

**JANUARY
2023**



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 Feabhra

Monthly Management Report for consideration at the February 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

BIRR LOCAL AREA PLAN

The CE Report on the Draft Birr Local Area Plan was considered by the elected members on 23rd January 2023. The proposed material alterations is on public display **from 10th February 2023** inviting submissions.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT FUND 2022-23

The closing date for applications is 24th February 2023.

LIBRARY DATES

On **February 25th**, Ireland Reads is inviting people of all ages to get reading and local author, Donna Mills, will launch her Children's Book 'What Can I Do?' in Tullamore Library at 12pm



STEPS Engineers Week, March 4th – March 10th
Irish Astronomy Week, March 20th – 26th

REPORT AT A GLANCE

Urban Regeneration and Development Fund

On the 30th January 2023, Mr. Darragh O'Brien, TD, Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage announced the third round of URDF funding.

Active Travel Funding 2023

The Active Travel allocation for 2023 equates to over €3,009,382 in funding.

Public Participation Network

Work in January for Offaly PPN centred on developing the three Year Strategic Plan 2023 – 2026 and the Work Plan for 2023.

Pride of Place

Three Offaly community groups nominated by Offaly County Council took an unprecedented three prizes at the annual IPB Co-operation Ireland Pride of Place Awards, which were held on 21st January 2023 at a gala event held in the Clayton Hotel, Dublin.

PLANNING

Development Management

	To end January 2023	To end January 2022	Total 2022
Planning Applications	25	24	697
Extensions of Duration Applications & Assessments	1	1	15
Warning Letters and (Enforcement Notices) issued	58 (2)	2	158 (15)

During the month of **January 2023**, the following large planning applications were received:

**DERMOT NALLY
STONE LIMITED**

**PP BACKFILL
GRAVEL PIT QUARRY
WITH IMPORTED
SOIL AND STONE
MATERIAL,
WHEELBATH, OFFICE
FACILITIES,
BALLINAHOWN.**

**ELEGIN ENERGY
SERVICES LTD**

PP SOLAR
DEVELOPMENT,
LURGAN, MOATE

**DERRYCARNEY
SOLAR LIMITED**

PP SOLAR FARM,
COMPOUNDS, 30 NO.
MEDIUM POWER
STATIONS, LUMCLOON
/ BUN / DERRYCARNEY
/ DERRIES / RIN / LEA
BEG / LEA MORE

**BIR TRUSTEE
COMPANY LIMITED**

PP MICRO-
HYDROPOWER
GENERATOR AND ALL
ASSOCIATED SITE
WORKS, BIRR CASTLE
DEMESNE, BIRR

**TULLAMORE
MEDICAL CENTRE**

PP CHANGE OF USE OF
EXISTING
RESIDENTIAL TO
COMMERCIAL
INCLUDING
DEMOLITION, ARDAN
ROAD, TULLAMORE

Forward Planning

January 1st 2023 was the closing date for submissions on the Draft Map relating to the Residential Zoned Land Tax. 19 submissions were received, which will be considered as part of the preparation of the Supplemental Map on 1st April 2023.

REGENERATION

Urban Regeneration and Development Fund – Third Round of Funding Support

On the 30th January 2023, Mr. Darragh O'Brien, TD, Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage announced the third round of URDF funding. This third call is specifically designed to address long term vacancy and dereliction across URDF cities and towns which will align with the Government's Vacant Homes Action Plan 2023. Tullamore is the only town eligible for URDF funding in Offaly.

Distinct from previous URDF funding calls, the third funding round will not be a competitive bid process. This round will act as a dedicated revolving fund for Tullamore to address the financial barrier and risk faced by local authorities in seeking to tackle long term vacant and derelict buildings. Offaly County Council will receive a financial allocation relative to its size, and having 1 URDF town located within its functional area and the level of vacancy and dereliction within Tullamore.

The fund will be available to cover the acquisition costs of a property or site and also any civil or design works which may be required to de-risk or improve the site/building to make it more attractive for reuse, development by others or onward sale. The intention is that the fund would be replenished from the proceeds received from the end use/user, thereby allowing the local authority to put in place a rolling programme to tackle long term vacancy and

dereliction without recourse to borrowing and the associated financial risk.

It is noted, this round of funding support under the URDF programme is not seeking to replicate or replace the various social housing programmes available to local authorities to tackle vacant and derelict buildings and sites. The revolving fund is intended to act as an additional and much broader tool for the activation of long term vacant and derelict buildings and sites.

While the third round of funding is specifically tailored to help deliver specific objectives of the National Development Plan and Housing for All, a fourth round of funding support will be made available later in 2023. This further call will revert to the heretofore wider scope of URDF projects which reflect the complex investment proposals required to transform key areas of our cities and towns.

Croí Cónaithe

Minister O'Brien said recently while launching a new six-week advertising campaign on supports for converting vacant property into homes that *"the most efficient home to deliver is one that already exists"*. The recently established Vacant & Derelict Properties Unit within the Regeneration Section of Offaly County Council has received over 88 queries about the fund since it was officially launched.

