



**comhairle chontae na mí**  
*meath county council*

# **Chief Executive's Report for Elected Members**

**Monthly Management Report**  
**May 2021**

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 continues to be a challenging time for the Council, the county and the country more generally but with a more positive outlook for the weeks and months ahead. This report is being provided for your information and consideration.

The Council has remained open for business during the period of Level 5 restrictions and will now respond to the Government announcement and modify how we provide a number of our services during the months of May and June, as public health measures are relaxed.

Its not too long ago that COVID case numbers in Meath were some of the highest in the country and it is very welcome that these have reduced in recent weeks. However, we need to remain vigilant and ensure that the case numbers continue to decline, which is not the case in all MDs. The roll out of the vaccination programme and the opening of the vaccination centre in Simonstown during the month of April are further grounds for optimism and I hope that we can look forward to a good summer and a sustainable re-opening of society and the local economy and businesses.

This month will also see the commencement of the next phase of the review of the County Development Plan, with the material amendments being put on display for public consultation on May 26<sup>th</sup> for a four week period.

I look forward to your continued cooperation as we work through the current situation with a sense of hope that there are better days ahead later this year.

Thank You,

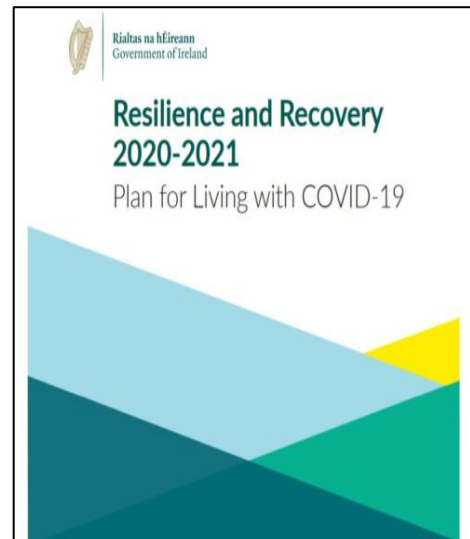
**Jackie Maguire**  
**Chief Executive**

## Covid-19 – Response to Public Health Measures

### Easing of Restrictions

The recent decisions of Government on April 29, 2021 regarding the easing of public health restrictions on a graduated basis will have direct impacts on the Council and the level and nature of the services it will be providing to the public.

While the vast majority of the Council's services are deemed essential, there have been significant restrictions in providing some services directly to the public. This will now change and these changes will mirror those announced on April 29<sup>th</sup> for the wider re-opening of the economy and society.



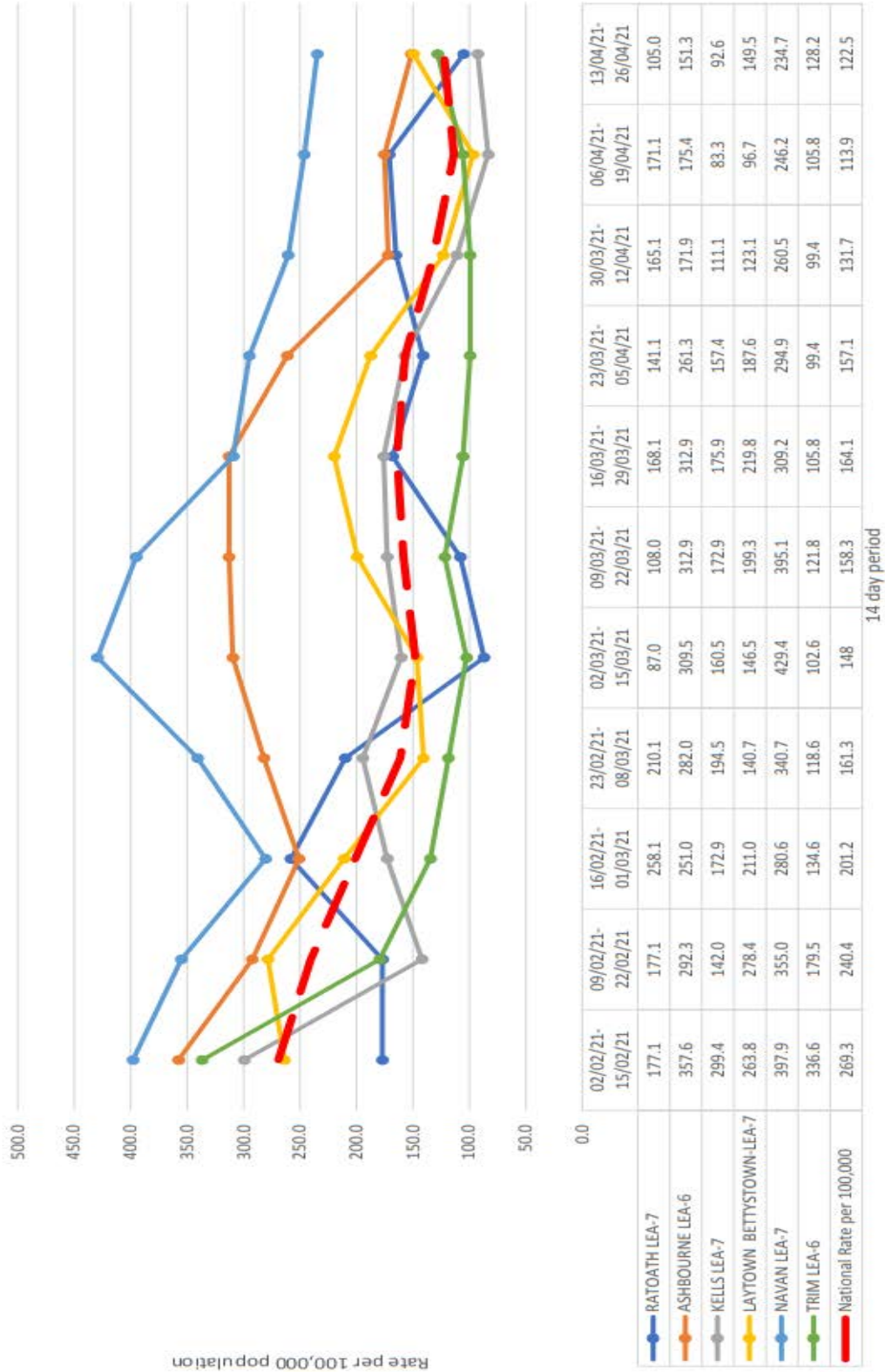
The Council is preparing for these changes and will work in parallel with other local authorities and implement the service levels as agreed and coordinated by the Local Government Management Agency.

