



comhairle chontae na mí
meath county council

Chief Executive's Report for Elected Members

Monthly Management Report
September 2020

This Monthly Management Report is prepared in accordance with Section 136(2) of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended by the Local Government Reform Act, 2014, and provided to the Elected Members for consideration and information.

Introduction by the Chief Executive

To Members,

This Monthly Management Report gives an overview of the on-going governance of Meath County Council at what is a very challenging time for the Council, the county and the country more generally. This report is being provided for your information and consideration.

The Council continues to provide an almost full range of services in compliance with the national Roadmap for Reopening Society and Businesses, the Return to Work Protocol and the latest set of public health restrictions announced by the Government in August.

Our Return to Work Plan and the various working arrangements in place for staff across the organisation is now well established and working well but it does bring some challenges in terms of new ways of working and ensuring continuity of service delivery.

We continue to monitor and review how we are performing and our need to respond to the public health advice as it evolves.

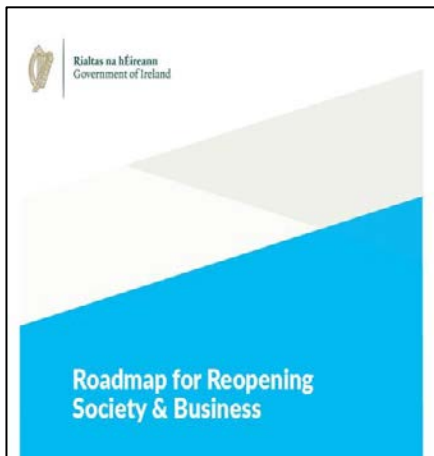
The September Council meeting is traditionally the start of a very busy period for the Council with a focus on the future financing of the Council and the budget for the following year. This year will be particularly challenging, given the significant impact of the Covid-19 crisis and the emergency responses put in place. As well as adopting a budget for 2021, the Council will be reviewing the Capital Programme and also working on the next phase of the review of the County Development Plan 2021-2027.

I look forward to working with the elected members in the coming months on progressing these very significant priorities for the Council and for County Meath.

Thank You,

Jackie Maguire
Chief Executive

Covid-19 Response



Roadmap for Reopening Society and Business

The Council is operating and providing public services in line with the provisions of the Government's **Roadmap for Reopening Society and Business**. The opening of the Public Counters in June and an expansion in service levels across the full range of Council services, means that there is a near as normal level of service to the public. However, the public health restrictions in place have meant that some services and Council activities remain impacted. The Council's website will continue to provide an up-date on service levels.

Meath County Council Return to Work Plan: The Council's Return to Work Plan to protect customers, employees and to minimise the spread of Covid-19 in the workplace continues to be implemented, with all modifications of the workplace and the public areas of Council facilities now in place. The roster for office based staff is in place and working well, with the majority of staff now enabled to work remotely, where required.

The Council will continue to assess the public guidance as it is issued and all measures in place will be reviewed in light of changing guidance where appropriate.

National Guidance – Local/Regional Responses: The Council's response to the Covid-19 crisis is informed by the public health advice issued by NPHET and the guidance published by the Government. The Council remains in close contact with the other relevant statutory bodies at regional level and is working with these agencies to prepare a coherent inter-agency response in the event of a local or regional lockdown, with more stringent public health measures. This work will continue and the situation will be monitored as both the Health Service Executive and the Health and Safety Authority ramp-up their testing regimes in the coming weeks.

Corporate Services

Meetings Administration

Covid Restrictions: Following the recent Government announcement, on August 18, relating to mass gatherings and events, the Local Government Management Agency has confirmed that the new restrictions do not encompass Council meetings, due to their statutory and business function. However, local authorities are required to continue to ensure appropriate COVID-19 protective and public health measures are in place for Council meetings, such as physical distancing between participants.

In this regard, it is intended that all Council meetings will continue to be held in the Solstice Theatre for the foreseeable future and that all Municipal District meetings, except the Ashbourne MD meetings, will be held in the Council Chamber.

Chains of Office: Following requests from a number of Municipal Districts and consideration by the Protocol Committee, the Council has acquired new chains of office for the Cathaoirligh of the Municipal Districts (except Navan MD). The new chains of office incorporate the existing medallion, with a double set of linked chains replacing the cloth chain.



Irish Water Clinics: Irish Water has confirmed that it will recommence Councillor Clinics from September. The clinics will be held online for approximately one hour and the target is to have hold at least one for each local authority by the end of 2020.

Customer Services

On Monday, June 29, public counters at Buvinda House and the Civic Offices were re-opened for Customer Service queries, Motor Tax (am only), payments at the Cash Desk and dealing with queries at the Planning Counter. A new queuing system and a number of other measures have been put in place to enable physical distancing and customers may have to wait in order to access buildings, where capacity has been limited. The new arrangements are working well.

Community Call Support Line: The Customer Services team led on the establishment of the Community Call Support Line, which has been operational since March 30. Members of the Customer Service team continue to handle the calls to the support line. In line with a national decision, the operating hours have been revised to 9am-5pm, Monday to Sunday. Since the Support Line was established, it has dealt with over 1,200 cases (calls and emails).

Following the most recent guidance to people over 70 and the medically vulnerable, the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government has asked that local authorities renew efforts to inform their communities that the Community Call service is available to those who need it. The Council has followed-up on this call through additional information on it media platforms.

Communications

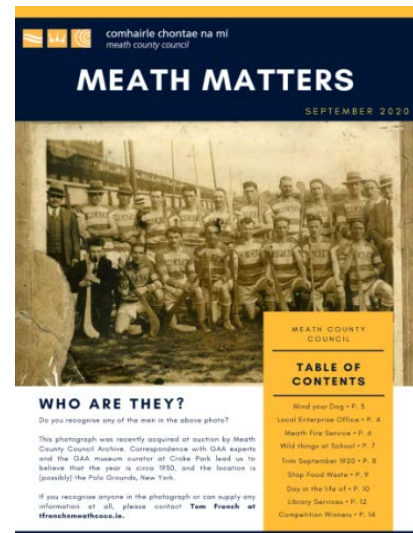
Forthcoming Events: The following events will take place during September:

- (a) Launch of the 'Trim, September 1920' Publication – this will be a virtual event with the launch being streamed live on You Tube. The date for this event is Thursday, September 24th
- (b) Official Opening of the new Civic Defence Headquarters – the date for this event is Friday, September 25th.

Both events will be organised in strict compliance with the public health guidance and thus participation will be limited.