Applications received to date

- 8 application forms currently progressing.
- 5 successful application have been approved.

Application forms or queries to tvr@offalycoco.ie or by downloading an application form.

Town Centre First, Clara 2021

Consultants, Urban Agency Architects Ltd., have presented the Inception Report including the Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy for the Clara Town Centre First Plan, which marked the completion of the First Stage of a 6 Stage Process. Two Public Consultation Events were held in the 4th Quarter of 2022, with approximately 75 people in attendance over the two events. The Regeneration Team has reviewed the Draft Baseline Report prepared by the Consultants, with the assistance of other Council Sections. The Consultants have finalised the Baseline Report for the Town Centre First Plan.

The Design Phase of the Town Centre First plan has commenced. The Clara Town Team are currently assisting in the circulation and completion of a Digital Citizen Survey as part of the Digital Blueprint Report. This Digital Towns – Blueprint Report will be incorporated into the TCF Plan and is currently being prepared by DCU. The survey is designed to give an insight into the Town's:

- Internet access and use
- Digital skills
- Digital activity
- Digital work

Town and Village Renewal Scheme

All 16 active TVR projects from 2019-2022 are progressing:

Birr MD	Edenderry MD	Tullamore MD
Shinrone phase II (2019)	Cloneygowan (2020)	Mucklagh (2020)
Pollagh (2020)	Kilmalogue (2020)	Mount Bolus Phase II (2020)
Ferbane Fairgreen (2020)	Clonbullogue (2021)	Killeigh (2021)
Ballyboy (2021)	Daingean Town Hall, Project Development Measure (2022)	Clara (Streetscape Enhancement Measure) (2022)
Market Square, Birr (2022)		
Kilcormac Fiesta Hall (2022)		
Shinrone Old Library Building (2022)		
Moneygall Village Project Development Measure (2022)		

Building Acquisition Measure Scheme

Both properties have now been acquired by Offaly County Council.

Property Location	Description
Ballyboy	Purchase of the former Community Hall for use as a multi-purpose community space
Moneygall	Purchase of the former family-run business with a garage to be converted into a multi-purpose community and enterprise hub

Rural Regeneration Development Fund (RRDF)**Successful RRDF projects progress update****2021 Edenderry Phase II**

- Initial conception meeting with Edenderry elected members held on 8th February 2023.
- OPW site now acquired.

2020 Banagher Regeneration

- Consultants are progressing detailed design for Master Plan of Banagher Marina and environs.
- Options for tendering for redevelopment of Hotel site being explored.

2021 – Ferbane Regeneration

Tender responses for design team for the refurbishment of St Joseph's Convent closed on 29th January, responses now being evaluated. Minor 'meanwhile' remedial works to permit community use are nearing completion.

Outdoor Recreational Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS)**ORIS projects progress update**
2021 – Derrynounce Lakes and Trails, project development

Tender was published for a ‘10 Year Development Plan and Concept Designs for Derrynounce Lakes & Trails’. The deadline date for responses to this tender was the 31st January 2023. Tender responses have been received and are now being evaluated.

ROADS

Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project (PLEEP)

Works are ongoing concerning the Regional PLEEP project managed by Kilkenny County Council. Surveying works within Offaly County are programmed to commence in April 2023 with installation and upgrade works scheduled to commence in July 2023 with a contract period of 2 months. Once completed approximately 4800 lighting units will be upgraded to Energy Efficient Lighting units that will in turn generate a reduction on our Energy and maintenance related costs and assist in decreasing our Carbon Footprint.

Active Travel Funding 2023

The Active Travel allocation for 2023 equates to over €3,009,382 in funding. The program comprises of approximately 22 schemes. All of the schemes are multi annual from a delivery perspective. 16 schemes are currently at the Tender process/Award or Construction stage while 1 scheme is currently at detailed design. There are five new schemes as part of the 2023 program, which account for an allocation of €350,000. As the majority of the 2023 schemes commenced in 2022, the spending profile in 2023 will be much higher than 2022.

The annual funding is assigned to match our multi annual program with regards to the delivery of any scheme. It is important to recognise that schemes approved for Offaly County Council are all on a predominantly 18-24-month delivery program and are categorised as multi annual. There are indeed some schemes with a potentially broader delivery timeline such as the new Spollenstown Bridge Crossing of the Railway Line and the Tullamore Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA).

The Active Travel team are currently focused on future scheme delivery in 2023 and have commenced the formulation of a number of Part 8 schemes with a view to commencement in Q4 of 2023 or Q1 2024 subject to NTA approval and allocation of additional funding beyond our 2023 allocation.

The Active Travel Programme is delivered under our Annual Roadworks Programme. The Annual Allocations under the Roadworks Programme have doubled between 2018 and 2022, with a further increase expected in 2023. The limited availability of contractors and delays with utility providers, coupled with more recent inflationary trends against this additional activity, have significantly impacted delivery times.

ENVIRONMENT AND WATER SERVICES

Climate Action & Energy

Works are continuing at the Wetlands, with the pathway being surfaced, and a number of trees planted.

