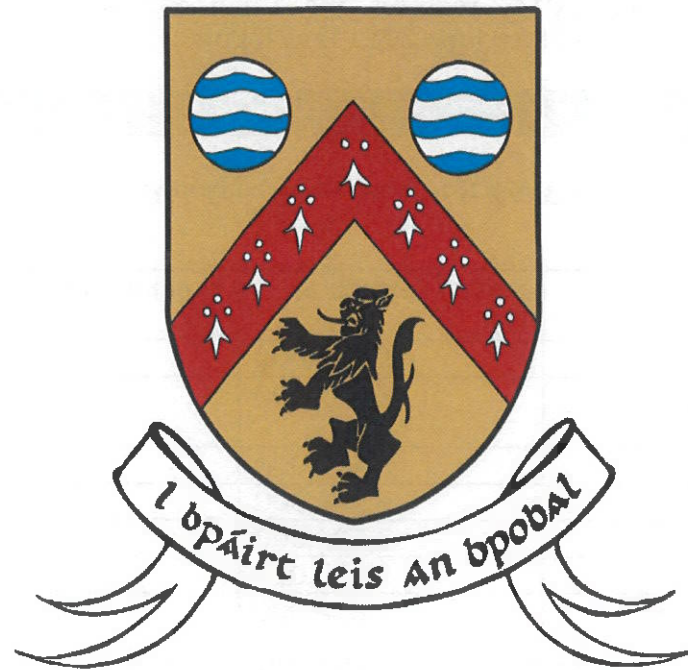


LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE LAOISE



MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT
JUNE 2021
TUARASCÁIL BHAINISTÍOCHTA
MEITHEAMH 2021

To: Each Member of Laois County Council
 Do: Gach Ball Comhairle Chontae Laoise

Section 136(2) of the Local Government Act, 2011 as inserted by Section 51 of the Local Government Reform Act, 2014, requires the Chief Executive to prepare monthly management report. The report for June 2021 is as follows:-

Finance, & Allocations Notified

Expenditure and income to the 31/05/2021 is summarised below:

Service Division	Budget Allocation (€)	Expenditure to 31/05/2021 (€)
Housing and Building	15,772,000	5,182,922
Road Transportation and Safety	21,225,000	4,773,891
Water Services	3,421,000	1,268,359
Development Management	6,970,000	3,312,170
Environmental Services	7,500,000	2,348,219
Recreation and Amenity	3,926,000	1,186,082
Agriculture, Education, Health and Welfare	822,000	164,771
Miscellaneous Services	9,533,000	4,997,681
Central Management Charge	9,714,000	3,168,177
Total	78,883,000	26,402,272

Service Division	Budget Allocation (€)	Income to 31/05/2021 (€)
Housing and Building	17,594,000	6,412,740
Road Transportation and Safety	16,749,000	3,007,230
Water Services	4,534,000	1,707,450
Development Management	4,423,000	3,881,326
Environmental Services	1,501,000	557,010
Recreation and Amenity	601,000	358,184
Agriculture, Education, Health and Welfare	330,000	89,844
Miscellaneous Services	8,126,000	2,108,818
Superannuation	700,000	262,577
Local property Tax	9,063,079	4,531,539
Rates	14,495,092	5,135,771
Capital Transfer	766,829	
Total	78,883,000	28,052,489

Allocations Notified

Local Live Performance Programming Scheme	€143,000
Faoin Speir	€67,500
Litter Infrastructure Support Grant Scheme	€50,000
Climate Change Adaptation Measures DTTS	€463,500

Housing & Regeneration

Construction Programme

Scheme	Units	Progress
Gleann naGlaise, Ballyroan	10	On-Site. Site back open since 12th of April after 4 months closed due to COVID 19 Level 5 restrictions.
25-30 Moore St., Rathdowney	6	On-Site. Site back open since 12th of April after 4 months closed due to COVID 19 Level 5 restrictions.
Pattison Estate, Mountmellick	10	On-Site. Site back open since 12th of April after 4 months closed due to COVID 19 Level 5 restrictions.
Sean Doire, Durrow	22	On-Site. Site back open since 12th of April after 4 months closed due to COVID 19 Level 5 restrictions.
Coolroe, Ballybrittas (Rural)	1	On-Site. Site back open since 12th of April after 4 months closed due to COVID 19 Level 5 restrictions.
Harbour Court, Mountmellick	6	Stage 3 Approved May 20 th 2021. Tenders advertised and due back in July.
Mooreville, Rathdowney	7	Stage 3 documents to be submitted to Department this month.
St. Kierans Park, Errill	14	Stage 4 submitted to the Department on 13 th June. Site start expected next quarter.
Clonrooske, Knockmay	13	Stage 2 submission to be submitted for the Department in July.
Iona, Abbeyleix Road, Portlaoise	9	Draft layout being prepared for discussions with local councillors.
Oak Park Halting Site	4	Site start expected next quarter.
Carraig Glas, Stradbally	26	Stage 2 granted. Part VIII advertised in June 2021.

Urban Regeneration Programme

Scheme	Units	Progress
Former C.B.S. Site	67	Part VIII granted. CALF funding application to be submitted in Q3 2021.
Hepburn/Knockmay	54	Cluid Housing Association are progressing this development of 54 units towards a Part 8 submission

O'Moore Place Regeneration	To be determined	The landowner is working with an Approved Housing Body and concept drawings on the proposed development are being prepared.
Convent Site, Portlaoise	51	Stage 2 approved in February 2021. Site investigations complete. Enabling works contract has been tendered with work expected to commence this summer.
County Hotel, Portlaoise	10	Meeting arranged with local councillors to discuss design proposal.
Vacant Homes Office		12 vacant properties have been acquired by CPO and 8 properties are currently going through the CPO process.