Meath Matters Publication: In September, the Council will publish the second edition of 'Meath Matters', a newsletter to inform citizens of Meath about a mix of news, information and stories on Council services and activities. The second edition follows-on from the launch of the newsletter in June, which was delivered to all households and nursing homes in the county as part of the national 'InThisTogether' campaign. This publication, which is produced internally by the Communications Team, has been well received.

The second edition will be different in that it will be an e-publication, available on the Council's website, promoted on social media and circulated to subscribers. There will be a very limited print run, in order to make copies available through the libraries and to some other locations. Elected members are encouraged to promote the publication through their own information channels and platforms.



Register of Electors – Register to Vote: The annual campaign to update the voting register is currently underway, with a deadline of November 25th. The public health restrictions mean that fieldworkers are unable to call to houses to check and up-date the Register this year, but an enhanced communications campaign will be launched in September to encourage people to Register to Vote. Again, elected members are requested to promote this initiative when it is fully launched.

Irish Language Scheme – Public Consultation

The Council adopted its first Irish Language Scheme in June 2006 and now proposes to develop a second scheme for the period 2020-2023, in accordance with Section 11 of the Official Languages Act 2003. The primary objective of the Act is to ensure better availability and a higher standard of services through Irish.

It is anticipated that the new Scheme will build on and consolidate the progress made by the Council over the past number of years in delivering services through Irish. The Council is inviting submissions in relation to the preparation of the new scheme from interested parties. Details are available on the Council's consultation portal: <https://consult.meath.ie/en/browse> Submissions will be accepted up to 5pm on Wednesday, September 30, 2020.

Housing Services

Capital Programme

Summary Profile of Approved Direct Construction Projects

PROJECT NAME	NO. OF UNITS	APPROVED BUDGET €	ESTIMATED START DATE	ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE
DESIGN PHASE				
Farganstown	84	24,630,457	Q2 2021	Q4 2022
Kells Archdeaconary	20	3,826,010	Q1 2021	Q1 2022
Blackhill Cresent, Donacarney	2	418,369	Q1 2021	Q3 2021
Nangle Court, Navan	6	1,096,600	Q1 2021	Q1 2022
Church View, Rathmoylon	9	1,719,002	Q1 2021	Q1 2022
Carrick Street Regeneration, Kells	36	10,225,755	-	-
Totals	157	41,916,193		
PART 8 PLANNING PROCESS				
Ashbourne	76	19,730,587	Q1 2021	Q2 2022
Lagore, Dunshaughlin	34	7,996,502	Q3 2021	Q4 2022
Totals	110	27,727, 089		
TENDER FOR CONSTRUCTION				
Donore	21	4,165,565	Q4 2020	Q4 2021
Totals	21	4,165,565		
CONSTRUCTION STAGE				
Bettystown (Phase 2)	15	3,426,308	Q1 2019	Q4 2020
Kells	40	8,555,683	Q1 2019	Q4 2020
Carlanstown	13	2,719,237	Q2 2019	Q4 2020
Lagore, Dunshaughlin	26	5,813,948	Q1 2020	Q2 2021
Totals	94	20,515,176		
PROJECTS COMPLETED				
Bettystown (Phase 1)	16	3,437,478	Complete	N/A
Athboy (Phase 1)	32	8,850,320	Complete	N/A
Proudstown Road Navan	4	819,737	Complete	N/A
Summerhill	19	3,854,980	Complete	N/A
Ratoath	17	3,662,700	Complete	N/A
Cortown*	10	6,922,971	Complete	N/A
Kilmainhamwood*	4		Complete	N/A
Oldcastle*	16		Complete	N/A
The Belfry, Trim	3		560,000	Complete
Totals	121	28,108,186		
GRAND TOTAL	503	122,432,209		

* Rapid Build Delivery Projects

Summary of 2020 Approved Funding Submissions

PROJECT NAME	PROJECT TYPE	NO. OF UNITS	FUNDING APPROVED €
Dunboyne	Part V	10	2,025,748
Dunshaughlin	Part V	8	2,222,861
Trim	Part V	6	1,549,664
Navan	Part V	5	1,116,500
Drogheda South	Part V	10	2,584,583
New Lane, Navan	Direct Construction	5	985,945
Athboy (Kildalkey Rd)	Direct Construction	20	4,135,500
Meath Women's Refuge	Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS)	8	2,014,482
Newtown	Rural Dwelling (Disability)	1	237,718
Navan	Turnkey	26	6,362,500
Mornington	Part V	8	2,105,199
Bettystown	Part V	2	507,980
Donacarney	Part V	5	1,305,042
Bettystown	Turnkey	2	575,505
Ashbourne	Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS)	20	5,393,367
Duleek	Turnkey	16	4,297,030
Totals		152	37,419,624

Expression of Interest for Turnkey Schemes and/or Lands: There is currently an open call for proposals (no deadline applies) regarding the supply of development sites or completed housing schemes that are fit for purpose for social housing within the County. Details regarding same and required forms can be found on www.etenders.gov.ie. or via the following link on Meath.ie <http://bit.ly/EOIHouseSchemesAndOrLand>

Housing Adaptation Grant Schemes for Older People and People with a Disability: On the 6th August 2020, The Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government announced an allocation of €2,477,800 to Meath County Council for 2020 under the Housing Adaptation Grant Schemes for Older People and People with a Disability. A sum of €495,560 of this allocation must be provided by Meath County Council from its own resources.

Grants to the value of €1,273,939 have already been awarded by Meath County Council to 181 Households under the various Grants schemes to date in 2020. The value of Applications currently being processed which were delayed for inspection due to Covid – 19 restrictions and the awaiting of the announcement of the 2020 allocation, is in excess of the balance of funds available for allocation.

Local Authority Adaptation Works Scheme: Sixteen projects completed to date in 2020 (€106,972), with a further 13 task orders issued to contractors (€110,155)

Local Authority Vacant Units Currently Unavailable for Allocation: Outlined below is a summary per Municipal District of the number of vacant properties that currently require works before they can be re-tenanted, as at 21st August 2020. For the period from 19th June 2020 to 21st August 2020, works were completed on 17 vacant units; while 13 units became vacant during this period.

	No. of Units Vacant < 3 Months	No. of Units Vacant 3-6 Months	No. of Units Vacant > 6 Months	No. of Vacant Units Currently Subject to Works	No. of Vacant Units not with Contractors
Ashbourne	1	1	0	1	1
Kells	3	4	5	11	1
Laytown/Bettystown	2	2	**2	6	0
Navan	3	0	**2	5	0
Ratoath	2	5	2	8	1
Trim	3	0	**1	4	0
TOTALS	14	12	12	35	3

Note: **1Includes three pre-lets with major renovations aiming to upgrade BER rating to B2.