Scoil Bride partnered with Tullamore Tidy towns to plant 40 trees at Tullamore wetland.



Environmental

Environmental Report to EPA for 2022

The European Parliament and Council Recommendation 2001/331/EC details the setting of Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections (RMCEI) in EU member states. The purpose of the Recommendation is to strengthen compliance with and contribute to a more consistent implementation and enforcement of EU Environmental Law.

OCC Environmental Section has completed and Environmental report for 2022, covering national priorities (set by EPA) covering Waste, Water, Air and Noise to meet the above criteria.

In February, an Environmental Plan for the year ahead, outlining how OCC will meet the minimum criteria for environmental inspections will be submitted to the EPA.

Litter Fines

Offaly County Council was successful in Court two waste prosecutions in January 2023.

The first case related to an ongoing waste issue whereby an individual was allowing third party waste to be disposed of and burned on his property. This case has been ongoing since 2020 and following the failure of the individual to comply with notices, court proceedings were initiated. The individual attended Court on 4 January in Tullamore; by which time the individual was to have the property cleaned up. Failure to do so by the Court date then resulted in a conviction.

The second case related to the build up and storage of domestic waste at a property whereby the tenant of a property would not engage the services of a waste collector or bring domestic waste to a waste/recycling facility. Following the issuing of a Section 55 Notice under the Waste Management Act, 1996 the individual did not comply with the Notice or co-operate in any way with the Council. The person was found guilty of the waste offence on 20 January. As the person did not attend Court, following the conviction the Judge issued a bench warrant.

Lead Remediation Grant

The Dept. of Housing has announced details of the revised Lead Remediation Grant Scheme. Lead is a naturally occurring metal that was used for pipework and plumbing in some houses built up to, and including, the 1970s. However, exposure to lead in drinking water has been identified as a serious public health risk. The grant scheme was introduced in line with the Government's National Lead Strategy in order to reduce people's exposure to lead in drinking water.

The aim of the grant is to assist households with the cost of replacing lead pipes and fittings within the boundaries of the property. The grant is available if you

receive a water supply from either a public or private water supplier.

The grant has been increase to a uniform grant rate of 100% of the eligible costs of the replacement of any such lead pipes and/or related fittings, or €5,000, whichever is the lower.

Water Services

Clara Ballycumber Rising Main

Work has been completed on this rising main, at St Emmets Tce Clara in an effort to eliminate odours from the environs.

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 451 on the Social Housing List awaiting housing support at the end of January 2023.
- A further 676 active tenancies are currently being supported under the Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) Scheme, 7 signed up for HAP and 7 exited from HAP in January.
- At the end of January, 25 single people and 14 couples and families were being supported in emergency accommodation.
- The annual rent review of Local Authority Tenants has commenced. 1,984 rent assessment forms and cover letters issued to Local Authority Tenants on 10th January. 1,362 rent assessment forms have been returned. All tenants who have yet to submit their completed form are requested to return these immediately to the Housing Section. Any queries from tenants can be directed to our email RentReview@offalycoco.ie.
- Local Authority Home Loans (LAHL): currently five applications at approval in principle stage to a value of €901,300. Three applications have been received in 2023, additional information has been sought prior to progressing.

Housing Stock – Number, Maintenance & Repair:

- Total housing stock at end of January 2023 is 2,031.
- 435 maintenance calls were logged in January.

Housing Capital Programme Update

- Raheen, Clara development (38 units) – Revised Stage 4 approval was granted on the 18th October

2022. Letter of Acceptance to Issue to Preferred Tenderer in February 2023. Project scheduled to start on site in March 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. Houses are complete and will be allocated in March 2023.
- Beechgrove, Belmont (7 units) – Project commenced on site on 10th November 2021. Due for completion in Q2, 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. Due for completion in Q4 2023.
- Banagher, Kylebeg (18 Units) – Stage 4 approval received on 25th June 2021. Project is due for completion at end of March 2023.
- Circular Road, Daingean (9 units) – Contractor appointed and project scheduled to start on site in March 2023.
- Circular Road, Daingean, Site 2 (10 Units) – Stage 1 approval application was granted on 3rd August 2021. Stage 2 was lodged on 30th January 2023. Part 8 to follow on approval.
- Sycamore Drive, Ballycumber (10 Units) – Stage 2 approval received 30th Nov 2022. Part 8 to be advertised on 15th February 2023.
- 1 Newbridge Street, Birr: Works are now complete and the dwelling allocated.

- 4 Holly Park, Birr: Consultants have been appointed; Combined Stage 2/3 application to be submitted to Department in March 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 - Completed and being allocated
- Bog Road, Portarlinton, 28 units - Under Construction, completion in Q2, 2023
- Walsh Island, 4 units – Completed and allocated
- 2 x Part V units under construction at Ard na Carriage, Edenderry. Completed and being allocated
- Part V units in Redwood & Silverbrook, Tullamore under construction

LOCAL & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Community Response Forum

The Community Forum consists of a range of agencies working within Offaly who meet on a fortnightly basis to discuss updates in relation to Ukrainian refugees arriving into the County and ensuring appropriate responses with integrated

supports to housing, transport, medical, social welfare, education, employment, training and social integration.