Turnkey Projects

Scheme	Units	Progress
Expressions of interest		The Council has invited expressions of interest from the public in respect of the supply of newly completed homes as turnkey projects.
Main St., Borris-in Ossory	11	Contractors on site. 6 units complete with Phase 2 (5 units) due in Q4 2021.
Church Avenue, Stradbally	31	Expected delivery Q4 2022.

Approved Housing Bodies Delivery

Scheme	Units	AHB	Progress
Bellingham, Portlaoise	30	Cluid	Contractor is on site. 24 of the 30 units have been delivered. Phase 5 (6 units) expected delivery end of Q2 2021.
Wilton Lawns, Portarlinton	2	Respond	Contractor is on-site with delivery expected at the end of Q4 2021.
Holdbrook, Portlaoise	20	Cluid	Contractor is on site. Phase 1 (10 units) to be delivered in July 2021. Phase 2 (10 units) to be delivered in June 2022.
Clonrooske Abbey, Portlaoise	32	Cluid	Contractor is on site. Phase 1 (14 units) expected delivery in July 2021.

			Phase 2 (6 units) expected delivery in Q4 2021 Phase 3 (12 units) expected delivery in Q2 2022
Spa Street, Droughill, Portarlinton	26	Oaklee	Contractor is on site. Expected delivery in February 2022
The Meadows, Mountrath Road, Portlaoise	48	Cluid	Delivery is expected in Q1 2023
Ballymorris Court, Portarlinton	46	Cluid	Delivery will be in 3 phases with dates to be confirmed
Harpers Lane, Portlaoise	44	Respond	Contractor has commenced on site with expected delivery in Q4 2022.

In addition to the units outlined in the above tables the Housing Department are also in discussion with various AHB's regarding the delivery of further Social Housing units throughout the county. The total number of units currently under discussion in the county, in addition to the units mentioned above, is 521 broken down by MD area as follows –

- Portlaoise MD – 310
- Borris in Ossory/Mountmellick MD – 123
- Portarlinton/Graiguecullen MD – 88

Refugee Resettlement Programme

There is currently 1 family remaining to be housed under our Refugee Resettlement Programme. It is anticipated that this tenancing will now be able to take place in July and this will see us completing our overall Refugee Resettlement Programme to house 22 families.

Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan

Since 1st February 2018, 109 Rebuilding Ireland Home Loans have been approved. 94 applications have been declined. Some of the reasons for negative outcomes include:

- Don't have the deposit required
- Repayment on the mortgage would exceed 30/35% of their income
- Already sufficiently committed (i.e. already are at capacity with other loans)
- Credit rating issues

HAP

There are currently 1096 active HAP tenancies, 303 of which have transferred from rent supplement.

Private House Grants

To the 14th June, 2021 the following grants for privately owned houses were approved:-

- 63 Housing Aid for Older People Grant Applications in the sum of €266,118
- 45 Mobility Aids Grants have been paid in the sum of €190,120
- 30 Housing Adaptation Grants have been paid in the sum of €232,390

Private Rented Inspections

Due to Covid-19 restrictions in place inspections are being carried out virtually.

Housing Maintenance

Month	Work Orders Raised	Work Orders Closed	Work Orders Open
January 21	234	229	5
February 21	216	216	0
March 21	252	236	16
April 21	368	293	75
May 21	329	183	146
TOTAL (YTD)	1,399	1,157	242

Housing Re-Lets

Month	LA Keys Surrendered	Properties Acquired	Works Completed
January 21	8	0	7
February 21	2	1	6
March 21	3	2	9
April 21	10	1	4
May 21	6	2	5
TOTAL (YTD)	29	6	31

NOTE: There are currently 30 vacant units from our existing stock and a further 14 units that the Council acquired recently. Works are either ongoing on these properties or specifications are being prepared for works to be carried out.

The Council has been notified of an allocation towards our costs in refurbishing 50 units over the course of 2021.

Midlands Housing Retrofit Programme

Budget approval has been granted 160 homes as part of a pilot initiative under the above programme.

The scope of eligible works includes:

- a) Attic Insulation
- b) Flat Roof Insulation
- c) External Wall Insulation / Dry Lining / Pumped Cavities
- d) Windows & Doors
- e) Heat Pumps
- f) LED Lighting

Houses must achieve a minimum BER rating of "B2" (or Cost Optimal Equivalent).

Phase 1 (62 units – Mountain View, Quigley Park & Radgarc Alain) to commence this Summer. Phase 2 and Phase 3 (98 units – Hillview, Derrymore & Kirwan Park) currently advertised and tenders due back at end of June.

Energy Efficiency/Retrofitting Programme

Budget approval has been granted for the retrofitting of 31 homes in O'Moore Place, Portlaoise.

Planned Maintenance works are also part of the planned programme.

Tenders are due to be advertised in early Q3 2021.

Homeless Presentations

Time Period	Homeless Presentations	Emergency Homeless
April 17 th -May 12 th 2021	19	1
Year to Date	64	28

Individuals Accessing	Emergency Accommodation as of 12 th May, 2021	Transition Accommodation as of 12 th May 2021
Adults	11	6
Children	3	6

Housing Allocations Year to 14th June 2021.

Method of Housing Delivery	Numbers allocated
1 st allocation including new builds LCC	6
2 nd and subsequent allocations LCC including refurbished stock	41
Nominations to Approved Housing Bodies	51
Total Allocations	98

Social Housing List at 18th May 2021

Social Housing Applicants	864
Applicants in receipt of HAP	966
Total	1830

Planning, Development and Heritage

FORWARD PLANNING PROGRESS REPORT LAOIS DRAFT COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2021-2027

The CE report on the Submission to the Draft Plan was circulated to the Councillors on the 22nd June 2021.

