

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT



Comhairle Cathrach
& Contae **Luimnigh**

Limerick City
& County Council

December 2020

CHRISTMAS - County-wide marketing campaign launched to support local businesses

WEBSITE - New site on the way for Limerick City Gallery of Art

WATER - Four new contactless drinking water fountains installed

AGE FRIENDLY- Festive giftpacks distributed to elderly and vulnerable across Limerick

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Economic Development Directorate

1. Trade and Investment

- A virtual launch of the Confirm Centre (a UL-Science Foundation Partnership) in Castletroy took place on 11 December, which unveiled a new dedicated World Class Digital Manufacturing Facility.
- Electricity Exchange announced a rebranding to VIOTAS to coincide with its expansion by extending its technology and services to commercial and industrial customers in Australia, creating 60 new jobs.
- A new Primary Health Care Centre is under construction at Station Road, Newcastle West, which will create 100 jobs during construction and 100 full-time jobs when completed.
- Twomey's Bakery in Dromcollogher secured a deal to supply 145 Aldi Stores nationwide, which created 12 new jobs at the Bakery.
- Dealz Discount Store opened a new store in Crescent Shopping Centre, creating 50 new retail jobs.
- Bus Éireann to create 13 new jobs in Limerick with the expansion of services in the City and County (NTA).

2. Strategic and Forward Planning

- Work on the proposed Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 continued with meetings held with each Directorate and four briefing meetings with the Elected Members on the Chief Executive's report that issued in November on the pre-draft public consultation. A presentation was also made to the Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning Strategic Policy Committee.
- The Chief Executive's report on the Draft Southern Environs Local Area Plan was prepared and issued to the Elected Members on 17 December. The report consists of a summary of the 33 submissions received, together with the Chief Executive's responses and recommendations. The Members are required to consider the Chief

Executive's Report and decide whether to make or amend the Draft Southern Environs Local Area Plan at the January 2021 Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick.

- The Supplementary Development Contribution Scheme to assist in the Development of the R526 Link Road (Phase 3) Mungret was adopted at the Council Meeting on 3 December.

3. Innovate Limerick

Film in Limerick

- Innovate Limerick, through Film in Limerick, has launched ENGINE Shorts, an ambitious new short film development and production scheme for emerging talent based in Limerick, Tipperary and Clare. Run by Innovate Limerick through Film in Limerick, Engine Shorts is a partnership between the Local Authorities in Limerick, Tipperary and Clare, and Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, supported by the Arts and Culture Office. The new scheme aims to inspire and support up-and-coming writers, directors and producers to create inspiring, engaging world-class short films that resonate with a wide international audience. Shortlisted teams will receive training to develop their project ideas and up to six teams will be awarded production funding of €12,500 each to produce a short film. Engine Shorts aims to become a key mechanism for developing film-making talent in the Mid West supporting skills and talent development through industry-led training as well as tailored training and practical experience for crews on commissioned projects. The six projects will all be filmed in the region.



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4. Urban Innovation

Living Georgian City Programme

- The first step of the public engagement process for the Laneways Demonstration project concluded on 14 December. A summary of findings, completed by engagement lead, Allies and Morrison, was circulated to all participants and to Limerick City and County Council staff. The full report will be available on the Living Georgian City website at Limerick Laneways Project | Limerick.ie
- The first draft of options analysis work for Stage 1 of the Housing Demonstration projects was issued by the Design Team. Incorporation of client feedback into the design work has commenced, in preparation for costings and viability work in January 2021.

+CityxChange – Climathon

The objective of Climathon is to support citizens in generating ideas on climate action. It brings local people together to crowdsource ideas to help make their city more sustainable. Two groups of citizens successfully completed Climathon in Limerick this year and one of these was presented to Councillors and staff at the Travel and

Transportation Strategic Policy Committee Meeting in December. Safe School Streets proposes using safe zones around schools to improve air quality, reduce carbon emissions and encourage active travel in children. The project was welcomed by Strategic Policy Committee members and consultation on a pilot Safe School Street is proposed for the Spring 2021.

+CityxChange

Planning on a full programme of citizen engagement is being finalised with +CityxChange partners. An Open Innovation Call, Energy Champions Campaign and City Engage weeks in May and September will form part of the implementation programme for +CityxChange in 2021.

Living City Initiative (LCI)

The Living City Initiative tax incentive has been extended to December 2022. The Urban Innovation Department holds fortnightly advice clinics in ENGINE, Upper Cecil Street, giving multi-disciplinary advice to property owners, potential property owners and landlords who want to avail of the tax incentive for qualifying renovation works. In attendance at the clinics are the Fire Officer, Conservation Officer, Senior Architect and Town Planner.

	December	2020 to Date	TOTAL (since 2018)
No. of Applications Received	2	24	43
Owner Occupier	0	0	2
Rented Residential	2	22	38
Mixed Residential	0	2	6
No. of Applications Acknowledged (Interim)	2	21	34
Final Cert Issued	1	3	8



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5. Marketing and Communications

Marketing

Christmas in Limerick

- Concluded a six-week multi-media marketing campaign promoting Christmas in Limerick which featured festive highlights, COVID-friendly events and gift ideas to support Limerick stores and businesses.
- Engaged a number of prominent local influencers to promote the campaign including Radio Presenter and Columnist, Louise Cantillon, Fashion Stylist, Chloe Markham, and Behaviour Specialist, Deirdre Holland Hannon.
- Promoted local businesses through social media competitions.
- Collaborated with Holman Lee Agency to promote city and county fashion boutiques through the creation and distribution of 29 videos.
- Created and shared video content across Christmas in Limerick social channels including:
 - How To Make Irish Coffee with local TV Chef, Eoin Sheehan.
 - Missing You This Christmas featuring self-shot messages from the Limerick community abroad and Limerick's international residents who will not make it home this Christmas.
 - Developed a series of Limerick Gift Guides on Limerick.ie/Christmas featuring 120 gift ideas from local Limerick businesses.
 - Produced a downloadable guide for Limerick City's festive window trail, Walking In A Window Wonderland. Created and distributed Christmas in Limerick branded window decals to participating retailers and cafés.
 - Continued to develop local business listings on Limerick.ie/Shop which now features 287 local traders.
- Collaborated with Limerick Chamber on print advertisements to promote free festive parking initiatives and Limerick.ie/Shop.
- Created and issued eight Limerick.ie e-newsletters, including a weekly Christmas-themed version.
- Limerick's Piquant Media took the top prize for Most Effective Use of Illustration in the Irish Content Marketing Awards for their work on Riverfest Limerick.
- Installed Limerick: Atlantic Edge, European Embrace, banners outside Colbert Station on Parnell Street which feature Limerick brand ambassadors.

Social Media:

- Continued to monitor, schedule and update social media channels with creative content to utilise engagement with the public and put Limerick in people's minds.
- Posted 70 times on Limerick.ie's Facebook, with followers now 30,554. Posts reached 92,675 users, with 15,854 engagements.
- Tweeted 63 times on Limerick.ie's Twitter, @limerick_ie, with total followers now 19,167. Our tweets earned 173,100 impressions (no. of times users saw our tweet).
- Posted 20 times on Limerick.ie's Instagram and created eight stories with total followers now 12,972.
- Posted 16 times on Limerick City and County Council's LinkedIn, with total followers now 6,245.



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Limerick.ie

In December, there were 117,980* unique site visits to Limerick.ie, a 0.92% decrease on the same period in 2019. (*Google Analytics)

Content Report: 63 articles, 98 events and 11 amenities were added to Limerick.ie in December.

The most popular pages on Limerick.ie in December were:

1. www.limerick.ie
2. www.limerick.ie/council/services/planning-and-property/apply-or-search-planning-application/search-planning
3. www.limerick.ie/christmas
4. www.limerick.ie/council
5. www.limerick.ie/council/your-council/jobs

Communications

- Issued 22 news releases from the Marketing and Communications Department and researched and wrote nine speeches for the Office of the Mayor.
- Produced and distributed the monthly Council Connect staff e-newsletter.
- Tweeted 260 times on Limerick City and County Council's Twitter account, @limerickcouncil, with total followers now 15,609. Our tweets earned 411,600 impressions (no. of times users saw our tweet).