Summary Profile of Approved Housing Body Approved Projects 2017-2021

PROJECT NAME	NO. OF UNITS	AHB	DELIVERY
PIPELINE DELIVERY			
The Bungalows, Dunshaughlin	8	Circle	Delivery Due - Q3 2020
Slan Duff, Kentstown	2	Cluid Housing	Delivery Due – Q4 2020
Fitzherbert Wood, Navan	24	Tuath Housing	Delivery Due – Q4 2020
Gort Fionnbarra, Navan	38	Tuath Housing	Delivery Due – Q4 2020
Frederick Manor	11	Cluid Housing	Delivery Due – Q4 2020
Narrow Ways Bettystown	12	Tuath Housing	Delivery Due - Q1 2021
The Maudlins, Trim	9	Cluid Housing	Delivery Due – Q1 2021
Ashewood Ashbourne	11	Cluid	Delivery Due - Q2 2021
Athboy Road, Navan	63	Respond	Delivery Due - Q3 2021
Ledwidge Hall, Slane	28	Oaklee	Delivery Due – Q4 2021
Royal Oaks, Enfield	16	Cluid Housing	Delivery Due – Q4 2021
Gort Fionnbarra, Navan	49	Tuath Housing	Delivery Due – Q4 2021
TOTAL UNITS TO BE DELIVERED	271		
UNITS DELIVERED			
Churchfields, Ashbourne (Part V)	8	Tuath Housing	Complete - 2017
Grangehall, Dunshaughlin	6	Tuath Housing	Complete - 2017
Ardmore, Bettystown	1	North & East Housing	Complete - 2017
Royal Oaks, Enfield (Part V)	4	Cluid Housing	Complete - 2017
Seabury Lawns, Mornington	6	Cluid Housing	Complete - 2018
Kellets Grove, Dunshaughlin (Part V)	6	Tuath Housing	Complete - 2018
Milltown Meadows, Ashbourne	67	Cluid Housing	Complete - 2017
Emmet Street, Trim	11	North & East Housing	Complete - 2018
Dunville, Navan (30 units Part V)	64	Tuath Housing	Complete - 2018
Ceamach Close, Donacarney	16	Cluid Housing	Complete - 2018)
Blackcastle, Navan	26	Tuath Housing	Complete - 2018
Grangehall, Dunshaughlin	8	Tuath Housing	Complete - 2018
Ashewood, Ashbourne	12	Cluid Housing	Complete - 2018
Churchfields, Ashbourne	18	Tuath Housing	Complete - 2018
Fitzherbert Wood, Navan	22	Tuath Housing	Complete 2018/2019
Churchfields, Ashbourne (Part V)	25	Tuath Housing	Complete – 2018/2019
Eastham Square, Bettystown(Part V)	5	Cluid Housing	Complete – 2019
Station Road, Dunboyne	24	Respond	Complete – 2019
Dunville, Navan	6	Tuath Housing	Complete – 2019
Commons Road , Navan	12	North & East Housing	Complete - 2019

Gort Fionnbarra, Navan	20	Tuath Housing	Complete - 2019
Maudlins, Duleek	20	Respond	Complete – 2019
Dun Eimear, Bettystown	23	Cluid	Complete – 2019
Dunville, Navan	54	Tuath	Complete – 2020
Athboy Road, Trim	25	Oaklee	Complete – 2020
Whitefield Hall, Bettystown	29	Tuath	Complete – 2020
TOTAL UNITS DELIVERED	518		
GRAND TOTAL	789		

Homeless Service

	SINGLE ADULTS/COUPLES	HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN	TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS
Placements at 31st July 2020	115 (120 Adults)	28 (41 Adults, 65 Children)	143
Of the 28 households with children, 13 families are placed in short term private rented accommodation (house/apartment) through Settlement Team’s intervention and 7 Families in PMVT Family Hubs.			
Reasons for emergency accommodation placement in order of frequency: Primary reason is Notice to Quit & unable to a find property to rent; followed by family breakdown; addiction; mental health and young person leaving Tusla aftercare			

101 tenancies were secured through the support provided by the Homeless HAP Placefinder Service for the period January 1st to July 31st 2020

Social Housing Supports

A total of 486 new applications for Social Housing Support were received for the period January 1st to July 31st 2020.

Outlined below is the number of households that have had their accommodation needs met by Meath County Council in the period January 1st to July 31st 2020.

Allocations/Housing Supports	Number
MCC Direct Allocations	109
Approved Housing Bodies	90
RAS	0
HAP	266
TOTAL	465

Planning Services

Planning Applications

A total of 1149 planning applications were received for the period 01.01.2020 to 25.08.2020. This is compared to 1113 in the same period last year.

Development Contributions

Development Contribution receipts up to the end of July 2020 are €5,445,027. This is compared to €8,02,8824 in the same period last year. (Figures are inclusive of Irish Water receipts).

Training Webinar for Local Authority Elected Members

Following on from the online planning training webinar for elected members in July, a further training webinar for Councillors is being organised by the AILG and the Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) and titled ***“Guidance for Councillors on the initial Stages of Preparing Development Plans and their Core Strategies”***

The training will focus on:

1. The Development Plan: the initial stages in Development Plan Preparation - including case studies.
2. The Core Strategy – purpose and implications for the wider development plan including linkages to the Housing Strategy

The webinar is to be held on Friday 18th September 2020 from 10 am to 11.30 am.