Where, following the consideration of the draft development plan and the Chief Executive 's report , it appears to the members of the authority that the draft should be accepted or amended, subject to *subsection (7)*, they may, by resolution, accept or amend the draft and make the development plan accordingly.

The amendments only will be put on public display for a period of four (4) weeks and made available for the Public to view and make further submissions on if required.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT REPORT

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMPARATIVE FIGURES FROM 2020 TO 2021

Year	Valid applications from 01/01/2021 – 08/06/2021	Valid applications from 01/01/2020 – 08/06/2020
	332	203

2021 PERFORMANCE	
Number of valid applications received:	332
Number of decisions made	309
Number of applications granted:	273 (Decisions to Grant)
Number of applications refused:	11 (Decisions to Refuse) 3.20% refusal rate
Invalid applications returned to applicant:	98 (2021 Invalid Applications) 28.5%
Pre planning	
No of requests to date	228
No of meetings held to date Up to and including the 8 th June 2021	217
Wait time	2 weeks

ENFORCEMENT UPDATE

Service Review	May	Jan - May 2021	May	Jan - May 2020
Total number of new cases subject to complaints that were investigated	9	59	7	28
Number of Warning Letters served	26	116	0	131
Number of Enforcement Notices served	5	46	0	23
No Of cases referred for legal proceedings	0	3	0	1
Number of cases in Court(incl adjournments)	6	23	1	19
Number of cases Resolved in Court	0	1	0	1
Number of Files Closed	10	59	2	54
Number of cases on system	172	172	174	174
Enforcement Costs recouped	€ 1,100.00	€5,736.24	€ -	€1,491.24
Number of Valid Retention Applications Received relating to Enforcement Action	6	19	1	17
Fees received through Valid Retention Applications Received relating to Enforcement Action	€2,173.50	€5,405.50	€179.00	€6,847.28
Legal fees paid	€0.00	€14,140.04	€0.00	€1,613.76

Heritage Officer Update Report

FUNDING UPDATE

Just Transition Fund Project Conservation and Pollination

Final letter of offer has been received from the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications. The total grant is €748,000. The total project cost is €880,000. The project will see restoration of medieval churches at three sites in Laois (one in each MD) and three in Offaly, and also management to enhance graveyards for pollinators, and training of local communities.

National Biodiversity Action Plan

Application for funding under the National Biodiversity Action Plan for 2021 and 2022 has been successful as follows:

- Wetlands Survey to the amount of **€37,273 (€14,323 in 2021 and €22,950 in 2022)**
- Biodiversity Awareness campaign to the amount of **€17,297 (€13,047 in 2021 and €4,250 in 2022)**

Community Monuments Fund

Applications for funding for conservation of masonry, conservation plans and interpretation at six monument sites in Laois were successful as follows:

Site Code	Site	Grant
CMF21-1-LA001	Killabban Church	€31,053.00
CMF21-1-LA002	Old St. Peter's Church and Graveyard, Portlaoise	€59,525.00
CMF21-1-LA003	Dysert Enos Church	€66,407.00
CMF21-2-LA001	St Bridget's Church & Graveyard, Kilbreedy, Rathdowney	€8,610.00
CMF21-2-LA002	The Heath	€22,173.85
CMF21-3-LA001	Killabban Church	€11,594.00
TOTAL		€199,362.85

The Heritage Officer will work with local communities at each site to ensure works are carried out to best practice in the time available.

BROADBAND OFFICERS REPORT

1. National Broadband Ireland (NBI)

A special meeting was held on Monday 10th May in which NBI presented to the Council giving an update on the Programme of works and rollout in the county. Section 254 Licences have been applied for in the Eastern Municipal Area to provide pole network for rollout.

2. WIFI for EU.

A tender in relation to the provision of WIFI infrastructure (equipment, installation and maintenance and support) in the following locations was advertised on ETenders with the closing date 23rd April 2021.

Tender evaluation is ongoing.

3. Broadband Connection Points (BCP's)

Broadband Connection Points are available to the public as outdoor facilities currently due to public health guidelines at

- Vicarstown Community Centre
- Oisín House Rossmore Killeslin
- Emo "Old School" Community Centre
- Donaghmore Workhouse and Agriculture Museum.

There is a 5th BCP applied for:

- Shanganamore Community Centre Barrowhouse – PENDING.

4. IoT – Internet of Things.

Investigating options of IoT in relation to Environmental Monitoring.

Local Enterprise & Economic Development

Shop-front Improvement & Accessibility Grant Scheme

- 11 applications received to date in 2021. 5 applications approved to the value of €2,775.00

Business Incentive Schemes

- 1 Application has been approved to date this year under the Business Incentive scheme totalling €5,380.67 over the 3 years

Stradbally Farmers Market Project

The Business Support Unit has commenced a project with the Farmers Market in Stradbally. The project consists of several proposals designed to promote and develop the new outdoor market in Stradbally. There had been an indoor country market previously operating there however due to COVID this market was no longer able to operate. The new market now operates out of the Market Square in Stradbally and there are currently 7 traders involved. The project involves the following:

- -purchase of gazebos for the market
- -purchase of street furniture to facilitate outdoor dining
- -soft landscaping
- -signage and marketing material

Portlaoise Town Team

The BSU is in the final stages of completing a marketing project with the traders association Downtown Portlaoise. The project which is nearing completion consisted of the following elements:

- The production of a marketing video for the Town (completed)
- Purchase of additional season lighting (completed)
- Purchase of gazebos for festivals & events (completed)

- Brand Enhancement package -design of new signage & social media graphics(**completed**)
- Extension of Sound System to new areas of the Town- Bull Lane/Lyster Lane/Lower Main Street (**completed**)
- Provision of artistic installation on Market Square – **to be installed shortly**
- Erection of lamp post banners on JFL Avenue – **currently being installed**

Portarlington Façade Enhancement Scheme

This scheme will entitle premises in French Church Street/Market Square and Main Street Portarlington apply for a grant to paint the façade of their premises. There are 108 properties included in this designated area. The amount of the grant is €750 or 75% of the cost of the works whichever is the lesser. The scheme will be launched later this month.

