

CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT

OCTOBER 2022 ISSUE

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS

A list of Orders made in the last month will be available in the Corporate Department for inspection by the Elected Members.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

31st October

Dog Fouling Campaign at Madra Monday will run from 1.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m. on the Parade.

Community and Cultural Facilities Capital Scheme (CCFCS) 2022

The closing date for receipt of valid applications is 12 noon on Wednesday 2nd November, 2022.

REPORT AT A GLANCE

ROADS:	2
WATER SERVICES:.....	2
ENVIRONMENT:.....	4
PARKS/SPECIAL PROJECTS:	10
PLANNING:	14
COMMUNITY:.....	15
LEO/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	16
HOUSING:	19
FIRE SERVICES:	24
ARTS:.....	25
LIBRARY SERVICES:.....	28
FINANCE.....	30

ROADS

MAJOR PROJECTS

(Included in NDP- Funded by TII)

N24 Waterford to Cahir Scheme

The public consultation No 2 on Alternatives & Options is complete and the Design Team is working through the submissions and starting the preparatory work on site investigations/studies that will feed into the selection of the preferred corridor.

MINOR PROJECTS

(Not included in NDP-Funded by TII)

N24 Tower Road (Safety Scheme)

Three contractors submitted tenders in relation to the project by the tender deadline of 19th September and these three tenders are presently undergoing tender evaluation.

The expected timelines remain to be in a position to appoint the contractor in late Q4 2022 with works most likely to commence on the ground in early Q1 2023 with a 12/15 month construction period. An allocation of €3m was received for 2022. The overall outturn cost for the project is expected to be circa €10m.

N77 Ballyragget to Ballynaslee

An allocation of €500K was received for 2022 which will fund progression to preparation of contract documents and potentially provide for land acquisition. The Notice to Treat under CPO procedures issued to all affected landowners and occupiers in mid-September 2022. The preparation of contract documents is on-going. The overall outturn cost for the project is expected to be circa €10m.

N24 Carrick Road:

An allocation of €150K was received for 2022 which will fund progression to statutory approvals stage including 177AE Planning and Compulsory Purchase Order. Approval has been requested from TII to commence statutory approval procedures and is expected imminently. Subject to that approval, it is expected that the application will be submitted to An Bord Pleanála during October 2022. The overall outturn cost for the project is expected to be circa €10m.

OTHER

Kilkenny Ring Road Extension

The SAR (*Strategic Assessment Report*) has been submitted to the Department for consideration to proceed to design\planning.

Pavement Schemes

The N78 Webbesborough Pavement Improvement Scheme is presently under construction and is expected to be completed by early October 2022.

The N10 Danesfort Pavement Improvement Scheme including additional safety improvement works is at tender award stage with works expected to commence in the coming weeks. Works are expected to be completed before the end of 2022.

The N77 Georges Tree to Dunmore West (*Phase 1 Ardloo Junction North*) Pavement Improvement Scheme is expected to go out to tender before the end of October 2022 with works expected to commence in Q1 2023

WATER SERVICES

Kilkenny City Regional Water Supply Scheme

Construction works on the Kilkenny City Regional Water Supply Scheme (RWSS) Upgrade Contract is progressing following commencement earlier this year. Approximately 30% of the construction works are complete as of the end of August 2022. The majority of the works undertaken to date are the major civil engineering elements of the project. The cumulative hours worked on this project to the end of August is 57,649.



A brief summary of completed and ongoing works includes:

- The construction of the new 2.8km treated water rising main between Troyswood Water Treatment Plant and the Radestown Reservoirs.
- The construction of the new raw water intake works.
- The construction of the new Chemical Storage and Treated Water Dosing building.

- The construction of new flocculation and process tanks including the upgrade of the existing flocculation system and process tanks.
- The extension of the existing treatment plant building including the new UV dosing room.
- The construction of the Used Wash Water Equalisation Settling Tanks and Sludge Holding Tanks for clarification of liquid waste residuals.
- The construction of the new Clear Water Tank to facilitate contact time verification on site.

Gowran Regional Water Supply Scheme

The proposed new scheme for the Gowran, Goresbridge & Paulstown area is currently at tender stage with a closing date for tenders in November 2022.

The existing Gowran RWSS has a treated water throughput of approximately 980m³/day. All raw water for the scheme is currently sourced from Tobergoolick Pool and treated at the adjacent water treatment plant (WTP).

The design demand of the Gowran RWSS has been calculated as 1,500m³/day. Irish Water's proposal is to replace the existing Tobergoolick Pool source and treatment plant with new groundwater sources and a new WTP which can deliver this design demand.

Irish Water has acquired the Woodquarter Water Abstraction Site for the purpose of developing groundwater sources. Raw water will be pumped from this site to a new water treatment plant (WTP) and storage reservoirs. Once treated at the proposed new Gowran WTP, all treated water will be pumped to the existing Butlersgrove water tower via a new treated water rising main from Gowran WTP before being distributed to the scheme from the existing water tower.

The advanced works contract to develop the new abstraction site at Woodquarter, Gowran has commenced in early October.

Kilkenny Main Drainage - Satellite Dewatering Centre

Irish Water (IW) published National Wastewater Sludge Management Plan (NWSMP) in September 2016. Under the NWSMP a set of requirements for the design and installation of sludge treatment facilities were developed to standardise the approach across the country. Kilkenny's main wastewater treatment plant located at Purcellsinch was identified as a suitable

location for sludge treatment facilities for Kilkenny.

Following the granting of planning permission, the works were tendered with the successful tenderer appointed in Quarter 3 2022.

Construction work commenced in September at the Purcellsinch site on the Sion Road in Kilkenny City and will consist of the following main items:

- Sludge acceptance works including screening
- Sludge Import Reception Tank
- Sludge Blending Tank
- Sludge Liquor Return Sump
- Sludge Liquor Return Balancing Tank
- Odour unit
- Refurbish Picket Fence Thickener
- New Sludge Dewatering Press

Water Networks Programme

Mains Rehabilitation

- Knocktopher Village - installation completed on 1,250m of 180mm HDPE water main completed in May 2022. Permanent reinstatement completed in Q3 2022.
- Carrickmounne, Thomastown - installation ongoing on 3,250m of 125mm HDPE water main. Estimated completion October 2022.
- Slieverue Village - installation ongoing on 1,200m of 125mm HDPE water main. Estimated completion October 2022.

Water & Waste Water Services are critical services and were maintained and operated at full capacity by our staff during the year while adhering to public health requirements.

Backyard Services

Michael Street, Kilkenny City - mains rehab and backyard services project was completed in August 2022. On completion of the project, the benefits will be a reduction in leakage and improved pressure for the residents of Michael Street.

Find and Fix Programme

The Find and Fix process continued through 2022 reducing leakage within the Bennettsbridge, Castlecomer, Thomastown, Inistioge, Piltown and Kilkenny City water supply zones. Leakage savings of 1.56ML/D have been achieved in Kilkenny County for 2021, equivalent to 4,300 housing units.

First Fix Programme

Cold calling resumed in 2022 after Covid-19 restrictions lifted. Each Customer is entitled to one initial fix on the private side once consent is provided to Irish Water (IW)/Regional Contractor (RC) to undertake the repair, repair must be outside the footprint of the house. Kilkenny County Council find, quantify and report Customer Side Leaks over to IW and the RC for action.

Disinfection and PH Correction Programme

The Disinfection and PH programme continued in 2022. This upgrade of works at Water Treatment Plants and reservoirs has delivered a standardisation of disinfection across the County. The programme has improved drinking water quality, by improving the disinfection system and standards, while ensuring compliance with all regulations. Jamestown, Callan and Gorteen WTP's scheduled to be commissioned by Q4 2022.



ENVIRONMENT

Climate Action

Dearbhala Ledwidge has been appointed as the Climate Action Officer for Kilkenny County Council. The role of the Climate Action Officer is to co-ordinate, manage and develop the implementation of the local authority's response to the challenges of the climate crisis, and support Kilkenny County Council to help deliver on the national climate targets. The main priorities are:

- to facilitate the Council and stakeholders in Kilkenny to identify and deliver on climate priorities in their work areas;
- to work with a cross-department Climate Action Team to co-ordinate the preparation and implementation of the Kilkenny County Council Climate Action Plan;
- to embed a culture of climate action in the organisation.

If you have any queries please email dearbhala.ledwidge@kilkennycoco.ie

Climate Action Plan for Kilkenny

The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (*Amendment*) Bill 2020 requires local authorities to develop a five-year Climate Action Plan with mitigation and adaptation measures. The Climate Action Officer has commenced work on the Advanced Planning Phase of the Climate Action Plan. When adopted (*Q4 of 2023*), the new Climate Action Plan will replace the existing Climate Adaptation Plan.

Working in partnership with four local authorities in the South East, tenders have been invited for the preparation of a Baseline Emissions Inventory and a Climate Risk Assessment for Kilkenny using the National Framework developed by the Climate Action Regional Offices. The data from these studies will inform the priorities and actions in the new Climate Action Plan. Funding has been provided for these two studies by the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications.

Decarbonising Zone

Each Local Authority is required to identify and develop plans for a Decarbonising Zone (DZ) – an area where the local authority, community and businesses will work together to achieve low carbon energy and low greenhouse gas emissions using a range of climate mitigation, adaptation and biodiversity measures. The Decarbonising Zone will be a demonstration and test bed for what is possible for decarbonisation and climate action at a local level. Kilkenny County Council has identified an area South West of Kilkenny City Centre that covers an area of approximately 3 sq. km-as our Decarbonising Zone.