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Physical Development Directorate

1. Travel and Transportation Strategy

Energy and Emissions Balance

The closing date for tenders for the development of an Energy and Emissions Balance for Limerick City and County was 16 December 2020. Three tenders were received and these will be evaluated in early January.

The objective of an Energy and Emissions Balance is to identify the energy used within the city and county and to categorise it by sector and by fuel for the years 2000-2020 based on historical data, and predicted for the year 2030 based on projected data and relevant policy targets.

The Energy and Emissions Balance will inform the energy and emissions elements of the new Development Plan process and a review of the Limerick City Sustainable Energy and Climate Plan 2016.

ISO50001 Energy Management Standard – Annual Review

Limerick City and County Council has successfully retained the ISO50001 Energy Management Standard, first achieved in 2019.

2. Environment Strategy

- To prevent the use of single use plastic bottles, December saw the launch of four public contactless drinking water fountains in Merchant's Quay, Limerick City, and in Kilmallock, Abbeyfeale and Adare. Thanks to Healthy Ireland Fund, Pobal, and Limerick's European Green Leaf Team for the funding to bring this project to fruition. A fifth fountain was launched in Athea by Athea Tidy Towns and funded by the Community Development programme.
- To celebrate Limerick as European Green Leaf City 2020, Lumen Street Theatre Company, on behalf of the Council's European Green Leaf Team, created an amazing window display using recycled, upcycled and repurposed materials at Silkes Arts and Crafts on the corner of Catherine Street and Roches Street. The window display is a cornucopia of treats, with amazing scenes and decorations, handmade with an added dollop of festive creativity and innovation. The Limerick rooftop scene in the window display is made entirely from cardboard, as is Santa's office. The decorations are old cereal or grocery boxes, off-cuts of card, paper, newspaper and paint, while the tinsel lighting and ribbon are from previous years' Christmas decorations.
- As part of URBACT Health and Greenspace, a webinar was held on Natural and Inclusive Play Spaces on 16 December. The event was introduced by Dr. David Coleman, Clinical Psychologist, who emphasised the importance of play for children. Laurence Colleran, Senior Executive Parks Superintendent, South Dublin County Council, did a presentation on their innovative programme to deliver natural play spaces in the county, including the issues to overcome in delivering them and the benefits to children and communities. The event was well attended and enjoyed by all.

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT****Community Development Directorate****1. Tourism, Culture and Arts****TOURISM****Tourism Ireland Virtual Industry Event**

Tourism Ireland has been tracking consumer opinion and behaviours in relation to travel here, since the pandemic began. As part of this, a detailed programme of consumer research is underway in key overseas markets.

Findings of the latest tranche of this research were shared with industry partners at a virtual event on 1 December, attended by members of the Tourism Development Team.

Great Southern Greenway

A number of sections of the Great Southern Greenway were opened in December. As part of the Council's €5million upgrading works to the Great Southern Greenway Limerick, an extensive programme of resurfacing works is underway and a number of sections of the Greenway have been temporarily closed to facilitate these works.

Over the past four weeks, the following sections have now been opened:

- 27/11/20: Rathkeale: Irish Palatine Heritage Centre to the River Deel Bridge.
- 04/12/20: Newcastle West: Station Road to Bishop's Court.
- 22/12/20: Rathkeale: at the Irish Palatine Heritage Museum to the Ardagh Station House.

These sections were reopened for local use. A permissions procedure for events on the Greenway is now in place and an application can be made via Limerick.ie.

CAPITEN EUROPEAN PROJECT

A CAPITEN Partner Meeting of 16 European partners in the CAPITEN Project took place during the first week in December. CAPITEN, which stands for 'Atlantic Cluster for Technological and Economic Innovation in the Nautical Sector,' is a European collaborative project that brings together partners from Scotland, Ireland, France, Portugal and Spain. The project is led by the Brittany Region in France and has been ongoing since 2017. Due to COVID-19, it has been extended to 31 March, 2021.

Supported by the INTERREG Atlantic Area Regional Development Programme, the aim of the project is to promote the tourism economy, promote a sustainable approach in the nautical industry and create jobs in the various sectors of the industry.

MMIAH Project (Military Maritime, Industrial, Atlantic Heritage)

As part of the MMIAH Project, the Tourism Department collaborated with the Open House architectural festival to create a short film highlighting Limerick's participation in the Interreg EU-funded programme.

Due to social distancing restrictions, this year's Open House festival was undertaken virtually. Under the theme 'Limerick through a lens,' the short film took the form of a virtual tour of the Canal Harbour area, formerly the terminus of the extensive Inland Navigation System in Ireland. It examined the lost industrial and maritime landscape of the canal area, the restoration being undertaken of the Canal Harbour Buildings by Limerick City and County Council and the future development of the canal system in Limerick as a tourism and recreation amenity.



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CULTURE AND ARTS OFFICE

OPEN CALLS

Limerick Theatre Bursaries Autumn 2020

Limerick Culture and Arts Office announced an open call for the Limerick Theatre Bursaries Awards Scheme, in partnership with the Lime Tree Theatre/Belltable in October. This provides an enhanced support to the sector, as a response to COVID-19. There are three Limerick Theatre Bursaries available, up to a maximum value of €5,000 each. The closing date for applications was 2 November 2020. The assessment panel met on 9 November. Ten applications were received with a total ask of €50,000. The panel recommended the allocation of funding to three successful applicants, totalling €15,000. Funding was approved at the full Council Meeting in December for three grants of €5,000 for the proposals submitted by Georgina Miller, Joanne Ryan and Liam McCarthy.

STRATEGIC FUND

The Strategic fund for Culture and Arts Scheme supports applications to national and international funding bodies to help leverage funding by offering a percentage of any funding awarded, in the event of a successful application. In December, four letters of support were issued, to include two Arts Council schemes, the music network capital scheme and the National Concert Hall music production project.

CREATIVE IRELAND FUNDED PROJECTS

Creative Ireland Limerick secured €264,274 funding in 2020 to support Limerick creatives and to bring creativity to our communities. In 2020, there were over 60 projects/events inputted on the Creative Ireland portal.

Fresh Film Productions Seasonal Online Workshops

Limerick Culture and Arts Office, in partnership with Fresh Film Productions, presented Fresh Film Productions seasonal online workshops on 19 December. The workshops provided much-needed activities for children during the festive season. The

workshops included all age ranges - Seamus the Shanagolden Sheep Saves Christmas - A Musi-Tale, written by Mike Finn with music from Ann Blake, for 0 to 5 year-olds. For 5 to 8 year-olds, Tia Friedel created a Flip Book Animation workshop teaching children how to draw two festive characters and make it into an animation. Ana Colomer's workshop for 8 to 12 year-olds showed children how to make their own playdough characters with her Claymation Animation workshop. Costume 101 - Character Colour and Shape, was a costume design workshop for 12 to 18 year-olds with Costume Designers, Ella Daly and Emma Fisher.

Mícheál 'Moley' Ó Súilleabháin - All Saints Online Performance

This concert went live on Limerick.ie on 1 December and was a unique mix of sacred and secular song and poetry from one of Ireland's finest singers. It incorporated the seasonal theme of Advent and Christmas, with Latin Gregorian chant, Irish Sean Nós, traditional song, and poetic recitation. This festive performance at All Saints, in partnership with Love Castleconnell, complemented this year's Castleconnell Autumn Concert Series and was a performance by the unique and virtuosic singer, Mícheál 'Moley' Ó Súilleabháin. Mícheál had specially curated this programme of pieces that has illuminated his artistic and musical life to date.

Nutty Scientists Online Workshops

These workshops were facilitated through the Limerick City and County Library services in partnership with the Limerick Culture and Arts Office. Five workshops ran on 19 December and were fully booked. There were ten participants per workshop.