Tourism Destination Town Project- Portlaoise

Façade Enhancement Scheme which is a grant of €750 or 75% is being offered to all premises in the areas of Lyster Square, Lyster Lane and Bull Lane. There are 40 properties in this designated area.

Commencing work on the tender for the provision of information panels in the Town.
Provision of Lamp post banners around the Old Fort Quarter

THE SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE SCHEME COVID (SBASC)

The expanded Small Business Assistance Scheme for COVID is now open for applications.

Phase 2 of this scheme has been expanded to include those that had previously been ineligible. Businesses working from non-rateable premises are now eligible to apply and if they meet the other eligibility criteria, they will receive a grant of €4,000. Businesses with a turnover between €20,000 and €49,999 are also now eligible to apply and if they meet the other eligibility criteria, they will receive a grant of €1,000.

SBASC gives grants to businesses who are not eligible for the Government's Covid Restrictions Support Scheme (CRSS), the Fáilte Ireland Business Continuity grant or other direct sectoral grant schemes. This scheme aims to help businesses with their fixed costs, for example, rent, utility bills and security.

Details of the scheme can be found on the Council's website at: <https://laois.ie/small-business-assistance-scheme-for-covid-sbasc-q2>

The closing date for this scheme is 21st July 2021.

RATES WAIVERS: Quarter 3 of 2021

A further extension of the 2021 Rates Waiver Scheme has been approved by the Government and details of that extension expected shortly. Once received, details will be available on our website at www.laois.ie

Just Transition Fund – Promoting Laois & the Midlands

Laois County Council acting as lead authority on behalf of the four midland Counties has been notified by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications in respect of the following:-

- (i) **MRTT80** – ‘Promoting the Midlands – Developing a Destination Digital Platform’. €1,175,000 of which €998,750 is grant support and the balancing €176,250 to be provided by the four midland Counties
- (ii) **MRTT81** – ‘Midlands Network of Co-working facilities – Business Development Manager’ €235,280 of which €199,998 is grant support and the balancing €35,282 to be provided by the four midland Counties.

Roads, Transportation & Smarter Travel

Roadworks Scheme 2021

The Annual Road Works Scheme 2021 was for the Members’ consideration at April 2021 Monthly Meeting. Work is well underway delivering the Road works Scheme across all three Municipal Districts.

Outdoor Seating and Accessories Grant Scheme 2021

The Failte Ireland/Laois County Council Outdoor Seating and Accessories for Tourism & Hospitality Business Scheme will provide a level of financial assistance to tourism and hospitality businesses across the county to purchase and/or upgrade equipment to provide additional outdoor seating and, therefore, increase their outdoor dining capacity for the summer of 2021.

Grant aid available is 75% of the cost of the equipment to a max of €4,000. The scheme is open between 12th April and 30th September 2021. The scheme is being led by the Roads Section, with the assistance of Planning Section and the Business Support Unit.

Smarter Travel

A contract is signed for the construction (part) of the Triogue Bluway linking the Portlaoise Southern Circular with the People’s Park. Works will commence in the coming weeks.

Climate Adaptation and Resilience Works 2021

Funding has been announced under the DTTaS Climate Adaptation and Resilience Works fund for 2021. Interventions are summarised below and are targeted towards interventions that will mitigate the impact of climate related weather events and increase the robustness of the existing road network when faced with such events.

Road Number	Scheme Title	LA Allocation
L-1652	Kilbricken Bridge, Mountrath	€35,000
R435	Pound Street, Rathdowney	€75,000
L-81104-0	Woodgrove Portlaoise	€82,500
L-77951-0	Aughnacross Spink	€30,000
L-16564-0	Ballytarsna Abbeyleix	€15,000
L-1034	Cardtown, Camross Embankment	€30,000
L-78001-0	Crutt Spink	€7,000
L-3838	Coolnabacka, Timahoe, Co. Laois	€18,000
L-6695-21	Clonboyne Portlaoise (road and land adjacent to railway line)	€70,000
L-2694-0	Clonadacasey Portlaoise (Fitzpatricks)	€10,000
R945	Mountmellick Road Portlaoise	€46,000
L-7819	Ballymaddock Cross Roads, Stradbally, Co. Laois	€15,000
L-26965-0	Togher Portlaoise	€30,000
Total		€463,500

1. **Kyletelesha Tipping Head and Civic Amenity Site, Portlaoise:**
Normal services continue at the Kyletelesha Landfill & Civic Amenity Site.
 - (a) **Transfer Station & Civic Amenity Site:**
The management and operation of the facility is progressing satisfactorily.
Landfill Aftercare Monitoring:
All waste licence monitoring is on-going and up to date.
 - (b) **C&D Waste Material:**
It is estimated that it in approximately 16 months' time Cell 15 will have reached its permitted Waste Licence intake. A waste license review will be needed for the continued acceptance of C&D material after this date. A cost benefit analysis is currently being carried to see if it will be financially worthwhile for a waste license review. This review is on-going.

2. **Portarlington Civic Amenity Site:**
This facility is operated and managed under contract with AES (Ireland) Ltd.

3. **Historic Unregulated Waste Disposal Sites:**
The tender evaluation is completed and the award of the contract is imminent. The Department Grant must be drawn down by early December 2021.

