



COMHAIRLE
CONTAE AN CHLÁIR

CLARE
COUNTY COUNCIL

Tuarascáil Mhíosúil ón Phríomhfheidhmeannach Monthly Management Report



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HUMAN RESOURCES

- A Bill extending the retirement age for certain civil (and public) servants to 70 years of age was signed by the President on 26 December 2018 and has become law from that date. Details were circulated to staff.

- During the month of January a number of recruitment competitions were competed including Retained Fire-fighter (Ennistimon, Killaloe, Scarriff), Retained Sub-Station Officer (Killaloe), Assistant Staff Officer (ICT) and Irish Language Development Officer. The first interviews for the 2019 Co-op placements were also carried out during January with more to follow over the coming months.

- Competitions to be progressed in the coming month include: Technician Grade 2 (Civil; Architectural/Building) (Interviews), Retained Part-time Fire-fighter Kilkee, Kilrush, & Shannon Fire Stations (Interviews), Library Assistant (Short-listing Interviews), Part-time Cleaner (Library) (Interview), Senior Library Assistant (Eligibility Exercise & Interviews).

- The following positions have been advertised recently: GO Driver 2, Branch Librarian, Clerical Officer, Beach Lifeguard, Assistant Foreman (Water Services) and Acting Executive Planner.

- There were 10 Training Courses provided with 357 staff in attendance. Courses delivered include: Children First, Emergency Helpline, Safe Pass, Manual Handling, Procurement, SSWP and Confined Spaces. Forthcoming training will include: Junior Achievement, H&S at Roadworks, SSWP, IPA A-Z in Local Government and Safe Pass.

CORPORATE SERVICES

- Detailed **Procurement** Training is being provided in order to up-skill all Departments on the Procurement Role.

Dates scheduled for training are as follows:

4th & 5th February, 2019 &

19th & 20th February, 2019

- The **Register of Electors** 2019/2020 has been published and will be effective for 1 year from 14 February 2019. This is the Register which will be used on polling day in the event of any elections or referenda being held during this timeframe.

The Local, European Elections and Referendum will be held on 24 May 2019. With regard to the 2019 Local Elections the 2019/2020 Register of Electors contains the 5 new Electoral Areas updated from the previous 4 Electoral Areas which were in existence from 2014 to 2019.

A supplement to the 2019/2020 Register will be compiled and the closing date for inclusion on this will be 14 working days prior to polling day. A supplement of postal voters will also be compiled closing date of which will be notified to us by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government. Application Forms for the supplement for all categories are available at Council Headquarters and all Council Area Offices.

The Register of Electors is on display at all Post Offices, Local Authority Offices, Dispensaries and online at www.checktheregister.ie. An advertisement to this effect encouraging the public to check and make sure their details are correctly registered has been advertised in the Clare Champion issue dated Friday 1st February 2019.

Legal Costs

Legal costs paid during the period June to December 2018 amounted to €690k (inclusive of VAT) of which €195k related to capital projects and is fully recouped . The balance of €523k , as set out in the table below , represents the amount charged to the Revenue Account for the period.

DESCRIPTION	Euro
LEGAL ADVICE AND DEFENCE OF COUNCIL POSITION	219,546
JUNIOR AND SENIOR COUNSEL FEES	84,436
CONVEYANCING	22,910
DEBT COLLECTION	58,166
ENFORCEMENT ENVIRONMENT/PLANNING	33,215
JUDICIAL REVIEW	53,325
OTHER (LITIGATION, OUTLAY , PROPERTY)	52,325
GRAND TOTAL	523,924

Further analysis is provided in the table below of the Legal Advices figure. The table sets out by directorate the main elements of this figure.

Directorate	Euro
Housing	57,871
- Traveller Accommodation	31,840
- Housing Loan applications & MARP	26,031
Physical	118,130
- Fire Safety & Building control	22,543
- Environmental Investigations	69,433
- Environment Waste Enforcement	7,662
- Other (Roads and Water Services)	18,492
Economic Development & Control	38,272
- Cliffs of Moher	7,633
- Planning Advice	22,258
- Forward Planning	8,381
Support Services	5,273

CORPORATE SERVICES

The Members of Clare County Council hosted a Mayoral Reception in the Council Chamber on Thursday, 31st January. The recipients included:

- Laura Brennan - who is an advocate and ambassador for the HPV Vaccination Programme
- Mary Fitzgerald of Clare Haven Services - Recipient of the Christine Buckley Award for work with Volunteer Ireland and The Wheel.
- Shannon on its IPB Pride of Place Award
- Shannon Enterprise Town on being named Regional Runner Up 2018
- Ennis Enterprise Town on being Regional Winner in 2018
- and Kay Murphy, President of Active Retirement Ireland



Visitor growth at Cliffs of Moher at Council attraction picks up Travel Award



Visitor numbers at the Cliffs of Moher Visitor Experience in County Clare increased by 3.8% to 1.6m (1,580,010) in 2018. Significantly, the visitor figures reveal that the Fully Independent Traveller (FIT) market showed greater growth than the group market with 55% of all visitors being FITs (862,226 - up 42,103 on 2017).

Cliffs of Moher Visitor Experience introduced a new dynamic pricing model for FITs (Fully Independent Travellers) for the 2018 summer season. The new booking system at www.cliffsofmoher.ie enables customers to purchase tickets online with up to 50% off the gate rate for early and late visits. Dynamic pricing has also been introduced for coach operators (group business) which offers reduced admission rates during off peak periods to encourage the operators to overnight in County Clare.

Cliffs of Moher Visitor Experience employs 110 staff during the peak season and is a significant employer in North Clare. Additionally, more than 50 staff employed by tenant companies are supported at the site.

Meanwhile, the Cliffs of Moher Strategy 2040 is being developed to enhance the visitor experience and the attraction by Clare County Council. The recently appointed Board of the Cliffs of Moher Centre Ltd will have a key strategic role in shaping the new sustainable tourism direction envisioned for the future. This Strategy is at tender stage to appoint consultants with international experience. This will involve consultants with local, national and regional stakeholders. The Strategy will take over a year to prepare the comprehensive plans for the site and visitor experience."



The Cliffs of Moher won the Irish Tourism Industry Awards for the large visitor attraction category on the Wild Atlantic Way.

The visitor attraction was short-listed, together with Kilkee, Ailwee Caves and Loop Head Lighthouse. The Cliffs of Moher has had an exceptional month of awards beginning with a win as Ireland's Favourite Visitor Attraction in the 2019 Irish Independent Reader Travel Awards. This was followed immediately by a win of the 2019 CIE Tourism in Excellence Awards.

Secretary General at Geopark offices

Dr. Eamon Doyle, Geologist, Burren and Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark presenting a copy of his book to Mr. Kevin McCarthy, Secretary General, Department of Rural and Community Development.



Rural Development Forum meeting

The Clare Rural Development Forum meeting was held on 15th January 2019 in the Civic Room, Buttermarket Building, Drumbiggle, Ennis.

Topics discussed included: Clare Rural Development Strategy Update, Rural Enterprise, Proposal for Co-operative local response to rural service issues, Presentation by the Western Development Commission on the Smart Atlantic Way.



Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme



Pictured during a site visit by Clare County Council officials to the Lough Derg Blueway Amenity Trail and Looped Walks are: Tom Mellett, Senior Executive Engineer, Killaloe MD; Siobhan O'Reilly, Administrative Officer, Rural Development Directorate; and Michael McNamara and Ger O'Brien of Ogonnell Community Centre Co. Ltd.

Clare County Council has received €498,000 under the Department of Rural and Community Development's Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme for the Lough Derg Blueway Amenity Trail and Looped Walks.

The project will be led by the Killaloe Municipal District Office and the Rural Development Directorate in partnership with Ogonnell Community Centre Co. Ltd. This project involves the development of an amenity trail i.e. a new 5 km path on the verge of the R465 from Bealkelly to Tuamgraney along with the upgrade and completion of the trail from Ballycuggeran to Bealkelly. When completed it will provide for a continuous off-road amenity trail for the 18km route from Killaloe to Scariff.

Councillor Pat Burke, Cathaoirleach of Killaloe Municipal District stated that the completion of the works will provide a direct tourism and community link between Killaloe and Tuamgraney.



The first phase of the trail from Killaloe to Two Mile Gate has been a tremendous success with walkers and cyclists using the route at every time of the day and evening. There is great potential for even greater interaction amongst users of the route which underlines the great sense of community generated by this initiative.

The objective is to attract additional tourists to the towns/villages, extend their stay as well as opening access to Ireland's Hidden Heartlands and its environment by linking existing small trails to create greater scale walks that will be capable of

promotion Nationally and Regionally. It will also provide facilities for locals to enjoy. This project will complement the recently developed REDZ funded Blueway Project. The project aims to build on the existing tourism and recreational infrastructure as well as improve economic activity surrounding the Blueway on Lough Derg, by working with and supporting communities of the Scariff and Nenagh REDZ areas to avail of opportunities to help themselves and their local areas. The Blueway concept aim is to encompass all there is to do, see and experience on the lake but also off the lake, on the shores, mountains and trails that surround it. Quaint harbours, wooden jetties, idyllic swimming spots and cosy pubs are here in abundance, making it the ideal location for those wanting to squeeze every drop of fun from their free time.