The total numbers of Ukrainians in Offaly has continued to increase. On the 8th December 2022 896 PPSN numbers were allocated in Offaly. The majority of the families are accommodated in Tullamore, Birr, Portarlinton, Moneygall and Shannonbridge.

Members of the Forum are using the €9,525 allocated under the Ukrainian Refugee Health & Wellbeing Support Fund to provide health and wellbeing supports to Ukrainian refugees who have sought protection in Ireland, by providing activities focused on benefits to mental health, physical activity, integration and social connection.

Public Participation Network

PPN staff are undertaking training including the National PPN Communications training and Salesforce training both of which are ongoing over the coming months.

The first quarterly meeting of 2023 took place between Offaly Co. Co. Staff, Sharon Kennedy, D.O.S., Lourda Giles, SEO, Brian Pey, AO, Community team and PPN Secretariat members Martin Buckley, Linda Dowling and Seamus Rourke. Bridie Costello Hynes was also in attendance. The meeting covered the following:

- Overview of Offaly PPN
- Secretariat Function
- Hosting arrangements
- Staff Roles
- Work plan 2023
- Budget

Offaly ETB met with the PPN to organise opportunities for collaboration during the year.

The ODEN (Offaly Disability Equality Network) Accessible Offaly Round Table Event –took place on Tuesday 24th January. PPN staff facilitated at the round table event, with the attendance of over 90 participants on the day. ODEN is a PPN thematic group working on ongoing projects that impact on people with disabilities in Offaly.

Comhairle Na nÓg

School Visits - Co-ordinator Hazel Daly visited a number of Secondary Schools in the county and presented to learners about Offaly CNN and ran workshops with students. Workshops; broke into smaller groups and answered three questions around their knowledge of disabilities, what they think people should know about disabilities and the best ways to teach people about disabilities. Their answers will form part of the work action plan for 2023.

Pride of Place

Community Group	Category	Municipal District	Result
Geashill Tidy Towns	Creative Place	Edenderry MD	Winner
Mucklagh Community Dev. CLG	Population 1,000 to 2,000	Tullamore MD	Runner Up
Pullough Village	Community Resilience	Birr MD	Runner Up

Geashill Tidy Towns were worthy winners in the Creative Place Initiative category. The group has an enviable track record of success in national competitions, winning Biodiversity and National Pollinator awards in 2017 and 2019, and the award for Ireland's Tidiest Village in 2021. This award encapsulates the pride and care they have for their village and community.

Geashill Tidy Towns, National Winner of the Creative Place Category being presented with their award



Mucklagh Community Development CLG beat off stiff competition from across the island to emerge as Runners Up in the Population 1,000-2,000 category. Their state of the art community centre and can-do attitude won them firm admirers among the judges.

Mucklagh Community Development CLG, Runners Up in the Population 1,000-2,000 category, with Leas Cathaoirleach Councillor Tony McCormack, Councillor John Clendennen and Council staff.



Pullough Village was praised by the judges as an example of how to overcome economic decline through positive community action. They awarded the group the Runners Up prize for their commitment and dedication in making their village a lively, resilient community again.

Pullough Village, Runners up in the Community Resilience category, with Leas Cathaoirleach Councillor Tony McCormack, Councillor John Clendennen and Council staff.



Community Support Fund 2022-23

This Fund totaling €298,782 is managed by Offaly LCDC. Applications are welcome from community groups under the following four categories:

- 1) €146,403 Current non-pay running costs such as energy costs (electricity costs, refuse charges, heating charges) or other non-pay operating costs. Only energy/operating costs incurred in the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 are eligible.
- 2) €99,391 Capital repairs and improvements to facilities / purchase of equipment.
- 3) €50,000 LED Lighting. Offaly LCDC has ring fenced up to €50,000 towards grants of up to €5,000 each towards replacement of existing lighting with energy efficient LED Lighting in their premises.
- 4) €2,988 Women's Sheds Non-pay Running Costs. This Fund has been ring-fenced for operational costs for Women's Sheds.

Community Recognition Fund

This is a new €50 million national Fund for capital projects launched by DRCD on 24 January 2023. The funding is specifically

targeted at projects that are located in communities, towns and villages that are hosting Ukrainian refugees in significant numbers. In Offaly these towns are currently Tullamore, Portarlinton, Birr, Moneygall and Shannonbridge.

OCC must submit proposals to DRCD before 15 March 2023. Projects submitted for approval must demonstrate that the funding is targeted at those communities, villages and towns where the highest level of new arrivals are located. Projects situated in areas that do not have high levels of new arrivals will not be deemed eligible.

A total of €669,691 has been allocated to Offaly, with at least 60% to be spent in 2023 with the remaining 40% in 2024. County allocations are based on the number of new arrivals located in each county. All projects must be completed by 18 October 2024. The Fund aims to support the development of facilities that will be used in the future by all members of the community. Ongoing operational or running costs are ineligible. Projects can be delivered directly by the local authority or via community organisations.

