



comhairle chontae na mí
meath county council

2023

ANNUAL REPORT

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This Annual Report has been prepared in accordance with Section 221 of the Local Government Act and adopted by the members of Meath County Council in May 2024.

Joint Foreword An Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Tommy Reilly & Chief Executive, Mr. Kieran Kehoe

This Annual Report showcases the wide variety of services provided by Meath County Council which include not only the core services of housing, roads, fire and emergency services but also our supports to local communities in the areas of the arts, libraries, heritage, conservation, age friendly and economic development.

It has been another busy year for the Council. The provision of social and affordable housing continued to be a priority for the Council in 2023 and this is evidenced by our significant spend of over €151m in the delivery of 518 social houses, as well as the delivery of 70 affordable dwellings within the county.

We'd like to pay tribute to the Community Response Forum who work tirelessly to provide assistance and support to internal protection applicants, and we commend our communities for the variety of community integration initiatives which have taken place throughout the county.

In May 2023 we were delighted to officially open the Swift Cultural Centre in Trim. In collaboration with Trim Library it provides a diverse and enriching community learning, engagement and performance programme for the public. It was our privilege to showcase this fabulous facility, as well as the town of Trim, to President Michael D. Higgins and Mrs. Higgins during their visit in June 2023.

The Council is dedicated to the transition towards an environmentally sustainable, climate-neutral economy that is rich in biodiversity and resilient to climate change. As part of this programme, in August 2023, 345 solar photovoltaic panels were installed on the roof of Buvinda House. It is estimated that our electricity consumption from the national grid will be reduced by approximately 30% during the height of the Summer.

Throughout 2023 work continued on the Navan Town 2030 Scheme and we welcome the continued growth in users of the N1 and N2 bus services. In addition, public realm works were completed at Kennedy Plaza to create a pedestrian plaza which forms part of the rejuvenation of Navan town. 2023 also saw the completion of construction of the Park and Ride on the N51 at Moatlands, and the commencement of further work to expand the cycle network in Navan on the Trim Road. We would like to pay tribute to the local businesses and residents for their patience and ongoing support as works continue on the Navan 2030 scheme.

One of the most exciting events of the year was the Púca Festival, which took place during the Halloween season in Trim and Athboy. The Festival attracted approximately 44,000 visitors to the county and reportedly boosted the economy by c€4.6m. We are committed to building on the success of Púca, and we are looking forward to the publication of the Meath Tourism Strategy later this year.

We'd like to take the opportunity to offer our condolences to Staff and Elected Members of the Council who have lost loved ones over the past year and we remember our dear friend and colleague Cllr. Damien O'Reilly, who passed away in September 2023.

Finally, we'd like to thank the Elected Members, the staff of Meath County Council as well as the business and community groups who support the work of the Council to drive the economic, social, cultural and environmental improvement of our county and to enhance the quality of life for the people of Meath. We commend you all for your commitment and dedication as we work together for the betterment of our County and the people of Meath.



2023 – Corporate and Civic Events

AGM 2023



Newly elected Cathaoirleach Cllr. Tommy Reilly with Leas Chathaoirleach Cllr. Paul McCabe and Chief Executive Fiona Lawless at the Annual General meeting, which took place on June 10, 2023.

Millrace, Ashbourne



Cathaoirleach Cllr. Nick Killian and Chief Executive Jackie Maguire welcomed the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Darragh O'Brien TD to Millrace, Ashbourne.

Official Opening of Community Centre in Blackwater Park



Cathaoirleach Cllr. Nick Killian, Mayor of Navan Cllr. Eddie Fennessy and Meath County Council Chief Executive Jackie Maguire officially opened new facilities at Blackwater Park, Navan.

Twining Agreement between Ireland and New York



Cathaoirleach Cllr. Nick Killian pictured with Michael Hodin, CEO of the Global Coalition on Aging and Jackie Maguire, Chief Executive of Meath County Council signing a Twining Agreement between Ireland and New York at the New York City Department for Ageing.

Completed Works at John Street Gardens, Kells



Leas Chathaoirleach Cllr. Mike Bray was joined in Kells by Minister for Sport and Physical Education Thomas Byrne TD, Kells MD Elected Members and Meath County Council staff to acknowledge the completed works at John Street Gardens.

Nobber Fire Station Official Opening



The newly upgraded Nobber Fire Station was officially opened by Meath County Council Cathaoirleach Cllr. Nick Killian. The opening follows the completion of works to the station of €1,100,000 with the redevelopment being funded by the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management in the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage

Park & Ride Facility Opens at Garlow Cross



Cathaoirleach Cllr. Nick Killian pictured with Cathaoirleach of Ashbourne MD Cllr. Amanda Smith and Cormac Ross, Meath County Council Resident Engineer at the new Park and Ride facility at Garlow Cross.

Launch of the 3rd Meath Age Friendly Strategy



Cathaoirleach Cllr. Nick Killian was joined by Chief Executive Jackie Maguire, Director of Services Barry Lynch and the Chair of the Age Friendly Alliance, Michael Finnegan, to launch the 3rd Meath Age Friendly Strategy.

Completion of the N51 Dunmoe Phase 2 Realignment



Cathaoirleach Cllr. Nick Killian pictured at Wiggers Cross with Cathaoirleach of Navan MD Cllr. Eddie Fennessy, Cathaoirleach of Laytown/Bettystown MD Cllr. Wayne Harding and Chief Executive Ms. Jackie Maguire.

Green Coast Award for Bettystown Beach



Bettystown Beach was granted its first-ever Green Coast Award in the International Blue Flag and the National Green Coast Awards for 2023.

Official opening of Swift Cultural Centre



Meath County Council welcomed Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, to Meath to officially open the newly built Swift Cultural Centre.

Official Opening of the Broadband Connection Point Network in Meath



Minister for Rural and Community Development Heather Humphreys TD travelled to Bective GFC, where she officially opened the Broadband Connection Point network in Meath.

Official opening of the Linear Walkway, Rooske Road, Dunboyne



At the Linear Walkway's official opening, Rooske Road, Dunboyne, are Meath County Council Chief Executive Fiona Lawless, Minister Thomas Byrne TD, Cathaoirleach of Meath County Council Cllr. Nick Killian with Minister Helen McEntee TD, and Cathaoirleach of Ratoath MD Cllr. Gillian Toole.

Official Opening of the Castletown Trail



Cathaoirleach of Kells Municipal District Cllr. Eugene Cassidy was joined by Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee TD, to officially open Castletown Trail.

Rose of Tralee Tour 2023



Meath County Council welcomed the Rose of Tralee Tour 2023 to Meath during August, where the 32 contestants of this year's Rose of Tralee contest enjoyed everything the Royal County offers.

Official Opening of the Nobber to Kilmainhamwood section of Greenway



The Cathaoirleach, Cllr Tommy Reilly, and Chief Executive Fiona Lawless pictured at the official opening of the latest completed section of the Boyne Valley to Lakelands Greenway between Nobber and Kilmainhamwood.

Corporate Affairs and Governance

The Corporate Affairs and Governance Department works within a framework of democratic principles and ethics, providing services to the Elected Members, the management of meetings and the preparation of the Register of Electors. It also facilitates the delivery of services to the public, through our customer services team, the management of corporate facilities, safety and health procedures and supports effective corporate governance practices. It also manages communications and media relations, corporate events, twinning and relations with a number of relevant bodies.

Meath County Council is committed to meeting our obligations under Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014. A Working Group has been set up to oversee the development of the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty: Implementation Plan, which sets out the frame within which Meath County Council is implementing its duty.

1.1 2023 Service Delivery Plan

The 2023 Service Delivery Plan was adopted by Meath County Council in February 2023. The service plan set out the principal services that the Council intended to provide to the public in the period to the end of 2023. Alongside these principal services, the plan set out the Corporate Plan's Supporting Strategies, the service funding, service objectives, performance standards and timelines for the delivery of these services. The associated risks to delivering the principal services are also identified and it outlines whether these are captured by the Council's risk management process. The 2023 Annual Report serves to provide an assessment of the delivery of services as set out in the service delivery plan for 2023.

NOAC was established under the 2014 Local Government Reform Act to provide independent oversight of the Local Government Sector. The statutory functions assigned to NOAC include the scrutiny of the performance of local government bodies against relevant indicators. In 2022, there were 44 separate indicators covering 11 areas that the Commission considered appropriate to review. NOAC published the Local Authority Performance Indicator Report 2022 in September 2023, and a synopsis of the Council's performance is included at Appendix 12.

1.2 Meeting Administration

To facilitate and improve accessibility for Elected Members and members of the public, most Council meetings are now held in hybrid format, in person and via the Zoom online platform.

The Annual General Meeting was held in the refurbished conference room in Buvinda House on June 12, 2023. Councillor Tommy Reilly was elected Cathaoirleach and Councillor Paul McCabe was elected Leas-Chathaoirleach.

The Annual Budget Meeting was held on November 27th, 2023, and saw the adoption of the Council's revenue budget for 2023 in the sum of €208,717,215.

Council Meetings 2023	No. of meetings
Ordinary (monthly) meetings	10
Annual and Budget Meetings	3
Special Meetings	2
Total	15

MD Meetings:

Municipal District 2023	No. of Ordinary Meetings	No. of Special Meetings	No. of Annual & Budget Meetings	Total
Ashbourne	11		2	13
Kells	11	1	2	14
Laytown-Bettystown	11	-	2	13
Navan	11	-	2	13
Ratoath	11		2	13
Trim	11	-	2	13
TOTAL	66	1	12	79

1.3 MD Allocation Scheme

In 2023, a total of 611 applications were processed, totalling €599,441. This represented allocations of €38,073 towards 15 internal projects and €561,368 benefitting 596 groups across the county, representing a wide variety of sectors, including community, sporting and heritage groups, residents' associations, and support services. A further €18,950 was deferred towards projects in 2024 and €17,664 reverted to the relevant municipal district for allocation.

1.4 Register of Electors

The Corporate Affairs and Governance Department manages the on-going process of information gathering, quality control, publication and distribution of the Register of Electors. The Register of Electors was published in February 2023. There were no electoral events in 2023. The following outlines the various categories of electors in the county:

Dáil Electors	144,102
Presidential Electors	142,607
European Electors	144,362
Local Electors	148,854
Postal Voters & Special Voters	689

The following is a breakdown of the Local Electors in each Local Electoral Area:

Ashbourne	21,403
Kells	26,098
Laytown-Bettystown	25,774
Navan	23,157
Ratoath	26,546
Trim	25,876

1.5 Ethics

The role of Ethics Registrar is set out in Part 15 of Local Government Act, 2001 and is managed by Corporate Affairs and Governance. The following sets out Ethics Registrar activities in 2023:

Possible Part 15 Contraventions notified	2
Complaints referred to Chief Executive and/or Cathaoirleach	2
Investigations carried out	2
Cases for disciplinary action/referred to appropriate external bodies	0

All elected members and staff at certain grades are required to make an Annual Declaration of interests to the Ethics Registrar, who maintains a register of such interests. Elected members are also required to submit a declaration of all political donations received each year.

1.6 Freedom of Information

Meath County Council as a public body is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 2014, which allows for access to certain records held by the local authority, subject to a number of exemptions.

In 2023, Meath County Council received 161 Freedom of Information requests, 124 of which were for non-personal records and 37 of which were for personal records, and included 26 requests from journalists, 48 from business/interest groups, and 3 from Oireachtas Members/public representatives.

The following are the 2023 statistics relating to Freedom of Information requests:

Applications Received 2023	161
Carried forward from 2022	4
Total	165
No. of requests Granted	58
No. of requests Part Granted	32
No. of requests Refused	31
Requests Transferred	4
Requests Withdrawn	9
Requests dealt with outside FOI	27
Live Cases at end of 2023	3
No. of Internal Reviews	4
No. of Appeals to Information Commissioner	0

Training:

In October 2023, 24 staff attended FOI decision maker training.

1.7 Access to Information on the Environment (AIE)

The following are the 2023 statistics relating to requests for Access to Information on the Environment requests:

Applications Received 2023	53
Carried forward from 2022	0
Total	53
No. of requests Granted	16
No. of requests Part Granted	15
No. of requests Refused	18
Requests Transferred	0
Requests Withdrawn & handled under FOI	0
Deemed Refused	0
Live Cases at end of 2023	3
No. of Internal Reviews	13
No. of Appeals to Information Commissioner	06

Training:

In November 2023, 12 members of staff from various departments attended training on Access to Information on the Environment Regulations and dealing with AIE requests.

1.8 Data Protection

The core functions of the Data Protection Unit/Data Protection Officer under the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 include processing of data subject access requests (DSAR), data breach investigations and notification to Data Protection Commission (DPC), review of departments record of processing activities (ROPA) and in supporting departments in carrying out data privacy impact assessments (DPIA).

In 2023, the Unit dealt with the following:

Data Subject Requests- DSAR	27
Data Breach Notifications reported to DPU	35
Data Breach Notifications reported to Data Protection Commissioner	0
Review of Data Privacy Impact Assessments (DPIA)	10
Total Number of ROPA	393
Review of Departments Record of Processing Activities (ROPA)	40

The DPU has continued with an internal communications campaign and engagement with data protection liaison officers (DPLOs) across the organisation to improve staff awareness of the Council's obligations and responsibilities in how we collect, use, protect and safeguard personal data, and how are accountable for all our data processing activities.

Training:

Following the identification of data protection training needs, 28 staff from various departments attended

training on the preparation of Data Protection Impact Assessments in December 2023. In addition, training was rolled out to all new staff members joining the Council during the year.

1.9 Customer Service

Meath County Council is committed to delivering the best possible service to our customers, as outlined in our Customer Service Action Plan. We strive for excellence in our customer service model and will endeavour to deliver quality services in accordance with the highest standards of effectiveness, efficiency and integrity.

Throughout 2023 the Customer Service Team continued to serve our elected members, our customers, and staff. As the first point of contact with the organisation, the team logged 41,461 requests on our Customer Relationship Management System. 6,000 representations were received from our Elected Members with 5,600 resolved. A total of 14,000 emails were dealt with which were received through the customer service mailbox.

The Council's contact centre handled a total of 109,094 calls in 2023. 72,555 of these calls were dealt with directly by the Customer Service Team, and a further 36,539 were handled by other service departments.

During 2023, approximately 15,500 customers visited our customer service desks.

To improve our service to our customers, an upgrade to the Customer Relationship Management System (CRM) was rolled out across the Organisation in quarter one along with the introduction of a Members Portal.

1.10 Promotion of the Irish Language

The Irish Language Officer monitors the services that the Council provides through Irish; promotes the Irish language throughout the county and ensures that Meath County council complies with the obligations of the Official Languages Act 2003 and all statutory instruments made under the Act. The following activities were achieved for 2023:

Section 10A Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021 – Advertising

Meath County Council is obliged to place 20% of its annual advertising spend in Irish and 5% to be placed in Irish language media only. The Council was compliant regarding the necessary obligations as per this section of the Act for 2023 and reached 23.4% for placement and 4.85% for the budgetary spend to Irish Language media.

Irish Language Classes

As a result of demand from the local community, especially from the school community and parents whose children attend the Educate Together schools, the Meath County Council Irish Language Officer linked in with the Louth Meath Education Training Board (LMETB) to provide conversational Irish classes for the local community, the objective being that they would be free of charge for participants to encourage Irish as a spoken language, and to give support to parents to assist their children with schoolwork through Irish while enjoying the learning of the language at the same time. The LMETB funded the tutor for these classes and Meath County Council funded the participant fees for a 6 week 1 evening per week course that took place in Claremont Stadium.

Seachtain na Gaeilge

A broad range of activities was organised for the public as part of the annual Irish Language Festival Seachtain na Gaeilge, that takes place between 1 – 17 March. Events organised by the Irish Language Officer included:

- An invite to all ciorcal comhrá groups in Meath to attend a big conversation circle in Navan Education

Centre with Irish dancing and singing;

- Bodhrán lesson through Irish;
- An Irish language evening of song with native speaker Maria McCool.
- The showing of award winning film *An Cailín Ciúin* in Ashbourne Library;
- A traditional Irish dancing session for members of the Ukraine community that took place in Navan Library.
- Two pop up Gaeltachts were organised for the local community and for families who are making the effort to rear their children through Irish. Families were joined by Konor Halpin in the Solstice Theatre who ran a balloon making session through Irish. In cooperation with the Irish Language Officer for Royal Gaels Domhnach Seachnaill GAA, a circus skills session through Irish was organised for families in the GAA club;
- A talk on the Irish language for Leaving Cert classes from the secondary schools in Navan took place in Solstice Theatre and was hosted by Manchán Magan, Creative Ireland Writer in Residence. This talk was funded under the Creative Ireland Programme.

LAMA (The All Ireland Community & Council Awards) 2023

On Saturday, April 15 the LAMA Awards took place in the Minella hotel in Clonmel in Tipperary. These Awards recognise and celebrate communities and councils working together. The Meath County Council was shortlisted for the Best Irish Language Initiative category - Pop Up Gaeltacht for children & families initiative.



Irish Language Officer, Nóirin Murphy, Councillors and Director of Service Des Foley – LAMA Awards 2023

Gaeltacht Scholarship Scheme

The Meath County Council Gaeltacht Scholarship scheme was opened in May and provided 38 residential scholarships to students attending secondary schools in the county. The grants were recoupable against fees paid at recognised residential Irish colleges during the summer of 2023. An Awards Night was held in Buvinda House on Thursday, May 25 for successful applicants. The Gaeltacht Scholarship Scheme is supported by the Meath County Council, Irish Language and Creative Ireland programmes.



Scholarship Awards: Left to Right: Manchán Magan, Cathaoirleach Cllr Nick Killian, Director of Services, Barry Lynch, CE Jackie Maguire, Irish Language Officer, Nóirín Murphy, County Librarian, Ciarán Mangan

Other Irish Language Events & Activities

A pop up Gaeltacht for families raising their children through Irish was held in Solstice Theatre with a Christmas theme in December. There was a Ciorcal Comhra Mór organised in the gardens of the Navan Education Centre in June with guest singer and native Irish speaker Maria McCool. In July a cartoon drawing workshop through Irish, *Ceardlann Chartúin trí Ghaeilge* was held for children aged 9-12 in Navan Library with cartoonist Aidan Courtney.



Ciorcal Comhrá Mór, Navan Education Centre, July 2023

Culture Night

A cultural event was held at Oldcastle Library to celebrate Culture Night on 22 September. The Meath County Council organised an evening of traditional music and songs with the local traditional group in Oldcastle 'An Cupán Tae' and with guest Irish language singer Maria McCool. Maria McCool, a native Irish speaker from the Gweedore Gaeltacht, and who has sung alongside Enya, Moya Brennan and other members of music group *Clannad*, sang songs through Irish such as *Báidin Fheilimí* and *Óro sé do Bheatha 'Bhaile* accompanied by the traditional group.

To continue to promote events happening in the county through the medium of the Irish language in general, the Irish language Officer presented a short piece for Nuacht Cúla 4, the children's Irish language news channel on the new Boyne Valley to Lakelands Greenway. The interview gave the opportunity to spread the word about this amenity among children and families and the Gaeltacht community.

Oifig an Choimisinéara Teanga

The Council continues to cooperate with the Office of the Language Commissioners (Oifig an Choimisinéara Teanga) in aiming to resolve issues regarding signage, publications & correspondence etc. in the Irish language that are in breach of the Official Languages Act. In 2023, a total of four complaints relating to signage & lack of correspondence in Irish were reported to the council from the Commissioner's office, three of which were resolved satisfactorily. Two other existing complaints were carried forward from 2022 as they still remain in progress.

1.11 Governance and Risk Management

The Council's corporate governance policies and procedures are coordinated by the Corporate Affairs and Governance Department.

Throughout 2023, Meath County Council worked with IPB to review its approach to risk management and during March and April, 15 workshops were held to review the corporate and department risk registers. IPB provided an overview of the process to the Audit Committee in September and further support was provided by IPB throughout the year.

1.12 Audit Committee

The Audit Committee plays an independent role in advising the Council on financial reporting processes, internal control, risk management and audit matters as part of a systematic review of the control environment and governance arrangements of the local authority.

The Audit Committee is comprised of 5 members, 3 external members and 2 elected representatives. The current membership is:

- Mr. Tom McGuinness (Chair)
- Ms. Geraldine Tallon
- Ms. Kate Williams
- Cllr. Sean Drew
- Cllr. Gerry O'Connor

During 2023, the Audit Committee continued to make progress in discharging its responsibility to provide independent assurance on the Council's control environment and governance framework. It continued to focus on financial management and risk management, including cyber security preparedness.

In accordance with statutory legislation and regulations, the Audit Committee's Annual Report 2023 and the Audit Committee Report on the 2022 Audited AFS were presented and approved by the Council at its monthly meeting in April 2024. The Audit Committee is satisfied that its statutory and regulatory obligations were carried out and that the objectives in its Work Programme for 2023 were met.

1.13 Internal Audit

The primary role of Internal Audit is to advise management on the adequacy of the Council's internal control systems and provide recommendations for improvement where necessary. It also assists the Audit Committee in carrying out its functions and provides assistance and information to the Local Government Auditor as required.

During 2023 the Internal Audit Unit continued to review and evaluate the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes in accordance with the Internal Audit Work Programme.

The Internal Audit unit maintained a tracker database of all recommendations issued in both internal and external audit reports. In accordance with the Internal Audit Charter, implementation of these recommendations was reviewed and reported to the management team and the Audit Committee during the year.

In the period 2023 four internal audit reports of council activities were completed. The internal audit reviews conducted are as follows:

- Rent Collections and Arrears Management
- Housing Scheme – Riverside Kells
- IT – Follow up of recommendations
- Fuel Cards

The Internal Audit staff also followed up on any outstanding items from previous audits.

1.14 Communications

The Corporate Affairs and Governance Department plays a key role in ensuring that accurate, timely, and relevant information is made available to the public, councillors, and council staff. The Council is also committed to ensuring that our information is written in plain English and is user-friendly.

To ensure efficient communications, Meath County Council aims to:

- Support open, transparent, timely, and effective communications;
- Focus on delivering successful, proactive, high-quality communications;
- Ensure the use of the full range of communication tools and channels available;
- Put insight, measurement, and evaluation at the heart of all that we do, effectively utilising reporting and evaluation to measure the impact of our communications activity;
- Targeted communications to appropriate stakeholders

By being proactive in our communications, engaging our audience, and encouraging feedback, Meath County Council continues to be a reliable and credible source of information for its key stakeholders.

Irish Language Act

The Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021 (2021 Act) was enacted in December 2021, to introduce changes to the Official Languages Act 2003 (2003 Act). Under this provision (Section 10A of the Act as amended), all public bodies are now obliged to undertake at least 20% of their annual advertising in Irish and to spend 5% of their advertising budget on advertising in Irish in the Irish language media. Throughout 2023, the Communications Unit worked closely with the Irish Language Officer to increase the use of the Irish language on

the Council's social media accounts and in traditional media; the Council reached 23.4% for placement and 4.85% for the budgetary spend on Irish Language media.

Traditional Media

Whilst the Council may increasingly use electronic communication and social media platforms, there is still a need to accommodate those residents who continue to rely on printed information, this continues to be conducted through the established press and media outlets.

Social Media Platforms

The Council continues to grow its number of subscribers and followers on our various social media platforms. These platforms continue to assist the communications team in providing up-to-date and timely information, the running of various information campaigns and in reaching various cohorts of the population. The Council will continue to grow its subscriber base and will continue to focus on high quality, accurate and engaging content.

At the end of 2023, the Council recorded the following numbers in relation to social media followers/subscribers:

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Facebook	14,264	17,514	21,632	23,244	24,711
Twitter	8,862	9,842	10,423	10,800	11,208
Instagram	972	2,023	2,657	3,143	3,815
YouTube	31	96	217	259	317
LinkedIn	2,363	2,981	3,637	4,329	5,328

Internal Communications

The implementation of the Internal Communications Programme will continue to contribute to the integration of employees and elected members, foster a feeling of belonging, create a healthy work environment, and increase the efficiency of the Council. The aim is to develop and maintain a spirit of collaboration and better work relations.

The communications team continue to produce a weekly staff newsletter which is sent through email and published on the MCC Connect App each Friday. TV screens in the Simply Honest restaurant in Buvinda House display daily staff messages and notifications. Notice boards throughout the building and in depots are also used to share messages.

Events Management

The Council continues to organise a number of events which are important opportunities to promote the county, show the Council in a good light and/or communicate key messages to the public and the media, such as the opening of Social Housing developments, Age-Friendly activities, opening of Capital Projects, etc.

Some events coordinated by the team in 2023 include:

- Minister Heather Humphreys visit to Meath
- President Michael D Higgins visit to the Swift Cultural Centre
- Castletown Greenway opening with Minister Helen McEntee
- The Meath Rose Tour
- Official Opening of Nobber Fire Station
- Official Opening of The Willows, Dunshuaghlin with Minister Darragh O'Brien
- The launch of Meath Economic Development Roadmap

1.15 Occupational Safety and Health

Meath County Council continued to improve our Safety Management System to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of our employees, contractors and members of the public. The effectiveness of the systems in place were highly scrutinised during external audit which resulted in a positive finding from the audit team, resulting in the international health and safety management standard ISO 45001:2018 being retained by Meath County Council and Meath County Council Fire and Rescue Services.

This success was accomplished through the continued commitment of our employees and external interested parties. Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) documentation was reviewed throughout the year and as relevant updated to ensure compliance. A continuous improvement programme is in place to ensure identified OSH objectives are progressed. In late 2023, a new electronic safety management system was put in place which has greatly enhanced the way in which the Safety Management System is monitored, controlled and actioned.

Regulatory Inspections

The Health and Safety Authority (H.S.A) completed 4 No. Regulatory Inspections in 2023:

- 2 No. Internal (MCC) Operations.
- 2 No. External (Contractor) Operations.

OSH Incident Summary

The reporting of incidents is an important element of our Safety Management System and is used as a tool for identifying areas for continued improvement. A total of 66 incidents were reported during 2023:

Fatal	IR1	IR3	Injury < 3 days	No Injury/ Damage	Injury no absence	Near Miss	V&A	Property Damage	Illness	Other
0	2 Int 1 Ext	0	5	10	8	2	8	14 Int 3 Ext	2	11

The greatest number of incidents reported were in the categories “Slip, Trips and Falls”, “Violent and aggressive behaviour” and “Other”. (Examples of “Other” being Minor wound / cut / abrasions, Animal bites, Minor back injuries and Employee illness).

OSH Training and Awareness

Training is a key element of promoting a positive safety culture and embedding good safety practices.

In addition to a large number of activity specific training, training courses held included Noise Awareness, Safe Pass, Driver CPC Module 4 (RPDTI), Surface Dressing for Operatives, IOSH SHE for Construction Site Mgrs. Refresher and Chemical Awareness & Spill Control to name a few.

Communication, Consultation and Participation

The Council consults and communicates with employees using the following methods:

- MCC App;
- Preparation of Risk Assessments and Safety Procedures;
- Quarterly safety reports;
- Safety representatives;
- Safety Monitoring Groups;
- Safety Management Committee meetings;
- Management Team meetings.

The Safety Monitoring Group Meetings were held with each Section on a six-monthly basis, this allowed for specific safety issues to be discussed and addressed.

Safety Management Committee Meetings were held four times during the year to address issues on a corporate basis and any specific safety issues raised at the Safety Monitoring Group Meetings. These meetings are also used to evaluate compliance with safety and legislation and to review progress on the annual continuous improvement programme.

A number of toolbox talks and safety alerts were issued across relevant Sections, some of these topics included Safety, Health and Wellbeing Awareness, Working on or Near Roads, Basic First Aid Awareness, Weather Warning for Snow, Hedge Cutting Near Overhead Electricity Wires and Lifting Operations.

Flex Manager is used as a communication tool for up-to-date content of the Safety Management System.

OSH Monitoring

OSH audits and inspections of direct and external (contractor) operations were routinely undertaken across all sections of the Council. As noted, the introduction of the new electronic safety management system has greatly enhanced efficiency when carrying out audits and inspections and assigning any actions that may arise. These reviews assist in achieving our OSH objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to improve the effectiveness of safety management through continuous improvement.

Housing

2.0 Social Housing Investment Programme

Meath County Council is committed to realising the ambition of Housing for All at County level, for the benefit of those in need of social housing support, and those impacted by the affordability constraints that exist for many in certain areas of the County. 2023 is another record year for delivery in Meath with significant exceedance of our target. The Housing for All 2022-2026 summary of target and delivery is outlined in Table 1 below and social housing delivery is listed in Table 2 below.