Local apprenticeship and employment options

Students and young people attending a recent event in Obair, Newmarket on Fergus, were given the unique opportunity to interact with local employers to discuss opportunities in their respective organisations.

The event, which was organised by Obair and Shannon Chamber in conjunction with the Rural Development Directorate of Clare Council, involved representatives from Atlantic Aviation Group, Edward Lifesciences, Lufthansa Technik Shannon and Zimmer Biomet giving presentations on the apprenticeships they provide and the job opportunities coming on stream within their respective organisations.

Many young people, while somewhat aware of the companies that operate from this area, do not necessarily understand the employment opportunities that exist within them.

Taking the companies out into the community gives students and their parents the opportunity to talk directly to executives from companies and map out their individual journeys to employment.

Community Supports Scheme 2019

Clare County Council announced the Community Supports Scheme for 2019. The scheme is available to support community and voluntary groups wishing to undertake specific projects under the relevant categories of the scheme. This new approach coordinates separate grant schemes to community groups operated by various council departments into a single structured scheme.

The purpose of the council's Community Supports Scheme is to encourage and assist community and voluntary groups to take an active part in the development of their communities and to improve the quality of life experience in their areas. Completed applications must be lodged not later than 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday February 6th, 2019. Application form and scheme guidelines can be downloaded below or email css@clarecoco.ie

Clare Community Awards 2019

Clare County Council is hosting a prestigious awards event to recognise and celebrate communities and volunteers across Clare on March 7th, 2019 at Hotel Woodstock, Ennis. The overall Clare Community of the Year and Clare Volunteer of the Year award winners will be selected on the night.

Applications forms, are available from www.clarecoco.ie/services/community/competitions, must be submitted by 4.00pm on 15 February, 2019 to awards@clarecoco.ie (max file size of 6mb) or to Clare Community Awards 2019, Rural Development Directorate, Clare County Council, Áras Contae an Chláir, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare, V95 DXP2.

The inaugural

Clare Community Awards 2019

Celebrating Clare's Communities



COMHAIRLE CONTAE AN CHLÁIR
CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL

Clare County Council is hosting a prestigious awards event to recognise and celebrate communities and volunteers on March 7th, 2019.

The overall Clare Community of the Year and Clare Volunteer of the Year award winners will be selected on the night.

Applications are invited under the following categories:

1. Community Innovation Award
2. Community Enhancement Award
3. Best Kept Residential Area (public)
4. Best Kept Residential Area (private)
5. Community Environmental Award
6. Best Festival/Event
7. Junior Volunteer of the Year
8. Volunteer of the Year

Applications forms available from www.clarecoco.ie/services/community/competitions (application deadline: 4.00pm, 15 February 2019). Email applications (max file size 6mb) to awards@clarecoco.ie or send by post to Clare Community Awards 2019, Rural Development, Clare County Council, Áras Contae an Chláir, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare, V95 DXP2.

Funding support for Clare Bus

As rural transport is one of the targets in the Clare Rural Development Strategy, Clare County Council invested €60,000 in the Rural Transport initiative of Clare Bus. Pictured at the unveiling of the new bus are Pat Dowling (Chief Executive), Leonard Cleary (Director of Rural Development and West Clare Municipal District), Cllr Michael Begley (Mayor of Clare), Laura Ward, Ger Hoey and Chris Kidney (Clare Bus) and Cllr Pat Hayes (Rural Development SPC Chair)



HOUSING



On the 9th January 2019 Minister Damien English and his team from the Department of Housing met with housing staff to discuss performance for 2018 and targets for delivery in 2019.

The Minister was satisfied with Clare County Councils work programme and acknowledged the effort in exceeding the 2018 target for housing delivery. The Minister with Minister Pat Breen, Oireachtas members and the elected members met with the Contractors Dermot Custy Construction (Feakle) and Patrick Keogh Construction (Clonlara) and the local community at the launches of the construction of the social housing developments in Feakle and Clonlara.



The focus of the Housing team is to ensure the provision of accommodation for those in need of housing. To meet housing need Clare County Council's Social Directorate is continuously delivering additional social housing units through various mechanisms with units being provided through leasing (RAS, HAP and Social Leasing), construction, refurbishment and acquisitions.

In addition to directly provided social housing those qualified for social housing support are accommodated as follows:
Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) = 364
Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) =1350
Short term leasing = 118
Long term leasing =158
Approved Housing Body lease arrangement = 152

The Housing capital delivery team are working to ensure a pipeline of housing supply, to this end Stage 1 approval for a scheme of 27 housing units in Miltown Malbay was received in January. This project is locked into the 59 week delivery schedule therefore a start date in early 2020 is expected.

The Department of Justice and Equality has advised Clare County Council of its intention to seek accommodation and ancillary services for those seeking international protection (direct provision centre(s)). The tender will be launched in February for the Mid-West Region covering Clare, Limerick and Tipperary. The intention of the completion is to establish a multi-supplier framework from which the Department of Justice can draw down accommodation to meet its demand.

Update on Capital Projects:

SHIP Capital	No. approved	Current stage	Commencement Date	Completion Date
Clonlara	9	Under construction by Pat Keogh Construction Ltd.	20 th November 2018	Q4 2019
Feakle	13	Under construction by Custy Construction Ltd.	5 th November 2018	Q1 2020
Quilty	18	Tender completed, Stage 4 submitted for approval	March 2019	Q3 2020
Roslevan, Ennis	8	Tender completed, Stage 4 submitted for approval	March 2019	Q1 2020
Ashline, Ennis	40	Stage 2 to be submitted to DHPLG for approval	Q4 2019	Q2 2021
Tullyglass Shannon	21	Following announcement of funding for embankment works this project will recommence.	Q1 2020	Q2 2021
Ballyboy TAU	5	Tenders returned.	Q2 2019	Q3 2019
Miltown Malbay	27	Stage 1 approval received, preparation of stage 2 submission	Q1 2020	Q3 2021
Shannon NDFA project	51	NDFA bundle being prepared for tender.	Q3 2019	Q3 2021
Subtotal	192			
CAS - Cahercalla Phase 2 (Cuan an Chlair)	15	CAS Construction Stage 3 submitted to DHPLG for approval 14.11.2018	March 2019	Q2 2020
Roslevan (CoOperative Housing Ireland)	2	CALF Turnkey. 3 units were delivered with the 2 remaining units to be delivered in 2019	Q1 2018	Q2 2019
Bruachlan, Westbury (CoOperative Housing Ireland)	22	CALF - Property transfer complete, CHI to commence procurement of design team.	Q4 2019	Q3 2021
Tullyvarraga, Shannon (CoOperative Housing Ireland)	47	CALF Acquisition application approved works ongoing, expect stage delivery with some units delivered in 2019	Q2 2018	Q2 2020
Meelick (Thomond Housing Association)	4	CAS construction, works nearing completion	Q1 2018	Q2 2019
Clonlara (Newgrove Housing Association)	4	CALF construction, works complete.	Q4 2017	Q1 2019
Subtotal	150	AHB delivery		
Total				

Homelessness

As of the 1st February the Department of Social Protection are no longer providing homeless services with responsibility for the provision of homeless accommodation resting with Clare County Council as the Housing Authority.

Staff in the Homeless Action Team (HAT), have been working tirelessly to ensure a smooth transition of service with minimum disruption to service users. That said with any transition of service some disruption to service is inevitable and this is compounded by the fact that the works at Aras an Chontae to accommodate the HAT staff are not yet complete. We ask that service users, staff and elected Members bear with us during this transitional period.

Tenders have been returned for the refurbishment of Cusack Lodge, the tender assessment is ongoing however it is anticipated we will be in a position to award the contract in the coming week. The anticipated date for operation, the end of Q1, remains the target. The HUB on completion will provide supported accommodation for up to 5 homeless families, the facility will be operated by NOVAS for and on behalf of Clare County Council.

The number of presentations to Homeless Services in Clare for the month of December was 13. For verification purposes we are reporting homeless presentations a month in arrears.

The homeless figures for December indicate full occupancy of 13 beds at Laurel Lodge and on 31 December there was also 49 adults and 33 dependents in emergency accommodation.

Incentivised Schemes

- The Council invites you to register properties known to be vacant on the vacant homes website www.vacanthomes.ie, for this the Council can target the return of the housing unit through acquisition, **Buy and Renew** and/or **Repair and Lease (RLS)** schemes. The premise of these schemes is to address vacancy and return units to occupancy in a timely fashion.

- A Vacancy Sub-Group is being set up at national level to develop an agreed methodology for the identification of recoverable and liveable homes. Clear guidelines have yet to issue from the Dept in assessing vacancy but a detailed methodology for assessing true vacancy is due to be rolled out to Local Authorities in a Training Manual Format accompanied possibly by software in the coming months. This will further inform the Council's work in this area. In Clare 80 no. houses have been visually examined at this stage and of those at least 22 appear to be vacant. 2 no. have been purchased and 4 others are in progress. A number of these property owners have re-located and lack of knowledge on their whereabouts is a barrier to advancing acquisition, and there are also legal/title/financial issues with a number of properties in receivership or repossessed by the Banks. Follow up work is continuing to establish property owners and identify the reasons for vacancy and units that can be brought back into use.