It includes both existing built up areas characterised by mature urban infrastructure, as well as a significant area earmarked for new build, the primary extent of which is now referred to as the Breaghagh Valley. The Decarbonising Zone will be integrated into the new Climate Action Plan. A detailed Baseline Emissions Inventory for the Decarbonising Zone will commence in the coming months.

Energy Saving – Simple actions to help with the Climate Crisis

Would you like to find out how to save energy at work or at home, and help address the climate crisis? The SEAI's Energy Academy is an excellent free resource with online training modules on all aspects of energy including topics such as Electricity Bill Analysis, Gas and Oil Bill Analysis, Heat Pumps, Solar Panels, Office Energy Efficiency etc. <https://www.seai.ie/energyacademy/>

Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections (RMCEI)

Kilkenny County Council as a Lead Local Authority on the NEMIS Project (National Environmental Management Information System) which has now progressed to the 2nd phase of development. This system is a national complaints system for Environment Sections in Ireland. Kilkenny County Council continues to work closely with the LGMA on this project.

The first joint inspection between the EPA and the Local Authority was held in September at the civic amenity facility (CHI Environmental) in South Kilkenny. The Waste Enforcement Regional Lead Authority (WERLA) representatives were also present. The joint audit proved to be successful and all parties were satisfied at the standard of the facility that CHI operate.

Waste

Our RMCEI statistics for waste show that we are currently just under half way in terms of our inspections. A substantial effort will be required between now and end of November to ensure that we achieve our targets. Again, we have received great assistance from our WERLA office on validations and auditing when it is required.

Air Noise & Water

The following is an update of the Air, Noise & Water Inspections to the end of September 2022.

Air Noise Water Incl. Planning (<i>Planning Referrals</i>)	Planned	Completed as at 30 th September, 2022	
Subtotal 6.4 Routine Water / Wastewater Inspections	1,586	1,257	79%
Subtotal 6.5 Non-Routine Water / Wastewater Inspections	51	36	71%
Subtotal 6.6 Routine Air / Noise Inspections	70	6.5	9%
Subtotal 6.7 Non-Routine Air / Noise Inspections	38	13	34%
Subtotal 6.9 Planning (Environmental) Inspections (Routine)	1,150	651	57%
Total >>	2,895	1,963.5	68%

It is noted that the number of Planning Referrals has reduced when compared to this time last year. Consequently, we expect that the numbers for Planning overall on the above table will be less than the Planned figure at years end.

Farm Inspections 2022 (*Under 6.4 Routine Water / Wastewater Inspections*)

There are 80 new farm inspections planned for 2022. The inspections are carried out under the Good Agricultural Practice for the Protection of Waters Regulations 2022. Typically, a higher number of farms are initially selected for inspection and pre-inspection letters are then issued. Once contact is made with the farmers some locations may prove to be unsuitable for inspection. For example the farmer may be retired, the land may be rented or there are zero stock numbers being held on the farm at present.

The locations below have been identified for Farm inspection in 2022. The basis for targeting the said locations have also been provided.

- (a) *Circa. 40 Farms in the Ennisnag Stream 010 Catchment (Ennisnag / Danesfort & Cuffesgrange Area):*
This location has been targeted based upon previous sampling, with varying water quality results having been noted. The watercourse has been classed as being At-risk on EPA Maps. The maps also identified that the catchment contains areas of high pollution potential related to both Nitrates and Phosphorous which would suggest that Agriculture is a pressure within the catchment. It is also noted that the catchment in general contains equal areas of both poorly drained and well drained soils.
- (b) *Circa. 11 Farms in the Gowran 010 Catchment (near Gowran Village)*
A number of water pollution complaints have previously been received at this location and EPA maps have identified watercourses as being at-risk within the catchment. It is also noted that

nutrient management plans have been submitted for the spreading of sewage sludge at a number of farms within the catchment. The catchment also contains a high percentage of poorly drained areas and EPA Mapping also indicates a high pollution potential related to Phosphorous due to surface run-off. The above would suggest that Agriculture is a pressure within the Gowran 010 Catchment.

(c) *Circa 40 Farms in the Monefelim 030 Catchment (Goresbridge / Paulstown & Gowran Area)*

The watercourse has been classed as being At-risk on EPA Maps. The maps also identified that the catchment contains areas of high pollution potential related predominantly to Phosphorous. In this regard it is noted that the catchment has a large extent of poorly drained land. The catchment contains small areas of free-draining land and such areas present a pollution potential related to Nitrates. In this regard Groundwater quality issues have been identified in the Paulstown area over a number of years. The above factors would suggest that Agriculture is a pressure within this catchment.

Further targeting within the above areas may also be undertaken via riverbank walks and additional water quality sampling in order to identify specific locations for inspection and having regard to available resources.

It should be noted that due to staff resource issues it is unlikely that 80 Planned Farm Inspections under the RMCEI will be achieved this year. It is anticipated that additional funding for staff resourcing in this area will be made available to Kilkenny County Council by central government in Q4 2022 and going forward into 2023, in order to meet agreed European Commission requirements and increasing inspection numbers.

Environment Complaints

All Environment complaints received are logged on the CRM (Customer Relations Management) System. The number of complaints being received and logged by Environment staff for investigation for the first nine months of 2022 is 734 compared with 996 for the same period last year (i.e. down circa 26%). The nature of these complaints ranges from littering, illegal dumping, water quality and abandoned cars. The vast majority continue to be related to littering and illegal dumping.

Anti-Dumping Initiative application for 2022

Kilkenny County Council has been awarded funding for projects under the Anti-Dumping Initiative for 2022. Such funding has allowed us to work with Cartoon Saloon on designing graphics for our road sweepers as pictured here:



Clean Up at Thomastown Bridge

As part of ADI Project No. 7 Clean Up at Thomastown Bridge, picnic tables and benches have been installed at Sweetman Castle, Thomastown.

A number of other clean ups took place to assist with the "Lets Team up to Clean Up, Together for Kilkenny" City initiative on the N76, N77 Canal Walk and Bleach Road planned for October 9th, 2022 (Project No. 6 below).



Final Progress Report Of These Projects Is As Follows:

Project Number	Project Title	Update
1	County Wide Mattress Amnesty	Complete 724 Mattress's collected
2	Variable messaging boards for waste	Complete
4	Media campaign using ADI information	Complete
5	Clean up of Bishops Mountain	Complete
6	Clean up of various Roadside verges around County	Complete
7	Clean up at Thomastown Bridge	Complete
8	Clean up at Slieverue	Complete

LITTER AWARENESS

“Lets Team Up to Clean Up, Together for Kilkenny”

“Lets Team Up to Clean Up, Together for Kilkenny” preparations are underway, as groups continue to sign up for the City initiative on the 9th October 2022. Planning is already underway for next February’s whole county environmental day of action. The Environment Section was present at the Iverk Show hosting information about the whole county event. At the end of September, 55 groups registered with all groups agreeing to litter pick their local neighbourhoods between 10.30am-12.30pm on the 9th of October 2022. Each group has received flowering bulbs which will bloom all over the city next spring, amounting to approximately 6,000 new pollinator friendly flowers.



Advertisement Poster and Volunteers at the Library Information Safety Session

Green Schools

The Green Schools Information session had a strong attendance this year, as schools begin to re-join the programme after Covid disrupted many green school committees. Kilkenny County Council is encouraging schools to re-activate the programme by providing a range of supports throughout the year. It is encouraging that three secondary schools have registered for the first time this autumn and two schools are participating in the An Taisce support programme “Neat Streets”.

All biodiversity schools which are due to renew their flag this year have been offered a programme in collaboration with the Council’s Heritage Office and is co-funded by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage under the Local Biodiversity Action Fund. Schools will have one autumnal based workshop, and two in the spring/summer of 2023, one will explore the role of pollinators and the other workshop will be the school’s choice, as schools may require practical assistance with mapping their local habitats or nurturing nature on their school grounds.

A pilot programme was run with Kilkenny City schools last year and it was determined to be a practical way to support schools working on their biodiversity theme. The Council’s Environment Awareness Officer will be supporting schools starting their first flag or completing their Global Citizenship Litter and Waste theme by visiting schools on request throughout November to complete talks on recycling, waste prevention and how these themes tie into climate actions and sustainable development goals which are now part of the primary curriculum.

Sustainable Development Goals Week 2022

Ireland’s Second National Implementation Plan for the Sustainable Development Goals 2022-2024 was due to be brought to Government in September. The draft Plan recognises local authorities as key stakeholders of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. It also emphasises the important role that local authorities can play in raising awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at local and community level and the potential local authorities have to contribute to concrete actions and change.

**SEACHTAIN
FORBARTHA
INBHUANAITHE
NA hEORPA
20-26 MEÁN FÓMHAIR**

Ireland's first annual Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Week took place this year from 20th – 26th September and formed part of the wider European Sustainable Development Week (ESDW). The Environment Section collaborated with the Library Service to highlight "Greener Cleaning" methods and all branches provided booklets and stickers which allows householders to ditch industrial cleaners by swapping to eco-friendlier home-made remedies. The initiative was logged onto www.esdw.eu/country/ireland/ with along with two other local library initiatives. A total of 110 Irish actions took place across the country for Ireland's first SDG week.

