

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT



Comhairle Cathrach
& Contae **Luimnigh**

Limerick City
& County Council

February 2021

€400 million investment across three sites

Contract awarded after Minister gives go ahead for Coonagh to Knockalisheen Distributor Road

1,000+ entries from public to name five road vehicles

Consultants appointed to develop Blue Green Infrastructure Strategy

CONTENTS:

Economic Development Directorate

1. Trade and Investment	2
2. Strategic and Forward Planning	2
3. Innovate Limerick	2
4. Urban Innovation	2
5. Marketing and Communications	3

Physical Development Directorate

1. Mid-West National Road Design Office	5
2. Environment Strategy	5
3. Water Services	6

Community Development Directorate

1. Tourism, Culture and Arts	7
2. Property and Community Facilities	9
3. Urban & Rural Community Development	10
4. Libraries, Gallery and Museum	12

Housing Development Directorate

1. Strategic Housing Development	15
2. Regeneration Strategy Implementation	16

Service Operations Directorate

1. Housing Support Services	19
2. Planning & Environmental Services	23
3. Veterinary Services	23
4. Cemeteries	23
5. Municipal District Offices	24

Capital Investment Directorate

1. Design & Delivery	26
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National and Regional Shared Services Directorate

1. HAP SSC	28
2. Fire and Emergency Services	28
3. Digital Services & EU Programmes	30

Support Services Directorate

1. Finance Services	31
2. Corporate Services, Governance & Customer Services	33
3. Schedule of Meetings	34
4. Access to Information	35
5. Business Improvement	36



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

Economic Development Directorate

1. Trade and Investment

- Limerick City and County Council announced a major transformational development proposal across three key housing sites in Thomondgate, Hyde Road Park and Coonagh, in an investment of €400m. The proposed development will include a new hospital to be built in association with the University of Pittsburgh Medical Centre. It is estimated that there will be 200 construction jobs across the sites.
- SL Controls, a Software Integration firm based in Castletroy, announced plans to expand its business, creating 50 new jobs over the next 18 months (10 of these jobs will be at its Limerick base). The jobs will be in software development and project management.
- The Global Limerick Diaspora Project hosted three online gatherings for the Ryan, Fitzgerald and Collins family tribes on 27 February. Contributions were received from the Mayor of the City and County of Limerick, Councillor Michael Collins, the Chief Executive, Dr. Pat Daly, Laura Ryan, Marketing and Communications and Rory Corbett, Trade and Investment. The event was an opportunity to showcase Limerick, and each of the clans' connections to Limerick, to the Global Diaspora Network. An invitation was extended to each of the family clans to visit Limerick for a physical gathering during summer 2022. In total, the three events have been viewed over 127,000 times.

2. Strategic and Forward Planning

- The Material Alterations to the Draft Southern Environs Local Area Plan 2021-2027 were placed on public display for four weeks. Submissions are welcome on the Material Alterations during the public display period which runs until 8 March 2021.

3. Innovate Limerick

Film in Limerick

- The ENGINE Short Film Scheme, a film training and production programme run by Innovate Limerick through Film in Limerick, received 133 submissions from film talent throughout the Region. The shortlisting panel has now selected a shortlist of projects and teams that will receive script development and production training in the coming months. Teams will then pitch to an industry panel and up to six teams will be awarded production funding of €12,500 each to produce a short film locally.
- Innovate Limerick, Film in Limerick, Local Enterprise Office Limerick and the Digital Collaboration Centre are sponsoring ten local film and ten local tech sector representatives to attend this year's virtual SXSW Festival in Austin, Texas. Delegates will have the opportunity to attend keynote and conference sessions, technology showcases, film screenings and be able to take part in a variety of networking events with creatives across interactive, film and music industries.
- Writer's Factory: Introduction to Screenwriting programme, a 22-week course run by Film in Limerick and supported by Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, held webinar sessions with Limerick author, Kevin Barry, and OSCAR-nominated Director, Vincent Lambe, to talk about their film projects.

4. Urban Innovation

+CityxChange

- **Open Call 2 – Take Control of Your Energy**
This new Open Call "Take Control of Your Energy" was launched this month. The goal of this +CityxChange project, through the Open Innovation Calls, is to find a way for members of the public to join the work of the project, by



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

demonstrating ideas, pilot projects and prototypes that can be tested in real-life settings in Limerick. An Online Information/ Matchmaking session for interested parties was held on 24 February.