Social Housing Build Target 2022-2026						
Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Total
Target	340	243	249	267	273	1,372
Delivered to date	447	446				
Affordable Target 2022-2026						
Target	10	28	41	36	36	151
Delivered to date	0	70				

Table 1: Housing For All Targets

2023 Social Housing Delivery		
Scheme Type	Nr. Units Delivered	€
AHB CALF Acquisition	1	168,000
AHB CALF Turnkey	278	92,642,201
AHB Long-Term Leasing	38	524,280
CALF Part V	9	2,473,546
CAS Acquisitions	2	411,000
LA Acquisitions	25	6,055,500
LA Part V	92	28,468,270
SHIP Construction	42	11,288,970
SHIP Construction Turnkey	24	7,157,000
SHIP Renewal	7	1,903,910
Grand Total	518	151,092,677

Table 2: Summary of Housing for All 2023 Delivery for Meath as at 19/01/2024

2.1 Social Housing – Direct Construction

Construction works were completed in Lagore Lawn, Phase 2, Dunshaughlin, with the delivery of 42 social units.

Construction works are ongoing on the following sites:

- Gort na Glaise, Farganstown, Navan
- Millrace, Castle St., Ashbourne
- Yellow Ford, Convent Lands, Kildalkey Road, Athboy
- Swan Lane, Balreask, Navan
- St. Francis Park, Navan

Meath County Council advertised a tender to establish a framework for Design Build Contractors for schemes valued between €5m and €35m for Meath, Louth, Monaghan, Cavan, Westmeath, and Longford County Councils. The initial contract called off this framework will be Connaught Grove Phase 2, Athboy.

In addition to the schemes that commenced on site in 2023, tenders were advertised for Rathaldron Court Navan and Pitcher Lane, Kells.

Detailed Designs were progressed for schemes at New Lane, Navan; and Nangle Court, Navan. Design of smaller schemes was commenced inhouse for sites at Blackfriary, Trim; Friars Park, Trim; Woodview Heights, Dunboyne; and Robinstown, Navan.

Meath County Council gave notice of its intention to commence Housing Developments under Section 179A of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 – 2022 for schemes at New Lane, Navan; and Haggard Street, Trim.

There were 50 potential sites and/or turnkey opportunities investigated during 2023. A planning and engineering assessment to determine suitability for development or acquisition was carried out on all sites. A number of Turnkey deliveries were identified and agreed upon with developers.

A summary of all Construction and Turnkey schemes is provided in Table 3.



Meath County Council Site Direct construction – Lagore Lawn, Dunshaughlin

The RTE Show Super Garden – Lagore

5 budding designers wowed RTÉ audiences with their ambitious garden designs for the residents of Lagore Lawn, Dunshaughlin, a brand-new development built by Meath County Council for social housing.

Each designer had a budget of €15,000 and three weeks to build their garden, with €5,000 of the budget allocated to Irish grown plants.

Photo 3 – 'Garden of the Senses' by Kells sculptor, Betty Newman Maguire, for Martin who is recovering from an acquired brain injury.



A summary of all Direct Construction Schemes is provided in Table 3

Project Name	Nr. Units	Estimated Start Date	Estimated Completion Date
Preliminary Design Phase			
Archers Glen, Ashbourne	79	Q3 2024	Q4 2025
Total	79		
Planning Lodged with Aa Bord Pleanala			
Kells, Archdeaconry	22	Q3 2023**	Q4 2024**
Carrick Street Regeneration, Kells	47	Q3 2023**	Q2 2025**
** will be updated when decision is received from ABP			
Planning Process & Detailed Design			
Nangle Close, Navan	12	Q2 2024	Q2 2025
Church View, Rathmolyon	22	Q1 2024	Q1 2025
Haggard Street, Trim	4	Q1 2024	Q1 2025
Abbott Mews, Abbeylands, Navan	6	Q1 2024	Q1 2025
Blackhill Crescent, Donacarney	2	Q1 2024	Q1 2025
Planning Stage & Detailed Design Total	115		
Tender for Construction			
Brews Hill, Navan	12	Q1 2024	Q2/2025
Pitcher Lane, Kells	5	Q2 2024	Q2/2025
Ratholdren Court, Navan	27	Q1 2024	Q1 2025
Newtown, Drumconrath	1	Q1 2024	Q4 2024
Connaught Grove	47	Q2 2024	Q3 2025
Total	92		
Construction Stage			
Gort na Glaise, Farganstown	84	Q1 2023	Q3 2024
Millrace, Castle Street, Ashbourne	74	Q4 2022	Q2 2024
Yellow Ford, Convent Lands, Kildalkey Road, Athboy	28	Q2 2023	Q3 2024
St. Francis Park, Navan	10	Q4 2022	Q2 2024
Swan Lane, Navan	6	Q4 2023	Q4 2024
Lagore Lawn, Phase 2, Dunshaughlin	42	Q1 2022	Completed.
Total	244		
Overall Total	525		

Table 3: Summary Profile of Approved Direct Construction Projects at 31/12/2023

2.2 Part V & Turnkey Social Housing

A summary of Part V & Turn Key Schemes is provided in Table 4.

PROJECT NAME	PROJECT TYPE	NO. OF UNITS
Ashbourne	Part V	4
Drogheda	Part V	11
Dunshaughlin	Part V	6
Kells	Part V	5
Trim	Part V	20
Navan	Part V	34
Donacarney	Part V	2
Kilcock	Part V	2
Slane	Part V	3
Enfield	Part V	2
Kilmessan	Part V	3
Total Part V		92
Kells	Turnkey	12
Donacarney	Turnkey	12
Total Turnkey		24
Grand Total		116

Table 4: Summary Profile of Part V & Turn Key Social Units 31/12/2023

2.3 Approved Housing Bodies

A summary of Approved Housing Body schemes is provided in Table 5.

Project Name	No. of Units	AHB	Estimated Completion
Glen Boann, Donacarney	12	Cluid Housing	Completed Q3/2023
Cois Glaisin	5	Cluid Housing	Completed Q2/2023
Oak Village, The Willows, Dunshaughlin	20	Cluid Housing	Completed Q2/2023
Effernock, Trim	20	Cluid Housing	Completed Q2/2023
Baker Hall	26	Tuath Housing	Complete Q4/2023
Maudlin Vale	31	Tuath Housing	Completed Q4/2023
Applewood Court, Beaufort Place, Navan	21	Tuath Housing	Completed Q4/2023
Swanbrook, Trim Road Navan	112	Tuath Housing	Completed Q4/2023
Swanbrook, Trim Road Navan (last Phase)	7	Tuath Housing	Q2/2024
Mine View, Navan Phase 1	34	Respond	Completed Q1/2023
The Arches, Dunshaughlin	6	Tuath	Completed Q1/2023
Mine View, Navan Phase 2 & 3	29	Respond	Q2/2024
Woodstream, Bailis, Navan	39	Cluid Housing	Q3/2024
Park Avenue Oldcastle	5	Saint Vincent de Paul - CAS	Q2/2025
Tailteann, Navan	8	Meath Women's Refuge	Q4/2025
Total Number of Approved Units	375		

Table 5: Summary Profile of Approved Housing Body Approved Projects At 31/12/2023

2.4 Refurbishment Project – Alverno Court, Laytown

This project consists of 28Nr.units to be refurbished and 2Nr. New Builds. Works commenced on site in Aug 2021, to be completed over 5Nr. Phases. Although the project has experienced significant delays, works are now progressing better. Phase 4 of the project is planned for completion in January 2024. The final Phase (7Nr. units) is expected to be complete in Q2 2024. The two new builds are complete.

2.5 Affordable Housing

Two Affordable Housing Schemes which generated a huge amount of interest were launched in 2023. 20 houses in The Willows, Dunshaughlin and 50 houses in conjunction with the LDA in Baker Hall, Navan. Successful applicants are at various stages of the conveyancing process.

2.6 Housing Capital Expenditure

Claims in the amount of €78,958,326 were made for Housing capital expenditure during 2023 to the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage under the following headings: Acquisitions, Buy & Renew, Construction, Traveller Accommodation, Part V, LAAWS, Turnkey, Voids, Turnkey Admin Costs, EERP, NTW – Wages, EERP Project Management Fees.

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

In 2023, 463 Households received Grant aid under the various Grants schemes in 2023 to the value of €3,272,432.08 including VAT. Grant funding of €2,617,945.60 (80%) was received from the Department of Housing Local Government & Heritage towards these works.

2.8 Local Authority Adaptation Works Scheme

In 2023, 74 projects were completed on existing Council stock with a total expenditure of €645,356.18 including VAT. Grant funding of €580,820.56 (90%) was received from the Department of Housing Local Government & Heritage towards these works.

2.9 Private Rental Inspections

A new Housing Inspections Team was put in place in 2023. 4,745 inspections of private rental accommodation were carried out for the period January-December 2023. 2,730 Improvement Letters, 93 Improvement Notices and 59 follow up letters on Improvement Notices were issued. This was a significant improvement on the 2022 inspection figure of 1,560.

First inspection targets of 1,827 set by the Department of Housing Local Government & Heritage were exceeded by carrying out 1,956 first inspections.

The pass rates were as follows: 1st inspections 16.15%, 2nd inspections 19.3%, 3rd inspections 19.0%, 4th inspections 28%.

2.10 Housing Maintenance

Local Authority Vacant Units Currently Unavailable for Allocation

92 Vacant units required works prior to being re-tenanted in 2023 resulting in expenditure of €2,928,726. A total of €2,505,622 of this was eligible to be claimed from the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage under Void Maintenance and Energy Efficiency Retrofit works.

Table 6 is a summary per Municipal District of the number of vacant properties that currently require works before they can be re-tenanted, as of 12th January 2024. For the period from 16th November 2023 to 12th January 2024, works were completed on 13 vacant units, while 16 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	0	0	0	0	0
Kells	5	1	4	6	4
Laytown/Bettystown	2	1	0	2	1
Navan	6	6	2	12	2
Ratoath	5	2	0	3	4
Trim	10	3	1	4	10
Total	28	13	7**	27	21

Table 6: Current Vacant Properties

**Note: These seven pre-let properties are major refurb which include energy upgrades to bring the property to B2 BER rating or better.

2.11 Response Maintenance

6,571 response maintenance cases were logged in 2023 and subsequently dealt with by Housing Maintenance.

2.12 Estate Management and Settlement

Homeless Service

	SINGLE ADULTS/COUPLES	HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN	TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS
Placements at 31st October 2023 (Previous Reported Figure)	146 (157 Adults)	69 (111 Adults, 109 Children)	215
Placements at 31st December 2023	151 (163)	68 (115 Adults, 110 Children)	219

Table 7: Summary of people in Emergency Accommodation

Of the households with children, 61 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 family breakdown; relationship breakdown; Notice to Quit; unable to find property to rent; domestic violence; overcrowding; couch surfing; addiction; mental health; house fire; unsuitable accommodation; rough sleeping.

81 tenancies were secured through the support provided by the Homeless HAP Place finder Service for the period 1st January 2023 to 31st December 2023.

531 households presented as homeless to Meath County Council in 2023 (271 individual/couples and 260 families).

Summary of the overall EA movements for the year

As at the 1st of January 2023, 186 households were accommodated in Emergency Accommodation (EA).

There were a total of 310 placements in EA over 2023, this includes repeat placements, (6 families moved to the family HUB from EA. 11 singles or couples moved to a Simon House, DHA house or became a family).

260 households exited EA over 2023, some of the exits would include people who were in EA on the 1st of January 2023. As at the 31st of December 2023 we had 219 households in placements in EA.

Impact of the end of the eviction ban

The eviction ban was lifted on the 31st March 2023. The Council did not have a huge number of presentations as homeless at any one time.

On average 8 households a month contacted the Housing Authority as a result of a Notice to Quit. 14 households made contact in May and September.

The reasons for presentations were:

- NTQ – 162;
- Family Circumstances - 151 (family breakdown 78; relationship breakdown 32; domestic violence 27; addiction 8; mental health 5; family home sold 1)
- Aftercare – 5
- Leaving Hospital / Treatment / Prison – 34
- Various reasons - 102 (couch surfing - 31; unsuitable living conditions / overcrowding - 41; rent arrears - 3; unable to afford rent 17; unable to source private rented accommodation 6; left HAP tenancy - 3; left MCC tenancy 1)
- Financial assistance / placefinder assistance requested – 27
- Rough sleeping – 8
- Barring / Protection Order – 8
- Other – 34 (came to Ireland 10; illegal occupiers of MCC property 2; house fire 16; family reunification 1; family circumstance 2; referred from other LA 2; requesting Simon House referral 1)

260 households exited emergency accommodation in 2023 with 38.1% of households exiting into private rented / Local Authority / Approved Housing Body tenancies / Housing First tenancies.

2.13 Tenant in Situ

183 people contacted Meath County Council enquiring about the Tenant in Situ Scheme. We had 16 Tenant in Situ acquisitions completed by the end of December 2023 with a further 16 properties sale agreed and going through the conveyance process.

Presentations	Total
Acquisitions complete (including pre April 2023)	16
Acquisitions in conveyancing	16
Potential acquisitions identified	6
Social Housing Allocations made in lieu of TIS	31
Assessment in progress	44
HAP	14
HAP Only	8
CRTIS	7
Deceased	2
Over the Income Limits	4
Other miscellaneous reasons	35
Total	183

Table 8: Tenant in Situ Acquisitions

The quality of properties that are being submitted as tenant in situ now is much worse than at the beginning of the scheme. We have had 2 properties that could not proceed as they did not pass the technical inspection.

2.14 Tenant Purchase Scheme

Four units were acquired by tenants of Meath County Council in 2023 under the Tenant Purchase Scheme in 2023, at a cumulative discount of €301,503.

2.15 Traveller Accommodation

Progress was made in delivering the 5 Year Traveller Accommodation Programme. Year Four of the programme saw 27 No. social housing allocations to housing applicants from the Traveller community (target 9).

7 No. LAAWS applications completed for Housing People with a Disability (target 3)
The Refurbishment of St Francis' Park commenced.

The Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee (LTACC) met in March, June and December 2023.

LTACC Research Project Report was completed and the report was presented to the LTACC at the January 2024 meeting.

2.16 Tenant Liaison

Estate Management 1st January 2023 – 31st December 2023

ASB Complaints	Totals
ASB Complaints received	1408
ASB complaints received per MD	
Ashbourne	150
Kells	221
Laytown / Bettystown	129
Navan	438
Ratoath	331
Trim	139

Table 9: Complaints

ASB Investigation Cases (One case can include multiple complaints)	Totals
ASB investigation on going	23
ASB investigation completed	1,385

Table 10: Investigations

Action Taken (one case can receive multiple actions)	Totals
No further action required – No ASB found (unfounded / malicious)	7
Advice / Instruction given	1,271
Verbal warning issued	22
First breach of Tenancy Notice	17
Second breach of Tenancy Notice	8
Statutory warning issued	3
Notice to Quit served	0
Referrals to other agencies	17
Exclusion Orders Sought	1
House taken back into possession (No legal fees nor security fees were used in these cases)	69
Total Action Taken	1,415

Tables 11 : Actions Taken

Tenancy Outcomes	Totals
Repossession commenced (due to ASB & other reasons)	7
Repossession completed	13
Eviction (Following Repossession Order)	0
Exclusions Orders obtained and in place	1
Possession Orders obtained regarding Illegal Occupants	0
Number of pre-tenancies conducted	333
Rightsizing	
No. of Tenants identified: 26	Achieved 6

Table 12 : Tenancy Outcomes

In excess of 333 tenants completed pre-tenancy training during 2023, obtaining a variety of information concerning their tenancy with Meath County Council.

Tenant liaison team are playing an active part in the Alverno refurbishment project. Tenant

Liaison Officers are providing support for the decanting of tenants and assisting return to properties, liaising with housing maintenance team.

Estate Management Policy

The Estate Management Policy was implemented to provide an overall framework to promote and achieve better estate management outcomes within Meath County Council's estates.

The Tenant Liaison team encourage all new tenants to participate in existing resident's association or set up new resident's association for new estates. The Tenant Liaison Team outline what supports are available from the Public Participation Network (PPN). The Tenant Liaison Team assist and attend resident's association meetings throughout the year and encourage estate management initiatives and explain what funding is available.

In 2023 we supported an initiative with Youth Work Ireland Meath and The Men's Shed Navan.

They built flower beds, cut grass for older people, general clean up in council estates in the Navan Area. 50 individual young people took part in this initiative over the summer months. The young people created a video of the works they completed. A presentation by the Cathaoirleach and Mayor of Navan took place in Buvinda House on the 2nd of November 2023 to acknowledge their hard work.

2.17 Disability Strategy

Meath County Council's 'Strategy for Housing People with a Disability was reviewed in under the auspices of the Housing Disability Steering Group following the publication of the National Housing Strategy for Disabled People 2022-2027. A National Implementation Plan was published in 2023 from which local actions were identified and are being progressed.

In 2023 the Housing Disability Steering Group progressed the establishment of a Disability Housing Action Team which focuses on the specific needs of applicants. The Disability Housing Action Team convened four times in 2023.

2.18 Social Housing Supports

1,086 new applications for Social Housing Support were received for the period January 1st to 31st December 2023. Outlined below is the number of households that have had their accommodation needs met by Meath County Council in the period 1st January to 31st December 2023.

Allocations/Housing Supports	Number
MCC Direct Allocations	371
Approved Housing Bodies	317
RAS	4
HAP	367
Long term Leasing	18
MTR (AHBS)	1
TOTAL	1078

Table 13: Housing Supports

Work has been undertaken with the software provider during 2023 to improve the Choice Based Letting (CBL) system. A new system for assessing and allocating properties has also been introduced, to streamline the processes.

Planning and Development Management

3.0 Forward Planning

Meath County Development Plan

Meath County Council continued to defend the judicial challenges to the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027. Two challenges have been successful and have resulted in a requirement for the Council to make a Variation to the plan. While the Council had been successful in defending two of the challenges, the decisions of the High Court were appealed to the Supreme Court. Both of these cases were heard by a panel of seven judges in early October 2023 and both resulted in the High Court rulings being upheld.

The Two-Year Progress Report for the County Development Plan was presented to the Members in December 2023 to outline progress to date on all objectives. It also contained Core Strategy Monitoring, Commercial Monitoring and SEA Monitoring.

Variations to County Development Plan

Draft Variation No. 1 is progressing to deal with zoning corrections and to reflect existing permitted land uses. It will also deal with Housing delivery with an aim to introduce evidence-based flexibility to the Core Strategy. This was placed on public display at the end of Q1 2024. The Section is carrying out a comprehensive countywide Settlement Capacity Audit to identify lands that are serviced as well as lands that are serviceable. This will assist with the progression of further variations in particular regarding potential future zonings.

Draft Variation No. 2 is progressing to give effect to a range of land use zoning amendments. Predominantly these amendments are necessary to reflect the permitted and current land use that has come to the attention of the Local Authority since the adoption of the CDP. These are not additional zoning for new development proposals but are being brought forward to reflect the current (or approved by way of planning permission) land use and to avoid any non-conforming land use on a zoning.

Joint Local Area Plans

Work has continued on the Joint Local Area Plan for Maynooth in collaboration with Kildare County Council with the public display period scheduled for Quarter 2 2024. Progress on the Joint Local Area Plan for Drogheda was impacted by one of the above-mentioned judicial reviews, which is now complete. The pre-draft Strategic Issues Paper was published in mid-January 2024, with the main body of work on this plan to take place during 2024, in conjunction with Louth County Council.

Residential Zoned Land Tax

Work continued in 2023 on the Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT) Initiative. The Planning Department have gone through an extensive process to identify lands which meet the criteria of the RZLT. The Draft Maps were on public display and the Draft and Supplemental stages of the processes are complete. A number of the landowners involved have appealed the Council's decision to include their lands in this scheme to An Bord Pleanála, but to date they have upheld all of the decisions of Meath County Council. The Final Map was published in December 2023. Following Budget 2024 it has been confirmed that the Tax will not now be implemented until February 2025.

3.1 Heritage & Conservation

Development of County Heritage Plan

Work took place on the development and adoption of the County Meath Heritage Strategy 2024 – 2030 throughout the year. The public were consulted at the beginning of the process in Feb/March in relation to the Strategic themes and again in Sept/Oct when the draft plan was produced. Based on the submissions received the final draft of the plan was presented to the Strategic Policy Committee in October, and adopted by the Full Council at the January 2024 meeting.

Meath Biodiversity Management Projects 2023

- Commons of Lloyd Management Plan
- Bat Survey
- Biodiversity Education Programme 2023
- Native Tree Nursery
- Urban Biodiversity Audits – Navan, Trim, Kells

Grants Awarded 2023

- Community Monuments Fund: 6 projects, value €460,717
- Community Heritage Grant Fund: 21 projects, value €20,300
- Built Heritage Investment Scheme: 20 projects, value €209,744
- Historic Structures Fund: 3 projects, value €87,907
- County Heritage Plan Fund : 5 projects, value €37,500
- National Biodiversity Action Plan: 7 projects, value €110,505
- Historic Towns Initiative: 1 project, value €30,000

Irish Walled Town Network - Work ongoing in Trim and Kells and Navan Town Walls.
Heritage Week 2023 - 65 events held across the county.

3.2 Projects

The Planning Projects Team also commenced work, continued to advance work on or provided assistance on various public realm projects across the county in 2023. They also supported work on the following:

- Enfield Town Centre First
- Streetscape Enhancement Scheme – Market Street, Trim
- Amenity and Recreation Plan for Tower of Lloyd
- Flowerhill and Abbeyland Urban Design Plan
- Renovation of St. Patrick's Classical School
- County Hall Site Redevelopment Plan
- Duleek Heritage Led Regeneration Plan

2 Planning Projects were short-listed for prestigious IPI planning awards aimed to highlight innovation and excellence:

- The Flower Hill Urban Regeneration Plan (finalist)
- Kilcloon Community Development (overall winner)

Enfield was one of 26 pilot scheme towns across the country that has received funding to develop a Town Centre First Plan. The aim of the plan was to map out future development, focus on tackling dereliction and vacant properties, and make the town centre a more attractive place to live, work, socialise and run a business. This initiative aims to help re-imagine and revitalise rural communities as part of the National Town Centre First

Policy. The Town Team for Enfield was formed in May 2023 and with the support of Meath County Council, and extensive public consultation, the plan was completed and submitted to the Department of Rural and Community Development in December 2023. The plan has outlined a number of projects for delivery, which can be put forward for funding when funding opportunities arise in the future.

3.3 Development Management

Planning applications (Section 34)

1685 planning applications were received in 2023. This is compared to 1744 in 2022.

Large-scale Residential Developments (LRD) (Section 32)

The Council issues seven LRD opinions during 2023, as well as eight Section 247 determinations. In total, 23 Section 247 meetings (consultations in relation to a proposed development) were held with developers during the year.

Part 8 Applications (Section 179)

A total of 11 Part 8 applications were lodged with the Planning Department in 2023, compared with 23 applications in 2022.

Development Contributions (Section 48)

Pre-Audited Development Contribution receipts for 2023 show a collection of €10,363,884 (Figures are inclusive of Irish Water receipts). This includes receipts from the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage under the Temporary Time-Limited Waiver Scheme, which was introduced in April of this year for all permitted residential development commencing within a defined time period. The Circular also confirmed that the houses must be completed by 31st December 2025 for the waiver to apply. This measure was introduced by the Minister to expedite home building and help reduce building costs. On top of what was receipted, Meath County Council was awaiting a recoupment from the DHLGH for waived contributions for November & December of approximately €1.74m. This compared to 2022 where €14,029,439 was collected in total.

The new Development Contribution Scheme went through the public consultation process and was presented to Members for adoption on 4th December 2023 and commenced from 1st January 2024.

Pre-Planning Consultations (Section 247)

The Council facilitated a total of 503 pre-planning meetings held under Section 247 of the Planning & Development Acts. Approximately 43% of the meetings were held in person, with the remaining 57% being held online or over the phone. The same advices and level of service is provided regardless of the method of communication offered to the proposed applicant.

3.4 Planning Enforcement (Sections 152,154 and 160)

The Planning Department opened 176 planning enforcement cases in 2023 following complaints received relating to non-compliance with the planning laws. These figures do not include action taken for non-compliance with the financial provisions of extant planning permissions.

Taking-in-Charge of Estates (Section 180)

The Council continues to carry out its function of taking-in-charge of estates. In 2023, a total of 14 housing estates were taken in charge and exploratory studies were carried out on a number of other estates. The Council also continues to deal with the large number of compliance submissions in order to facilitate new development.

Building Control

The Council's Building Control function is performed by the Building Control Officer who also leads the Planning Enforcement Team. The Building Control function plays a critical role in informing the Planning Financial Compliance Team.

643 valid commencement notices were received in 2023. This is compared to 580 in 2022. This 10% increase can be attributed to the Temporary Time-Limited Waiver Scheme introduced in April 2023 for residential developments.

The commencement notices can be broken down as follows:

Development Type	Number of Units
One-Off House	264
Multi-Units	1108
Extensions	124
Other*	59

* Agricultural, Commercial, Recreational etc

On foot of these commencement notices being received, 763 first time inspections were carried out. Each multi-unit is inspected approximately 20 times throughout the build to ensure it is complying with Building Control Regulations and the conditions of planning.

Quarry Regulation

The Planning Authority continues to monitor and assess quarrying operations in Meath.

e-Planning

Meath County Council's e-Planning portal went live in March of 2023. The new portal www.planning.localgov.ie allows agents, developers and members of the public to lodge their applications and make submissions electronically and will run as an alternative option to the existing paper-based system. The e-Planning system offers improved efficiency in the statutory planning process and delivers on the Government strategy to move more public services online.

Agents are encouraged to register on the e-planning portal where an information video, and user guide are available at the following link <https://planning.localgov.ie/what-online-planning>

By the end of 2023, approximately 60% of all planning applications were being lodged via the portal with 515 being lodged via the portal from the go live date to the 31st December 2023.

Vacant Sites Register

Meath County Council continues to identify appropriate sites for the Vacant Sites Register. The register is available to view on www.meath.ie/council/council-services/planning-andbuilding/vacant-or-derelict-sites-and-dangerous-structures/vacant-sites

Road Transportation and Safety

Overview

Meath County Council manages and maintains over 3,500 km of road network encompassing an overall budget expenditure of circa €52 million in 2023. This is achieved with the co-operation and assistance of the NTA, TII, and DoT through the following main elements:

- Road upkeep, including routine and winter maintenance and surface dressing.
- Road improvements, which includes discretionary improvement, restoration improvement, specific improvement schemes, bridge works, footpath improvements and other improvement schemes.
- Road traffic, which includes traffic management and safety.
- Sustainable transport Initiatives
- Public lighting services reactive and preventative maintenance and management of existing and new lighting assets and progression of the Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project (PLEEP, and works has commenced on the design element.
- Traffic Assets Services reactive and preventative maintenance and management of existing and new traffic assets.
- Fleet management and maintenance including investigation into decarbonization of fleet.
- Road Safety Education and Awareness including an outreach to almost 13,000 citizens through school and community groups and events. Work commenced on the new Road Safety Plan for County Meath which resulted in the establishment of a multi-agency Road Safety Working Together Group.
- The impacts of climate change on the network were acknowledged by €532,500 funding under Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience Works. Municipal District engineers are capturing data on extreme weather events and the impact on services and the network.
- Street cleansing and maintenance of parks, playgrounds, and public spaces.
- Annual gully cleaning contract.
- Clean up from extreme weather events.
- Data collection and management including traffic surveys, road condition visual surveys and mechanical testing.
- The department has also worked in conjunction with TII in progressing several National Primary and National Secondary Road improvement and resurfacing schemes within the County.

Achievements

Road Improvement achievements included the delivery of a €40million road works programme this included the completion of fourteen Community Involvement Schemes (4 schemes from DoT funding and 10 from own resources), 6 Local Improvement Schemes initially with a further eight approved following a second round of funding. (grant funding from DR&CD). These schemes showcase how partnership between the Council and communities can deliver meaningful improvements on roads, which otherwise would not receive maintenance/improvement funding.

4.0 Summary of Progress on Schemes

National Primary and Secondary Road Schemes were advanced in 2023

N2 Slane Bypass and Public Realm Improvements

EIAR and CPO documents were lodged with An Board Pleanála in December 2023. Dedicated website available <https://www.n2slanebypass.ie/> detailing the project. Key Dates: Statutory documents on public display: December 6th, 2023, to February 16th, 2024.

N51 Dunmoe Phase 2

The main construction was completed in 2023 and the road re-opening to vehicular traffic with only minor accommodation works to be completed.

N52 Grange to Clontail Road Scheme

An Board Pleanála issued the CPO submissions to Meath County Council – There were 19 submissions received in total. These have been reviewed and responses issued to An Bord Pleanála. Awaiting decision from An Board Pleanála for oral hearing.

