

FEBRUARY 2020

MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT



Do: Baill Comhairle Chontae Uíbh Fhailí

To: Each Member of Offaly County Council

Tuairisc mhíosúil bainistíochta a bhreithniú i gcomhair tionóil mí Márta

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

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS:

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

UPDATES

NATIONAL SPRING CLEAN WEEK

The launch of the National Spring Clean week will take place on Wednesday 1st April in O'Connor Square at 11am.

COVID 19

Update to be provided at the March Monthly Meeting

REPORT AT A GLANCE

Netherlands Ambassador visits I-LOFAR project in Birr

The Ambassador of the Netherlands to Ireland, Adriaan Palm visited the I-LOFAR Project in Birr Castle on the 28th February.

Severe Weather Response

Offaly County Council's severe weather response was activated during the period of unsettled weather and significant periods of rainfall from 9th February 2020 to date. Responding to daily information from the National Directorate for Fire & Emergency Management Crisis Management Team, Met Eireann and the OPW, Offaly County Council staff monitored river levels and prepared for the deployment of defence measures where required. Offaly County Council crews responded to flooding issues throughout the County issuing sandbags and pumping where required.

Public Participation Network

Offaly PPN coordinated a meeting of the Midlands Region PPN Resource Workers and Gerry Finn Just Transition team to agree a means to support the upcoming consultations and workshops in communities adjusting to low carbon transition. Offaly PPN presented on behalf of the PPN Midlands Region at the Just Transition Team Meeting in the Chamber on Feb 14th.

ENVIRONMENT & WATER

Environment

A total of 231 complaints in relation to waste and litter were made to date in 2020. No legal action has been instigated so far this year.

National Spring Clean Week

The launch of the National Spring Clean week will take place on Wednesday 1st April in O'Connor Square at 11am.

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The following roads were closed due to flooding and as of 12th March a number were reopened. The public were informed on a daily basis through the website, social media and press releases.

- Shannon Harbour to Banagher Road L7014-1(closed 22/2/2020 reopened 10/3/2020);
- Botley Lane, Portarlinton L50151 (closed 24/2/2020 reopened 5/3/2020);
- The Pollagh to Derrynagun Road L7020-6 (closed 25/2/2020 reopened 29/2/2020);
- The Crank Road L-7017-1 in Banagher (closed 26/2/2020 reopened 9/3/2020);
- The R438 at Anglers Rest on the Tipperary/Offaly border (closed 26/2/2020 reopened 5/3/2020);

- N62, Birr to Cloghan, at Kennedys Cross (closed 1/3/2020 will reopen 19/03/2020).

Air/Noise

Work has commenced in March on Round 4 Noise Mapping and action planning cycle (2020-2025) as required under European Communities (Environmental Noise) regulations EC Directive 2002/49/EC.

Work has commenced on identifying the relevant electoral division and any additional townlands that will form the geographical extent of the Tullamore Low Smoke Zone (LSZ) under "smoky coal ban" Air Pollution Act (marketing, sale, distribution and burning of specified fuels) regulations 2012-2016.

**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 and considering a replacement reservoir at Walsh Island.

**LOCAL & COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT**

Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

The LCDC met on 13th February 2020. Agenda items included Rural Development LEADER Programme 2014 – 2020; SICAP 2019 Annual Performance Review; SICAP 2019 Annual Progress Report and SICAP 2020 Annual Plan. The SICAP 2019 Annual Performance Review was approved by the members. The SICAP 2019 Annual Progress Report was agreed and adopted by the members. The SICAP 2020 Annual Plan was formally agreed and approved by the members.

Age Friendly Strategy

The Age Friendly Alliance met to further the Age Friendly Actions for 2020. Clara is the main focus for 2020 in terms of Public realm, Age Friendly Businesses and support services to compliment Clara Age Friendly Library.

The Age Friendly CPD took place offering managers & regional coordinators an opportunity to share learning and identify new opportunities.

