

# CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT



Comhairle Cathrach  
& Contae **Luimnigh**

**Limerick City**  
& County Council

January 2021

**MAYOR** – Government announces details of plans for a Directly Elected Mayor

**RENEWAL** – Six towns and villages receive funding for revitalisation projects

**STRATEGY** – New Strategy being prepared for Blue Green Infrastructure

**CONTROL** - “Take Control of your Energy” open call looks for projects to reduce the amount of energy in the city

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## CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

### Economic Development Directorate

## 1. Trade and Investment

- Indigo Telecoms announced plans to create 100 jobs in Limerick, through its Irish subsidiary 4site, over the next three years. Jobs will include Fibre Planners, GIS Engineers, Design Engineers and will be located at its Headquarters in Raheen Business Park.
- Limerick Software company AMCS announced 40 new jobs at its Global Headquarters in Limerick. Since 2018, AMCS employs a workforce of 169 people working in software development, product management and sales and marketing.

## 2. Strategic and Forward Planning

- Following consideration of the Chief Executive's Report issued to the Elected Members of Limerick City and County Council on the Pre-Draft Consultation of the Proposed Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 at the January Council Meeting, the Elected Members issued Directions to the Chief Executive in relation to the preparation of the Draft Development Plan.
- Following consideration of the Chief Executive's Report issued to Elected Members of the Metropolitan District of Limerick on the Draft Southern Environs Local Area Plan 2021-2027 at the January Meeting of the Metropolitan District, Material Amendments will be prepared for public display.

## 3. Local Enterprise Office

- Mentoring and Training**

Support	No. of Participants
Mentoring	9
Training	240

- Trading Online Voucher**

Support	Trading Online Voucher
Applications Submitted	6
No. of Refusals	
No. of Approvals	16
Value of Approvals €	€36,167.10

- Client Stimulus Scheme**

A total of €315,593.00 was paid to 52 Clients.

## 4. Innovate Limerick

### Film in Limerick

- The ENGINE Short Film Scheme, a film training and production programme run by Innovate Limerick through Film in Limerick, held an information webinar in January attended by 87 aspiring and emerging filmmakers interested in applying to the scheme. By the application deadline, 133 submissions were received from film talent throughout the Region.
- 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 filmmaking 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 and offer skills training and career development for all those involved.



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### 5. Urban Innovation

#### +CityxChange

##### Citizen Innovation - Open Call 2 – Take Control of Your Energy

Urban Innovation, with +CityxChange partners, launched the second Open Call to the Limerick public, looking for innovative ideas to improve how homes, businesses and residents use energy. This new Open Call, "Take Control of Your Energy," looks for projects that test ideas to reduce the amount of energy used in the city and increase the energy generated from innovative sources, encouraging the development of energy communities and cooperatives (what would help people to work together to save/generate energy?).

The theme can include:

- using sensors and data to understand energy and renewables (how might we measure different kinds of energy use/production in the city?).
- enabling decision-making on energy usage by individuals and communities (how do we help people to take control of their energy use?).
- supporting energy saving activities, including recycling, waste management improvements, and smarter production methods.
- other innovations that support communities to take an active part in the energy transition.

Funded up to €5,000, the pilots will be tested in the city centre for a fixed period of time. Citizens, businesses, community groups, makers and other interested groups are welcome to get involved. Applications close on 12 March.

### 6. Marketing and Communications

#### Marketing

##### Christmas in Limerick

- Produced a Christmas in Limerick 2020 campaign report. Despite the scaled-back campaign, it generated topline figures of 3.48 million paid impressions, 21,325 link clicks and 917,246 video views – a 3,000% increase in video views from 2019. Press coverage reached an audience of 1.5 million.
- More local companies availed of free marketing opportunities through Limerick.ie/Shop, which now hosts 285 local companies – a 25% increase since Shop Limerick launched in May 2020.
- The campaign profiled almost 250 Limerick businesses through paid advertising, digital content, event listings, influencer collaborations, press releases and social media competitions.
- Commenced collaboration with Tourism, Culture and Arts Department ahead of Limerick St. Patrick's Festival launch.
- Finalised Limerick European Green Leaf media book – a collation and analysis of media coverage received during Limerick City's designation for 2020.
- Created and issued two Limerick.ie e-newsletters.

#### 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 33 times on Limerick.ie's Facebook, with followers now 30,676. Posts reached 67,148 users, with 8,298 engagements.



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- Tweeted 21 times on Limerick.ie's Twitter, @limerick\_ie, with total followers now 19,279. Our tweets earned 66,700 impressions (no. of times users saw our tweet).
- Posted five times on Limerick.ie's Instagram and created eight Stories, with total followers now 13,203.
- Posted 20 times on Limerick City and County Council's LinkedIn, with total followers now 6,377.

### Limerick.ie

In January 2021, there were 94,559\* unique site visits to Limerick.ie, a 22% decrease on the same period in 2020. (\*Google Analytics)

- Content Report: 45 articles, 110 events and eight amenities were added to Limerick.ie in January.
- New webpage dedicated to the Keep Well campaign was created and published to Limerick.ie.
- Commenced coordination and publication of 2021 online festivals guide.
- Produced the Limerick.ie 2020 report. During the period 1 January to 31 December 2020, a total of 1,125,976 users visited Limerick.ie. 34% of site traffic was to the Council Section and 30% to the Discover Section. Throughout 2020, 1,587 Events, 1,018 Articles and 338 Amenities were published to the website.

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

1. [www.limerick.ie/council/services/planning-and-property/apply-or-search-planning-application/search-planning](http://www.limerick.ie/council/services/planning-and-property/apply-or-search-planning-application/search-planning)
2. [www.limerick.ie](http://www.limerick.ie)
3. [www.limerick.ie/council](http://www.limerick.ie/council)
4. [www.limerick.ie/council/services/housing/social-housing/housing-assistance-payment-hap](http://www.limerick.ie/council/services/housing/social-housing/housing-assistance-payment-hap)
5. [www.limerick.ie/council/your-council/jobs](http://www.limerick.ie/council/your-council/jobs)

### Communications

- Issued 19 News Releases from the Marketing and Communications Department and researched and wrote four speeches for the Office of the Mayor.
- Produced and distributed the monthly Council Connect staff e-newsletter.
- Tweeted 145 times on Limerick City and County Council's Twitter account, @limerickcouncil, with total followers now 15,739. Our tweets earned 326,800 impressions (no. of times users saw our tweet).





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### Physical Development Directorate

#### 1. Environment Strategy

The Contract for development of an Energy and Emissions Balance for Limerick City and County has been awarded to Arup Consulting. Work will commence shortly on the data gathering and analysis.

##### Blue Green Infrastructure Strategy for Limerick City and Environs:

The Physical Development Directorate published a request for tender on eTenders for consultancy services to develop a Blue Green Infrastructure (BGI) Strategy for Limerick. The aim of this strategy will be to:

- directly inform the protection and enhancement of our blue green infrastructure assets, including the important and vulnerable habitats, natural heritage and green and blue spaces.
- promote the use of nature-based solutions (NBS) in developments as an alternative to traditional engineering systems.
- create strong multifunction linkages between BGI assets.
- add increased value that improves the quality of life for all Limerick City residents, employees and visitors.

The Strategy will focus on Limerick city and environs (an area of approximately 63km<sup>2</sup>). However, it is envisaged that policies related to GBI and NBS, developed in this context, will have wider applicability across the county.

The Strategy will use a strong evidence-based approach to provide a clear set of recommendations that will directly inform the policies, objectives, land use and design guidance for BGI NBS.