N2 Rath Roundabout to Kilmoon

Preliminary design work is on-going to refine the preferred option corridor for the scheme at the tie in junction locations. To inform this work the ground site investigations commenced in August 2023.

N3 Virginia By-Pass project

Cavan County Council are currently preparing statutory planning documents.

National Road Resurfacing

This took place at N2 Kellystown to Glassallen; N2 Rathdrinagh to Tuiterrath including N2 Pump Cross ; N52/ R154 Johnsbrook Cross Safety Improvement works ; N52 Reask to Carlanstown ; N51 Slane to County Boundary ; N52 Cloncat ; N52 Mullaghey ; N51 Mullaghmore to Irishtown

4.1 Non-National Road Network Maintained in 2023

Non- National Roads 2023 funding from DoT – Grant Allocation €27,031,143

- Road Restoration Total 61 Schemes in RWP
- Regional Roads
 - 15 no. schemes 12.488Km under Restoration Improvement
 - 46 no. schemes on Local Roads – 50.417 km
 - 8.58 kms for Community Involvement Schemes
 - 8.8 kms of roads were completed under the Local Improvement Scheme
- Surface Dressing Total 80 Schemes in Roads Works Programme
 - Regional Roads – 8no Schemes 14.328 kms
 - Local Roads – 72 no schemes 110.006 kms

Non-national roads network maintained in 2023:

187.25km of schemes delivered centrally over 4 phases, in year 2 of a 3-year programme, which included:

- 31 Recycling Structural Overlay and Surface Dressing Schemes (Phase 1)
- 80 Surface Dressing Schemes (Phase 2)
- 16 Structural Overlay and Surface Dressing (Phase 3)
- 14 HRA Schemes (Phase 4)

€750,000 of funding was allocated for former national roads, the R147 at Dowdstown, this scheme was undertaken at a pilot project using 40% reclaimed asphalt pavement. This pilot sought to drive sustainability moving from the traditional carbon heavy industry. Extensive structural testing and core samples were extracted from the finished pavement and preliminary findings indicated pavement performance exceeding to traditional pavement. The overall goal is to maintain material performance and reduce the use of virgin materials (aggregates and bitumen).

Non-National Schemes progressed in 2023:

- R156 Realignment of the junction at Mullagh
- R162 Kilberry traffic calming
- L6219 Newtownmoyaghy Kilcock improvements
- R157 Dunboyne Industrial Estate Link improvements
- R154 Batterstown traffic calming

Bridge Remedial Works progressed in 2023. Remedial Works have been funded and completed during 2023 as follows:

- L6033 Kiltale Culvert
- L5008 Coolfore Culvert
- L3409 Tatestown Culvert
- R195 Springhall Culvert
- R147 Kilcarn Bridge
- R108 Dardistown Bridge
- L5606 Mellifont Bridge
- R161 Oldbridge Trim
- L4020 Clonguiffin Bridge
- Obelisk Bridge – in conjunction with Louth County Council

Climate Change Adaption & Resilience Works progressed in 2023 are as follows:

- L7411 Oristown
- L3405 Drumconrath Flood Works
- R941 Mullingar Road Kells
- L6814 Fennor
- L16184 Mill Road Stamullen
- R160 Flood Alleviation

Safety Improvement Works progressed in 2023 allocation of funding of €390,500 at the following locations:

- N52/ R154 Johnsbrook Cross
- L4007 Shambo Cross
- N2 Pump Cross
- R162 Kilberry to Lisnagrew
- R154 Creevagh Rathniska
- R147 Dalgan Park

4.2 Active Travel

Active & Sustainable Transport Schemes progressed in 2023:

Active Travel Grants 2023 from National Transport Authority (NTA) 2023, saw 36 projects streamlined through the various stages (stages 1-7) of progression as per the NTA funding requirements.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Grant Application	Options Development	Preliminary Design	Statutory Processes	Detailed Design	Construction	Close Out
1	1	6	5	8	11	4

Navan 2030

Navan Town Scheme Navan 2030 Contract 3:

Kennedy Road, Kennedy Plaza, Market Square, Abbey Road. Works included the construction of a new bus interchange on Kennedy Road, reconfiguration of Kennedy Plaza car park to create a pedestrian plaza area at the new interchange, new pedestrian routes and crossings in the plaza, signalisation of the Kennedy Road/Paddy ‘O’Brien Street junction, relocation of the taxi rank on Kennedy Road to Abbey Road, signalisation of the Trimgate Street/Market Square/Kennedy Road junction, removal of on-street parking and footpath widening, upgrade of the zebra crossings on Market Square (2 No.), and advance works to facilitate making Market Square two-way for traffic and works for a ‘bus/taxi gateway’. The traffic reversal on Bridge Street & Ludlow Street, and introduction of bus services via the new ‘bus/taxi gateway’ to Kennedy Road due to come into effect in January 2024.



Aerial view of Market Square

Accessible Bus Stop Programme:

Meath County Council are advancing works to construct wheelchair accessible bus stops with the capability of serving high-floored coaches, at several existing bus stop locations throughout County Meath. A review by NTA and Meath County Council of accessibility request in County have identified 11 bus stop locations suitable for modification. In 2023, ten wheelchair accessible bus stops were constructed which included six new bus shelters.

Navan 2030 Contract 4:

N51 Moathill Park and Ride: The works included the construction of a 182-space park and ride facility to the rear of St Patrick's Classical School at Moathill. The works also included the upgrade of the L3416 (Hospital Road)/N51 junction, provision for future e-charging facilities, with road widening of the L3416 to accommodate new segregated cycle and pedestrian facilities, new cycle and pedestrian facilities on the N51 and a new bus stop terminus with bus shelters for the N51 Navan to Dublin Express Services. The works were timed to be complete in advance of the end of Contract 3 in order for the terminus to be in place prior to the introduction of bus services to the new bus interchange on Kennedy Road, which included the NX services.



Athlumney to Trim Road Cycle and Pedestrian Scheme

Construction of Storm Water Drainage Network started along with footpath and kerb construction works is continuing. Gully construction works continued on the Trim Road Section. Landscaping and fencing were installed along the boundary of Trim Road and Connolly Avenue. Additional Excavation/site clearance works on Trim Road section (west side of road) commenced. A Temporary Traffic Management Plan (TTMP) and diversion route for the Trim Road from Carriage Road to Dan Shaw Road is being maintained in place. Plans in place for road surfacing works, including final surface course layer in late January/early February on 2 No. sections of the scheme, 1) Railway Street and 2) Woodlands to Flowerfield School. Road markings, parking spaces etc be completed on Railway Street following the road surfacing works which are still on-going & scheduled to finish in June 2024.

Greenogue Bus Stop (on R125)

Part 8 planning lodged and in public display and submissions period progress.

Harlockstown Footpaths and Bus Stop

The new bus stop is now in operation. A continuous footpath has now been constructed between Harlockstown and the Ninemile Stone Roundabout. Additional public lighting is being installed to ensure the continuous length of footpath is fully illuminated.

Navan GDA Cycle Network

Fairgreen to Johnstown

Consultant/Designers are continuing with the Detailed Design of a cycle and pedestrian scheme from Solstice Roundabout to the R147 (Circular Road) to link with the Athlumney Road (i.e., Athlumney – Trim Road Phase 2).

R147 Martha's Bridge to Circular Road

Consultants working on Phase 5 Detailed Design process. Designer has commenced producing works packages.

R147/N51 Poolboy Bridge to Kells Road Roundabout

Tender process was completed, and a Successful Tenderer identified & funding approval received. Letter to Successful to preferred bidder is anticipated to issue in January 2024.

Flowerhill Cycle & Pedestrian Scheme

Consultants continued design work associated with Phase 3 – Preliminary Design. Preparations are ongoing for the identification of a preferred option to be delivered to stakeholders ahead of the Statutory process. Options, to include a route on the N51, are currently being examined.

Navan Public Realm

Trimgate Street Pedestrianisation

Preliminary design works in relation design elements and stakeholder impacts is being finalised Designer to progress final design and produce deliverables for NTA approval of progression to Part 8 application, anticipated for Q1 2024.

Navan Public Realm Academy Street Upgrade

Design work continuing on potential options, including the proposed upgrade of the Academy Street/R147 junction.

Convent Road to Metges Road & Trim Road

Beechmount to Balreask Manor Active Travel Schemes: The non-statutory public consultation process for the Emerging Preferred Option (EPO) for the Beechmount to Balreask Manor Section was completed in mid-December 2023. Selection Report is at final draft stage and Gateway 2 report is being produced.

Pathfinder Scheme – R161, Navan to Trim Scheme

The appointed designers/consultants are currently working to deliver this project through the Concept Development/Option Selection Process. Information gathering including topographical, traffic count, landowner, land use surveys is progressing.

Ratoath Pedestrian & Cycling Scheme

Awaiting formal confirmation of the NTA's 2024 allocation for the scheme which will determine timeframe for tender and construction of Contract 1. Design works continuing remainder of the scheme, including the urban greenway along the Broadmeadow.

N51 Park & Ride

Final elements (cctv system, parking meters) installed and commissioned. Signage installed. Works to the proposed new pedestrian crossing on the N51 adjacent to the roundabout junction at the R147/N51 ('Woodies roundabout') to commence.

Dunboyne to Clonee Pedestrian and Cycle Network

Preferred routes updated following workshop with the NTA on the 9th of November. Works progressing on documentation for non-35 statutory public consultation on the routes and public realm plans for Dunboyne and Clonee.

Safe Routes to Schools

Construction works complete at Realt Na Mara Donacarney, SN Pheadair agus Phoil Drumconrath and Ashbourne Community schools with public lighting to be completed.



Ashbourne Community School

Eastham Road Cycle Facilities, Bettystown

Preliminary Design complete including and final preparations for Part 8 Planning application.

Newtown Road Trim Walking Facilities

Part 8 planning lodged and in public display and submissions period progress.

Donacarney Footpath and Cycleway Scheme

Works 90% complete, anticipated completion by mid February 2024.

Bike Share Schemes

In conjunction with Tier Bikes and Moby Bikes have launched a 12-month pilot bike share scheme (BSS) in Ashbourne and Navan. In Navan, the Scheme has 25 pedal bikes, 25 e-bikes and 2 e-cargo bikes across the Navan area.



Navan Bike Share Scheme, Pilot Project

Cycle Parking:

198 No. 'On street' bike parking spaces

162 No. 'Off-Street' bike parking spaces recorded at the end of 2023.

Ashbourne R135 Cycle Network Design

Works substantially complete up to Rath Lodge. Works progressing between Rath Lodge and south of Ballybin Road junction. Works will mainly focus on the delivery of new footpath and cycle lanes on the eastern side of the R135 between Circle K filling station and Ballybin Junction. Works on commissioning the traffic lights at Castle Street and St. Johns Wood are now at an advanced stage, site commissioning to take place mid-2024.

Garlow Cross Park & Ride

The Garlow Cross Park and Ride was completed in March 2023. The facility consists of 49 car parking spaces, including 1 No. Disabled parking space. In addition, bicycle parking for 20 bicycles was installed.

Boyne Valley to Lakelands County Greenway

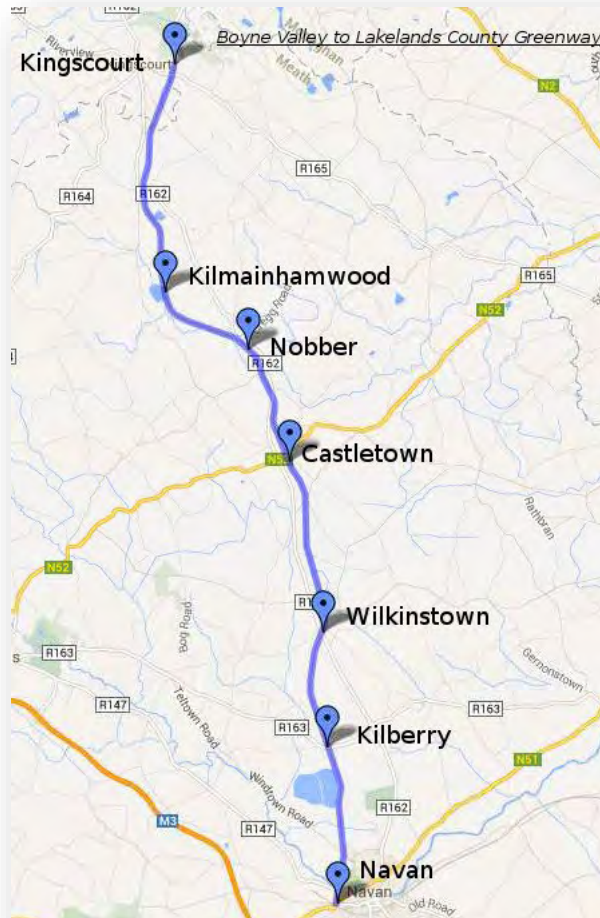
The greenway is now complete from Navan to 2.5km north of Kilmainhamwood. This provides 25km of continuous greenway, with a remaining 5km which is currently 80% complete;

Wilkinstown to Castletown

This section of Greenway is now open to the public. Works are currently ongoing at the road crossings; the contractor plans to have all outstanding works complete in the next 6 weeks.

Nobber to Kingscourt Nobber to Kilmainhamwood

Opened 25th October 2023. Kilmainhamwood to 500m south of Poles Cross (Crystal Maze) opened 8th December 2023. Poles Cross to Kingscourt (5Km) 80% currently complete.



Boyne Greenway & Navigation Restoration Scheme (Navan - Oldbridge)

Non-statutory consultation on the Emerging Preferred Route ongoing including public consultation, liaison with landowners, national organisations, and other stakeholders.

Dunshaughlin Public Realm Main Street

Part 8 process has concluded (AAO for 'Notices' issued).

Kilberry Looped Walking Trail

Work substantially complete, apart from minor elements.

Other Projects

Oldcastle Public Realm Scheme: Screening determination referred to An Bord Pleanála. Part 8 process stalled as a result. Further information submitted to ABP.

LDR4 Abbeylands Navan: New road from Kells Road to Ratholdren Road contract awarded in December 2023 with works to commence early 2024.

Traffic Calming Ramps Works substantially completed:

- Boyerstown National School
- Dangan National School
- Ardcath National School
- Bellewstown National School
- Scoil Mhuire School
- R156 Summerhill Meals on Wheels
- Castletown works

Traffic Signals Upgrade and new junctions added Upgrades of existing sites: 10 pedestrian crossing upgrades, 6 junction small upgrades, 4 junction large upgrades. New sites commissioned: 4 new junctions, 4 new zebra crossings and 7 new pedestrian crossing.

Boyneside Trail: Planning application submitted to An Bord Pleanála in July 2020, further information requested from An Bord Pleanála in 2023 which saw the scheme refused permission by An Bord Pleanála. The Route of the Greenway will be revisited as part of the East Coast Greenway route option study.

Footpath Programme and other works: Works to rehabilitate and construct new footpaths carried out including Clonmageddon Road, Navan. Completing minor works remaining at Kilbride, Dunshaughlin and East Meath. Completed 2.2 km (2218meters) of footpath completed in 2023. 5.75km (5715 meters) tendered in 2023.

Meath County Council Projects Team are working closely with our Climate Action Section to ensure that all our buildings are:

- At a minimum NZEB rated.
- Setting out with our design teams that our buildings are to achieve a BER rating of A3 as a minimum.
- Working with CODEMA (Dublin's Energy Agency) to check our designs at pre-construction.
- Using electrical sources of power and heating as opposed to fossil fuel.
- Reduce the demand on the electrical grid by using PV panels on the roof of our buildings, using Heat Pumps, insisting on natural ventilation where possible.
- Monitoring our energy usage by calculating each buildings annual energy usage and displaying in the form of Display Energy Certificates.
- Going forward we are looking at new construction standards to provide a framework to deliver high performance and sustainable buildings by using the following: -
- EXCEED, Framework for Energy Efficiency Design (IS 399:2014)
- LEED, includes a set of rating systems for everything from design to construction and operation to maintenance of building
- WELL, is a performance-based system for measuring, certifying, and monitoring features of the build environment that impact human health and wellbeing, through air, water, nourishment, light, fitness, comfort and mind.

Dunshaughlin Multi-Purpose Community Facility & Public Realm Enhancement Project

Part 8 process complete. RRDF funding application being prepared.

Flowerhill Frontage Improvement Scheme, Navan

URDF funded Project D-Building Frontage Scheme, consultant procured to finalise proposed interventions and implement same

Linear Walkway and Playing Fields at Rooske Road, Dunboyne

Meath County Council worked in partnership with St Peter's GAA to secure funding from the LSSIF (Large Scale Sports Infrastructure Fund) for the completion of the playing pitches and car park which was part funded by Meath County Council and St Peter's GAA. An official opening was held on 26th May 2023.

The Bridge was carefully removed by Meath County Council and put into storage until it could be reused in the new location in the park, which created continuity between the existing park and the new linear park. The bridge was restored in 2022 and located in its new location as a historical (one of a kind) element of our new sustainable park and walkway which encourages physical activity from Rooske Road to Main Street, Dunboyne.



4.3 Work continued on the delivery of other Transportation/Operations services in 2023

- Development Control / Transport Planning Advice
- Ordinary Maintenance, Winter Maintenance Service and Maintenance of Plant and Machinery.
- Capital Programme of Footpath Improvement Works.
- Public Lighting Services, maintenance, and progression of National Retrofit Scheme to achieve Energy Efficiencies across the county.
- Road Safety Improvement Schemes, Promotion and Education.
- Road Opening Licences, Abnormal Load Applications, Roads, and Services in Charge queries.
- Review of Bus licences, Bus Stop locations and Taxi ranks.
- Additional funding was provided by DoT of €681,000 for Drainage Schemes throughout the county.
- Processing of applications for Section 254, skip scaffolding & hoarding licences, as well as signage various signage applications.
- 31 Housing Estate Schemes were progressed across the municipal districts.

Road improvement and Municipal Districts works benefited from just over €27M of Department of Transport funding. Data and surveys provided guidance to the development of the roadworks programme, ensuring a balance between improvement and maintenance of the network. Sustainability and preparing for climate change adaptation is considered in the delivery of services and projects with a Reclaimed Asphalt Pavement trial and adaptation drainage works.

4.4 Sustainability

The 2022 trial undertaken on the R147 at Dowdstown using 40% Reclaimed Asphalt Pavement was extended further in 2023, this was supported by TII and Department of Transport. In this trial a control section was laid without RAP to allow in-situ monitoring of performance and comparison with laboratory strength and durability testing.

A trial using a Warm Mix Asphalt in lieu of a Hot Mix Asphalt was undertaken in 2023, warm mix has the same performance life and workability properties as hot mix due to the introduction of an admixture. Warm mix reduces the production energy inputs and can offer a 7% carbon emissions savings. It is planned to incorporate greater amounts of warm mix into the 2024 roadworks programme.

The surface dressing contract requires a high specification of plant to be used to surface dress. The surface dressing can be achieved using a combination bitumen and chip spreader, reducing wastage and ensuring great accuracy in the spread rates. Technology embedded into this plant gives real-time print outs of the surface dressing process ensuring easy checking with the specifications.

4.5 Climate Change

Surface dressing can only be laid during the warmer summer months under specific weather conditions. July 2023 saw the wettest July on record with 217% of the Long-Term Average rainfall occurring. This and several other rainfall events over the summer resulted in a loss of 21 days for surface dressing. The high specification for surface dressing plant, as outlined above, means a faster delivery of the surface dressing and allowing a faster catch up on programme.



Surface dressing combination plant

Environment & Climate Action

The protection of the environment and the enhancement of the county's natural and built environment are of significant importance for the residents of, and visitors to, County Meath. Clean air and water, a litter-free countryside, pristine beaches and sustainable waste management systems are fundamental to a sustainable and high-quality environment and improving the quality of life of our citizens.

5.0 Environmental Education and Awareness Activities

In 2023, the Council engaged in a wide range of environmental education and awareness activities and supports including:

- Forty Four Green Flags were awarded to Meath Schools in 2023 for a variety of themes including Litter and Waste, Water, Energy, Biodiversity, Global Citizenship, Marine Environment.
- Picker Pals rolled out to 68 schools in 2023.
- Secondary Schools – The Really Rubbish Film Company, ECO UNESCO Young Environmentalists, ReLove Fashion, TY Climate Action Project with GAA Future Leaders Programme.
- Plastic Bottle Free School – Three schools signed up for the Water Dispenser Scheme in Meath in 2023. High-quality touch-free water fountains are provided to secondary schools in Meath and each participating school is required to introduce a ban on single-use plastic bottles. There are ten schools in the scheme at present with a plan to roll out to all secondary schools in Meath in the coming years.
- Community-related projects – Green KM, Tree Planting Project, Halloween Awareness Campaign, October Reuse Month.
- Litter Management Service for community groups and individuals undertaking clean-ups in their local area – Equipment, advice, waste collections service.
- 5,000 native saplings were provided to participants to plant in communal areas in their towns, villages and housing estates.
- Food Waste Digester Project at Navan Recycling Centre.
- Comprehensive Dashboard dining, Anti-Litter, Anti Dog Fouling and Anti Dumping Advertising Campaign – Radio, Press and Social Media.
- Provision of signage across the county – Litter, dumping, car litter (dashboard dining) and dog fouling.
- Bikes for Africa – Reuse project with Rotary Ireland supplying bikes for secondary school transport in the Gambia, through Navan Recycling Centre and Loughan House Prison.
- Clean Coast Awards for Bettystown and Mornington Beaches
- Calendar of Free Bulky Waste Collection Days at the recycling centres for Couches, Beds, Mattresses, Outdoor/Garden Equipment, Nurse Equipment and Toys across the year.
- Halloween Bulky Waste Collection – Diverting combustible material from bonfire by providing Free Bulky Waste Collections in the run-up to Halloween at five recycling centres across the county.

Anti Dumping Initiative

Each year Meath County Council undertakes a number of projects targeting known illegal dumping blackspots and/or prevention projects. In 2023 the focus was on household bulky waste with events to the value of €113,000 across the County.

Landfill Levy

The Minister of State with special responsibility for Communications and Circular Economy, signed new regulations in 2023 to encourage recycling and reduce the amount of waste that goes to landfill and incineration. The Waste Management (Landfill Levy)(Amendment) Regulations 2023 and the Circular Economy (Waste Recovery Levy) Regulations 2023 came into effect on 1 September 2023.

The legislation introduces a waste recovery levy of €10 per tonne (or 1,000kg), and a €10 increase to the existing “landfill levy” to €85 per tonne.

The level at which the recovery levy was introduced, and the size of the increase in the landfill levy, should mean that any additional costs arising for householders will be very modest as the levies only apply to black bin waste.”

The recovery levy does not apply initially to the recovery of construction and demolition (C&D) material.

Flooding: Ashbourne Flood Alleviation Scheme:

Works on this major flood relief scheme continued during 2023 and are now substantially complete. The scheme has been designed to protect properties to at least the 100-year event i.e. to protect against the largest flood expected in 100 years.

River Basin Management Plan 2022-2027

The EU Water Framework Directive commits Member States to protect and improve water quality in our rivers, lakes, estuaries, coastal and ground waters and in this regard requires the production of a River Basin Management Plan (RBMPs) every 6 years . A draft River Basin Management Plan (3rd cycle) for the period 2022-2027 was the subject of an extensive public consultation process during 2022 and is expected to be finalised by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and in Q2 2024

Draft National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy

The draft National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy together with the associated Environmental Report were the subject public consultation from May to July 2023 and following consideration of all submissions received, the Plan will be made by way of Chief Executive order in February 2024 . The Plan sets out a framework for the prevention and management of waste in Ireland for the period 2023 to 2029.

Burial Grounds

Substantial progress has been made on burial grounds in 2023 to address capacity issues:

The provision of an extension to the Rooske Road Burial Ground in Dunboyne and involving the addition of some 1,200. single burial plots together with a columbarium wall were completed in 2023. Planning for some additional works including the provision of a caretaker’s office (including public toilets) new natural stone clad entrance walls and automated gates are at an advanced stage and works expected to be completed in early 2024.

A contract for the development of a new burial ground and associated infrastructure at Loganstown Trim was signed in July 2023 and with works expected to be completed in the Spring of 2024. The development will consist of 2,400 single plots, a garden of remembrance and columbarium walls for the interment of Urns as well as ancillary works including an access road & 2-metre-wide footpath, carparking, public lighting , a caretaker’s office/ canteen and all associated boundary fencing, landscaping and surface water drainage.

The development of a playground, woodland walk, and burial ground in Stamullen was the subject of a successful Part 8 planning process in September 2023 and works on detailed design now progressing.

Proposals for the development of burial gardens and Columbarium Walls within the five Burial Grounds which are directly under the Councils control and namely St Finians Navan, Derrockstown Dunshaughlin, Good Sheppard Duleek, St Declans Ashbourne, and Rooske Road Extension Dunboyne are now at an advanced stage.

Other Environmental Initiatives In 2023

Brown Bins - new Regulations signed by the Minister providing that every household in the state will be provided with a brown bin for food waste and light garden waste.

Deposit Return Scheme for plastic bottles and drink cans education and awareness campaigns in preparation for the introduction of the scheme on the 1st February 2024.

Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems – amount of grant increased from €5,000 to €12,000 and changes made to other qualifying requirements.

Blue Flag Application – application made for Blue Flag status for Bettystown Beach as well as Green Coast Award application for Mornington Beach and Bettystown Beach

Dog Control - Increase in on the spot fines for more serious offences under the Control of Dogs Act from €100 to €300 – allocation of €64k to MCC for the acquisition of a dog control vehicle.

Big Boyne Clean Up April 2023 – support in collaboration with LAWPRO to local Community Groups and elected members in clean ups at 6 no. locations in Drogheda, Mornington, Oldbridge, Slane, Navan and Trim

5.1 Climate Action and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Meath aims to be a climate resilient, biodiverse rich, environmentally sustainable and climate neutral economy that supports healthy lifestyles and jobs growth.

Climate Change is a reality and Meath County Council is at the fore-front in leading, inspiring and enabling climate adaptation and mitigation in Ireland, influencing in areas such as energy, waste management, air quality, biodiversity, surface water management, planning, building control, transport choices etc. The Council has continued to implement many of the practical actions contained in the Climate Action Strategy, 2019-2024, in working with the CARO and other stakeholders to assist County Meath adapt to and mitigate against climate change in taking advantage of our unique position in identifying risks and vulnerabilities across a wide spectrum of areas.

In addition to the strategy actions, the Council commenced various initiatives in 2023, many of which arise from EU, National and Regional publications of policies and regulations which are all designed to ensure Ireland meets legally binding targets of net zero greenhouse gas emissions no later than 2050, and a reduction of 51% by 2030.

The main achievements in 2023

Meath County Draft Climate Action Plan 2024 - 2029

Preparation of the Draft Plan was substantially completed in 2023 and ready for adoption in early 2024 as statutorily required and designed to facilitate the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity rich, environmentally sustainable and climate neutral economy.

The aim of the plan is to put County Meath on a trajectory towards achieving climate neutrality by no later than the end of 2050, with a target of 51% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.

As part of the development of the Draft Plan, the Council undertook a Climate Change Risk Assessment and prepared a Baseline Emissions Inventory for the County and Decarbonising Zones.

The Climate Change Risk Assessment has identified the impacts which climate change is currently having on the County and is likely to have into the future.

The Baseline Emission Inventories provided an estimate on greenhouse gas emissions for the Council's own activities, County Meath and for each of the nine Decarbonising Zones. These assessments provided an evidence base for the development of place-based climate actions. Nine Decarbonising Zones (Navan, Dunshaughlin, Ashbourne, Ratoath, Trim, Duleek, Kells, Laytown/Bettystown and Dunboyne) have been identified, in which to develop a place-based and systems-thinking approach to identify pathways that support the implementation of effective of climate action measures and will act as test beds for a range of climate mitigation, adaptation, and biodiversity measures within their specifically defined areas.

Members of the public were afforded the opportunity to have their say on the Draft Climate, through the public statutory consultation phase launched in November, 2023.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

A wide range of climate change and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) education and awareness activities and supports were run during 2023.

To coincide with Sustainable Development Goals Week 2023, Meath County Council launched the SDG Survey & Map. The SDG Survey & Map provides an opportunity for local community groups, NGO's, individuals, businesses, and schools to highlight how their endeavours link with and advance the SDGs. Groups and individuals can promote their contribution to the SDGs by completing the survey on www.meath.ie/council/council-services/environment/climate-action/sustainable-development-goals.

All surveys completed will then be displayed on the SDG Map which will provide a visual demonstration of the work being done in County Meath to deliver on the goals.