Eligible Projects include -

- Development, enhancement or refurbishment of community or cultural facilities including play areas, walkways, parks, community/sensory gardens;
- Development, enhancement or refurbishment of local club and sports facilities including facilities such as community swimming pools, changing rooms, toilets,
- Enhancement to school/parish facilities which are open to use by all of the community after school hours;
- Purchase of equipment for local clubs, festivals, community events and

organisations, e.g. music, arts or sports equipment;

- Transport infrastructure such as the purchase of community vehicles, bus shelters and attendant information boards;
- Purchase and refurbishment of buildings, or the purchase of land for the development of community facilities such as play areas/ MUGAs or town parks/ community gardens, recreational areas etc. for community use where a clear need is identified. Due to the short time frames, this option is considered difficult to achieve.

ARTS OFFICE

Arts Office Planning 2023

Planning for the Arts Office programme 2023 has continued with the completion of the Arts Service Delivery Plan 2023.

ARTS OFFICE PROGRAMMES

Lough Boora - Art in Landscape Project Funding

Offaly County Council Arts Office in collaboration with Mayo County Council Arts Office and Visual Artist Ireland have been successful in securing project funding under the Art Council's Invitation for Collaboration Scheme. OCC Art's Office is the lead partner on the project. The project, currently being designed by the partners, will include a series of events to take place at Lough Boora Sculpture Park and Tír Sáile (County Mayo) in September.

FilmOffaly

The FilmOffaly Award 2022 entitled, *Missing* is in process with the shooting of the film due to commence in 2023. FilmOffaly 2023 has been advertised and the Arts Office are awaiting submissions with a deadline 13th March.

FilmOffaly Review

The FilmOffaly Review is underway by researchers, *Culture Works* with consultations with key stakeholders planned. The FilmOffaly Commission Board are due to meet the researchers in February.

CAPITAL PROJECTS

Arts Infrastructure Strategy

The Arts infrastructure Strategy by People Places Consulting: Caoimhín Corrigan and Siobhán O'Malley was presented and adopted by the county council at the January 2023 meeting. The strategy explores how all the Arts Infrastructure (existing and planned) can be developed in a collaborative and harmonic manner, resulting in a cohesive, complimentary and self-sustaining network of arts infrastructure that is beneficial to the whole county, and will inform the forthcoming Art Office Strategy.

Esker Arts

Works, operational planning and programming continues with regards to the soon to be opened, Esker Arts. Great excitement and anticipation is being felt by all.

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.

Creative Ireland

The Arts Office continues to plan for Creative Ireland programmes and the arts programmes from the Community Call for 2023.

SPORTS

Funding

- Health Services Executive additional section 39 funding to the value of €2,700 secured for a Corrective Gymnastics programme in two schools.
- Sport Ireland Dormant Accounts funding to the value of €142k secured.
- Sport Ireland funding to the value of €26,620 to host an ASPIRE graduate placement in 2023 secured.
- Over €9,500 has been secured to support the delivery of cycling events as part of Bike Week 2023. Bike Week takes place from the 14th to 21st May 2023. Offaly Sports Partnership will be working with local cycling clubs to draft a programme of events for the week.

Programmes

ACE schools programme – Liam O Reilly
Modelled on the SPORTSHALL Athletics concept 21 schools and 3,258 pupils participated in the programme before Christmas. The programme culminated in the hosting of an interschool's event in Drumcullen GAA on the 29 / 30th November 2022 at which 18 schools and 650 pupils were present.

A spring athletics programme is currently being rolled out in 11 schools. Liam O Reilly, ACE Project coordinator alongside various tutors of the sports partnership are delivering this programme. After schools athletics programme underway in Daingean sports hub.





Community Sports Development Programme – Denise Coghill

A Couch to 3k programme was piloted in Pullough as part of a larger community fitness programme in in quarter four 2022. The programme ran across three nights a week for eight weeks. 12 people started the programme with eight people completing it.

Daingean Hub – November 2022 to January 2023 saw a full timetable of programmes and classes in the Hub. With over 17 different programmes up and running, all ages and abilities were facilitated through a wide variety of sports and activities. The attendance at each programme grew steadily week on week; and among the programmes delivered were:-

- activities for children with additional needs including “ready, steady, play” programme (15 children registered for this programme)
- activities for older adults including badminton, strength & conditioning classes, social bocchia, walking football
- activities for teenagers
- badminton for children and adults
- fundamental movement skills programme in Daingean National School. 85 pupils from across junior infants, senior infants and first class took part on the programme
- handball
- parent & grandparent / toddler sessions
- pilates
- “Ready, steady, play” programme for Daingean Childcare – 44 pre-schoolers participated on the programme
- SPORTSHALL athletics for children
- women in sport activities including badminton and social basketball
- yoga



Integration

On the 6 / 7th December 2022, Offaly SP, in association with TUS Sport and Athletics Ireland, hosted two days of Diversity Games for primary and secondary schools. Across the two days, there were over 600 entries from schools across nine counties.