- **Georgian Neighbourhood Energy Survey** – The Georgian Neighbourhood Energy Survey was launched on MyPoint this month. The purpose of this survey is to better understand from residents, businesses and property owners in the Georgian neighbourhood how energy is being used. This will allow for identification of the best areas to target for energy-related interventions. It is hoped to work with the residents and owners in the area to install renewable energy sources (solar panels, as one example) and connect these sources to collectively harness the energy they generate. Persons wishing to complete the survey can do so here.

Living Georgian City Programme

- An order of magnitude costings, draft viability work and a draft Stage 1 Report were produced for the Housing Demonstration Projects at 58 O'Connell Street and 33/34 Thomas Street.
- Site investigation works were procured and further design development took place for the Laneways Demonstration project in preparation for upcoming public engagement in March.

5. Marketing and Communications

Marketing

Vehicle Naming Competition #ReadySpreadyGo

- Launched a public social and digital media competition to name five specialised roads vehicles. Entries were invited to name the newest additions to Limerick City and County Council's fleet – three velocity patchers used to repair potholes and two road gritters used to spread rock salt onto Limerick's roads.

- More than 1,000 entries were received. Following review, eight entries were selected for the shortlist which will be put to a public vote in March.

Limerick St. Patrick's Festival

- New brand created for the Limerick St. Patrick's Festival and the Limerick International Band Championship, reflecting the 'Limerick - Atlantic Edge European Embrace' brand identity.
- Creation of digital and social marketing assets, video content, photography and adverts underway ahead of the campaign launch on 1 March.

Brand Limerick

- Created a Brand Limerick video highlighting the brand's campaigns and achievements realised in the year since launch. Promoted across social media.
- Entered the brand launch campaign for 'Limerick: Atlantic Edge, European Embrace' in the All Ireland Marketing Awards (AIM) which are organised by The Marketing Institute of Ireland.
- Continued collaboration with Fáilte Ireland and the Limerick Gateway to the Wild Atlantic Way group regarding the rollout of the Gateway brand alongside Brand Limerick.
- Continued collaboration with Limerick City and County Council's Tourism Department on the incorporation of Brand Limerick across the Limerick City Wayfinding Strategy and the Limerick Greenway plans.
- Branded face coverings gone into production for all staff and Elected Members. Collaborated with Business Improvement, Corporate Services and Health and Safety in the production of same.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

Other Marketing Activities

- Supported the national Ireland Reads initiative by posting a series of videos to Limerick City and County Council's Twitter.
- Created and issued six Limerick.ie e-newsletters.
- Created and issued the first quarterly Limerick.ie Business Bulletin of 2021.

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 23 times on Limerick.ie's Facebook, with followers now 30,753. Posts reached 153,163 users, with 18,839 engagements.
- Tweeted 37 times on Limerick.ie's Twitter, @limerick_ie, with total followers now 19,402. The tweets earned 176,200 impressions (no. of times users saw tweet).
- Posted eight times on Limerick.ie's Instagram and created 18 Stories, with total followers now 13,414.
- Posted 29 times on Limerick City and County Council's LinkedIn, with total followers now 6,622.

Limerick.ie

In February, there were 102,754* unique site visits to Limerick.ie, a 28% decrease on the same period in 2020. (*Google Analytics)

- Content Report: 57 articles, 96 events and 8 amenities were added to Limerick.ie in February 2021.
- New dedicated subsection, www.limerick.ie/stpatricksfestival, created ahead of Limerick St. Patrick's Festival launch on 1 March.

- Continued collaboration with Irish Language Working Group to establish requirements for providing Irish translations for 'static' content on Limerick.ie/council.
- User acceptability testing carried out on new photo galleries functionality on Limerick.ie.

The most popular pages on Limerick.ie in February 2021 were:

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

Communications

- Issued 12 news releases from the Marketing and Communications Department and wrote four speeches for the Office of the Mayor.
- Supported Local Enterprise Office Limerick with content for their promotion of Local Enterprise Week 2021.
- Produced and distributed the monthly Council Connect staff e-newsletter.
- Tweeted 201 times on Limerick City and County Council's Twitter account, @limerickcouncil, with total followers now 15,886.

The tweets earned 403,400 impressions (no. of times users saw tweet).



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

Physical Development Directorate

1. Mid-West National Road Design Office

N20 O'Rourke's Cross Road Improvement Scheme Compulsory Purchase Order 2020

Planning for the N20 O'Rourke's Cross Road Improvement Scheme is ongoing. On 2 February, An Bord Pleanála held an Oral Hearing to hear the objections to the Compulsory Purchase Order to acquire the land and extinguish rights-of-way necessary to construct the Scheme. The Oral Hearing was held online.