Registration is via info@ailg.ie

Transportation

1. National Roads 2020 funding from TII confirmed - €7,278,918

N51 Dunmoe Phase 2	Stage 1 Archaeology works complete, stage 2&3 will continue for the next 2 months. Detailed Site investigation works complete - factual reports to be finalised. Environmental/Ecology surveys by ROD/AECOM ongoing. Drafting of tender documents by Westmeath RDO and Arup for the main contract ongoing.
N2 Slane Bypass	RPS design consultants progressing Phase 3. Topographical Survey complete. Geophysical contractor commenced on site and will continue for another 2-3 weeks. Site Investigation Contractor to commence on site in September. Tender competition running to appoint Archaeology Geophysical Contractor
N2 Rath Roundabout to Kilmoon	Second public consultation complete. ROD/Aecom are liaising with Landowners and progressing Phase 2 - Options selection. Aerial Photography survey complete on site - reports to be finalised.
N52 Grange to Clontail	Landowner meetings held in July. Design consultants updating design documents for the Part 8 process. Members briefing arranged for September prior to publication of Part 8.
NS Resurfacing	N51 Cruicetown Carrickdexter resurfacing contract – substantially complete Resurfacing works have commenced at various locations on the National routes around the county

2. (a) Non- National Roads 2020 funding from DTT&S - € 23,696,867

R150 Laytown to Bettystown Spine Road	Construction Contract awarded to John Cradock Ltd. on 15 th July 2020. Works commenced on site on 04 th August and are currently expected to take circa 12 months to complete. Earthworks currently underway.
LDR4 Abbeyland Navan	Formal application to An Bord Pleanála re Environmental Impact Assessment Report and CPO was lodged in early July and went on public display. Final date for submissions was 21st August 2020. Awaiting correspondence from ABP re any submissions received.
Road Works Programme	Phase 1 – Restoration Improvement contract 60% complete Phase 2 – Surface Dressing 95% complete Phase 3 & Phase 4 – Overlay/surface dressing 75% complete Phase 5 – CIS – Contractor appointed Phase 6 – LIS – At tender stage

2. (b) Non- National Roads 2020 - Funding – Other than DTT&S

LDR1b (R161 Trim Rd –N3 Kilcarn Link Rd)	DBFL Consulting Engineers appointed 10 th August 2020. Currently reviewing the approved Part 8 planning and prelim design.
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Work commenced on the R150 Laytown to Bettystown Spine Road in early August

3. Sustainable Transport Measures Grants from NTA Confirmed - € 5,877,000

Navan Town Scheme (Navan 2030)	Temp traffic management changes on Abbey Rd. Boundary wall to Scoil Mhuire & Garda Station set back. Accommodation works commenced. Excavation of footways and installation of kerbing commenced on Abbey Rd. Drainage works commenced on Circular Rd and Bridge St. as well as footpath works on Bridge St. Temp traffic management measures on Bridge St & Circular Rd.
Boyne Greenway – Drogheda to Mornington Section	Application documents submitted to ABP.
Navan Town Bus Stops	Section 38 advertised and non-statutory public consultation commenced.
Tender for Installation of Bus Shelters	Tender submissions for the appointment of Consultants received and under assessment.
Dunboyne Cycle Network	Meeting held with Consultants in relation to review of preliminary design proposals and recent planning developments was undertaken.
Athlumney to Trim Road Cycle and Pedestrian Scheme	Site walk through survey completed by Consultants. Utility service information data collection phase underway.
Harlockstown Bus Stops	Additional topographical survey completed.
Laytown Park and Ride	Tender documents package issued on SupplyGov

Pedestrian Crossing at Ratholdren Rd, Navan.	Works completed in late July. Awaiting electricity connection from ESNB to commission flashing lights.
Pedestrian Crossing at Dan Shaw Rd, Navan (Beechmount Homepark)	At Survey/Design Stage

Additional funding of €3,105,000 from the NTA under the Jobs Stimulus Programme 2020 was confirmed for 38 schemes across the county. Lists for each MD have been circulated to the Elected Members. Works will be commencing as soon as possible as the expenditure has to take place before the end of the year in order to avail of this grant.

4. Safety Improvement Works on Regional & Local Roads


2020 Schemes	Road	MD	Status
Kells Town	R164	Kells	Under construction
Athgaine Cortown	L2813	Kells	Contractor appointed – awaiting start date
Drumbaragh	R163	Kells	
Scottstown Gormanlough	R163	Laytown/Bettystown	
Minnistown Road	L5615	Laytown/Bettystown	Ready to go to Tender
SallyGardens Crossroads	L1625	Laytown/Bettystown	
Beauparc Junction	L1600	Laytown/Bettystown	

(DTT&S Grant Allocation outlined above includes €357,000 for Safety Improvement schemes for 2020)

5. Bridge Rehabilitation Works Regional & Local Roads

- Construction works on the Roadworks Programme 2020 Bridges are complete.
- Works on the repair of Annesbrooke, Skearke and Kearntown bridges commenced on Tuesday August 18th.
- Works on the repair of Clonard, Stoneyford, Anne's & Cornmill bridges scheduled to commence late August.
- The design of repairs to Kilmainhamwood and Donaghmore retaining walls and embankments are ongoing.
- The repair works for Danestown and Normansgrove culverts currently out to tender.

6. Other Actions/ Projects

Public Lighting Capital Programme	2020 Programme of Capital Public Lighting Works – Set to commence in Sept
Risk Mitigation – Footpath Improvement Works  <p style="text-align: center;">Navangate Street - Trim</p>	<p>Navan MD Clusker Park: Works completed in late June. Dean Cogan Place: Contractor appointed. Due to commence start of Sept Kilcarn Court Phase 2: Tenders closed. Intended start date of late Sept Clomagadden Road: Survey/Design Stage. Intention to go to Tender mid Sept</p> <p>Kells MD Works commenced on Jim Brunnock Rd Footpaths Kells.</p> <p>Trim MD –Works commenced in Summerhill Village & Navangate St, Trim. Works completed on Summerhill Road, Trim. Works almost completed on Towerview Housing Estate Trim. Contractor being appointed for works on footpath extension from Baynefield to Industrial Estate, Enfield</p>
Milltown Rd/Ashbourne-Rd Safety Improvement Scheme	Works progressing well -approximately 60% complete
Pedestrian & Cyclist footway on N52 Bypass, Kells	Works substantially complete – Route open to the public
(DCYA) Capital Grant Funding Scheme for Play & Recreation 2020	Clogherboy Playground Refurbishment – Contract offer made. Intended start date of early October
Anti-Dumping Initiative Funded Works - Navan	Kilcarn Court/Beaufort Old Railway Walk Improvement Works – Contract offer made. Intended start date of mid/late September
Ashbourne Industrial Estate Refurbishment Works	Works complete
Oldcastle Pedestrian Crossings	Contractor has commenced works on site, awaiting delivery of Zebra crossing and public lighting equipment in order to continue works
R135 Cycle Network Design	DBFL have prelim design done, with option / layout selection nearer conclusion, prior to detail design. Murphy Survey's currently on site to carry out Topographical and Utility Services surveys

Climate Change Adaptation Allocations: In accordance with Circular RW 09/2020, Councils were asked to submit applications for Climate Change Adaptation works, for consideration for funding in 2020. In late August, the Council received an allocation for five projects:

Circular RW 09/2020 - Climate Change Adaptation Allocations 2020			
Meath County Council			
Road Number	Location	Description of Works	LA Allocation
L1002-37	Riverstown road	Remedial Works - Road is on a gradient and suffered from significant wash-out (down to formation level) along road edges following heavy rainfall events.	€ 100,000
R151	R151 Mornington	Altering the level of the road to mitigate flooding and reduce road closure frequency. Three separate sections of the R151 become impassible due to high tides and storm surges	€ 142,000
R-160-1	Trim ring road	Remedial works due to severe damage done by Storm Emma and subsequent severe weather events.	€ 150,000
R125	Dunshaughlin	Remedial works where roads have been significantly damaged by recent severe weather events. Overlay with SMA.	€ 110,000
R125	Greenoge, Donaghmore	Broadmeadow River (floodplain) is making the embankment of the R125 road unstable causing gradual slippage of the embankment over a 100m long section. It is causing longitudinal cracking and slippage of the surface course on the R125	€ 15,000
Total	5		€ 517,000

The approved allocation is solely for design/works which can be completed and claimed by the end of November 2020.

Environment

Septic Tanks and Wells

Revised grant scheme for Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems (DWWTS)(Septic Tanks, etc):

The DWWTS (National Inspection Plan) scheme provides assistance towards the remediation, repair or upgrading works to, or replacement of, a domestic waste water treatment system under the EPA's National Inspection Plan.

While the DWWTS (Prioritised Areas for Action under the RBMP) grant scheme provides assistance towards remediation, repair or upgrading works to, or replacement of, a domestic waste water treatment system situated in a Prioritised Area for Action in accordance with the River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021.

The DWWTS (High Status Objective Catchment Areas under the RBMP) scheme provides grants towards remediation, repair or upgrading works to, or replacement of, a domestic waste water treatment system in a High Status Objective Catchment Area in accordance with the River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021.

The general rules applying to the DWWTS Grants schemes: Grant rate of 85% of the eligible costs of remediation, repair or upgrading works, or replacement of any such system or €5,000, whichever is the lower. Also, the means test requirement has been removed.

Grants for Private Water Supplies (Wells): This is a revised grant scheme towards the carrying out of improvement works to a private water supply. Provision of a new well: 85% of the approved costs for the provision of a new well, subject to a maximum of €5,000. For rehabilitation works: 85% of the approved costs for rehabilitation works, subject to a maximum of €3,000. For treatment works: 100% of the approved costs for works that, in the opinion of the housing authority, are necessary to treat the water to meet the water quality standards specified in the Regulations, subject to a maximum grant of €1,000. Examples of such treatments are filtration or Ultra Violet treatment.

River Basin Management Plan

Following public consultation on SWMI (Significant water Management Issues) a draft River Basin Management Plan for the period 2020-2027 a draft plan is scheduled to be published in December 2020 and will be subject to extensive public consultation.

With regard to the current RBMP work is ongoing by the Local Authorities Waters Protection Regional Offices (LAWPRO) in the Priority Areas for Action (PAAs) identified in the Plan in Meath including the Dee, the Tolka, the Lower Nanny and the Blackwater (Longwood). Works typically include desk studies, fieldwork investigations and referrals to bodies such as Irish Water.

Council staff are also involved in targeted water quality investigations/stream surveys in a number of catchments, around the County

Smoky Coal Regulations

The Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment has signed Regulations to give legal effect to the extension of the smoky coal ban to all towns with populations of over 10,000 people.

From September 1, 2020, Ashbourne Town and Environs will become a Low Smoke Zone under the Air Pollution Act (Marketing, Sale, Distribution and Burning of Specified Fuels) (Amendment) Regulations 2020. The current Low Smoke Zones of Navan, and Laytown-Bettystown remain unchanged.

From that date it will be illegal to burn bituminous coal (Smoky Coal) within the Low Smoke Zone. Information and a map showing the specified areas is available on www.dccae.gov.ie and can also be obtained from Meath County Council or on the website www.meath.ie. Smokeless coal, turf/peat briquettes and wood are deemed to be smokeless fuels and are acceptable.

Coal merchants and retail outlets will not be allowed to display or sell bituminous coal within this Low Smoke Zone.

Local Authorities are primarily responsible for the enforcement of the smoky coal ban within their functional areas and staff from the Environment Department have been engaged in an extensive on the ground awareness campaign around Ashbourne and also through public advertisement and social media.

Impacts of Covid 19 on the Waste Sector

The Regional Waste Management Plan Offices have produced an interim report on the impacts of Covid 19 on the waste sector and with the main findings being:

- ✓ **Municipal Solid Waste** - That the structures and relationships which are in place ensured essential services continued and that there was a robust, reliable and resilient response of the sector to the crisis particularly in the early stages.
- ✓ There are no current issues arising from Covid with collections, treatment exports etc returning to normal
- ✓ Household waste figures have all increased while some areas of retail are down by significant percentages
- ✓ **Construction and Demolition Waste** - Covid shutdown had a significant impact on the C & D sector with overall activity likely to be down by about 30% on expectations.
- ✓ Capacity available nationally for soil and stone but some issues on capacity for non hazardous, non-inert and C& D Fines.

Environmental Initiatives

Stop Food Waste Challenge: Meath County Council worked with Laois, Westmeath and Wicklow County Council and the EPA's Stop Food Waste to undertake a regional Stop Food Waste Challenge over a 4 week period in July and August.

A series of Stop Food Waste Challenge videos screened every Sunday over the period, with an online Q&A hosted live every Wednesday afternoon. The Campaign had 210,000 online hits over the period which also included radio and press also.

The aim of the campaign is to encourage people to make small changes to the way they consume food, in order to make a large difference to food waste.



Dog Fouling Campaign: An Anti-Dog Fouling Campaign took place over the summer on LMFM and on billboards.

Paint Collection: The collection of old or unused paint has resumed at all Meath Recycling Facilities.

Paint Reuse Scheme: Meath County Council has been successful in acquiring funding from the LAPN for a Paint Reuse project in conjunction with the Rediscovery Centre. The project will be rolled out over the next 12 months and will see unused paint diverted from disposal for resale and reuse. Paint will be collected at the Recycling Centres, reusable paint will then be sent to the Rediscovery Centre for repotting and resale. Meath County Council will examine the possibility of acting as a depot or collection location for reusable paint.