URBACT - In4Green

Meath County Council were successful in 2023 in its bid to become a partner city in the URBACT IV Programme 'In4Green'.

The aim of the In4Green project is to empower and build the capacity of local stakeholders in industrial areas to overcome the barriers that prevent the transition to greener economies while remaining competitive and inclusive cities.

The project will involve the development of an Integrated Action Plan (IAP). The IAP will be developed through an integrated and participative approach. A local committee called the URBACT Local Group (ULG) will be formed to co-design and co-create local actions.

Trim Air Quality Project

The 18-month Trim Air Quality Project, funded through the Department of Rural and Community Development's Digital Innovation Programme, is monitoring the air quality in two locations in the town of Trim. It will provide an online dashboard on Meath County Councils website which is called the Meath Environment Platform and the public can view and look at the air quality on this platform.

The project involves the installation of Air Quality sensors in two sites in Trim Town, which are Patrick Street, where a number of schools are located and Market Street, which is the busy main street in Trim town. The Air Quality sensors are monitoring air quality at a local scale, with particular focus on fine particles (PM2.5), due to its well-understood harm and links to both traffic and solid fuel use, and nitrogen dioxide (NO2) due to its effects

on child health and its close relationship with vehicle use. In addition, the air quality sensor data is providing in-depth insights on trends and health.

The Meath Environment Platform will launch shortly and will be accessible on www.meath.ie to the public. The data on the platform will be used to inform our community through graphs/visualisations, which will inform and help the community visualise the trends in air quality in the town.

Sustainable Energy Communities (SECs)

The following SECs are either currently carrying out/or have completed Energy Management Plans for their communities. Meath County Council are supporting these communities with training supports and also covering the costs of their Energy Management Plans.

Meath SECs	
Athboy	Louth East Meath
Batterstown	Ashbourne
Trim	Kilbride
Kilmainhamwood	Bettystown
Laytown	Gormanstown

Climate Action Training

The Local Authority Climate Action Training Programme continued to be rolled out for local authority employees and elected members. Numerous public and community workshops and awareness sessions were run over the year.

Grow it Yourself

In collaboration with META, Grow it Yourself and the URBACT Local Group, an initiative to encourage communities and individuals to grow fruit and vegetables kicked off in July 2023. Over 12-week period registered participants were provided with a Grow Box Growing Kit (sponsored by META). Each registered group received support and advice from the 'Grow It Yourself' initiative. A total of 23 groups in Co. Meath have signed up to take part.

Electric Vehicle charge points

Six Electric Vehicle charge points have been installed at Buvinda House. The charge points are now live and accessible by the public and staff. The charge points are operated by Easy Go, one of the country's largest charge point operators.

Solar PV on Buvinda House

In August 2023, Meath County Council's first Solar PV roof project was commissioned and switched on. To become more sustainable and reduce our carbon footprint as an organisation, Meath County Council have recently installed solar PV panels on the roof of our headquarters in Navan. 345 solar photovoltaic panels have been installed on the south facing apex roofs of the Council's head office building, which will have a maximum peak output of 142kW. It is anticipated that this will reduce consumption from the national grid by approximately 30%, resulting in an annual CO₂ reduction of 31 tonnes. The panels will contribute to the electrical demand of the building and aid with the demand associated with the recently installed Electric Vehicle Charge Points.

HVO Trial

The HVO (Hydrated Vegetable Oil) trial which ran from mid-April 2023 was completed in October. The trial incorporated 10 vehicles from our Transportation, Environment and Civil Defence sections. A total of 9,000 litres of HVO were consumed as part of the trial, which resulted in a CO2 reduction of 25 tonnes compared to using the same volume of diesel. This is a reduction of 88% in emissions.

Fire and Emergency Services

6.0 Meath County Council Fire and Rescue Service

Meath County Council Fire and Rescue Service cover a broad range of functions ranging from operational response to fire prevention, including:

- Fire fighting and rescue services
- Community fire safety
- Technical fire prevention
- Emergency preparedness including Major Emergency planning

The operational response to incidents was challenging for a long period of industrial action during 2023 but with the commitment of staff to protecting citizens and providing essential services, operational response continued to remain effective.

To ensure a continued efficient and effective response, our staff are continuously trained and supported to maintain competency in the wide range of skills required. The challenge of staff recruitment and retention has budgetary implications especially given the significant investment to train and equip a new firefighter.

Health and Safety

Meath County Council Fire and Rescue Service successfully renewed certification to ISO 45001 during 2023 ensuring that our Health and Safety Management System has external accreditation and is regularly assessed and audited to ensure continuous improvement. The fire service is aligned to the corporate system and the successful management of health and safety will need continued investment and improvement to protect staff and the public.

Recruitment

Following a period of industrial action by Retained Firefighters over the summer of 2023, the Workplace Relations Commission issued an agreed position for implementation for the retained fire services nationally. The requirement for increased numbers of firefighters bringing the staffing levels to a minimum of twelve in each fire station meant that new firefighters were needed in all areas. Meath County Council Fire & Rescue Service in conjunction with the Human Resources Department revised and enhanced the recruitment efforts across the County to ensure that suitable panels of people would be available to take up the new positions in the fire service. Recruitment and Retention continue to be a key challenge for the fire service and more investment is needed to ensure suitably trained staff are available for fire service work locally and that they remain in the fire service successfully.

Station Development

The newly upgraded Nobber Fire Station was officially opened in April by Meath County Council Cathaoirleach Cllr Nick Killian and Chief Executive Jackie Maguire in the presence of fire service staff and representatives from the local community. The €1.1m project includes a new appliance bay to accommodate both vehicles attached to the station, a drill yard and training tower, training rooms, canteen facilities and modern changing rooms. The state-of-the-art building creates an impressive focal point as you enter the village and the design also incorporates the Turlough O' Carolan monument, greatly enhancing the streetscape. The redevelopment was funded by the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management in the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. There will continue to be investment in all stations to improve welfare, training and operational facilities through the Fire Service Capital Programme and Meath County Council capital budget.

Fire Prevention and Community Fire Safety

Meath County Council Fire & Rescue Service initiated new Community Fire Safety initiatives in 2023, delivered in consultation with agencies and community groups in the around the County. Under the Community Fire Safety Programme vulnerable groups who may be at a risk from fire are identified and then targeted to provide fire safety awareness. The programme commenced by actively engaging with community network groups such as the Public Participation Network and Age Friendly. As a result of this active engagement, the Meath County Council Community Smoke Alarm scheme distributed over one thousand smoke alarms with fire safety information to the residents of County Meath, including the installation of specialised smoke alarms for people with hearing impairments. Under the Community Fire Safety programme, fire service staff also delivered fire safety talks to retirement and other community groups.

For the first time Meath County Council Fire & Rescue Service ran a fire safety art competition for the primary school children of County Meath. The aim of the competition was to encourage children to learn about fire safety and to increase fire safety awareness among families in County Meath. The competition resulted in over 1300 entries from over forty primary schools and was a huge success allowing important engagement with students at all levels of primary school on the matters of fire safety and about the fire service.

6.1 Civil Defence

Meath Civil Defence Service continues to provide assistance to the principal response agencies as well as community groups and sporting organisations in line with the requirements for the Civil Defence Towards 2030 document. Service provided by Civil Defence can be categorised under the following headings:

- Emergency Response
- Search and Rescue
- Medical Response
- Community Assistance
- Radiation Monitoring Services

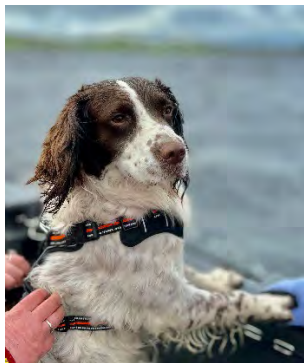
2023 saw the introduction of the Civil Defence Act and the associated Code of Practice. 2023 also saw the launching of the new VEM's Software application, which is designed to assist in the management of Volunteer training and Equipment management.

Training

The current membership of Meath Civil Defence sits at 200 **volunteer members**. These volunteers meet on a weekly basis to train in a range of practical skills which enhances the services that are provided. Volunteers continue to train at eight local training centres across the county twice per month and attend our training facilities in Moat View House twice per month for centralised training.

The current location of our training units are:

- Dunboyne (The Oak Centre)
- Duleek (The Old Court House)
- Navan (Moat View House)
- Trim (Trim Fire Station)
- Ashbourne Library
- Dunshaughlin (The Community Centre)
- Kells (The Family Resource Centre)
- Oldcastle (The Church Hall)



2023 saw the formal introduction of our K9 Rossi to the team at Meath Civil Defence. Rossi is a Human Remains Detector Dog and work alongside his volunteer handler. While boarded with his handler and assigned to Meath Civil Defence, Rossi and Karen can be tasked to assist in missing person searches nationwide. Rossi is also trained in water-based search and was of valuable assistance in recent searches.

Volunteers have completed training in the following areas.

- Cardiac First Response
- First Aid Response
- Manual Handling
- People Moving and Handling
- Fire Safety
- Flood Water Pumping
- Health and Safety
- Water Safety Awareness
- Rescue Skills
- Kayaking
- Severe Weather and Off-Road Driving

Recruitment

During 2023 we held three recruitment evenings in Moat View House, resulting in the recruitment of 27 new probationary volunteers. These volunteers will join the active cohort once all their minimum training is completed. Our next recruitment evening will take place during January 2024 and the current list on names stands at 36 potential volunteers.

Operational Activity


During 2023 Meath Civil Defence volunteers have aided at 162 events and this number is expected to exceed 185 duties by the end of 2023. So far in 2024 we have completed 45 operational duties to support community groups, sports clubs and festivals.


Fleet

Our current fleet consists of 3 Ambulances, 1 x Fire Appliance, 1 x Command and Control Unit, 2 x Operational support units, 1 x Mobile Catering unit, 1 x 4-wheel drive ambulance, 9 x 4-wheel drive jeeps, 1 x K9 Transport van, 2 boats.

Community

The Community Department continued to deliver a range of activities in 2023 supporting community organisation and groups including:

Community Department Activities	Highlights in 2023
<p>Public Participation Network (PPN)</p> 	<p>609 groups were registered groups at 31/12/2023. New constitution, workplan and policies and procedures were developed, and progress was made on the development of linkage groups and nomination and election of community representatives for various Strategic Policy Committees.</p> <p>Outreach programmes continued with migrant community, Ukrainian refugees, Traveller, LGBT+ and youth groups.</p>
<p>Meath Age Friendly Programme</p> 	<p>The Meath Age Friendly Alliance met quarterly in 2023 and launched the 2023 – 2028 Meath Age Friendly Strategy.</p> <p>Age Friendly IT Initiative commenced in Colaiste na hInse, Bettystown.</p> <p>The Chair of Meath OPC was elected as the chairperson of the National Network of Older Person’s Councils (NNOPC).</p> <p>Failte Isteach, an initiative of Third Age was shortlisted for the National Age Friendly Recognition Awards 2023</p>
<p>Comhairle na nÓg</p> 	<p>Youth Work Ireland Meath continue to facilitate Meath Comhairle na n’Óg on behalf of Meath County Council by way of a Service Level Agreement and in 2023 focused on substance misuse and positive mental health.</p>
<p>Pride of Place Initiative</p>  <p>Schools Pride of Place</p>	<p>222 entries were received in 2023. Three groups were chosen to enter the IPB Co-operation Ireland All Island Pride of Place initiative:</p> <p>Solas Glan Community Garden Summerhill - Population 500 to 1500 Kells Community Allotments</p> <p>53 schools submitted applications for the Schools Pride of Place Gardening Scheme. Each participating school was presented with a prize and certificate.</p>
<p>Joint Migrant Strategy 2019-2022</p>	<p>The Joint Migrant Strategy was extended by one year to the end of 2023 to facilitate the completion of the actions within the strategy.</p> <p>The Joint Migrant Integration Forum met quarterly this year and a joint migrant information event was held in November to showcase the supports and services available to migrants in both Louth and Meath.</p> <p>In June, Diversity and Inclusion training was held online for both Meath and Louth elected members.</p>

<p>Unity Centre</p>	<p>The Unity Centre continued to provide a space for community activities as well as training and leisure activities and preschool.</p> <p>The playground at the centre was renovated with new play equipment and play area installed.</p>
<p>Joint Policing Committee (JPC)</p>	<p>The JPC and sub-committees met quarterly in 2023.</p> <p>The annual report 2022 was adopted by the Committee in February.</p> <p>The annual public meeting took place in the Village Hotel, Bettystown in September.</p>
<p>Broadband</p> 	<p>NBI completed their rollout in Drogheda, Delvin and Skerries and commenced works in Kilnaleck, Dunboyne and Navan. Significant make ready works were completed in Kingscourt, Donabate, Carnaross, Trim, Donadea, Hill of Down and Lusk.</p> <p>16 Broadband Connection points delivered providing free public WIFI. Programmes were delivered across the BCP network including taster sessions for Microsoft Dream Space, the development of OurKidsCode Clubs and Arts programmes and performances facilitated by The Ark.</p> <p>The Council processed 1,325 licences for underground roadworks and granted 14 licences for the installation of 129 Poles and 652 km of cable.</p> <p>The WIFI4EU network continues to be used with an average of 1,639 users per day.</p>

7.0 Community Grants and Funding





In 2023, the Community Department allocated 573 projects a total of €787,739.52 in grant aid.

<p>Community Grants 533 application €246,819.52 allocated</p>	<p>Fáilte Ireland, Regional Festivals and Participative Events, Small Grants Scheme 2023 7 applications €11,000 allocated</p>
<p>Community Grants and Funding 2023</p>	
<p>Carranstown Environmental Project Grant Scheme (CEPGS) 32 applicants awarded funding of €279,920.</p>	<p>Knockharley Grant Scheme €250,000 allocated for the Kentstown Village Project Scheme</p>

7.1 Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

The function of the LCDC is to implement the Local Economic Community Plan (LECP), to co-ordinate, manage and oversee the implementation of local and community programmes on behalf of the government departments e.g. SICAP, LEADER Healthy Ireland scheme and the Community Enhancement Programmes. The new six-year Statutory Local Economic & Community Plan 2023-2029 was prepared by the LCDC throughout 2023. This Plan serves as the primary strategy guiding development in Meath and the targeting of resources under the direct management of the LCDC.

Highlights for 2023 include:

<p>SICAP</p> 	<p>The SICAP programme was extended to 31st December 2023 with a budget of €521,618.</p> <p>An additional sum of €234,373 was allocated to the SICAP Programme for Ukrainian supports.</p> <p>Meath Partnership continues to deliver the programme on behalf of the LCDC.</p>
<p>Healthy Meath</p> 	<p>The Healthy Ireland Fund 2023-2024 Local Strategy for Meath was published and an allocation of €86,570.62 was received for activities focused on Increase in Positive Mental Health and Reduction in Chronic Disease.</p> <p>Projects progressed include:</p> <p>Positive mental health activities with Foróige, Meath Travellers Workshop, Comhairle na nÓg and Prosper Meath.</p> <p>Reduction in chronic disease projects included provision of free health checks in collaboration with The Irish Heart Foundation and Community Pharmacies.</p> <p>A Health and Wellbeing Subgroup was established in June 2023.</p>
<p>LEADER Programme</p> 	<p>The LCDC and Local Authority are responsible for monitoring/overseeing the delivery of the LEADER programme. 2023 saw steps to close out the previous LEADER programme and measurers to support the rollout of the new LEADER Programme 2023-2027.</p>
<p>Community Support Fund</p> 	<p>214 groups were awarded €157,107 under the 2023 Community Support Fund.</p>

7.2 Funding Schemes

The Community department administers the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme, *Town & Village Renewal Scheme* and CLÁR Scheme on behalf of the Department of Rural and Community Development. Schemes progressed or completed in 2023 include:

SCHEME	PROJECTS COMPLETED IN 2023
<p>Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) provides funding for the development of new outdoor recreational infrastructure and for the repair and enhancement of existing outdoor recreational facilities.</p>	<p>Development of a section of greenway between Wilkinstown to Navan to link with the existing sections of greenway.</p> <p>Construction of fence, planting holly bushes and management plan at Balrath Woods.</p> <p>Preparation of a design for the development of a park in Laytown.</p> <p>Provision of 3 swimming changing facilities on Bettystown and Laytown beach.</p>
<p>Town & Village Renewal Scheme (TVRS) is funded under Project Ireland 2040 and is targeted at towns with a population of 10,000 or less.</p>	<p>Upgrade and landscape around monument beside Nobber fire station and establish a Nobber Heritage Centre.</p> <p>Construction of footpath from Harlockstown Lane to bus stop at Baltrasna.</p> <p>Replanting of Parnell Garden Kells and creation of a sensory garden and accessibility entrance, and pedestrian crossing.</p> <p>Construction of footpath in Stamullen to connect a residential care facility to the village.</p> <p>Refurbishing the old derelict building in the centre of Kilmainham Wood into a Community Centre.</p> <p>Dunboyne Playground Redevelopment.</p>
<p>CLÁR Scheme supports small scale rural projects and sustainable development in identified areas by attracting people to live and work there. Areas included in the scheme are areas that have suffered the greatest levels of population decline. The areas in Meath covered are in north-west Meath.</p>	<p>Upgrade works at Kilskyre Parish Hall.</p> <p>Tarmac surfacing of the carpark at Ballinlough GFC.</p> <p>Lighting and associated works for community walking track at Moylagh GAA Club.</p> <p>Widening and surfacing the driveway to St. Brigid's clubhouse to all the facilities such as the running track, walking track and gym.</p> <p>Maoi Well Restoration Project.</p>

7.3 Broadband

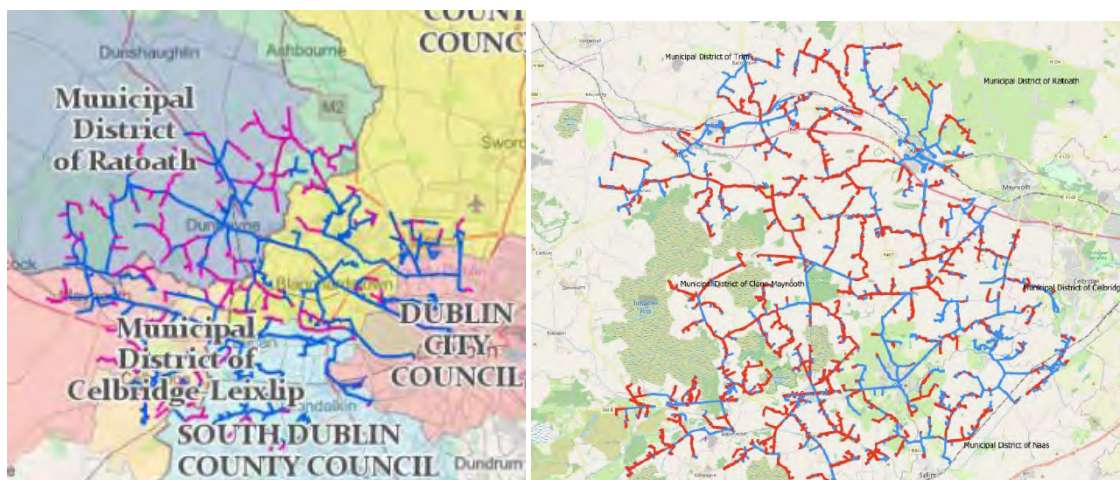
Meath provide 16 Broadband Connection points across the County providing free public WIFI to residents in Rural Areas. The OurKidsCode programme was launched in Meath at Bective GAA and a Family coding club was developed from the launch that continues to develop and provide projects to the network of clubs across the country. Microsoft Dreamspace also partnered with OurKidsCode and Meath County Council to engage primary schools in the DoYour:Bit Challenge with children from five schools in the County attending a try-it out days in May and September. Schools subsequently are engaging in the full programme in October 2023 with plans to enter the showcase in June 2024.



The GoRemote Campaign to highlight the opportunities for remote working in Meath was launched in January and was rolled out across the year with videos, signage, online marketing, and LMFM radio ads of the remote working hubs in the County.

The WIFI4EU network continues to see high levels of utilisation with an average of 1699 clients per day across the access points in Kells, Navan, Dunshaughlin, Dunboyne, Ratoath, Ashbourne, Trim and Oldcastle.

Work to deliver Fibre broadband to every premises in the County commenced with National Broadband Ireland had commenced in 2022. In 2023, Drogheda, Skerries and Delvin DA’s were made live providing fibre broadband to 3432 homes and businesses. Work commenced in 10 other deployment areas that will be delivered in 2024.



The Council processed 1,325 licences for underground roadworks and granted 14 s.254 licences for the installation of 129 Poles and 652 km of cable on poles across the 6 Municipalities in 2023.

Age Friendly Ireland - National Shared Service Office

Age Friendly Ireland operates as a shared service of local government, hosted by Meath County Council. The shared service manages the national network of 31 Local Age Friendly Programmes, hosted in each local authority, and is affiliated to the World Health Organisation’s Global Network of Age Friendly Cities & Communities. As of 2019, the World Health Organisation has designated Ireland, through the shared service in Meath County Council, as the first fully affiliated Age Friendly Country in the world.

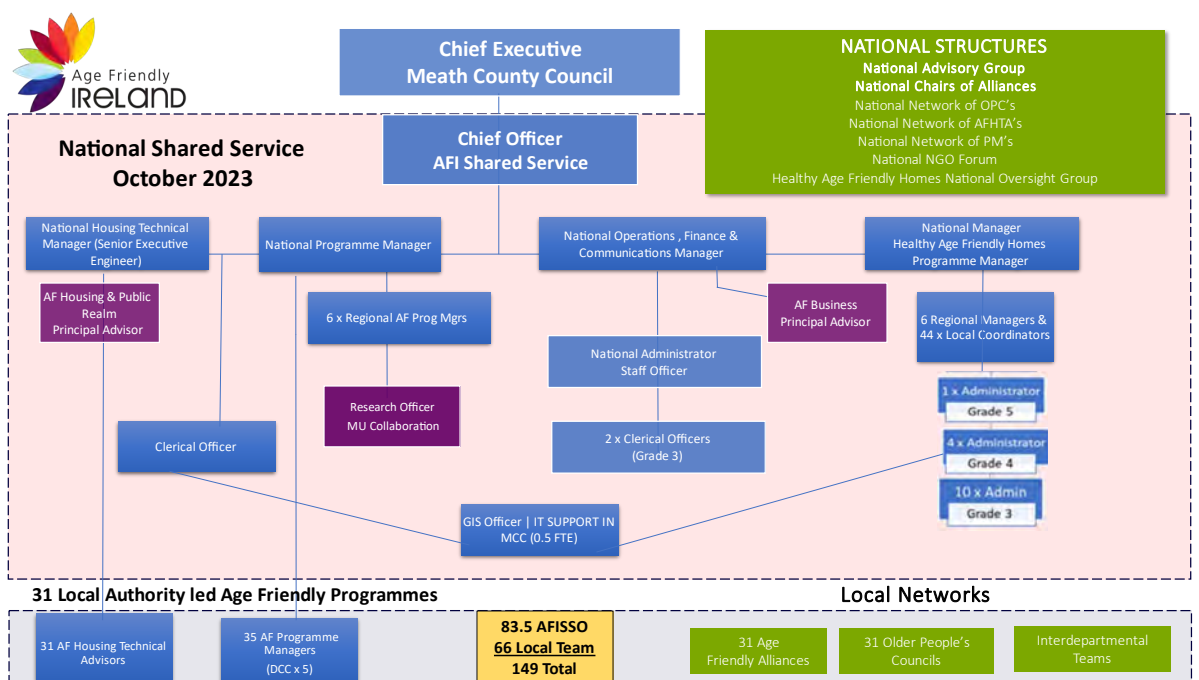
The shared service provides the technical management and operations for the network of 31 local authority-based Age Friendly Programmes around the local government sector. These operate under multi-agency Alliances, chaired by each local authority Chief Executives, involving partners in the public sector, business community, and voluntary sector and work in partnership with older citizens through Older People’s Council structures. Across Ireland there are over 5,400 members of Older People’s Councils (as of December 2023), with almost 400 actively participating on Older People’s Council Executive Committees.

Staffing and Structures

In 2023, Age Friendly Ireland reached a total of 83.5 Staff within the shared service following an extensive recruitment campaign with the Public Appointment Service and Meath County Council for Healthy Age Friendly Homes.

With the addition of local team (35 Age Friendly Programme Managers and 31 Age Friendly Technical Advisors), there are 149.5 staff working directly into the shared service. In 2023 Age Friendly Ireland welcomed the addition of a National Technical Manager who is responsible for the team-based framework of 31 Age Friendly Housing Technical Advisors.

The 83.5 core staff within the shared service operate within the following areas: management, communications, administration, regional development, research, and the Healthy Age Friendly Homes Programme. In addition to the core shared service staff, two Principal Advisors (for Housing & Public Realm training and the Age Friendly Business Programme) support the service on a contractual basis.



The shared service manages national networks including the National Network of Older People’s Councils, the National Network of Programme Managers, the National Network of Chairs of Alliances, the National Network

of Age Friendly Housing Technical Advisors and the Age Friendly NGO Forum. The National Advisory Group membership expanded during the year with the nomination of a representative from the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media and the Department of An Taoiseach

Across the country, 35 Age Friendly Programme Managers and 31 Age Friendly Housing Technical Advisors are assigned within local authorities to work on the programme in their local areas.

The regional managers play an important role in supporting the development of local programmes in their region. In 2023, they implemented the new training programme which was launched in 2022 for Older People's Council members to ensure that all structures are aligned with the operational guidelines.

National Convention

The National Convention of Older People's Councils took place in May 2023 in Tralee, County Kerry hosted by Kerry Age Friendly Programme and Kerry County Council. The previous national convention was held in Meath in 2022. The theme for the 2023 convention was '**Reconnecting | Fáilte ar ais – Welcome back!**' which was identified through the National Network of Older People's Councils, who felt the concept of reconnecting post Covid was a priority for older people. There were workshops on Arts, Sports, Nature, Technology and Accessible Communities and Housing. There was also a focus on maintaining connections. One of the foremost messages from the convention was articulated by older people who expressed that many older people have not fully re-engaged in their communities since the pandemic and the convention aimed to encourage people to re-establish connections to support their health and wellbeing.



Programme Outputs

Local programmes reported the following outputs for 2023:

- 20 local authorities have established interdepartmental teams.
- 24 Older People's Councils undertook training receiving training in multiple areas.
- 14 programmes provided digital devices to older people.
- 18 programmes ran intergenerational activities during the year.
- 35 walkability audits were carried out.
- Over 60 Age Friendly Towns (at various stages of development)
- 373 Age Friendly car parking spaces with further spaces planned.

National Age Friendly Recognition and Achievement Awards

The National Age Friendly Recognition and Achievement Awards, attended by Minister of State for Older People, Mary Butler, TD took place on 30th November in Clayton Whites Hotel hosted by Wexford Age Friendly Programme in Wexford County Council. These awards showcase and recognise a wide range of innovative initiatives that support older people and prepare for an ageing society. There were two winners of the Judge's Special Recognition Award which were Beech Hill College, Monaghan's TY Students on broadcasting news for local nursing homes and Colaiste Na Sceilge, Cahersiveen's Youth Action Addressing IT poverty among older

people in South Kerry.



Age Friendly Communications & Resources

Age Friendly Ireland publishes a weekly newsletter, with information relevant to older people and Age Friendly programme staff. The shared service maintains two websites www.agefriendlyireland.ie and www.agefriendlyhomes.ie and manages various social media platforms to engage with older people and practitioners and stakeholders. Additionally, the Age Friendly Housing Case Studies were published which showcased some age friendly housing developments.

International Engagement

Ireland is recognised by the World Health Organization as the first Age Friendly Country in the world, having full affiliation to their global programme across all administrative areas. In this leading role, the shared service provides support to other countries who are developing age friendly programmes. In 2023, staff engaged with Denmark, South Korea and Chile. Our Age Friendly Programme Manager also travelled to South Korea for an international symposium held in the capital.

Also, during 2023 Age Friendly Ireland completed its international webinar series, with the remaining webinars focusing on communications and information, social participation, employment and civic participation, respect and social inclusion, outdoor space and buildings, and transport.



Scaling up new support service | Healthy Age Friendly Homes

The Healthy Age Friendly Homes Programme continued to deliver AFI’s support co-ordination service during 2023, this programme is a unique and innovative collaboration between Sláintecare, Department of Health, HSE and Local Government’s Age Friendly Ireland Shared Service, which takes a person-centred approach to delivering on the Sláintecare goals of providing safe and timely access to care, improving patient and service user experience, and bringing care closer to home.