During the months of May and June, there will be changes in terms of: the opening-up of public buildings and the public counter services; the Library Service will have eleven of the twelve libraries back on normal library hours from week commencing May 10<sup>th</sup> to enable the public to enter the library, browse and select their books. Likewise facilities such as the Trim Visitor Centre will open from May 11<sup>th</sup>.

The Council will respond accordingly, as the various restrictions are eased and will update the Elected Members and the general public as service levels are modified.

Rate of Confirmed Cases in each Municipal District per 100K population (February – April 2021)

LEA Rate per 100K population - Meath  
from 02/02/21



## Corporate Services

### Meetings Administration

**Online Meetings:** All Council meetings will continue to take place as an online-only format for the month of May. Future meeting arrangements will be assessed in line with the easing of restrictions and the public health advice.

**Call to Establish a Local Women's Caucus:** The Council has submitted a proposal to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage under its call for proposals to establish a local caucus of women councillors. The proposal is based on the feedback from the female members of Meath County Council, who met on two occasions in advance of the submission of the proposal. The general objectives of the Meath Women's Caucus are seen as four fold: (1) A Forum for Discussion and Change; (2) A Forum for Influence and Impact within the Council; (3) A Forum to Improve Members' Capacity and Provide a Support Structure; and (4) An Outreach Forum – Encouraging the Next Generation.

### Events - Communications

**Covid-19 Communications** – The Council has worked closely with the HSE and An Garda Síochána in strengthening some of the public health messaging locally on Covid-19. This took place over Easter on local radio and social media channels.

**Vaccination Centre – Simonstown** - Cllr. Tom Behan and Meath Civil Defence Officer Michael Fitzsimons joined HSE staff and Minister Helen McEntee TD, Minister Thomas Byrne TD and Minister Damien English TD at the opening of the HSE Vaccination Centre in Simonstown GAA Club, Navan.



### **Lighting of Public Buildings and Spaces – Go Purple Day**

To show our support to Go Purple Day and to create awareness of domestic violence in aid of Men's Aid Ireland and Safe Ireland, Meath County Council lit up numerous buildings and landmarks throughout the county on Friday, April 23.

**Mí Meath Launch** - Leas Cathaoirleach Cllr. Aisling Dempsey and the Chief Executive joined County Meath Chamber in the virtual launch of the Mí Meath Shop Local initiative on Monday, April 26. This is the first reloadable, county-specific gift card of its kind, which it is hoped will have a multiplier effect for business owners and their families in County Meath. To find out more visit:

[www.countymeathchamber.ie/mimeath](http://www.countymeathchamber.ie/mimeath)



**Spine Road – Road Naming Competition** - The Council has initiated a competition for the naming of a new piece of infrastructure, the 'Spine Road' in the Laytown-Bettystown Municipal District that will provide a more participative approach, with a view to giving local children and local communities a greater say in the naming process.

The competition will be in two parts: (a) local schools will nominate one name for the road; with (b) members of the public being asked to vote on the nominations, via the Council's social media accounts. The name that receives the highest number of votes will be forwarded to the full Council for formal approval – most likely at the July Monthly meeting.

**Meath Alerts – Free Alert Service – Open for Subscribers** - Meath County Council's free alert service for people living or working in County Meath is being rolled-out to the public. This service gives people timely information on things that may affect their daily lives including notices relating to road works and traffic, water outages, planning applications in their community, community activities and other isolated events such as severe weather emergencies.



The service is completely free, there is no cost to receive alerts through any channel, including by SMS text messages. Log onto: <https://alerts.meath.ie/en/> and subscribe to get alerts by SMS Text Alert and email from Meath County Council.

**Irish Language Scheme** - The Minister of State at the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Mr. Jack Chambers, T.D., has confirmed the Council's second scheme under the Official Languages Act. The scheme shall remain in force for a period of 3 years from May 1, 2021. The new scheme is available on the Council's website and a number of measures will see implementation over the coming months.

### **Corporate – Health and Safety**

**Worker's Memorial Day:** Workers Memorial Day (WMD) 2021 was held on April 28, to remember the workers who have lost their lives in workplace accidents during previous years. To mark the day nationally, Minister of State for Business, Employment and Retail, Damien English TD hosted an online broadcast streamed via the ICTU website. The theme for the day and adopted by ICTU was: "Workplace Health & Safety – it's your right".

Meath County Council held a minute's silence at 12 noon, a candle was also lit in the Garden of Remembrance in Buvinda House.