##### Woodland Creation on Public Lands

Tenders were sought from approved foresters for the creation of native woodlands on two pockets of Council owned land: a one hectare site in the Newcastle West Demesne and a 1.8 ha site near the Loobagh River in Kilmallock. It is hoped to progress this work in 2021. Creation of native woodland under this scheme is grant-funded by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.





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### Community Development Directorate

## 1. Tourism, Culture & Arts

### TOURISM

#### Development of Limerick Greenways

A report to the Elected Members at the January Council Meeting outlined all aspects of the development of the main Greenways in the City and County, including construction and product development of the Limerick Greenway from Rathkeale to Newcastle West to Abbeyfeale (Kerry Border). As part of this report, details on the resurfacing project, station houses refurbishments, Part 8 planning for Phase 2, bike hire provision, marketing promotion, signage and naming and the destination development programme were outlined. The Great Southern Greenway Limerick has been renamed as the 'Limerick Greenway' as part of the marketing proposals for the project. The section of the Limerick Greenway from Rathkeale to Ardagh Station House has now been fully resurfaced and reopened since December 2020.

Due to Level 5 COVID-19 restrictions, construction work has paused on the Limerick Greenway Project and will recommence when restrictions have been eased.

#### CAPITEN Project

CAPITEN Project: (Atlantic Cluster for Technological and Economic Innovation in the Nautical Sector) is a European collaborative project that brings together sixteen partners from Scotland, Ireland, France, Portugal and Spain. Supported by the INTERREG Atlantic Area Regional Development Programme, it aims to promote the tourism economy, promote a sustainable approach in the nautical industry and create jobs in the various sectors of the industry.

Limerick City and County Council attended a virtual CAPITEN Project Workshop, which took place on 21 January, to create a long-term and unique cluster of stakeholders in the nautical sector of the Atlantic Area. This cluster will gather related partners and organisations from the Atlantic Area, to organise a long-term development of the nautical sector and addressing common objectives.

The Cluster will promote and strengthen cooperation between the Atlantic regions with the common goal of strengthening blue growth on the Atlantic Area, bringing together partners and experts from across Europe in the marine tourism and maritime industry sectors. <https://capiten.eu>

#### MMIAH Project

MMIAH Project (Military Maritime, Industrial, Atlantic Heritage). The MMIAH project is part of the Interreg Atlantic Area European Regional Development Fund programme. The project has nine city partners from the UK (Plymouth and Liverpool), Ireland (Limerick and Cork), France (La Rochelle and Caen), Spain (Cadiz and Ferrol) and Portugal (Ilhavo).

The project is focused on the recovery and rehabilitation of abandoned military, maritime or industrial heritage sites located on the western coast of the Atlantic Area for tourism and the benefit of local communities. As part of the MMIAH Project, Limerick City and County Council has collaborated with its partners in the production of a White Paper, which will be the main legacy document of the project.

This White Paper will provide an overall review of the MMIAH project and present a best practice guide to inform heritage regeneration within the European region and beyond for development, interpretation, and presentation of military, maritime and industrial heritage in the Atlantic Area. <http://www.mmiah.eu/>

## CULTURE AND ARTS

### OPEN CALLS

#### 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 January, five letters of support for Arts Council Bursaries were issued.





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### CREATIVE IRELAND FUNDED PROJECTS

#### Esposito Quartet, Castleconnell Autumn Concert Series Online

Limerick Culture and Arts Office co-ordinates the Castleconnell Autumn Concerts Series. The final concert in the 2020 series was by The Esposito Quartet, in association with the National String Quartet Foundation. The four members for the concert were Mia Cooper and Keith Pascoe, both on Violin, Joachim Roewer on Viola and William Butt on Cello. They played Beethoven Quartet in A minor Op.132 and Quartet in E minor Op.59 No.2 in the beautiful surroundings of All Saints Church in Castleconnell. The concert was released online on 12 January on Limerick.ie and will be nationally broadcast by RTÉ Lyric FM on 1 February on the Full Score Programme.

Due to restrictions the 2020 series, Limerick Culture and Arts Office, in partnership with Love Castleconnell, went online. The Castleconnell Autumn Concert Series were presented by RTÉ Lyric FM's Liz Nolan and were supported by the Arts Council in programming the series, and Creative Ireland in making the concert series recording possible.

#### The Women of Limerick Mobile Phone App, Ormston House

The Women of Limerick Mobile Phone App went live on 6 January. Ormston House collaborated with a local historian and a local software developer to co-create a mobile app mapping the history of women in Limerick City. The user-friendly interface will inspire programmed events and projects as well as self-directed walks with images, text and audio clips geo tagged throughout the city.

This is a new resource for artists, community partners and visitors to Limerick City. Ormston House worked with award-winning Historian and National Heritage Hero, Sharon Slater, and Creative Industry Expert, Dr Alan Dormer, to create a free mobile app. There are 25 points on the map of Limerick City honouring 25 women throughout the history of the city: from Órlaith ingen Cennétig to former Mayor of Limerick, Frances Condell. Each point includes an image (drawing or photograph), a short text and an audio-

recorded story. There will be three added to the app in the coming year to create new points/walking routes on the map.

#### The Opera Project Limerick

The Songs of a Meteorologist were sparked into life by soprano, Roisin Walsh, who was confused by the naming system of storms and hurricanes, leaving long phone messages to composer, Fiona Linnane, on the subject - Fiona's response was Stormy Weather. It was filmed in October 2020 at the iconic Shannon Rowing Club, Limerick, and released in January.

The Songs of a Meteorologist by Fiona Linnane were first produced as part of Abandoned, a site-specific production of four short operas by Opera Workshop, at the Sailor's Home, Limerick, in May 2019 as part of the Limerick Riverfest. The original production was supported by Limerick City and County Council Arts Office, Shannon Foynes Port Company, Irish Chamber Orchestra and University Concert Hall Limerick.

### ARTS COUNCIL FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT PROGRAMME

#### PARTNERSHIPS

##### Artists in Schools

The Artists in Schools Programme works to develop opportunities for engagement for young people through involvement in culture. It aims to achieve this by placing professional creative practitioners in a primary school setting to enhance and diversify pupils' creative education and is supported by the Arts Council of Ireland.

In response to COVID-19, the Artists in Schools Programme for 2020/21 has been re-modelled, and Limerick Culture and Arts Office is working in partnership with Music Generation Limerick City who have developed an innovative LiveStream Model. This delivers a high-quality programme to children in schools, when the traditional model of artists in schools is not feasible. This programme was offered to all National Schools in the Municipal District of Newcastle West, to engage children and young people in rural County Limerick.



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Twelve schools signed up to the livestreamed artist in residence programme. These are: Killoughteen NS; Templeglantine NS; Ballyagran NS; Ashford NS; Ahalin NS; Kilmeedy NS; St. Mary's Abbeyfeale; Scoil Ide Naofa; Monagea NS; Feenagh NS; Carrickerry NS and Scoil Iosaf, Newcastle West.

In the new term, the programme is planning to move to the young people partaking in more active music making and composition. At the beginning of January, the programme was rolled out entirely online. Young people were reached in their homes with a modified format in which the livestreams are filmed separately (at the artists' homes) and combined into a unified delivery. This is laying the foundation for the young people's compositions that will resume in earnest when schools return.

### Sliabh Luachra Music Trail

The Sliabh Luachra Music Trail is a joint initiative involving Limerick Culture and Arts Office, Limerick City and County Council and the Arts Offices of Cork and Kerry County Councils. Some of the objectives include a range of measures that aim to promote and preserve the region's unique musical heritage. The Sliabh Luachra Music Trail works with local Arts organisations to programme concerts, sessions, talks, workshops and master classes.

Eoin O'Sullivan, Musician in Residence, presented presentations and online live streaming to schools. Eoin has now started work on the second series with young musicians very enthusiastic to take part.