The historic unregulated sites being assessed are Aghanure, Killabban and the Rathdowney Road, Durrow

4. **Bring Banks:**
There are 42 Bring Bank sites provided in the county. A total of 940.04 tonnes of recyclable material is recorded to 21st June 2021.

5. **Waste Enforcement & Litter:**

Environmental Complaint Register

Complaint Type	Litter	Abandoned Cars	Waste Enforcement incl. C&D	Management & Infrastructure (Bring Banks)	Air	Water	Noise	Vet	Total
Jan	10	2	53	1	2	2	1	2	73
Feb	8	3	71	1	1	4	2	2	92
March	38	5	93	2	3	8	2	1	152
April	43	1	78	2	4	5	1	5	139
May	23	4	57	0	6	10	6	2	108
June up to 21/06/21	6	1	26	0	6	2	3	0	44
Total	116	15	344	6	15	30	13	11	608

- 2021 – 608 complaints logged for investigation to 21st June 2021.
- 2021 – 58 fixed penalty notices issued to date, for breaches of Litter Pollution Act, 1997
- Notices – One Section 9 (Litter Pollution Act) and four Section 55 Notices under the Waste Management Act have issued to date in 2021 regarding unauthorised litter or waste activities. Waste Enforcement Officers are working to resolve issues where possible, but all cases will be pursued through Courts as necessary.

6. Illegal Dumping:

Waste Enforcement continue to tackle illegal Dumping in various problematic areas within the County in accordance with the current legislation. Enforcement efforts are limited by virtue of the current prohibition on the use of CCTV.



**Continuous Dumping at Bruders Bridge, Togher
(Clonminam Industrial Park side) Portlaoise**

7. Anti-Dumping Initiatives 2021

Table 1 below lists the approved Anti-Dumping Initiatives for 2021.

Project No.	Project Title	Total Amount Approved (€)
1	Extended National Spring Clean and Autumn Blitz	25,000.00
2	UAV/Drone technology and audio devices	15,760.00
3	Bulky Waste Amnesty	20,000.00
4	Clean up of Bog Areas- Cloninagh/Errill/ Clonreher Bogs	29,500.00
Total		€90,260.00

Table 2 – Approved 2021 ADI Projects

A programme of works for the above initiatives is currently being prepared by the Waste Enforcement Section.

8. Clean-Ups by Volunteers, Tidy Towns groups

Environment Section continue to support Tidy Towns, local Residents and Clean up groups with the provision of Litter pickers, gloves, hi-viz vests and refuse sacks. Environment staff liaise with these groups to arrange pick up and disposal of the collected rubbish.

Tonnes taken to Kyletalesha Landfill by Litter Wardens 2021	
2021	Monthly Total 2021
January	6.5
February	22.49
March	13.48
April	11.8
May	13.62
June 21st	4.46

9. Anti-Dog Fouling Campaign

With the official launch in Pairc on Phobail on May 5th 2021 and the continued social media and radio campaigns. Environment Section has seen a noticeable increase in Dog Fouling Awareness with 4 complaints received from the public identifying the offending dog and dog owner compared to 0 in the same timeframe last year.



50 New Metal Anti dog fouling signs are being dispatched to area offices and erected in public parks and dog walking areas.

Tips for Summer BBQs without Food Waste

10. Environmental Protection:

i) Protect the Water Quality Status in all Water Bodies:

On site investigations of complaints in relation to water pollution are being carried out by Environmental staff in compliance with Health and Safety and Covid-19 control measures.

- Investigation ongoing into surface water discharges to the lakes at Kilminchy.
- Investigation into elevated Phosphorus Levels in River Erkina downstream of Rathdowney WasteWater Treatment Plant
- Investigation into unauthorised wastewater discharges in the Triogue River at Kyletalesha, Portlaoise
- On-going assessment of planning applications with regards to water quality protection
- Regulation of Discharge Licensed Companies.
- Several Advisory Notices under the Water Pollution Acts 2007 & 2012 have been served relating to domestic wastewater treatment systems.

i) Air & Noise:

- In conjunction with the EPA, an NO₂ (Nitrogen Dioxide) monitoring survey will be carried out in the towns of Abbeyleix, Durrow and Cullahill to quantify prevailing air quality. The six-month survey will begin in early July.

Emergency Planning, Fire Services & Flood Relief

- In 2021 (to 16th June), Laois County Fire & Rescue Service attended 216 emergency incidents consisting of 114 fires, 70 special service incidents & 32 false alarms.

Turnout by Station*:

Portlaoise – 76	Portarlinton - 54	Stradbally – 27	Mountmellick – 46
Abbeyleix - 17	Mountrath – 31	Durrow – 18	Rathdowney – 16

*Note – figures are higher as many incidents are 2 station turnouts as per the PDA.

Fire Services Capital Programme

- Planning & design is continuing for the Mountmellick Fire Station upgrade, a €150,000 project, which consists of a fire service drill tower & new concrete yard to the rear of the fire station.
- In recent months Elected Members were advised of an allocation of €140,000 for the acquisition of a new Water Tanker to support Fire Services operations in County Laois. The tanker chassis has been delivered to HPMP Fire, who are now in the process of building the body. Delivery is expected in mid-2021

Risk Based Management - Nearest Available Resource Project

- In accordance with the recently issued Circular Fire 01/2021, Laois County Council has established the Senior Project Group which has endorsed this project. The Working Technical Group has substantially completed its work. New townland data sets have been completed & uploaded it to the STORM mobilising system in ERCC & is being tested operationally in advance of full sign off of the project.

COVID-19 Report update

- Laois County Fire & Rescue Service continues to provide a full emergency service. In addition Covid – 19 Contingency Planning is still a key focus for the Fire & Emergency Service.
- In parallel the Civil Defence have provided key assistances, servicing requirements of the HSE, the Community Forum Call Centre and other local agencies. Civil Defence taskings have been scaled back due to volunteers returning to work & operations being scaled back nationally.