# Housing Services

## Capital Programme

### Summary Profile of Approved Direct Construction Projects

PROJECT NAME	NO. OF UNITS	APPROVED BUDGET €	ESTIMATED START DATE	ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE
<b><u>DESIGN PHASE</u></b>				
Blackhill Crescent, Donacarney	2	563,166	Q4 2021	Q2 2022
Nangle Court, Navan	16	2,961,862	Q4 2021	Q4 2022
Church View, Rathmoylon	22	5,476,215	Q4 2021	Q4 2022
Haggard Street, Trim	4	931,870	Q2 2022	Q1 2023
Kildalkey Road, Athboy	20	4,358,112	Q2 2022	Q1 2023
Carrick Street Regeneration, Kells	43	10,225,755	-	-
<b>Totals</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>24,516,980</b>		
<b><u>PART 8 PLANNING PROCESS</u></b>				
Ashbourne	76	19,730,587	Q3 2021	Q1 2023
Kells Archdeaconary	20	3,826,010	Q4 2021	Q4 2022
Farganstown	84	24,630,457	-	-
<b>Totals</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>48,187,054</b>		
<b><u>TENDER FOR CONSTRUCTION</u></b>				
Donore	21	4,524,250	Q4 2021	Q3 2022
Lagore, Dunshaughlin	42	9,850,185	Q4 2021	Q2 2023
<b>Totals</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>14,374,435</b>		
<b><u>CONSTRUCTION STAGE</u></b>				
Lagore, Dunshaughlin	26	5,813,948	Q1 2020	Q3 2021
<b>Totals</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>5,813,948</b>		
<b><u>PROJECTS COMPLETED</u></b>				
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	N/A
Carlanstown	13	2,719,237	Complete	N/A

Bettystown (Phase 2)	15	3,426,308	Complete	N/A
Kells	40	8,555,683	Complete	N/A
<b>Totals</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>42,809,414</b>		
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>565</b>	<b>136,060,516</b>		

\* Rapid Build Delivery Projects

### Summary of 2021 Approved Funding Submissions

PROJECT NAME	PROJECT TYPE	NO. OF UNITS	FUNDING APPROVED €
Athboy	Turnkey	7	1,598,475
Enfield	Part V	1	255,000
Duleek	Part V	2	458,675
Stamullen	Part V	3	812,353
<b>Totals</b>		<b>13</b>	<b>3,124,503</b>

### Summary of Current Funding Submissions

PROJECT NAME	PROJECT TYPE	NO. OF UNITS	FUNDING SOUGHT €
Donacarney	Turnkey	1	322,700
Kilcock	Part V	13	3,394,991
Stamullen	Part V	5	1,282,577
Staleen, Donore	Low Cost Private Sites	5	€551,682
2021 Acquisition Programme	Acquisitions	45	€11,000,000
<b>Totals</b>		<b>69</b>	<b>16,551,950</b>

### Expression of Interest for Turnkey Schemes and/or Lands

There is currently a call for proposals 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](http://www.etenders.gov.ie). or via the following link on Meath.ie <http://bit.ly/EOIHouseSchemesAndOrLand>

### Affordability Measures

The two successful applicants have been notified that they can proceed subject to conditions to acquire the two LIHAF Cost Reduced Units in Ratoath.

### Housing Adaptation Grant Schemes for Older People and People with a Disability

Grants to the value of €1,135,169 have been awarded by Meath County Council to 169 Households under the various Grants schemes to date in 2021

### Local Authority Adaptation Works Scheme

A total of 6 projects completed to date in 2021 (€53,749), with a further 14 task orders issued to contractors (€116,819)

### 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 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2021. For the period from 16<sup>th</sup> March 2021 to 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2021, works were completed on 21 vacant units; while 17 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
<b>Ashbourne</b>	1	0	1	2	0
<b>Kells</b>	6	0	0	5	1
<b>Laytown/Bettystown</b>	3	0	0	2	1
<b>Navan</b>	9	0	0	7	2
<b>Ratoath</b>	5	0	0	4	1
<b>Trim</b>	6	0	0	6	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>5</b>

### Summary Profile of Approved Housing Body Approved Projects

PROJECT NAME	NO. OF UNITS	AHB	DELIVERY
<b>PIPELINE DELIVERY</b>			
Gort Fionnbarra, Navan (Phase 2)	20	Tuath Housing	Delivery Due – Q2 2021
St Mary's Dunboyne	16	Co-Operative Housing	Delivery Due – Q2 2021
Bryanstown Wood, Drogheda	28	Tuath Housing	Delivery Due - Q3 2021
Narrow Ways Bettystown	12	Tuath Housing	Delivery Due - Q1 2022
Whitefield Hall, Bettystown	2	Tuath Housing	Delivery Due - Q1 2022
Ashewood Ashbourne	11	Cluid Housing	Delivery Due - Q3 2021
Athboy Road, Navan	63	Respond	Delivery Due - Q1 2022
Ledwidge Hall, Slane	28	Oaklee Housing	Delivery Due – Q4 2022
Royal Oaks, Enfield	30	Cluid Housing	Delivery Due – Q4 2021
Gort Fionnbarra, Navan (Phase 3)	49	Tuath Housing	Delivery Due – Q2 2022
The Willows, Dunshaughlin	96	Cluid Housing	Delivery Due – Q2 2022
Effernock, Trim	16	Cluid Housing	Delivery Due – Q4 2021
Beaufort Place, Navan	21	Tuath Housing	Delivery Due – Q3 2022
Bridge Street, Ashbourne	20	Peter McVerry Trust	Delivery Due – Q4 2022
Tailteann, Navan	8	Meath Women's Refuge	Delivery Due – Q1 2023
<b>TOTAL UNITS TO BE DELIVERED</b>	<b>420</b>		

### Homelessness

	SINGLE ADULTS/COUPLES	HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN	TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS
<b>Placements at 28<sup>th</sup> February 2021 (Previous Reported Figure)</b>	134 (138)	27 (41 Adults, 62 Children)	161
<b>Placements at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021</b>	138 (142)	26 (40 Adults, 57 Children)	164
Of the 26 households with children, 12 families are placed in short term private rented accommodation (house/apartment) through Settlement Team's intervention and 8 Families in PMVT Family Hubs.			
<b>Reasons for emergency accommodation placement in order of frequency:</b> Primary reason is Notice to Quit & unable to find a property to rent; followed by family breakdown; addiction; mental health and young person leaving Tusla aftercare.			