Rebuilding Ireland Affordable Loan

Interest in the 'Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan' remains high with 67 no. completed applications and 205 enquiries received to date. 48 no. loans have gone to Credit Committee for decision, 44 of which have been approved, 9 of those following an appeal to the Appeals Panel and 14 have been drawn down.

The loan scheme offers a fixed rate for credit worthy low to middle income first time buyers with a view to making home ownership more affordable.

Housing Refurbishment and Maintenance

- The management and turnaround of our housing stock to minimise voids is continuously assessed and hereunder is the activity in this regard:

Period	No. of voids/casual vacancies	No. of voids returned to stock	No. of properties undergoing refurbishment	Average vacancy period (days)	No. of maintenance calls
January	35*	6	88	123	445

* This figure does not include properties which have become vacant after 1st February nor does it include acquisitions and long-term voids

Grants

- In 2018 a total of 328 grant approvals issued to applicants to a value of €2,844,241. Now on January 1st there remains a current waiting list of 360 applications and works are ongoing in prioritising these with the most immediate works firstly receiving approval. Administrative checks will continue in an effort to issue as many approvals as possible over the coming weeks in order to significantly reduce the current waiting list.

SPORTS & RECREATION

ACTIVE ENNIS LEISURE COMPLEX



- Emergency Evacuation Ramps were installed at the Emergency Exits of the Swimming Pool during the month of January, as part of ongoing investment in disability services at Active Ennis Leisure Complex. Two wheelchair ramps and a pathway have been installed for emergency wheelchair evacuations.

- Active Ennis is diligent in its awareness that its Sports & Recreation facilities will be inclusive for all and our goal is to provide the best disability services. We are recognized by Ireland Active as a renowned leader in this pursuit. We engage with various Disability groups throughout Clare on their requirements and requests to ensure that the facilities at Active Ennis are evolving with the needs of the those less able bodied within our community. We have the following facilities and services for our disabled clients: Disabled bathrooms, designated disabled Parking Spaces with signs displaying the telephone number of Active Ennis should assistance be required for accessing the complex, designated Lockers at wheelchair height, wheelchair accessible Gym Equipment, Poolside Hoist, Wheelchair Ramp to the poolside Sauna and Steamroom, Emergency Evacuation Chair, Changing Room Hoist, wheelchair height counter at Reception, wheelchair Shower Chair and a Wheelchair located at Reception should it be required. An Audio Frequency Induction Loop System is at the Reception Desk for clients who have difficulty hearing. Our Gym offers an Alter G Anti-Gravity Treadmill, Motomed Machine and Aerobic classes which are tailored towards the immobile and disabled clients.



Large Scale Sports Infrastructure Fund

The Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport has announced the 'Large Scale Sport Infrastructure Fund'. This is a capital allocation of at least €100m over the period 2019 to 2027 for the entire country. The funding is aimed at National Governing Bodies (NGBs) as well as Local Authorities. Further details on the outline of the Scheme are available on the following link - <http://www.dttas.ie/sites/default/files/content/sport/english/general/large-scale-sport-infrastructure-fund-lssif/large-scale-sport-infrastructure-fund-scheme-outline.pdf>

Clare County Council is seeking expressions of interest from sporting bodies, clubs and voluntary organisations to submit joint projects for funding under this scheme that will increase:

- participation in sports
- interest in sports
- improve standards
- develop sport facilities

Expressions of interest are now being sought to be considered to be put forward for funding.

Please forward detailed proposal to:

"LSSIF Expression of Interest"
Social Development Directorate
Clare County Council
Áras Contae an Chláir
New Road,
Ennis,
Co. Clare

The **closing date** for completed Expressions of Interest forms is **3pm on Friday 8th March 2019**. Expressions of Interest forms received after this date will not be accepted.

Hereunder is a synopsis and requirements of the Fund:

- The scheme is initially open to applications from National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and Local Authorities (LAs).
- The scheme will consist of two streams. Stream One, which is aimed at smaller NGBs and Local Authorities, will help fund the development of proposals to tender stage. Stream Two will assist applicants to bring projects from tender stage to completion.
- The scheme will require a minimum contribution of 30% from applicants toward the cost of any works/design.
- The scheme encourages multi-functional sports facilities that will serve more than one sport. Sharing between sports, NGBs and LAs is encouraged and such projects will be viewed more favourably.
- The existing Local Authority Swimming Pool Programme is closed for new applications and any proposed funding for swimming pools will be considered under the LSSIF

Eligibility

In considering investment in infrastructure, priority will be given to projects that:

- Can be identified as a priority within a local authority's development plan and strategic vision, demonstrating cross-sector collaboration and clearly identified local priorities.
- Can be identified as a priority of an NGB in its strategy for the development of active participation, social participation and improvement of high performance in the sport it governs e.g. development centres.
- Are multi-functional in nature and cater for a number of sports and other activities.
- Provide facilities that are open to the general public.
- Meet the needs of a mixed group of clubs and associations.
- Prioritise the needs of disadvantaged areas and groups including people with disabilities.
- Require funding for the development of capital infrastructure (new build, modernisation or refurbishment) and major fixed equipment where it is an integral part of a project.
- Are located on a site(s) where the applicant holds ownership or long-term lease with at least 25 years remaining.
- Are seeking a grant of at least €300,000 under Stream two.
- Identify confirmed capital partnership funding (30%) for the project from the applicant and/or other parties (not state funded).
- Provide and demonstrate a commitment and financial management strategy to effectively manage the facility.
- Address the potential for delivery of sustainable energy conservation for the facility and promote sustainable travel.
- New swimming pool projects will also be considered
- Do not include costs for non-fixed equipment which are not covered by this fund.
- Projects with already committed expenditure cannot be considered.

Returns will be considered and the successful projects to be submitted by Clare County Council to the Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport under the Large Scale Infrastructure Fund will be generated following a determination of the eligibility criteria subject to meeting the criteria of the fund.

SPORTS & RECREATION

JOHN O'SULLIVAN PARK, LEES ROAD



- The resurfacing of the Entrance Road to Lee's Road has taken place during the month of January.
- Drainage Works has been completed of all Playing Pitches during this month also.
- Plans are in motion for an increase to the number of bench seating at John O'Sullivan Park Lees Road and also at Tim Smythe Park in the town centre, as requested by the customers of both parks.

Operation Transformation 2019

Operation Transformation 2019 is being well received and attended by 16 – 20 customers.

Active Ennis provides a free weigh-in and health recommendations to all participants of Operation Transformation.



Irish International Christmas Tree Throwing Championship

The Annual Christmas Tree Throwing Championship, which is organised every year by Clare County Council Sports & Recreation Department took place as in previous years at Active Ennis Tim Smythe Park on Sunday 6th January, 2019. All money raised was donated by Clare County Council to Cahercalla Hospice.



Clare Trail Volunteer Warden Programme

Clare Sports Partnership and Clare Local Development are currently expanding the Clare Trail Volunteer Warden programme.

Clare has 420km of trails including walking trails like The Burren Way, East Clare Way, Lough Avalla Farm Loop and the Ballyvaughan Wood Loop, and on-road cycling trails in Loop Head and Doolin.



CULTURAL SERVICES

CLARE COUNTY LIBRARY

- The County Library acquired a set of Thomond manuscripts relating to Henry O'Brien, the Earl of Thomond dating from 1664 to 1707 at the end of 2018. This is an important primary source for Thomond and Clare for the end of the seventeenth century, beginning of the eighteenth century. Local Studies also accepted the donation of three manuscripts relating to the O'Loughlen family of Corcomroe, specifically Torlogh O'Loughlen. The three manuscripts date from 1663 and 1641. They were very kindly donated to the County Library by the O'Loughlen descendants in Australia. The librarian hopes to have the manuscripts calendared shortly. They will be a very valuable source for north Munster historians. It is rare that such 17th century primary source material comes to light and it is very fortunate that such material should be added to the county collection.
- Coder Dojo sessions took place in Scariff Public Library and Seán Lemass Public Library, Shannon during the month. Coder dojo teaches basic coding skills to children.



Alexander Technique in Scariff Library

- Healthy Ireland events took place in the following libraries in January, Kilrush, Kilkee, Ennistymon, Sixmilebridge, De Valera and Scariff. Events included a six week "Quit Smoking" course, talks on nutrition with Anne Griffin, mindfulness with Pauline Bradley, line-dancing, and Ireland's Pilgrim paths with John O'Dwyer.
- Applications have been received from communities for the Creative Ireland project awards for 2019. Funding will be used to support events and projects that focus on cultural activity involving the arts, creative industries, heritage, film and animation.
- Film clubs, story times, book clubs and chess classes continued as usual throughout January.



Storytime and craft in Shannon Library

CLARE ARTS OFFICE

- Artist residencies began in Ruan NS and St. Anne's Special School on Ennis.
- Rehearsals began in Kilkee for 'TakeOver' a community drama project in Cultúrlann Sweeney with Zara Starr Madden as part of her theatre residency.
- The public art project, FOLK Radio, in the X-PO in Kilnaboy continued with radio training taking place each Saturday.