CIVIL DEFENCE

- Laois Civil Defence continue to provide assistance to the HSE vaccination rollout programme.

Public Water and Wastewater Capital

The following capital works have been approved by Irish Water:

- **STVGP-Ballyroan WwTP** –IW Asset Strategy has recently confirmed that they will now proceed to continuing with their expansion of the treatment plant as planned and tendered in 2019.
- **Durrow** –bringing of new borewell into service/supply in Fermoy is ongoing. David Ball on site at present completing testing - flow, level, quality - of the new production well. Provision of a storage/blend tank and booster pump set also being discussed with IW.
- **Coolbanagher** – Irish Water intend to commission PW9 only. Currently with Asset Delivery – NOD currently reviewing with Irish Water again regarding bringing into service. Proposal for Emergency intervention for the Portlaoise Public Water Supply compiled by LCC Water Services Department sent to Irish Water. Interim emergency works have been approved by Irish Water and orders have been placed for the supply of materials and the engagement of contractors. It is anticipated that these temporary works will be in place in Q3, 2021.
- **Disinfection/PH control program:** The Strand WTP – boil water notice has been issued for this WTP, upgrade works as part of the Laois/Offaly disinfection programme intended to be completed by the end of June 2021, with a 30-day process-proving period by the end of July 2021. Design also progressing at present for Derryguile, Five-Wells, Kilminchy, Kyle, Lough, Derrymoyle, Knocks and Ballyroan WTPs.
- **Castletown WwTP** – Inlet Works Storm and Sludge Program, new storm tank and sludge holding tank intended to be installed on site by the end of 2021. Hazop meeting for this took place on the 19th of May. Replacement of fixed decanter with moving decanter – the installation of this should commence within the next two weeks.
- **Containerised unit program** – site survey works ongoing at Aughafeerish WTP. UV containerised unit expected to be installed on site over the coming months.
- **Leakage Reduction Programme** –Mains Rehabilitation works now complete in Portlaoise (Colliers Lane), Stradbally (Church Avenue) and Abbeyleix (Tonduff). Mains Rehabilitation works have commenced in O'Daly Terrace, Rathdowney. Find & Fix leak detection being carried out in Portarlinton and Portlaoise.
- **Staff Welfare Units** – provision of a welfare unit is being progressed in Ballinakill.
- **Single Public Utility (SPU)**- transfer details to be agreed by July 2021. WRC discussions, transfer of staff and IR issues associated with this is currently the main focus. Employers have accepted a WRC proposal recognising that unions will not recommend or support any outcome that will involve the coerced transfer of local authority staff to the water services utility. Further meetings are scheduled over the coming weeks.
- **Irish Water Regional Structure** -The proposed implementation date is the 1st of July 2021 for the 4 Region structure.

Multi Annual Rural Water Programme 2019-2021

Measure 2 -Public Health Compliance

- **The Heath GWS:** Work is in progress and is 30% complete.
- **Strategic Options Report:** This report has been completed and was submitted to the Department on the 1st June 2021.

Measure 3 - Enhancement and Water Conservation

- **Heath GWS:** Work is in progress and is 40% complete.

Measure 5 – Transition of Existing Group Water Schemes to Irish Water

- Work ongoing to complete the takeover of the following schemes: The Rock, Kilbride, Ullard & Dereen:

Measure 6 - Community Water and Wastewater Connections

- **Wastewater Community Connection at Goodwin Estate:** The lowest tenderer has been requested to submit H&S questionnaire for PSDP/PSCS role, insurance, tax clearance etc. Irish Water has confirmed an application for a Sewer connection should be submitted. This is being progressed.

Railway Mews, Portarlinton: Contractor has finished surveying and a report is awaited. Following this, the scope of work will be prepared and costed and a budget for the work sought. When the budget is confirmed a tender for the work can issue. Preventative jetting will continue in the interim.

Dangerous Structures – Local Government (Sanitary Services) Act, 1964

- **Centrepoint Shopping Centre, Portlaoise-**The owners of the property were identified and a Notice in accordance with Dangerous Structures legislation was issued. Subsequently a secure fence has been erected around the site. Plans for the demolition of this building are being progressed. This will continue to be monitored.

Corporate, Community, Climate Action, Arts, Culture, Libraries & Tourism

CORPORATE

Work is progressing on the preparations for the draft 2022/2023 Register of Electors.

COMMUNITY

Covid-19 Community Response

Covid-19 Helpline

To date (30.03.2020 – 14.06.2021) the helpline has received 795 calls.

Calls Received 2020: 732

Calls Received 2021: 63

Breakdown of Calls Received in 2021:

Calls Jan 2021: 24

Calls Feb 2021: 13

Calls March 2021: 13

Calls April 2021: 10

Calls May 2021: 0

Calls June 2021: 3

Calls received in 2021 remain low, accounting for 63 of the 795 calls received to date. This ongoing reduction in calls received can be attributed to the easing of restrictions, the roll out of the COVID Vaccination programme and local groups taking a proactive lead in their communities assisting the most vulnerable.

Public Participation Network

Info Session on Leader Funding

Laois PPN hosted a fully attended online Info Session on Leader Funding to PPN Member Groups workshop to PPN Members on Thursday 10th June. Presented by Jenny Collier, Laois Partnership, the session and was followed by a Q&A session on Leader Funding for participants.

Social Media Training

Laois PPN provided a free and fully attended online 2 hour Social Media Training workshop to PPN Members. This online workshop took place on Wednesday 16th of June and was presented by Karen Twomey of the Communications Hub.