41 tenancies were secured through the support provided by the Homeless HAP Placefinder Service for the period January 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup> 2021

### **Social Housing Supports**

258 new applications for Social Housing Support were received for the period January 1<sup>st</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

Outlined below is the number of households that have had their accommodation needs met by Meath County Council in the period January 1<sup>st</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

<b>Allocations/Housing Supports</b>	<b>Number</b>
MCC Direct Allocations	118
Approved Housing Bodies	44
RAS	0
HAP	147
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>309</b>

## Planning Services

### **Planning Applications**

A total of 772 planning applications were received in the period 01/01/2021 to 24/04/2021. This is compared to 553 in the same period last year.

### **Development Contributions**

Development Contribution receipts for March 2021 were €3,773,128. This is compared to €2,447,666 in the same period last year. (Figures are not inclusive of Irish Water receipts)

### **Planning Enforcement Complaints**

A total of 81 planning enforcement cases have been opened up to 24/04/2021, an increase of 31 from the previous report.

### **Application under Section 182A(1)**

The Planning Authority has received an application under Section 182A(1) of the Planning and Development Acts as amended, with a development description of *'110kV electrical substation, underground cable and all associates site works and drainage. Townlands of Milltown, near Cortown, Kells, Co. Meath.'*

**Note:** Section 182A applications relate to electricity transmission lines and are made directly to An Bord Pleanála. The Planning Authority must prepare a Chief Executive's Report on the application providing a planning opinion on the merits of the application. Submission date for the report is June 21, 2021.

### **Transboundary EIA**

The public consultation with respect to the Environmental Impact Assessment with Belgium concerning the proposed 10 year extension of the operational life of the Doel 1 and 2 Nuclear Power Plants, and the associated nuclear safety-related improvement works, runs from 28<sup>th</sup> April to 23<sup>rd</sup> June. Further details of the application are available at [www.gov.ie/housing](http://www.gov.ie/housing)

## Transportation

### 1. National Roads 2021 funding from TII - €7,629,918

N51 Dunmoe Phase 2	Letter of intent for the construction & consultancy services contract has issued. Letter of acceptance for the construction & consultancy services contract is subject to TII approval. Preparation of tender documents for legal services during the construction contract ongoing.
N2 Slane Bypass & Public Realm Enhancement Scheme	RPS progressing Phase 3 design. Landowner meetings ongoing. Decision taken to include Public Realm Plan as part of the application to ABP for the N2 Slane Bypass Project. Scheme is now titled " <b>N2 Slane Bypass &amp; Public Realm Enhancement Scheme</b> ".
N2 Rath Roundabout to Kilmoon	The third public consultation was extended and has just finished with submissions on the EPO accepted to 22 <sup>nd</sup> April 2021. Analysis of submissions received is on-going and will be contained in the Public Consultation Report. Affected landowners/residents have been meeting with the design team to discuss the EPO.
N52 Grange to Clontail	Atkins finalising Phase 3 design. On completion and subject to TII approval, the project will proceed to Phase 4 – Statutory Processes
NS Resurfacing	Pavement designs and tender document preparation on-going for 2021 schemes.

### 2. Non- National Roads 2021 funding from DoT – Grant Allocation €26,145,367 in total

#### 2. (a) Restoration Improvement & Restoration Maintenance (Surface Dressing)

Road Works Programme	Preparation ongoing for 2021 Restoration Maintenance Grant (Surface Dressing) and Restoration Improvement Grant schemes. Surface Dressing contract awarded & one Restoration Improvement contract awarded. Two further Restoration Improvement contracts are at Tender Assessment stage
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#### 2. (b) Specific Improvement Grant

R162 Kilberry Traffic Calming	Section 38 non-statutory public consultation re proposed next phase (Phase 2) completed and Phase 2 design and tender document preparation now underway
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#### 2. (c) Safety Improvement Works on Regional & Local Roads - Allocation for Safety Schemes

2020 Schemes	Road	Status
Newhaggard Road	R161	Traffic Lights installed - waiting on ESB to complete connection

2021 Schemes	Road	Status
Newgate	R147	At Design Stage
Liscarton	R147	At Design Stage
Cabinhill	L-1006-0	Consultation with Landowners
Clonguiffin, Longwood	L-4020/ L-80142- 47 /L-2226-0	Consultation with Landowners
Donaghpatrick	L-3409-18/ L- 7414-12	At Design Stage
Kilmore Moynalvey	R-156 / L-62161	At Design Stage
Cabinhill Reask Junction	L-5006-25/ L- 5024-8	Landowner issues – safety works scheme may not proceed

## 2.(d) Bridge Rehabilitation Works Regional & Local Roads – Allocation for 6 Bridge Schemes

2020 Schemes	Status
Stoneyford Bridge	Works complete
Kilmainhamwood & Donaghmore	Design of repairs to retaining walls and embankments are ongoing

2021 Schemes	Status
Clavens Bridge (R147)	Tender assessment-appointment of consultants - design of remedial works ongoing
Julianstown Bridge (R132)	Consultants appointed to design remedial works
Gibber Bridge (L-7400), Breakey Bridge (L-2805), Johnstown Culvert (L-5050) & Ashfield Bridge (L-8029)	Consultants appointed to design remedial works

Minor Bridge works and Bridge Roadworks Programme 2021 works currently ongoing

## 3. Sustainable Transport Measures Grants 2021 from NTA – €12,885,000

Navan Town Scheme (Navan 2030)	Ironmongery (manhole lids/watermain valves etc) raised in pavements on Abbey Rd & Bridge St to tie into new pavement. Accommodation works to entrances to school & Garda Station commenced. Bollards and traffic signage poles installed on Bridge St & Abbey Rd, general 'snagging' works undertaken in both locations. Works commenced on Ludlow St, with full road closure until 31 Aug 2021.
Navan Town Bus Stops	Works commenced on Clonmaggaden Rd on 13 <sup>th</sup> of April to construct new bus stops. Works to commence on Commons Rd in May.
Athlumney to Trim Road Cycle and Pedestrian Scheme	Draft tender documents (drawings) received for section from Dan Shaw Rd to the Solstice roundabout, and are currently under review. Meeting held with Irish Rail in relation to the upgrade of the rail crossing.