48% of the participants who took part were of an ethnic minority background



January 2023 saw the roll out of the following programmes: -

- Healthy Choices / Healthy Communities – delivered in association with Offaly Local Development Company and the Tullamore Community Mental Health team, this eight week programme began on the 11th January. The programme consists of two physical activity sessions and one healthy eating workshop every week. To date, 60 participants are taking part in the programme on a regular basis
- The final session of the SEN post primary adapted physical activity programme in St Mary's Secondary School, Edenderry was delivered in January. 25 young people with additional needs took part in the programme; and continue to meet weekly in preparation for an upcoming sports inclusion activity day in March
- Following the success of the pre-Christmas adapted physical activity programme delivered for the

Muíríos Foundation, an eight week multi-sport programme has commenced in Mucklagh Community Centre in January. 10 service users across three houses are enjoying the activity sessions every Tuesday

- Mucklagh Sports Hub – Offaly Sports Partnership have recently established a third community and sports hub in Mucklagh.

HEALTHY OFFALY

January 2023 has so far been the busiest month of Round 4 of the Healthy Ireland Fund. The month began with the continuing of the Round 4 Consultation Process which commenced in November 2022. The online surveys continued to be received in with a total of 339 respondents completing the questionnaire. The survey closed on Friday 6th January.

The information received back pointed to two outcome indicators being selected from the Lifestyle & Behaviour Risk Outcome Area and the Wellbeing Factors Areas. The two outcome indicators selected by all stakeholders and subsequently Healthy Offaly for the period 2023 – 2025 are: -

1. *Decrease in number of adults who are overweight or obese; and*
2. *Increase in the percentage of adults & children meeting physical activity guidelines.*

The HIF Round 4 Local Strategy 2023 - 2025, based on evidence gathered from the Consultation process and the HSE health atlas data, was formulated and submitted to Pobal on 27th January. Also the Round 4 online application for funding and the programme of works for 2023 was submitted on the same day.

TOURISM

The Tourism Team exhibited at the very popular Holiday World Show in Dublin in January.

The 3 day event, hosted in the RDS is the biggest of its kind in Ireland, attracting up to 70,000 visitors each year. Increased footfall in 2023 led to a hugely successful show with great interest from a captive audience.



LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE



Local Enterprise Week 2023

Small businesses and budding entrepreneurs will have the opportunity to sample hundreds of events helping them to start or grow their business as part of this year's Local Enterprise Week. The initiative of the Local Enterprise Offices,

supported by Enterprise Ireland and the local authorities, takes place from the 6th-10th March this year across the country.



Local Enterprise Week 2023 Activities

LEO Offaly look forward to bringing another week long programme of events and training during Local Enterprise Week 2023. These events will be covering everything from gaining business advantage and digital marketing to tendering or money mastery. [Book online here.](#)

There are also a host of national events to be delivered online, more details available [here.](#)

There are 5 National Spotlight events that are available for free online, with one taking place each day of Local Enterprise Week. These events will focus on Exporting with Enterprise Ireland, Digital Skills with Google, Sustainability and Cost Saving with top green and lean consultants and how to innovate within your business. Check out some of our spotlight events below.

Date	Event Details	Time / Venue	Book/Register
06/03/2023	County Enterprise Awards 2023 - Invite only		
06/03/2023	Digital Marketing and Website Mentoring Clinic - One to One appointments with Aisling Hurley of the Business	9.00am - 4.30pm Online	Register here
07/03/2023	Student Enterprise Awards County Final	Tullamore Court Hotel	
07/03/2023	Gaining Business Advantage during these Inflationary Times	12.30pm - 2.00pm Tullamore Court Hotel	Register here
07/03/2023	Digital Marketing Programme (12 sessions) commences 7/3/23	9.30am - 12.00pm Online	Register here
07/03/2023	Tourism Mentoring Clinic - Are you interested in setting up or growing your tourism business? One to One	9am - 4pm Online	Register here
08/03/2023	Tendering and Public Procurement Advisory Clinic - One to One appointments with Ian McKay of Navigate	9.00am - 5.00pm Online	Register here
08/03/2023	Local Enterprise Office in YOUR Locality - One to One session with Local Enterprise Office Business Advisor	5.30pm - 7.30pm Birr Library	Register here
09/03/2023	Money Mastery & Mindset Delivered by Anne-Marie Macken of Marketing Coach.ie	9.30am - 12.30pm Online	Register here

LEO Offaly County Enterprise Awards 2023

The National Enterprise Awards competition is organised annually by the Local Enterprise Office (LEO) Network to acknowledge the achievements of the small business sector.

The competition is sponsored nationally by the network of Local Enterprise Offices and is the only national competition specifically for the micro-enterprise sector. It is hosted on an annual basis to acknowledge the achievements of small enterprise and their valuable contribution to the local economy. The competition is open to Offaly businesses operating in the manufacturing & internationally traded services sectors who have received financial assistance from the LEO Offaly. Entries will be judged in accordance to marketing strengths, financial strength, innovation & technology, entrepreneurial skills and business plan.