The Nutty Scientists online workshops are interactive and fun. Packs were made available for collection and the participants were taken on a fun and exciting journey of discovery via virtual demonstrations and guided activities. The workshops were as hands-on as possible, to ensure learning by doing, and were designed as part of Science Week 2020.



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Innovate Limerick / Film in Limerick, Mid-West Film Crew Database

Innovate Limerick / Film in Limerick has completed work on the Mid-West film crew database which has captured and profiled film, TV and animation talent in the Mid-West. It will allow individuals to create and manage a professional CV listing that will be accessible to producers and companies hiring crew in the region. It will also support Film in Limerick to better connect with local talent to provide tailored training and production and creative opportunities.

The Limerick Opera Festival

Soloist, Derek Moloney, and accompanist, Ger O'Connor, performed at Limerick's iconic Milk Market on 12 December. They have also produced a promotional video from the event. This festival objective it to reignite great operatic tradition pertaining to Limerick City - an "opera for all" festival determined to create and maintain a new audience.

Polish Arts Festival (PAF), In Search of Identity 2

This year's Polish Arts Festival (PAF) was deferred and held from 26 November to 13 December. PAF is a community organisation that integrates and promotes Polish culture and artists through collaboration with Limerick artists and venues. They strongly believe in social inclusion, integration and mutual understanding through arts. They have created a platform for an innovative and creative approach to diverse Limerick. They strive to engage community through involvement in culture, empower their individual and group potential.

This year, in response to COVID-19, they re-imagined their festival and the Creative Ireland funded "In Search of Identity 2" took place in the Belltable as an online virtual workshop.

ARTS COUNCIL PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME

PLATFORM 31

A nationwide artist development scheme by the 31 local authority arts offices, in collaboration with the Arts Council, PLATFORM 31 is a national opportunity for artists to develop their practice and test new ideas of collaboration, research, audience development, place-making and sharing their work.

COVID-19 has fundamentally altered the pathway for the arts and culture in a way that may not see a return to normal levels of work in the arts until 2025. The Limerick PLATFORM 31 Assessment Panel met on 16 December. Three Limerick artists were selected from this panel to go forward to the second national stage of assessment. In 2021, one will be successful in obtaining grant-aid of €8,000.

County Limerick Youth Theatre

A total of 32 young people between 8-17 took part in 33 virtual workshops with the County Limerick Youth Theatre which ended on 16 December. The younger two groups did workshops on the following topics: Theatre Games, Devising, Movement, Character Design and Development, and Improvisation. The older age groups did workshops on the following topics: Theatre Games, Devising, Script Analysis, Improvisation, Stage Directions, and Directing. This older group also did rehearsed readings of two plays: Chaos by Laura Lomas, and Stuff by Tom Wells. Each of the three Groups also did Story Exchanges in September, based on the model designed by Narrative 4.

Limerick Youth Choir

Directed by Marie Keary Scanlon, the Limerick Youth Choir rehearsed online, culminating in a recording in the Belltable on 13 December. These rehearsals and recording ensured that the choir could meet and benefit from the programme throughout the month of December.



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CULTURE AND PLACE-MAKING

Christmas in Limerick

A magical trail through the city centre, featuring a host of festive shop windows, was unveiled in Limerick. Limerick City and County Council invited shoppers to wrap up in winter woollies and take a walk in a window wonderland around Limerick City Centre this Christmas. Throughout December, many of Limerick's shopfronts transformed into an enchanted, festive tale with retailers making a special effort to dress their windows for Christmas 2020. Limerick families could post their letters at Santa's special post box on Lower Cecil Street and follow the adventure as Santa's letters made their magical journey to the North Pole. Christmas characters including Rudolph, the busy elves, Mrs. Claus and, of course, the man himself, Santa, were visible in the windows to create this magical atmosphere at this special time of year. This year, there was an enhanced Christmas lights display in Limerick city centre. New festive LED lights were erected on Denmark Street, Catherine Street from Roches Street to Thomas Street, Arthur's Quay Park and on the boardwalk, while additional lighting has been installed on Cruises Street. The parklets on O'Connell Street and Catherine Street were decorated, to create an upbeat Christmas atmosphere in Limerick city centre.

2. Libraries, Gallery and Museum

LIBRARIES

- Libraries entered Level 3 COVID-19 on 1 December. Access to branches for browsing, borrowing and returning resumed. Remote printing via Surfbox at participating branches recommenced. The very popular call-and-collect service continued. Libraries opened again to the public for short visits. Online requests and deliveries allowed library members to go online and order specific titles for delivery to their selected branch.
- Watch House Cross Library created a novel variation to the call-and-collect service by adding a gift craft bag with an age appropriate lucky dip book selection for families, and this proved very popular. Library members collected fifty pre-selected bags in the space of an hour following a Facebook post on 9 December.
- "Family Time at your Library," which is one of the core programmes of the national literacy programme "Right to Read," was presented online this year. Seasonal bedtime stories created by library staff were posted on Facebook each evening for twelve days, finishing on Christmas Eve. Stories were chosen by staff from our branch network, bringing the magic of storytime directly to people's homes. Christmas craft videos were also shared online. This included an autism-friendly craft session using the expertise gained by staff under the Autism Friendly Library initiative in Limerick Libraries. Lisa from Gravity Dance Academy, and Michelle from Watch House Cross Library, continued to dance, sing and rhyme to engage with pre-schoolers and their families. This completed a five-week video programme encouraging all Limerick Libraries Facebook followers to stay healthy during the Christmas period with some very cool dance moves for all the family.
- The very festive seasonal window in Adare Library featured on the Council's Twitter page and all were delighted to see the completion of the innovative contactless water bottle filling station outside the library.
- To support the Limerick Senior Hurlers and to mark the occasion of the historic victory, the story of Setanta, the great mythical hurler, and some relevant excerpts from The Story of Croke Park by Micheál Ó Muircheartaigh, were told by library staff and posted on social media.
- Watch House Cross Community Library Facebook account recorded 5,500 views of videos posted during December.
- Science Week 2020 allowed libraries to offer thirty families a special opportunity to participate in "Nutty Scientists" online workshops on 19 December. Each family who had applied through their local library, collected kits and login codes to avail of these live interactive sessions. Featuring



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the "Nutty Scientist," this was a collaboration with Limerick City and County Arts Department and funded by Creative Ireland.

- Schools from around the city and county, including Rathkeale, Abbeyfeale, Cappamore, Newcastle West, Adare and Kilmallock, were invited to participate from their own classrooms via Zoom in a range of readings and workshops hosted by library staff. Many schools went on social media to thank libraries for these events.
 - 2 December - two workshops with author, Helena Close - two classes attended.
 - 3 December - two workshops with Alan Nolan – ten classes attended.
 - 7 December - two author talks with Oisín McGann – six classes attended.
 - 9 December - two more author talks with Oisín McGann - six classes attended.
 - 10 December - two Christmas storytimes with Storygate/Simone Schuemmelfeder - four classes attended.
 - 15 December - two story time events with Roisin Meaney - nine classes attended.
 - 17 December - two more story time events with Roisin Meaney - ten classes attended.
- Newcastle West had a big hit on Twitter in the month of December with their 'Elf on the Shelf' antics, keeping followers enthralled with visual puns and some very creative activities for this seasonal library dweller. Seasonal storytelling from Santa himself seated comfortably among the shelves entertained their many Facebook followers. The branch got behind the Limerick Hurling team for the All Ireland Final, with a nice video on the Council social media.
- Throughout the month of December, branches curated and displayed selections of Christmas craft books, children's festive stories, and holiday romance and thriller titles to facilitate quick selections by library patrons.
- Also, this month, Limerick Libraries announced the winners of the short story competition that ran throughout October and November as part of the programme of events for this year's Children's Book Festival. 129 entries were received from

children aged 7-13. There were two age categories and prizes were awarded in both. Entries were short-listed by library staff, and the winning entries were then chosen by bestselling children's author, Pádraig Kenny.