Foynes to Limerick Road (including Adare By-Pass)

Planning for the Foynes to Limerick Road (including Adare By-Pass) Scheme is ongoing. An Bord Pleanála held an Oral Hearing to hear objections into the approval application and also the Compulsory Purchase Order element of the Scheme. The Oral Hearing took place over nine days from 8 to 23 February and was also held online.

N21 Newcastle West Road Scheme/N21 Abbeyfeale Road Scheme

The N21 Newcastle West Road Scheme and the N21 Abbeyfeale Road Scheme are currently at Phase 2 Option Selection stage. The Project Team has developed a range of technically feasible road-based options, including by-pass options, within the study area for the Schemes. Public consultation in respect of the route options commenced on 1 February, with online public consultation platforms on the project websites www.n21newcastlewest.ie and www.n21abbeyfeale.ie.

Feedback and submissions received through the public consultation process will be considered by the Project Team as part of the Option Selection process.

N20 Banogue Traffic Calming Scheme

In February, works commenced on the N20 Banogue Traffic Calming Scheme. The Scheme is approximately 600m in length and provides for pavement surfacing, kerbing and associated works. The Contractor on the Scheme is Tony Kirwan Civil Engineering Ltd, Ballybrack, Kilmacthomas, Co. Waterford.

N69 Court Cross to Bolane Pavement Improvement Scheme

Works commenced on the N69 Court Cross to Bolane Pavement Improvement Scheme. The Scheme is approximately 3km in length and provides pavement surfacing, kerbing and associated works from Court Cross to Bolane, which includes Kildimo Village. The Contractor on the scheme is Roadstone Ltd, Fortunestown, Tallaght, Dublin 24, Co. Dublin.

2. Environment Strategy

Limerick City and Environs Blue Green Infrastructure Strategy

LUC/Tobin Consultants were appointed on 26 February to develop a Blue Green infrastructure Strategy for Limerick City and Environs. The aim of the Limerick City and Environs Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) Strategy is to inform and guide the planning and management of a network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and identify opportunities to employ nature-based solutions (NBS) within Limerick City and Environs and help deliver a range of environmental, economic, and societal benefits.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

The project will involve conducting a detailed audit of the City and Environs blue and green assets, an assessment of their condition along with recommendations for their protection and enhancement. It will also identify key projects to be progressed in the short, medium and long term as well as opportunities to incorporate nature-based solutions in the built environment. The project will commence shortly and run for approximately 12 months. The final Strategy will be put on public display in Quarter 4 2021.

Roundabout Sponsorship Scheme

The Roundabout Sponsorship Scheme was re-launched in February with a major media advertising campaign. This has led to unprecedented interest in the project. Several companies have committed to implementing the pollinator-friendly designs commissioned by the Council in 2020 with funding from the Heritage Council, while others have commissioned their own biodiversity-friendly designs for roundabouts which were not included in the original design brief. To allow for lead-in time in terms of procurement, ground preparation and limited planting windows, the first planting schemes are likely to go ahead next Autumn.

3. Water Services

Limerick City Drainage Area Plan

Irish Water, working in partnership with Limerick City and County Council and RPS Group Limited, began a survey of the existing sewer network in Limerick City this month. Precision Industrial Services Limited is working on the Council's behalf to deliver these surveys, which form part of the Limerick Drainage Area Plan project. The project provides for the survey of the City sewer network, including sewer cleaning and pump station hydraulic testing in order to capture the condition of the Limerick City sewer network. The information will be used for the production of sewer hydraulic models to assess the capacity, condition and performance level of the sewer network.

Limerick Water Supply Leak Reduction

Since 2004, leak reduction efforts have achieved a saving equivalent to 12 million litres of treated drinking water per day in Limerick City alone. In 2020, a leak reduction equivalent to 5.6 million litres of treated drinking water per day throughout the County has been achieved through the excellent work undertaken by the Water Services staff in collaboration with Irish Water and Shareridge (Leakage Reduction Programme Contractor). This performance has been recognised by Irish Water as one of the best in the country. The 2021 leak reduction target is to save the equivalent of a further 1 million litres of treated drinking water per day throughout the County.