### County Limerick Youth Theatre

In January, weekly workshops began on Zoom. The two younger groups undertook workshops on Improvisation and played their favourite theatre games. With the oldest group (ages 14-17), issues were identified that they are most interested in, to inform the next few months around what they are passionate about. The concepts of Leadership and what constitutes a Hero were discussed and debated. Two workshops were organised with Limerick playwright, Niall Carmody, on scriptwriting and dialogue.

### Stony Thursday Poetry Book

The Stony Thursday Poetry Book is one of the longest-running literary journals in Ireland. The 43rd Edition, No. 17 in the New Series, was edited by Martin Dyar. Martin Dyar is the author of the Pigott Prize shortlisted poetry collection, Maiden Names. His poem 'Death and the Post Office' has been added to the Leaving Certificate Prescribed Poetry syllabus. Over one hundred and fifty national and international poets made submissions of up to six poems each, with a total of eighty-nine poems selected for inclusion. The issuing of journals to all participating poets has been concluded.

## 2. Libraries, Gallery and Museum

- The Granary Library has been busy adding content to the Local Studies database. The Pallasgreen Parish Journal, Gréan, was digitised and added to the website and is now available for viewing at <http://www.limerickcity.ie/library/localstudies/> Much of the Rathkeale Community Council Journal, Deel Views, has also been added to the website, as well as the parish history An Antique and Storied Land by Tom Toomey and Harry Greensmyth and is available at this web address, <http://www.limerickcity.ie/Library/LocalStudies/BooksJournals/DeelViews/> <http://www.limerickcity.ie/Library/LocalStudies/BooksJournals/AnAntiqueandStoriedLand/>

Local Studies queries continue to be addressed via phone and email.

- Online services came to prominence again this January as Libraries entered Level 5 COVID-19 restrictions. Posts on social media with unique content, generated by library staff, have forged new relationships and continue to provide a service to library members. Library staff are available via phone and email to answer queries.
- Library Headquarters received a request from a Limerick Direct Provision Centre for books about Ireland, some fiction and some young adult





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titles, for use in the Centre. Over 400 titles from withdrawn stock were selected and delivered and it is hoped this will be a first step in developing a supportive relationship with this centre.

- Dooradoyle branch has been busy with telephone and email queries about book recommendations for all ages, online resources and membership details.
- The new year brought new technology to Kilmallock Library. The acquisition of green screen technology, movie-editing software, camera and lighting equipment enabled staff to post superb quality videos for families to enjoy. In its first week of being posted on Facebook, the finished video has had in excess of 2,000 views.
- Ciara from Dooradoyle Library posted a story-time video on social media, where she read 'The Paper Dolls' by Julia Donaldson.
- This is all part of The Right to Read Programme with 12 videos being created, shared on the Watch House Cross Library Facebook page and tweeted on Limerick.ie. Videos included story times for younger children, with The Chill Skill by Niall Breslin proving most popular with 1,880 views, and one 'as Gaeilge' read by Liam from Newcastle West Library.
- Craft videos are being shared as part of the Keep Well campaign, picking up on the theme of "Switching off and being creative." Three videos have been shared online, each with a visual schedule in keeping with the library's Autism Friendly Library Programme.
- To showcase our E-services and, in particular, the BorrowBox app, Pam Byrne has made three videos showing the huge range of authors, titles and genres available as E-books and audiobooks. The publicity around the BorrowBox app has brought both calls and emails to the branch with requests for assistance in downloading the app. Staff are delighted to talk people through this process. Total views for shared content this month is 6,200.
- Library staff attended the virtual launch of the Age Friendly Library Ambassadors' Programme this month. The programme is a partnership between the Local Government Management Agency Libraries Development Unit and Age Friendly Ireland and aims to support older people in accessing online library resources. A number of staff will receive training under this initiative to reach out to members of the community struggling with online technology. Library staff are uniquely qualified to provide this training as connecting library members to online resources has always been a core skill for all frontline staff. Library staff will take part in training, delivered by Age Friendly Ireland and Libraries Development, to support them in providing online tutoring sessions to older people in their areas. Through these tutoring sessions, older people will be empowered to avail of a wide range of services online. This is a "Train the trainer" approach to share skills and confidence on "a peer to peer" level to achieve maximum effectiveness.
- Newcastle West Library celebrated St. Ita's Day on 15 January. Her grave and holy well are sites of pilgrimage in Limerick. St. Ita was born in Co. Waterford circa 480 and was the daughter of a Déise chieftain. Travelling through Waterford and Cork, she came to settle in Killeedy and founded a convent. It became a renowned seat of learning, fostering hundreds of students, including St. Brendan the Navigator. She was said to have possessed the power of prophecy, and performed a number of miracles. For more information about this illustrious saint, you can read this excerpt from Canon Begley's "Diocese of Limerick," available through the Local Studies Archive ([www.limerickcity.ie/library/localstudies](http://www.limerickcity.ie/library/localstudies)). The Weekly Observer newspaper of 20 January also has an excellent article by Helen Broderick on page 26. <http://www.limerickcity.ie/media/saints008.pdf>
- To improve skills in delivering online content, a number of library staff attended online talks and workshops organised by Youth Libraries Group relating to library services to children and young people. The Youth Libraries Group is an active Group within the Library Association of Ireland. It aims to promote books for children and young people, reading activities and library services to young people through various programmes.



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The Group organises seminars, workshops and lectures on themes relating to children's books and children's libraries. The workshops took place via Zoom and the first two seminars with Eleanor Glennon – Play Therapist – covered sensory play. The workshops provided practical examples of how to bring sensory play into activities at the library, making it a more inclusive space. The programme is titled 'Recommending with Confidence 2021.'

### Limerick City Gallery of Art (LCGA)

- 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.
- A video of the exhibition, Winterjoy, will be uploaded to our social media platforms.
- Work has commenced on upgrading our website and an initial meeting took place with ICT and Marketing & Communications to advance this important piece of work.
- Work continues on our 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. The exhibition will open on 25 February.
- Running concurrently with At Home on the Farm will be a major touring exhibition of works by international photographer, Martin Parr.
- Plans are being developed to present this exhibition and attendant Public Engagement programme online due to ongoing COVID-19 related restrictions.
- Initial research work has commenced on documenting the Permanent Collection in preparation for the 75th anniversary of the opening of the Gallery as the permanent home for the Municipal Collection.

### Limerick Museum

- The Museum continues to add to its social media platforms, including previous exhibitions, virtual tours of the Museum and short films on aspects of Limerick's history.