- The "Ganganli Project", with composer Ian Wilson, began in West Clare.
- The "Destroyed Site" dance project in Shannon began working with the GAA club and the Active Retirement Group.
- An arts project around fairy ringforts began with artist, Seán Lynch.
- Submissions and survey results were received for the new County Arts Development Plan.
- Scariff Library held an exhibition of visual art that received a lot of media attention, focussing on an artist with chronic illness and how his art has helped him deal with it.

Clare Museum

- January is a quieter month for visitors, activities revolved around setting up new educational workshops for launch in the early spring, and cataloguing the collection.
- Seven schools from Ennis and the county are booked in for the Museum's St Bridget's Day workshops, beginning on 29th January.
- An application has been made for a license to survey a famine village as part of the Creative Ireland project, and it is expected to be carried out in February.
- A total 151 items were accessioned (made the property of the Council) to the collection during the month. The museum is updating its database and work is to begin on this in the coming weeks.

Archives

- The archivist went to Kilkee to view a collection compiled by Manuel DiLucia. It comprises 4 scrap-books and covers about 50 years of his life in Kilkee. The collection will go to Local Studies
- Clare Archives will take the Mount levers collection from the National Archive. This will be digitised and a copy given to the levers family.
- Archives is considering the acquisition of Clare County GAA material and registers from St Joseph's Hospital. Archives receive genealogy queries from around the world and one of the most accessed is the McMahon Collection.

Inputs to the Draft Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy (RSES)

The Southern Regional Assembly has prepared a draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region for the period 2019-2031. The draft RSES provides a long-term regional level strategic planning and economic framework, in support of the implementation of the National Planning Framework, for the future physical, economic and social developments for the Southern Region.



The draft RSES is a consultation document and the Southern Regional Assembly will consider all submissions made in writing between Tuesday 18th December 2018 and on or before 5.00pm Friday 08th March 2019 before adopting the RSES. Submissions or observations can be made via:

- Online: www.southernassembly.ie (see below)
- Email: rses@southernassembly.ie
- Mail: RSES Submissions, Southern Regional Assembly, Assembly House, O'Connell Street, Waterford X91F8PC

The relevant documents can be downloaded from their website on the public consultation section (<http://www.southernassembly.ie>) and are on public display at the planning counter of Clare County Council at Áras Contae an Chláir, New Road, Ennis during normal office hours. Presentations on the draft RSES were provided by the Senior Planner to the Economic SPC and to the Rural SPC. It is proposed to present to the Social & Physical SPC's prior to hosting a workshop with the Elected Members in late February to collate a submission on behalf of Clare County Council.

Strategic Development Zone – UL

In April of 2018 the Elected Members of Clare County Council committed to the preparation of a Strategic Development Zone (SDZ) application for UL's/South Clare campus. The SDZ application will transform a 325 acre greenfield site beside UL's existing 125 acre Campus in Clare into an education/employment/residential University zone. In the process, it is anticipated that at least 3,500 jobs will be created and simultaneously UL will seek the EU designation of Europe's first University Town.

Since April Deloitte Consultants have prepared an economic basis for the SDZ designation. In recent weeks the Council have met with the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government officials who have requested that additional work i.e. preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment be undertaken which will accompany the SDZ application to Government. It is anticipated the full SDZ application will be lodged with Government in May 2019.

Ennis 2040

Work on drafting the Ennis 2040 Spatial and Economic Strategy continues with Steering and Working Group Meetings being held in January 2019. It is anticipated that a draft Strategy will be available for circulation in March 2019.

Proposed variation no.1 to identify a suitable site for a proposed Data Centre for Ennis



This Variation No. 1 to the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 went on public display from 21st December 2018 until 29th January 2019.

The proposed Variation is to give effect to the Government Policy Statement on the development of Data Centres in Ireland by identifying, in a plan-led manner, the preferred location of a Data Centre in County Clare.

A Chief Executive's report will now be prepared on the 17no. submissions received to the proposed variation and will issue to the Elected Members in February for the consideration of the Council at the March 2019 Council meeting.

Cahercon Marine Centre of Excellence

Clare County Council led the development of the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan (SIFP) for the Shannon Estuary.

The SIFP identified a number of strategic sites in the Shannon Estuary, including Cahercon, and the site was zoned for Marine Related Development in the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023. The Development Plan and the Clare Renewable Energy Strategy identified a number of sites suitable for off-shore wave energy renewable technologies.

In 2017 the Planning Department with the assistance of Enterprise Ireland undertook a feasibility study on maximising the development potential of the Cahercon Marine Related Site. The feasibility study identified a number of potential developments in Cahercon.

The vision for the Cahercon facility in the document is to create a

- A specialist commercial training facility providing maritime training courses and value-added training for non-seafaring personnel taking up positions at sea,
- A facility to include field research labs, marine equipment, and marine transport for a large national and international third-level field research marketplace,
- A field testing base for marine renewable device developers for secure R&D and to build on the planned activities of a current developer on site.

Enterprise Ireland have awarded the sum of €1.7 million for the purchase of specialist training equipment, personnel and office/lab kit out for a multipurpose facility that will deliver international cruise training, house an international field research centre, and marine renewable testing and training location.

FORWARD PLANNING

Ballyallia Amenity Enhancement Plan

The public consultation period for submissions on the enhancement plan has now closed. The next step will be for the consultants to collate the submissions received and present their findings to the community group and to prepare the Draft Plan. The Planning Section of Clare County Council will act in an advisory capacity to this community group for the remainder of the plan preparation stage.



Shannon Town Park

Work on the development of the new Shannon Town Park has begun after Clare County Council signed a contract with M. Fitzgibbon Contractors. The works, which are expected to be completed by mid 2019, include formal footpaths and a cycle track, an adventure play area and a bandstand/performance area, the first cycle pump track to be built in the Mid West Region, formal and informal seating areas, lighting and signage, the creation of a natural water feature and new native woodland planting. The development will also include a new Toucan pedestrian/cycle crossing on Bóthar Linne.

The proposal to deliver the €1M flagship park for Shannon Town has been developed by Clare County Council with co-funding through the Southern Regional Assembly's Operational Programme 2014-2020.



The design proposals have been prepared by Nicholas de Jong Associates|Urban Design (Limerick) with Malachy Walsh and Partner following extensive consultation with the community and key stakeholders. The consultation included invaluable feedback from local residents, the schools, SkyCourt, the Garda Station, the Shannon Venue and the Leisure Centre. The Part 8 approval for the scheme was obtained in April 2017.

Further information and updates on the new Shannon Town Park project is available on the Clare County Council website, www.clarecoco.ie.

Cappa Enhancement Strategy

The Planning Department are currently procuring a design consultant to complete a Cappa Enhancement Strategy which would strength both physically and visually the connection between Cappa and the pier in Kilrush.

Development Management

- 56 planning applications were received by Clare County Council during the month of January.
- 25 pre-planning applications were received during the month of January.

Planning Enforcement

During January 2019 there were 5 new complaints received and 3 Warning Letters were issued. In the month, 3 files were closed and no new legal proceedings were initiated.

Taking in Charge

- Further preparatory work has been undertaken on 6 estates and it is hoped to commence the taking in charge process on these estates in February.
- The taking in charge team is continuing to monitor progress on a number of new estates where works are being progressed.
- The taking in charge team are preparing tender packs for remedial works programmes on a number of estates for which bond monies have been paid over. The focus will be on priority remedial works that will enable the estate to be completed to a standard required for taking in charge.

Heritage and Biodiversity

On the evening of 15th January, over thirty people from 9 communities along the Shannon Estuary Way attended an evening presentation on heritage projects which was opened by Cllr Gabriel Keating. Róisín Burke of Albarta Heritage presented the Shannon Estuary Way Heritage Recording Project and Alan Lauder, of Alan Lauder Consulting presented the report on the Shannon Estuary Way Nature Based Tourism proposals.

The ambition of these projects was to fully realise, with the local communities, the potential for and variety of activities and the dept and richness of the heritage of the route. The provision of heritage and recreational routes and looped trails associated with the Shannon Estuary Way will add to visitor experiences and ttractions and will also further enhance the value of the route.

Pictured at the launch of the Shannon Estuary Way Heritage Tourism Proposals



LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE CLARE

Training & Development Brochure

- LEO Clare published their 2019 Spring/Summer Training and Development Programme. 31 programmes in total have been announced. Programmes include Start Your Own Business Programme, Book-Keeping, Marketing on a Budget and HACCP refresher course to correspond with the Irish Open in Lahinch.

Training Programmes

- LEO Clare held six training programmes in the month of January which were attended by over 90 participants. Programmes included a Start your own Business and Complete Digital Marketing course.

Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur (IBYE) 2019

- LEO Clare launched this year's IBYE competition on Thursday January 24th in the Templegate Hotel. The event was attended by Minister Pat Breen and Cathaoirleach Michael Begley along with a number of past and future participants. The county final and awards night will take place on Thursday 2nd May.