N51 Park & Ride	Contractors appointed for the Archaeological Investigation works and Topographical Survey for the site. Investigation works and survey work to commence at the end of the month. Detailed design ongoing.
Ratoath Cycle Network	Alternative layouts discussed with the NTA. A number of drafted options have been issued to the NTA for their approval /comments, before re-engaging with residents. In house Topographical Survey being carried out.
Bus Shelters	Detailed designs for 11 locations prepared and under review. It is anticipated tender documents will be ready for issue in May 2021.
Accessible Bus Stops	Detailed designs for 8 locations prepared and under review. It is anticipated tender documents will be ready for issue in May 2021

NTA Jobs Stimulus Programme 2020 (€3,105,000): Of the 38 schemes, 28 schemes are complete. The remaining 10 schemes are on hold due to the current Covid restrictions.

#### 4. Non- National Roads/Sustainable Transport Schemes - Funding other than primarily DoT & NTA

Athboy Town Centre Project	Public consultation in relation to potential options for the improved bus stop facilities and associated ancillary works in Athboy expected to take place before end Q2 2021.
Milltown Rd/Ashbourne-Rd Safety Improvement Scheme	Snagging works delayed due to ESB not completing outstanding works, now scheduled for 29th April & 6th May. Stage 3 Safety Audit will follow once ESB are finished. Final A/C to be agreed with the contractor.
R135 Cycle Network Design	CCTV contractor also most complete on site. Tender documents issued for site investigation works. Detailed design progressing, meeting with Designer (DBFL) to tie down date for completion of design and issuing of scheme tender.

#### 5. Other Actions/ Projects

<b>Risk Mitigation – Footpath Improvement Works</b>	<p><b>Kells MD</b> –Athboy - Church View &amp; St Joseph Villas estates - Works are complete.</p> <p><b>Ashbourne MD</b> – Proposed Schemes in Ardcah (Church View Housing Estate); Stamullen (Mountain View Housing Estate entrance); Bellewstown (Woodview Estate) - Works have commenced on 15/04/21</p> <p><b>Trim MD</b> –Kildalkey Rd and Mornington Heights at contract award stage with site works due to commence end of April</p> <p><b>Laytown/ Bettystown MD</b> - Coney Hall Mornington – Site works commenced on the 13/04/21.</p> <p><b>Ratoath MD</b>- Dunshaughlin Main Street, currently at contractor appointment stage</p>
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	<p><b>Navan MD</b> – Blackcastle Estate – works by Contractor progressing well and on program for completion by the end of May</p> <p>Clonmagadden Rd Shared Space Upgrade Scheme – preliminary design ongoing. Intention is to have final design and tender documents prepared by end of May 2021.</p>
<b>Public Lighting Capital Programme</b>	Programme of Capital Public Lighting Schemes - Schemes selected in 2020 are 90% complete
<b>Housing Estate 30km/h Special Speed Limit Bye-Law</b>	110 number housing estates identified as part of a public consultation earlier this year, currently being assessed and surveyed for inclusion in an updated 30km/h speed limit Bye-Law. Bye-Law expected to be adopted by the end of 2021 and to come into effect by end Q2 2022 to allow for signage installation early next year.
<b>Johnstown Village Traffic Calming Scheme</b>	Provision of speed control ramps & associated signage on roads through Old Johnstown Village, Navan - Contractor appointed - due to commence by end of May 2021
<b>Pedestrian Crossings at Round-O pub on R161 &amp; N51</b>	Preliminary design works being completed for provision of 2 No. zebra pedestrian crossings North of the Round-O junction in Navan; one each on R162 Kingscourt Rd & N51 Slane Rd. Intended to have final designs & tender docs prepared by mid May 2021

## Environment

### **Waste Prevention, Reduction and Litter**

**Anti-Dumping Initiative 2021 (ADI)** - Details of the 2021 scheme have been announced and aiming to reduce incidents of illegal dumping nationally by providing funding for projects aimed at tackling the problem, using a collaborative approach involving local authorities, communities and other State Agencies. The focus of the ADI for 2021 will be on 4 key areas and namely prevention, abatement, education and enforcement and applications made via the Waste Enforcement Regional Lead Authority Office will be assessed based on their potential impact in these areas. The closing date for receipt of applications is Wednesday, May 5<sup>th</sup>.

Since the introduction of the ADI scheme in 2017 a total of 23 projects have been approved for Meath projects.

**Green Kilometre Scheme for Meath** - The scheme which commits individuals or groups to maintaining a kilometre or longer stretch of local road free of litter over the course of a year is continuing to attract considerable interest with now near 200 individuals / groups now participating.

Incentives of some native trees, litter pickers, bags and gloves are on offer for all participating individuals/groups and if desired the Council will arrange for an adviser (when restrictions allow) to visit to give advice in relation to planting, care of heritage features etc, where applicable.