Report on Climate Action Initiatives

- Native Woodland Scheme – Department of Agriculture grant available to LAs, an exercise has taken place to identify suitable council owned lands and info on this will be circulated shortly. A forester to undertake site assessments has been procured. Native woodland schemes are also available to private landowners/community lands and a number of potential sites have been identified through the CAF.
- Work on the Implementation Guidelines are ongoing with the North-East Sub-Region and CARO. These will have KPIs but straight forward ones, eventual movement to capture all climate mitigation and adaptation activities through KPIs, metrics, indicators, etc.
- Progress on Climate Action Strategy excel spreadsheet will be circulated next week for completion by departments.
- #MeathClimateAcademy events put on hold but Tourism Sustainability delivered on line, currently looking at what else can be delivered on line.
- Collaboration with Solstice to deliver a Climate Conference 6th – 9th October, will include a schools summit and Elected Members day – subject to Covid restrictions.
- Pilot CARO training scheduled for October, MCC will participate on this. Actual training most likely Q2 next year and will commence with Senior Management and Elected Members.

- Social media – slow and steady following, averaging 30k impression/month. Recent campaigns include Clothing Capsule Challenge and next month will see a #ListenToTheScientists campaign.
- Purls of Wisdom project is on-going and well received, will display as part of Climate Exhibition with Solstice. Collaborating with Age Friendly and ICrag
- 1st Agri-event scheduled for 29th August in Devenish – starting a climate conversation with the sector and its stakeholders to identify challenges, opportunities and potential partnerships and show leadership.
- CAF one year old and it is proposed to reduce numbers as some members fail to attend meetings. The CAF work has moved towards action over talking and many members are engaging in climate action awareness and activities. Propose to capture these acts of leadership to be able to quantify and qualify work.
- We have one Climate Reality Leader now, and with others including the Cathaoirleach are completing their own on-line training. We will be the only LA to have such training and it means we can train others.

Community

Governance Structures

Local Community Development Committee (LCDC): A meeting of the LCDC took place on Friday, July 31, with the next one scheduled for Friday, September 25, 2020.

LEADER Programme 2014-2020: Meetings of the LAG took place on Friday, July 31, with the next one scheduled for Friday, September 25, 2020.

Age Friendly County Programme: An online Climate Action talk by the Climate Action Officer and An Cathaoirleach was provided to the Older Peoples Council. The Climate Action and Age Friendly sections of the Council teamed up to launch "Purls of Wisdom" which is a knitting project using yarn colours to show the earth's changing climate. The final knitted items will be displayed and donated to Alzheimers and Dementia groups.

Under the RRDF scheme, Athboy Town Centre was approved for funding of €608,250 for design of the Public Realm which will be Age Friendly and Dementia focused.

Public Participation Network (PPN): Meath PPN submitted its Annual Report for 2019. A Climate Action Workshop was facilitated by Gavin Harte. A webinar for Social Inclusion member groups identified the need to develop the PPN Social Inclusion Network into an independent strategic partner. Support was provided to groups to complete funding applications.

Joint Policing Committee (JPC): The next JPC Meeting is scheduled to take place on Monday, September 14, 2020 in the Solstice Theatre.

Grant Schemes

Carranstown Grant Scheme: The Indaver Community Liaison Committee AGM and annual awards night took place on July 30, 2020.

Knockharley Grant Scheme: The next meeting is scheduled for September with a date and location to be finalised.

CLÁR 2020: Six applications were submitted to the DRCD for consideration and await the announcement of these.

Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme 2020: The Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) will provide funding under 3 separate measures:

Measure 1: Small Scale repair/Promotion and Marketing (grant up to €20,000).

Measure 2: Medium scale repair/upgrade and new Trail/Amenity Development (grant up to €200,000).

Measure 3: Large scale Repair/upgrade and new Strategic Trail/Amenity Development (grant up to €500,000). Project applications are submitted via the Local Authorities under all Measures.

Proposed applications to be submitted to the DRCD by the end of September by the Local Authority.

Community Enhancement Programme: The Minister announced a separate fund under this scheme which will provide capital grants towards improvement works to community centres and community buildings. Meath was allocated €157,594. Closing date for applications is August 28, 2020 and recommendations will be brought to the LCDC meeting on September 25.

Community Wellbeing Initiative: The closing date for the Community Wellbeing Initiative was extended to Friday, August 28, 2020. Assessment of the applications will take place during September with winners being announced in October.

Town & Village Renewal Scheme 2020

Accelerated Measure Covid - Round 1: A total of 5 applications were submitted, with 4 applications being approved by the Department.

Applicant	Grant
Cormeen	€6,327.00
Kells	€40,000.00
Meath Hill	€22,500.00
Moynalty	€21,022.38
Total	€89,849.38

Accelerated Measure Covid - Round 2: The closing date for the submission of Round 2 applications to the Department was August 14, 2020. A total of 6 applications were submitted for consideration.

Accelerated Measure Covid - Round 3 (additional measure announced on 7th August): The closing date for the submission of Round 3 applications to the Department was August 28, 2020. Some 6 applications are allowed to be submitted for towns/villages under 10k population and applications allowed for submission for towns over 10k population with 3 identified for Meath.

Standard Town & Village Scheme: The number of applications permitted under the Standard Town and Village Renewal Scheme has increased to 10 applications per Local Authority. As a result of this change, the closing date for the submissions to the Department has been moved to September 30, 2020.

Broadband

National Broadband Plan- Broadband Connection Points (BCPs): Vodafone has commenced connecting BCPs in Meath. The active sites will be announced and go live following the national launch of the initiative at the end of September.

WIFI4EU: New connections and the equipment for the WIFI4EU initiative in Kells has been installed in most of the sites. The network is undergoing testing before going live by the end of September.

Libraries Service

Library Branch Services

Public Libraries are continuing to offer more services to the public as outlined in the various phases of the Government's Roadmap for Reopening Society and Business. However, it will be some time before full library services can resume.

Services are being provided to the public in a step-by-step manner in line with public health guidance.

Eleven of the twelve branches in the county are now open again for browsing and lending. All branches are also offering PC access, photocopying and online services. Due to restricted numbers allowed in branches priority is being given to those calling in to borrow and return items. It will not be possible to provide the traditional after-school study/homework facilities at our larger branches in the current circumstances.

Oldcastle library re-opened on September 2, 2020, after a minor upgrade. The work involved replacement of the heating system, insulation, and carpeting, addition of a kitchen to the upstairs community events space and a reconfiguration of the branch.

Branches are currently operating on temporary opening hours. As local circumstances allow opening hours will be increased across the branch network.

Online services continue to be available as the county moves through the re-opening phases. It is possible to:

- join the library online;
- download eBooks and eAudiobooks;
- read magazines and newspapers
- take eLearning or language courses;
- watch or listen to storytimes; or,
- take part in other activities like online quizzes.