Community Safety Talk

Laois PPN in partnership with Offaly PPN were pleased to deliver a Community Safety talk with Garda Sergeant Graham Kavanagh, Crime Prevention Officer via Zoom on Thursday June 17th 2021. This talk covered :

Current Scams

- Phone
- Email
- Text

Ø What they do

Ø What they seek

Ø What we can do to prevent them

Comhairle na nÓg

- A Comhairle na nOg steering committee meeting was held on 2nd of June 2021.
- Under the 'Keep Well' campaign, young people took part over recent weeks in art, cooking and fitness programs organized by Youth Work Ireland Laois.
- 5 members of Comhairle took part in a focus group on Tuesday 1st of June with Joe Thompson of LOETB regarding the Greenfield Project
- One member, Jack Bowe, is now on the LOETB Board representing Comhairle na Nog.
- At a meeting held on 15th June the issues of lack of seating and bins provided around the county was raised and these concerns conveyed to the relevant Council Departments.

Community Resilience Fund /Keep Well Campaign

Laois County Council, are currently compiling the end of programme report for the CRF Fund for the budget allocation of €67,225. On social media the Keep Well campaign has made 358 posts, having 257,711 interactions from the public.

Community Enhancement Programme 2021

98 applications were received by closing date with estimated grants sought in the amount of €297,703.56. Staff are now checking eligibility. The CEP sub committee will convene on Friday 25th June to appraise applications which in turn will go forward to the July LCDC meeting for members approval.

TVRS 2021

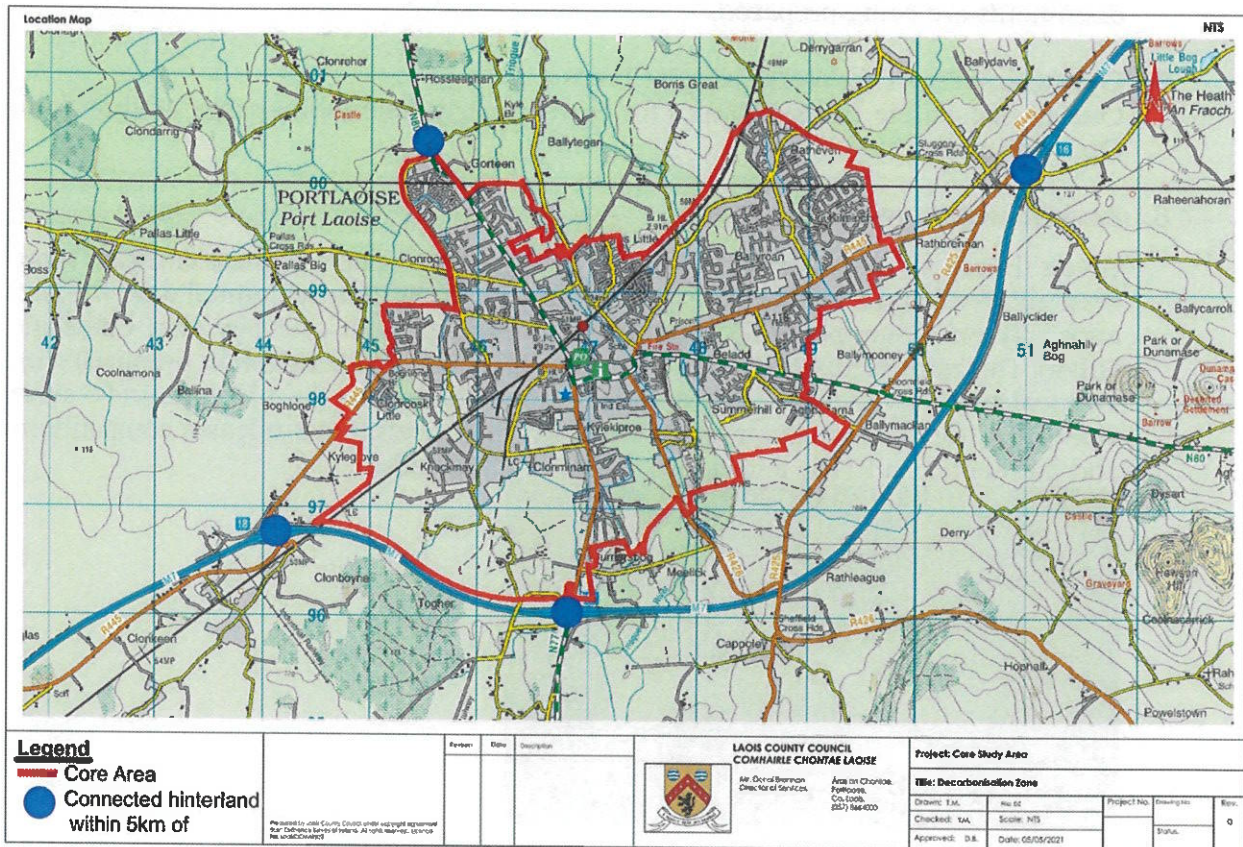
13 Expression of Interest forms were received for the Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2021. Project leads have been appointed to complete application forms for submission to the DRCD by 16th July 2021.

1. Decarbonisation Zone

Portlaoise has been formally submitted to the Department as the first decarbonising zone (DZ) for Laois. Portlaoise DZ will focus on the town of Portlaoise; However it is important that the DZ also includes the hinterland of the town

Therefore, the full definition of the DZ is

- the town of Portlaoise as set out on the recent Carbon Footprint Report
- a connected hinterland covering
 - that area with 5km of the M7 motorway to the south of the town (Junctions 16 to 18) and
 - that area within 5km of the Fairgreen roundabout on the N80 to the north of the town.