- In Dooradoyle Library, Staff member, Deirdre Kelly, posted a Christmas Arts and Crafts video online for children, which has been shared on the social media platforms. Students from fourth and fifth Classes in Caherelly National School took part in a 'Book Review Project' with Dooradoyle Library. All of the children received a Certificate and goodie bag for their efforts. Their book reviews were displayed in the library. Ciara from Dooradoyle Library, and Bernadette from Library Headquarters, posted a 'Christmas Story time' video, where they read 'There's an Elf in Your Book' by Tom Fletcher, and 'Santa is Coming to County Limerick' by Steve Smallman. These stories formed part of the online Christmas Story time Programme for Limerick Libraries.

LIMERICK CITY GALLERY OF ART (LCGA)

- Limerick City and County Council adopted the Strategic Plan 2020-2025 on 3 December. Work will commence in January on the implantation plan.
- The Arts Council awarded €20,000 to LCGA to develop a new website as the current one is "not fit for purpose." It is hoped to have this completed by end of Quarter 1 in 2021.
- LCGA completed the de-installation of EVA International on 4 December.
- A selection of work, which can seldom be exhibited, forms the basis for the exhibition Winterjoy, which will run until the end of January. 2020 has provided LCGA with a unique opportunity to exhibit work from the Collections which cannot normally be shown due to limitation of space.
- Online activities for families are available on the various social media platforms.



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- Work continues on the next exhibition, At Home on the Farm, featuring five farms in County Limerick. A vibrant Public Engagement programme is being developed to accompany this exhibition which will open at the end of February. Plans are being developed to present this exhibition and attendant Public Engagement Programme virtually in case of a Lockdown being imposed.
- The Learning Programme and Three Muses Project continue to develop.

LIMERICK MUSEUM

As part of Limerick City and County Council's Decade of Centenaries programme, the second part of a two-part online '1920 in Limerick: A Centenary Symposium' was uploaded on the Museum platforms on 23 December. It examined the important events that occurred in both Limerick and Ireland during the year 1920, and among the speakers were Angus Mitchell and Fr Brian Murphy.

3. Property & Community Facilities

DERELICTION AND VACANCY

Dereliction, Vacancy and Reuse Team - December	
Inspections carried out	82
Statutory Notices issued under the Derelict Sites Act	33
Cases closed through engagement	6
Properties entered onto the Derelict Sites Register	14
Properties put forward for Compulsory Acquisition (Section 15 Notices)	0
Properties Compulsorily Acquired (Section 17 Notices)	0

BIN WAIVERS

Bin Waivers Issued:	310
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4. Urban and Rural Community Development

LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (LCDC)

- The Monthly Meeting of the LCDC was held virtually on 9 December. The LCDC, as the LEADER Local Action Group (LAG), approved funding of €792,738.08 under the LEADER Programme 2014-2020.
- Limerick received an additional allocation of €1,147,880.00 as part of the Government transitional funding arrangement between the completion of the current programme and the commencement of a new EU LEADER Programme.

LIMERICK PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK (PPN)

- A PPN Plenary (Members) meeting was held in December. This included a presentation from the Chair of the Implementation Advisory Group on the Directly Elected Mayor for Limerick. The 2020 PPN non-financial and financial reports, draft 2021 workplan, ratification of successful PPN candidates from 2020 elections, and terms of reference for PPN Linkage Groups, were also considered.
- Training over two sessions was held on the Sustainable Development Goals and facilitated by the National Environmental Pillar.
- Election of a PPN representative to the URBACT Health and Greenspaces Local Group, hosted by Limerick City and County Council, took place.
- Three PPN Linkage Group meetings were held in December.



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- Membership of the PPN stands at 132. The membership registration form is on the PPN website and eligible groups in Limerick can register at any time.
- Limerick PPN continued to have an active social media presence on its regularly updated website and on Twitter and Facebook.

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

- A 'prevention of single-use plastic bottles' initiative saw the launch of four public contactless drinking water fountains in Merchant's Quay, Limerick, and Kilmallock, Abbeyfeale and Adare. A fifth fountain was launched in Athea by Athea Tidy Towns and funded by the Community Development Programme.
- 'Love Limerick Don't Litter' social media video launched (<https://vimeo.com/489369469>).
- Limerick City and County Council Carr Street depot fence-line has been transformed in a collaborative initiative between the Council's Environment Awareness, Cleansing and Operations Teams. The mural-style display encompasses positive behaviour by the Council and citizens alike and acts as a call for volunteers for Limerick City Centre Tidy Towns Group. The overall message is one of encouragement to Limerick citizens and visitors alike not to litter.

AGE FRIENDLY

- Age Friendly Programme Initiatives such as "Reaching Out, Staying Connected" and "Remembering Yesterday, Living Today" are continuing, with people asking regularly for copies to be sent to them. Copies are now also available in all library branches throughout the city and county.
- The Age Friendly Limerick Programme, in collaboration with the Mayor of the City and County of Limerick, Councillor Michael Collins, dispatched gift packs to older and vulnerable people across Limerick to mark the beginning of

the Christmas season. The gift pack contained an Advent calendar (complete with chocolate treats), an Age Friendly calendar for 2021 and a letter of acknowledgement, support and Christmas wishes from the Mayor. 1,500 gift packs were distributed by mail, with a further 1,500 delivered to Nursing Homes and Direct Provision Centres across the City and County.

- On 8 December, Minister of State, Peter Burke, TD, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, officially launched the Local Authority-based 31 Age Friendly Housing Technical Advisors. This launch represents another substantial development in the vision of an Age Friendly Ireland to support older people to live in their own homes and communities with dignity and independence, for as long as possible. The aim of the Ageing Population housing policy is to ensure that older people will have greater choice by developing a range of housing options that are suited to their needs, so they can plan ahead and, insofar as possible, choose the right home for them. Age Friendly Ireland has supported the development and implementation of the policy document and now Limerick City and County Council has assigned Sarah Newell to undertake this role. Sarah has participated in training provided by Age Friendly Ireland to enable her to become the Local Authority specific age friendly Housing Technical Advisor. This will ensure that she can provide specialist advice to the Authority itself, to private sector interests who want to get involved in providing age-friendly housing and to individuals from the public generally.

The Age Friendly Programme Manager was interviewed by Eoghan Corry of the Senior Times. The half-hour podcast, launched on 21 December, discussed the response the Age Friendly Community in Ireland has made in dealing with the current COVID pandemic. <https://seniortimes.ie/eoghan-corry-talks-to-anne-rizzo-director-of-the-limerick-age-friendly-programme/>

Online Meetings/Webinars attended

- ✓ National Network of Age Friendly Programme Managers.
- ✓ Age Friendly Housing Specialists National Launch.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

- ✓ National Age Friendly Business Training Workshop.
- ✓ National Age Friendly Senior Team Meeting.
- ✓ Age Friendly Regional Programme Managers' Meeting x 2.
- ✓ Meeting with HSE regarding Assessment of Health and Wellbeing Programmes being delivered across the country.

LIMERICK COVID-19 COMMUNITY RESPONSE

- The COVID-19 Community Response Freephone number 1 800 832 005 and email address covidsupport@limerick.ie has operated continuously since March 2020. The service was extended over the Christmas period with an average of just three calls per day being received. The service will continue to operate from 8am to 8pm every day, and is ready to provide supports to those staying at home and shielding from the virus.
- The Government's 'Keep Well' campaign was implemented throughout December. Funding for the implementation of these initiatives is being managed through Pobal with projects to be undertaken between December 2020 and March 2021. Limerick City and County Council's Working Group has received confirmation of a successful submission, and is currently preparing the delivery of a number of government-funded initiatives to be rolled out across Limerick City and County up to the end of March 2021.