Individualised support is provided directly to older people by a local coordinator positioned within the local authority, they liaise with a broad spectrum of agencies and services, including personnel in local government, health services, transport, community and voluntary groups, Gardaí, elected members and others. The local coordinators visit older people living in the community who have been referred into the programme, where a needs assessment is conducted aligned to four key domains/supports: housing, health, community/social supports and technology. The co-ordinator agrees a personal plan with each individual older participant and supports them to access a range of services which include housing adaptation grants, home energy

improvements, health appointments, befriending or other community services, or technology supports. Supports are provided under six key themes of Health, Housing, Community, Technology, Climate/Energy, Finance.

Since the launch of the pilot in 9 sites in 2021 the following Outputs and Supports were provided (2021/2023)

- Total Home Visits: 4,845
- Needs Assessments: 3,157
- Additional Visits: 1,688
- Total Supports Provided: 9,030
- Technology: 1,618
- Housing: 3,557
- Community: 812
- Medical | Health: 1,003
- Finance: 812
- Climate | Energy: 1,228

Following a successful bid for funding in the Budget 2023, the Healthy Age Friendly Homes programme was allocated funding for national rollout. Using a population-based approach, each local authority in the country (31) hosts a local coordinator, with some areas receiving more based on their population's needs. Partnerships with key stakeholders are being scaled to ensure service provision across the country. The programme aims to support up to 10,500 older persons in their homes on an annual basis.

An effective recruitment campaign has seen the National scale of the programme with the appointment of a 66 staff within the Shared Service with a National Manager, a team of 15 administration staff, 6 Regional Managers and 44 Local Coordinators.

Research and Policy

A Research Officer was jointly employed under a partnership arrangement between AFI and Maynooth University. During 2023 the Research Office was involved in several studies such as a fuel poverty survey and gathering information from the 2022 Census. Age Friendly Ireland worked closely with various local authorities and institutions such as Trinity College to conduct data gathering. Additionally, Age Friendly Ireland multiple walkability audits in 2023.

In 2023 AFI have made several submissions were made to government departments to inform policy development. Some examples include submissions to ComReg's Postal Strategy and the LGMA Digital Strategy. AFI have also continued to support research conducted by the WHO.

Creative Regional Initiatives

During the year six bespoke regional creative initiatives for older people were delivered by Age Friendly Ireland with funding from the Creative Ireland Programme. Each initiative was co-designed with older people based on consultation sessions organised in early 2023 and delivered with the support of creative partners. The six initiatives were co-ordinated by Age Friendly Ireland's regional programme managers in their respective regions:

- NORTH: Poetry and straw workshops and a modern day pageant exploring the history and culture associated with St Brigid in preparation for the new bank holiday St Brigid's Day. (47 older people)
- WEST: A Travelling Roadshow of music and songwriting sessions led by a professional musician that engaged older people in songwriting and exploration of proverbs. (215 participants)
- SOUTH EAST: A creative response to place, exploring older people's sense of belonging and experiences of their riverine and coastal community. (87 participants)
- EAST: A series of large scale outdoor creative events linked to public/heritage parks that offered taster programmes of creative activity. (560 participants)
- DUBLIN CITY: A train the trainer céilí dance initiative that upskilled older people in adapted céilí dancing

who in turn acted as 'dance leaders' in their own local area to pass on these skills. (30 participants)

- MIDLANDS: A music teaching residency across a range of instruments targeting older people who were lapsed musicians and wished to return to playing an instrument. (62 participants)

The evaluation of the initiatives indicated that they impacted on health and wellbeing of participants, including increased physical activity (33%), increasing social connections (85%) and increased feelings of happiness (58%) confidence (62%).



Age Friendly Business

The Age Friendly Business Recognition Programme is one of the core areas of work of the shared service. This programme is aimed at upskilling the business community to future proof their service for population ageing. Businesses are encouraged to consult with their older customers and commit to making changes in the business to ensure it is Age Friendly. During 2023, the Principal Advisor focused on supporting local Programme Managers to deliver the programme and took a regional approach to ensure uptake across all areas. At national level, she worked with large scale businesses and service providers including the Money Advice and Budgeting Service and worked with the advertising industry to raise awareness of ageism in the depiction of older people in advertising.

Library Services

In addition to delivering the core public lending, reference, IT, study, local studies, and schools service library staff across the branch network also:

- Reopened **Trim** library.
- Opened **Enfield** branch library.
- Promoted the new '**My Open Library**' facilities at Enfield.
- Progressed the design and fitout of the new **Bettystown Library** and Community Facility.
- Progressed the design of the new **County Archive** building.
- Delivered projects funded under the **Dormant Accounts Funding 2022** to develop initiatives on Traveller culture and LGBTQI+ awareness including the publication of '*Traveller Roots and Routes*'. Introduced additional Sensory equipment and fit-out to Oldcastle library.
- Secured multi-annual funding to deliver library led initiatives under the **National Integration** programme. Funding was secured with the support of the Community Department. Delivered the **ScanEz** translation product at Navan, Ashbourne, and Mosney Accommodation Centre.
- Secured funding from the national **Healthy Ireland** programme to provide designated Healthy Reading areas in Ashbourne Library.
- Secured additional funding from Creative Ireland for the cataloguing and listing of the **Clayton Woollen Mills**, Navan, archive collection.
- Secured additional funding for the '**Toys, Technology and Training**' under the Dormant Accounts Funding 2023.
- Delivered the 2023 annual plan for **Creative Ireland** in partnership with national, local and community stakeholders. Launched the Meath County Council Culture and Creativity Strategy 2023-27 in partnership with relevant stakeholders.
- Continued the very successful library led **Writer-in Residence** programme with Manchán Magan's residency, supported by Creative Ireland.
- Devised and delivered annual Creative Meath **Cruinniú na nÓg** programme of events at Navan, Ráth Chairn and various locations in East Meath in partnership with national, local and community stakeholders. '*Cruinniú*' was a joint action of Meath and Louth County Councils under the Drogheda Implementation Board.
- **Decade of Centenaries** – published 'Peadar Murray's Photographs: A Selection' in partnership with Dunshaughlin Historical Society.
- Published '*Wielding the Willow: A History of Cricket in South Meath 1860-1950*'
- Managed the delivery of the annual 'Decade of Centenaries' programme through the wider culture team.
- Catalogued and listed the personal libraries and archive of noted Meath historians, Fr. Gerry Rice, and Professor George Eogan.
- Delivered a range of events under the **Healthy Ireland At Your Library** initiative and supported the programming of the local authority Healthy Ireland Co-ordinator.
- The annual '**Children's Book Festival**' in October was delivered in hybrid format in 2023, welcoming schools back to branches but also allowing access to national and international authors via Zoom and pre-recorded events.
- 3,300 children participated in the annual **Summer Reading Challenge** and a very vibrant **Summer Programme** heralded the absolute return of normal lending patterns after the pandemic. Meath was the fifth highest performing county nationally in terms of 'reaching' the target age group.
- Delivered the second annual rollout of '**Little Library Book Bag**' initiative to all 4–5-year-old children in the county.
- Extended the '**Scéal Trail**' /**Storyboards** initiative for children and young families under the Right to Read Programme to Ráth Chairn. Renewed the trail in Blackwater Park with a new story.
- Launched a new pre-literacy initiative for babies using the 'Magic Table' – 'Magic Tummy Time'

at four libraries.

- Delivered local programming for the **Ireland Reads** campaign.
- Right to Read programming was delivered in **Mosney Accommodation Centre** in partnership with Louth Libraries (all 4 core R2R programmes delivered)
- Introduced a '**Climate Action Resource Collection**' for schools at Ashbourne Library.
- Introduced a '**Seed Borrowing Scheme**' at Dunboyne Library under the library Climate Action Plan.
- Piloted '**Age-friendly tablets for loan scheme**' in 4 branches and delivered individual and small group digital skills classes.
- Delivered programming for '**Science Week**'.
- Delivered the first rollout of '**Books at Bedtime**' initiative to all 0-4-year-old children in the county.
- Delivered programming for *Seachtain na Gaeilge* and managed the **Gaeltacht Scholarship Schemes** in association with Irish Language Officer.
- Celebrated **Culture Night** with introductory tours of Trim library.
- **Eservices roadshows** were delivered in Mosney Accommodation Centre and other locations.
- Secured funding in collaboration with Trim Family Resource Centre for project at Trim and Athboy Libraries under **the Adult Literacy for Life programme (ALL)**
- Piloted '**OurKidsCode**' workshops at Navan library in partnership with the Broadband Officer.
- Delivered the first rollout of '**Books at Bedtime**' initiative to all 0-4-year-old children in the County.

Arts Office

The Meath County Council Arts mission statement as per the County Arts Development Plan 2019 – 2024 is:

To work closely with artists, individuals and communities to increase access to, awareness of and participation in the arts across all disciplines and sectors of society. To act as a facilitator for arts organisations and play a major role in the development of good practice for the county. To provide opportunities across disciplines intended to support the Local Authority policy of supporting quality artistic endeavour, provision of employment opportunities for artists and long-term sustainability and durability for the arts in the county.

In implementing key aims and objectives as per the County Arts Development Plan, the Arts Office continued to adopt a proactive approach in devising the 2023 Arts programme and engaged with creative partners, artists, groups, organisations and the greater creative community. The Arts Office also engages with and is supported by the Dept Tourism Culture Arts Gaeltacht Sports and Media the Arts Council and Creative Ireland.

Arts Grants Awards & Bursaries:

A total of 82 awards were made across a variety of schemes which included:

- Annual Arts Grant
- Community Arts Grant
- Drama League of Ireland Bursary
- Professional Artist Development Fund
- Tyrone Guthrie Centre/MCC/Age & Opportunity Award
- CCI Paris Residency Award
- Words Ireland Mentorship Award
- MCC/Children's Books Ireland /Tyrone Guthrie Centre Award
- Culture Night Event Awards
- Festival Grant Scheme

The individual funding streams covered a wide range of disciplines, arts practices and activities and were intended to enable artists and organisations engaged in arts activities to develop work and projects that enhance and sustain the arts in County Meath. Over 100 arts groups, community organisations, schools and artists have been supported under the 2023 Arts Grants Awards & Bursaries Schemes.

The Meath Artists Meet Up Network (MAMU) and Artists CPD

Now with a membership of 100+ professional artists, proved an invaluable way for us to connect, engage and be informed by artists of their issues & needs. Informed by this we:

- Continued to provide 1-1 mentoring and CPD exchanges via phone or Zoom.
- Issued a quarterly MAMU Newsletter with monthly opportunities updates.
- Expanded the Associate Artist and small commissions/in development programme.
- Expanded the nature and range of Arts Awards and Bursaries
- Hosted Creative Journey Writing Workshop Weekend with Award winning playwright Deirdre Kinahan.

A further suite of artists commission and performance (live & recorded) supports were also introduced with the objective of supporting artists in the creation and presentation of work whilst continuing to engage with our creative communities & audiences. These included:

- Toradh Gallery 1 Ashbourne & Toradh Gallery 2 Kells exhibition programme outreach.
- *In the Middle of the Fields* – Mary Lavin Celebration films.
- *Where Angels Listen* - Francis Ledwidge artists response films.
- Streaming partnership with Sofft Productions and HotPress continued with viewing figures of over 10,000 for the Mary Lavin *In The Middle of The Field* films.

Culture Night 2023

Was expanded in Meath with a new Culture Night Event Funding stream being introduced. 25 in person events took place at various locations across the county which represents a 100% increase in the number of CN events taking place.

Toradh Gallery 1 Ashbourne & Toradh 2 Kells:

Continued to attract and host exhibitions from local, national and international artists. 2023 exhibitions included:

- *Threading the Táin* a five-county community collaborative stitch tapestry project inspired by the Táin Bó Cuailigne. The Meath Táin Tapestry piece is now on permanent display in the Tourist Office, Kells Courthouse Tourism & Cultural Hub.
- *If They Could See Us Now* a community audio visual exhibition by Belfast based Dumbworld, sponsored by Meta in partnership with Solstice Arts Centre.
- *Angles* – an exhibition of work by international artist & cinematographer Kieran Slyne.
- *Last Dance* Kells Printing works poster exhibition in partnership with Type Trail.
- *The Ashbourne Story* – a celebration of Ashbourne 1820 – 2020 in partnership with Ashbourne Historical society.

Tea and Chats and Tunes

Connecting Nursing Home Residents in County Meath & their Families at Home or Abroad.

Tea, Chats and Tunes continued in 2023 as a project partnership between Meath County Council Arts Office & Music in Health Ireland, supported by funding from Creative Ireland under Creativity in Older Age and Meath County Council and delivered through Healthcare partners in County Meath.

Tea, Chats and Tunes was developed in response to the need to find new ways of connecting some of the most vulnerable members of our communities isolating in Nursing Homes with their families at home or abroad through an opportunity to engage in a live cultural experience in a safe way.

Through the support of technology, a virtual zoom room supports families to connect-in with their loved ones in a meaningful way, regardless of where they are located. Music, conversation, and memories are shared while offering an opportunity for new ones to be made through a specifically designed framework that supports person-centred music engagement. This project is being delivered by Music in Health Ireland in nursing homes across the county.

County Arts Officer invited to present at Music in Health Ireland *Music and Dementia* event in partnership with The Global Brain Health Institute, National Concert Hall and Kells Courthouse Tourism & Cultural Hub May 2023.

Sightless Cinema project

Continued in partnership with White Cane Audio Theatre, Solstice Arts Centre & NCBI. Three County Arts Council *Invitation To Collaborate* partnership application successful with workshops and performances taking place in each county.

Other Festivals & Events

New strategic partnerships developed with Meath Beo traditional Irish music festival (Slane & Ashbourne) and Another Love Story contemporary music & arts festival Kilyon.

Kells Creative Placemaking selected as one of 8 DTCAGSM national pilot Creative Economies programmes in 2022 the programme continued in 2023 with specific funding support being provided by Creative Ireland towards development activities.

County Arts Officer invited to present at the Arts Council Festival Makers conference NUI Galway May 2023.

Type Trail Festival took place June - Sept. showcasing the work of 30 artists across 21 internal & external sites across Kells.

Hinterland Festival of Literature and Arts successfully took place June with events taking place across multiple venues.

Samhain Food Festival successfully took place November with events taking place in a variety of venues in Kells.

Work on **Kells Printing Works** Project progressed.

BookMarket Unplugged concert series partnership continued in 2023.

Upstairs at the Courthouse, managed and programmed by the Arts Office, successfully hosted: 28 sold out Hinterland Festival events.

Samhain Food Festival Symposium and Festival events.

Two major national and regional events:

- Irish Walled Town Network Festival Development Workshop in partnership with AOIFE
- Music in Health Ireland *Music and Dementia* Round Table event in partnership with The Global Brain Health Institute at Trinity which brought local, national and international Health Consultants, GBHI Atlantic Scholars, healthcare workers and creatives to Kells.
- *Bloody Yesterday* by award winning playwright Deirdre Kinahan.
- *National Heritage Week* National Print Museum workshops.
- Conservation Officer talk on Lloyd Spire Tuesday 15th August.
- Arts Council Invitation to Collaborate three- county 'Natural Habitats' workshop programme.

Children & Young Person's programmes

- Strategic 3 Year Development Partnership with Droichead Arts Centre formalised. East Meath projects included Leanbh Festival, Back in The Grove programme, Young Producers Project, Boyne Valley Film Festival & the Colaiste na hInse Clós Arts Festival.
- Drogheda SCP/ National Concert Hall Music in Mind children's programme at Mosney Direct Provision Centre.
- *Act Out Youth Theatre* continued to flourish and expand in Navan and Dunshaughlin delivering an exciting blend of online & in-person projects.
- Continued support to *Julianstown Youth Orchestra*.
- *Cruinniú na nÓg 2023* Delivered in partnership with County Library Services,
- *Music Generation Meath* Ongoing liaison with Music Generation Meath as part of the LMEDP
- *Creative Ireland* Continued implementation of the Creative Ireland Meath Five Year Strategy in collaboration with Cultural Services Team.

LEO and Economic Development

11.0 Achievements in 2023

- An interim Roadmap document was produced by the Economic Development team in 2023, to continue the vision and focus of the Meath Economic Development Strategy, to promote Meath as the “place and space to thrive” for entrepreneurs, potential investors, future residents, communities and visitors alike. The purpose is to ensure that those considering establishing or expanding their business in County Meath, along with their potential workforce, see Meath as the ideal place to live, work and do business, and play.
- Three videos were produced, promoting everything that Meath, Navan and Dunboyrne have to offer. These videos have been shared with the IDA, Enterprise Ireland and other key stakeholders to help market Meath both to clients in Ireland and abroad.
- Work was completed on a Strategic Sites Brochure, highlighting the 12 Strategic Employment Sites from the Meath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027, and the connectivity and services linked to these sites. The aim of the brochure is to ensure that potential investors can identify potential locations for consideration within the County, with the relevant zoning already in place.
- The Economic Development Team has become integrated into the Planning Department, working closely with the Forward Planning team on the initiatives mentioned above, and offering a one stop shop for developers, investors and indigenous businesses on site identification, pre-planning advice, supports and mentoring etc.
- To further enhance the work of the Team, the Meath Economic Development Forum was established in 2023. The aim of the Economic Development Forum is to build on and increase collaboration within the county to maximise its assets, attract further investment and create additional jobs and opportunities. The Forum sees various business leaders, entrepreneurs and high achievers come together to share their experience to facilitate economic activity and growth in the county.
- The vision is to create “An economically vibrant and sustainable County that enables our people and businesses to thrive”. Members of the Forum are looking at ways to support and grow activity across 5 workstreams in the County, Food & Agri, Indigenous & Micro, Education & Skills, Foreign Direct Investment and Hospitality, Tourism & Retail. A draft action plan is being developed across all workstreams which will enable delivery of key economic objectives for the County over the next 5 years.
- Engagement with State Agencies and third level education providers is key to the positive development of the County, as a result of this engagement in 2023 a skills audit and business profile of Meath are currently underway. This will help identify and plan for any future employment/skills needs and further increase Meath’s attractiveness to potential investors and reduce commuter numbers.
- A comprehensive marketing plan to target investment both nationally and internationally into Meath is also being devised. This will promote us as a border county to the Capital and all of its amenities while showcasing the high-quality lifestyle available to those living in Meath.

11.1 Business Supports

The Boyne Valley Food Strategy

The new Boyne Valley Food Development Officer was appointed in May 2023. Also in May, Boyne Valley Flavours held their first in-person member event post-Covid with a well-attended Summer Symposium and producer showcase event held in Slane Castle. Work commenced on the new 5-Year Boyne Valley Food Strategy, supported by Meath County Council, Louth County Council and Fáilte Ireland. The new strategy will be published in 2024.

Culinary Centre of Excellence

A feasibility study was undertaken to establish the viability of setting up a Centre of Food Culture in the Boyne Valley region of Ireland. A working group consisting of local leaders from the food and drink industry worked with a third-party consultant to develop a draft strategy document to determine the mission, vision, objectives and a 5 year plan for the development of the Centre. Meath County Council, in conjunction with Louth County Council, provided support towards the establishment of the Centre by funding the post of Development Manager for the Centre of Food Culture project, who commenced in role in October 2023.

Economic Development provided support and sponsorship to Samhain Festival of Food and Culture in 2023

Samhain Festival took place in Kells for its 5th year with a programme of over 30 events and experiences celebrating and showcase the very best of the past, present and future of Irish food and culture, from food & drinks tastings, cookery demonstrations, and cocktail masterclasses, to food safaris, farm visits, kids workshops, and panel discussions with some of the biggest names in Irish food.

11.2 Local Enterprise Office

LEO Meath continued to provide funding to support businesses in 2023 as well as the successful rollout of training programmes, mentoring and business information seminars for SMEs during the year. The LEO continues to work with all business development stakeholders including Enterprise Ireland, IDA, LEADER, Solas, Údaras na Gaeltachta, INTREO and SkillNets.

LEO Meath provides a range of productivity supports to assist businesses in their growth:

- Green for Business: Focuses on sustainability and environmental practices.
- Lean for Business: Aims to enhance efficiency and reduce waste.
- Digital for Business: Assists businesses in adopting digital technologies.
- LEO Meath have had great success with SME's in Meath in delivering these programmes and helping them save time, money and become more sustainable in the process.

In 2023, through LEO Meath, 227 clients received mentoring. Also, a new craft collective of Designers and Craftspeople was established in the County "Meath Made", which was supported by LEO Meath and the Economic Development section. In addition to this, 6 LEO clients represented Meath at a "Showcase" in the RDS with An Gobha being awarded the overall product winner and overall show winner.

Innovate/Accelerate Europe: A very successful export development programme has been developed by Meath and Louth LEOs and a cross border partner in response to the Brexit situation. This programme provides classroom learning on export potential, and preparing the company for exporting. The next part of the course involves commissioning and delivering a professional promotional video for each company. This video showcases the company and is in effect the 'business card' for the company. The third phase of the programme links the companies with businesses across the EU. This is done through agents and brokers who have been selected by the LEOs and Northern partners. Currently there are agents in place in Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Greece and the Netherlands. Over eighty companies in the region have gone through the programme to date.

Tourism Development



2023 was a successful year for the tourism industry with a very busy Summer season however rising energy costs, an increase in the vat rate for hospitality businesses and a reduction in availability of accommodation, has resulted in many challenges for tourism businesses. Boyne Valley Tourism and Meath County Council have worked with the tourism industry to facilitate, advise and support businesses. The new tourism strategy is underway and is capturing many of those challenges.

Boyne Valley Tourism Strategy 2024-2030 Consultation



Meath and Louth County Councils have collaborated on a third shared Tourism Strategy. Consultation on the new 7-year Boyne Valley Tourism strategy commenced in September 2023 with extensive consultation with the tourism industry involving two in person events across Meath and Louth, and a further online session followed by individual sessions with agencies. A public session was held in October while over 400 surveys were gathered at the key tourist sites and from the community. Further opportunities to submit views will take place.

The new Tourism Strategy will guide the future development and growth of the tourism industry across the Boyne Valley. It will have an emphasis on sustainability and the integration of the UN SDGs, in addition to incorporating accessibility to create an inclusive destination. Generating an economic spread throughout the destination along with identifying innovative ideas for new projects will be key. There will be a focus on heritage, adventure and activities, food and outdoor trails. The hidden gems along with opportunities within our rural towns and villages will be explored through the consultation process.

30 Year Anniversary of Meath Tourism



On Friday, 1st September Boyne Valley Tourism, formerly Meath Tourism celebrated its 30-year anniversary since its foundation with over 100 people from the tourism industry, Meath and Louth County Councils, past Chairpersons and former staff in attendance. Speakers addressing the audience included: Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee TD, Cllr. Aisling Dempsey, Chairperson Boyne Valley Tourism, Fiona Lawless, Chief Executive Meath County Council and Ross Kenny, Vice Chair Boyne Valley Tourism and Boyne Boats.

Boyne Valley to Lakelands Greenway

With the anticipated completion of the Boyne Valley to Lakelands Greenway underway, content for marketing the greenway has been developed. To raise awareness of the Greenway, social media accounts on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) were set up and a [new map](#) was launched end October 2023.

Marketing and Promotion Highlights

- **Boyne Valley brochure** was designed, printed and distributed at Dublin Airport and across businesses.
- Boyne Valley Tourism held a **Virtual Media Event** in February to launch 3 new videos #MyBoyneValley to national press with 15 national journalists and influencers in attendance.
- **9 travel journalists** and influencers have visited on invitation from Boyne Valley Tourism for a 2 day visit with carefully curated itineraries. This has resulted in a significant amount of coverage from national press including Irish Country Magazine, the Belfast Telegraph, Irish News, Examiner, The Sun, Stellar Mag, Sunday Independent and Ireland of the Welcomes.
- **2 Networking events and 2 familiarisation trips** were held and the outcome was to create Referral document to refer business and keep business in the Boyne Valley.
- The first **tour operator fam trip** since Covid was organised by Boyne Valley Tourism and had a great take up rate with 25 tour operators spending 2 days inspecting attractions, accommodation and experiences for inclusion in future programmes.
- The Boyne Valley was promoted at a dedicated stand at **The Holiday World Shows, Balmoral, and Bloom** with a total attendance of 300,000
- Meath County Council continues to support the operation of **three tourist offices** at the Trim Visitor Centre, Kells Courthouse Tourism and Cultural Hub and Solstice Arts Centre.
- New scheduled tours of **Kells town** were established; new **Trim brochure** was designed and printed; support was provided to the new **Navan Racing Festival** to get it off the ground.
- **New monthly Trade Ezine** was created to encourage information sharing with up to 20 businesses contributing content each month.



The Púca Festival took place from 27th to 31st October at key festival hubs of Trim and Athboy supported by Fáilte Ireland and Meath County Council. The festival attracted 43,647 visitors and likely increased spending in the economy by c€4.6m (Economic Impact Report). 3 out of 4 people cited Puca Festival as their main reason to visit County Meath (B&A Research).

It features a number of musical acts, comedy acts and cultural events. There were many new additions to the programme this year but most notably around local business engagement. The new harvest market in the Porchfields was a great success with 40 stalls and an estimated 20,000 footfall. Free daily fire performances will take place outside the Castle walls, while a harvest market with local food and craft stalls will be in the porchfields daily. There was a greater emphasis on Athboy in 2023 with more and varied tours to the Hill of Ward and a spectacular Festival Closing Ceremony in Athboy attracting an audience of 3,000.

16 International Buyers from Europe and Canada and 13 international media and influencers and USA broadcast teams were in Meath over the 4 days presenting immense opportunities for international awareness not only of Púca but also the Boyne Valley as a destination.

Additional family events took place throughout the month of October, promoted under the Spirits of Meath Festival through its dedicated website and social media supported by Boyne Valley Tourism and Meath County Council www.spiritsofmeath.ie.

Water Services

12.0 Transfer of Responsibility

In May 2023, Meath County Council signed a Master Co-Operation agreement with Uisce Éireann.

This resulted in Uisce Éireann assuming full responsibility and accountability for the delivery of water services and the management and direction of all water services staff in Meath, from 19th July 2023.

As part of this Meath County Council have entered into a Support Services Agreement under which the Council will provide support, mainly in the form of existing staff, to help Uisce Éireann deliver their services in Meath, until 2026.

In 2023 Uisce Eireann started to directly recruit and employ all new water services staff. Meath County Council no longer recruits or employs new water services staff.

Financial

The Councils' 2023 Budget accounted for Water Services staff payroll, directly incurred costs and a representative proportion of the Central Management Charge, which were recouped on a monthly basis from Uisce Éireann during 2023.

Uisce Éireann budgeted directly for the provision of the goods and services associated with the provision of water services.

Meath County Council as WSA

Meath County Council remains the Water Services Authority (WSA) for the functions that fall outside the remit of Uisce Éireann and in this regard, continues to have responsibility for storm water, storm flooding, group schemes, Private Regulated Water Supplies, well grants and lead piping replacement grants. The associated costs were provided for in the 2023 budget.

There are approximately 150 registered Private Regulated Water Supplies (ie private Group Water Schemes, Hotels with own wells, premises serving the public with own wells, etc.) in Meath and these were monitored by the Councils Water Services Department throughout 2023.

The Councils performance in relation to monitoring Private Regulated Water Supplies is measured annually by NOAC (National Oversight and Audit Committee).

In 2023 overall compliance for these supplies in Meath was in excess of 98%.

Finance

During 2023 budgetary control continued to be the focus for the Finance Section as we strive to effectively manage the County's resources and achieve efficiencies and value for money while delivering a wide range of services.

Emphasis for 2023 was on maintaining collection rates for all sources of income. (Rents, Rates, Loans, NPPR)

Accounts Payable continued to process supplier payments in a timely and efficient manner with regular monitoring and reporting to ensure compliance with Prompt Payment legislation. System development and enhancements continued throughout 2023 to ensure compliance with all taxation legislation.

The Procurement Unit continued to promote, guide, and support all procurement activities in Meath County Council. The unit regularly provides training and guidance to staff and supports strong corporate governance by conducting regular procurement and budgetary compliance checks. This training and guidance will continue throughout 2024. During 2023,

During Q1 of 2023 Finance produced the Annual Financial Statements for 2022. This was followed by the half year accounts in July. The Local Property Tax reports were brought to the September council meeting for members consideration and the Three-year Capital Investment Programme was prepared and brought to full council in October. The Annual Budget for 2024 was prepared and presented to the members for adoption in November.

During 2023 we continued reviewing our systems and processes to identify areas that can be further automated or enhanced by new Business Solutions and Information Management.

Human Resources

The HR Department oversaw and facilitated the significant expansion of the Council during 2023, which experienced the commencement of high numbers of new staff and changes in the workforce that is now younger and more diverse.