Library App

The library service has submitted an application for funding for a new library App. The App allows users to collect reservations, quickly browse and undertake a digital checkout transaction using their smartphone to borrow a physical library item. Critically the service offers library patrons access to a self-service technology which will eliminate the need to touch communal devices or engage with staff in a post COVID-19 library. The App will benefit users across the branch network. The proposal was submitted as part of a recent call for projects under the libraries 'Healthy Ireland' programme.

Creative Ireland's Positive Ageing and Creative Well Being Programme

Meath County Council is one of a number of local authorities participating in Creative Ireland's Positive Ageing and Creative Well Being Programme.

In response to an idea put forward by Meath County Library, some Meath people have been keeping diaries during the pandemic. Paddy Smith is one of the diarists and his work will now be published by the library service with support from Creative Ireland and the Meath Age Friendly programme.

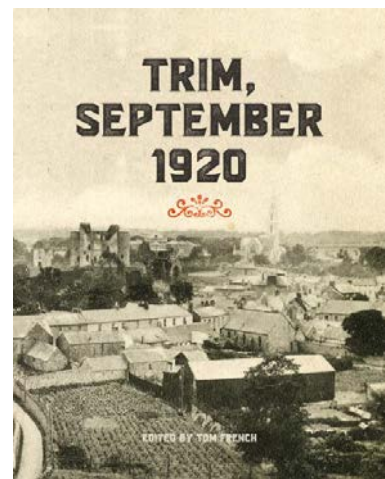
Paddy is a retired journalist who lives in Trim, Co Meath, where he was born in 1943. Over a long career, he has worked in provincial weekly newspapers, daily newspapers, the RTE Newsroom on radio and TV, and periodicals. He retired in 2007 from the Farming Independent section of the Irish Independent, and since then he has been writing for pleasure, mainly plays and short stories.

Dormant Accounts Funding 2020

Meath County Council Library Service has submitted a funding application under the above scheme (Library Supports for Marginalised, Socially Excluded and Disadvantaged Communities) to purchase online licenses to Touch, Type, Read, Spell (TTRS). The proposal is aimed at supporting children and adults with learning differences such as Dyslexia and Dyspraxia but the product can be used by all. If the application is successful the product will be made freely available to 1,000 users through the library service. A particular feature of the application is the support it will offer to parents engaged in home schooling arising from the covid-19 pandemic.

Decade of Centenaries – Trim, September 1920

To further aid understanding of this critical period in our history the local authority has published a new volume Trim, September 1920. This volume edited by local studies librarian, Tom French has been published on the centenary of the tumultuous events which occurred in the town of Trim a century ago, and forms a vital part of County Meath's Decade of Centenaries commemorations. By presenting contemporary accounts, documents and images, it is hoped that this book will contribute to our understanding of our history. The book reproduces facsimiles of original courts martial and prison documents, contemporary newspaper accounts, stills of contemporary newsreel footage, and rare photographs of the town in the immediate aftermath of the burning. Arrangements are being made at present for a virtual launch. The book will be available for sale after the launch from Trim Library and Antonia's Bookshop in Trim.



Arts Office

Arts Office Activities – Covid 19

The Arts Office continues to adapt and respond to the circumstances presented by Covid 19. It has adopted a proactive approach in re-imagining the 2020/21 Arts Programme and is currently engaging with creative partners, artists, groups, organisations and the greater creative community. It has also engaged with the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and the Arts Council in Covid Response development.

Meath County Council/Arts Council Framework Agreement

This is an agreement reached by the Arts Council and Meath County Council. Its purpose is to highlight the shared strategic priorities for arts development in Meath over the period of the agreement; setting out a vision and goals for what we can achieve together.

It has been developed through a collaborative process between both organisations, under the overarching national agreement, A Framework for Collaboration (2016 – 2025), between the Arts Council and the County and City Management Association.

This national agreement reaffirms the centrality of a strategic partnership which has been in existence since 1985 and outlines a shared vision for a new era of arts development, striving for equality of access to and engagement in the arts by all those living in Ireland.

Through an agreed process MCC has identified shared strategic actions that will influence arts development in each area over the period of the agreement and is intended as an expression of partnership whereby the Arts Council can focus on very specific areas of need through their funding relationship with us.

The Meath County Council/Arts Council Framework agreement aligns with the four strategic priorities set out in the County Arts Development Plan 2019 – 2024.

Music Generation Meath

There is on-going discussion and liaison with Music Generation Meath regarding the roll out of MGM programme in Covid 19 context. A new working group has been established. The Music Development Officer has successfully completed the recruitment of 32 Music Tutors for the delivery of the revised programme. 22 of these tutors are Meath based.



On-line Content

The *Theatre Tuesday* readings by playwright Deirdre Kinahan; *Ceol Comfort* music series and the *Toradh Thursday* visual arts exhibitions are being updated/added to weekly. These initiatives are intended to provide alternative means of supporting those artists and creatives who have seen their work, performances and engagements cancelled or postponed for the foreseeable future, whilst providing greater access to the wider community to quality creative and cultural experiences. Viewing figures for this initiative are strong with very positive public response.

All the artists under the initiatives above are being paid a fee for their work or for rights to broadcast.

Type Trail Kells 2020

Given the nature of the Kells Type Trail Festival, this is one of the few festival events nationally that have been able to proceed under current Covid 19 restrictions. Now celebrating its 11th year, this is an annual festival celebrating typography and lettering as a modern art form. Each year one word is translated into a variety of languages reflecting the diversity of the community in Kells, this year's theme is the word 'JOURNEY'.



Type Trail 2020 takes place mid - August to October with 26 public art installations created by local, national and international artists, third level final year degree students, and local arts groups. All works are sited around the streets and buildings of Kells - a significant achievement in the current circumstances.

The annual Type Trail printed map has been replaced by a new Type Trail website and downloadable map. www.kellstypetrail.com

Economic Development

Response to Business Need during Covid Crisis

The Local Enterprise Office (LEO) continues to be the First Stop Shop for businesses in County Meath, and has been widely promoted as such by the Government in the media. The economy has suffered a severe shock with the advent of Covid 19 and the LEO is at the forefront of the response to the small business community during this crisis. In extraordinary circumstances the LEO is delivering a suite of supports which will be critical to ensuring the survival of many small local businesses.