## 3. Property and Community Facilities

### DERELICTION AND VACANCY

DERELICTION, VACANCY AND REUSE TEAM – JANUARY	
Inspections carried out	93
Property and Community Facilities Department Notices issued	22
Statutory Notices issued under the Derelict Sites Act	6
Cases closed through engagement	16
Properties entered onto the Derelict Sites Register	0
Properties put forward for Compulsory Acquisition (Section 15 Notices)	0
Properties Compulsorily Acquired (Section 17 Notices)	0

### BIN WAIVERS

Bin Waivers Issued:	1,680
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### 4. Urban and Rural Community Development

#### 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 library branches throughout the county.
- Following the launch by Minister of State, Peter Burke at the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, of the Local Authority-based 31 Age Friendly Housing Technical Specialists, Limerick City and County Council appointed Sarah Newell as Limerick's Specialist Advisor. The Age Friendly Housing Technical Specialist will act as the Council's key point of contact for matters relating to age friendly housing technical queries, specifically around designing for life and universal design principles. The Specialist Advisor will respond to, and progress, referrals and queries from a range of sectors, including in-house staff (particularly across Planning and Housing), external stakeholders and agencies, private sector developers, Approved Housing Bodies and individuals. The Specialist Advisor will also provide clients with information on key contacts within the Council to discuss issues and solutions with, around age friendly housing and public realm works. The Specialist Advisor will also refer to models of good practice in other areas and share universal design guidelines, technical plans and development specification to inform design. The Age Friendly Housing Specialist will also provide contacts, as appropriate, of people outside the organisation who might be able to provide further technical guidance and assistance, particularly in relation to universal design principles and crime prevention through environmental design. The Specialist Advisor will be required to work closely with the local Age Friendly Programme Manager and the national Age Friendly Ireland shared service team in relation to strategy implementation and translation of policy objectives at local level.
- Recording of progress and monitoring referrals, developments, adoption of principles and outcomes to inform the national report from Age Friendly Ireland to the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government under the National Implementation Group will also form an integral part of this work.
- On 20 January, the Minister of State at the Department of Health with responsibility for Mental Health and Older People, Mary Butler, TD, officially launched the Age Friendly Digital Ambassadors Programme. A collaboration between Age Friendly Ireland and Libraries Ireland (LGMA), the Age Friendly Libraries Digital Ambassadors Programme's aim is to support older people in accessing online library resources, particularly BorrowBox, while physical library services are suspended as part of Government measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The pilot was delivered in two distinct stages. In Stage 1, a group of older people took part in 'train the trainer' sessions with a view to becoming mentors for their peers. In Stage 2, library staff took part in a condensed 'train the trainer' session with a view to becoming mentors for older people. Mary Cronin, Chair of Limerick Older People's Executive, is the Limerick Library Ambassador. The role of mentors like Mary is to deliver remote tutoring sessions, online and over the phone, to other older people to help them join and use the library online.
- As part of Government's "Keep Well" Campaign, Age Friendly Limerick issued a gift pack to coincide with Operation Transformation returning to TV screens with local Limerick woman, Hazel Hartigan, from Pallaskenry, becoming one of this year's Leaders. In support of Hazel's journey to a healthier lifestyle, Age Friendly Limerick is partnering with its colleagues in Limerick Sports Partnership to send out this gift pack. The pack contained a Hi-Vis vest with the Age Friendly logo and a beanie hat from Age Friendly Limerick. Also in the pack is a book from Limerick Sports Partnership detailing exercises that a person can do, either indoors or outdoors. So, whether they can get out for a socially distanced walk in



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the crisp January air, or have to stay indoors because they are shielding from the virus, there are exercises to suit all requirements. The theme of this pack is to encourage people to take time to look after their physical health, take whatever exercise is suitable for them, and above all enjoy the experience. 1,000 packs were distributed to people across Limerick.

### Online Meetings/Webinars attended

- ✓ National Network of Age Friendly Programme Managers.
- ✓ Age Friendly Housing Specialists' Monthly meeting.
- ✓ National Age Friendly Senior Team meeting.
- ✓ Two Age Friendly Regional Programme Managers' meetings.
- ✓ Northside Older People's Advisory Group (NOPAG).

### 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 continues to operate from 9 am to 5pm Monday to Friday, and is ready to provide supports to those staying at home and shielding from the virus.

### Online Meetings/Webinars attended

- ✓ Re-Mind international Partners' meeting.
- ✓ Two National COVID-19 Co-Ordinators' meetings.
- ✓ Keep Well Limerick Working Group.

### EDUCATION

#### Online Meetings/Webinars attended

- ✓ Learning Limerick Steering Group.

### INTEGRATION

Work concluded on the development of a Peer-to-Peer anti-racism campaign for secondary school students, with the pilot completed and the programme ready to now expand to other schools across Limerick, once they re-open fully.

#### Online Meetings/Webinars attended

- ✓ Migrant Integration Sub-group meeting.
- ✓ EDNIP (Embracing Diversity, Nurturing Integration Programme).

### LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (LCDC)

The January meeting of the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) was held virtually on 19 January. The Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys, TD, announced funding of €20 million for a new Transitional LEADER Programme which is coming into effect from 1 April, 2021. Limerick has received €632,495 in funding for LEADER Projects under the Transitional LEADER Programme.

The Department of Community and Rural Development (DRCD) launched the second round of the COVID-19 Emergency Fund. A national allocation of €1.7m has been made available to assist voluntary and community groups/organisations in their response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. The allocation for Limerick is €62,071. The purpose of the scheme is to assist groups/organisations to adapt their services and operations to fit the new COVID-19 reality and to become more involved in the Government's 'Keep Well' campaign. The LCDC decided to target Community and Voluntary Organisations eligible under the fund who provide services to groups that are particularly badly impacted by COVID-19, such as organisations working with schools supporting disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and to other groups requiring additional supports due to COVID-19, such as Mental Health Services, Youth Services, services to Special Needs Groups, Disability Services, Migrant



## CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

Services, Carers' Associations so that they can adapt their services and operations to fit the new COVID-19 reality. Closing date for receipt of completed applications is close of business on Friday, 26 February, 2021. Details can be found at the following Link: <https://www.limerick.ie/council/services/community-and-leisure/grants-and-funding/covid-19-emergency-fund-round-2>

### ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

Information regarding Managing Waste at Home with Limerick City and County Council and MyWaste was developed. Details can be found at the following Link: <https://www.limerick.ie/council/services/environment/waste-and-recycling>

### LIMERICK PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK (PPN):

Elections opened for vacant seats on the Joint Policing Committee, two Strategic Policy Committees, URBACT (European exchange and learning programme promoting sustainable urban development) Health and Greenspace Local Group, and the PPN Secretariat.

A meeting between Limerick PPN Secretariat members and Limerick City and County Council staff included agreement on 2021 Memorandum of Understanding between the Council and the PPN, and a review of progress made in 2020 and the 2021 draft PPN work plan.

Training delivered by Social Justice Ireland for current and potential PPN Secretariat members commenced.

Training, giving an overview of the Public Sector Duty, was delivered by Community Law and Mediation Limerick to PPN members.

PPN Linkage Group meetings this month: Community, Leisure and Culture Linkage Group; Urban and Rural Community Development and Social Inclusion Linkage Group.

Limerick PPN was represented by PPN staff and membership at the launch of the research report

'Delivering Deliberative Democracy - Participation by the Public Participation Networks in Local Government Decision-Making.'

Membership of the PPN stands at 134. 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.

Details can be found at the following Link: <https://www.limerickppn.ie/>

### TOWN AND VILLAGE RENEWAL SCHEME

The Town and Village Renewal Scheme is targeted at rural towns with populations of less than 10,000 people and is a key initiative under the Action Plan for Rural Development - Realising Our Rural Potential, and Project Ireland 2040. It is designed to help rural Ireland achieve its full economic and social potential by supporting public realm activities and the enhancement of town centre amenities to make them more attractive places to live, work and visit. The 2020 Scheme also focused on supporting projects that would aid economic and social recovery of towns and villages in response to COVID-19.

Under the Main Town and Village Renewal Scheme, Limerick City and County Council was approved €679,901 for six projects:

- Feenagh - Creation of a new town park.
- Glin - Interpretive fit-out and production of audio-visual material for the Knights of Glin Interpretive Centre under construction to the annex of Glin Library.
- Croom - Creation of two new car parks near the Town Centre adjoining the Main Street trading area.





## CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

- Caherconlish - Creation of a safe walking route for the 'Old Creamery' Looped walk, including safe pedestrian access from Caherconlish National School.
- Doon – Development of a Community Services and e-Hub facility.
- Rathkeale – Renovation of railway goods shed for Community/Tourism use to support the Limerick Greenway at Rathkeale.