**Draft National Strategy for Ireland to transition to a Circular Economy** - The Government has published a [draft national strategy](#) on how Ireland can transition to a Circular Economy and is inviting businesses, communities and citizens to contribute their views through a public consultation.

The draft Strategy sets out what is a circular economy, why Ireland needs to achieve a circular economy and how national policy will develop to support that goal. The public consultation is open until 11<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

To help communities make the transition to a circular economy, the Government has launched a new [Circular Economy Innovation Grant Scheme \(CEIGS\)](#). This grant scheme aims to support innovation and circular economy projects by social enterprises, voluntary and community organisations and businesses with less than 50 employees. The total CEIGS is €250,000 for the 2021 call. The maximum year 1 grant available will be €50,000 – the indicative funding range for projects is €10,000 - €50,000. The closing date for applications is May 28, 2021.

In line with the measures proposed in the Waste Action Plan, also launched is a consultation on Ireland's new [Circular Economy Programme](#), led by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This new programme builds on fifteen years of leadership by the EPA on waste prevention, including Ireland's well-regarded food waste prevention campaign and the development of national guidance on priority topics such as Construction Waste Management and Green Public Procurement.



**Rubbish Film Festival** - Beaufort College Navan and O'Carolan College in Nobber were the winners and runners up in the Rubbish Film Festival Online Awards in April.

The Transition Year students in 10 secondary schools across the county learn how to make a short video of their choice with an overarching Climate theme. The resulting movies were very well received by the judging panel from the Climate Action Team. The workshops will take place for next years TY students in the Autumn. The students will present their movies which will be shown together with the announcement of winners at the Guth Gafa International Documentary Festival in Kells in 2021.

**Sustainable Gardening Course** - A sustainable gardening course designed by horticulturalist and environmentalist Aoife Munn to support the work of Tidy Towns Groups began on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, and will run for 5 weeks. It has proven to be hugely popular.

#### **Forest and Wildfires Awareness Initiative**

The Environment Section has engaged with the Fire Service and Coillte to carry out a social media campaign to increase awareness surrounding the prevention forest and wildfires in County Meath. The collaboration will include a video informing the public of the issues and impacts fires have on forests and our Environment.

#### **River Basin Management Plan (RBMP)**

Drafting of the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle River Basin Management Plan (for the period 2022 – 2027) is underway and the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage (DHLGH) hope to publish same in mid-summer. An extensive public consultation process, including public meetings in every municipal district in the country and presentation to SPCs and full Council levels, is commencing. It is planned for the final plan to be adopted in early 2022.

#### **Code of Practice for Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems.**

The Code of Practice establishes an overall framework of best practice in relation to the development of domestic waste water treatment systems, in unsewered rural areas, for protection of our environment and specifically water quality and human health.

The [2021 Code of Practice for Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems](#) (Population Equivalent ≤ 10) applies to site assessments and subsequent installations carried out on or after June 7, 2021.

The [2009 Code of Practice Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single Houses](#) (p.e. ≤ 10) may be used for site assessments and subsequent installations commenced before June 7, 2021 or where planning permission has been applied for before that date.

The Code of Practice sets out a methodology for site assessment and selection, installation and maintenance of an appropriate domestic waste water treatment system. It includes information on:

- policy and legal background;

- waste water characteristics and loadings;
- how to characterise a site and decide on the type of domestic waste water treatment system;
- required minimum separation distances, depths of unsaturated soil and/or subsoil above the bedrock and the water table, and percolation values; and
- design, installation, operation and maintenance.

### **Climate Action**

The Council's activities in respect of Climate action will be the subject of a presentation at the May 2021 Council meeting and to include details on:

- Identification of a Decarbonisation Zone
- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- The URBACT Project (Trim)
- Establishment of an Energy Bureau
- The role of the Climate Action Forum
- The Low Carbon and Climate Action Bill and the subsequent preparation of a Climate Action Plan within 18 months.

The Climate Action Regional Offices (CARO) have just launched a website [www.caro.ie](http://www.caro.ie) to support all County and City Councils in leading Ireland's climate action efforts.

### **Rooske Road Burial Ground Extension Dunboyne**

Work is continuing on the extension to the Rooske Road Cemetery in Dunboyne, with additional capacity to be available in early June. Further expansion is planned which involves the acquisition of some adjoining lands which will facilitate the provision of parking and other associated facilities. Some development will be the subject of a Part 8 planning process in the coming months.

## Community

### **Governance Structures**

#### **Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)**

Next meeting is scheduled to take place on April 30, 2021.

#### **LEADER Programme 2014-2020**

Next meeting is scheduled to take place on April 30, 2021. The LAG will receive details of LEADER Transitional Programme and any EOIs received.

#### **Joint Policing Committee**

The next Meeting of the JPC is scheduled for May 24, 2021.

#### **Age Friendly County programme (AF)**

Meath Age Friendly continues to work with the various sections and groups to roll out initiatives under the Keep Well national campaign which continues until June. AF continues to roll out the local Age Friendly Business Initiative in Athboy where a second workshop was held with business owners recently.

#### **Meath Public Participation Network (PPN)**

A draft Framework of Principles and Purpose for Meath PPN was issued to all member groups. There has been a positive response and a real appetite for change, which provides a solid basis for developing the PPN's potential in Meath. A Plenary (a meeting of all member groups) was held on April 28<sup>th</sup> via Zoom.

#### **Carranstown Grant Scheme**

A meeting of the ICLC took place on 30<sup>th</sup> March and recommended grants to the value of €101,500 to 25 groups who applied for grant assistance under the 2020 Scheme. These recommendations are part of the May Council Meeting for approval.

#### **Comhairle na n'Óg**

The Comhairle is continuing to make their voices heard through consultation. One Comhairle Member is sitting on the Youth Action Group for the UN Consultation on the rights of Children and two additional Comhairle Members will be participating in the online consultation which will be taking place online in May.