The winner will be announced and presented at the County Offaly final of the competition to be held at a lunchtime reception on Monday, 6th March in the Tullamore Court Hotel.

Previous winners of the County Enterprise Awards include Applied Concepts Ltd who went on to win the Overall National Enterprise Award and Acoustic Interiors who last year won Best Start Up at the National Enterprise Awards 2022.

The Overall Winner will go forward to represent County Offaly at the National Finals to be held in the Mansion House, Dublin, 1st June 2023, where there are further prizes to be won.



Student Enterprise Programme 2023



The Student Enterprise Programme is an educational and fun-packed initiative that teaches second-level students what it's like to be an entrepreneur

and set up and run their own businesses over the course of the academic year. 10 schools from all over County Offaly will compete in this programme to win prizes in various categories at our County Final on 7 March 2023 in the Tullamore Court Hotel.

The overall winners in the Senior, Intermediate and Junior categories will go forward to the National Finals, which will be held in Croke Park in May 2023.

Number of jobs supported by Local Enterprise Office Offaly rises by 60% in 2022

The Local Enterprise Office Offaly support over 204 small businesses and 1,196 jobs according to new figures announced recently by Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment Simon Coveney TD



- 279 new jobs created in 2022
- 2nd year of YoY jobs growth
- Net employment gain of 154 in 2022
- 204 small businesses employing 1,196 supported by LEO Offaly

Orla Martin, Head of Enterprise, LEO Offaly “The results announced are a testament to Ireland’s small business community. When faced with adversity, they have adapted, pivoted, upskilled and did whatever it took to sustain themselves. The figures show that companies have seen the opportunities in the challenging trading

conditions they have faced. We are seeing new opportunities for Irish businesses here and as always with tough economic periods we see new ideas and companies emerge and flourish. This year will be no different and as we continue to work closely with Enterprise Ireland and Offaly County Council to ensure our small businesses get the best possible supports.”



Showcase Ireland 2023 - Ireland's largest fashion & accessories, jewellery & homewares show

Two businesses from Offaly had the chance to meet with buyers from all over the world as part of the Local Enterprise Showcase at the 2023 Showcase event in the RDS, which took place from the 22-24th January. Jennifer Doyle from Millbee Studios and Karen Burke from Heart on my Sleeve said it was a busy and worthwhile event to attend.

Upcoming Events

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 >](#)

15/02/2023	How to Develop a Digital Marketing Plan for Your B...	Book online
21/02/2023	How to Market your Small Business like a Pro (1 hr...	Book online
23/02/2023	Trading Online Voucher Webinar	Book online
28/02/2023	How to Use Twitter for Marketing	Book online
06/03/2023	LEW2023 Free Digital Marketing and Website Mentori...	Book online
07/03/2023	LEW2023 One to One Tourism Mentoring	Book online
07/03/2023	LEW2023 Gaining Business Advantage during these In...	Book online

LIBRARY SERVICES

Squeeze in a Read for Ireland Reads Day 25th February with Offaly Libraries

One minute, ten minutes, an hour, or more – it doesn't matter how long you read for or what you read! Why? Because taking some time for yourself to relax and do the things you enjoy (like reading) is important to help look after your mental wellbeing.

Offaly Libraries will be supporting this initiative with special book displays and reading spaces set aside for visitors to get comfortable and enjoy a good book.

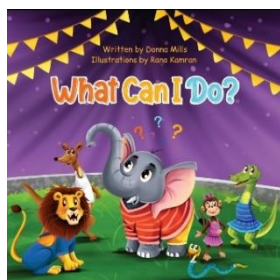


We are still running our Book Bingo Reading Challenge so be sure to drop in and pick up a sheet to take part! We will also be encouraging our readers to pledge their reading time on www.irelandreads.ie. A good read is never hard to find with Offaly Libraries! [Visit our branches](#) to browse the shelves, [log in online](#) to order

something specific or [visit our Digital Library](#) to take your reading on the go!

Official launch of new Children's Book in Tullamore Library

Children are invited to attend a special story time reading of Donna's book, performed by the author herself. A fun Arts and Crafts session will also be on offer immediately following the story time.



For more information, please contact Tullamore Library on 057 93 46832 or email tullamorelibrary@offalycoco.ie.

Offaly Libraries School STEAM Programme 2023

Building upon the success of last year, Offaly Libraries looks forward to launching our new STEAM programme of events for 2023!

Engineers Week will kick start our programme in early March, quickly followed by the inaugural Irish Astronomy Week! **STEPS Engineers Week, March 4th – March 10th and Irish Astronomy Week, March 20th – 26th**



More details on our STEAM 2023 programme will be announced shortly. Keep an eye on our website and social media channels for updates.

International Lego Day, Saturday 28th January

Edenderry and Tullamore Libraries celebrated **International Lego Day** on Saturday 28th January.

Tullamore Library hosted a **LEGO Freeplay** session, which saw an outstanding turnout of over **60 attendees**.

Edenderry Library enjoyed similar success with their wonderful display of Lego models and **42 attendees** at their Lego Freeplay session.



