

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

VOTED

#1

Local Authority of the Year
by Chambers Ireland



100
new
jobs
announcement

Vision

- That the people of Limerick are supported by a professional, proactive and accessible local government structure at the heart of a wider public service.
- That Limerick is acknowledged for its inclusive participation of all its citizens in the development of their community.
- That Limerick is the desired location for business development, cultural enrichment and educational opportunity.
- That Limerick and the Mid-West will compete with other European destinations in terms of business, tourism, living and investment.

Strategy

1. Empowering the citizen to participate in the development of their community, both rural and urban.
2. An environment for real economic development and job creation.
3. A new model of local governance and service delivery.

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Empowering the Citizen

1. Home and Social Development
 2. Pride of Place Achievements
 3. Intercultural Cities Events
 4. Age Friendly Update
 5. PPN (Public Participation Network) Progress
 6. Festivals Tender
 7. Update on Library and Cultural Events
 8. Limerick to bid for European Capital of Culture 2020
 9. Fire - Keeping Communities Safe
 10. New Civil Defence Headquarters
 11. Environmental Updates
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Economic Development and Planning

1. Economic Development
 2. Planning Update
 3. Limerick Marketing Update
 4. Local Enterprise Office
 5. Innovate Limerick
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 7. Road Projects
 8. Flood Relief and Defences
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Organisational Development

1. Excellence in Local Government Awards
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Financial Matters

1. Collection Figures

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Empowering the Citizen

1. Home and Social Development

Approved Applicants for Social Housing Support and Areas	Approved Applicants to the 30th of November 2014
Metropolitan District of Limerick	3,459
Municipal District of Adare	
- Rathkeale	286
Municipal District of Cappamore	
- Kilmallock	311
Municipal District of Newcastle West	
West	318
Total	4,374

Home Improvement Schemes

Private Housing Grant Aid	Number of Grants paid at the 30th November 2014	Euro Amount
MAGS (Mobility Adaptation Grant Scheme)	145	597,965
HAGS (Housing Adaptation Grant Scheme)	86	710,692
HOPS (Housing Aid for Older Persons Grant Scheme)	249	1,069,550

Stock Management and Construction

Voids Housing Stock 2014 Euro Allocation	Total Units	Completed at the 30th November 2014
911,969	94	94

Name of Programme	Number of Units for 2014	Number of Units Completed at 30th November 2014
Energy Efficiency Programme	528	528
SEAI Programme (Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland)	904	904

Rent Collection

Opening Balance @01/01/2014	Accrued Income	Total for collection	Receipts	Closing balance @30/11/2014	% Collection
1,477,480	10,722,832	12,200,312	10,279,131	1,921,181	84.25

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Social Housing Strategy 2020: Support, Supply and Reform

The Government launched its new Social Housing Strategy 2020: Support, Supply and Reform during the month.

The Strategy commits to;

- supplying 35,000 additional social housing
- estimated 29,000 Jobs in construction and promotion of mixed-tenure developments
- meeting the housing needs of some 75,000 households through local authority provision via the private rented sector - using Housing Assistance Payment and Rental Accommodation Scheme;
- reforming social housing delivery and management in Ireland,
- establishing the Dublin Social Housing Delivery Taskforce, to respond to the current supply difficulties and focus on the delivery of social housing in the Dublin area, and
- sets out road map to accommodate everyone on the Housing Waiting Lists by 2020 (90,000 households).

Under the Strategy, national targets for the delivery of social housing are to be agreed in Quarter 1 2015.

2. Pride Of Place Achievements

Limerick communities received two awards at the 2014 Pride of Place competition held on 15th November, 2014.

- **The Community Wellness Empowerment Leadership & Life Skills Project**, St. Mary's, Kings Island, Limerick scooped one of the Special Awards in the Community Health Initiative category - Cities Competition. The aim of the CWELL project is to deliver a programme in well-being and life style education in St Mary's Community. This unique project brings together community partners, University of Limerick staff and students through practice-based, educational activities to work collaboratively and build capacity in well-being and lifestyle education within the local community, commencing in St. Mary's with the objective of future rollout in other disadvantaged areas.
- **Radharc na Cille Housing Estate in Kilmallock, Co Limerick** also picked up a prestigious runner up prize in the Housing Estates Category. Although the Residents' Committee has only been formed in recent years, its achievements, nevertheless, have been very impressive, with tremendous gains accruing for all residents, in terms of community spirit, quality of life, and physical

appearance of the estate. The group works very closely with the Estate Management Unit of Limerick City & County Council and has received great support from Ballyhoura Development Ltd.

Limerick was also represented by Feale Life, Abbeyfeale in the Eco Community Initiative category and by Kileely in the Urban Neighbourhood category.