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT****Community Development Directorate****1. Tourism, Culture & Arts****TOURISM****Second Fáilte Ireland Annual Greenway Development Workshop 2021**

Findings of the latest tranche of research were shared with industry partners at a virtual event on 02 February. Attended by members of the Tourism Development Team, the workshop included updates from the Department of Transport, international trends, insightful research and an introduction to the Greenway Interpretation and Experience toolkit.

Wild Atlantic Way Gateway City Plan

A presentation was given to members of the Community Leisure and Culture Strategic Policy Committee at a meeting on 01 February outlining progress to date on the Wild Atlantic Way Gateway City Plan for Limerick. The presentation was made by Daithi Gallagher on behalf of project lead, Fáilte Ireland. The plan is being developed in partnership with key local stakeholders via the Limerick Gateway Steering Group. It is designed to provide a focus that will deliver the collective ambition to transition Limerick into a compelling destination and a base for exploring the Wild Atlantic Way.

Limerick Orientation Wayfinding and Signage Plan

The Metropolitan District members received a briefing on 09 February by Placemarque outlining the development of the Limerick Orientation Wayfinding and Signage Plan for the city centre.

Fáilte Ireland Survive to Thrive Industry Conference

The 'Survive to Thrive' virtual industry event took place on 01 February and was attended by members of the Tourism Department. The conference focused on shared plans to help the industry survive the COVID-19 crisis and begin the journey to recovery. Five industry professionals shared their thoughts on the impact the COVID-19 crisis has had on business and the future of tourism in Ireland.

West Limerick Food Series 2

The West Limerick Food Series 2 is a networking and training initiative. This series focused on 'Getting Down to Business in the New Normal.' The event, which was attended by members of the Tourism Department, featured a blend of workshops with expert trainers, guest speakers and interactive discussion. It is open to, but not limited to, food/ drink producers and growers, café owners, restaurateurs and chefs, hoteliers, Bed and Breakfast owners, tour guides/operators, retailers, publicans, tourist attractions and food/drink enthusiasts in the West Limerick area.

European Projects**CAPITEN - Atlantic Cluster for Technological and Economic Innovation in the Nautical Sector**

As part of the CAPITEN Project, the Consultancy, Emagine Media, has been appointed for the creation of an innovative Virtual Reality Experience to highlight to locals and visitors alike the numerous activities that are now available on the River Shannon at the heart of Limerick City. Three immersive Virtual Reality simulations are being prepared:

- In the river activities, such as kayaking, swimming and rowing.
- Around the river activities, highlighting Limerick's riverside city amenities.
- On the river activities, promoting navigation to Limerick.

These Virtual Reality Experiences will raise the awareness of water-based activities in Limerick through innovative virtual reality simulations, showcasing the unique setting of Limerick and the significance of its relationship with the River Shannon.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

MMAIAH - Military Maritime and Industrial Atlantic Heritage

The MMAIAH project is part of the Interreg Atlantic Area European Regional Development Fund programme. The project has nine city partners from Ireland (Limerick and Cork), the UK (Plymouth and Liverpool), 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.

Limerick is the Lead Partner in the creation of a transnational legacy video for the MMAIAH Project, which has been produced by Piquant Media. This video called 'Living on the Edge,' features footage from each of the MMAIAH partner cities and focuses on the strong cultural heritage and community links that connect the MMAIAH partners on the Atlantic coast. This production will further strengthen Limerick's new brand and identity, in possessing an Atlantic Edge and a European Embrace.

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 February, six letters of support were issued; three to the Arts Council the Grand Stretch Scheme and one each to Creative Ireland, The Arts Council Markievicz Award Scheme and the Arts Council Touring Scheme.

CREATIVE IRELAND FUNDED PROJECTS

Féile na Gréine Film

Féile na Gréine is a music festival that takes place in Limerick City showcasing the best in emerging and left-field Irish music and connecting audiences with unconventional artists in an inclusive and celebratory environment. The festival has been reimagined exclusively online due to COVID-19 restrictions which has suited their creation of a festival brand identity that resonates strongly in a digital social media space. The teaser trailer for 'Out of Place,' a film by Féile na Gréine, features Post Punk Podge, Gavin Davinci, His Father's Voice, Hey Rusty, Denise Chaila, God Knows, and MuRli and was released in early February.