The HR Department had to face the challenges of recruitment and retention of skilled staff in an increasingly competitive environment and introduced more innovative and agile approaches to recruiting new staff and further promoting the Council as an attractive place to work during 2023.

Further, 2023 was a year that saw an increase in industrial unrest, with national strike action taken by the Retained Fire Service in June and July, with threatened industrial action by Water Services staff being averted in June and a period of work-to-rule by administrative staff on the issue of Job Evaluation. All of these matters had to be managed, which impacted on the work of the HR Department, and indeed the wider workings of the Council.

14.0 Strategic Workforce Planning

The HR Department continued to review staffing levels and requirements during 2023. The Department has continued its work with senior management and the various service areas of the organisation in order to identify current and emerging requirements so as to be in a position to plan and respond to same in terms of staffing.

Ongoing engagement on workforce planning, throughout 2023, gave consideration to the following:

- Continued increase in activity both locally and throughout the local government sector in terms of recruitment and selection and staff retention due to the continued changing nature, diversification, and the expanding requirements placed on the sector by national programmes and new initiatives to deliver key policy priorities.
- Continued increase in opportunities throughout the public sector in general and consequent employment and skills mobility.
- Planning for the filling of vacancies and a renewed focus on attracting and recruiting people with the appropriate knowledge and skills – this includes marketing what the Council, and the sector in general, can offer to prospective job applicants/candidates more effectively and having consideration to changing employee expectations and how media is consumed.
- Continued work towards being an employer of choice.
- Renewed focus on learning and development opportunities for staff with a focus on structured induction for new staff, fostering a fair and healthy working environment, and consideration of other developmental opportunities.

14.1 Recruitment and Selection

In 2023, the HR Department organised a significant number of recruitment competitions – 51 competitions in total. The number of applications received was 1233, with a total of 699 candidates interviewed. These interviews were mainly in-person, with candidates being facilitated with online interviews, where required.

	2022	2023
Number of Competitions held	55	51
Number of Applications received	915	1233
No of Interviews conducted	437	699

In September, the HR Department launched a series of Rolling Recruitment initiatives, targeting particular skillsets, such as Engineering and Financial Management. These were open calls for candidates, where applications were processed, interviews held and offers issued in a quick and agile manner. These initiatives were very successful in helping to fill a number of key vacancies across the organisation.

As a result of the overall recruitment effort, a total of 123 new starts commenced in 2023.

One significant recruitment project in 2023 was the expansion of the national Healthy Age Friendly Homes (HAFH) Programme, which required the HR Department to recruit an additional 66 new staff. This work was done in collaboration with the Public Appointments Service and Council staff have now been appointed in all 31 local authorities across the country to implement the HAFH Programme, supported by a management and administration team centrally in Meath County Council.

14.2 Learning and Development

In terms of Learning and Development, the Department continued to build on its programme commenced in 2020, with an expansion in the learning supports and professional development course options for staff. Work will continue to focus on the development of necessary competencies for the required role for each staff member, to enable individuals to perform to the best of their ability.

The Department continues to review and assist with training and up-skilling requirements throughout the organisation.

	2022	2023
Number of Course Types	121	146
Number of Training Courses held	344	346
Number of Individual Staff Trained	790	791

14.3 Coaching Programme

In 2023, the Council implemented its own coaching programme for a number of middle-management staff, which was deemed to be a success.

Meath County Council is one of seven local authorities participating in a national pilot Coaching Programme for the local government sector. Twenty employees are training to be coaches and when qualified will be available to coach other staff. It is intended that the programme will be rolled-out more widely, after the pilot phase.

14.4 Time and Attendance

The HR Department processes employees' applications for statutory leave entitlements and other work arrangements. This saw 24% of staff availing of work-sharing, parental leave or other leave entitlement in 2023.

Also, in 2023 there was a total of 5,345 days lost to certified sick leave, with a further 514 days lost through self-certified sick leave. All of these leave instances are managed by the Time and Attendance team in the HR Department.

14.5 Payroll and Pensioners

The HR Department continues to process payroll and pension payments for nearly 1,000 staff and approximately 430 pensioners and implemented the various pay increases, as negotiated under the national pay talks.

14.6 Health and Wellbeing

The HR Department agreed a Wellbeing and Mental Health Policy for the Council in 2023 and implemented a number of initiatives, which will be further developed in 2024.

To further support employees, the Council continues to provide an Employee Assistance Programme, through the services of Spectrum Life.

14.7 Blended Working

The HR Department oversaw the introduction of the Blended Working pilot in 2023, in line with its policy adopted in 2022. Some 330 employees availed of a blended working arrangement during the pilot phase. Blended working enables the organisation and staff members to have more flexible work arrangements whilst at the same time having a continued focus on the delivery of high-quality services. The policy also helps to ensure the Council remains an Employer of Choice and supports potential future opportunities for digitisation, decarbonisation and rural regeneration.

A review of the pilot, including a survey of staff, took place at the end of 2023. This review will inform the future implementation of Blended Working in the Council.

14.8 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The principles of equality, diversity and inclusion are fundamental to the work of the HR Department and integrated in the business processes of the organisation.

14.9 Gender Pay Gap Report

In December, the Council published its Gender Pay Gap Report for 2023. The gender pay gap is the difference in the average hourly wage of men and women across a workforce. Employers with more than 250 employees in Ireland are now required to publish their gender pay gap data.

The 2023 report showed a Mean Gender Pay Gap where, on average, males are paid 6.56% more than females. However, the Median Gender Pay Gap shows that the median rate of pay for females is 0.31% higher than the median rate of pay for males.

14.10 Industrial Relations

The HR Department continued to work closely with staff and the various trade unions on a range of issues and individual cases, including cases that were brought before the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC).

Following the WRC reaching agreement on two key sectoral issues: (a) Future Delivery of Water Services; and (b) Retained Fire Fighters, the HR Department is tasked with coordinating two fora, composed of Trade Union representatives and Council management, established to oversee their implementation and to help resolve any issues arising. This work with each Forum continues.

14.11 MCC Connect App

The MCC Connect App which was introduced in 2020 continues to be an excellent platform for HR and corporate communications. It was an invaluable tool during the Covid pandemic and the App has been further developed, with increased content and functionality. The HR Department will roll-out additional functions in 2024. The Council continues to be approached by a number of other local authorities, seeking to replicate what Meath County Council has achieved with the introduction and development of the App.

Information Systems

During 2023, the Information Systems department continued to deliver business improvement projects across the entire organisation maintaining its focus on operational stability and information security.

15.0 IT Operations

Highlights from the IT Operations team in 2023 include:

- The continued support of the operational needs of council employees whether working in council offices or from home.
- The continued modernisation of our devices (including phones, laptops, tablets, servers).
- The continued modernisation and patch management of our operating systems and software.
- The continued focus on cyber security initiatives, including enhancements to network infrastructure, vulnerability and patch management, network penetration testing, email validation, policy and procedure -updates, cyber security awareness initiatives and governance.
- The rollout of a new IT help desk system and processes.
- The completion of our project to migrate to Office 365.
- The migration of all mobile devices to Microsoft Intune.
- The procurement and rollout of a new managed print service.
- The procurement of new storage, computing, and networking infrastructure.

15.2 Business Solutions & Information Management

Highlights from the Business Solutions team in 2023 include:

- The introduction of an Elected Members Portal providing Councillors and Elected Members the ability to log and manage their representations to any Meath County Council Department 24/7.
- Additional CRM modules including Planning Compliance and Roads & Services in Charge modules.
- The introduction of a corporate web based shared calendar which supports our teams when working in multi-location/hybrid environments. The system provides huge benefits for the organisation in terms of team and project planning and supports our delivery of public services, business continuity and major emergency requirements.
- A major upgrade to Drupal 10 was undertaken on our corporate website content management system.
- An evaluation of the structure and design of the corporate website was initiated with the procurement of an expert review.
- Ongoing work on the accessibility of Meath County Council's public websites saw the achievement of 99.84% compliance on the National Disability Authority auditing tool.
- The rollout of an internal planning management system (mPlan) to manage a small number of planning application types. The system complements and integrates with the national iPlan system.
- The rollout of the national e-Planning portal. The new portal www.planning.localgov.ie allows agents, developers, and members of the public to lodge their applications and make planning submissions and observations electronically.
- Support of the design, implementation, and rollout of the National Healthy Age Friendly Homes Programme.
- Continued dashboard and report support for all departments.

Geographical Information Systems

Highlights from the GIS\Information Management team in 2023 include:

- Implementation of PACE (Planning Application Capture Environment) to digitise planning applications. The PACE Project is a collaboration between the Tailte Eireann and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. It provides local authorities with a spatial data tool for digitally capturing the site geometries of planning applications. PACE will provide a national standard for planning application data and the project is seen as a process improvement to the established NPAD service.
- Continued support provided to the Planning Department, in the implementation of the new Residential Zoned Land Tax.
- In the preparation of the County Development Plan Monitor <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/b5c3959715ac4b01bf45e1218fb6e832>
- Interactive mapping suite prepared for the Fire Service Emergency Management Plan.
- Preparation of data and return of same for the Sports Ireland National Sport & Recreation Amenities Database.
- Continued support provided to the Healthy Age Friendly Homes Programme Local Coordinators through the development of Age Friendly Ireland GIS web map applications and accompanying spatial services.
- Continued support to all departments in the Council to improve spatial analytics reporting.

Appendix 1 – Elected Members 2023

YOUR CURRENT COUNCILLORS

ASHBOURNE



Joe Bonner
Non-Party



Suzanne Jamal
Fine Gael



Helen Meyer
Sinn Féin



Alan Tobin
Fine Gael



Conor Tormey
Fianna Fáil



Amanda Smith
Non-Party

KELLS



Mike Bray
Fianna Fáil



Eugene Cassidy
Fine Gael



Sean Drew
Fianna Fáil



Michael Gallagher
Sinn Féin



David Gilroy
Non-Party



Paul McCabe
Fianna Fáil



Sarah Reilly
Fine Gael

LAYTOWN-BETTYSTOWN



Tom Behan
Fianna Fáil



Wayne Harding
Fianna Fáil



Geraldine Keogan
Non-Party



Elaine McGinty
Labour



Stephen McKee
Fianna Fáil



Paddy Meade
Fine Gael



Sharon Tolan
Fine Gael

NAVAN



Yemi Adenuga
Fine Gael



Francis Deane
Non-Party



Padraig Fitzsimons
Fianna Fáil



Edward Fennessy
Sinn Féin



Alan Lawes
Non-Party



Tommy Reilly
Fianna Fáil



Emer Tóibín
Aontú

RATOATH



Brian Fitzgerald
Non-Party



Maria Murphy
Fine Gael



Nick Killian
Non-Party



Gerry O'Connor
Fine Gael



Caroline O'Reilly
Fianna Fáil



Deirdre Geraghty Smith
Fianna Fáil



Gillian Toole
Non-Party

TRIM



Aisling Dempsey
Fianna Fáil



Joe Fox
Fine Gael



Noel French
Non-Party



Trevor Golden
Non-Party



Ronan Moore
Social Democrats



Niamh Souhan
Fine Gael

Appendix 2 - Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) Members

Climate Action, Environment and Emergency Services SPC

Cllr. Eugene Cassidy Chair	Cllr. David Gilroy
Cllr. Tom Behan	Cllr. Suzanne Jamal
Cllr. Joe Bonner	Cllr. Geraldine Keogan
Cllr. Mike Bray	Cllr. Ronan Moore
Cllr. Francis Deane	Cllr. Gillian Toole
Vacant	Environmental – Pillar
Tom Rogers	Community/Voluntary – Pillar
Seamus McGee	Agriculture/Farming – Pillar
John Paul Gilroy	Business/Commercial – Pillar
Noel Maguire	Trade Union - Pillar

Transportation SPC

Cllr. Trevor Golden (Chair)	Cllr. Paul McCabe
Cllr. Noel French	Cllr. Paddy Meade
Cllr. Deirdre Geraghty-Smith	Cllr. Gerry O'Connor
Cllr. Michael Gallagher	Cllr. Amanda Smith
Cllr. Wayne Harding	Cllr. Sharon Tolan
Alan Watson	Community/Voluntary - Pillar
Geoffrey Clarke	Environmental/Conservation – Pillar
Dermot Ward	Agriculture/Farming – Pillar
Damien Hughes	Business/Commercial – Pillar
Danny Reilly	Development/Construction - Pillar

Planning, Economic Development, Enterprise and European Affairs SPC

Cllr. Stephen McKee, (Chair)	Cllr. Elaine McGinty
Cllr Aisling Dempsey	Cllr. Helen Meyer
Cllr. Brian Fitzgerald	Cllr. Sarah Reilly
Cllr. Padraig Fitzsimons	Cllr. Tommy Reilly
Cllr. Joe Fox	Cllr. Alan Tobin
Fergal Hennessy	Agriculture/Farming - Pillar
Vacant	Environment/Conservation – Pillar
Gary Plunkett	Development/Construction – Pillar
Sean Boyle	Business/Commercial - Pillar
Michael Wall	Business/Commercial - Pillar

Housing, Community & Cultural Development SPC

Cllr. Conor Tormey (Chair)	Cllr. Alan Lawes
Cllr. Yemi Adenuga	Cllr. Maria Murphy
Cllr. Sean Drew	Cllr. Caroline O'Reilly
Cllr. Edward Fennessy	Cllr. Niamh Souhan
Cllr. Nick Killian	Cllr. Emer Tóibín
Niamh Bn Ui Loinsigh	Community/Voluntary – Pillar
Gerard Weldon	Community/Voluntary - Pillar
John Regan	Trade Union - Pillar
Vacant	Social Inclusion - Pillar
Michele McCullough	Social Inclusion – Pillar

Appendix 3 – SPC Activities

Activities of the Strategic Policy Committees 2023

Strategic Policy Committee	Number of Meetings
Planning, Economic Development, Enterprise and European Affairs	3
Climate Action, Environment and Emergency Services	3
Transportation	3
Housing, Community and Cultural Development	3

Appendix 4 – Other Committees of the Council

Committee	Name	Party
Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee	Cllr Yemi Adenuga	Fine Gael
	Cllr Nick Killian	Non-Party
	Cllr Elaine McGinty	Labour
	Cllr Noel French	Non-Party
	Cllr. David Gilroy	Non-Party
Meath Comhairle na nÓg Steering Committee	Cllr Helen Meyer	Sinn Féin
	Cllr Ronan Moore	Social Democrats
Regional Advisory Council Teagasc	Cllr Francis Deane	Non-Party
Regional Health Forum	Cllr Tom Behan	Fianna Fáil
	Cllr Michael Gallagher	Sinn Féin
	Cllr Niamh Souhan	Fine Gael
	Cllr Emer Tóibín	Aontú
	Cllr Gillian Toole	Non-Party
(LCDC) Local Community Development Committee	Cllr Yemi Adenuga	Fine Gael
	Cllr Mike Bray	Fianna Fáil
	Cllr Elaine McGinty	Labour
Audit Committee	Cllr Sean Drew	Fianna Fáil
	Cllr. Gerry O'Connor	Fine Gael
(LMETB) Louth Meath Education Training Board	Cllr Wayne Harding	Fianna Fáil
	Cllr Nick Killian	Non-Party
	Cllr Paul McCabe	Fianna Fail
	Cllr Maria Murphy	Fine Gael
	Cllr Gerry O'Connor	Fine Gael
	Cllr Caroline O'Reilly	Fianna Fáil
	Cllr Amanda Smith	Non-Party
	Association of Irish Local Government	Cllr Joe Fox

Committee	Name	Party
	CLlr Wayne Harding	Fianna Fáil
	CLlr Nick Killian	Non-Party
LAMA	CLlr Amanda Smith	Non-Party
Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurances Ltd	CLlr Tommy Reilly	Fianna Fáil
Navan Enterprise Centre Company Ltd	CLlr Yemi Adenuga	Fine Gael
	CLlr Francis Deane	Non-Party
	CLlr Edward Fennessy	Sinn Féin
	CLlr Pdraig Fitzsimons	Fianna Fáil
	CLlr Emer Tóibín	Aontú
East Border Region (Directors)	CLlr Sean Drew	Fianna Fáil
	CLlr Trevor Golden	Non-Party
	CLlr Gerry O'Connor	Fine Gael
Forum of East Border Region	CLlr Tom Behan	Fianna Fáil
	CLlr Paul McCabe	Fianna Fáil
	CLlr Paddy Meade	Fine Gael
Meath Local Sports Partnership Ltd	CLlr Pdraig Fitzsimons	Fianna Fáil
Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly	CLlr Paddy Meade	Fine Gael
	CLlr David Gilroy	Non-Party
	CLlr Caroline O'Reilly	Fianna Fáil
Board of Meath Arts Centre Ltd	CLlr Yemi Adenuga	Fine Gael
	CLlr Francis Deane	Non-Party
	CLlr Pdraig Fitzsimons	Fianna Fáil
Boyne Valley Tourism Ltd	CLlr Tom Behan	Fianna Fáil
	CLlr Aisling Dempsey	Fianna Fáil
	CLlr Helen Meyer	Sinn Féin
	CLlr David Gilroy	Non-Party
	CLlr Sarah Reilly	Fine Gael
Athboy Social Needs & Recreational Company Ltd	CLlr Mike Bray	Fianna Fáil
	CLlr David Gilroy	Non-Party

Committee	Name	Party
Kells Community Enterprise Company Ltd	CLlr Mike Bray	Fianna Fáil
	CLlr Sean Drew	Fianna Fáil
	CLlr Paul McCabe	Fianna Fáil
	CLlr Sarah Reilly	Fine Gael
Meath Heritage Forum	CLlr Edward Fennessy	Fine Gael
	CLlr Noel French	Non-Party
	CLlr Elaine McGinty	Labour
	CLlr Suzanne Jamal	Fine Gael
	CLlr Paul McCabe	Fianna Fáil
	CLlr Maria Murphy	Fine Gael
Trim Sports & Leisure Centre Company Ltd (Directors)	CLlr Aisling Dempsey	Fianna Fáil
	CLlr Joe Fox	Fine Gael
Indaver Community Liaison Committee	CLlr Geraldine Keogan	Non-Party
	CLlr Stephen McKee	Fianna Fáil
North East Regional Drugs Task	CLlr Paul McCabe	Fianna Fáil
	CLlr Niamh Souhan	Fine Gael
Meath Age Friendly Alliance	CLlr Gillian Toole	Fine Gael
Knockharley Community Liaison Committee	CLlr Joe Bonner	Non-Party
	CLlr Suzanne Jamal	Fine Gael
	CLlr Amanda Smith	Sinn Féin
Joint Policing Committee	CLlr Yemi Adenuga	Fine Gael
	CLlr Tom Behan	Fianna Fáil
	CLlr Francis Deane	Non-Party
	CLlr Edward Fennessy	Sinn Féin
	CLlr Pádraig Fitzsimons	Fianna Fáil
	CLlr Noel French	Non-Party
	CLlr Deirdre Geraghty-Smith	Fianna Fáil
	CLlr David Gilroy	Non-Party
	CLlr Trevor Golden	Non-Party
	CLlr Alan Lawes	Non-Party

Committee	Name	Party
	CLlr Paul McCabe	Fianna Fáil
	CLlr Helen Meyer	Sinn Féin
	CLlr Maria Murphy	Fine Gael
	CLlr Alan Tobin	Fine Gael
	CLlr Gillian Toole	Non-Party
Community Reps	Tinu Achioya	
	Bernard Kenny	
	Conor O'Leary	
	Ronnie Owens	
	Bill Commerford	
Meath Co. Council Staff	Kieran Kehoe	
	Fiona Fallon	
Gardai	Chief Superintendent John Dollard	
	Superintendent Martina Noonan	
Oireachtas Members	Thomas Byrne	
	Damien English	
	Johnny Guirke	
	Helen McEntee	
	Darren O'Rourke	
	Peadar Tóibín	
	Shane Cassells	
	Regina Doherty	
	Annie Hoey	
	Sharon Keogan	
Protocol Committee	CLlr Aisling Dempsey	Fianna Fáil
	CLlr Francis Deane	Non-Party
	CLlr Edward Fennessy	Sinn Féin
	CLlr Joe Fox	Fine Gael
	CLlr Trevor Golden	Non-Party
	CLlr Paul McCabe	Fianna Fáil

Committee	Name	Party
	CLlr Gerry O'Connor	Fine Gael
	CLlr Tommy Reilly	Fianna Fáil
Corporate Policy Group (CPG)	CLlr Eugene Cassidy	Fine Gael
	CLlr Trevor Golden	Non-Party
	CLlr Nick Killian	Non-Party
	CLlr Stephen McKee	Fianna Fáil
	CLlr Tommy Reilly	Fianna Fáil
	CLlr Conor Tormey	Fianna Fáil
Municipal District Chairs (change yearly)	CLlr Alan Tobin	Ashbourne
	CLlr Paul McCabe	Kells
	CLlr Stephen McKee	Laytown/ Bettystown
	CLlr Edward Fennessy	Navan
	CLlr Brian Fitzgerald	Ratoath
	CLlr Noel French	Trim

Appendix 5 – Payments to Members of Meath County Council

Annual Expenses Allowance (Travel and Subsistence)	€147,423.98
Local Representation Allowance	€144,989.72
Cathaoirleach and Leas Cathaoirleach Allowances (subject to taxation)	€77,079.71
Allowance Chairpersons of Strategic Policy Committees	€23,983.64
Annual Remuneration (subject to taxation)	€1,150,720.99
Conferences Abroad - Travelling and Subsistence	€20,178.43
Additional Expenses	€1,521.60

Appendix 6 – Conferences Abroad

List of Approved Abroad Conferences and members who attended in 2023

Title	Dates	Members Attended
Tallinn European Green Capital Conference 2023 – Tallinn, Estonia	January 2023	Cllr. Ronan Moore
St Patrick’s Day – New York	March 2023	Cllr. Nick Killian Cllr. Elaine McGinty Cllr. Damien O’Reilly Cllr. Sharon Tolan
St Patrick’s Day – London	March 2023	Cllr. Mike Bray Cllr. Wayne Harding Cllr. Paddy Meade Cllr Amanda Smith
East Border Region - Dundee	March 2023	Cllr. Trevor Golden
Columban Charter of Partnership Signing – St Gallen, Switzerland	July 2023	Cllr. Paul McCabe
Ashbourne Twinning – Corcubion, Spain	July 2023	Cllr. Suzanne Jamal Cllr. Tommy Reilly Cllr. Amanda Smith Cllr. Alan Tobin
Twinning - Broccostella, Italy & Navan	September 2023	Cllr. Edward Fennessy Cllr. Alan Lawes

		Cllr. Emer Tóibín
East Border Region (EU Brussels)	October 2023	Cllr. Trevor Golden
1st Transnational Meeting Urbact In4Green – Avilés, Spain	October 2023	Cllr. Edward Fennessy
Meath Association of London Annual Dinner	Ocotober 2023	Cllr. Tommy Reilly

Appendix 7 – Conferences/Training at Home

Event = AILG - Annual Training Conference 2023, SUM: Event Cost = 1,650.00, SUM: Member Claimed = €3,915.30, SUM: Overall Event Claim = 5,565.30, Total Members Attended = 10

Event	Event Type	Salutation	Elected Member	Date From	Date To	Event Cost	Member Claimed	Overall Event Claim
AILG - Annual Training Conference 2023	Training	Cllr	O'Reilly (Damien)	19/04/2023	20/04/2023	165.00	€508.83	673.83
AILG - Annual Training Conference 2023	Training	Cllr	Fox (Joe)	19/04/2023	20/04/2023	165.00	€481.33	646.33
AILG - Annual Training Conference 2023	Training	Cllr	Tormey (Conor)	19/04/2023	20/04/2023	165.00	€428.91	593.91
AILG - Annual Training Conference 2023	Training	Cllr	Jamal (Suzanne)	19/04/2023	20/04/2023	165.00	€437.20	602.20
AILG - Annual Training Conference 2023	Training	Cllr	Gallagher (Michael)	19/04/2023	20/04/2023	165.00	€0.00	165.00
AILG - Annual Training Conference 2023	Training	Cllr	Reilly (Tommy)	19/04/2023	20/04/2023	165.00	€434.61	599.61
AILG - Annual Training Conference 2023	Training	Cllr	Keogan (Geraldine)	19/04/2023	20/04/2023	165.00	€443.42	608.42
AILG - Annual Training Conference 2023	Training	Cllr	Smith (Amanda)	19/04/2023	20/04/2023	165.00	€501.77	666.77
AILG - Annual Training Conference 2023	Training	Cllr	Killian (Nick)	19/04/2023	20/04/2023	165.00	€242.05	407.05
AILG - Annual Training Conference 2023	Training	Cllr	Golden (Trevor)	19/04/2023	20/04/2023	165.00	€437.18	602.18

Event = AILG - Autumn Training Conference 2023, SUM: Event Cost = 1,650.00, SUM: Member Claimed = €5,560.72, SUM: Overall Event Claim = 7,210.72, Total Members Attended = 10

Event	Event Type	Salutation	Elected Member	Date From	Date To	Event Cost	Member Claimed	Overall Event Claim
AILG - Autumn Training Conference 2023	Training	Cllr	Keogan (Geraldine)	13/09/2023	14/09/2023	165.00	€629.37	794.37
AILG - Autumn Training Conference 2023	Training	Cllr	Reilly (Tommy)	13/09/2023	14/09/2023	165.00	€595.83	760.83
AILG - Autumn Training Conference 2023	Training	Cllr	O'Reilly (Damien)	13/09/2023	14/09/2023	165.00	€604.90	769.90
AILG - Autumn Training Conference 2023	Training	Cllr	Smith (Amanda)	13/09/2023	14/09/2023	165.00	€631.18	796.18
AILG - Autumn Training Conference 2023	Training	Cllr	Jamal (Suzanne)	13/09/2023	14/09/2023	165.00	€485.10	650.10
AILG - Autumn Training Conference 2023	Training	Cllr	Meade (Paddy)	13/09/2023	14/09/2023	165.00	€476.58	641.58
AILG - Autumn Training Conference 2023	Training	Cllr	Tormey (Conor)	13/09/2023	14/09/2023	165.00	€603.77	768.77
AILG - Autumn Training Conference 2023	Training	Cllr	Golden (Trevor)	13/09/2023	14/09/2023	165.00	€578.62	743.62
AILG - Autumn Training Conference 2023	Training	Cllr	Fox (Joe)	13/09/2023	14/09/2023	165.00	€547.84	712.84
AILG - Autumn Training Conference 2023	Training	Cllr	Gilroy (David)	13/09/2023	14/09/2023	165.00	€407.53	572.53

Event = AILG - Module 1 Elected Member Training Programme 2023, SUM: Event Cost = 560.00, SUM: Member Claimed = €1,777.28, SUM: Overall Event Claim = 2,337.28, Total Members Attended = 7

Event	Event Type	Salutation	Elected Member	Date From	Date To	Event Cost	Member Claimed	Overall Event Claim
AILG - Module 1 Elected Member Training Programme 2023	Training	Cllr	Tormey (Conor)	23/02/2023	23/02/2023	80.00	€111.93	191.93
AILG - Module 1 Elected Member Training Programme 2023	Training	Cllr	Golden (Trevor)	23/02/2023	23/02/2023	80.00	€72.55	152.55
AILG - Module 1 Elected Member Training Programme 2023	Training	Cllr	Smith (Amanda)	23/02/2023	23/02/2023	80.00	€118.66	198.66

AILG - Module 1 Elected Member Training Programme 2023	Training	Cllr	Fox (Joe)	25/02/2023	25/02/2023	80.00	€328.65	408.65
AILG - Module 1 Elected Member Training Programme 2023	Training	Cllr	O'Reilly (Damien)	25/02/2023	25/02/2023	80.00	€364.21	444.21
AILG - Module 1 Elected Member Training Programme 2023	Training	Cllr	Harding (Wayne)	25/02/2023	25/02/2023	80.00	€399.45	479.45
AILG - Module 1 Elected Member Training Programme 2023	Training	Cllr	Reilly (Tommy)	25/02/2023	25/02/2023	80.00	€381.83	461.83

Event = AILG - Module 2 Elected Member Training Programme 2023, SUM: Event Cost = 400.00, SUM: Member Claimed = €305.55, SUM: Overall Event Claim = 705.55, Total Members Attended = 5