National Food Waste Campaign at Savour Kilkenny Food Festival – Save the Date!

Kilkenny County Council is working with the regional waste office to promote the www.mywaste.ie campaign on food waste. Some food waste is unavoidable and at the Savour Kilkenny Food Festival, an information stand will be there to give advice to the public on how to manage their food waste properly. Food waste prevention tips will also be available with information sourced from www.stopfoodwaste.ie. We will have hundreds of food waste caddies available to give out to the public throughout Saturday and Sunday to assist with the proper segregation of food waste.



Dog Fouling Campaign at Madra Monday on the 31st October – Save the Date!

Kilkenny County Council will have a presence at Madra Monday, which runs from 1pm-5pm on the Parade on the October Bank Holiday Monday. The Environment Section will be promoting its "Bag It, Bin It" anti-litter campaign. Come along and show your support of this important litter issue.

Burial Grounds

Community Monuments Fund 2022

Kilkenny County Council secured €196,200 from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage to help conserve and protect three medieval churches and graveyards as summarised on the table below.

Site	Grant	Proposed Works
Clomantagh Church & Graveyard	€85,000	To stabilise and conserve the 13 th century church ruin including its distinctive double bell-tower, walls, doors and windows of the church.
Dunkitt Church & Graveyard	€85,000	To stabilise and conserve the late 12 th / early 13 th C church and the adjacent graveyard boundary wall.
Grangefertage Church & Graveyard	€26,200	To prepare a Conservation Management Plan for the medieval church and graveyard which will provide a vision, policies and actions to help protect and conserve the site for future generations.

The appointed contractor commenced works on-site at **Clomantagh Church** in August 2022. Work to the bell tower and gables on both sides are substantially complete. Works to the inner and outer face of the west gable have been postponed to November until the sprayed ivy dies away (*Photos of Clomantagh Church below*).



Work also commenced on-site at **Dunkitt Church** in September 2022. The project is due to be completed by end of October 2022 (*Photos below*).



Consultants have been appointed to prepare a Conservation Management Plan and associated works at **Grangefertagh Church**.

Columbarium Wall Garden St. Kieran's Cemetery

Following a recent procurement it is anticipated that a contractor will be appointed shortly, with works scheduled to commence before the end of October 2022. The project will be completed before the end of Q1 2023.

The budget for the project is €200k and will include the following:

- Site Clearance including topsoil strip, circa. 370m² for the garden development;
- Provision of foundations and installation of pre-made Columbarium Wall units;
- Provision of paved areas from the existing access road / path;
- Provision of seating; and
- Landscaping

A change to the rules and regulations for St. Kieran's Cemetery will be required for the provision of a Columbarium Wall Garden. This will be developed in due course during the construction phase of the project.



Air Quality - Grant for Solid Fuel Enforcement Activities 2022

Following an application to the Department of the Environment Climate and Communications Kilkenny County Council Environment Section recently received grant approval for €15,000. This funding is to be used as follows:

- Provision of mobile Air Quality Monitoring in the city, excluding ongoing maintenance i.e. Mobile Monitor;
- Engagement with fuel suppliers regarding obligations under New Regulations; and
- Printing and distribution of Information Leaflets based on standardised leaflets (*TBC by the Department*) for households.

The above activities must be carried out between September and December 2022.

Animal Welfare

The Veterinary Officer continues to carry out monthly inspections at the Dog Shelter to ensure the site is operating efficiently and effectively. At the end of September 2022, there were a total of 249 dogs dealt with

by the Carlow/Kilkenny dog shelter, with 85 of these dogs rehomed by the shelter along with 92 rehomed by charities. There were 58 reclaimed by owners. There were 13 dogs remaining at the shelter at the end of September 2022.

There is an 84% increase on the number of dogs being dealt with at the shelter in comparison to the same period last year.

PARKS/SPECIAL PROJECTS

2021 Outdoor Recreational Infrastructure Scheme Funded Projects

MEASURE 1 APPLICATIONS

Location	Scheme	Status	Grant Deadline
Community Loop Walk Network	The establishment of a countywide network of community walks. This application includes 4 proposed routes ranging from 2kms to 5kms in length in the villages of Johnstown, Stoneyford and Skeoughvasteen.	Completed.	End Dec 22
Kells – King’s River Walk Enhancement	Rehabilitation of a 200m section of walking trail along the King’s River and repairs to the pedestrian bridge over the river which connects the walk to the Kells Augustine Priory.	Completed.	End Dec 22
Tory Hill Looped Walk Enhancement Works	Sections of the trail have deteriorated and are in need of significant rehabilitation particularly along the approaches to the summit. The proposal also includes for the supply and installation of interpretative signage to give an enhanced visitor experience by providing walkers with a better understanding of the surrounding landscape.	Trail upgrade works completed. Tender awarded for repairs to stone summit feature and installation of interpretative signage.	End Dec 22
The Bishops Meadows – River Nore Swimming Area	Enhancements to the traditional open water swimming area located on the Nore Valley Park in Kilkenny City. Improvements include facilities for smarter travel, enhanced amenity space and the installation of interpretative signage.	Design complete, AA Screening currently being undertaken.	End Dec 22
Woodstock Estate, Inistioge	Social media marketing campaign to promote Gardens and Trails within the estate	Services on-going via Civic Trust - grant will be fully accounted for.	End Dec 22
Outdoor Kilkenny - Promotion & Marketing	Continuation/development of the promotion and marketing campaign for ‘Outdoor Kilkenny’ a new brand and website that promotes all outdoor attractions that Kilkenny has to offer.	Services on-going via consultants and led by Kilkenny Tourism- grant will be fully accounted for.	End Dec 22
Silaire Wood – Walking Trail Extension	Extend the existing walking trail by 300m, given a total trail length of 1.5km. This will make this section of the walk available for use all year round and more accessible for all users.	Completed in September.	End Dec 22

MEASURE 2 APPLICATIONS

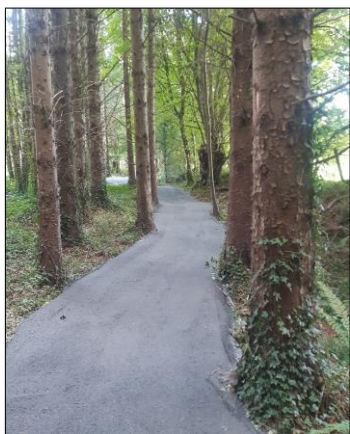
Location	Scheme	Status	Grant Deadline
Woodstock Estate - Accessible Trails , Age Friendly and Disabled Parking and Wheelchair Swing	Upgrade of woodland and garden trails in Woodstock Estate to improve accessibility for all. Designated age friendly and disabled parking provision. Refurbishment of toilet block to improve accessibility and the installation of a wheelchair accessible swing and sensory play area.	Trail upgrade and new access paths complete. Tender awarded for toilet block upgrade. Tender awarded for accessible see-saw. Carpark works to commence November.	End June 23
Rehabilitation of the Ardra Looped Walk & Arboretum Walk - Castlecomer Discovery Park	Trail rehabilitation to two established woodland walking trails located in the Castlecomer Discovery Park. The works include 2.1km of trail rehabilitation, surfacing and drainage, along with the provision of age friendly accessible amenity spaces and interpretation signage, on the natural and cultural heritage of the area.	Trail rehabilitation 80% complete. Signage and seating tender complete. Plan to officially re-open Ardra Looped Walk in November.	End June 23

MEASURE 3 APPLICATIONS

Kilkenny Countryside Park - Cycle Swim Play Stay, from the City to the Park	Kilkenny Countryside Park -. The focus of this application is linked to recreational amenities along the North Kilkenny Cycle Loop providing local amenity/tourism provision to Walk, Run, Cycle, Wild Swim, Play and Stay	Detail design and tender docs complete. Works tender advertised 23 rd Sept & tender submission deadline 25 th Oct.	End June 23
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PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Castlecomer Discovery Park Masterplan plus Planning & Design for CDP Masterplan plus Planning & Design for free activity attractions	Engage consultancy services -The two key elements within the scope of the consultancy brief will include: 1) Development of a Masterplan for the Castlecomer Discovery Complex - including lands currently unutilised; 2) Advance planning and design process of agreed activity elements identified in the Masterplan.	Tender for consultancy services advertised 9 th Sept & tender submission deadline 10 th Oct	End Dec 22
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Completed works (L to R)

Ardra Loop Walk - Castlecomer Discovery Park, Johnstown Community Walk and Silaire Wood Loop Walk

Playgrounds

Maintenance work continues around the county on our playgrounds to ensure that same are safe and presented in an attractive manner. This month saw the painting of the play equipment in Assumption Place playground (*see image below*). A Tender has also been awarded for the supply and installation of a universally accessible roundabout to add to the offering in Assumption Place and it's expected that same will be installed over the next month or so. This newest addition to the playground is possible on foot of a successful funding application to the DCEDIY under the Play and Recreation Capital Grant Scheme 2022. A contract has also been awarded for the painting of the playgrounds in Ballyragget, Coon and Castlecomer and this will be undertaken as the weather permits.