Finbar Tuohy, LEO Clare, Minister Pat Breen, Ciara O'Halloran, Red-bank Food Co. and Cllr. Michael Begley, Mayor of Clare

National Enterprise Awards

- LEO Clare announced details of this year's National Enterprise Awards, with a total prize fund of €10k available to local businesses in the county. Clare has had previous success at national level, with two overall winners and two category winners since the competition was launched. The county final will take place as part of Local Enterprise Week (4th – 8th March) on Friday 8th March.



Showcase Ireland

- LEO Clare supported three local enterprises (Galánta Jewellery, Airmid Natural Irish Skincare and Sallyann's Handmade Bags) to participate in Showcase Ireland 2019, an international art, craft and design event in the RDS, Dublin. The event is attended by traders from across the globe. Members of LEO Clare visited the stands on 22nd January while each stand was also visited by both Minister Heather Humphries and Minister Pat Breen.



Minister Pat Breen with LEO Clare Client Galánta Jewellery

Property Management

- As advised last month, property negotiations are underway to accommodate a larger third level offering in County Clare.

It is hoped that such arrangements will come to fruition during February and further information will be provided at that stage.

- The arrangements for letting of Council lands for the year 2019 have been put in place and the necessary agreements are being signed at present.
- Thatching has been repaired at Murphy's Cottage, Slí na Mara, Shannon which will preserve it for the future.



ROADWORKS PROGRAMME & OPERATIONS

• DTTaS has just announced its road grant allocations for 2019. The total allocation available to Transportation in 2019 for Regional and Local roads improvement and maintenance as well as Bridge Rehabilitation is €18.5m which represents a 6% increase in funding from DTTaS' allocation to Transportation of €17.4m in 2018.

The main changes from the 2018 allocation relate to:

- An increase in the Restoration Improvement grant of €0.83m
- An increase in the Restoration Maintenance grant of €0.25m
- An increase in the Discretionary grant of €0.488m
- An increase in the Drainage Works grant of €0.448m
- A reduction in the Specific Improvement Grant of €1.13m

The draft Schedule of Municipal District Works will be prepared during February to be brought before each MD during March. Work programmes are currently being compiled.

Winter Maintenance

The status of the Winter Maintenance is that we currently have 2,800 tonnes of salt in Beechpark. Currently we have enough salt for over 50 treatments of all planned routes.



West Clare MD road crews approach Corkscrew Hill in January

PUBLIC LIGHTING



The key priorities in relation to public lighting include complete changeover to LED technology, achievement of the 2020 Carbon footprint reduction target and replacement of supporting infrastructure where required.

It was announced in late 2018 that the Road Management Office (RMO) have been successful in securing €17.5 million in support from the Climate Action Fund for the LA Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project nationally.

This will form part of the funding necessary for the delivery of the project. Clare has confirmed its participation and has signed up to be included in region 1 of the Local Authority Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project.

For the benefit of Councillors, the following are the options available to facilitate reporting of public lighting faults:

- Internet: Direct reporting on airtricitysolutions.com
- Phone: Airtricity Utility Solutions Call Centre@ 1850 372 772
- Local Authority Identification – via clarecoco.ie / 0656821616.

Speed Limit Review

1. A speed limits review was carried out during 2017 and 2018
2. The speed limits were adopted by Clare County Council by Resolution on the 8th of October 2018.
3. The signage scheduling has been completed.
4. The installation / infrastructure will be implemented in early 2019.
5. The Commencement date for the new speed limits is 1 June 2019.

Road Design Office Projects being developed in 2019

CURRENT PROJECTS

- O'Briensbridge Walkway Protection structures - Onsite - MI & S Boland (Contractor)
- L4506 Kilrush rd to Limerick Rd Traffic calming - On site – Ennis MD
- Inagh Bridge - On site – Triur (Contractor)
- N85 Clareabbey Roundabout - Design , Drawings, Feasibility Report for traffic calming and pedestrian/cyclist facilities
- N68 Fahy's Rd Kilrush Pedestrian Crossing - RSA, Section 38 Public Consultation and report
- N68 Shaughnessy's Cross - Feasibility Report , RSA
- R462 Cratloe Cross Pedestrian Crossing - Design, Section 38 Public Consultation and report
- R458 Newmarket - Design, Section 38 Public Consultation and Report
- Annagh Bridge - Design of repairs, Drawings, Tenders docs issued, due back on 20th Feb
- Aghy Bridge - Design of repairs, Drawings, Tenders docs issued due back on 20th Feb
- Bunratty Castle Junction - Design of Traffic calming , junction improvement, liaison with Shannon Group and local businesses
- EuroVelo 1 - Evaluation Report for Sport Ireland /ECF
- Knockanean NS - Road Improvement scheme
- N85 Shanaway Rd Junction, Ennis - Design , Drawings, Feasibility Report for Junction Improvement
- R352/Corrovorrin Junction - review of junction options

Housing Pre Planning:

Ashline, Ennis , Kilmihil and NDFA Shannon Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy

Continued next page ----->

PROJECTS ON WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2019

- Clare Noise Action Plan 2018 - priorities and Matrix assessment/ further Monitoring
- Update of the Road Schedule and reproduction of the old paper mapping

Low Cost Safety Schemes 2019

- L4010/ L8022 Y junction on a bend L4010 south of Flagmount.
- Sixmilebridge
- R478 St Brigids Well
- L4506 Kilrush Rd- Limerick Rd Traffic calming
- Ballymacahill Cross Pedestrian crossing
- Carmody St/Drumbiggle Rd, Ennis
- R474 Kilmaley

Road Safety Remedial Measure 2019

- N67 Hospital Cross Ennistimon to Leinch
- N68 Beneden
- N67 Bend at Lisdeen

Bridge Rehabilitation

- Latoon Bridge Piers
- Inghid Bridge
- Quin Bridge
- Ballycorrick Bridge
- Pollagh Bridge
- Annagh Bridge
- Doorus West Bridge
- Kelly's Pass Bridge
- Aghy Bridge

- Caherbarnagh Bridge
- Cloonanaha South Bridge
- Goleensallagh Bridge
- Breaghva Bridge
- New Bridge
- Mountievers Bridge
- Sixmilebridge Bridge
- Aughaglanna Bridge
- Barony Bridge
- Ballyvohan Bridge

Other Projects

- Doonbeg Traffic Calming
- Car park at Lemanagh Castle
- R469 Keevagh
- N67 Killimer Church review of Traffic calming

General Design Office – Projects being developed in 2019

- Ennis Digital Hub
- Cliffs of Moher Footpath Upgrade and Extension to Carpark
 - Quin Road Campus – Civil Defence Headquarters
 - Killaloe Bypass-Shannon Crossing

- Land Registry Compliant Maps. 20% completed.
- Demolition of Brookville House, Gort Road Ennis
- Bindon Court Ennis and No 1 Bindon Street.

Capital Delivery/Project Management Office (PMO)

• **Killaloe Bridge and By-Pass** – Topographical Surveys are currently being conducted and following a Tender competition, a Ground Investigation Contractor has been procured. Letters seeking consent to access were issued to affected Landowners and we are getting a good response to same. RPS are continuing with the detailed design and discussions are ongoing with the DTTaS and TII regarding technical issues as they arise. In parallel, Land acquisition is being progressed both by agreement and through the Arbitration process. To reflect increased costs since the original business case, this is now being updated in line with the Common Appraisal Framework. At the end of the month we were advised by the DTTaS of a funding allocation of €8m for this project for 2019.

• **Limerick Northern Distributor Road (Phase 2)** – An updated Project Appraisal Plan was submitted to DTTaS in late January with the follow on Project Appraisal scheduled to be submitted in late February. Following consideration of the Appraisal by DTTaS and the TII, the Council expects approval to proceed to the next stage of the Project. An allocation of €100k was announced for this project in the DTTaS Funding for 2019.

• **Ennistymon Inner Relief Road & Bridge Crossing (Blakes Corner)** – Further engagement took place with some of the affected landowners in mid January and their views and concerns are being considered in the detailed design process. The detailed design has also benefitted from some local surveys carried out in certain key areas during the month. The DRAFT CPO schedule and associated drawings are nearing completion and will be submitted for TII approval prior to publishing. An allocation of €500k was announced by TII for this project in their recent budget for 2019. The next meeting of the Project Steering group comprising of CCC, TII, the Midwest Regional Design Office (MWRDO) and Consultants (Roughan O'Donovan) is scheduled for February 15th.

• **N85 Kilnamona Realignment Scheme** – The Ground Investigation Contractor has been appointed to carry out the necessary Ground Investigation works required. This will inform the detailed design in terms of type and volume of surplus material involved. The scheme permission and CPO will need to include where this surplus material, expected to be significant in volume, can be disposed of. The TII announced an allocation of €150k for this project in their recent budget for 2019 and it is expected to be in a position to submit a planning application later in the summer.

• **N19 Shannon Airport Access Road** – The next Steering Group meeting

is scheduled for Feb 27th where we are hopeful of receiving approval from TII to appoint Consultants for Phases 1 – 4. The tentative date for the appointment of Consultants is May 2019 and to allow for this, initial funding of €50k has been allocated by TII in their recent budget for 2019.