Event	Event Type	Salutation	Elected Member	Date From	Date To	Event Cost	Member Claimed	Overall Event Claim
AILG - Module 2 Elected Member Training Programme 2023	Training	Cllr	Gilroy (David)	25/03/2023	25/03/2023	80.00	€0.00	80.00
AILG - Module 2 Elected Member Training Programme 2023	Training	Cllr	Golden (Trevor)	25/03/2023	25/03/2023	80.00	€66.33	146.33
AILG - Module 2 Elected Member Training Programme 2023	Training	Cllr	Killian (Nick)	25/03/2023	25/03/2023	80.00	€41.80	121.80
AILG - Module 2 Elected Member Training Programme 2023	Training	Cllr	O'Reilly (Damien)	25/03/2023	25/03/2023	80.00	€132.32	212.32
AILG - Module 2 Elected Member Training Programme 2023	Training	Cllr	Fox (Joe)	25/03/2023	25/03/2023	80.00	€65.10	145.10

Event = AILG - Module 3 Elected Member Training Programme 2023, SUM: Event Cost = 320.00, SUM: Member Claimed = €814.55, SUM: Overall Event Claim = 1,134.55, Total Members Attended = 4

Event	Event Type	Salutation	Elected Member	Date From	Date To	Event Cost	Member Claimed	Overall Event Claim
AILG - Module 3 Elected Member Training Programme 2023	Training	Cllr	Killian (Nick)	15/06/2023	15/06/2023	80.00	€68.13	148.13
AILG - Module 3 Elected Member Training Programme 2023	Training	Cllr	Bonner (Joe)	15/06/2023	15/06/2023	80.00	€0.00	80.00
AILG - Module 3 Elected Member Training Programme 2023	Training	Cllr	Harding (Wayne)	17/06/2023	17/06/2023	80.00	€413.54	493.54
AILG - Module 3 Elected Member Training Programme 2023	Training	Cllr	O'Reilly (Damien)	17/06/2023	17/06/2023	80.00	€332.88	412.88

Event = AILG - Module 4 Elected Member Training Programme 2023, SUM: Event Cost = 400.00, SUM: Member Claimed = €2,205.97, SUM: Overall Event Claim = 2,605.97, Total Members Attended = 5

Event	Event Type	Salutation	Elected Member	Date From	Date To	Event Cost	Member Claimed	Overall Event Claim
AILG - Module 4 Elected Member Training Programme 2023	Training	Cllr	Keogan (Geraldine)	22/07/2023	22/07/2023	80.00	€349.70	429.70
AILG - Module 4 Elected Member Training Programme 2023	Training	Cllr	Golden (Trevor)	22/07/2023	22/07/2023	80.00	€463.38	543.38
AILG - Module 4 Elected Member Training Programme 2023	Training	Cllr	Fox (Joe)	22/07/2023	22/07/2023	80.00	€438.93	518.93
AILG - Module 4 Elected Member Training Programme 2023	Training	Cllr	O'Reilly (Damien)	22/07/2023	22/07/2023	80.00	€504.17	584.17
AILG - Module 4 Elected Member Training Programme 2023	Training	Cllr	Reilly (Tommy)	22/07/2023	22/07/2023	80.00	€449.79	529.79

Training Programme
2023

Event = AILG - Module 5 Elected Member Training Programme 2023, SUM: Event Cost = 320.00, SUM: Member Claimed = €1,286.34, SUM: Overall Event Claim = 1,606.34, Total Members Attended = 4

Event	Event Type	Salutation	Elected Member	Date From	Date To	Event Cost	Member Claimed	Overall Event Claim
AILG - Module 5 Elected Member Training Programme 2023	Training	Cllr	Killian (Nick)	19/10/2023	19/10/2023	80.00	€79.00	159.00
AILG - Module 5 Elected Member Training Programme 2023	Training	Cllr	Golden (Trevor)	21/10/2023	21/10/2023	80.00	€666.39	746.39
AILG - Module 5 Elected Member Training Programme 2023	Training	Cllr	Harding (Wayne)	21/10/2023	21/10/2023	80.00	€124.16	204.16
AILG - Module 5 Elected Member Training Programme 2023	Training	Cllr	Gilroy (David)	21/10/2023	21/10/2023	80.00	€416.79	496.79

Event = AILG - Module 6 Elected Member Training Programme 2023, SUM: Event Cost = 400.00, SUM: Member Claimed = €2,094.64, SUM: Overall Event Claim = 2,494.64, Total Members Attended = 5

Event	Event Type	Salutation	Elected Member	Date From	Date To	Event Cost	Member Claimed	Overall Event Claim
AILG - Module 6 Elected Member Training Programme 2023	Training	Cllr	Fox (Joe)	16/11/2023	16/11/2023	80.00	€413.59	493.59
AILG - Module 6 Elected Member Training Programme 2023	Training	Cllr	Bray (Mike)	18/11/2023	18/11/2023	80.00	€187.59	267.59
AILG - Module 6 Elected Member Training Programme 2023	Training	Cllr	Golden (Trevor)	18/11/2023	18/11/2023	80.00	€460.66	540.66
AILG - Module 6 Elected Member Training Programme 2023	Training	Cllr	Keogan	18/11/2023	18/11/2023	80.00	€515.04	595.04

Elected Member Training Programme 2023			(Geraldine)					
AILG - Module 6 Elected Member Training Programme 2023	Training	Cllr	Smith (Amanda)	18/11/2023	18/11/2023	80.00	€517.76	597.76

Event = AILG - Online Webinar 1 2023, SUM: Event Cost = 0.00, SUM: Member Claimed = €0.00, SUM: Overall Event Claim = 0.00, Total Members Attended = 7

Event	Event Type	Salutation	Elected Member	Date From	Date To	Event Cost	Member Claimed	Overall Event Claim
AILG - Online Webinar 1 2023	Training	Cllr	Tobin (Alan)	24/02/2023	24/02/2023	0.00	€0.00	0.00
AILG - Online Webinar 1 2023	Training	Cllr	Drew (Sean)	24/02/2023	24/02/2023	0.00	€0.00	0.00
AILG - Online Webinar 1 2023	Training	Cllr	McCabe (Paul)	24/02/2023	24/02/2023	0.00	€0.00	0.00
AILG - Online Webinar 1 2023	Training	Cllr	Adenuga (Yemi)	24/02/2023	24/02/2023	0.00	€0.00	0.00
AILG - Online Webinar 1 2023	Training	Cllr	Murphy (Maria)	24/02/2023	24/02/2023	0.00	€0.00	0.00
AILG - Online Webinar 1 2023	Training	Cllr	O'Reilly (Damien)	24/02/2023	24/02/2023	0.00	€0.00	0.00
AILG - Online Webinar 1 2023	Training	Cllr	Toole (Gillian)	24/02/2023	24/02/2023	0.00	€0.00	0.00

Event = AILG - Online Webinar 2 2023, SUM: Event Cost = 0.00, SUM: Member Claimed = €0.00, SUM: Overall Event Claim = 0.00, Total Members Attended = 3

Event	Event Type	Salutation	Elected Member	Date From	Date To	Event Cost	Member Claimed	Overall Event Claim
AILG - Online Webinar 2 2023	Training	Cllr	Tolan (Sharon)	28/04/2023	28/04/2023	0.00	€0.00	0.00
AILG - Online Webinar 2 2023	Training	Cllr	O'Reilly (Damien)	28/04/2023	28/04/2023	0.00	€0.00	0.00
AILG - Online Webinar 2 2023	Training	Cllr	Golden (Trevor)	28/04/2023	28/04/2023	0.00	€0.00	0.00

Event = AILG - Online Webinar 3 2023, SUM: Event Cost = 0.00, SUM: Member Claimed = €0.00, SUM: Overall Event Claim = 0.00, Total Members Attended = 3

Event	Event Type	Salutation	Elected Member	Date From	Date To	Event Cost	Member Claimed	Overall Event Claim
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AILG - Online Webinar 3 2023	Training	Cllr	Murphy (Maria)	26/05/2023	26/05/2023	0.00	€0.00	0.00
AILG - Online Webinar 3 2023	Training	Cllr	O'Reilly (Damien)	26/05/2023	26/05/2023	0.00	€0.00	0.00
AILG - Online Webinar 3 2023	Training	Cllr	Toole (Gillian)	26/05/2023	26/05/2023	0.00	€0.00	0.00

Event = AILG - Online Webinar 4 2023, SUM: Event Cost = 0.00, SUM: Member Claimed = €0.00, SUM: Overall Event Claim = 0.00, Total Members Attended = 3

Event	Event Type	Salutation	Elected Member	Date From	Date To	Event Cost	Member Claimed	Overall Event Claim
AILG - Online Webinar 4 2023	Training	Cllr	Golden (Trevor)	30/06/2023	30/06/2023	0.00	€0.00	0.00
AILG - Online Webinar 4 2023	Training	Cllr	O'Reilly (Damien)	30/06/2023	30/06/2023	0.00	€0.00	0.00
AILG - Online Webinar 4 2023	Training	Cllr	Gallagher (Michael)	30/06/2023	30/06/2023	0.00	€0.00	0.00

Event = AILG - Online Webinar 5 2023, SUM: Event Cost = 0.00, SUM: Member Claimed = €0.00, SUM: Overall Event Claim = 0.00, Total Members Attended = 2

Event	Event Type	Salutation	Elected Member	Date From	Date To	Event Cost	Member Claimed	Overall Event Claim
AILG - Online Webinar 5 2023	Training	Cllr	O'Reilly (Damien)	14/07/2023	14/07/2023	0.00	€0.00	0.00
AILG - Online Webinar 5 2023	Training	Cllr	Gallagher (Michael)	14/07/2023	14/07/2023	0.00	€0.00	0.00

Event = AILG - Online Webinar 6 2023, SUM: Event Cost = 0.00, SUM: Member Claimed = €0.00, SUM: Overall Event Claim = 0.00, Total Members Attended = 4

Event	Event Type	Salutation	Elected Member	Date From	Date To	Event Cost	Member Claimed	Overall Event Claim
AILG - Online Webinar 6 2023	Training	Cllr	O'Reilly (Damien)	22/09/2023	22/09/2023	0.00	€0.00	0.00
AILG - Online Webinar 6 2023	Training	Cllr	McGinty (Elaine)	22/09/2023	22/09/2023	0.00	€0.00	0.00
AILG - Online Webinar 6 2023	Training	Cllr	Tobin (Alan)	22/09/2023	22/09/2023	0.00	€0.00	0.00
AILG - Online Webinar 6 2023	Training	Cllr	Golden (Trevor)	22/09/2023	22/09/2023	0.00	€0.00	0.00

Event = AILG - Online Webinar 7 2023, SUM: Event Cost = 0.00, SUM: Member Claimed = €0.00, SUM: Overall Event Claim = 0.00, Total Members Attended = 3

Event	Event Type	Salutation	Elected Member	Date From	Date To	Event Cost	Member Claimed	Overall Event Claim
AILG - Online Webinar 7 2023	Training	Cllr	Meyer (Helen)	13/10/2023	13/10/2023	0.00	€0.00	0.00
AILG - Online Webinar 7 2023	Training	Cllr	McGinty (Elaine)	13/10/2023	13/10/2023	0.00	€0.00	0.00
AILG - Online Webinar 7 2023	Training	Cllr	Fox (Joe)	13/10/2023	13/10/2023	0.00	€0.00	0.00

Event = AILG - Online Webinar 8 2023, SUM: Event Cost = 0.00, SUM: Member Claimed = €0.00, SUM: Overall Event Claim = 0.00, Total Members Attended = 2

Event	Event Type	Salutation	Elected Member	Date From	Date To	Event Cost	Member Claimed	Overall Event Claim
AILG - Online Webinar 8 2023	Conference	Cllr	McGinty (Elaine)	20/10/2023	20/10/2023	0.00	€0.00	0.00
AILG - Online Webinar 8 2023	Conference	Cllr	Meyer (Helen)	20/10/2023	20/10/2023	0.00	€0.00	0.00

Event = AILG - Online Webinar 9 2023, SUM: Event Cost = 0.00, SUM: Member Claimed = €0.00, SUM: Overall Event Claim = 0.00, Total Members Attended = 1

Event	Event Type	Salutation	Elected Member	Date From	Date To	Event Cost	Member Claimed	Overall Event Claim
AILG - Online Webinar 9 2023	Training	Cllr	Murphy (Maria)	27/10/2023	27/10/2023	0.00	€0.00	0.00

Event = Association of Irish Regions 2023 - Regional Seminar and Training, SUM: Event Cost = 800.00, SUM: Member Claimed = €1,623.95, SUM: Overall Event Claim = 2,423.95, Total Members Attended = 5

Event	Event Type	Salutation	Elected Member	Date From	Date To	Event Cost	Member Claimed	Overall Event Claim
Association of Irish Regions 2023 - Regional Seminar and Training	Training	Cllr	O'Reilly (Damien)	07/02/2023	09/02/2023	160.00	€382.56	542.56
Association of Irish Regions 2023 - Regional Seminar and Training	Training	Cllr	Smith (Amanda)	07/02/2023	09/02/2023	160.00	€316.54	476.54
Association of Irish Training Regions 2023 -	Training	Cllr	Tormey (Conor)	07/02/2023	09/02/2023	160.00	€379.45	539.45

Regional Seminar
and Training

Association of Irish Training Regions 2023 - Regional Seminar and Training	Cllr	Fox (Joe)	07/02/2023	09/02/2023	160.00	€357.82	517.82
Association of Irish Training Regions 2023 - Regional Seminar and Training	Cllr	Keogan (Geraldine)	07/02/2023	09/02/2023	160.00	€187.58	347.58

Event = Connecting, Communicating and Collaborating - Irish Regions Cooperating across the EU, SUM: Event Cost = 0.00, SUM: Member Claimed = €487.72, SUM: Overall Event Claim = 487.72, Total Members Attended = 2

Event	Event Type	Salutation	Elected Member	Date From	Date To	Event Cost	Member Claimed	Overall Event Claim
Connecting, Communicating and Collaborating - Irish Regions Cooperating across the EU	Training	Cllr	Harding (Wayne)	19/04/2023	19/04/2023	0.00	€229.18	229.18
Connecting, Communicating and Collaborating - Irish Regions Cooperating across the EU	Training	Cllr	O'Reilly (Damien)	19/04/2023	19/04/2023	0.00	€258.54	258.54

Event = Empty Homes Roadshow, SUM: Event Cost = 0.00, SUM: Member Claimed = €128.74, SUM: Overall Event Claim = 128.74, Total Members Attended = 2

Event	Event Type	Salutation	Elected Member	Date From	Date To	Event Cost	Member Claimed	Overall Event Claim
Empty Homes Roadshow	Training	Cllr	O'Reilly (Damien)	16/02/2023	16/02/2023	0.00	€76.69	76.69
Empty Homes Roadshow	Training	Cllr	Meade (Paddy)	16/02/2023	16/02/2023	0.00	€52.05	52.05

Event = EPA Annual Climate Change Conference 2023, SUM: Event Cost = 0.00, SUM: Member Claimed = €0.00, SUM: Overall Event Claim = 0.00, Total Members Attended = 1

Event	Event Type	Salutation	Elected Member	Date From	Date To	Event Cost	Member	Claimed
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								Claim
EPA Annual Climate Change Conference 2023	Conference	Cllr	McGinty (Elaine)	25/05/2023	25/05/2023	0.00	€0.00	0.00

Event = Irish Planning Institute - Annual Conference 2023 - Planning Reform and Planning Delivery, SUM: Event Cost = 500.00, SUM: Member Claimed = €527.91, SUM: Overall Event Claim = 1,027.91, Total Members Attended = 1

Event	Event Type	Salutation	Elected Member	Date From	Date To	Event Cost	Member Claimed	Overall Event Claim
Irish Planning Institute - Annual Conference 2023 - Planning Reform and Planning Delivery	Training	Cllr	Harding (Wayne)	19/04/2023	21/04/2023	500.00	€527.91	1,027.91

Event = LAMA Autumn Training Seminar 2023, SUM: Event Cost = 1,280.00, SUM: Member Claimed = €3,932.32, SUM: Overall Event Claim = 5,212.32, Total Members Attended = 8

Event	Event Type	Salutation	Elected Member	Date From	Date To	Event Cost	Member Claimed	Overall Event Claim
LAMA Autumn Training Seminar 2023	Training	Cllr	Tolan (Sharon)	25/10/2023	26/10/2023	160.00	€369.92	529.92
LAMA Autumn Training Seminar 2023	Training	Cllr	Golden (Trevor)	25/10/2023	26/10/2023	160.00	€637.50	797.50
LAMA Autumn Training Seminar 2023	Training	Cllr	Jamal (Suzanne)	25/10/2023	26/10/2023	160.00	€665.86	825.86
LAMA Autumn Training Seminar 2023	Training	Cllr	Smith (Amanda)	25/10/2023	26/10/2023	160.00	€526.69	686.69
LAMA Autumn Training Seminar 2023	Training	Cllr	Reilly (Tommy)	25/10/2023	26/10/2023	160.00	€657.44	817.44
LAMA Autumn Training Seminar 2023	Training	Cllr	Meade (Paddy)	25/10/2023	26/10/2023	160.00	€523.45	683.45
LAMA Autumn Training Seminar 2023	Training	Cllr	Harding (Wayne)	25/10/2023	26/10/2023	160.00	€0.00	160.00

LAMA Autumn Training Seminar 2023	Training	Cllr	Fox (Joe)	25/10/2023	26/10/2023	160.00	€551.46	711.46
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Event = LAMA Spring Training Seminar 2023, SUM: Event Cost = 1,440.00, SUM: Member Claimed = €5,433.30, SUM: Overall Event Claim = 6,873.30, Total Members Attended = 9

Event	Event Type	Salutation	Elected Member	Date From	Date To	Event Cost	Member Claimed	Overall Event Claim
LAMA Spring Training Seminar 2023	Training	Cllr	Fox (Joe)	02/03/2023	04/03/2023	160.00	€590.91	750.91
LAMA Spring Training Seminar 2023	Training	Cllr	O'Reilly (Damien)	02/03/2023	04/03/2023	160.00	€864.37	1,024.37
LAMA Spring Training Seminar 2023	Training	Cllr	Smith (Amanda)	02/03/2023	04/03/2023	160.00	€682.53	842.53
LAMA Spring Training Seminar 2023	Training	Cllr	Gilroy (David)	02/03/2023	04/03/2023	160.00	€591.78	751.78
LAMA Spring Training Seminar 2023	Training	Cllr	Harding (Wayne)	02/03/2023	04/03/2023	160.00	€688.75	848.75
LAMA Spring Training Seminar 2023	Training	Cllr	Jamal (Suzanne)	02/03/2023	04/03/2023	160.00	€681.50	841.50
LAMA Spring Training Seminar 2023	Training	Cllr	Tormey (Conor)	02/03/2023	04/03/2023	160.00	€0.00	160.00
LAMA Spring Training Seminar 2023	Training	Cllr	Reilly (Tommy)	02/03/2023	04/03/2023	160.00	€675.80	835.80
LAMA Spring Training Seminar 2023	Training	Cllr	Golden (Trevor)	02/03/2023	04/03/2023	160.00	€657.66	817.66

Event = Local Authority Procurement Process, SUM: Event Cost = 200.00, SUM: Member Claimed = €1,316.79, SUM: Overall Event Claim = 1,516.79, Total Members Attended = 2

Event	Event Type	Salutation	Elected Member	Date From	Date To	Event Cost	Member Claimed	Overall Event Claim
Local Authority	Conference	Cllr	O'Reilly (Damien)	20/01/2023	22/01/2023	100.00	€648.03	748.03

Procurement
Process

Local Authority Procurement Process	Conference	Cllr	Tormey (Conor)	20/01/2023	22/01/2023	100.00	€668.76	768.76
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Event = MacGill Summer School 2023, SUM: Event Cost = 420.00, SUM: Member Claimed = €4,043.44, SUM: Overall Event Claim = 4,463.44, Total Members Attended = 7

Event	Event Type	Salutation	Elected Member	Date From	Date To	Event Cost	Member Claimed	Overall Event Claim
MacGill Summer School 2023	Conference	Cllr	Meade (Paddy)	16/08/2023	19/08/2023	60.00	€863.40	923.40
MacGill Summer School 2023	Conference	Cllr	Bonner (Joe)	16/08/2023	19/08/2023	60.00	€0.00	60.00
MacGill Summer School 2023	Conference	Cllr	Cassidy (Eugene)	16/08/2023	19/08/2023	60.00	€471.08	531.08
MacGill Summer School 2023	Conference	Cllr	McKee (Stephen)	16/08/2023	19/08/2023	60.00	€306.01	366.01
MacGill Summer School 2023	Conference	Cllr	Keogan (Geraldine)	16/08/2023	19/08/2023	60.00	€711.57	771.57
MacGill Summer School 2023	Conference	Cllr	Golden (Trevor)	16/08/2023	19/08/2023	60.00	€849.07	909.07
MacGill Summer School 2023	Conference	Cllr	Smith (Amanda)	16/08/2023	19/08/2023	60.00	€842.31	902.31

Event = Modular Housing in Ireland, SUM: Event Cost = 125.00, SUM: Member Claimed = €312.01, SUM: Overall Event Claim = 437.01, Total Members Attended = 1

Event	Event Type	Salutation	Elected Member	Date From	Date To	Event Cost	Member Claimed	Overall Event Claim
Modular Housing in Ireland	Conference	Cllr	Reilly (Tommy)	24/11/2023	26/11/2023	125.00	€312.01	437.01

Event = Retrofitting Ireland - Building resilience into Irish homes, SUM: Event Cost = 0.00, SUM: Member Claimed = €251.95, SUM: Overall Event Claim = 251.95, Total Members Attended = 1

Event	Event Type	Salutation	Elected Member	Date From	Date To	Event Cost	Member Claimed	Overall Event Claim
Retrofitting Ireland - Building resilience into Irish homes	Conference	Cllr	O'Reilly (Damien)	28/07/2023	28/07/2023	0.00	€251.95	251.95

Event = Suck Valley Way Conference 2023, SUM: Event Cost = 140.00, SUM: Member Claimed = €322.39, SUM: Overall Event Claim = 462.39, Total Members Attended = 1

Event	Event Type	Salutation	Elected Member	Date From	Date To	Event Cost	Member Claimed Claim	OverallEvent Claim
Suck Valley Way Conference 2023	Conference	Cllr	Fox (Joe)	05/04/2023	06/04/2023	140.00	€322.39	462.39

Event = The First Home Scheme – Helping Homeowners get onto the property ladder, SUM: Event Cost = 125.00, SUM: Member Claimed = €0.00, SUM: Overall Event Claim = 125.00, Total Members Attended = 1

Event	Event Type	Salutation	Elected Member	Date From	Date To	Event Cost	Member Claimed	Overall Event Claim
The First Home Scheme – Helping Homeowners get onto the property ladder	Conference	Cllr	Fitzsimons (Padraig)	20/10/2023	22/10/2023	125.00	€0.00	125.00

Appendix 8 – Meetings of the Council – 2023

Monthly Meetings	10
Annual	1
Pre Budget and Budget	2
Protocol	8
CPG	13
SPC – Climate Action, Environment and Emergency Services	3
SPC - Transportation	3
SPC – Housing, Community & Cultural Development	3
SPC – Planning, Economic Development, Enterprise and European Affairs	3
Municipal District:	
	13
Ashbourne	
	14
Kells	
	13
Laytown/Bettystown	
	13
Navan	
	13
Ratoath	
	13
Trim	
	13

Appendix 9 – Annual Financial Statement Meath County Council Annual Financial Report 2023*

Expenditure

Expenditure	Revenue (€m)	Capital (€m)
Housing & Building	52.069	118.934
Roads Transportation & Safety	56.481	41.886
Water & Sewerage	11.242	0.519
Development Incentives & Controls	19.205	11.289
Environment Protection	18.344	3.229
Recreation & Amenity	10.796	14.297
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	1.227	0.310
Miscellaneous	11.858	(2.949)
Total	181.222	187.515

Income

Income (see funding sources below)	132.756	174.024
Net Transfers		16.239
Net Revenue Cost to be funded from Rates & LPT	(48.467)	
Rates	50.688	
Local Property Tax	14.732	
Transfer from/(to) Reserves	(16.828)	
Surplus/(Deficit) for year	0.125	2.749
Opening Balance (01/01/23)	0.151	100.412
Closing Balance	0.276	103.161

* Based on draft AFS

Appendix 10 – Annual Energy Statement 2022¹

The performance results and other data produced in this statement are based on the data reported by Meath County Council for 2022 through SEAI’s public sector monitoring and reporting (M&R) system.

TPER

Total primary energy requirement (TPER) is a measure of all the energy consumed by the organisation and accounts for the energy that is consumed and/or lost in the transformation and distribution process.

Actual Consumption or Final Energy

Actual Consumption or Final Energy is the total energy consumed by Meath County Council in 2022. It includes electricity, thermal (heat) energy and transport consumption.

Energy savings since the baseline (Deterioration in energy efficiency since the baseline)
The percentage savings (or deterioration) shown in the percentage improvement (deterioration) is the energy performance of Meath County Council since its baseline period (2009). The energy performance is tracked between the baseline and 2022 using an Energy Performance Indicator (EnPI), example, energy used per population served, per floor area of buildings, or per number of public lights.

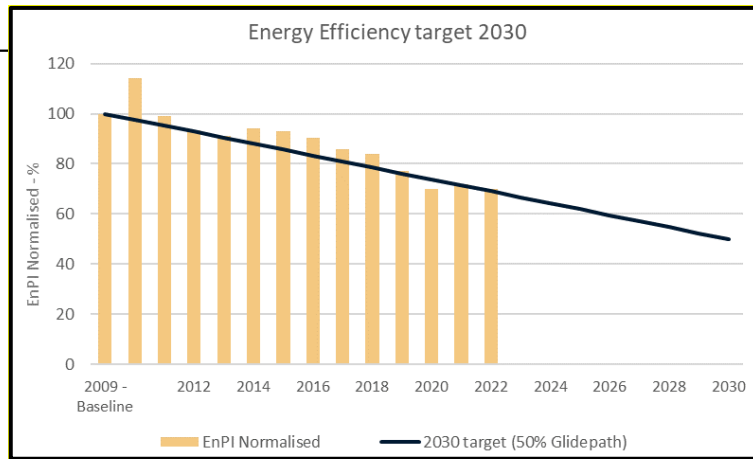
2022 Energy Consumption & Progress to 2030 Targets

All energy values shown are expressed as primary energy, or total primary energy requirement (TPER). The 2022 SEAI Annual Report on Public Sector Energy Performance outlines the status of all public bodies’ energy performance.

The below chart shows Meath County Council’s tracking based on our 2030 targets for energy efficiency. Meath are currently at 30% towards the 2030 target of 50% for energy efficiency as per the below chart.

Energy Performance			
2022 Energy		Energy Performance Indicator	
Final GWh	Primary GWh	2030 Target	Change since EE baselines ● Good ● Bad
23.3	35.3	-50%	-30%

¹ Note that reporting will always be a year behind due to the SEAI issuing of the Annual Energy Statement. This is the same for all local authorities.



MCC has improved its energy efficiency by 29.8%, falling short by 1.1% from the projected glidepath to 2030 when adjusting for the increasing population served, compared to the baseline year.

2022 Energy-related CO2 emissions#

The CO2 emission values shown are attributable to the energy consumption reported by Meath County Council. They have been calculated using the average emission factor for electricity generation in Ireland for the relevant year and the relevant emission factors for the used fossil fuels burned.