Amenity Grants

The closing date for the submission of Amenity Grant claims was the 24th September, the processing of these claims



is now well underway and will continue over the next few months. In total €140,000 was allocated to 176 groups across the county. The range of works involves grass cutting, planting flowers, erecting signage, tree and shrub planting and many other amenity type projects. An increase in the number of groups making efforts to manage their areas in a more sustainable way has been observed. For example, many groups are reducing the frequency of grass mowing and allowing flowering plants to grow while others are planting pollinator friendly planting schemes.

South East Greenway

Detailed Design: landowner agreements on the accommodation works for Lots 1 – 7 continue to progress.

It was decided to split Lot 5 into two sections of equal length comprising Lot 5a (*Ferrybank to Luffany*) and Lot 5b (*Luffany to Aylwardstown South*). Transport Infrastructure Ireland have now completed their final review of the tender documentation for Lot 5a and the works tender will be advertised early October. The review of the design to rock cutting faces for Lot 5b in accordance with TII specifications is ongoing

Construction: of Lots 1 – 3 are substantially completed. The ramp access to the Greenway from the Abbey Road, Ferrybank is complete. The Greenway Project Office are exploring the possibility of opening sections of the Greenway as they are completed.

Ferrybank Car Park Option: following detailed environmental assessments, a Part 10 planning application to An Bord Pleanála will now be progressed for the new Link Road from the Abbey Road to Belmont Road. The Ferrybank Car Park will be accessed from the Link Road and will form part of the overall project. The tender to procure consultancy services to develop the design and documentation for this scheme was advertised in September by the Council's Road Design Office.



Business Development Officer (BDO): Alan Fitzhenry has recently vacated the position of SEG Business Development Officer and has been replaced by Jill Kelleher, contact details as follows: Email: Jill.Kelleher@wexfordcoco.ie Mobile: 0873737951

Lyme's Disease

The Project Office and Parks Section recently conducted a risk assessment of our amenity spaces that are managed in a manner that could potentially increase exposure of Lyme's disease to the public. Thus, the focus of the assessment was on amenity areas that are managed as wild areas i.e. grass cut once a year or trails within woodlands. The assessments were carried out in line with HSE guidelines and on foot of same, Lyme's disease warning signage will be erected at the main entrance point or trail-head at the following locations:

- Dukesmeadows
- Bishopmeadows
- Pockocke Valley
- Melville Heights
- Glendine Woods
- Woodstock Woodland Trails

Quotations are currently being sought for the supply and installation of signage at the above locations and information details, for uploading onto the Council website, are also being finalised.

Galar Lyme agus Greamanna Sceartáin

Céard é Galar Lyme?

GALAR LYME
An baictéar *Borrelia burgdorferi* is cúis leis.

CONAS A SCAIPTEAR É
Trí gheim ó sceartán (feithid bheag cosúil le damhán alla).

FEICFIDH TÚSCARTÁIN
I gcoilte, i móintéin agus ar thalamh féarach eile go háirithe i bhféar thais.

CÉ ATÁ IMBHAOL?
Siúlóirí, daoine atá ag campáil, rothaithe sléibhe, agus daoine a oibríonn nó a shíolann in áiteanna féaracha.

CÉ CHOMH COITANTÁ IS ATÁ GALAR LYME IN ÉIRINN?
Ní fós go cruinn, ach meastar go mbíonn timpeall 200 cás ann gach bliain.

COMHARHAÍ GHALAR LYME
Grios (erythema migrans) a bhíonn le feiceáil idir 3-30 lá tar éis greim a fháil, i dtimpeall 75% de chásanna. Ar na comharthaí eile tá fubhras, fuacht, tinneas cinn, muineál ríghin, tuirse, pian sna matáin agus pian sna hailt. Is féidir leis dochar a dhéanamh don chroí agus don néarchóras i ndroch-chásanna.

Conas tú féin a chosaint ar ghreamanna sceartáin

SEACHAIN GREAMANNA SCEARTÁIN

1. Cailth briste fada, léine le muinchill fada agus bróga
2. Cuir éarthaicht feithidí ort féin
3. Tar éis lá a chaitheamh lasmuigh, seiceáil do chraiceann, do ghruaig agus aon chraiceann ina mbeadh liomóg the (go háirithe an muineál agus cloigeann leanaí)

GREAMANNA SCEARTÁIN - TREORACHA

1. Má bhaintear an gheim laistigh de chúpla uair an chloig, is beag seans go dteicfidh tú an galar
2. Bain an sceartán (le pionsúirín) trí bhreith air gar don chraiceann. Nígh an craiceann le gallúnach agus ulsce
3. Bain son chúid de bhéal an sceartáin atá fágtha ionat le ionsúirín
4. Seiceáil an áit sin ar do chraiceann go ceann cúpla seachtain ar eagla go n-annas sá/deirge
5. Má fheiceann tú grios/aon chomhartha eile, téigh chuig do dhochtóir agus leis do gur bhain sceartán greim asat

Lyme Disease and Tick Bites

What is Lyme disease?

LYME DISEASE
Is caused by a bacterium *Borrelia burgdorferi*

SPREAD BY
The bite of a tick (a tiny spider-like creature)

TICKS ARE FOUND
In woodland, moorland and other grassy areas in moist undergrowth.

WHO IS AT RISK?
Ramblers, campers, mountainbikers, and people who work and walk in forested/grassy areas.

HOW COMMON IS LYME DISEASE IN IRELAND
The true incidence is not known, recent estimates suggest around 200 confirmed cases per year.

SYMPTOMS OF LYME DISEASE
A rash (erythema migrans) appears 3-30 days after bite in about 75% of cases. Other symptoms include fever, chills, headaches, stiff neck, fatigue, muscle aches and joint pain. The heart and nervous system can become affected in severe cases.

Protecting yourself against tick bites

AVOID TICK BITES

1. Wear long trousers, long sleeved shirt and shoes
2. Use an insect repellent
3. After your day out, check skin, hair and warm skinfolds (especially the neck and scalp of children)

TICK BITES-WHAT TO DO

1. If the tick is removed within a few hours, you are very unlikely to become infected
2. Remove the tick (with tweezers) by gripping it close to the skin. Wash with soap and water
3. Remove any mouthparts with tweezers
4. Over the next few weeks check the area for swelling/redness
5. If a rash/other symptoms develop, see your GP and report the tick bite

Arna bhainistiú ar son an fhiadhúlra
Managed for Wildlife

Plean Uile-Éireann um Pailneoirí
All-Ireland Pollinator Plan

National Biodiversity Data Centre
Faisnéis ar bhithéim agus ar na bheatha beaga
Bithéim agus bheatha beaga

Comhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh
Kilkenny County Council

www.pollinators.ie

In addition to the above, permanent signage advising the public that these areas are being managed for wildlife in support of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan will also be erected.

PLANNING

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

Planning Summary	Total August	
	2021	2022
Planning Applications Received	811	645
Planning Applications Granted	670	488
Planning Applications Refused	60	73
Complaints Received	103	62
Warning Letters Issued	85	68
Enforcements Notices Issued	17	27
Cases Closed	78	63

FORWARD PLANNING

Masterplans:

Abbey Quarter

A brief for the extension of Abbey Quarter Masterplan area was prepared, tendered in May. O'Mahony Pike Consultants were appointed, an inception meeting was held and a site visit completed with the consultants. The consultants are currently meeting with stakeholders and interested parties with the aim of preparing a draft plan. It is anticipated that the process will be completed by April 2023.

St. Canices Campus

The preparation of the Masterplan for the HSE's St. Canice's Campus is ongoing. Loci consultants are assisting the Project Steering Committee in the drafting of the Masterplan. Draft concepts are currently being finalised. These will be considered with the HSE in the coming weeks. Following consultation with the HSE on these concepts, a plan will be drafted. Once a draft plan is available, it will be presented to the Council and HSE before it is placed on public display.

Loughmacask

The draft Loughmacask Masterplan was placed on public display on the 26th of August 2022. The consultation period has been extended and the public can view the plan and make comments until 5pm on Friday the 28th of October 2022.

The public can view the plan and make comments in three ways :

- directly on the consultation portal consult.kilkenny.ie
- by email to ourplan@kilkennycoco.ie or
- in writing to: The A/Senior Planner, Planning Department, Kilkenny County Council, County Hall, John Street, Kilkenny. Two public meetings were held to date, the first

being on the 6th of September 2022 at Dicksboro and the second on the 19th of September 2022 at St. Canices Neighbourhood Hall. A further two events are scheduled for 10th and the 17th October 2022 to be held in the St. Canices Neighbourhood Hall.

Urlingford

Work has commenced on the preparation of a Masterplan for Urlingford Town Centre. The appointed consultants are currently working on this Masterplan and several meetings have been held between the consultants, the Planning Department and the Community Section of the Council. A pre-draft public meeting was held on the 15th of August 2022 in Urlingford. The meeting was attended by the Town Team and interested parties. A format for the Masterplan has been developed and the document is being worked on presently. Once available the draft plan will be put on public display.

Ballyragget/Paulstown/Kilmacow

Contracts were recently issued to Turleys Planning Ireland Ltd, the appointed consultants to compile Masterplans for the settlements of Ballyragget, Paulstown and Kilmacow. An initiation meeting will be held shortly with the consultants and the Planning and Community Sections of the Council in the coming weeks to commence the masterplan process for each of these settlements.