### OUTDOOR RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURAL SCHEME (ORIS)

The Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme provides funding for the development of new and existing outdoor recreational infrastructure in rural areas, such as cycleways, walking trails, blueways and improved access to leisure or recreational facilities. The Scheme provides funding for small-scale repair or promotion and marketing in relation to existing infrastructure, as well as for medium/large scale upgrade works and new trail or amenity developments. The Council was allocated €106,548 for six Measure 1 Projects in Lough Gur, Doon, Knockfierna, Liskennett, Kilfinane and Ballyhoura country.

### LIMERICK SPORTS PARTNERSHIP

- Limerick Sports Partnership has been allocated €470,000 under Core, Women in Sport, LSP Programmes for 2021. This allocation included

funding to recruit an additional Community Sports Development Officer.

- €148,000 was secured under the 'Your Space/ Your Place' Youth Programme supported by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.
- A 110-page Keep Well Booklet was developed to circulate to all groups to engage in Physical activity, and to look after their health and wellbeing during the current restrictions.
- Programmes are being delivered through Zoom, there are 6–8-week programmes around Walking, Kids Home Fitness, Men on the Move, Cycling Turbo Programme, Women on the Move and Operation Transformation Fitness programmes. There are over 500 participants on a weekly basis.
- For more information log onto [www.limericksports.ie](http://www.limericksports.ie)



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

The following table shows progress to 31 January, 2021, in the above social housing delivery streams:

As at 31 January 2021 (01.01.21 – 31.01.21)	Complete	In Progress	Overall Complete and In Progress
Build	0	474	474
Buy	0	10	10
Lease	3	141	144
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>625</b>	<b>628</b>

**2. SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT (SPOC)**

The fast-tracking of refurbishment works has continued, with 168 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 January	Completed	Underway	Design Stage	TOTAL
Cat1	0	2	3		5
Cat2	0	37	11		48
Cat3	0	26		29	55
Cat4	0	2		44	46
Conveyance				14	14
	<b>0</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>168</b>

**3. HOUSING DEVELOPMENT TEAM UPDATE**

Staff from Housing Development attended online Training on Mortgage to Rent Leasing, hosted by the Housing Agency, on 29 January.



## CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

### 2. Regeneration Strategy Implementation

#### Regeneration Strategy Implementation Plan – Limerick City

##### Regeneration Committee Meetings

These are all now taking place regularly online with good representation from residents and services.

##### Southill Hub

- Youth Work continues, both online and by socially-distanced outdoor home visits.
- Youth Workers deliver activity packs to club members each week.
- The community café is working with the local schools to provide 80+ meals per day to vulnerable families.
- Staff are delivering food packs to community members in conjunction with the Simon Community.
- Community providers are working from the building in line with their own organisations' policies.
- The café remains open to the community for takeaway.

##### Our Lady of Lourdes

##### Community Centre

- Centre opening hours limited to 9am to 1pm by appointment due to COVID-19.
- All administrative staff working mornings in Centre and afternoons at home.
- Instructed by Government to limit crèche opening hours to children of frontline staff and vulnerable children.

- Main café remains closed while Meals-on-Wheels continues to offer full service to older people.
- Youth services operating remotely and online.
- Social Intervention Fund application and activity reports submitted.

##### Environmental

- Environmental cleaners are working out in the community five mornings a week.
- Some concerns and queries from residents are brought to the community consultative forum to keep their voices heard.
- Environmental Manager continues to maintain contact with several residents and pass on their repair and maintenance issues or queries to Council.
- Environmental Manager links in with several sections of the Council on a daily basis on various matters that concern the welfare and wellbeing of members of the community.

##### Care and Repair for Older People

- In touch with older people by phone, with up to 30 calls per week.
- In touch with the SICAP (Social Intervention Community Activation Programme) groups by phone and text.
- Christmas dinner delivery was a great success with great feedback from the community.
- Care and Repair receive about 15 calls per month, with five being acted upon and others referred to more suitable services.

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

Housing Waiting List	2,333
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• **Allocations**

	No. of Units JANUARY 2021	Year to Date
Adare-Rathkeale	0	0
Newcastle West	4	4
Metropolitan District	16	16
Cappamore – Kilmallock	4	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>24</b>

• **Allocation Refusals**

	No. of Units JANUARY 2021	Year to Date
Adare-Rathkeale	0	0
Newcastle West	1	1
Metropolitan District	0	0
Cappamore – Kilmallock	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

• **Traveller Housing Welfare**

No. of Units offered JANUARY 2021	Year to Date
2	2

\*these figures are included in Allocations figures

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

2,455 of active HAP Tenancies monitored, reviewed and maintained.

No. of HAP tenancies set up this month	39
No. of Amendments	198
No. of Cessations	30

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

January 2021	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	€10,950.00	2	€0.00	0	€47,166.00	10	€0.00	0
Newcastle West	€27,250.00	5	€28,813.44	4	€28,855.40	8	€0.00	0
Metropolitan	€20,943.00	5	€29,591.78	4	€49,773.50	16	€0.00	0
Cappamore - Kilmallock	€21,287.54	4	€56,700.00	5	€47,763.95	8	€0.00	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>€80,430.54</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>€115,105.22</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>€173,558.85</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>€0.00</b>	<b>0</b>
Total Monies issued in January 2021 = €369,094.61								
Total Grants issued in January 2021 = 71								

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Metropolitan	€20,943.00	5	€29,591.78	4	€49,773.50	16	€0.00	0
Cappamore - Kilmallock	€21,287.54	4	€56,700.00	5	€47,763.95	8	€0.00	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>€80,430.54</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>€115,105.22</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>€173,558.85</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>€0.00</b>	<b>0</b>
Total Monies issued January to January 2021 = €369,094.61								
Total Grants issued January to January 2021 = 71								

**RENT COLLECTION**

Rent Collection Limerick City & County Council					
Opening Balance at 01/01/2021	Accrued Income	Total for collection	Receipts	Closing balance 31/01/2021	% Collection
€5,040,713	€1,275,035	€6,315,748	€1,357,578	€4,958,170	21%



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

Individuals – 25/01/2021		
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	15
Hotel (no children)	Adults without children accommodated in Hotel	7
Clare Street Emergency Pods	Adults without children accommodated in low threshold emergency accommodation	7
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
<b>Total</b>		<b>133</b>

Families			
Location	Description	No. Adults	No. Children
Suaimhneas	Family Emergency accommodation	3	3
		Families - 3	
Hotel Accommodation	Families	5	13
		Families - 4	
Twin Oaks Family Hub	Families Hub	11	9
		Families - 8	
Totals		Adults	Children
		19	25
		Families - 15	

**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	2
Tenant Purchase Applications: No. Approved	1
Rebuilding Ireland Home Loans	
Loan Applications: No. Received	5
Loan Applications: No. Approved	3
Deed of Discharge	
Deed of Discharge Applications: No. Received	4
Consent to Sale	
Consent to Sale Applications: No. Received	3
Cottage Purchase Annuity	
No. of Cottage Purchase Annuity Applications	1
Ground Rent	
No. of Ground Rent applications	1

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION, DATA REQUESTS AND OMBUDSMAN**

Freedom of Information requests submitted	5
Freedom of Information requests withdrawn	1
Ombudsman	4

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT****2. Planning & Environmental Services****Environmental Services (Litter, Waste Enforcement, Air, Noise, Water/Waste Water and Public Health)**

- 193 complaints were received in January.
- 344 inspections were undertaken during the month.
- The Department issued six Statutory Notices.
- Five Directions were served by the Department.
- Ten Warning Letters were issued in January.
- 16 litter fines were issued during the period.