To respond to the crisis, several new business support schemes have been rolled out in a very short timeframe. The staff of the LEO - with the very welcome additional resources temporarily assigned by Meath County Council – have ensured that these supports are made available in a timely manner to the business community in the county. The upsurge in applications to new and existing schemes during the crisis has stretched the capability of the team to deliver the supports required, but they rose magnificently to the challenge.

The headline comparison between the twelve months of 2019 and the period March 15 – August 15, 2020, shows the enormous growth in grant and training support delivered. In all of 2019 less than 80 grants totalling €575k were awarded by the LEO, while in the 'Covid' period over 700 grants totalling over €2m were awarded to Meath companies. Comparing training, more companies have availed of specialised training during the Covid period as did during all of 2019. The LEO team during this period also moved all training on-line – a first for LEO Meath.

	Value of Grants Awarded	Applications Received	Grants Awarded (to date)	Trainees Companies
2019	€ 575,000	97	80	838
2020 (Jan – Aug)	€2,099,000	1012	766	871

Some details of the business supports delivered during this period include:

Feasibility, priming and Expansion Grants: These continue to be processed in the normal way. To date, €350k has been awarded under these schemes. The LEO has noticed a marked increase in uptake for start-up grants.

Business Continuity Vouchers: These vouchers were introduced to assist companies access specialised support to re-imagine and restructure their business. They are worth €2,500 each. The LEO has processed 576 applications with 481 being awarded to a value of €1.14m.

TOVs (Trading on-line vouchers): These are worth €2,500 to companies who wish to trade on-line. It pays for the development of websites and e-commerce solutions. The LEO has processed 382 applications, with 255 being awarded to date with a value of €609k

Training: The LEO has moved all training and mentoring on-line or virtual (via Zoom). Almost 900 companies have availed of these services, along with a constant stream of one-to-one business advice sessions.

New Training Courses: These have been developed and released in the following areas:

- a. Managing through the COVID Emergency
- b. Business through Zoom
- c. Resilience and Positivity
- d. Preparing a brief for web developers
- e. Specific service sector business focus
- f. Book-keeping & Sage
- g. Food-Academy

The LEO continues to act as a signpost and strategic resource to companies wishing to avail of the various other supports that are administered by other organisations, such as the Restart Grants, and COVID loan schemes.

Tourism

Marketing and Promotion: Meath County Council and Boyne Valley Tourism are working closely with the tourism industry to support them through marketing campaigns to attract holidaymakers.

Meath, along with Louth County Council, has allocated Funding to a marketing campaign to support the tourism industry. The Campaign entitled Rediscover the Boyne Valley targets domestic staycations and the Northern Ireland market and is aimed at 5 audiences with specific digital ads to target them to holiday in the Boyne Valley: families, golf enthusiasts, foodies, outdoor enthusiasts and well-being. This campaign commenced in mid-August and will run until year end and will include influencer partnership visits to the Boyne Valley, new promotional video and domestic PR.

One of Ireland's leading bloggers Janet Newenham Journalist on the Run was invited by Boyne Valley Tourism to visit the Boyne Valley over 5 days in July. With a packed itinerary, she created 2 vlog diary style [videos](#) of her itinerary along with numerous [blogs](#) on the [Boyne Valley](#) and [things to do in Trim](#).

Other promotional activity during July and August included: an 8 week facebook competition between Boyne Valley Tourism and Boyne Valley Flavours; advertising and editorial with Celtic Media for their Autumn Breaks and Your Ireland Staycation Guide and radio advertising and prize giveaways.

Reopening Businesses: Meath has had a great response to the sign up for the Failte Ireland Covid 19 Safety Charter now with 70 businesses registered, having completed the infection control training.

The OPW sites have all reopened now for access to the grounds with the majority offering free access. Trim Castle, Loughcrew and Old Mellifont Abbey reported a busier than usual season.

Grants: Failte Ireland has announced details of its Adaptation Grant. Tourism Businesses are eligible to apply for an adaptation Grant to Failte Ireland. The Fund will help offset some of the costs that businesses have incurred in adapting premises and operations for safe re-opening. Expenditure on items such as protective screens, outdoor areas, PPE, online apps, technology and sanitisers are all covered.

The Restart Grant Plus is available to commercially rateable premises through Meath County Council. B&B's are eligible to apply and should apply directly to Failte Ireland, details to be announced.

Finance Section

Commercial Rates

Restart Grant Scheme: The scheme commenced on May 22, 2020 and ceased on July 22, 2020. A total of 1342 applications were made, 1,237 of these have been paid to a value of €4.73m. Of the remaining 105, 101 were refused, withdrawn or duplicated and 4 are awaiting further information.

Restart Grant Plus Scheme: This scheme commenced on Monday, August 10, 2020. Some 222 new applications have been received. A declaration has issued to the 1,237 previous successful applicants under the Restart Grant Scheme in order to process an enhanced payment under the Restart Grant Plus Scheme. For further information: <https://www.meath.ie/council/covid-19-information/covid-19-restart-grant-plus>

Six Months Rates Waiver Scheme: This initiative was announced on July 23, 2020 and Circular Fin 11/2020 was issued upon the application of the scheme. The waiver is currently being applied, which will result in a credit being automatically applied to all customer accounts that meet the relevant criteria. Information about this scheme is available: <https://www.meath.ie/council/covid-19-information/covid-19-commercial-rates>

Housing Loans

The 3 month mortgage payment break has been applied to 40 Loan accounts. This scheme was expanded for a further 3 months, with 8 Loan accounts having availed of this at present.

An update from the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government is awaited to address the present criteria of 2 years continuous employment in relation to Rebuilding Ireland Home Loans home loan applications. This has a great impact on prospective applicants due to the Covid 19 situation.

Loans Data 1st February 2018 to 24th August 2020	
Applications Received	359
Applications Returned	16
Applications awaiting further information not Submitted to Housing Agency	2
Applications Submitted to Housing Agency for Assessment/Recommendation	341
Applications Awaiting Assessment /Recommendation by Housing Agency	0
Applications Awaiting Decision by Meath County Council Credit Committee	0
Applications Approved by the Meath County Council Credit Committee	214
Applications Refused by the Meath County Council Credit Committee	127
	341
Approvals Drawdown by Customer for House Purchase (includes restructuring)	141
No of customers in MARP	34

Rents

Meath County Council operates a Differential Rents Scheme. Where notified of income reduction or increase, a tenant's rent is adjusted accordingly in line with this scheme.

Non Principal Private Residence (NPPR)

The level of applications for certificates remains constant, all issued within the 14 day limit, once the application is in order. There is no back log of applications.