2. Low Carbon Implementation Group

LCC has a Climate Action Team which meet monthly to progress the 42 objectives/actions contained in the Council's Climate Adaptation Plan. The Climate Section also works closely with the Climate Action Regional Offices (CARO) in terms of contributing to national initiatives and also climate related training for staff.

The Climate Section will be working with the CARO offices to implement local actions in Laois under the new local authority sectoral strategy "*Delivering Effective Climate Action*"

<https://www.lgma.ie/en/news/new-local-authority-strategy-to-deliver-effective-climate-action.html>

The Low Carbon Town Implementation Group meet on a quarterly basis with the most recent meeting on Teams on 26th of May 2021. A further interim report on achievements of the group is being prepared for the Department later this summer.

3. Creation of Woodlands on Public Lands

An examination of potential sites that might be suitable for the "*Woodlands on Public Lands*" scheme has been underway. This Scheme aims to encourage Public Bodies to establish new native woodlands on suitable bare land. This scheme is 100% funded by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

<https://www.gov.ie/en/service/4b0e6-creation-of-woodland-on-public-lands-scheme/>

The Climate Section is working with the Environmental section with a view to developing a proposal under this scheme for part of the Kyletalesha site. Other sites are also being examined.

4. BEC

LCC were recently awarded 30% funding amounting to €83,628.22 in Better Energy Communities funding from SEAI for PV Solar Panels for Portarlington, new BMS for Portlaoise Leisure Centre and Energy Improvements to County Hall. Tender documents are being prepared.

5. Optimising Power @ Work Energy Clinics

One to one online Energy Clinics for Staff in early June with energy advisor from Optimising Power @ Work.

6. Environmental Awareness Events

Given that food waste is responsible for 8% to 10% of global climate emission more than air travel and maritime transport combined, Laois County Council were the lead authority on a Summer BBQ Food Waste Campaign with celebrity chef Catherine Fulvio. This multimedia campaign featured a Cookery Demonstration premiering on 14 local authority Facebook pages and StopFoodWaste.ie on the 17th June and 3 short videos tips for social media along with radio interviews, press releases competitions and banner ad on RTE.ie and native article in RTE Guide.



7. Refurbishment of Meeting Rooms and corridors Block 1

Tender documents have been published for the refurbishment Meeting Rooms and corridors Block 1 in County Hall. Tenders have been received for the insulation of the Council Chamber and this work will proceed over the summer.

Monitoring & Reporting to SEAI completed for 2020. Laois scored 46.8% better than baseline, which was 5.7% better than 2019, and which exceeded the 2020 target of 33% by 13.8%. Laois County Council were awarded 30% funding amounting to €83,628.22 in BEC funding from SEAI for PV Solar Panels for Portarlington Leisure Centre, Building Management System (BMS) for Portlaoise Leisure Centre and Energy Improvements to County Hall including BMS upgrade, retrofitting of internal and external lights, pump upgrades and heating controls.

Climate Action Tab on website

IT have added in a Climate Action Tab on <https://laois.ie/about-the-council/climate-action/> which is being populated with information on the Carbon Footprint Study and Abbeyleix Testbed. It is planned to expand this to have a council section and a community section to capture all the climate related projects ongoing in the County both internally and externally. It is also hoped to have a section specifically for retrofitting of houses.

Sustainable Energy Communities

Portlaoise 2040 SEC EMP application will be submitted next week for approval by SEAI. Portarlington SEC have completed their community charter and are in the process of completing their application for EMP with the SEAI mentor. Arrangements are underway to

build up interest into other towns and villages. LCC will be liaising with Kilminchey Residents Association to investigate the possibility if an SEC can be formed there.

Environmental Awareness

A Sustainable School Travel Study for Portlaoise has commenced and An Taisce have sent out survey forms to pupils in primary and post primary schools. There was a participation rate of 50% by the schools in this initial study.

CEMETERIES

Portlaoise – Columbarium Wall – An Expression of interest (Market Soundings) has been published on ETenders. The latest date for receipt of responses from suppliers is 25/06/20

ARTS & CULTURE

Laois Youth Theatre

Outdoor workshops have taken place at Laois Music Centre and during June and will recommence indoors (if allowed) at the Dunamaise Arts Centre in September. Arrangements for delivery of the service for next academic year are underway.

LLPPS

Laois County Council secured funding of €143,000 under the Local Live Performance Programming Scheme. The funding will be used to support employment and wellbeing in the commercial arts and culture sectors through the provision of live performances by engaging the services of professional artists, musicians, crew and other staff members involved in live performances for the period up to 30 September 2021.

Creative Ireland Laois

Cruinniú na nÓg (a national day of creativity for children and young people under the age of 18) took place in Laois on Sat 12th June. The Library Service's online creative writing and arts & crafts had over 250 participants; over 500 downloads of the Heritage's Office's 'In Your Nature' special children's edition of the podcast on birds and biodiversity; over 250 children and 7 schools participated in 'Beat Goes On' body percussion specialists and supported by MG Laois musicians in-person. Live, in-person creative workshops with 21 participants took place at MYT Creative Space. Total participation figures approx 1100. Two new grants schemes: 'Equipment' and 'Made in Laois' are open for submissions week of June 21, as well as a new Film Bursary.

SPORT & LEISURE UPDATE

- **ORIS 2021** – Measure 1 - 7 EOI's received. Closing Date for submission of applications- Wednesday, 30th June 2021
- **Leisure Centres:**-Portarlinton LC have signed the licence agreement to manage both Leisure centres. Estimated date for occupancy of Portlaoise LC is July 1st 2021. Programme of repairs in place to be completed by mid-July at Portlaoise LC

Chief Executive's Orders

- A schedule of Chief Executive Orders signed during the month of June 2021 will be circulated.


John Mulholland
Chief Executive

June 24th 2021

...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...