• **Shannon Embankments** – Work continued in January with relevant baseline data in the possession of the Shannon Group, the OPW and the Council being collated. At the Project Steering Group meeting held in late January, it was agreed that an open competition be run for the appointment of project Consultants. The Tender Specification for the appointment of engineering and environmental consultants has been completed with the OPW and the tender process has begun with the expectation of having the Consultants appointed in early May 2019.

• **Ennis South Flood Relief Scheme** – The OPW gave approval to award the Contract in mid January. The necessary Letters of Intent and regret issued and the standstill period is up in early February. Following which, we will be in a position to appoint the successful Contractor in mid February with an expected commencement on site in early March. Negotiations with affected landowners are continuing in parallel.

• **Doolin Pier Services Centre** – A Project Team Meeting has been scheduled for 20 February after which, a detailed programme on what is required to meaningfully advance the project will be agreed. A funding application was made under the Rural Regeneration & Development Fund, the outcome of which is expected in the coming weeks.

• **West Clare Railway Greenway** - Preliminary work continues while we await the outcome from 2 funding applications submitted in late 2018.

• **CFRAMs** - The 4th meeting of the Steering Group comprising of Clare County Council, OPW regional, OPW national and the Shannon Group took place on 21 January. It was agreed to progress the tender process for the appointment of Consultants for the larger Kilkee and Shannon projects initially. A Tender Specification for the appointment of engineering & environmental consultants has been completed which will allow us to advertise the competitions in the coming weeks. Other areas outside of the CFRAM identified FRMPs can be included in applications to the OPW under the Minor Works Scheme Programme.

• **LIHAF** - This project, facilitated by the Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund, proposes a new road connection between the N85 Roundabout at Laureen and the Drumcliff/Lees Road Junction. Engagement continues with the relevant Landowners and a meeting with the Department of Housing is scheduled for later in February.

STORM DAMAGE

The updated position in regard to the various Coastal and Flood/Storm damaged works is as follows:

PROJECT	CURRENT SITUATION
Cloughaninchy	Clare County Council are progressing land acquisitions to facilitate construction of the scheme. Draft tender documents are now prepared by the Consultants.
Liscannor Bay	Clare County Council has requested the OPW for an update on the progress of the scheme with particular reference to Clahane.
Lahinch South	A contractor has been selected and work will commence on site in the coming weeks following completion of the appointment process. Weather dependant, we will endeavour to have the works completed before June. However, it may be necessary to return to site at the end of the bathing season in September to complete the works.
Whitestransd Miltown	An application for a coastal protection scheme under the minor flood mitigation works and coastal erosion protection scheme has been submitted to the OPW and we await their consideration of same.
Kilbaha	Coastal Flood and Erosion Risk Management Study completed and submitted to the OPW for observations and recommendations.
Quilty	Consultants are currently producing revised flood and erosion maps based on new data and looking at the options based on the revised mapping.
Doolin	Coastal Flooding and Erosion Risk Management Study completed and submitted to the OPW for observations and recommendations.
New Quay	Coastal Flooding and Erosion Risk Management Study completed and submitted to the OPW for observations and recommendations.
Spanish Point	An application for a coastal protection scheme under the minor flood mitigation works and coastal erosion protection scheme has been submitted to the OPW and we await their determination of same. To this end, an update meeting has been arranged with the OPW Regional Office on Feb 8th next.

Flood Relief Schemes

The up to date position in relation to each of the areas where we have been progressing flood relief schemes is as follows:

- **Springfield, Clonlara: Flood Relief Schemes:** The draft final report on the preferred option has now been submitted to Clare County Council by the consultants. Clare County Council together with the Office of Public Works will now examine the draft report in detail and revert to the Consultants with our recommendations and conclusions. Any issues highlighted by us will be addressed by the Consultants and the report amended to reflect this.



- **Murtyclough:** Following the grant of permission by An Bord Pleanála, an Application for funding has been submitted to the Office of Public Works.
- **Shannon Estuary and Atlantic Coastline:** Work is continuing to address various environmental issues that were highlighted during the design stage of this scheme.

- **Quin Flood Relief Scheme:** A project brief is being prepared at present to go to tender for the appointment of consultants to progress this scheme to detailed design and planning stage.
- **Thomond Villas:** Work is continuing on the design of the scheme with a view to preparing an application for permission. Given the proximity to a Special Area of Conservation the environmental issues raised by the proposal are considerable and are being examined in detail prior to an application.
- **Minor Works Schemes:** Funding was recently announced by the OPW for a minor works scheme at Ballycorrick in Ballynacally. Work will commence in the summer. Additionally, we are engaging with the relevant personnel in the OPW in regard to the other application schemes submitted and decisions on same are awaited re same.
- **Miltown Malbay:** The Office of Public Works have been in contact with Clare County Council and indicated that a decision on the Section 50 Application will be made shortly.



WATER SERVICES

Annual Service Plan & Headcount 2019

The 2019 Annual Service Plan has been issued by Irish Water outlining the Headcount and Budgets for Payroll, Goods and Services and the Central Management Charge. There has been no change to the headcount from last year with a slight increase in Operational Budget to €12.1m.

Non Domestic Metering

A new protocol for Reactive Maintenance Work Orders to enable all Non Domestic work orders to be sent to Hand Held Units was introduced by Irish Water on Dec. 17th, 2018. This will facilitate a quicker response time when dealing with such queries by directing queries to the appropriate person.

Water Conservation

The Operations team continued water conservation activity throughout the county reacting to various increases in demand in Shannon and Ennis to assist local staff in locating leaks in the Network. The Find and Fix team operated in the Turnpike and Cloughleigh District Metering Areas in the Ennis Water Supply Zone during the month and Share-ridge carried out night surveys on the Drumbiggie and Tulla Rd. District Metering Areas.

Asset Transfer project:

370 water & waste water assets, in Co Clare, have been identified to date. Of these 51 are Non Operational/Non Transfer to Irish Water and a further 150 have been completed and transferred to Irish Water. This leaves a list of 169 assets to be dealt with and eventually transferred to Irish Water which is broken down as follows:

- **Pending** - 43 assets are being discussed to be brought forward for transfer to Irish Water in the coming months – these consist of straight transfers and also some assets having to be subdivided by map/plan once an agreement has been reached on the size of the plot containing the asset to be transferred and right of ways etc.
- **National Special Projects Office (NSPO)** – This is a department within Irish Water dealing with special projects including Facilitating the Asset Transfers from Local Authorities - 6 assets are with the NSPO for investigation to ascertain if they can be considered an underground asset and can therefore be transferred by S.I. 13 of 2015.
- **3rd Party/Unregistered assets** - The remaining 120 assets identified to be transferred to IW are on 3rd Party Registered lands (99) or Unregistered Lands (21). Background work continues on these assets.
- Procedures are still being discussed and developed between Irish Water and their Legal Department to provide guidance as to how to deal with these 120 assets – i.e. whether CCC apply for 1st registration with the Property Registration Authority Ireland (PRAI) and then transfer to IW or if IW will apply for 1st registration and who will pay Legal fees, registration fees etc.

CAPITAL PROJECTS

IW's & (CCC's) Capital Section is broken down into the following sub-sections;

- Infrastructure Programmes: (major infrastructure projects)
- Capital Programmes: (minor projects)
- Network Programmes: (mains replacements / find and fix)

Irish Water refer to the different phases of a project as Gates.

- Gate 1. Concept Design and data gathering.
- Gate 2. Environmental Studies Detailed design and planning.
- Gate 3. Construction stage and handover
- Gate 4. Contract closeout

Infrastructure Programmes (Capital Projects) Clare Capital Investment Plan (CIP) 2014–2016 Projects: (continuing from 2016)

Kilfenora Waste Water Treatment Plant

Now at planning stage – Clare County Council (as Planning Authority) are currently assessing the planning application. Expectation to go to Gate 3 – construction stage before the end of 2019.

Quin Waste Water Treatment Plant

Tender stage completed. This contract has now been awarded under IW ECI (Early Contractor Involvement) framework and is expected to advance to contract commencement in March 2019.

Clonroadmore Waste Water Treatment Plant Upgrade:

As part of the Ennis Main Drainage Plan Ennis North's Waste Water Treatment Plant, Clonroadmore More WwTP, received an upgrade and this was completed in November 2017. The site has also undergone some noise attenuation works to the blower units and pipework in December following complaints from residents and this has resolved the issue. The inlet screens at both the Francis Street and Tulla Road pumping stations are also under review.

Clare Capital Investment Plan 2017–2021 Projects

Lahinch Waste Water Treatment Plant:

Gate 1: Concept design report at draft stage. Progressing to **Gate 2** - detailed design and environmental evaluation and thereafter advancing to planning stage in 2020. Expectation to go to **Gate 3** – construction stage before the end of 2021.

Ennistymon Waste Water Treatment Plant Upgrade:

Gate 1: Concept design report at draft stage. Progressing to **Gate 2** - detailed design and environmental evaluation and thereafter advancing to planning stage in 2020. Expectation to go to **Gate 3** – construction stage before the end of 2021.

Newmarket on Fergus Waste Water Treatment Plant Upgrade:

Gate 1: Concept design report at draft stage. Progressing to **Gate 2** - detailed design and environmental evaluation and thereafter advancing to planning stage in 2020. Expectation to go to **Gate 3** – construction stage before the end of 2021.