Taking in Charge

The initiation of taking in charge process is on the Agenda for the October Council meeting:

- Whitehall, Paulstown
- The Greens, Thomastown

Works are continuing on the following estates:

- An Choill Rua, Paulstown
- Abbeygate, Ferrybank
- College Park, Callan Road
- Kiln Lane, Callan
- Rathullard - Phase 1

Active Land Management

Active Land Management

- Guidelines on the new Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT) were published at the end of June. The Council must publish a map of all lands in scope for this tax by the 1st November. This is a national exercise and all maps will be

on display until January 2023. The mapping of lands in all the zoned settlements is underway. An awareness campaign will be run with the public display of the draft RZLT map.

- There are 20 sites on the Derelict Sites Register at present. Three sites were added in September. The Council is continuing to concentrate on Kilkenny City with subsequent phases set out below:
 - **Phase 1:** City
 - **Phase 2:** Ferrybank & Towns >1,500
 - **Phase 3:** Rural Towns & Villages
 - **Phase 4:** Rural Area
- There are 29 sites on the Vacant Sites Register and the number of cancelled entries due to site activation or improvement stands at 18 sites. Four appeal decisions were received from An Bord Pleanála in September, upholding the Council's decisions.
- For 2022, the emphasis will be on the activation of sites currently on the Register, the pursuit of levies due and ongoing monitoring. The Vacant site levy will be replaced by the Residential Zoned Land Tax in 2024. Any outstanding levies will remain due to the Council.

Conservation

The Conservation Office manages all protected structures in Kilkenny County and City. These structures are recognised for the following special interest: Architectural, Historical, Archaeological, Artistic, Cultural, Scientific, Technical, Social.

Conservation Grants

All approved Built Heritage Investment Scheme and Historic Structures Fund grant projects have commenced and are progressing towards completion.

Additionally, the following conservation projects are being managed by the Conservation Officer:

- Gathering and collating relevant information from existing planning files to increase the knowledge base for 30 possible Early Modern towns housing Kilkenny City
- Appointment of a Grade 1 Conservation Architect for the compilation of necessary surveys, assessments and specifications for the reuse of a vacant historic property in Upper Bridge Street Callan.

- Appointment of a qualified archaeologist to undertake a detailed Laser Scan and interpretation of the Shee Alms House on Rose Inn Street, Kilkenny
- Conservation repairs have commenced and are progressing well on the Old Ennisnag Bridge, County Kilkenny (this project is undertaken in conjunction with the Roads Section of Kilkenny County Council)

Building Control

Valid commencement notices submitted: 271 for the first 9 months of 2022.

57 Valid Disability Access Applications have been received during the first 9 months of this year.

COMMUNITY

Kilkenny LECP (Local Economic and Community Plan) 2023-2028

Work continues to progress on the development of the LECP. Engagement with Community stakeholders and economic stakeholders took place in late September, with the public consultation events held in early October. Results from both these and the on-line survey will be reviewed by the Advisory Steering Group who will then present recommendations to a joint meeting of SPC 1 and Kilkenny LCDC scheduled for the 10th November.

Callan Town Team Plan (Review)

A review of actions for the Callan Town Team Plan took place in September 2022. Kilkenny County Council selected Callan to pilot the "Framework for Town Centre Renewal" published by the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Conservation, in 2016. The Council identified Callan as a priority location due to the severe decline in its economy and the areas of significant dereliction. The Callan Town Team was formed in January 2018 and the Callan Town Team Plan was developed with a number of actions identified by the local community. Following the review of the plan it was identified that over 70% of actions are now complete or under way, with significant funding secured under the Departments Town & Village Renewal and Rural Regeneration Development fund.

Callan Streetscape Scheme

Under the "Our Rural Future" national programme Minister Humphreys announced in August that following an application submitted

by Kilkenny County Council that Callan was one of 26 towns to benefit from €2.6 million fund to enhance streetscapes and shopfronts. From this fund Callan was awarded €100,000. Under the Streetscape Enhancement Initiative, retailers and property owners will be provided with grants that they can use to improve the facades of their buildings, carry out artwork or install features such as street furniture or canopies. The overall purpose of the Scheme is to give our towns and villages a facelift and make them more attractive places to live, work or visit. The scheme was advertised in September and Kilkenny County Council received 38 applications.

Community and Cultural Facilities Capital Scheme (CCFCS) 2022

The Community and Cultural Facilities Capital Scheme (CCFCS) 2022 is now open for applications. The objective of this scheme is to respond to the need for better community, recreational and cultural facilities for community groups through the provision of a capital grant.

Who can apply for the Community and Cultural/Inter-Cultural Facilities Capital Scheme?

The scheme is open to groups operating within the Community Sector who have a recognised legal structure, operate on a 'not for profit' basis, demonstrate a policy of inclusion and demonstrate the capacity to manage and operate the proposed facilities.

Examples of projects eligible for support could include the development of open spaces, walks and parklands, play areas, broad based recreational facilities, community arts projects and projects that conserve the built and natural heritage of the county. The closing date for receipt of valid applications is 12 noon on Wednesday 2nd November, 2022. Further details are available on the Kilkenny County Council Website.

Video Production OUT NOW - Showcasing Irelands Largest Outdoor Basketball Exhibition that was held in the New Outdoor Amenity in Thomastown

This documentary entitled "The Court" tells the story of the transformation of a Town Centre space in Thomastown from a once derelict site into an awesome outdoor amenity, hosting Ireland's Biggest Outdoor Basketball Exhibition Game, an event that also marked the celebration of the amenity's first anniversary. Kilkenny County Council co-ordinated the development of the project and the event was also supported by Kilkenny County Council, Kilkenny Recreational

Sports Partnership, the newly branded SETU (South East Technical University), Basketball Ireland, the Thomastown Community Centre, Grennan College, Kilkenny Leader Partnership, local businesses and community volunteers, all of whom have been very supportive to help make this happen. This amenity was funded primarily by the Irish Government who helped fund the amenity under the National Town & Village Renewal Scheme (Our Rural Future), Kilkenny County Council and Leader. The development has since been nominated for a National Pride of Place award.

See link to the documentary here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=at0gexF9n1o>

Rural Regeneration Information ONE STOP SHOP

Kilkenny County Council have developed a ONE STOP SHOP on our website to help communities easily navigate and get access to information relating to Rural Regeneration and Town & Village Renewal Funding. As part of this landing page we have also uploaded Town Team Plans, National Policy Documents and a number videos showcasing projects. Other documents available include the IN FOCUS on-line magazines that highlight projects completed and underway in our District Towns and Villages throughout the County. Please see link here:
<https://www.kilkennycoco.ie/eng/publications/rural-regeneration/>

LEO/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Local Enterprise Village at the Ploughing Championships

The Cookie Co-Op, a Thomastown based business representing Local Enterprise Office Kilkenny were one of 30 Local Enterprise Office clients from across the country who exhibited in the Local Enterprise Village at this year's National Ploughing Championships in Laois.



You're the Business



A new partnership involving Google, Enterprise Ireland and the Local Enterprise Offices focusing on supporting Irish businesses to upskill digitally and enhance their online capabilities was launched recently. 'You're the Business' programme aims to accelerate Irish SME growth through digitalisation in the form of a free of charge online training scheme, as well as an SME reward programme. Through the new 'You're the Business' digital platform, Irish SMEs will have access to a series of live and on-demand training sessions, geared towards supporting companies at all stages of their digitalisation journey: <https://yourethebusiness.withgoogle.com/>

TRAINING PROGRAMMES & EVENTS

Launch of Autumn Training & Events Schedule

On Thursday the 8th of September, Local Enterprise Office Kilkenny launched their Autumn Training and Events for 2022. LEO ran an Outside Broadcast with KCLR located at the Farmers Market on the Parade Kilkenny. Speakers on the KCLR Live show included local businesses owners who have benefited from LEO services and training sessions such as Brian Walsh The Cookie Co-Op, Denise O'Connell-My Skin Integrity and Ian Dowling from the Purple Cloud Story to highlight the advantages of our upcoming training and events and how they benefited them. Lynne Whelan joined in to discuss the forthcoming Innovate Kilkenny workshop taking place on the 4th October along with our Leading Light, Louise Kennedy to discuss our National Women's Enterprise Day event taking place on the 13th October.

The KCLR Live show concluded with a note from Cathaoirleach Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick to highlight the work that the Local Enterprise Office Kilkenny has done and will continue to do for small businesses in Kilkenny. The show was extremely successful resulting in many bookings for upcoming training and events.

Lunchtime Seminars with Blaise Brosnan

Local Enterprise Office Kilkenny ran two lunchtime seminars with Blaise Brosnan focusing on *Planning for Your Business in 2022 and Beyond* and *Optimising Your Bottom Line*. Clients now have the option of signing up to the Management Development Business Coaching Programme which is running over 8 weeks and includes one-

to-one mentoring with Blaise. The programme is starting in early October.

Launch of National Women's Enterprise Day

The theme of this year's National Women's Enterprise Day is "Our Future, Our Way" which will be reflected in the 16 physical events taking place across the country, supported by Enterprise Ireland and the Local Authorities. The Local Enterprise Office Kilkenny event which was launched by the Cathaoirleach Cllr Pat Fitzpatrick, will take place at Mountain View, Ballyhale, Co. Kilkenny, from 9.30am – 2.30pm on Thursday 13th October. This will be a facilitated networking and exhibition event to allow attendees meet with other female businesses and to pitch for business. Ruth Larkin, Lark Bridal Ltd will MC the event and host a masterclass entitled "Elevate Your Pitch in 30 Seconds" followed by a panel discussion with Suzie McAdam, Suzie McAdam Design and former judge on RTE's Home of the Year along with our Leading Light Louise Kennedy, Red Robin Events Ltd. The event will conclude with a networking lunch.