Public Participation Network

The PPN assisted in the Community Planning piece for Ballyboy and the TVR application.

Offaly PPN coordinated a meeting of the Midlands Region PPN Resource Workers and Gerry Finn Just Transition team to agree a means to support the upcoming consultations and workshops in communities adjusting to low carbon transition.

Offaly PPN presented on behalf of the PPN Midlands Region at the Just Transition Team Meeting in the Chamber on Feb 14th. Work is underway on Bealtaine plans for 2020.

Comhairle na nÓg

Comhairle na nÓg held their February meeting and also completed a video shoot. The video is in relation to Exam Stress and Anxiety. It was a fun day with all Comhairle members giving their best effort to creating the video. The video will be launched towards the end of March when it will be shown to Leaving Cert exam students in the library.

Three of our members contributed to a consultation in Dublin to get the views of young people on parenting support, organised by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. They were working closely with the Parenting Support Policy Unit which was newly set up in the department.

Another member was selected to join the Youth Work Committee with the LOETB to help make recommendations to the LOETB on the performance of its functions.



Offaly Community & Sports Awards



**OFFALY COMMUNITY
& SPORTS AWARDS**
OFFALY INDEPENDENT

County's Official 10th Photo
With County Council

Offaly County Council in partnership with the Offaly Independent will launch the inaugural Offaly Community & Sports Awards 2020 in March. There will be nine categories across sport and community in total, with an award for the winner of each – as nominated by the public and voted on by a panel of judges. The purpose of the awards is to acknowledge groups and individuals who, through their commitment to voluntary, community and sporting activities, have played a significant role in enhancing the quality of life in their communities in County Offaly. The shortlisted nominees will be invited to the gala awards ceremony in the Tullamore Court Hotel on May 8th. In addition, the winners of the 2020 Pride of Place and 2019

Tidy Towns Merit Awards will be honoured on the night. The overall winner of the 2020 Offaly Person/Group of the Year will also be chosen from the winners of all of the above categories. The launch will take place on the 3rd of March 2020, at Áras an Chontae, Tullamore. Michael Duignan, Chairman of Offaly GAA and renowned hurling analyst and commentator with The Sunday Game will formally launch the event.

Arts

The Arts Office began to plan the very busy annual programme in Jan/Feb following successful application to the Arts Council with an increase in funding from 49,000 to 62,000 including culture night.

Lough Boora

Environmental artists Tim Collins and Reiko Collins research is in the writing editing phase due for completion end Feb / March

Youth Arts

Youth Arts facilitator Oisin Robbins has been in the planning stage of the project working with the Arts Office and external agencies to further recommendations that have arisen from the Youth Arts Report. There will be a focus on the 'youth voice' in terms of planning and delivery of arts initiatives and the development of a county Youth Arts Forum in 2020. It is envisaged that the report *The Makings Fostering Youth Creativity*, will be published and launched to coincide with the launch of a new youth arts forum in 2020.

FilmOffaly Programme

Awards - Final budgetary and finance information for the 2019 FilmOffaly Award winners has been received and the contract and schedule is being developed.

Exhibition Programme

The exhibition for February is Derrinlough Briquette Factory by James Fraher.

American photographer Fraher captures the process of briquette making at Derrinlough through an exhibition of large scale black and white images. The project was funded through the Creative Ireland Offaly Programme and in partnership with Bord Na Mona.

Grants & Awards

There was a call out for all 2020 awards made in late November early December including; Arts Acts Grants, Professional Artists Support Scheme, Festival Arts Grants and the Atrium Exhibition Programme for 2020.

All applications have been assessed are awarded as follows:

Arts Acts Grants – Budget 20,000

Total applications received = 19 Total grants recommended = 18

Festival Arts Grants – Budget: 10,000

Total applications received = 9 Total applications recommended = 8

Professional Artist Scheme – Budget: 10,000

Total applications received = 21 Total applications recommended = 18

Capital Projects

Tullamore Community Art Centre

Board of Management continue to meet to discuss plans for fundraising.