Online Meetings/Webinars attended

- ✓ Re-Mind International Partners' Meeting
- ✓ National COVID Co-Ordinators' Meeting
- ✓ Keep Well Limerick Working Group x 2 Meetings

EDUCATION

- The Mayor of the City and County of Limerick, Councillor Michael Collins, officially launched the video series featuring the Learning Limerick Ambassadors at a virtual launch event held on 10 December. The Ambassadors are Limerick people from all walks of life, united by a common interest in promoting, developing and celebrating learning in all its forms throughout Limerick. Following the formal launch of the video series by the Mayor and a group online screening, some of the ambassadors shared their reflections of the project with the group and their experience of lifelong learning. The launch video is now available to watch on the Learning Limerick YouTube channel and also on the Learning Limerick website at <http://learninglimerick.ie/learning-ambassadors> and also through the 'Learning Limerick' YouTube channel.

Online Meetings/Webinars attended

- ✓ Learning Limerick Steering Group.
- ✓ Limerick Comhairle na n-Óg Steering Group.

INTEGRATION

Online Meetings/Webinars attended

- ✓ Migrant Integration sub-group Meeting.
- ✓ EDNIP (Embracing Diversity, Nurturing Integration Programme).

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Online Meetings/Webinars attended

- ✓ Connecting for Life partner meeting.

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT****Housing Development Directorate****1. Strategic Housing Development****1. BUILD, BUY AND LEASE**

The following table shows progress to 31 December in the above social housing delivery streams:

As at 31 December 2020	Complete	In Progress	Overall Complete and In Progress
Build	107	6	113
Buy	25	0	25
Lease	58	0	58
TOTAL	190	6	196

2. SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT (SPOC)

The fast-tracking of refurbishment works has continued, with 164 houses currently in the programme under four different categories of works:

Category 1 – Light refurbishment

Category 2 – Minor refurbishment e.g. kitchen/bathroom/heating upgrades

Category 3 – Deep retrofit e.g. wall insulation, windows, M&E (mechanical and electrical)

Category 4 – Derelict i.e. structural works – reroofing, complete retrofit

The different stages as detailed in the following table:

SPOC	Completed in December	Completed	Underway	Design Stage	TOTAL
Cat1	0	2	3		5
Cat2	0	37	11		48
Cat3	0	26		26	52
Cat4	0	2		43	45
Conveyance				14	14
	0	67	14	83	164



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

2. Regeneration Strategy Implementation

Regeneration Strategy Implementation Plan – Limerick City

Southill Hub

- Community Café was open for indoor dining from 5 December.
- Youth Work Team continued to provide youth clubs and programmes throughout the month.
- Worked with West End Youth Work Team to provide events and programme for Stand Up Week.
- Provided a Family Christmas Photo programme to the Southill community.
- Worked with the Limerick Food Partnership to deliver food hampers to families in the area.

Limerick Island Community Partners

- Company Board meeting held in individual pods and by e-mail.
- Delivery of 1,800 meals-on-wheels to the community and beyond.

- Planted up the beds in the Alms Houses.
- Erected Memorial Tree in St. Mary's Park.
- The renovation of No. 19 Nicholas Street: one floor complete. Meetings held with prospective clients.
- Delivered 60 food parcels twice during the month on behalf of Mid-West Simon and Fr. Enright.
- Community Bus is being used to aid Limerick Youth Services to deliver students to their projects.
- A joint enterprise continued with Limerick Youth Service to develop a programme for training youth bike mechanics.
- SICAP (Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme) Meetings: Targets set.
- Christmas Baked Ham Project started.
- Discussions with Limerick City and County Council regarding the location of the new Community Centre in conjunction with other stakeholders.
- Meeting with the community at large in relation to the new Community Centre.
- Delivered Christmas hampers to the elderly in St. Mary's Parish and Corbally.



**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT****Service Operations Directorate****1. Housing Support Services**• **Waiting List**

Housing Waiting List	2,284
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• **Allocations**

	No. of Units December 2020	Year to Date
Adare-Rathkeale	0	15
Newcastle West	0	54
Metropolitan District	12	227
Cappamore – Kilmallock	2	35
Total	14	331

• **Allocation Refusals**

	No. of Units December 2020	Year to Date
Adare-Rathkeale	0	1
Newcastle West	2	27
Metropolitan District	1	32
Cappamore – Kilmallock	0	5
Total	3	65

• **Traveller Housing Welfare**

No. of Units offered December 2020	Year to Date
2	38

*these figures are included in Allocations figures

• **Housing Assistance Payments Limerick (HAP)**

2,442 of active HAP Tenancies monitored, reviewed and maintained.

No. of HAP tenancies set up this month	27
No. of Amendments	167
No. of Cessations	29

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT****HOME IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES**

December 2020	MAGS (Mobility Adaptation Grant Scheme)	No.	HAG (Housing Adaptation Grant Scheme)	No.	HOPS (Housing Aid for Older Persons Grant Scheme)	No.	DPG	No.
Adare - Rathkeale	€0.00	0	€30,480.06	2	€1,520.00	1	€0.00	0
Newcastle West	€25,347.00	5	€7,403.28	2	€15,941.48	5	€67,604.77	10
Metropolitan	€15,400.00	3	€66,662.75	6	€56,246.30	15	€235,414.06	26
Cappamore - Kilmallock	€5,750.00	1	€1,530.00	1	€29,463.95	5	€0.00	0
Total	€46,497.00	9	€106,076.09	11	€103,171.73	26	€303,018.83	36
Total Monies issued in December 2020 = €558,763.65								
Total Grants issued in December 2020 = 82								

January to December 2020	MAGS (Mobility Adaptation Grant Scheme)	No.	HAG (Housing Adaptation Grant Scheme)	No.	HOPS (Housing Aid for Older Persons Grant Scheme)	No.	DPG	No.
Adare - Rathkeale	€117,594.37	23	€237,004.12	19	€154,806.87	40	€48,782.25	8
Newcastle West	€114,929.29	23	€92,690.73	13	€296,879.73	70	€73,052.77	11
Metropolitan	€200,593.54	41	€325,759.10	39	€260,218.48	69	€552,618.22	65
Cappamore - Kilmallock	€107,149.80	22	€154,199.30	16	€175,983.91	35	€63,515.20	9
Total	€540,267.00	109	€809,653.25	87	€887,888.99	214	€737,968.44	93
Total Monies issued January to December 2020 = €2,975,777.68								
Total Grants issued January to December 2020 = 503								

RENT COLLECTION

Rent Collection Limerick City & County Council					
Opening Balance at 01/01/2020	Accrued Income	Total for collection	Receipts	Closing balance 31/12/2020	% Collection
€4,599,470	€16,755,078	€21,354,548	€16,313,835	€5,040,713	76%

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT****LIMERICK HOMELESS ACTION TEAM – PATHWAY ACCOMMODATION AND SUPPORT SYSTEM (PASS) DATA**

Individuals – 17/12/2020		
Location	Description	No.
McGarry House	Mixed Low threshold accommodation for singles	33
St. Patrick's Hostel	Higher threshold accommodation for single males	43
Thomond House	Higher threshold accommodation for single females	12
B&B (no children)	Adults without children accommodated in B&B	6
Clare Street Emergency Pods	Adults without children accommodated in low threshold emergency accommodation	8
Temporary Emergency Provision TEP 1 (Edenvilla)	Low threshold, night by night (9pm-9am) emergency accommodation. Mixed	14
Temporary Emergency Provision TEP 2 (Phoenix Lodge)	Low threshold, night by night (9pm-9am) emergency accommodation. Mixed	14
Total		130

Families			
Location	Description	No. Adults	No. Children
Suaimhneas	Family Emergency accommodation	6	10
		Families - 6	
B&B/Hotel Accommodation	Families	11	19
		Families - 8	
Twin Oaks Family Hub	Family Hub	6	10
		Families - 6	
Totals		Adults	Children
		23	39
		Families - 20	

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT****TENANT PURCHASE/ GROUND RENT / DEED OF DISCHARGE / CONSENT TO SALE / COTTAGE PURCHASE ANNUITY DETAILS:-**

Tenant Purchase	
Tenant Purchase Applications: No. Received	1
Tenant Purchase Applications: No. Approved	0
Rebuilding Ireland Home Loans	
Loan Applications: No. Received	5
Loan Applications: No. Approved	1
Deed of Discharge	
Deed of Discharge Applications: No. Received	8
Consent to Sale	
Consent to Sale Applications: No. Received	1
Cottage Purchase Annuity	
No. of Cottage Purchase Annuity Applications	1
Freehold Purchase	
No. of Freehold Purchase applications	1

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION, DATA REQUESTS AND OMBUDSMAN

Data Access Reports	1
Freedom of Information	5
Ombudsman	1



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

2. Planning and Environmental Services

Environmental Services (Litter, Waste Enforcement, Air, Noise, Water/Waste Water and Public Health)

- 147 complaints were received in December.
- 260 inspections were undertaken during the month.
- The Department issued three Statutory Notices.
- Eight Directions were served by the Department.
- 29 Warning Letters were issued in December.
- Seven litter fines were issued during the period.
- Legal proceedings were initiated in three cases.