Shannon (2no projects):

- Interim upgrade of the Waste Water Treatment Plant. Project at Gate 2, tender stage. Construction expected to commence in the Summer 2019.
- Gate 1 studies, for the agglomeration, have commenced. Progressing to Gate 2 - detailed design & planning thereafter. Expectation to go to Gate 3 – construction stage – not determined at this stage.

Clare Untreated Agglomerations Study (UTAS) Projects: (project period 2017-2021)

RPS has been appointed as Consulting Engineers. A Design Inception Report has been submitted and accepted by IW. The projects under UTAS have progressed through pre-planning stage and detailed design. In May 2018, public information sessions were held in Clarecastle, Kilrush and Kilkee during May 2018, Ballyvaughan and Liscannor were completed in September and October respectively. Planning applications are commencing with Kilrush expected to be lodged by IW in Q1 2019.

Kilrush Waste Water Treatment Plant Upgrade:

Gate 2 – detailed design near completion. Planning to be submitted early 2019. Landowner/wayleave/CPO engagement process ongoing. Expectation to go to **Gate 3** – construction stage before the end of 2020 and completed by end 2021.

Cont'd. from previous page

Clarecastle Waste Water Treatment Plant:

Currently waste water in Clarecastle is pumped untreated into the river Fergus via Quay Rd pumping station. Under Irish Waters UTAS project it is expected that in 2019 the waste water collected at Quay Rd pumping station will be diverted via a new waste water pipeline to Clareabby WwTP. **Gate 2** – detailed design near completion. Site Investigation to commence in early 2019. Landowner/wayleave/CPO engagement process ongoing. Expectation to go to **Gate 3** – construction stage before the end of 2019 and completed by end 2019 / early 2020.

Liscannor Waste Water Treatment Plant:

Gate 2 – detailed design near completion. Planning submission expected in Q1 2019. Landowner/wayleave/CPO engagement process ongoing. Expectation to go to **Gate 3** – construction stage before the end of 2020 and completed by end 2021.

Ballyvaughan Waste Water Treatment Plant:

Gate 2 – detailed design near completion. Public consultation held and planning submission expected in Q2 2019. Landowner/wayleave/CPO engagement process ongoing. Expectation to go to **Gate 3** – construction stage before the end of 2020 and completed by end 2021.

Kilkee Waste Water Treatment Plant:

Environmental Impact Assessment Report required – will take approx 10 months to complete which will be quarter 4 of 2019. **Gate 2** – detailed design cannot be completed until outcome of EIA is known. Planning submission – programmed for Q4 2019/Q1 2020. Landowner/wayleave/CPO engagement process ongoing. Expectation to go to **Gate 3** – construction stage before the end 2020 and completed by end 2021.

Capital Programmes: (minor Capital Works)

Francis St Ennis Foul Storm Pumps Upgrade:

Project Commenced mid November 2018 and is ongoing. Completion date is scheduled for February 2019.

Inlet Works Project:

This is a national project reviewing and ultimately upgrading various inlet receiving structures including storm tanks and sludge handling In Clare the following are within this project;

- Inagh WwTP
- Clareabby WwTP
- Miltown Malbay WwTP

The following are other national projects with which Clare are involved in (at various stages)

National Certificate of Authorisation (NCAP):

This Programme will review all EPA Certified Wastewater plants with a P.E. of less than 500 and their impact on receiving waters. Ballycannon and Kilmihil WWTP's in Co. Clare have been included in the first round of assessments. RPS has prepared Site Option Reports for both plants which are currently under review.

Sludge Satellites:

Clareabby WWTP has been assessed as a potential satellite dewatering centre for the purpose of treating imported sludge from surrounding WWTP's. Jacobs Tobin has issued their report which is currently under consideration by Irish Water.

Network Programmes Mains Replacement Works:

Irish Water confirmed at a meeting with Clare County Council Water Services staff on Jan 10th, 2019 that the programme for construction by **Healy-Rae Plant Hire Ltd.**, working on behalf of Irish water, is as follows (all dates are in 2019 unless otherwise noted):

1. Bealaha Watermains Rehab (February 11th – May 24th).
2. Mullagh Miltown Malbay Watermains Rehab (24 May - 26 Jan 2020).

3. Scarriff Watermains Rehab has commenced.

Shareridge, working on behalf of Irish Water, have provided the following programme works for projects in West Clare Municipal District:

1. Doonbeg Watermains Rehabilitation: March 4th – April 11th
2. Ennistymon Main Street Watermains Rehabilitation: March 4th – April 5th
3. Dereen to St Brigid's Well Watermains rehabilitation: 8-26th April.

Water & Waste Water Operations

The following statistics provide an indication of the level of activity / work being carried out by the water and waste water teams throughout the county from early January 2019. The figures do not however reflect the time invested by the teams which is required to resolve each complaint /issue.

- 10 Customer Complaints were dealt with to-date
- 1 Emergency Work Order was dealt with and closed out
- 210 Reactive Maintenance Work Orders were dealt with and closed out
- 1 Customer Asset Flooding Work Order was attended to & closed out
- 113 Service Requests (SR's) were raised on Co. Clare for Field Requests and Follow On Work Orders for Reactive Maintenance work
- 36 Outage Notices were placed on the IW portal during January.

EIMS (Environmental Information Management system)

The new EIMS (Environmental Information Management system) module for AER (Annual Environmental Return) reporting went live on 21st January 2019, and will be used to manage the 2018 AER reporting process. It is anticipated that this new module will streamline the preparation of this report.

Burst Rising Main 7th/8th January 2019 Shannon

- On 7 January, the Water Services Department in Shannon responded to a burst rising main at Pumping Station No4A at Tullyglass, Shannon. This was a challenging incident as there is no emergency overflow and access and egress was difficult. Tankering of the domestic wastewater was undertaken for the duration of the repair and the incident presented many unforeseen obstacles which were successfully addressed by the crew throughout the day and overnight. The incident was resolved in a timely and safe manner with no disruption to the customer.
- There were no major outages to report in Water Operations in January.

Rural Water Programme/ GWS

- Following a successful 2018 where a total of 9 Group Water Schemes were taken in charge representing just under 50% of all group schemes taken in charge nationally by Irish Water, the Rural Water team are focusing on potential upgrade works and taking in charge schemes that can be progressed in 2019.
- Currently the Rural Water Programme are assisting a further 9 group water schemes with 4 of these having been submitted to Irish Water for consideration. A Group Sewerage Scheme was also submitted for a taking in charge in January and this is awaiting assessment by Irish Water.
- The notification of the Rural Water Programme interim allocation for 2019 to the Council by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government is expected shortly. The Department have advised that the programme is to be adjusted slightly in 2019 but shall generally follow the format of the 2016-2018.
- Schemes have been contacted by the Team to submit their subsidy applications for 2018 in order that early payment can be facilitated. Schemes are also invited to submit upgrade applications for the 2019 Rural Water Programme.
- The Rural Water Team continue to work with schemes to ensure their members have a robust and sustainable quality and quantity supply of water available to them.

ENVIRONMENT

Capital Projects – Lahinch Visitor Toilet Upgrade Project

Works are progressing on the new and extended public toilets in Lahinch on the site of the previous toilets at Seaworld. Demolitions have been completed, foundations and sub-floors poured and blockwork is now proceeding. The project remains on course for completion by May 2019.



Environmental Awareness

Clare County Council Waste Prevention Grant Scheme 2019 was announced this month. The scheme, which operates under the Local Authority's Greener Clare programme, aims to support communities to develop community led projects on waste prevention, re-use and repair activities, including workshops in their local areas and encourage partnership between local businesses, local schools, charities, community and voluntary groups. Under the scheme, which forms part of the Waste Prevention Programme for the county it is possible to apply for grants up to a maximum of €1,500.

Amongst those that are invited to apply are community and voluntary groups, charities, schools and businesses. For this year's waste prevention grant, applications for funding for locally led Plastic Free Initiatives, Zero Waste Initiatives, Greening of Festivals and Community Composting initiatives are particularly welcome.

Application forms are available by contacting the Environment Section, Clare County Council, Áras Contae an Chláir, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare. Tel: 065-6846331 or by emailing greenerclare@clarecoco.ie.

Laboratory & Technical Support

Monitoring Program 2019

The monitoring schedules for Rivers, Group Water Schemes, Public Water Supplies, Wastewater Treatment Plants and Discharge Licences for 2019 has been set-out and is currently underway. The sampling schedules have been modified to take account of requests by Irish Water or the EPA as well as targets set out in the RMCEI Plan.

National Inspection Plan for Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems

The regulations governing septic tanks/domestic waste water treatment systems require the owners to operate and maintain the systems. Re-inspections have been carried in January to assess progress on compliance with advisory notices and to

assess new installations or up-grades. A number of cases have been closed subsequent to satisfactory compliance with notice requirements. Once compliant a system owner can apply for grant assistance if they meet the relevant criteria as set out in the legislation.

Waste Management

Textiles

A new tender has been advertised for the provision and collection of textile banks on behalf of Clare Co Co. Tender return date has been extended by a week until 12 noon on Friday 8th February following a request from an interested party.