The 2022 SEAI Annual Report on Public Sector Energy Performance outlines the status of all public bodies' energy performance. Meath are currently at 21% towards the 2030 target of 51% absolute reduction in energy related greenhouse gas emissions.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions							
Non-Electricity GHG Emissions				Total GHG Emissions			
GHG baseline tCO ₂	2021 tCO ₂	2030 target tCO ₂	Change since GHG baselines	GHG baseline tCO ₂	2021 tCO ₂	2030 target tCO ₂	Change since GHG baselines
2,874.60	2608.3	1408.6	-9%	8,218.60	6,467.70	2,553.20	-21%

Appendix 11 – NOAC Performance Indicators 2022

Performance Indicators

01/01/2022 - 31/12/2022 (Annual)

Meath County Council

Topic	Indicator	Value	Comment
Housing: H1, H2 & H4 Approved	A. Number of dwellings in the ownership of the local authority at 1/1/2022	3633	
	B. Number of dwellings added to the local authority owned stock during 2022 (whether constructed or acquired)	195	
	C. Number of local authority owned dwellings sold in 2022	14	
	D. Number of local authority owned dwellings demolished in 2022	0	
	E. Number of dwellings in the ownership of the local authority at 31/12/2022	3814	
	F. Number of local authority owned dwellings planned for demolition under a D/HLGH approved scheme at 31/12/2022	18	
	A. The percentage of the total number of local authority owned dwellings that were vacant on 31/12/2022	4.85 %	
	The number of dwellings within their overall stock that were not tenanted on 31/12/2022	184	The vacant units at the 31/12/2022 are inclusive of acquisitions, part V's and turnkey units acquired late in late 2022 and which could not be allocated and occupied by year end. This higher vacancy rate at 31/12/2022(compared to 2021) is reflective of increased construction activity following relatively low levels of activity resulting from the two covid shutdowns which would have resulted in a lower level of acquisitions in 2021.
	A. Expenditure during 2022 on the maintenance of local authority housing compiled from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022, divided by the no. of dwellings in the local authority stock at	€741.17	

	31/12/2022, i.e. the H1E less H1F indicator figure		
	Expenditure on maintenance of local authority stock compiled from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022, including planned maintenance and expenditure that qualified for grants, such as Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) grants for energy efficient retro-fitting works but excluding expenditure on vacant properties and expenditure under approved major refurbishment schemes (i.e. approved Regeneration or under the Remedial Works Schemes).	€2813493	
Housing: H3 & H5 Approved	A. The time taken from the date of vacation of a dwelling to the date in 2022 when the dwelling is re-tenanted, averaged across all dwellings re-let during 2022	30.86 wk	There has been a significant reduction in average relet times from 39.34 (2021) to 30.86 (2022) due to new procedures being developed to minimise the time a property is vacant
	B. The cost expended on getting the dwellings re-tenanted in 2022, averaged across all dwellings re-let in 2022	€17442.83	
	The number of dwellings that were re-tenanted on any date in 2022 (but excluding all those that had been vacant due to an estate-wide refurbishment scheme)	86	
	The number of weeks from the date of vacation to the date the dwelling is re-tenanted	2654 wk	
	Total expenditure on works necessary to enable re-letting of the dwellings	€1500083	
	A. Total number of registered tenancies in the LA area at the end of June 2022		
	B. Number of rented dwellings inspected in 2022	1560	
	C. Percentage of inspected dwellings in 2022 not compliant with the Standards Regulations	84.41 %	
	D. Number of dwellings deemed compliant in 2022 (including those originally deemed non-compliant)	272	
	E. The number of inspections (including reinspections) undertaken by the local authority in 2022	1560	
Housing: H6 Approved	A. Number of adult individuals in emergency accommodation that are long-term (i.e. 6 months or more within the previous year) homeless as a percentage of the total number of	55.63 %	

	homeless adult individuals in emergency accommodation at the end of 2022		
	The number of adult individuals classified as homeless and in emergency accommodation on the night of 31 December 2022 as recorded on the PASS system	142	
	The number out of those individuals who, on 31/12/2022, had been in emergency accommodation for 6 months continuously, or for 6 months cumulatively within the previous 12 months	79	
Roads: R1 & R2 Approved	A. (a) The percentage of Regional road kilometres that received a PSCI rating in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2022	76.00 %	
	A. (b) The percentage of Local Primary road kilometres that received a PSCI rating in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2022	82.00 %	
	A. (c) The percentage of Local Secondary road kilometres that received a PSCI rating in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2022	86.00 %	
	A. (d) The percentage of Local Tertiary road kilometres that received a PSCI rating in the 60 month period prior to 31/12/2022	95.00 %	
	B. (a.1) The percentage of total Regional road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 1-4 at 31/12/2022	2.36 %	
	B. (a.2) The percentage of total Regional road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 5-6 at 31/12/2022	16.77 %	
	B. (a.3) The percentage of total Regional road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 7-8 at 31/12/2022	50.90 %	
	B. (a.4) The percentage of total Regional road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 9-10 at 31/12/2022	29.90 %	
	B. (b.1) The percentage of total Local Primary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 1-4 at 31/12/2022	5.45 %	
	B. (b.2) The percentage of total Local Primary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 5-6 at 31/12/2022	23.60 %	
	B. (b.3) The percentage of total Local Primary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 7-8 at 31/12/2022	36.86 %	
	B. (b.4) The percentage of total Local Primary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 9-10 at 31/12/2022	34.02 %	

B. (c.1) The percentage of total Local Secondary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 1-4 at 31/12/2022	9.50 %	
B. (c.2) The percentage of total Local Secondary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 5-6 at 31/12/2022	28.72 %	
B. (c.3) The percentage of total Local Secondary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 7-8 at 31/12/2022	35.60 %	
B. (c.4) The percentage of total Local Secondary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 9-10 at 31/12/2022	25.77 %	
B. (d.1) The percentage of total Local Tertiary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 1-4 at 31/12/2022	23.15 %	
B. (d.2) The percentage of total Local Tertiary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 5-6 at 31/12/2022	9.15 %	
B. (d.3) The percentage of total Local Tertiary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 7-8 at 31/12/2022	43.38 %	
B. (d.4) The percentage of total Local Tertiary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 9-10 at 31/12/2022	20.33 %	
A.1 Kilometres of regional road strengthened during 2022	14.0 km	
A.2 The amount expended on regional roads strengthening work during 2022	€6643396.00	This includes some new road construction.
A.3 The average unit cost of regional road strengthening works per square metre (€/m ²)	€58.56	
B.1 Kilometres of regional road resealed during 2022	14.6 km	
B.2 The amount expended on regional road resealing work during 2022	€663062.00	
B.3 The average unit cost of regional road resealing works per square metre (€/m ²)	€6.60	
C.1 Kilometres of local road strengthened during 2022	60.6 km	
C.2. The amount expended on local road strengthening work during 2022	€11381142.00	
C.3 The average unit cost of local road strengthening works per square metre (€/m ²)	€39.87	
D.1 Kilometres of local road resealed during 2022	111.6 km	
D.2 The amount expended on local road resealing work during 2022	€3083822.00	
D.3 The average unit cost of local road resealing works per square metre (€/m ²)	€5.68	

Motor Tax: R3 Approved	A. The percentage of motor tax transactions which were dealt with online (i.e. transaction is processed and the tax disc is issued) in 2022	90.51 %	
Water: W1 & W2 Approved	Percentage of drinking water in private schemes in compliance with statutory requirements		Data to be supplied by EPA
	The number of registered schemes monitored by each local authority as a percentage of total schemes registered	100 %	
	The number of registered schemes monitored in 2022	139	
	Total number of registered schemes in 2022	139	
Waste: E1 Approved	A. The number of households which availed of a 3-bin service offered by a licensed operator at 31/12/2022	36189	Data to be provided by NWCP
	B. The percentage of households within the local authority that the number at A represents (based on agglomerations of more than 500)	79.56 %	Data to be provided by NWCP
Environmental Pollution: E2 Approved	A. Total number of pollution cases in respect of which a complaint was made during 2022	2031	
	A. Number of pollution cases closed from 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022	2007	
	A. Total number of pollution cases on hands at 31/12/2022	70	
	The opening number of pollution cases carried forward from the year end 2021	46	
Litter Pollution: E3 Approved	A1. The percentage of the area within the local authority that when surveyed in 2022 was unpolluted or litter free	18 %	Data to be provided by Tobin Consulting Engineers
	A2. The percentage of the area within the local authority that when surveyed in 2022 was slightly polluted	39 %	Data to be provided by Tobin Consulting Engineers
	A3. The percentage of the area within the local authority that when surveyed in 2022 was moderately polluted	30 %	Data to be provided by Tobin Consulting Engineers
	A4. The percentage of the area within the local authority that when surveyed in 2022 was significantly polluted	11 %	Data to be provided by Tobin Consulting Engineers
	A5. The percentage of the area within the local authority that when surveyed in 2022 was grossly polluted	2 %	Data to be provided by Tobin Consulting Engineers
Green Flag Status: E4 Approved	A. The percentage of schools that have been awarded/renewed green flag	30.00 %	Data to be supplied by An Taisce

	status in the two years to 31 December 2022		
	Schools which attained a Green Flag for the first time in 2022	0	Data to be supplied by An Taisce
	Schools which renewed their Green Flag in 2022	23	Data to be supplied by An Taisce
	Schools which held a Green Flag from 2021 and therefore do not require renewal until 2023	19	Data to be supplied by An Taisce
Energy Efficiency: E5 Approved	A. The cumulative percentage of energy savings achieved by 31/12/2022 relative to baseline year (2009)	-29.83 %	This data to be supplied by the SEAI
Public Lighting: E6 Approved	A. Total annual consumption of the public lighting system	7644.00 MWh	This data will be supplied by the Road Management Office
	B. Average wattage of each public light	96.36 W	This data will be supplied by the Road Management Office
	C. Percentage of the total system that LED lights represent	35.14 %	This data will be supplied by the Road Management Office
	Number of LED lights in the public lighting system	6727	This data will be supplied by the Road Management Office
	Number of non-LED lights in the public lighting system	12414	This data will be supplied by the Road Management Office
Climate Change: E7 Approved	1 a) Does the local authority have a designated (FTE) Climate Action Coordinator?	Yes	This data to be supplied by the LGMA
	1 b) Does the local authority have a designated (FTE) Climate Action Officer?	No	This data to be supplied by the LGMA
	2. Does the local authority have a climate action team?	Yes	This data to be supplied by the LGMA
Planning: P1 Approved	A. Buildings inspected as a percentage of new buildings notified to the local authority	61.77 %	
	Total number of new buildings notified to the local authority i.e. buildings where a valid Commencement Notice was served in the period 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022 by a builder or developer on the local authority	1410	
	Number of new buildings notified to the local authority in 2022 that were the subject of at least one on-site inspection during 2022 undertaken by the local authority	871	
Planning: P2 & P3 Approved	A. Number of local authority planning decisions which were the subject of an appeal to An Bord Pleanála that were determined by the Board on any date	54	

	in 2022		
	B. Percentage of the determinations at A which confirmed (either with or without variation of the plan) the decision made by the local authority	70.37 %	
	Number of determinations confirming the local authority's decision (either with or without variation)	38	
	A. Total number of planning cases referred to or initiated by the local authority in the period 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022 that were investigated	219	
	B. Total number of investigated cases that were closed during 2022	206	
	C. Percentage of the cases at B that were dismissed as trivial, minor or without foundation or were closed because statute barred or an exempted development	0 %	
	D. Percentage of the cases at B that were resolved to the local authority's satisfaction through negotiations	42.72 %	
	E. Percentage of the cases at B that were closed due to enforcement proceedings	57.28 %	
	F. Total number of planning cases being investigated as at 31/12/2022	1435	
	Number of cases at B that were dismissed as trivial, minor or without foundation or were closed because statute barred or an exempted development	0	
	Number of cases at B that were resolved to the local authority's satisfaction through negotiations	88	
	Number of cases at B that were closed due to enforcement proceedings	118	
Planning: P4 & P5 Approved	A. The 2022 Annual Financial Statement (AFS) Programme D data divided by the population of the local authority area per the 2022 Census	€28.01	
	AFS Programme D data consisting of D01 - Forward Planning, D02 - Development Management, D03 - Enforcement (inclusive of the relevant Programme D proportion of the central management charge) for 2022	€6170517	
	A. The percentage of applications for fire safety certificates received in 2022 that were decided (granted or refused) within two months of their receipt	16.40 %	
	B. The percentage of applications for fire safety certificates received in 2022 that were decided (granted or refused)	58.20 %	

	within an extended period agreed with the applicant		
	The total number of applications for fire safety certificates received in 2022 that were not withdrawn by the applicant	189	
	The number of applications for fire safety certificates received in 2022 that were decided (granted or refused) within two months of the date of receipt of the application	31	
	The number of applications for fire safety certificates received in 2022 that were decided (granted or refused) within an agreed extended time period	110	
Fire Service: F1 Approved	A. The Annual Financial Statement (AFS) Programme E expenditure data for 2022 divided by the population of the local authority area per the 2022 Census figures for the population served by the fire authority as per the Risk Based Approach Phase One reports	€24.17	
	AFS Programme E expenditure data consisting of E11 - Operation of Fire Service and E12 - Fire Prevention for 2022	€5324114	E11= 4911919 E12 =412195
Fire Service: F2 & F3 Approved	A. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Full-Time Stations in respect of fire		N/A
	B. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Part-Time Stations (retained fire service) in respect of fire	5.22 min	
	C. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Full-Time Stations in respect of all other (non-fire) emergency incidents		N/A
	D. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Part-Time Stations (retained fire service) in respect of all other (non-fire) emergency incidents	5.56 min	
	A. Percentage of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at scene is within 10 minutes	31.13 %	
	B. Percentage of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at the scene is after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	55.06 %	
	C. Percentage of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes	13.80 %	
	D. Percentage of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which	22.39 %	

first attendance at the scene is within 10 minutes		
E. Percentage of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance at the scene is after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	64.57 %	
F. Percentage of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes	13.04 %	
Total number of call-outs in respect of fires from 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022	722	
Number of these fire cases where first fire tender attendance at the scene is within 10 minutes	203	
Number of these fire cases in which first fire tender attendance at the scene is after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	359	
Number of these fire cases in which first fire tender attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes	90	
Total number of call-outs in respect of all other emergency incidents (i.e. not including fire) from 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022	489	
Number of these non-fire cases in which first fire tender attendance at the scene is within 10 minutes	103	
Number of these non-fire cases in which first fire tender attendance at the scene is after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	297	
Number of these non-fire cases in which first fire tender attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes	60	

**Library Service: L1
Approved**

A. Number of visits to libraries per head of population for the local authority area per the 2022 Census	1.68	
B. Number of items issued to library borrowers in the year	426967	
C. Library active members per head of population		In respect of performance indicator L1C, the new LMS does not currently track active use employing the same methodology as the previous system. We are engaging with the suppliers to ensure that this is resolved as quickly as possible, however for 2022 there is no data available that will meet the definition of the performance indicator. NOAC are aware of this and are not expecting to receive any data

			from authorities
	D. Number of registered library members in the year	23672	
	Number of visits to its libraries from 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022	369900	
Library Service: L2 Approved	A. The Annual Financial Statement (AFS) Programme F data for 2022 divided by the population of the local authority area per the 2022 Census	€22.32	
	B. The annual per capita expenditure on collections over the period 1/01/2022 to 31/12/2022	€1.85	
	A. AFS Programme F data consisting of F02 - Operation of Library and Archival Service (inclusive of the relevant proportion of the central management charge for Programme F) for 2022	€4916225	
	B. The annual expenditure on new stock acquired by the library in the year	€408400.56	
Youth and Community: Y1 & Y2 Approved	A. Percentage of local schools involved in the local Youth Council/Comhairle na nÓg scheme	70.83 %	
	Total number of second level schools in the local authority area at 31/12/2022	24	Last year there were 23 post primary schools in County Meath. This year there are 24 post primary schools. The new school is Colaiste Rioga, based in Dunshaughlin, Co. Meath. It is an LMETB school.
	Number of second level schools in the local authority area from which representatives attended the local Comhairle na nÓg AGM held in 2022	17	
	A. The number of organisations included in the County Register at 31/12/2022 and the proportion of those organisations that opted to be part of the Social Inclusion College within the PPN	10.24	
	Total number of organisations included in the County Register (maintained in accordance with section 128 of the Local Government Act 2001) for the local authority area as at 31/12/2022	508	
	Total number of those organisations that registered for the first time in 2022	61	
	Number of organisations that opted to join the Social Inclusion Electoral College on whatever date they registered for the PPN	52	
Corporate: C1, C2, C4	A. The wholetime equivalent staffing	791.40	

& C5 Approved	number as at 31 December 2022			
	A. Percentage of paid working days lost to sickness absence through medically certified leave in 2022		2.29 %	
	B. Percentage of paid working days lost to sickness absence through self-certified leave in 2022		0.29 %	
	Total number of working days lost to sickness absence through medically certified leave in 2022		4841 day	
	Total number of working days lost to sickness absence through self-certified leave in 2022		512 day	
	Number of unpaid working days lost to sickness absence included within the total of self-certified sick leave days in 2022		0 day	
	Number of unpaid working days lost to sickness absence included within the total of medically certified sick leave days in 2022		724.5 day	
	If any staff are on long-term sick leave (i.e. a continuous period of more than 4 weeks), include a text note of the number of staff on long-term sick leave	23		
	A. All ICT expenditure in the period from 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022, divided by the WTE no.		€3986.56	
	Total ICT expenditure in 2022		€3154960	
	A. All ICT expenditure calculated in C4 as a proportion of Revenue expenditure		1.93	
	Total Revenue expenditure from 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022 before transfers to or from reserves		163317559	
	Corporate: C3 Approved	A. The per capita total page views of the local authority's websites in 2022		8.07
B. The per capita total number of followers at end 2022 of the local authority's social media accounts (if any)			0.67	
The cumulative total page views of all websites operated by the local authority for the period from 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022 obtained from a page tagging on-site web analytics service or equivalent			1777750	
The total number of social media users who, at 31/12/2022, were following the local authority on any social media sites			147170	
The number of social media accounts operated by the local authority			44	

Finance: M1 to M4 Approved	Indicate if there was a change to the cookie policies on the local authority sites and the date this came into effect	On one of our sites a cookie policy was introduced in August 2022.	
	A. Cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2018 in the Revenue Account from the Income & Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€-952361	
	B. Cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2019 in the Revenue Account from the Income & Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€-684544	
	C. Cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2020 in the Revenue Account from the Income & Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€-497931	
	D. Cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2021 in the Revenue Account from the Income & Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€47033	2021 figure €47,033
	E. Cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2022 in the Revenue Account from the Income & Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€151175	
	F. Cumulative surplus or deficit at 31/12/2022 as a percentage of Total Income in 2022 from the Income and Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	0.08 %	
	G. Revenue expenditure per capita in 2022	€741.36	
	H. Revenue expenditure per capita in 2022 excluding significant out of county / shared service expenditure		
	The 2022 Total Income figure from the Income and Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€178478504	
	The 2022 Total Expenditure figure from the Income and Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€163317559	
	The 2022 Revenue expenditure excluding county / shared service expenditure for the service providers of HAP, MyPay, DRHE and Dublin Fire Services		
	A. (a) Collection level of Rates in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2018	93.0 %	
	A. (b) Collection level of Rent & Annuities in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2018	89.0 %	
	A. (c) Collection level of Housing Loans in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2018	73.0 %	
	B. (a) Collection level of Rates in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2019	93.0 %	

B. (b) Collection level of Rent & Annuities in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2019	89.0 %	
B. c) Collection level of Housing Loans in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2019	81.0 %	
C. a) Collection level of Rates in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2020	88.0 %	
C. b) Collection level of Rent & Annuities in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2020	88.0 %	
C. (c) Collection level of Housing Loans in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2020	83.0 %	
D. (a) Collection level of Rates in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2021	92.0 %	
D. (b) Collection level of Rent & Annuities in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2021	89.0 %	
D. (c) Collection level of Housing Loans in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2021	83.0 %	2021 figures (a) Rates: 92% (b) Rent & Annuities: 89% (c) Housing Loans: 83%
E. (a) Collection level of Rates in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2022	95 %	
E. (b) Collection level of Rent & Annuities in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2022	86 %	
E. (c) Collection level of Housing Loans in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2022	86 %	
A. Per capita total cost of settled claims for 2022	€11.42	
IPB Insurance: Number of notified claims for 2022	152	
IPB Insurance: Number of settled claims for 2022	95	
IPB Insurance: Total cost of settled claims for 2022	€2514851.20	
Total cost of claims settled under excess for 2022	€0	
Self-insured: Number of notified claims for 2022	0	
Self-insured: Number of settled claims for 2022	0	
Self-insured: Total cost of settled claims for 2022	€0	
A. Overall central management charge as a percentage of total expenditure on revenue account	12.15 %	
B. Total payroll costs as a percentage of revenue expenditure	32.42 %	
Overall central management charge from the Local Authority FMS and defined in the Annual Budget	€19843673	
Total payroll costs from Appendix 1 of the AFS for 2022 (including Salaries,	€52948643	

	Wages and Pensions)		
Economic Development: J1 to J5 Approved	A. The number of jobs created with assistance from the Local Enterprise Office during the period 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022 per 100,000 of population	9.9866	
	The number of jobs created with assistance from the Local Enterprise Office during the period 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022	22.0	
	A. The number of trading online voucher applications approved by the Local Enterprise Office in 2022 per 100,000 of population	25.8743	
	B. The number of trading online vouchers that were drawn down in 2022 per 100,000 of population	6.8090	
	The number of trading online voucher applications approved by the Local Enterprise Office in 2022	57	
	The number of those trading online vouchers that were drawn down in 2022	15	
	A. The number of participants who received mentoring during the period 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022 per 100,000 of population	97.5960	
	The number of participants who received mentoring during the period 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022	215	
	A. Does the local authority have a current tourism strategy?	Yes	
	B. Does the local authority have a designated Tourism Officer?	Yes	
	The spend on local economic development by the local authority in 2022 per head of population	€55.93	
	The spend on local economic development by the local authority in 2022	€12322028	While specifying the sub services to be included is helpful, it might be necessary for further guidelines on the account elements to be included as part of the return, and for confirmation around including/excluding expenditure which was recoupable from another funding authority

Appendix 12 – Statement of Internal Financial Control (SIFC)

STATEMENT OF INTERNAL FINANCIAL CONTROL (SIFC)

Introduction

I, Kieran Kehoe, Chief Executive of Meath County Council am responsible for the annual financial statement (AFS), prepared by the Director of Finance, in accordance with the accounting code of practice issued by the Minister under section 107 of the Local Government Act, 2001.

I certify that the financial statements of Meath County Council for the year ended 31 December 2023, are in agreement with the books of account and have been prepared in accordance with the accounting requirements of the Minister of Housing Local Government and Heritage.

The AFS is subject to external audit, by an auditor of the Local Government Audit Service, whose purpose is to form an independent opinion of the accounts and state whether the annual financial statement presents *fairly the financial position* of the local authority and of its income and expenditure for the period in question, and whether the transactions of the audited body conform with the statutory or other authorisation under which they purport to have been carried out.

The AFS reports on the day-to-day activity of Meath County Council in the form of the Statement of Comprehensive Income & Expenditure, summarised by Division. The Statement of Financial Position outlines the Meath County Council overall financial position as of the 31st of December 2023.

The *Statement of Comprehensive Income* represents expenditure and income on the day-to-day running of Meath County Council.

The key sources of income for Meath County Council are as follows:

	Current Year	Previous Year
	€	€
Goods & Services	48,327,709	45,521,991
Grants & Subsidies	75,843,154	62,914,410
Other Contributions (as appropriate)	8,584,922	9,192,677
Rates	50,687,556	46,790,256
Local Property Tax	14,732,498	14,059,170

Activity on the Income and Expenditure account for 2023 is as follows:

The increase in income from €118k in 2022 to €133k in 2023 is mainly due to additional grant funding in the areas of Housing and Transportation. The Council's rate base also grew by €3.8m during 2023.

	Current Year	Previous Year
	€	€
Income	132,755,785	117,629,078
Expenditure	181,222,561	163,317,559
Transfers to Capital	16,828,179	15,056,849

Exceptional Item		
Surplus/(Deficit) for	125,098	104,096
Prior Year Adjustment		
Opening Revenue Reserve	151,175	47,079
Closing Revenue Reserve	276,273	151,175

The surplus of €151k for the year 2023 arose as a result of robust financial and budgetary controls coupled with strong collection rates across all income headings. Also, where possible Meath County Council endeavours to maximise all available external funding sources.

The *Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet)* represents the total financial activity of the council for the year together with comparative year figures as appropriate.

The statement includes assets and liabilities as follows:

- Assets both recently constructed/purchased and historical assets
- Work in progress and preliminary schemes- mainly roads and housing
- Long Term Debtors – housing loans
- Current Assets- including Stock, Debtors, Cash at bank
- Current and long term liabilities- mortgage and non-mortgage loan borrowings
- Various Reserves/Balances

The Net Assets of Meath County Council at the end of 2023 total € 3,198m and are as follows:

	Current Year	Previous Year
	€	€
Fixed Assets	3,046,304,204	2,978,031,044
Works in Progress	39,359,969	21,978,422
Long Term debtors	219,653,370	169,610,953
Current Assets	169,036,986	191,748,358
Current Liabilities	(45,105,515)	(67,886,501)
Net Current Assets/ (Liabilities)	123,931,471	123,861,857
Creditors (Amounts greater than 1 year)	(231,394,682)	(190,740,476)
Net Assets/(Liabilities)	3,197,854,332	3,102,741,799

A *Statement of Funds Flow* was introduced as part of AFS 2011. While the guidance of International Accounting Standard 7 Statement of Cash Flows has been followed, the business of local authorities is substantially different to most private sector organisations and therefore some minor changes to the format have been agreed to ensure the data displayed is meaningful and useful within the local government sector.

System of Internal Financial Controls

As Chief Executive of Meath County Council I acknowledge my responsibility for ensuring that an effective system of internal financial control is maintained and operated by Meath County Council. This responsibility is exercised in the context of the resources available to Meath County Council. Also, any system of internal financial control can provide only reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions authorised and properly recorded, and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or would be detected in a timely manner. Maintaining the system of internal financial controls is a continuous process and the system and its effectiveness are kept under ongoing review.

Financial Control Environment

As Chief Executive of Meath County Council, I confirm that a financial control environment containing the following elements is in place:

- Financial responsibilities have been assigned at management level with corresponding accountability.
- Reporting arrangements have been established at all levels where responsibility for financial management has been assigned.
- Formal procedures have been established for reporting significant control failures and ensuring appropriate corrective action.
- There is an Audit Committee which as part of its work programme regularly review the internal financial control system.
- Procedures for all key business processes have been documented.
- There are systems in place to safeguard the assets.

Administrative Controls and Management Reporting

As Chief Executive of Meath County Council, I confirm that a framework of administrative procedures and regular management reporting is in place including segregation of duties and a system of delegation and accountability and, in particular, that:

- procedures for key business processes have been documented
- there are systems aimed at ensuring the security of the ICT systems
- there are systems in place to safeguard the assets of the local authority and
- there are appropriate capital investment control guidelines and formal project management disciplines in operation.

Procurement Compliance

Meath County Council ensures that there is an appropriate and ongoing focus on good practice in tendering and purchasing and that procedures are in place to ensure compliance with all relevant procurement guidelines.

Internal Audit and Audit Committee

As Chief Executive, I can confirm that Meath County Council has an internal audit function with appropriately trained personnel, which operates in accordance with a written charter. Its work is informed by analysis of the financial risks to which Meath County Council is exposed and its annual internal audit plans are based on this analysis. I am satisfied that there are procedures in place to ensure that the reports of the internal audit function are followed up.

I can confirm that Meath County Council has an effective Audit Committee which carries out an annual effectiveness review of their activities. I can also confirm that an Audit Committee is in place in accordance with the requirements of Section 122 of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended).

The statutory functions of the Audit Committees as set out in section 59 and 60 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 are as follows:

- I. to review financial and budgetary reporting practices and procedures within the local authority that has established it;
- II. to foster the development of best practice in the performance by the local authority of its internal audit function;
- III. to review any audited financial statement, auditor's report or auditor's special report in relation to the local authority and assess any actions taken within that authority by its chief

executive in response to such a statement or report and to report to that authority on its findings;

- IV. to assess and promote efficiency and value for money with respect to the local authority's performance of its functions; and
- V. to review systems that are operated by the local authority for the management of risks.

I recognise that the Audit Committee plays a crucial role in the governance framework of local authorities, particularly in the context of increased public sector accountability. They have an independent role in advising the Council on financial reporting processes, internal control, risk management and audit matters as part of the systematic review of the control environment and governance procedures of the local authority.

I acknowledge the Audit Committee's role in the risk management process and in the continuing review of the control environment and governance procedures in Meath County Council.

Risk and Control Framework

Meath County Council has implemented a risk management system that identifies and reports key risks and the management actions being taken to address and, to the extent possible, mitigate those risks.

A corporate risk register is in place which identifies the key risks and evaluates and grades them according to their significance. The register is reviewed and updated by the Management Team on a regular basis. There is also a risk register in place for each service division and these are also reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

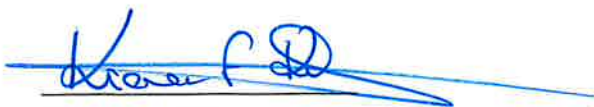
The outcome of these assessments is used to plan and allocate resources to ensure risks are managed to an acceptable level. The risk register details the controls and actions needed to mitigate risks and responsibilities for the operation of controls are assigned to specific staff.

As Chief Executive, I confirm that key risks and related controls have been identified and processes have been put in place to monitor the operation of those key controls and report any identified deficiencies.

This Statement of Internal Financial Control will be included in the draft Annual Report 2023 submitted to Council members by 30 April 2024 and thereafter included in the published Annual Report prepared and adopted by the Council by 30 June 2024.

Signed by:

Dated:



13th May 2024

Chief Executive