**Economic Development and Planning****Planning Applications**

A total of 74 new planning applications were received as follows:

Housing Developments	1
Domestic Developments	56
Agricultural Developments	5
Commercial Developments/Change of Use	5
Sporting/Community and Educational Developments	2
Other Developments	5

The current applications include proposals for the construction of 38 dwellings, connections to main services and all site development works at The Oaks, Liscreagh, Murroe.

**3. Veterinary Services**

- Two stray or wandering equines were impounded.
- The Dog Control Unit dealt with four dogs.
- Three food samples were submitted during January for analysis under the National Residues and Microbiological Sampling Programme.

**4. Cemeteries**

Number of Burials in City Cemeteries.

Mount St. Lawrence	22
Mount St. Oliver	18
Castlemungret	20
Kilmurry	2



## CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

### 5. Municipal District Offices

#### Metropolitan District of Limerick

- First Online Meeting**

18 January 2021 saw an historic first for Limerick City and County Council as Councillor Sarah Kiely chaired the first Online Monthly Meeting of the Metropolitan District. This followed on from the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Darragh O'Brien TD signing an Order to allow for Local Authority Meetings to be held remotely and online. Following the signing of this Order, the Metropolitan District incorporated this change into its Standing Orders at the November 2020 Meeting.

The Online Adjourned January Meeting of the Metropolitan District on 27 January saw another first with a series of votes taken by the Elected Members on the Draft Southern Environs Local Area Plan 2021-2027, the first such votes conducted online in relation to statutory duties of the Local Authority.

- Upgrade To Parks**

The Council awarded a contract to Lynkeo Civil Engineering Ltd. in the tender amount of €282,206.40 (inclusive of VAT), for the upgrade of the existing footpaths in the People's Park, Ted Russell Park, Baggott Estate, O'Brien Park and Westfield Wetlands.

- Active Travel Measures**

Funding for these works is provided by the National Transport Authority as part of the €10million stimulus package.

#### R506, Annacotty

The scheme comprised installation of a 320-metre shared cycleway/footpath installed adjacent to the R506. The works included public lighting, drainage, accommodation works (boundary set-back) and the installation of the path itself creating a safe space for pedestrians and cyclists alike. The overall project took five months to complete, and commenced in September 2020 and finished in January 2021. The scheme budget was €240,000.

#### Plassey Road, Castletroy

The scheme comprised the repaving of the existing on-road cycle track along the Plassey Road, the installation of road gullies to improve surface water drainage and the removal of tree roots which caused structural damage to the cycle track. The overall project took four weeks and was completed in December 2020. The scheme budget was €200,000.

#### Municipal District of Adare-Rathkeale

##### RATHKEALE

- Riverside Walkway**

Funding has been secured to widen and surface the Riverside Walkway connecting the Limerick Greenway to the Bus Stops on Lower Main Street. Works are also soon to commence on new footpaths connecting to the Slí na Sláinte on the Castlematrix Road.

- Ballywilliam Road and Footpath Scheme**

This difficult piece of work is now substantially complete and is a great enhancement to the local area.

- Rathkeale Inner Relief Road**

An application has been made to the Department of Transport for funding to develop the proposed Inner Relief Road through the Mart Site.

##### FOYNES

- Marine Cove Culvert**

Final Design Drawings have been received; consultations are now taking place with stakeholders to ensure compliance with requirements before going to tender.

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT****ADARE**

- Walkway to the GAA Pitch along the Blackabbey Road**

Limerick City and County Council is currently in negotiations with a landowner which will provide the required lands for a substantial amount of this walkway.

- Contactless Water Font, Adare Heritage Centre**

A contactless water fountain is to be installed at the Adare Heritage Centre in the coming few weeks. Preparatory works have been completed and the drinking fountain will be installed shortly.

**SHANAGOLDEN**

- Shanagolden Low-Cost Safety Works**

The Plaza area and footpath works are largely complete, with final raised table junction works expected this week. This project has been very well received, it creates a village centre and provides connectivity to local essential services within the village, including the Shop, Garage and Community Centre at the Foyes end and the Community Centre.

**Municipal District of Cappamore-Kilmallock**

- The Monthly Meeting of the Municipal District of Cappamore-Kilmallock was postponed due to the increase in the COVID-19 restrictions to Level 5.
- Access to the public office and library was also closed due to the restrictions, but services to the public continued via phone, post and email.

- Essential repairs to houses were undertaken by the Housing Maintenance and Roads Maintenance Teams.
- 110 cases were assigned to the Housing Maintenance Team in January.
- 69 cases were assigned to the Roads Maintenance Team during the month.
- 17 Private House Grants were paid out in January and, to date, 24 Pilot House Refurbishment Grants applicants have completed the works.

**Municipal District of Newcastle West**

- The introduction of Level 5 COVID-19 restrictions on 30 December saw the public counters at the Newcastle West Office close again to the public. However, staff are continuing to work to provide essential services for the District.
- The Housing Maintenance crew are continuing to respond to emergency housing maintenance requests during the Level 5 restrictions, with 87 requests received during January.
- A total of 347 Motor Tax applications were processed with applications being received by post during January.
- Also, payments were made to 17 applicants for works completed under the various Housing Aid Grants Schemes for works with regard to infrastructure and disability access improvement works.







## CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

### Capital Investment Directorate

## 1. Design & Delivery

### Tenders

- Tenders sought for the demolition of 10 housing units at 1-10 St. Ann's Court, King's Island, Limerick City.
- Tenders assessed for the provision of Engineering Consultancy Services for the South Circular Road Limerick to Bishop's Quay Cycle Infrastructure.

### Project Updates

- **Metropolitan Depot** – Topographical Survey and Ground Investigation Contract complete.
- **King's Island Flood Relief Scheme** – The closing date for submissions on 'Further Information' response to An Bord Pleanála was 7 January.
- **Croom Distributor Road** – The section of road to the new school is open and the construction of the remaining works to Crecora Road is underway.
- **O'Connell Street Limerick Improvement Works** - Construction start date delayed due to COVID-19 restrictions and current provisional commencement date is 5 March.
- **Castletroy Urban Greenway** - Contractor commenced on site with critical drainage works at the school entrance and Castletroy College Road underway. This work is expected to complete by 5 February.
- **Limerick Greenway** - Construction delayed due to COVID-19 restrictions and current provisional commencement date is 5 March.

### National Transport Authority Projects

- **Dublin Road Bus Corridor (UL to Parkway)**
  - Consultant appointed to undertake Environmental Impact Assessment Report and preliminary design.

- **Clare Street to Condell Road Cycleway Phase 1**
  - A second updated Draft Options Report received for review.
- **Parnell-Wickham-Clare Street Cycleway**
  - Options Report being reviewed.
- **UL to National Technology Park Cycleway**
  - Drafted first revision of the Preliminary Design Report complete, including a Construction Cost Estimate.
- **Raheen Cycle Scheme Options Report**
  - Draft drawings with National Transport Authority for review.
  - Environmental Impact Assessment and Appropriate Assessment Screening reporting and Road Safety Audit stage 1 has commenced.
- **Plassey Park Road Improvement Scheme**
  - Tender for Site investigation works.
  - Detailed design works have commenced.
- **Limerick Institute of Technology to City Centre**
  - Environmental Impact Assessment and Appropriate Assessment Screening commenced Q4 2020. Road Safety Audit Stage 1 to be appointed.
  - Drafting of layout drawings advancing.
- **R445 Dublin Road Improvement Scheme**
  - Drawings at draft stage.
- **National Transport Authority Bus Shelter Enabling works**
  - There are five shelters outstanding from 2020 contract to be installed. Project continuation form to be submitted to the Authority.
- **Fr Russell Road Cycle Lanes**
  - Revised options.