Doora Landfill/Clare Camogie Car Park

Work has commenced within the past week on the installation of lighting columns at the car park area of Doora Landfill/Clare Camogie Pitches. This area has been the subject of numerous illegal dumping incidents over the last two years and will be monitored to discourage this activity.

Water and Scientific Services

Water Pollution Complaints

Eight water pollution complaints have been dealt with so far in 2019.

Planning referrals from Planning Department

Planning referrals continue to be processed in this section where specialist scientific reports are required.

Farm Inspections under the Good Agriculture Practice (GAP) Regulations 2017

Clare County Council carries out inspections for the following reasons; to ensure compliance with the Good Agriculture Practice (GAP) Regulations, following notifications from the Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine, pollution investigation & complaint investigation. Six inspections were carried out in January.

River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021

Work is continuing in this area and staff of Clare County Council joined a well attended public meeting in Cooraclare on 31st January organised by the Local Authority Water Programme (LAWPRO) regional office in relation to the Doonbeg River.

Limerick Clare Energy Agency

Energy Management System

The statutory energy reporting cycle has begun, under SI 426. Electricity and gas data has been completed and returned. Thermal, transport & renewable energy is being compiled and analysed for submission by April 2019.

Energy Costs

There has been a 1% increase in energy costs in the past twelve months compared to the same period in 2017. The increase in energy costs is attributable to increase electricity use for public lighting and energy tariff cost increases. The local authority continues to benefit from centralised energy tariff negotiations, energy efficiency upgrades in public lights, and heating controls in large buildings.

Limerick Clare Energy Agency (cont'd)

Energy Consumption

- While the energy cost increase is 1%, actual energy use has increased by 2% overall. There are increases in the quantity of energy for public lighting, due to taking in charge. A national & regional public lighting upgrade programme has been proposed by the Roads Management Office (RMO). The capital cost of the programme for public lighting upgrade has been approved. For Clare County Council the proposed upgrade would involve 11,924 lights and could reduce energy consumption by 2,900,000 kWh. The programme is proposed to commence in Q1, 2020.

Energy Performance

- Clare County Council has achieved an energy performance of 17.8% towards the required 33% by 2020. Significant progress is required over the coming two years. The percentage improvement is dependent upon the organisation energy consumed and the performance metric. The percentage change is calculated on the Monitoring & Reporting performance tool hosted by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland.

Waste Enforcement

- January proved to be a busy month for the waste enforcement team with ongoing issues around fly tipping, illegal dumping, littering and unauthorised waste activity.



- A total of ninety eight environmental complaints were closed by the waste enforcement team for the month of January. Over 50% of the complaints received relate to illegal dumping and fly tipping. A total of five fines were issued to individuals under the Litter Pollution Act during the month.

- A successful prosecution was secured under the Litter Pollution Act against an individual in Ennis court on 25th January. Legal action has been initiated in an additional four cases and these are expected to come before the courts in the coming weeks.

- Alleged illegal waste activity was identified at three sites around the county. The team is investigating these and has carried out interviews with a number of individuals allegedly associated with the sites. Prosecution\directions under the Waste Management Act are currently being prepared for these cases. A number of other sites are being monitored by the team with a view to taking action in the coming weeks.

- Team attendance at a quarterly meeting of the regional WERLA group set out enforcement priorities for 2019 as directed by the Department of Communications, Climate Change and

Environment. These will form the nucleus of the 2019 inspections plan currently being prepared by the Environment section as a whole. Returns on the 2018 inspections completed are currently being finalised for issue to EPA in early February.

Gardening

Routine Winter Maintenance

- Seasonal/winter maintenance is ongoing at various public areas within Ennis, i.e. hedge cutting, pruning of shrubs, bedding preparation, etc. Non-routine grass cutting of green/public areas within Ennis has been required due to the unseasonably mild weather.



Preparatory work for 2019

- Preliminary orders have been placed for bedding and annual plants in preparation for the Dubai Duty Free Irish Open 2019.
- Deliveries of immature trees for National Tree Week have been received and put in temporary storage until March this involves the planting of trees in suitable substrate to protect bare-roots from suffering frost damage.
- Maintenance of early season annuals/bedding plants stored in poly tunnels over the winter (watering, feeding and protective measures to avoid frost damage/burns) is ongoing.

Christmas tree recycling programme

- Approximately eight hundred Christmas trees were received at the gardening depot, Gort Road. These were received and stored by staff, pending the shredding operation on Tuesday 22nd Jan by a private landscape contractor.
- All additional trees accepted at Clare County Councils four civic amenity sites (Lisdeen, Inagh, Scarriff, & Shannon) were shredded on 31st Jan.



PURPLE FLAG



A Purple Flag is an award for reaching a standard of excellence in the evening and night time economy (ENTE), with a diverse cultural offering – non alcohol dependent and is family friendly, safe and vibrant .

Ennis Purple Flag working group celebrated receiving interim Renewal Accreditation of the Purple Flag. The accreditation is awarded by the Association of Town and City Management (ATCM) who assessed the area against strong criteria. The Purple Flag application process is led by Ennis Chamber in partnership with Ennis Municipal District / Clare County Council and An Garda Síochána, together with local business associations and networks including local vintners, restaurateurs, hoteliers, Glór, Civil Defence and Active Ennis.

In order to receive interim renewal, Ennis Purple Flag Working Group successfully demonstrated the vitality and dynamism of the designated Purple Flag area in Ennis Town Centre, together with the highest standard of safety management.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

Recent Training Courses

The following brigade training courses were held during January;

- Two Chainsaw Courses
- Two Chainsaw Refresher Courses
- An induction Day
- 1 No. Compartment Fire Behaviour Refresher Training Course
- 1 No. Compartment Fire Behaviour Initial Training Course

As part of the continuous Major Emergency Management training & preparations, Emergency Helpline Training was provided to a number of Clare County Council personnel in January

Open Day held in Kilrush Fire Station

Following ongoing challenges with recruiting retained Fire Service Personnel, in particular in Kilrush, an Open Day was arranged of Kilrush Fire Station on 19th January 2019. The Open Day included an extensive display of the equipment and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) used by crews in Kilrush Fire Brigade. Fire-fighters and Officers from the Brigade gave visitors an overview of what the job entailed and the benefits to joining the Fire Service. Approximately 30 people visited the station on the day, and it is expected to see an increase in the number of applicants in the area for both Kilrush & Kilkee Fire Brigades in the near future.

CLARE CIVIL DEFENCE

Operational Duties

- 4 Clare Civil Defence medics provided medical cover for a Teenage Disco as part of a joint initiative between Clare CD and An Garda Síochána
- 5 members of the unit attended at the International Christmas Tree Throwing Championship
- 4 medics provided medical cover for the "Run the Banner" race series
- An ambulance and crew provided medical cover for the "Run Clare" race series
- 4 medics provided medical cover for the National Football League fixture

Training & Professional Development

- 16 members of the Severe Weather Response Team took part in an evening training exercise along the banks of the River Fergus.
- 5 Clare Civil Defence instructors held a Cardiac First Responder/Automated External Defibrillator course for Clare Youth Service as part of a joint initiative between An Garda Síochána and the Youth Service.
- Two members of the Emergency Medical Team assisted the University of Limerick at a Trauma Training exercise for Emergency Department consultants.

Fire & Building Control Section (Main Activities)	JANUARY 2019	2019 TOTAL
Number of Emergency Calls Attended	98	98
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Received	5	5
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Granted	9	9
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Invalidated	0	0
Number of Disability Access Certificates Received	6	6
Number of Disability Access Certificates Granted	8	8
Number of Commencement Notices Received	36	36
Number of Dangerous Structures/Places Complaints	1	1

JANUARY IN PICTURES

AROUND THE COUNCIL



Pictured at the contract signing for O'Brien's Tower at the Cliffs of Moher Visitor Experience were (L-R) Pat Dowling, Chief Executive; Councillor Michael Begley, Mayor of Clare; Donnacha Lynch and Kevin Hennigan, Cliffs of Moher Visitor Experience; Leonard Cleary, Director of Rural Development; and Kevin O'Leary, Mid West Lime Ltd., and Austin Dennany, Dennany Reidy Asc.



Elected Members joined Council officials on a site visit with Minister Damien English to the new social housing development under construction in Feakle.



More than 200 events and festivals are featured in a comprehensive new guide to all tourism related activity taking place in Clare during 2019. The Clare Festivals and Events Guide is being made available at visitor attractions, accommodation providers, tourist offices, libraries and Council Area Offices.



Elected Members also joined Council officials on a site visit with Minister Damien English to the new social housing development under construction in Clonlara.



Councillor Ian Lynch (pictured left) with other members of the Kilrush Town Team. Over the last year, the team have been busy working on a three-year community strategy for Kilrush. The Team recently held a meeting with Clare County Council's Rural Development Directorate.



Pictured at Áras Contae an Chláir examining the plans for the new Shannon Town Park is Back L-R Helen Quinn, Senior Executive Planner; Brian McCarthy, Senior Planner; FRONT L-R Cllr. Gerry Flynn, Cathaoirleach of Shannon MD; Liam Conneally, Director of Economic Development; and Michael Begley, Mayor of Clare.