Date
Payroll costs	28.03	27.44	97.9%
Grants and Subsidies Income	38.24	46.69	122.1%

OCC to 31st December 2021

	<u>Rates</u> €m	<u>Rents</u> €m	<u>Loans</u> €m
Opening Balance Jan 1, 2021	3.60	0.57	0.19
Net Invoices & Adjustments, waivers	13.68	7.25	0.45
2021 Cash Collected to end of December	13.68	7.36	0.56
Closing Balance December 31st , 2021	3.61	0.46	0.08

2020 Cash collected to December

	10.36	***	6.38	0.55
% Collection at this point in 2020	132%		115%	101%

*** Collections impacted in 2020 and 2021 by waiver uncertainty and effect of lockdowns

**Bank Overdraft to 31st December
2021**

Number of days Overdrawn in Bank year to date	43	12%
Bank Interest and non conforming charges to December 31st 2021 YTD	€19,567	
Bank Administration and transactional charges to December 31st 2021 YTD	€33,904	