Summary of Direct Supports to Businesses Via Local Enterprise Office 2022

- €475,748 in direct financial assistance has been approved for 17 manufacture /export service businesses located throughout the county. This assistance is linked to the projected creation of 46 jobs over the next three years.
- €344,385 in Business Expansion Grant assistance awarded to 12 existing businesses with forecasted new job creation of 39 jobs. Business Expansion grants assist businesses trading greater than 18 months to make investment in growing their businesses and employment numbers.
- €47,778 in Agile Innovation Funding to support a business to carry out research and development on a new product for their business.

- €35,610 in Priming Grant (Start-up assistance) to 1 new business.
- €27,975 awarded in feasibility study grants to 3 businesses.
- €30,000 in Grad Start funding to 1 business.
- 6 Technical Assistance for Micro Exporter grant awarded totalling €12,320. This scheme supports businesses to explore their export market opportunities.
- 13 Businesses have commenced LEAN one to one consultancy programmes to investigate possible resource efficiencies and process improvements for their businesses.
- 4 Business have commenced the LEO Building Better Business LEAN programme.
- Building Better Business program is about building a stable, secure, and sustainable business that is agile enough to face economic challenges. This programme is centred on the belief that waste exists in all processes and while it is a practical, hands on programme but it does not focus on the obvious ways of looking at problems and opportunities. It is about finding ways to do things faster, better, and together as a team.
- 23 business have been approved a Trading Online Voucher totalling €45,059 to support the enhancement of their online trading capacity.
- 11 Green for Micro supports awarded totalling €22,426. This scheme supports businesses to becoming greener and environmentally friendly.
- 3 Digital Start Vouchers to the value of €12,528.
- 7 business applicants have been supported to make loan applications to the Micro Finance Ireland loan fund.
- 220 people participated on focused small business training, including 71 people participating on the Starting Your Business programme.
- 432 businesses have availed of specialised business specific mentoring on a variety of topics including finance, marketing, social media marketing and HR.

Kilkenny Tourism

Kilkenny Tourism hosted its 2022 AGM on 14th September at the Parade Tower in Kilkenny. The event saw partners in the Tourism and Hospitality Sector come together to both review the previous years activity and to look towards the end of this year, the off season and further into next season planning and activation measures.

Ciaran Conroy, CE of Kilkenny Civic Trust stepped down from the role of Chairperson of Kilkenny Tourism and the members welcomed Pat Crotty into the role of Chair.

Kilkenny Tourism acknowledged the support of Kilkenny County Council towards its activities and in meeting its objectives and is looking forward to maintaining and growing this partnership into the future.



Failte Ireland Supports

To help tourism businesses recruit and retain staff in a highly competitive employment market, September saw Failte Ireland launch a new first of its kind industry wide **Employer Excellence initiative**. The programme will help to drive improvements in employment practices across the industry and provide businesses with tailored action plans and a trusted symbol that denotes a rewarding and appealing workplace. Local businesses are encouraged to sign up for the scheme and to enjoy reaping the rewards of being recognised as an employer of excellence in the workforce.

Employer Excellence Programme



Festivals & Events



Kilkenny County Council continues to support our year-round calendar of events with September hosting the fourth Kilkenny Animated programme. The festival is hosted by five time Academy Award® nominated animation studio, Cartoon Saloon and award winning Lighthouse Studios. It is set against and inspired by the backdrop of Kilkenny's medieval streets and slipways at the heart of Ireland's Ancient East. Kilkenny Animated is the first festival of its kind in the world to bring together so many different aspects

of visual storytelling for the enjoyment and appreciation of a wider public audience.

Taste Kilkenny

September saw Taste continue in its support of our local food producers and local hotels and restaurants:

- The Taste Facebook page has reached 4,000 followers.
- 2 new food businesses have been added to the Tastekilkenny.ie website
- 10 Kilkenny based food businesses have reached the finals of the Blas na hEireann 2022



HOUSING

Housing Capital Delivery

Housing For All is the government’s plan to increase the supply of housing to an average of 33,000 units per year over the next decade. An increase in the delivery of affordable and social housing by local authorities and Approved Housing Bodies is central to the Housing For All plan. Kilkenny County Council has prepared a Housing Delivery Action Plan, for the period 2022-2026 to outline how social and affordable homes will be delivered to meet the targets set for Kilkenny under the Housing For All plan.

Year	Social Build Units	Affordable Housing Units
2022	170	5
2023	149	14
2024	153	21
2025	164	18
2026	167	18
Total	803	76

Traveller Accommodation Programme

There have been 14 allocations under the Traveller Accommodation Programme in 2022. Capital delivery team are progressing projects for delivery under Housing For All during the period 2023-2026. A review of the TAP is currently being carried out in accordance with Section 17 of the *Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998*.

Vacant Homes

The Vacant Homes Officer is continuing to process the CPO of vacant and underutilised sites in Kilkenny. Project proposals for refurbishment, redevelopment and reuse are also required in relation to CPO sites.

The Vacant Homes Officer is also processing application under the Croi Conaithe (Towns) Fund for the refurbishment of vacant properties. 11 expressions of interest have been received to-date with 6 completed applications received. Under this scheme a grant of up to a maximum of €30,000 will be available for the refurbishment of a vacant property for occupation of the homeowner. Where the refurbishment costs are expected to exceed the standard grant a maximum top-up amount of €20,000 is available where the property is confirmed to be derelict.

Details in relation to this scheme are available on the KCC website Croi Conaithe (Towns) Fund – Information and Application Form. Queries and completed Application Forms to be emailed to housingcapital@kilkennycoco.ie.

Homeless Services

The number of homeless presentations being dealt with by our homeless services team continues to increase, with the number of emergency beds and HAP rental properties reducing in number. This situation is leading to significant challenges in service provision for the homeless services team. Based on the number of homeless presentations year to date there is a 22% increase in the number of homeless presentations. If this trend continues the number of people presenting in need of emergency accommodation in 2022 will exceed 400. This level of demand is unprecedented. The availability of private rented accommodation to allow people to move from emergency accommodation has reduced significantly with less than 10 rental properties advertised in the county.

In addition the number of HAP supported tenancies has reduced steadily over the past two years. As a result Kilkenny has reached capacity in its emergency accommodation and has a waiting list for emergency accommodation. We are aware of a number of rough sleepers in the county and are providing support services where possible.

It should also be noted that more than 53 families are currently seeking accommodation due to the service of a notice of termination of tenancy where properties are being sold or being removed from the HAP scheme. Locating alternative accommodation for these families is extremely difficult in the current property market.

For all of the reasons above it is expected that the number of people in need of emergency accommodation will increase and it will be necessary to source additional emergency accommodation as urgently as possible.

Projected Housing Delivery 2022 - 2024

Scheme	Dept No.	Project Name	Phase	Approved Housing Body	Project Status	Completion Year	Total Units Expected
SHIP Construction Turnkey	N/10/428	8-17 Limegrove, Ferrybank	2/2		Completed	2022	10
SHIP Construction Single Stage	N10/2/490	Ayrfield, Kilkenny	2/2		Completed	2022	2
SHIP Construction Turnkey	N10/2/421	Pennefeather Court, Hebron Rd, Kilkenny	1/1		Completed	2022	8
SHIP Construction Turnkey	N10/2/419	Pennefeather Green, Hebron Rd, Kilkenny (Nos. 21 - 46)	1/2		Completed	2022	26
SHIP Construction Single Stage	N10/2/417	Shanganny, Jenkinstown	1/1		Completed	2022	2
LA Part V	N10/2/419	Pennefeather Green, Hebron Rd, Kilkenny (Nos. 53 -58)	1/1		Completed	2022	6
SHIP Construction Turnkey	N10/2/419	Pennefeather Green, Hebron Rd, Kilkenny (Nos. 1 - 25 & 47 - 52)	2/2		Completed	2022	26
CAS Construction	CA21000095	Milton Lodge, Johnswell Rd, KK (Phase 2)	1/1	SOS Kilkenny Housing CLG	Completed	2022	1
CAS Construction	CA16000263	Kingsriver, Ennismag	1/1	Kingsriver Housing Association Limited	Completed	2022	2
AHB CALF Construction	2020.9339	Orchard Close, New Orchard, Kilkenny	1/1	Cluid Housing	Completed	2022	21
CALF Part V	2020.9339	Orchard Close, New Orchard, Kilkenny	1/1	Cluid Housing	Completed	2022	2

CAS Construction	CA18000 065	Brother Thomas Place, Church Lane, kilkenny	1/1	Good Shepherd Services Ltd	Completed	2022	12
CAS Construction Turnkey	CA21000 177	Tinnypark, Callan Road, Kilkenny	1/1	SOS Kilkenny HA	Completed	2022	6
CAS Construction	CA15000 419	Grennan Villa, Thomastown	1/1	Camphill Communitie s of Ireland	Completed	2022	5
AHB CALF Turnkey	2018.7398	Nuncio Road, Kilkenny Phase 3	3/3	Respond	On-site	2022	17
CALF Part V	2018.7398	Nuncio Road, Kilkenny Ph. 3	3/3	Respond	On-site	2022	5
SHIP Construction Turnkey	N10/2/4 11	New Road, Mooncoin	1/1		On-site	2022	4

Scheme	Dept No.	Project Name	Phase	Approved Housing Body	Project Status	Completion Year	Total Units Expected
SHIP Construction Turnkey	N10/2/4 12	Chapel Street, Mooncoin	1/1		On-site	2022	2
SHIP Construction Turnkey		Berkely Drive Mount Sion Rd Ferrybank Co Kilkenny	1/1		On-site	2022	5
						2022 Total	162
					Housing For All Target		170



Pennfeather Green

The delivery pipeline to-date for the period 2022 to year end 2024 is on track to provide 11 housing units below the Housing For All target set for Kilkenny. Further projects are under discussion for approval and commencement during 2023 and 2024 and it is expected to achieve or exceed the delivery targets set.