Economic Development and Planning

Planning Applications

A total of 155 new planning applications were received as follows:

Housing Developments	2
Domestic Developments	106
Agricultural Developments	18
Commercial Developments/Change of Use	10
Sporting/Community and Educational Developments	4
Other Developments	15

The current applications include proposals for:

- Construction of a motor service station which will include service station building with convenience shop, food court, staff facilities, canopy, fuel facilities, parking and circulation space, access provision with new entrance and exit arrangements off N69 & R510 at Skehacreggaun, Mungret.

- Construction of 2 no. two storey-office buildings, car parking and all ancillary site services at Croom Community Enterprise Centre, Croom.
- Construction of a residential development comprising 99 no. residential units and a crèche at Baunacloka, Raheen.

3. Veterinary Services

- A total of nine stray or wandering equines were impounded.
- The dog control unit dealt with five dogs.
- Three food samples were submitted during December for analysis under the national residues and microbiological sampling programme.

4. Cemeteries

Number of Burials in City Cemeteries.

Mount St. Lawrence	14
Mount St. Oliver	14
Castlemungret	12
Kilmurry	0



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

5. Municipal District Offices

Municipal District of Adare-Rathkeale

- **Askeaton Town Centre Town and Village Project**

A consultant has been appointed to conduct a Public Realm Study in Askeaton. The results from this study will determine the town centre improvement works. Initial meetings have been held with this consultant and stakeholder engagement will commence before Christmas.

A briefing document for the appointment of consultants to design and construct the undergrounding of services in prominent areas of the town, as well as enhancing public lighting, was sent to tender. No tenders were received and an alternative strategy of a design and build project will now be explored.

- **Rathkeale Promotion**

Meetings have been held with community groups to promote a positive message of Rathkeale. Team Rathkeale, which was set up in September 2020, has been provided with mapping to identify areas for possible improvement in the town. From this mapping, a need for the installation of additional benches and litter bins has been identified. A Rathkeale attractions map has also been created and it is hoped that this map (when modified to fit the design palette) can be included at the confluence of the Greenway and Riverwalk.

Municipal District of Cappamore-Kilmallock

Red Scape Consultants undertook a walk-around with representatives of Bruff Community and Lough Gur Heritage Centre on 15 December, as part of the development of a Public Realm plan for Bruff. Topics discussed included:

- Pedestrian and cycle connection between Lough Gur and Bruff.
- Built attractions for Tourism.
- Sean Wall Memorial.
- Refurbishment of Village Park.
- Traffic Management Plan and Parking.

- Regeneration of Main Street, including lighting, tree planting etc.
- Derelict Buildings.
- Walking Trails.

To date, 21 applicants out of 47 have completed works in the pilot refurbishment scheme.

Municipal District of Newcastle West

- At the monthly meeting of the Municipal District of Newcastle West held on 2 December, the Members approved amending the Standing Orders of the District to allow for remote meetings having regard to Local Government Circular LG 07-2020 "Guidelines for Supplementary Standing Orders regulating the proceedings in relation to remote meetings of the Council" and "S.I. No. 445/2020 – Civil Law and Criminal Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2020 (Section 29) (Local Authorities) (Designation) Order 2020."
- A special meeting of the Municipal District of Newcastle West was held on 16 December with regard to Part 8 planning applications for the Great Southern Greenway.

The Members considered and approved the following Chief Executive's Reports pursuant to Section 179 3(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended) in relation to (a) the construction of a new car park at Station Road, Newcastle West, comprising of 50 car parking spaces, associated surface lining, drainage, lighting and green area; and (b) the construction of six cattle underpasses and one cattle overpass at five locations on the newly developed Great Southern Greenway at Garranekeevan, Dromin (MacTurlough), Doonakeen, Knocknasna and Port; and (c) the refurbishment of Ardagh Station House (which is a Protected Structure) and goods shed and change of use to commercial, community and tourism use along with ancillary site works and also the refurbishment of Barnagh Station House (which is a Protected Structure) and change of use to a community and tourism use along with ancillary site works.

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT****Capital Investment Directorate****1. Design and Delivery****Tenders**

- Tenders sought for the construction of 12 social housing units in Knocklong.
- Tenders sought for the Design and Installation of Safety Works to Mulgrave Street Fire Station, Limerick.
- Tenders sought for the provision of Engineering Consultancy Services for the South Circular Road to Bishop's Quay, Limerick, Cycle Infrastructure.

Project Updates

- Contractor mobilised to commence works on the Castletroy Urban Greenway Project.
- Croom Distributor Road Phase 1 Access Road opened as far as new Secondary School, Coláiste Chiaráin.
- Coonagh to Knockalisheen Distributor Road – Contractor appointed for enabling works on Knockalisheen Road.

Home Improvement Schemes

Inspections & Recommendations for Home Improvement Schemes – December 2020

Inspection Types	Pre-application	Initial Inspection	Re-Inspection	Final Inspection	Total Inspections by Grant Type
MAGs (Mobility Adaptation Grant Scheme)	0	2	1	5	8
HAGs (Housing Adaptation Grant Scheme)	1	5	0	10	16
HOPS (Housing Aid for Older Persons Grant Scheme)	0	6	0	15	21
Total Inspections by Inspection Type	1	13	1	30	45

Projects Completed

Construction of four social houses completed at St. Patrick's Villas, Castleconnell.

Finance

- Recoupments submitted for Housing Projects to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) in December - €5,821,000.
- Recoupments issued by the DHLGH in December - €6,063,428.

Buy and Renew and SHIP Refurbishment Programme

Inspections Carried out in December	0
Refurbishment Works Commenced in December	0
Refurbishment Works Ongoing	5
Refurbishment Works Completed in December	1

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT****National and Regional
Shared Services Directorate****1. Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) Shared Services Centre**

- There were 59,821 active HAP tenancies nationally, managed by the HAPSSC at the end of December.
- A weekly average of 305 HAP tenancies have been set up during 2020.
- The December landlord payment run was €51.7 million.
- The weekly tenant debit at the end of December was €2.9 million.
- The HAPSSC Debt Management Unit collected a total of €142 million in differential rent to end of December.
- The HAP tenant rent collection rate at the end of December was 99%.
- The Debt Management Unit issued 5,553 HAP debt reminder letters in December.
- The Debt Management Unit issued 1,365 HAP COVID-19 letters in December.

2. Fire and Emergency Services**Statistics**

	No. of Fire Related Calls	No. of Non Fire Related Calls	Total
No. of call-outs 01/01/2020 – 31/12/2020	818	554	1,372
% of calls where on scene in < 10 mins from time of call	67%	57%	
% of calls where on scene between 11 and 20 mins from time of call	24%	35%	
% of calls where on scene in > 20 mins from time of call	9%	8%	

	No. Received / Assigned	No. Validated	No. Invalidated / Refused	No. Granted	No. Completed
Fire Certificate Applications January to December	162	147	24	151	
Disability Access Cert Applications January to December	118	110	8	113	
Licensing Applications January to December	136	136	0	117	
Commencement Notice January to December	494	490	3	490	494
Completion Certificate January to December	186	182	2	182	186
Planning Referrals January to December	222				216
Sugar CRM Cases January to December	16				34

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT****Fire and Emergency Training Events**

- 32 firefighters completed a one-day Working at Heights course.
- Nine firefighters completed a two-day Swiftwater First Responder Training course.