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT****Projects Completed**

- Clondrinagh Halting Site - works consisted of the construction of 10 extensions of existing bays and the conversion of the community centre to a habitable house. The extensions will now allow residents to live fully within the house, with facilities including, kitchen, bedrooms and toilet facilities, provided.

**Finance****In January, Design and Delivery:**

- Applied to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage for €577,627.
- The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage paid €1,716,368.

**Buy and Renew and SHIP Refurbishment Programme**

Inspections Carried out in January	0
Refurbishment Works Commenced in January	0
Refurbishment Works Ongoing	5
Refurbishment Works Completed in January	0

**Home Improvement Schemes**

Inspections &amp; Recommendations for Home Improvement Schemes – January

Inspection Types	Pre-application	Initial Inspection	Re-Inspection	Final Inspection	Total Inspections by Grant Type
MAGs (Mobility Adaptation Grant Scheme)	0	16	0	5	21
HAGs (Housing Adaptation Grant Scheme)	0	19	0	2	21
HOPS (Housing Aid for Older Persons Grant Scheme)	0	13	0	2	15
Total Inspections by Inspection Type	0	48	0	9	57

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

- There were 60,226 active HAP tenancies nationally, managed by the HAPSSC, at the end of January.
- A weekly average of 305 HAP tenancies have been set up during 2021.
- The January landlord payment run was €51.9 million.
- The weekly tenant debit at the end of January was €2.9 million.
- The Debt Management Unit of the HAP SSC collected a total of €11.7 million in differential rent to end of January.
- The HAP tenant rent collection rate at the end of January was 92%.
- The Debt Management Unit issued 3,218 HAP debt reminder letters in January.
- The Debt Management Unit issued 2,604 HAP COVID-19 temporary reminder letters in January.

**2. Fire and Emergency Services****Statistics**

	No. of Fire Related Calls	No. of Non Fire Related Calls	Total
No. of call-outs 01/01/2021 – 31/12/2021	69	26	95
% of calls where on scene in < 10 mins from time of call	69%	69%	
% of calls where on scene between 11 and 20 mins from time of call	17%	26%	
% of calls where on scene in > 20 mins from time of call	14%	5%	

	No. Received / Assigned	No. Validated	No. Invalidated / Refused	No. Granted	No. Completed
Fire Certificate Applications January	7	9	1	7	
Disability Access Cert Applications January	4	2	0	4	
Licensing Applications January	3	3	0		
Commencement Notice January	28	24	4	24	28
Completion Certificate January	10	5	0	9	9
Planning Referrals January	24				20
Sugar CRM Cases January	1				3

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT****Major Emergency Management Events**

- Attended Regional Working and Steering Group Meetings (Teleconference).
- Attended Regional Co-Ordination Meetings regarding COVID-19 (Teleconference).
- Reviewing Major Emergency Plan and Sub-Plans.

**Fire and Emergency Training Events**

- All training was on hold for the month.

**Civil Defence attendance at Events**

- Irish Blood Transfusion Service Blood Clinics – South Court Hotel, Limerick – 2 days.
- Irish Blood Transfusion Service Blood Clinic – Community Centre, Caherconlish – 1 day.
- Patient Transfer for COVID-19 Testing – Residence to Test Centre and returned to residence – 1 day.
- Irish Blood Transfusion Service Blood Clinics – Greenhills Hotel, Limerick – 2 days.
- Irish Blood Transfusion Service Blood Clinic – Woodlands House Hotel, Adare – 1 day.
- Irish Blood Transfusion Service Blood Clinic – Community Centre, Doon – 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
No. of Call-Outs 01/01/2021 – 31/01/2021	1,021	701	1 min 21 seconds	1,722

**Water Safety**

Number of lifebuoy replacements	Total January	January	Total 2021
Metropolitan Area	0	0	0
Municipal Area	0	0	0



## CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

### 3. Digital Services and EU Programmes

#### Digital Services

- Representatives from Digital Services attended three meetings of the All-Ireland Smart Cities Forum in January. These meetings formed a series of workshops run by an independent Consultant appointed to assist the Forum in defining what its goals, objectives and overall remit should be in the next five years, with the aim of defining a national strategy for the Forum that will allow it to achieve those targets.
- Members of Digital Services attended a webinar on the new national ePlanning Portal project. This portal will make the planning application process a mostly digital one, with a national phased rollout expected to commence in Quarter 3 2021.
- On 27 January, two Horizon 2020 project proposals were submitted which Limerick City and County Council has joined - CLACSON, which encourages citizen action and behaviour change through the rewarding of individuals for their energy savings or environmentally positive actions; and DR\_RUBICON which will expand the existing digital twin of Limerick for the full digitalisation of circular economy practices in the real estate development process.
- On 29 January, a meeting was held with the European Regions Research & Innovation Network (ERRIN). Limerick City and County Council has just joined ERRIN, a network of 125 regional stakeholder organisations, working together on both policy and project development. Membership of ERRIN will allow access to a greater variety of funding opportunities in areas such as Blue Growth, Health, Cultural Heritage and Tourism, and Design.

#### EU Programmes

- On 11 January, staff from Limerick and Trondheim, through the +CityxChange Project, held a discussion with Toyota Motors Europe. Toyota have been working on a project in Japan called TRENDE, which is designed to test a system for trading electricity between individuals by utilising distributed power supplies, and has many similarities with +CityxChange.





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

Commercial Rates 2021	Opening Balance 1 Jan €	Accruals €	Vacant Property Adjustment €	Writes offs / Waivers €	Total for Collection €	Amount Collected €	Arrears €	Specific Doubtful Arrears €	% Collected
As at 31st January 2021*	10,693,762*	59,995,748**	-		70,689,510	6,986,655	63,702,855	2,373,116	10%

\*\* The Date for Making the 2021 Rate was 2nd February 2021

\* 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 January 2021*	357,848 *	^	-	357,848	279,334	78,514	78%

\* subject to finalisation of year end accounts for 2020

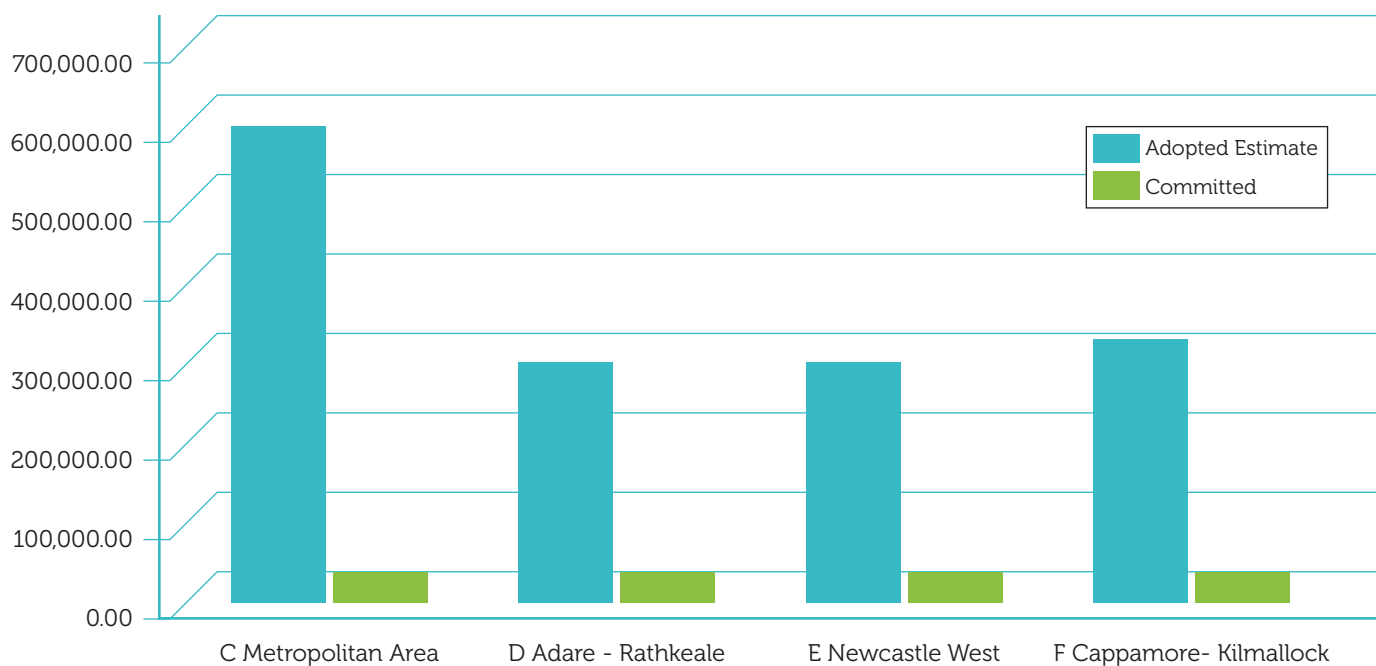
^ Accruals not updated for loans for January 2021