The Housing Capital Delivery Team continue to assess queries submitted in relation to sites for sale, potential turnkey developments and AHB proposals around the county which will be added to the delivery pipeline once they enter the four stage department approval process.

The Housing Capital Delivery Team are also concluding final accounts and sign off on recently completed projects at Piltown, Castlecomer, Callan and Ballyragget.

HOMELESS SERVICES SUMMARY SEPTEMBER 2022	
Homeless Presentations	56
Homeless Assessment Outcomes	
Prevention & Interventions	32
Emergency Service	9
Not eligible / Did not avail of service	15
HAP Place Finder Service	
No of Homeless HAP tenancies on the 1 st day of month	110
No of Homeless HAP tenancies created during month	1
No of Homeless HAP tenancies in place @ last day of month	111
Number of Homeless HAP tenancy breakdowns	1
Other Social Housing Tenancies supported / created during month	2
Households in Temporary Emergency Supported Accommodation	30
Households in Temporary Emergency B&B accommodation	7
Of Households in Temporary Emergency B&B Accommodation that are families	4
Households (<i>singles/couples</i>) in Transition Emergency Accommodation (<i>Own Front Door</i>)	23
Households (<i>Families</i>) in Transition Emergency Accommodation (<i>OFD</i>)	11

SOCIAL HOUSING SUPPORT APPLICATION SUMMARY SEPTEMBER 2022	
Number awaiting Social Housing Support at September 30 th (Gross Need)	1,627
Number awaiting Social Housing Support at September 30 th (Net Need)	766
No. of Social Housing Applications received in September	71
No. of applications incomplete / awaiting further information / clarification	39
No. of applications validated and ready for assessment during the month	37
No. of applications assessed during September	22
No. of applications awaiting assessment on September 30 th	94

HOUSING ASSISTANCE PAYMENT SUMMARY UP TO SEPT 30 th 2022	
Number of active HAP tenancies to September 30 th 2022	727
New HAP tenancies set up	71
HAP tenants allocated Social Housing	56
Closed HAP Tenancies	109
HAP Rent Reviews	187
Other tenancy amendments	350
HAP Calls Received 2022 year to date	2,750
HAP Calls Received September	307

Tenancy Management

The Tenancy Management Section deals with allocations, maintenance and anti-social behaviour complaints in relation to our tenants.

- LA/RAS/Leasing allocations in September (offers made): 22
- LA/RAS/Leasing allocations to date (offers made): 168
- Tenant Liaison Officer cases in September: 44
- Tenant Liaison Officer cases year to date: 426
- Maintenance Calls for September: 664
- Maintenance Calls year to date 4,326

Housing Grants

Kilkenny County Council administers a number of grant options to assist older people and people with a disability in carrying out works which are necessary for the purposes of rendering a house more suitable for their accommodation needs. The annual budget is €1,977,000.

Grants Approved & Committed up to 30 th September 2022		
Scheme	No.	Amount
HGD - Housing Adaptation Grant	136	€1,316,172
MAG - Mobility Aid Grant	21	€78,974
HOP - Housing Aid for Older Persons	144	€814,009
Total	301	€2,209,155

Grants Paid out up to 30 th September 2022		
Scheme	No.	Amount
HGD - Housing Adaptation Grant	86	€840,158
MAG - Mobility Aid Grant	18	€69,382
HOP - Housing Aid for Older Persons	86	€475,391
Total	190	€1,384,931

Housing Loans

The Local Authority Home Loan Scheme (LAHL) replaced the Rebuilding Ireland Home Scheme from 4th January, 2022.

Housing Loan Activity 1 st January 2022 to 30 th September 2022					
Loan Type	Received	Approved	Amount approved	No. Paid	Amount Paid
Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan	0	4	€451,750	4	€668,000
Local Authority Home Loan	45	8	€1,074,400	2	€216,000
Caravan Loan	0	0	€0.00	0	€0
Total	45	12	€1,526,150	6	€884,000

FIRE SERVICES

Capital Projects

Construction work has commenced on the new Fire Station for Urlingford and good progress is being made by the Contractors.



Sourcing a new site for Kilkenny City Fire is progressing. Discussions with land owners is ongoing.

Fire Safety Certificates

- 63 applications for fire safety certificates were received to date.
- 72 were received for the same period last year.

Fire Services Acts 1981 & 2003

- Fire Prevention staff made targeted inspections of premises both to provide advice and to enforce legislation.
- 54 Licence Applications were processed under Section 24 of the Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003.
- 58 Fire safety inspections of premises have taken place so far this year.

Community Fire Safety

Fire service personnel call to houses by appointment and give fire safety advice to the occupants. A HFSV is usually carried out by two uniformed operational fire service personnel. The primary aim of these HFSVs is to reduce the numbers of fires, deaths and injuries in the home by firstly preventing fires occurring and to ensure that when fires do occur, the occupiers are given early warning, and they know how to react quickly and safely.

Fire Brigade Operations

The Brigades have attended over 497 incidents to date. These incidents included a number of road traffic collisions, public road hazards, domestic fires, automatic fire alarm activations, grass fires,

chimney fires and ambulance assists. Thomastown Fire brigade attended what could have been a serious fire in a large factory in South Kilkenny. Good work between the factory management staff and the fire services from Waterford and Thomastown successfully extinguished the fire and prevented it from spreading.



Fire Service Training



Training on compartment fire behaviour was carried out in Freshford by our own in-house instructors. Compartment Fire Behaviour Training (CFBT) integrates the topics of fire behaviour, fire streams and ventilation within a structural firefighting context.

Safe and effective structural firefighting operations requires the firefighters to have:

- (i) A solid understanding of how a fire develops within a compartment or structure.
- (ii) The ability to “read” fire behaviour indicators.

- (iii) Knowledge of how tactical operations will influence fire development and the environment inside the building.
- (iv) A high level of skill in the application of these concepts.



Kilkenney Firefighters successfully completed the Emergency Services Driving Standard Course. The main aim of this driving standard is to benefit emergency service drivers and other road users by reducing the particular risks associated with driving emergency service vehicles.

The test of the External Emergency Plan for Trans Stock in accordance Section 13 of S.I. No. 209 of 2015 took place recently.

The objectives of the exercise was:

- (i) To familiarise participants with the External Emergency Plan and the arrangements within, including location of Access Points, Meeting Points, Holding Area and Traffic Control Points.
- (ii) To establish onsite co-ordination between the Controllers of Operation, and
- (iii) To consider the impact of the EEP activation on local environs.

ARTS

Culture Night

Culture Night is a national moment celebrating all that makes up the richness and diversity of culture in Ireland and Kilkenny had a varied programme of events on offer – nine venues in the City hosted events including but not exclusive to:

- Butler Gallery's Block Party with live DJs
- Kilkenny Castle Period Rooms open to the public plus a live performance of medieval/renaissance music

- the Kilkenny Arts Office Curator in Residence Programme hosting an exhibition RESILIENCE
- free AV tours at MacDonagh Junction Shopping Centre of the Kilkenny Famine Experience
- Young Irish Film Makers screening young peoples' short films from across the country

Countywide events included:

- An evening of Jewellery and Metalwork in Thomastown Community Centre
- Clogh Writers event at Moneenroe focusing on the theme of coal mining and local culture through various artforms of poetry, song and dance
- Ionad Lachtain, Freshford presented an evening of music, heritage and art
- And TADA! Theatre hosted fun drama workshops from 6 years to adults in Thomastown
- There was theatrical entertainment and eco-art explorations at KCAT Arts Centre, Callan
- Poetry by the Barrow in Graiguenamanagh.

Knitted Together

The Arts Office Knitted Together project hosted a drop-in workshop for children and adults on the Parade Plaza for Culture Night, for those wishing to learn how to crochet flowers etc. We had some very enthusiastic children and adults working away on their flowers and bracelets and a good night was had by all. There was a Knitted Together Charity Shop Trail of all the beautiful blankets knitted and crocheted by the participants at home and at our maker meet up hubs and, if course, the fabulous stools made by the Men's Sheds in Kilkenny and Graiguenamanagh.





ECDP Resilience Programme – RESILIENCE

The third exhibition launched as part of Culture Night will remain open until 22nd of October. The exhibition “Resilience” is taking place in MacDonagh Junction Shopping Centre with online audio and tactile tour for the visually impaired which includes the stories and language of the works and the backgrounds of the artists involved. A panel discussion took place on 1st October in Butler Gallery with panellists Mary Butler, Joanna Cunningham, Mary O’Hanrahan, Breda Lynch and Siobhan McQuillan followed by a Q & A with the audience.

