

Local Authorities are improving their performance in key service areas

Local Authorities are improving their performance in a number of key service areas according to the Local Authority Performance Indicator Report 2018 which has just been published.

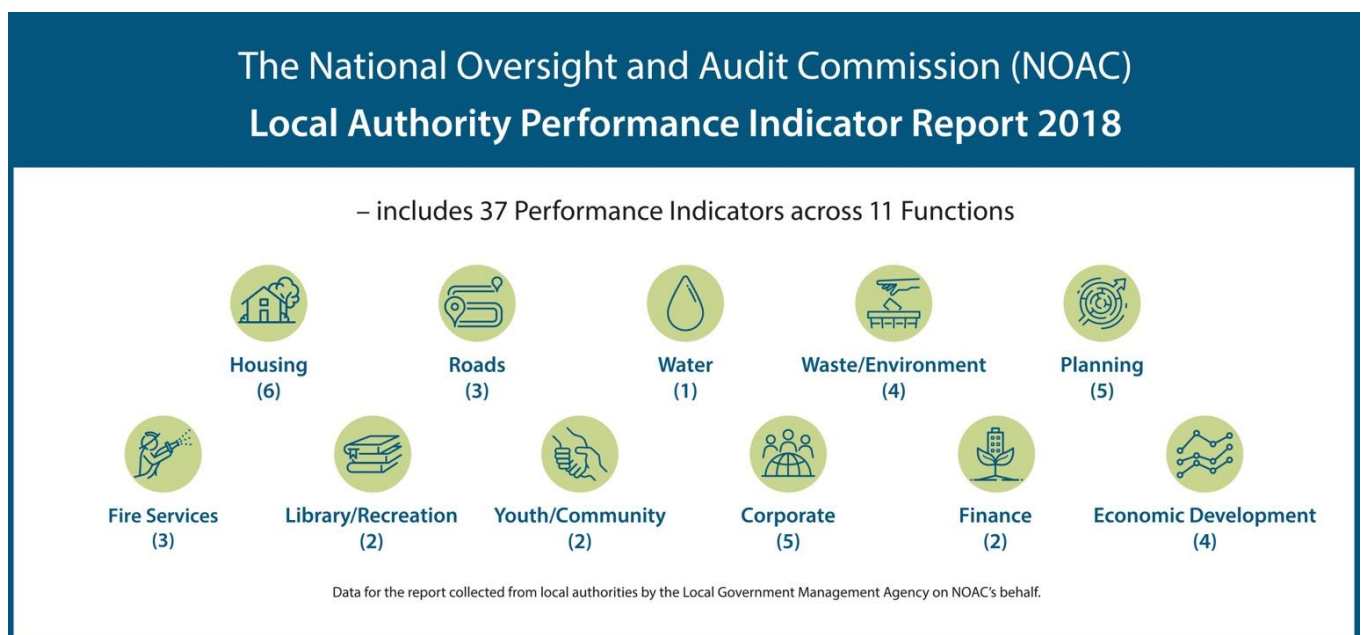
Overall local authorities are performing well when it comes to road maintenance, housing stock, commercial rates collection, job creation, corporate issues such as technology and social media engagement, employment levels and increased use of public libraries.

The comprehensive 100 page report from the National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC) is packed with statistics on the performance of 31 local authorities under 37 different performance indicators.

NOAC's chairman Michael McCarthy said that with this the fifth annual report on performance indicators individual local authorities have a very useful mechanism to view, track and improve on their own performance relative to that of other similar local authorities.

"Ultimately this will help improve their service to the public." he said.

Data for the report was collected by the Local Government Management Agency on NOAC's behalf.



Some of the key findings in the report include:

- **Road improvements.** ◦ 4,996 km of regional and local roads were strengthened or resealed in 2018 at a cost of €283million.
- **Housing Stock.** ◦ Local authorities had 134,880 dwellings in their ownership, an increase on the 2017 figures. There were 3,733 (2.8%) vacant and the average time for rehousing was 27.7 weeks.
- **Finance.** The total spend by local authorities in 2018 was €4.66bn. The median level of commercial rates collection was 86% up from 82.5% in 2017.

- **Creating Jobs.** The total number of jobs created nationally in 2018 with the assistance of the Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) was 3,656 which is an increase of 12.44% on the number of jobs created with LEO assistance in 2017.
- **Technology & Social media.** The total page views of local authority websites in 2018 amounted to 77.21m, In 2017 the figure was 69.68m. Total social media users at end 2018 were 2.38m. This is an increase of 35.78% on the 2017 figure. Local authorities showed an increase in the percentage of motor tax transactions dealt with online, ranging from 54.68% to 85.63%.
- **Staff total** Whole-time equivalent staff employed by the local authority sector at the end of 2018 was 28,307.84. This represents an increase of 3.39% or 927.62 staff since 2017. The national average medically certified paid sick leave rate for the sector in 2018 was the same as 2017 at 3.78%. The national average self-certified paid sick leave rate was 0.35%.
- **Waste / Environment.** Twenty-six local authorities recorded no area as grossly polluted. However for the remaining five that recorded areas in this category the proportional area of the county was low ranging from 1 to 4%.
- **Library Service**
Libraries are a vital part of community infrastructure enabling community engagement and social integration. In 2018 there were 14million items, mainly books, borrowed and visits per head of the population went from 3.56% in 2017 to 3.58% in 2018.
Overall, the average number of library visits per head of population was 3.58, a slight increase on the 2017 average of 3.56.
- **Youth / Community**
The number of organisations on the County Registers for the Public Participation Network (PPN) at the end of 2018 was 15,043 representing an increase on 2017 of 12.86%.
- **Green Flag status.** At the end of 2018, 2,037 schools held a Green Flag, representing 51.4% of all schools nationally. Local authorities provide environmental education and support to schools which participate in this programme.

Michael McCarthy thanked the NOAC board for its continued work in making this report possible and said that he looks forward to liaising with stakeholders for the year ahead to continue this valuable work.

The full Local Authority Performance Indicator Report 2018 is available at:
<http://noac.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/NOAC-Performance-Indicator-Report-2018-1.pdf>

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For further information contact: Jim Walsh 087 2541700
 or NOAC via DHPLG Press Office: Tel: (01) 888 2638 (direct), (01) 888 2000;
 E-Mail: Press@housing.gov.ie Web site: www.noac.ie

NOTES FOR EDITORS

NOAC (the National Oversight and Audit Commission) was established under the Local Government Reform Act 2014 to provide independent scrutiny of local government performance in fulfilling national, regional and local mandates. One of its functions is to scrutinise performance of local government bodies against relevant indicators and this is the fifth annual performance indicator report published by NOAC in relation to that function.

Since its establishment, NOAC has examined a range of areas of local authority activity, resulting in the publication of 22 reports to date. For further information on NOAC, including all reports published to date, see www.noac.ie