**Recourse to Overdraft Facility**

No of days in overdraft      **0**

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT****General Municipal Allocation 2021 Adopted Estimate €1.403 Million**

Graph outlining adopted budget and draft committed expenditure up to 31st January 2021



Municip (Code) + (Text)	Value Adopted Estimate (€)	Value Committed (€)
C Metropolitan Area	568,000.00	0
D Adare - Rathkeale	270,000.00	0
E Newcastle West	270,000.00	0
F Cappamore - Kilmallock	295,000.00	0



## CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

### 2. Corporate Services, Governance & Customer Services

#### Corporate Services

##### Publication of the Report of the Implementation Advisory Group established to consider a Directly Elected Mayor for Limerick

Mr. Peter Burke T.D., Minister of State for Local Government and Planning, announced that the Government, at its meeting on 26 January, 2021, approved the publication of the Report of the Implementation Advisory Group on a Directly Elected Mayor for Limerick. The Report is the fruit of a great deal of hard work by the Group, which included Local Authority Elected Members and officials, and key stakeholders in Limerick. The Report includes input from a range of sectoral stakeholders, as well as a public consultation, which was carried out by the University of Limerick. The Minister is prioritising the preparation of legislation to enable an election for Mayor in Limerick in 2021.

##### The Office of the Mayor co-ordinated and arranged for the Mayor to attend the following:

- Flying of American Flag ahead of the Inauguration of Joe Biden as the 46th President of the United States of America and Kamala Harris as Vice-President.  
Venue: Merchant's Quay, Limerick.

#### Joint Policing Committee

A Joint Policing Committee Online Briefing took place on 27 January where Members gave their input and suggestions regarding the Policing Plan for the Limerick Division. An overview was given to Members by the Garda Community Division, Divisional Drugs Unit, Crime Office in Henry Street and Newcastle West and the Roads Policing Unit.

#### Register of Electors

The Register of Electors Team in Corporate Services has finalised the Live Register 2021/2022 and updated the Postal Voters' Lists. The Live Register 2021/2022 will be published on 1 February, 2021.

- [www.checktheregister.ie](http://www.checktheregister.ie) has been updated with the Live Register for 2020/2021.
- Staff from the Register of Electors Team complied a report, which was circulated to senior staff members in Corporate Services, outlining the changes that are due to be implemented this year regarding the Modernisation of the Electoral Registration Process.
- Staff from the Register of Electors Team continue to process emails and forms being submitted in relation to queries and changes to the Register of Electors.

#### Health and Safety Training

- Safe Pass Training: Safe Pass Training was provided to one staff member in January. All Safe Pass Training has been suspended until after 5 March due to Level 5 COVID-19 restrictions.
- The Health and Safety Training Unit has suspended all training courses, based on Government advice, until after 5 March due to Level 5 COVID-19 restrictions.



## CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

### Customer Services

January has seen the re-introduction of COVID-19 Level 5 restrictions. Although this has resulted in Corporate Buildings at Merchant's Quay and Dooradoyle closing to the public, Customer Services continued to support customers at the first point of contact. This is achieved through alternative communication channels which include telephone, post, email, MyLimerick and Twitter. Team members continue to answer customer queries, process payments and facilitate applications for Council services whilst working both in the office and remotely.

One example of how Customer Services staff have aided both the public, as well as other Departments, during these restrictions can be seen with the Motor Tax Department. As well as facilitating the availability of application forms, envelopes and other necessary items at our Dooradoyle Office, Customer Services staff have handled 2,043 Motor Tax calls throughout January. This figure is threefold that of calls recorded pre-COVID.

The Refuse Waiver Scheme closing date was also extended to beyond January and, as such, Customer Services staff continue to aid those applying with any query they may have on the process. Throughout January, Customer Services staff handled just over 1,000 calls in relation to waiver queries.

The Customer Services Team also continues to answer calls received on the COVID-19 Community Support line. This initiative, which has been managed in partnership with colleagues in the Rural Community Development Department (RCDD), is working to ensure that members of the community are assisted in having vital resources, such as food, medicine and fuel, delivered to their homes by local community volunteers. January also saw the extension of the operational agreement with the RCDD to include the processing of all calls received by the out-of-hours service line set up for the COVID Community Response Team.

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

- Customer Services Call Centre dealt with 12,779 calls. This represents an average of 639 per day, with the number of calls exceeding 700 on several occasions. 63% 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.
- 3,175 cases were created, with 832 of these logged on behalf of Public Representatives. 3,138 cases were closed, with 725 of these being cases logged by Public Representatives.
- 2,750 emails were processed through the Customer Services email platform.
- Customer services staff processed a total of 507 requests received through the Voxpro out-of-hours services.
- The logging of cases through the MyLimerick portal continued, with a total of 432 cases being logged during the month, 368 of which were submitted by Public Representatives.
- 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 893 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. There was a total of 60 new Residential Parking Permits processed throughout the month.

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT****3. Schedule of Meetings for January**

Name of Meeting	Date	Location
<b>Full Council</b>		
Meeting of Limerick City and County Council	25.01.2021	Virtual
<b>Operational Briefings</b>		
Limerick City East	11.01.2021	Virtual
Limerick City North	11.01.2021	Virtual
Limerick City West	12.01.2021	Virtual
Corporate Policy Group	14.01.2021 18.01.2021	Virtual Virtual
Local Community Development Committee	19.01.2021	Virtual
Party Leaders' Meeting	20.01.2021	Virtual
Protocol Committee Meeting	20.01.2021	Virtual
Joint Policing Committee	27.01.2021	Virtual
<b>Metropolitan District of Limerick</b>		
Monthly Meeting	18.01.2021	Virtual
Adjourned Meeting to consider the Draft Southern Environs Local Area Plan	27.01.2021	Virtual



## CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

### 4. Access to Information

	January	2021 (January to December)
Total Freedom of Information Requests	21	21
FOI Internal Appeals	0	0
Information Commissioner Appeals	0	0
Total Ombudsman Requests	7	7
Total AIE Requests	0	0

### 5. Business Improvement

**Staff Engagement:** A total of 861 staff are now live on the employee app, an increase of 15 on last month's figures.

**MyPoint:** Business Improvement hosted training sessions for staff on MyPoint, the Council's online engagement platform. Thirteen colleagues were trained for surveys, while five colleagues were trained for consultations. The sessions will continue into February.