3. Intercultural City Events

Limerick was officially declared as an Intercultural City during the hosting of a major intercultural conference on 'Sports, Arts and Culture' on 20th and 21st November, 2014. Approximately 40 delegates from across Europe attended the conference at the Strand Hotel, Limerick, together with another fifty local participants.

A Charter was signed by Mayor of Limerick City and County, Cllr. Kevin Sheahan officially declaring Limerick as an Intercultural City - only the second Irish City to do so. A number of international and local speakers addressed the conference. Local speakers included; Keith Wood, Niamh Briggs, Mike Fitzpatrick, Phelim Macken and Sean Óg O'hAilpin.

4. Age Friendly Update

Interviews for OPRAH Co-ordinator position held and successful candidate will take up position in January, 2015. Draft Tender document for Older Adult Baseline Analysis Research project is being prepared.

5. PPN Progress

Series of Public Information meetings ongoing. Registration for PPN open since 13 November.

6. Festivals Tenders

Tenders received. Currently being assessed against selection criteria. Award assessment in December.

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7. Update On Library And Cultural Events

- Concert recital and poetry reading with RTE ConTempo Quartet and Joan McBreen (attendance, 70)
- Poet Gabriel Fitzmaurice held a series of children's workshops in Newcastle West and Cappamore libraries.
- Reading and question & answers session with two of Ireland's foremost fiction writers, Donal Ryan and Paul Lynch (attendance, approximately 90)
- Lecture, 'The Viking Origins of Limerick City' by John Elliott (attendance, 95)
- Reading and question & answers session with renowned author Kevin Barry and one of the most promising young Irish writers, Colin Barrett (attendance, over 100)
- Book launch - House Full by Joe Coleman (attendance, approx 150)
- Concert recital with RTE ConTempo Quartet (attendance, 70)
- Dooradoyle Library hosted a Poetry Night with Joe Slade, Terri Murray and Vivien McKenchie in association with the Limerick City of Culture and the Visiting Writers Limerick.
- Major resource launched on library website - full scans of all Limerick City and County directories from 1769 to 1976.

8. Arts

- Construction on-going to Credit Union Side of 69 O'Connell Street building.
- Arts Council application. First combined application from the merged Local Authority prepared and submitted 29th Nov.
- Cappamore Arts Studio. Deadline for applications for subsidised residencies 12th Dec. Bursary being offered.
- Music Programme (Autumn). Final concerts, Leonard Elschenbroich, Cello, Castleconnell and RTE Contempo Quartet, Granary Library.

9. Bid For European Capital Of Culture 2020

Limerick City and County Council has announced plans to bid for Limerick City to be named European Capital of Culture 2020. A tender process is currently underway to secure consultancy services to prepare the bid, which

follows on foot of the City's hugely successful stint as Ireland's foremost National City of Culture.

The European Capital of Culture initiative is one of the most prestigious and visible European cultural awards in the EU, and is awarded on the strength of an exceptional programme of events to a City. A local steering group, led by the local authority and comprising community, business interests and public representatives, will be set up to direct and oversee Limerick's preparations for a bid proposal.

10. Fire Service

Keeping Communities Safe

'Keeping Communities Safe' is the output from a review in 2012 of fire services and fire safety in Ireland. It aims to provide a comprehensive, balanced strategy to ensure the safety of the public in their homes and other locations, as well as worker safety in providing emergency services. It is an integrated blue-print for further development of the critical public safety roles performed by local authority fire services, to be implemented in the period 2013 – 2015. 'Keeping Communities Safe' is about managing risk, addressing public safety improvement, incident reduction, response standards, and service delivery structures for the decade ahead. 'Keeping Communities Safe' is an evidence-led plan, based on international best practice and with international expert validation.

The fire authority is currently preparing a report for the next meeting of the External Validation Group. This will be followed by the preparation of a draft Section 26 Plan shortly thereafter.

11. New Civil Defence Headquarters

The new headquarters for Limerick City and County Council Civil Defence, located at the Docklands Business Park, is currently being purchased by Limerick City and County Council. It is expected that the legal process will be completed before the end of the year.

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Economic Development and Planning

1. Economic Development

- A new SAP/Johnson & Johnson Development Centre initiative creating 100 jobs was announced. The centre will be initially based on the campus of the University of Limerick in Castletroy.
- The Directorate hosted delegation from the Australian Embassy to explore investment opportunities in the Limerick/Shannon Estuary area.
- Steady progress is being made on delivery of the Limerick 2030 Plan strategic sites including;
 - Securing a purchase option on the Cleeves site from Kerry Group
 - Purchase and re-design of the Hanging Gardens/GPO structure from NAMA,
 - Finalisation of the Opera Site 'Expressions of Interest' brief for release to the market through eTenders/Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU)
 - Completion of feasibility studies for the City Centre to UL public transport corridor and the Limerick Footbridge.
- Through the Council Retail Incentive Scheme and an improving economy, retail vacancy rates in Limerick City centre have reduced significantly in 2014.