Edenderry Library and Arts Space

The Arts Office is working 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

SPORTS

Funding

Dept. of Transport, Tourism & Sport – Bike Week application for €6,000 in funding submitted. Awaiting outcome

Healthy Offaly

Service level agreements signed with partner agencies

Partner agencies have received 75% draw down of allocation; and have commenced delivery of actions

Programmes

Staff of the Sports Partnership, the South Offaly sports hub and partner agencies (FAI and Leinster Rugby via their development officers) continue to deliver sport and physical activity programmes across the county. Key programmes delivered in February included: -

Community Sports Development Officer Programme

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

Action from the community sports development programme in west Offaly

**Operation Transformation**

Three ad break challenges filmed in Offaly (Moneygall, Kinnitty and Tullamore – approx. 300 people in attendance)

Sports Inclusion Development Programme

Various programmes underway including: -
Eight week “Healthy Choices, Healthy Community” programme

Six-week activator pole programme for older adults

Six-week multi-sport programme for people with intellectual disabilities

Gym programme for people with sensory disabilities

Rock steady boxing for people with Parkinson's

Boccia blitz for people with disabilities



LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE

LEO Offaly supported 62 new jobs in the county in 2019

The 31 Local Enterprise Offices, funded by the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation, are now supporting 38,535 jobs across 7,400 client companies. The 2019 figures for the Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs), operating in partnership with Enterprise Ireland and the local authorities, show that 3,149 net jobs were created last year across the country.

Local Enterprise Office Offaly 2019 jobs figures, announced during Local Enterprise Week, show that 62 net new jobs were created by Local Enterprise Office Offaly supported companies last year. This figure relates to client companies that have received Feasibility, Priming and/or Business Expansion Grants. It does not include job creation in all the businesses that interact with the Local Enterprise Office and receive Enterprise Training, Mentoring and Business Advice.

LEOs saw increases across all supports in 2019 including training, mentoring and funding. The number of those trained in 2019 was up 6.4% last year with 37,306 availing of training through their Local Enterprise Office. There was also an 10.5% increase in mentoring assignments completed, with 10,756 clients benefitting from LEO mentoring. In Offaly, 159 local entrepreneurs received mentoring while 549 took part in training programmes through Local Enterprise Office Offaly.

Netherlands Ambassador visits I-LOFAR project in Birr

The Ambassador of the Netherlands to Ireland, Adriaan Palm visited the I-LOFAR Project in Birr Castle on the 28th February. The meeting was organized by Professor Peter Gallagher and discussions included collaborative research, economic and tourism opportunities between Birr and

ASTRON in the Netherlands. On the day, Ambassador Palm met with Orla Martin and Cllr. John Clendennen, both of whom had visited ASTRON – the Netherlands Institute for Radio Astronomy.



Upcoming Events and New Initiatives GradStart scheme now available for LEO clients

The GradStart scheme is a 24-month graduate placement programme with funding of up to €30k (€15k per year). Local Enterprise Office client companies with at least 5 full time staff can apply for the GradStart programme. The objective of GradStart is to assist indigenous companies to scale and grow their businesses through the introduction of good graduate talent (with a minimum Level 6-degree qualification) to deliver clearly defined projects.



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.

Spring Business Training Courses

The Local Enterprise Office Offaly has launched the Spring Business Training Course schedule. Booking is now available for a number of courses such as Start your Own Business Course, Digital marketing

for Business, Part-Time Business Start Up (while holding down a day job) and How to Sell Successfully.

Free Business Advice Sessions on eCommerce Grants

A free 45-minute one-to-one mentoring session on how to set up an ecommerce website and avail of grants will be held in April 2020. The one to one mentoring session designed to help you get an application ready for the Trading Online Voucher Scheme. After this session you will have a clearer picture of what's involved in running an eCommerce website, the practicalities, and potential issues.

Anna Marie Delaney, Chief Executive