Celebrating Winnie the Pooh Day, Wednesday 18th January

Offaly Libraries recently celebrated **International Winnie the Pooh Day**, which took place on January 18th this year, the same date as AA Milne's birthday!

Readings from AA Milne's beloved classics were accompanied by songs and dances inspired by Tigger, Eeyore and Piglet.

Birr, Clara, Edenderry and Tullamore Libraries hosted story times aimed at children aged 2 + throughout the day.



Lunar New Year with Art and Craft Sessions

Offaly Libraries rang in the Lunar New Year with fun **Arts and Crafts** sessions held in Birr, Edenderry and Tullamore Libraries!



As a nod to the Year of the Rabbit, children created bunny themed crafts that they could take home.

43 children attended the sessions and a further **13 children** were treated to a special Lunar New Year themed story time at Edenderry Library.

Two New Young Adult Book Clubs Starting this February!

Edenderry Library welcomed members of their newly established Young Adult Book Club, for ages 15 – 17, on **Wednesday 1st February**.

Coinciding with the local Secondary schools schedules on Wednesday afternoons, the book club will meet on the first Wednesday of each month **from 14.30 – 15.30**.



Birr Library is also looking forward to their first Young Adult readers meeting on

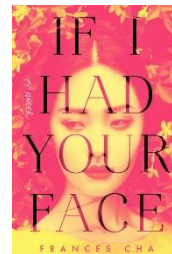
February 22nd from 16.30 - 17.15.

Those interested in registering for either book club can contact their respective library directly. [Contact information for both Birr and Edenderry Libraries can be found here.](#)

New! Daingean Library Book Club

Daingean Library book club met on 19th January with **6 people in attendance**. They discussed 'The Kind Worth Killing' by Peter Swanson. They will meet next on 16th February to discuss their next read, 'If I had your Face' by Frances Cha.

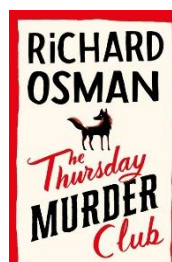
New members always welcome. [Contact Daingean Library](#) for more information.

**New! Birr Library Adult Book Club**

Birr Library's new book club for adults had their first meeting on Thursday, 25th January and welcomed **6 new members**.

They will meet on the last Thursday of each month with their next meeting schedule for 23rd February. They are currently reading Thursday Murder Club by Richard Osman.

New members always welcome. [Contact Birr Library](#) for more information.

**Edenderry Library Book Clubs*****'Tuesday Morning' Book Club***

Meets **every first Tuesday of the month at 11am** in Edenderry Library.

To register your interest in joining please email edenderrylibrary@offalycoco.ie

Adult Book Club

Meets on the **fourth Wednesday of each month at 7pm** in Edenderry Library.

To register your interest in joining please email edenderrylibrary@offalycoco.ie

Tullamore Library Book Clubs***The Novel Bunch - Adult Book Club***

Meets **every first Tuesday of the month at 3pm** in Tullamore Library.

To register your interest, please email Tullamorelibrary@Offalycoco.ie

Children's Book Club

Children aged 7 – 11 are welcome to join **every first Wednesday at 3.30pm** in Tullamore Library,

To register your child, please email: tullamorelibrary@offalycoco.ie

Online Book Clubs***Online Adult Book Club***

Our **Online Adult Book Club** meet over Zoom on the **first Thursday of every month at 7pm** and is an excellent link for those living abroad.... We currently have **two members who Zoom in from France!**

To register your interest, please email Tullamorelibrary@Offalycoco.ie

'I'm Just a Teenage Book Club!' Online YA Book Club

Our **Online Young Adult Book Club**, for **ages 13 – 17**, meet over Zoom on the **last Thursday of each month at 7pm**.

To register your child to join our Online YA Book Club, please email Tullamorelibrary@Offalycoco.ie

Anna Marie Delaney, Chief Executive

Appendix 1

Revenue Account Grant Income & Payroll Summary to 31st January 2023			
OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL	Full Yr Budget 2023 €m	Preliminary Value to Jan 2023 €m	% Year To Date
Payroll costs	32.97	1.86	5.6%
Grants and Subsidies Income	40.80	0.69	1.7%
OCC to 31st Jan 2023	Rates €m	Rents €m	Loans €m
Opening Balance Jan 1st, 2023	3.84	0.56	0.10
Net Invoices & Adjustments, waivers	0.00	0.59	0.00
2023 Cash Collected to end of Jan	0.85	0.61	0.05
Closing Balance Jan 31st, 2023	2.99	0.53	0.05
2022 Cash collected to Jan 31st	0.33 ***	0.61	0.05
% Collection at this point in 2022	256%	100%	106%
*** Collections impacted in 2022 by Q1 waiver and effect of building business back up after lockdowns			
Bank Overdraft to 31st Jan 2023			% YTD
Number of days Overdrawn in Bank year to date		2	6%
Bank Interest and non conforming charges to Jan 31st 2023 YTD	(Estimate)	€1,000	
Bank Administration and transactional charges to Jan 31st 2023 YTD	(Estimate)	€3,500	