2. Planning Update

- Sixty eight new planning applications were received during November 2014. Breakdown as follows; Single Houses (17), House Developments (3); Commercial Developments (10); Other (38).
- Planning permission was granted to Bus Eireann for the redevelopment of the Colbert Station Plaza.
- Nine Housing Estates were taken in charge at the November meeting of the Council;
 1. Avondale Court, Corbally Road.
 2. Bloomfield, Annacotty
 3. Cedarville, Abbeyfeale
 4. Coonagh Court, Doon
 5. Laurel Hill Court, Summerville Avenue, South Circular Road
 6. Lucas Drive, Lower Park, Corbally
 7. Maple Court, Killarney Road, Abbeyfeale
 8. The Belfry, Abbeyfeale
 9. Towerfield, Croom

- The Directorate hosted An Bord Pleanála members in Limerick over a two day period. The purpose of the visit was to update the Bord on current local and regional initiatives.

3. Marketing

- Limerick Marketing Company has agreed a Christmas media campaign with local and regional media outlets
- Christmas Initiatives: Elf Enterprises HQ and The North Pole Post office opened in City centre. Christmas Carol-oke events planned for each weekend up to Christmas. Christmas lights covered on national news programmes. An on-line Taste of Christmas promotion featuring local food/hospitality business is live on Limerick.ie/Christmas.

4. Local Enterprise Office

- LEO/Bank of Ireland Connect business event was held in Thomond Park with over 200 attendees, representing small business interests in Limerick
- LEO/Innovate Limerick Shadow board FDI/SME growth mentoring programme was launched and operational (full details from the LEO Office).

5. Innovate Limerick

- Discussions on-going with possible tenants for the Anderson facility in Rathkeale. Agreement reached with UK company to dismantle plating plant at Anderson Building in accordance with EPA requirements.
- Expressions of interest received from five businesses looking to set up in Anderson building, Rathkeale.
- Funding approved by Limerick Regeneration for Innovation Hub and an application has been lodged for funding with Enterprise Ireland.
- Innovate Limerick in discussion with a number of interested parties to establish a Venture Capital Fund for Limerick under the supervision of Innovate Limerick.
- Kantoher Site, Strand foods who are purchasing part of the Hatchery Building at Kantoher from Innovate Limerick are on target to commence production before year end with creation of seven jobs.

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- First stage of Innovation Hub and hot desk facility at LEDP Roxboro is now operational.

6. Partnership With Ardmore Studios

- In November the Council announced that it plans to work in partnership with Ardmore Studios, Ireland's top Film and Television Studios, to lay the foundations for the provision of a major film production facilities hub in Limerick.

7. Road Projects

NRA approval has been received to appoint contractors for the construction of the following schemes:

- N21 Killarney Pole to Barnagh Phase II
- N24 Dromkeen Traffic Calming Scheme
- Eirspan Munster Bridges Rehabilitation Contracts 2 and 3, involving bridges in Limerick, Clare and Cork, with Limerick City and County Council acting as lead authority.

Construction is scheduled to commence on all schemes early in 2015.

8. Flood Protection

The Chief Executive and staff recently met with Minister Simon Harris and stakeholders involved in the Foynes Flood Protection Project. Consultants are currently working on this scheme and it is hoped to commence the statutory planning process in December 2014. A commitment was given to the community representatives to hold a non-statutory public consultation in advance of the submission of the planning application under the Part VIII process.

Winter Maintenance Plan

The Limerick City and County Council Winter Maintenance Plan can now be accessed on the Council website using the following link
<http://www.limerick.ie/council/winter-maintenance>.

This plan sets out the roads and routes that will be salted in the event of severe weather.

Organisational Redevelopment

1. Excellence in Local Government Awards

Limerick City and County Council won the overall award of Local Authority of the Year at the Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards.

The local authority was named overall winner at the event which was judged by a panel of experts working in the field of Local Government.

Limerick City and County Council also took home two other awards at the event including one for Limerick Smarter Travel which won the 'Smarter Travel category' and the amalgamation of Limerick City and County Councils which won the 'Local Authority Innovation' award.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT**Financial Matters****1. Collection Figures**

Collection Rates 2014	Opening Balance 1 Jan €	Accruals €	To Collect €	Receipts €	Arrears €	%
As at 30 November	25,505,113	49,739,194	75,244,307	42,622,337	32,621,969	57

Collection Loans 2014	Opening Balance 1 Jan €	Accruals €	To Collect €	Receipts €	Arrears €	%
As at 30 November	598,023	1,607,984	2,206,007	1,636,113	569,894	74