One Comhairle member met with Minister Jack Chambers TD on April 19<sup>th</sup>, regarding the consultation piece on young people's participation in sport. Three members also attended the Comhairle networking event at the start of April and reported back to the group. The National Executive member is taking part in a student survey on Public Transport.

## **Broadband**

**National Broadband Plan** – National Broadband Ireland (NBI) commenced surveying for the Navan Deployment Area on April 19<sup>th</sup>. The work involved walking the potential routes to examine existing open air and enet infrastructure. They will also examine how fibre could potentially be delivered to each home in the intervention area around Navan.



**WiFi4EU** - The WiFi4EU Network in Navan was commissioned in April across several locations in the town centre (as highlighted on the map). Meath County Council would like to thank all the businesses who facilitated the delivery of this initiative.

## **Meath Digital Strategy**

A review of the 2020 outcomes from the Meath Digital Strategy has been completed. Several new actions for 2021 into 2022 have been identified.

## **Grant Schemes**

### **The Community Grant Scheme 2021**

Letters issued to all applicants advising them of the decision and their allocation as appropriate. Grant claims will be processed as they are received with all claims to be submitted by 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

### **Schools Pride of Place Gardening Scheme**

48 applications were received under the scheme and schools have until the 11<sup>th</sup> June to complete their work and submit their journals for assessment. Assessments are taking place virtually this year.

## **CLÁR**

Details of applications to the Department of Rural & Community Development ([clar@dracd.gov.ie](mailto:clar@dracd.gov.ie)) from Community Groups and closing dates are set out below:

- Measure 3: Community Wellbeing Measure, comprising:
  - (b) Mobility and Cancer Care Transport 7<sup>th</sup> May 2021
- Innovation Measure – 21<sup>st</sup> May 2021

**Pride of Place Scheme 2021**

The Pride of Place Scheme for 2021 launched on April 12<sup>th</sup>, the closing date for the receipt of applications is Friday, May 28, 2021. Applications are available from [www.meath.ie](http://www.meath.ie) or from the Community Department.

# Libraries Service

## Library Services Overview

Due to Level 5 restrictions all twelve branches in the county remain closed for browsing and lending, although this will change from the week commencing May 10<sup>th</sup>. Online services will continue to be available. 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.

Any registered library user can sign up for the **Borrowbox** service, download the app, and begin to borrow eBooks and eAudiobooks from the national eBook collection. Stock selection is selected by a purchasing team of two librarians from two local authorities, and staff in local authorities can make recommendations on content purchasing based on user requests. Library users have an allocation of five loans across both eBooks and eAudiobooks. Titles are loaned for up to three weeks. The allocation of five loans can be used for reserving titles currently on loan also, for example a user could divide and use their allocation as one eBook loan, one eAudiobook loan and three eBook reserves.

## **E-Magazine service**

An upcoming migration of the e-magazine service from RBDigital to OverDrive/Libby will increase the range of magazines on offer to the public.

The Libby/OverDrive e-magazines collection is comprised of almost 3,400 titles. Over 90% of the titles that were on RBDigital are also on the Libby e-magazine service. All titles are unlimited simultaneous access with no circulation caps, including *The Economist* and other top-circulating titles. and all will be launched with three years' back issues (where available) from the outset. The e-Magazines are available in a variety of languages including Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, Italian, German, and French.

## **Meath County Council Library Service Writer in Residence scheme 2021- Appointment**

Meath County Council is pleased to announce that local author Fiona Sherlock has been appointed as Writer in Residence for 2021. The residency runs from April to December and will be managed by Meath County Council Library Service. The Writer in Residence programme is a key element of Meath's Creative Ireland Strategy.

Fiona Sherlock is a crime writer from Bective in Meath and released two murder mysteries during the lockdown. *Preserved*, a modern murder mystery is out now, published by Poolbeg. *Twelve*

*Motives for Murder* is an immersive murder mystery experience published in audio and ebook by Hodder Studios. She creates murder mystery games for Zoom and in real life. She also writes poetry and is mammy to two small children.

Ms Sherlock will engage with a wide range of audiences during her residency and will host a series of public workshops and events, including two events for children and young adults for this year's Cruinniú na nÓg festival.



Welcoming her appointment, Fiona Sherlock said:

*"I'm just delighted with my appointment as this year's Meath-Writer-in-Residence. Through the pandemic, Meath Library has excelled in providing online resources for library users, and as society reopens, I look forward to working with them to deliver events online and in person, where restrictions allow. As we collectively process the trauma of the pandemic, it's a very exciting time to undertake this role, supporting the reading and writing communities in Meath. The written word is a hugely powerful tool, which helps us discover new ideas, escape and learn about ourselves as people."*

**Eduroam** - Eduroam is a federated service that allows roaming research and educational users to more easily obtain Internet access via the WiFi service at participating sites. When attaching to eduroam WiFi users are authenticated via their home institution. If authentication succeeds the user is granted wireless network access.

An application to introduce the service to all twelve branch libraries is currently with HEAnet and the application is supported by the broadband officer.

### **Keep Well**

**Magic Tables** - The very successful 'Magic Table' initiative is currently being expanded to introduce tables to the two public nursing homes in the county at Navan and Trim. The new service will be introduced and supported on an outreach basis by library staff. The tables are currently on order and will be installed in the coming months. The latest version of the 'Magic Table' suite of interactive games is particularly suitable for patients suffering with dementia.