Autumn Writers Workshops

As part of our continued support to emerging writers our six Week Autumn Writers Workshops will commence on 6th October titled Six Steps to a Story with tutor John McKenna. Over six workshops, novelist, short-story writer, playwright and broadcaster John will work with participants on the basics needed for developing their work. The workshops will examine the essentials you need BEFORE you begin writing your story, poem, novel, memoir or play. Bookings are taking place at the moment.

Youth Residency with Ossory Youth & The Drum – Artist in Residence

Kilkenny County Council Arts Office, Ossory Youth & The Drum Youth Centre invited applications from suitably qualified visual artists to undertake a residency in these two city-based youth centres from mid-September to mid-November. Aoife Doherty was appointed and commenced the programme last week. The aims of this programme are:

- To create a safe space for young people to explore their creativity

- To diversify and increase participation in the visual arts
- To enhance existing learning that they have received both in school and outside of the school setting
- To encourage young people to focus on the process of making and to be less focussed on outcomes
- To expose young people to different materials & ways of making and creating art
- To encourage them to experiment & work innovatively
- To deepen and enrich the young people's experiences of the arts by ensuring that all activities are rich, fun, challenging and rewarding
- To ensure that the young people’s voices clearly feature in the decision-making processes throughout the residency.

Primary School Residency

Kilkenny Arts Office are collaborating with the Kilkenny Education Centre to roll out a Primary School Residency and we are currently developing the project framework. The Residencies are designed to support and enhance learning & opportunities for the children, the teachers and the artists involved.

Aims & Objectives include:

- To provide primary school children in Kilkenny with high-quality hands-on arts educational opportunities with artists from Kilkenny.
- To provide primary school teachers in Kilkenny with classroom based CPD opportunities, learning transferable skills through high-quality hands-on arts educational opportunities with artists from Kilkenny
- To provide primary school children and teachers in Kilkenny with positive process led experiences of the arts & making across art forms

- To enable artists to share their practice with children and teachers in a modern primary school environment
- To provide employment opportunities for artists
- Create ongoing opportunities for paid work for artists who have completed the TAP summer programme
- Provide opportunities for artists, to develop their skills and experience of teaching & facilitating children in formal education settings / the school environment
- Provide opportunities for artists to work collaboratively with the school & children in a supportive environment where relevant, to enrich the artists own practice.
- Provide opportunities for teaching staff to engage with practising artists in creating & delivering bespoke, creative initiatives with and for themselves & their students in line with the Primary Curriculum
- Provide opportunities for teaching staff to develop the skills and confidence to facilitate arts experiences for the children in the school settings, and to champion the arts in these settings
- To further equip teachers & artists with the skills required to encourage the development of:
 - problem-solving skills
 - lateral thinking
 - complex analysis and critical thinking skills
 - emotional self-awareness and
 - fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination

Music Development Plan

The Arts Office has been working with First Music Contact (FMC) and the local authorities of Carlow, Waterford & Wexford to deliver a programme to support career development and opportunities for musicians in our localities. FMC is the leading national music organisation for resourcing musicians and the independent music

sector in Ireland. They deliver projects at key stages of an artist's development, helping them develop real careers. This new project aims to better develop a way of offering equal access to professional development services to musicians all around Ireland.

This process is supporting us to better understand where musicians are in their careers and what their current aspirations and needs are. We are using this information to inform our own work and to advocate for and provide for musicians to progress their careers.

This will be followed by a series of online workshops and sessions that will provide practical advice and music industry panels on many of the issues raised by our survey.





28,046 Items borrowed



14,266 Visitors



1,722 Members

Heritage Week 2022



Kilkenny County Council Library Service was delighted to welcome our users back into our libraries for our first inhouse Heritage Week events since 2019.

Our talks/events in our branches also touched on the ongoing Decade of Centenaries with talks in Loughboy Library covering the Life of Tom Treacy, in the City Library on the role of Newspapers during this period as well as on a local community project, 'Common Threads' also in the City Library.

We also welcomed back our popular Genealogy Masterclasses in Loughboy, Graiguenamanagh and the Local Studies Department. In keeping with our focus on virtual events we had daily posts of early 20th century images from our photographic collections online.

Culture Night

We held a fantastic Culture night in Loughboy Library with Historian John Dorney. John gave a very informative talk and presentation on the destruction of the big houses during the Civil War to a large crowd.

Library Activities



Our libraries are back and busier than ever with groups, classes and workshops. We have Irish and French conversation classes, Adult and children's book clubs, knitting groups, Wet Felting classes, Writings groups, children's story times, one to one tech support in City Library and much more happening.

To see what is coming up, visit our What's on section on kilkennylibrary.ie.

We have a number of groups and events running across our library network throughout the month of October. Here are some that you can still join! For more information on any of these groups/events contact your local library.

Mayfair Library Update

Shot blasting of existing roof trusses completed. Fortnightly progress meetings continue with contractor.



Online Services Usage

2,309 eAudiobooks borrowed

4,970 newspapers read

1,019 eBooks borrowed

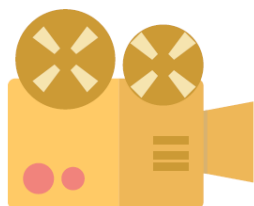
192 Online Courses sessions

823 eMagazines borrowed

369 Songs accessed

Digital Engagement

Our staff have prepared, recorded, edited and published **313** posts on our social media platforms in July and August. Our video views for the two months were **3,059**.



Digital Engagement

FINANCE

The expenditure by service division to the end of September is set out in Table 1. Total Expenditure for the period was €73m compared with the annual budget of €93.9m.

Table 1	Actual YTD September 2022	Budget Full Year 2022
	€'000's	€'000's
Housing & Building	17,103	22,101
Road Transport & Safety	21,770	26,590
Water Services	5,363	7,255
Development Management	7,148	10,502
Environmental Services	8,632	12,178
Recreation & Amenity	5,360	7,175
Agriculture, Education, Health, Welfare	415	680
Miscellaneous Services	7,247	7,390
OVERALL TOTAL	73,038	93,871

Finance Update

Inflation is having a significant impact on the cost of delivering all services and on the delivery of the Capital Programme.

Energy costs for all Council buildings is expected to be €600k over budget for the year as a result of recent price increases. The impact of inflation on other goods and services is estimated to cost an additional €550k in 2022 which will have to be absorbed within existing budgets. The public sector pay agreement that was recently negotiated will result in additional payroll costs of €936k for 2022. Government did provide compensation for 80% of the additional cost arising from the pay restoration in recent years. The sector will be seeking similar compensation for the additional cost arising from the latest agreement.

The issue of recoupment of salary and overheads from the Department for the RAS scheme has still not been resolved. This will result in a shortfall for the year of €650k.

Car parking income is 10% below budget level for the year. The budget income figure was based on pre covid-19 income levels. A 10% reduction will result in the income for the year being €230k lower than budget.

The completion of social housing voids is costing significantly more than the grant available. The estimated shortfall per unit is €13k with a total projected shortfall for the year of €1.1m.

Commercial rates income is estimated to be €700k higher than budgeted which will partially offset the shortfalls outlined. The projected net deficit could be in the region of €2m in the absence of further support from Government to deal with the impact of spiralling inflation.

The bank overdraft facility was not utilised in the nine month period to the end of September, 2022.

Rates Revaluation

Further to Revaluation in 2017, 197 customers with a total rate demand value of €4.5m appealed their new valuation to the Valuation Tribunal. To date 191 appeals have been completed. The following is a breakdown of the appeal outcomes to date:

Decrease in Revaluation on Appeal	150 cases
Appeal Withdrawn	33 cases
Increase in Revaluation on Appeal	1 case
No change to Revaluation on Appeal	7 cases
Appeals outstanding	6 cases

The total annual Income lost to date stands at €841k.

Targeted Rates Waiver Quarter 1, 2022

On 12th October, 2021 a targeted commercial rates waiver to support certain sectors was agreed by Government, for the final quarter of 2021. An extension of this waiver for a further period of three months, for the first quarter of 2022, was agreed by Government in December, 2021.

The extended waiver took the form of a credit in lieu of rates. The terms and conditions relating to eligibility and administration of the extended waiver remained the same as those outlined in Circular Fin 20/2021 “Targeted Commercial Rates Waiver Final Quarter 2021.

The broad categories of businesses the credit in lieu of rates applied to were as follows:

- Hospitality, including restaurants and cafes;
- Leisure;
- Miscellaneous entertainment;
- Certain tourism related categories; and
- Airports.

The value of the waiver is the equivalent value of 25% of the annual rate bill for 2022 for eligible categories of business. The waiver (*January to March*) was applied to eligible rate accounts by the Rates Section as a credit in lieu of rates in the value of €748,378 in March and eligible businesses were notified by letter.

Budget 2023

Work on the 2023 budget is ongoing. Further meetings with the Elected Members are planned for the coming weeks. The proposed date for the statutory budget meeting is Friday November 25th 2022. The national budget has provided for support for the Local Government sector to assist with the rising energy costs. We await detail on the exact level of Government support that will be forthcoming. The current estimate of the budget shortfall is €2.85m. The detailed budget will be discussed with the Elected Members in the coming weeks.