Civil Defence attendance at Events

- Irish Blood Transfusion Service Blood Clinic – Longcourt House Hotel, Newcastle West – 2 days.
- Patient Transfer – Tipperary Town to Nenagh General Hospital and back to residence in Tipperary Town - 1 day.

- Irish Blood Transfusion Service Blood Clinic – Castletroy Park Hotel, Limerick – 2 days.
- Blue Light Appreciation Run - 1 day.
- Returning of Local Authority PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) to Kildare - 1 day.
- Irish Blood Transfusion Service Blood Clinic – South Court Hotel, Limerick - 1 day.

Munster Regional Control Centre (MRCC)

	No. of Calls mobilised to an emergency incident by MRCC	Other Calls	Average Call Processing Time	Total No. of Calls in January to December
No. of Call-Outs 01/01/2020 – 31/12/2020	10,482	11,726	1 minute, 21 seconds	22,208

Water Safety

Number of Lifebuoy Replacements	Total January - November	December	Total 2020
Metropolitan Area	12	1	13
Municipal Area	24	0	24



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

3. Digital Services and EU Programmes

Digital Services

- On 7 December, the Heads of Digital Services and ICT attended the senior forum meeting to request submissions from departments on their ICT requirements for 2021. The submissions received will be evaluated for inclusion in the operational plans of both departments in 2021.
- On 9 December, the Head of Digital Services attended an All-Ireland Smart Cities Forum meeting, where the main topics discussed were the forum's involvement in the development of a scoping paper on building resilient cities, and an introduction to the independent consultants who have been appointed by the Forum to develop its national strategy going forward.
- On 21 December, the Head of Digital Services attended a meeting with independent Consultants appointed to develop a national strategy for the All-Ireland Smart Cities Forum, where he presented the Limerick Digital Strategy 2017-2020, outlined progress made to date, and discussed aspects that Limerick would like to have considered for inclusion in the national strategy. Workshops will be facilitated by the consultants in January and February 2021 to inform the development of that strategy.
- The LITe Programme was rolled out to both the Trade and Investment and Environment Departments in December.
- Two new online services were added to My Limerick: Burning of Agricultural Vegetation (BAV) and Time in Need Grave purchase.

EU Programmes

- On 9 December, Terry Connolly met with Lightsourcelabs (<https://www.lightsourcelabs.com/about>) to further build on our connection through an Horizon 2020 application earlier in the year. It was agreed to put together an imagined mini-pilot which can be used to help Enterprise Ireland direct us towards projects of interest.
- On 15 December, Corina Hanrahan presented the finalised Limerick Roadmap to an Integrated Action Plan as part of the FindYourGreatness URBACT 3rd Transnational Network Meeting. This roadmap is the result of several months of consultations with Smart Limerick stakeholders and will ultimately lead to a final Integrated action plan for Limerick by the end of the project in 2022.
- On 15 December, Terry Connolly met with the Limerick Institute of Technology research team to further discuss synergies from the previous meeting. It was agreed to work on finding common call topics in the next round of Horizon Europe funding and to partner where possible on projects that can benefit the people of the city and county.

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT****Support Services Directorate****1. Finance Services****Commercial Rates and Loans****Draft Collection Figures**

Commercial Rates 2020	Opening Balance 1 Jan €	Accruals €	Vacant Property Adjustment €	Writes offs / Waivers €	Total for Collection €	Amount Collected €	Arrears €	Specific Doubtful Arrears €	% Collected
As at 31st December 2020 ^	9,759,506	59,781,308 **	325,369	25,413,206	43,802,239	39,248,963	4,553,276 ^	2,496,668 ^	95%

** The Date for Making the 2020 Rate was 3rd February 2020

^ subject to finalisation of year end accounts for 2020

Debtors Loans	Opening Balance 1 Jan €	Accruals €	Writes offs / Waivers €	To Collect €	Receipts €	Arrears €	% Collected
As at 31st December 2020 ^	447,129	1,630,271 *	13,665	2,063,735	1,857,649	206,086	90%

* Accruals not up to date to end of December 2020

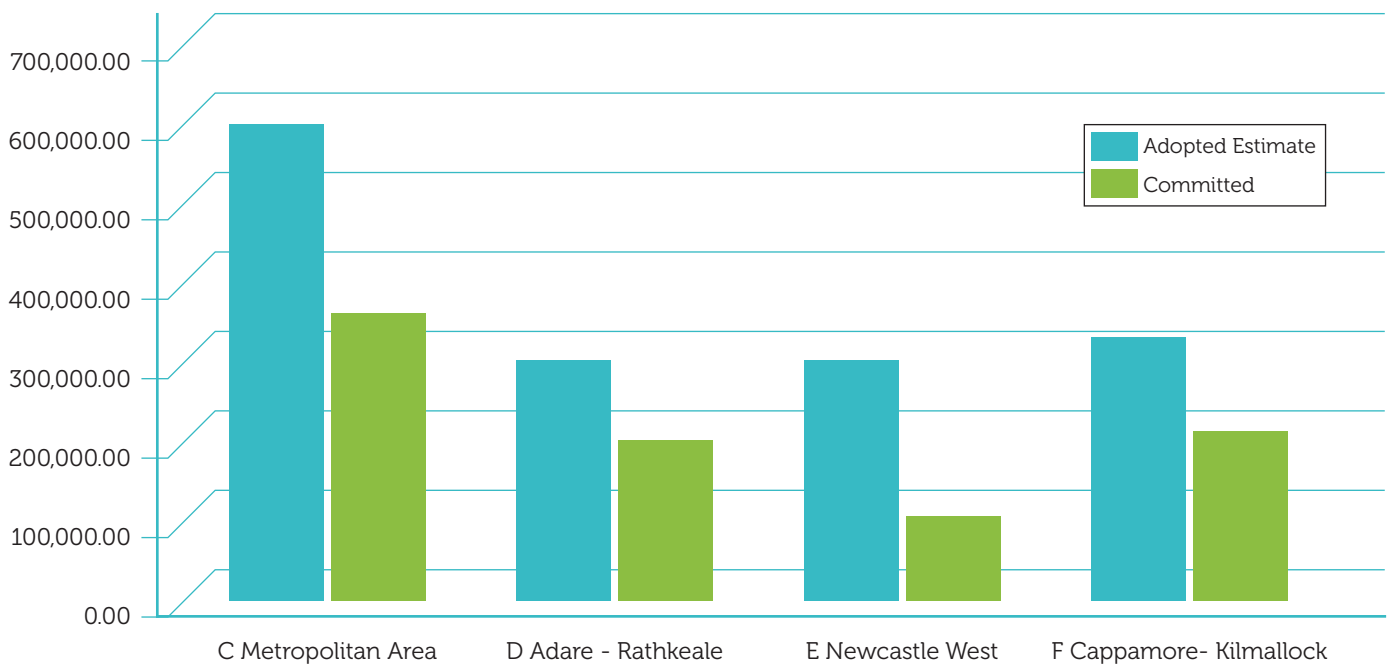
^ subject to finalisation of year end accounts for 2020

Recourse to Overdraft Facility

No of days in overdraft this year **1** (due to administrative error by Bank not returning Deposit on time)

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT****General Municipal Allocation 2020 Adopted Estimate €1.403 Million**

Graph outlining adopted budget and draft committed expenditure up to 31st December 2020
("Final" figures: subject to finalisation of year end accounts for 2020)



Municip (Code) + (Text)	Value Adopted Estimate (€)	Value Committed (€)
C Metropolitan Area	568,000.00	321,473
D Adare - Rathkeale	270,000.00	164,107
E Newcastle West	270,000.00	69,625
F Cappamore - Kilmallock	295,000.00	173,574