### **Gaeilge – Creative Ireland**

Dr Tracey Ní Mhaonaigh's *The Life & Legacy of Eoghan Ó Gramhnaigh* was first published in *Ríocht na Midhe* in 2019. Meath County Council is reprinting the work, accompanied by poems by Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill, Paul Muldoon, Tom French and Máirtín Coilféir and by images of unpublished material held at the Russell Library, NUI Maynooth, in the hopes that a new generation of readers will come to recognise the remarkable life of this native son of Athboy, County Meath. The publication of this volume is an action of Meath's Creative Ireland strategy. The publication is particularly timely given the renewed focus afforded to the Irish language by Meath County Council with the recent appointment of an Irish Language officer.

## Economic Development

### Overview of Activity

Activity	Approvals
Mentoring Assignments	7
Trading Online Vouchers Approved	8
Training Courses Attended (online)	184
LEO Fund Grants Approved / Agile Grant of €57,659 approved to Bridgeman Engineering / Grad Start of €30,000 for Goodman Engineering	5

### **Innovate Accelerate Europe Programme (IAE) - Export Readiness**

The programme has been jointly designed and implemented by the Meath and Louth Local Enterprise Offices and the Newry and Mourne Enterprise Agency. The IAE Programme is the first International business collaboration programme on the island of Ireland which has been adapted to operate within the constraints which have resulted from the Covid pandemic. This unique offering is designed to enable companies - despite the crisis - to realise their ambition to grow, stay ahead of their competition and significantly increase their earning potential and extend their reach beyond the island of Ireland.

The key aims of the programme are:

- To protect against the potential economic isolation brought on by Brexit, which threatens the region by supporting equality of opportunity through enabling SME owner-managers to transition from servicing local to external markets through engaging in transnational business collaboration.
- To develop a cross-border support infrastructure for SMEs challenged by Brexit, to increase their knowledge and capacity of the driving forces within their market; to develop the competitiveness of their businesses and the capacity of their staff; to engage effectively in sophisticated networking, and to be more innovative in applying management techniques to their own situation.

More specifically it is the ambition of IAE to:

- Encourage cross border and transnational business collaboration to increase SME growth potential.
- To help SMEs to investigate business collaboration opportunities in Europe afforded by new technology.
- To help SMEs to engage in new market and new product development by establishing business to business links and business to education/research links.
- To encourage innovation by assisting SMEs to adopt and implement new technologies, new management methods and best practices.



- To strengthen relationships between enterprise support agencies on both sides of the border through collaboration in devising and delivering enterprise support programmes which are consistent, quality driven, and offer good value for money.

The programme uses a mixture of one-to-one mentoring, taped masterclasses by experts, preparation of a bespoke export readiness appraisal, production of professional grade videography for each client along with a focused social media promotion programme.

### **Implementation – Food Companies**

The first sector to be targeted by this programme was the small food manufacturing sector, as it was well understood that they would be the hardest hit by Brexit. Different sectors will be addressed in subsequent roll outs of the programme in 2021 and 2022. Twenty one food and drink sector companies from the region, who were judged to have the potential to benefit from the programme, were recruited during August and September 2020.

#### **Key Deliverables:**

- Between April and June 2020 a panel of EU-based agents was recruited to assist the Partnership in targeting key EU markets - The Vision Works in Germany, MindShare in France, LimEU in Italy and INDA Iniciativas Spain.
- Between September and December 2020 with the help of a mentor each company owner/manager drew up a set of internationalisation objectives which he/she hoped to achieve as a part of an “International Activity Readiness Assessment”. These were all completed.
- Four online training sessions took place between September and the end of November 2020. These were presented via bespoke video content which had been newly made specifically for the purpose of engaging the interest of clients in an exclusively remote online interaction which had been forced on us by pandemic restrictions. Complex concepts had to be communicated in a compelling way. The aim was as far as possible to “walk” business owner/managers through a visualisation of what attending a trade fair, pitching to prospective international partners and building a relationship with them would be like.
- Twenty one bespoke professionally produced promotional videos, one for each of our clients, were prepared. This was delivered during November and December 2020.
- The international business-to-business collaboration element of the programme also got underway in November and December. This culminated in a Virtual B2B Meet event in April 2021 which enabled client companies to enter into direct dialogues about business collaboration opportunities with food companies based in Germany, France, Italy and Spain.

### **The Future**

Based on the success of the food based programme the implementation team are preparing to begin recruiting for the next realisation of the programme. This will be targeting technology based companies. Lessons learned from the food implementation will be incorporated in the rollout of subsequent programmes.

## Finance Section

### Commercial Rates

**Commercial Rates Waiver Scheme:** Quarter 1 & 2 of 2021 have been applied to qualifying Commercial Rate accounts totalling €5,982,777 to a total of 1,980 customers.

It should be noted that this waiver scheme has different eligibility criteria in comparison to previous waiver schemes in 2020. Statements have issued to all Rate Customers showing these adjustments if applied. Information was also circulated with the statements on how to lodge an appeal if the Waiver was not received.

**Small Business Assistance Scheme for Covid (SBASC):** The applications portal is now closed for Q1 2021. A total of 374 applications were received, 250 of which were fully completed and are in the process of being assessed.

### Housing Loans

<b>Loans Data 1st February 2018 to 22nd April 2021</b>	
<b>Applications Received</b>	<b>418</b>
<b>Applications Returned</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Applications awaiting further information not Submitted to Housing Agency</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Applications Submitted to Housing Agency for Assessment/Recommendation</b>	<b>398</b>
<b>Applications Awaiting Assessment /Recommendation by Housing Agency</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Applications Awaiting Decision by Meath County Council Credit Committee</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Applications Approved by the Meath County Council Credit Committee</b>	<b>246</b>
<b>Applications Refused by the Meath County Council Credit Committee</b>	<b>143</b>
	<b>398</b>
<b>Approvals Drawdown by Customer for House Purchase (includes restructuring)</b>	<b>161</b>
<b>No of customers in MARP</b>	<b>34</b>