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

2. Corporate Services, Governance & Customer Services

The Office of the Mayor co-ordinated and arranged for the Mayor to attend the following functions/events:

- Launch of Fundraising Campaign #RaiseTheRoof project to replace the roof of Limerick Boat Club. Venue: Limerick Boat Club, Sarsfield Bridge, Limerick.
- Official Turning on of the Christmas Lights 'Lighting of Rathkeale.' Venue: Community Centre, The Square, Rathkeale.
- Relaunch of Limerick Food Partnership (LFP). The LFP aims to raise awareness, improve access and increase the supply of healthy food options in Limerick City and County. Venue: Limerick Milk Market.
- Photoshoot, Launch of the Limerick Thomond Rotary Club Virtual Remembrance Tree. Venue: Bedford Row, Limerick.
- Launch of new publication by Limerick Columnist, Author and Journalist, Jim O'Brien, 'Matters of Great Indifference: A Reflection on Modern Rural Living.' Venue: Merchant's Quay, Limerick.
- Virtual Launch for Learning Limerick of the Learning Ambassadors Videos. These videos demonstrate how the Learning Limerick Ambassadors are Limerick people from all walks of life, united by a common interest in promoting, developing and celebrating learning, in all its forms, throughout the city and county. They are welcoming, friendly and proud that Limerick is a Learning Region. The ambassadors tell their own inspiring stories of learning and help spread the word and promote the idea of lifelong learning in their own communities, workplaces and neighbourhoods.
- Site Visit to Opera Site with Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Darragh O'Brien, TD.
- Photoshoot to unveil public contactless drinking water fountains in Limerick city and county to help reduce plastic waste. The new bottle-filling stations provide contactless, clean and safe water without the risk of touching high-use buttons that could increase the spread of infection. Venue: Merchant's Quay, Limerick - beside the gate into St. Mary's Cathedral.
- Attendance at online staff Christmas prayer service. Broadcast from St. Mary's Cathedral, Limerick.

Register of Electors

- The Register of Electors team in Corporate Services has completed the Revision Court process for the 2021/2022 Draft Register. A total of 256 claims were submitted to the Revision Court, which was held on 16 December, at The Courthouse, Merchant's Quay, Limerick. The County Registrar made a decision on each individual claim and the outcome was recorded on the Register of Electors System by the Team. Correspondence notifying electors of his decision were issued on 18 December.
- All postal votes and Nursing Home applications for special voters, which were received prior to the deadline of 25 November, are currently being processed.
- The team will continue to make any amendments that have come from electors who have checked the Draft Register and this will be completed prior to publication of the Live Register 2021/2022.
- www.checktheregister.ie has been updated with the Live Register for 2020/2021.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

- Staff from the Register of Electors Team met with staff from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) Electoral Register Modernisation Project and other Registration Authorities regarding the Modernisation of the Electoral Registration Process. Items presented / discussed were:
 - > Electoral Modernisation Registration Project - Petra Woods, DHLGH Principal Officer.
 - > Modernisation Project – Proposals for legislation - Niamh Gallagher, DHLGH Assistant Principal Officer.
 - > Simplification of Electoral Registration Forms - Yvonne Butler, DHLGH Higher Executive Officer.

Health and Safety Training

The Health and Safety Training Unit continues to organise essential Training Courses for staff.

- **Safe Pass Training:** Safe Pass was provided to staff whose training has expired, or is due to expire, and those who do not hold Safe Pass. A total of four staff were trained during the month of December.
- **Manual Handling Training:** The total number of courses held during the month was two, and the number of staff trained was 18.
- **Drivers CPC Module 1:** Total number of courses held during December was two and total staff trained was 10.

Customer Services

- The Household Waste Subsidy Scheme 2021 was adopted under the Budget. 2,700 application forms were issued to previous applicants in December. Customer Services staff liaised with the Urban and Rural Development Department to put in place a management system to ensure all calls and queries were answered efficiently. The application process was streamlined allowing

completed applications to be collated and processed in a more productive manner. There was a total of 463 phone calls received for the Household Waste Subsidy Scheme 2021 Team throughout December.

- Customer Services staff aided the Corporate Services Department again this year by fielding all calls in relation to the Mayor's Coal Appeal. Data and information was gathered and collated for applications received under the Scheme. At the time of closing, there were 619 applications logged by Customer Services staff for the Mayor's Coal Appeal.
- Throughout the Christmas period, members of Customer Services Team operated the COVID Community Response telephone line. Co-ordinating with external stakeholders, the team ensured that vulnerable households, and those self-isolating, maintained access to necessary goods and services. In addition to the day-to-day service provision, an additional 31 requests for support were managed over the Christmas break.

The following figures highlight the activity within the Contact Centre throughout December:

- Customer Services Call Centre dealt with 9,326 calls. This represents an average of 504 per day, with the number of calls exceeding 600 on several occasions. 59% of these calls were handled at first point of contact.
- Customer Services Case Management Team continued working with key service areas of the Council in supporting the closure and update of representations from Elected Members.
- 2,527 cases were created, with 532 of these logged on behalf of Public Representatives. 2,924 cases were closed, with 654 of these being cases logged by Public Representatives.
- A total of 1,848 emails were processed through Customer Services email platform.
- The logging of cases through the MyLimerick portal continued, with a total of 230 cases being logged, 186 of which were submitted by Public Representatives.

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- Customer Services continued to support the Housing Maintenance Department in creating the service requests and keeping citizens up to date on progress made. Throughout the month, there was a total of 1,116 cases logged for Housing Maintenance.
- Customer Services continued to provide other frontline services to the general public, such as the processing of Residential Parking Permits. A total of 70 new Residential Parking Permits were processed throughout the month.

3. Schedule of Meetings for December

Name of Meeting	Date	Location
Full Council Meeting of Limerick City and County Council	03.12.2020	Patrickswell
Operational Briefing Limerick City West	01.12.2020	Virtual
Municipal District of:		
Newcastle West Monthly Meeting	02.12.2020	Newcastle West
Special Meeting with regard to Part 8 applications for Great Southern Greenway, Limerick.	16.12.2020	Newcastle West
Adare-Rathkeale Monthly Meeting	08.12.2020	Dooradoyle
Cappamore-Kilmallock Monthly Meeting	10.12.2020	Kilmallock
Joint Policing Sub-Committee	10.12.2020	Kilmallock
Party Leaders' Meeting	03.12.2020	Dooradoyle
Protocol Committee Meeting	03.12.2020	Dooradoyle
Joint Policing Committee	04.12.2020	Virtual
Audit Committee	04.12.2020	Merchant's Quay
Local Community Development Committee	09.12.2020	Virtual

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Name of Meeting (cont.)	Date	Location
Strategic Policy Committee Meetings		
Climate Action, Biodiversity and Environment	08.12.2020	Virtual
Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning	14.12.2020	Virtual
Travel and Transportation	15.12.2020	Virtual
Home and Social Development	16.12.2020	Virtual
Metropolitan District of Limerick Monthly Meeting	21.12.2020	Dooradoyle

4. Access to Information

	December	2020 (January to December)
Total Freedom of Information Requests	11	162
FOI Internal Appeals	1	4
Information Commissioner Appeals	0	1
Re-Use of Public Information	0	1
Total Ombudsman Requests	2	32
Total AIE Requests	0	7
Information Commissioner Appeals	0	1



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5. Business Improvement

- **Citizen Engagement:** Business Improvement partnered with Trade and Investment to launch the 'Global Limerick Diaspora' survey on MyPoint.
- **Staff Engagement:** A total of 846 Staff are now live on the employee app, an increase of 45 on last month's figures.
- **Project and Programme Management:** Training was delivered in the Cora Project Management System to the Housing Regeneration Team.
- **Innovation:** Three staff competitions were launched through the Staff App in conjunction with the Marketing and Communications Department. This allowed staff to share their Christmas spirit with their colleagues and promoted staff engagement with the app.