ARTS COUNCIL FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT PROGRAMME

PARTNERSHIPS

Castleconnell Autumn Concert Series Online

Limerick Culture and Arts Office co-ordinated and presented, in partnership with Love Castleconnell, the Castleconnell Autumn Concert Series 2020 online. The Concert Series was presented by RTÉ Lyric FM's Liz Nolan and was supported by the Arts Council in programming the series, and Creative Ireland in making the Concert Series recording possible. The final concert featured The Esposito Quartet, in association with the National String Quartet Foundation, and was nationally broadcast by RTÉ Lyric FM on 1 February on the Full Score. The entire series remained online for viewing on Limerick.ie until 16 February.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

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. 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. In February, young people from 12 National Schools in the Municipal District of Newcastle West took part in music-making and composition in their homes, with a modified format where livestreams were delivered to them.

Sliabh Luachra Music Trail

The Sliabh Luachra Music Trail is a joint initiative involving the Arts Offices of Limerick City and County Council and Cork and Kerry County Councils. 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. Over February, Eoin O'Sullivan, Musician in Residence, compiled a video for a series, showcasing the best of Sliabh Luachra music, including performances from upcoming young musicians. It was broadcast from sliabhluchra.ie on 20 February and featured Limerick musicians, Áine and Francis O'Connor.

Healthy Ireland Fund/Sláintecare Community Resilience Fund, "Switching Off and Being Creative," Creative Music and Art Programme for patients of University Maternity Hospital, Limerick

The Creative Music and Art Programme for patients of University Maternity Hospital Limerick (UMHL), parents, mothers and infants, is delivered by Limerick Culture and Arts Office, Limerick City and County Council, in partnership with the PAUL Partnership. Interagency Project stakeholders are Limerick Children and Young People's Services Committee and UMHL.

The Creative Music and Art Programme for mothers and their families offers a series of workshops, virtual sessions and individual and group sessions, to improve wellbeing for mothers and infants. This programme of creative engagement primarily in the setting of UMHL is delivered by two qualified facilitators, in music and visual arts. Early intervention to support mothers can contribute to positive infant mental health.

Since the programme started in December 2020, 63 sessions have been delivered by the music and art facilitators, 30 of which were music and 33 around art. Very positive feedback has been reported by hospital staff and the patients who participated in the sessions. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the sessions have been delivered through online platforms and the two facilitators have adapted and progressed their programme to suit this.

2. Property & Community Facilities

DERELICTION AND VACANCY

DERELICTION, VACANCY AND REUSE TEAM - FEBRUARY	
Inspections carried out	112
Property and Community Facilities Department Notices issued	11
Statutory Notices issued under the Derelict Sites Act	168
Cases closed through engagement	9
Properties entered onto the Derelict Sites Register	26
Properties put forward for Compulsory Acquisition	0
Properties Compulsorily Acquired	10

BIN WAIVERS

Bin Waivers Approved	1,115
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CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

3. Urban and Rural Community Development

LIMERICK PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK (PPN)

- Limerick PPN Secretariat met once in February and continues to successfully deliver on its key functions. PPN Linkage Group meetings for this month included the following - Climate Action, Biodiversity and Environment; Home and Social Development; Travel and Transportation; Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning; Community, Safety and Policing.
- Limerick was selected as one of a number of PPNs nationally to host a Climate Conversation on the new Climate Action Plan. This is being led by the Climate Action, Biodiversity and Environment Linkage Group which agreed to Helena Kelly of Garryowen Residents' Association, and Caillum Hedderman of Ballybricken 46th Scout Group, being the conversation moderators.
- Three training sessions on Salesforce Chatter were delivered to PPN Linkage Group members and training on 'Getting the most out of Zoom' was delivered to PPN members and staff.
- Membership of the PPN now stands at 143. The membership registration form is on the PPN website and eligible groups in Limerick can register at any time.

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

- To support Tidy Towns groups with their volunteer work and applications for 2021, three webinars were hosted in February including: Sustainability - Doing More with Less – Debbie Nesbitt; Tidy Towns Adjudicator, Ideas for Tidy Towns – Sinead McDonnell, Environment Awareness Officer; and Nature and Biodiversity in your Local Area – Dr. Fiona Mc Gowan, Tidy Towns Adjudicator.

- To mark Fairtrade Fortnight, the Mayor of the City and County of Limerick, Councillor Michael Collins, hosted a virtual coffee morning on 25 February with Limerick Fairtrade Volunteers and encouraged people, wherever possible, to support Fairtrade.

Limerick Sports Partnership

- Limerick Sports Partnership was awarded €27,500 from the Health Service Executive to deliver physical activity programmes.
- 8,000 copies of the 'Keep Well Booklet' have been distributed across city and county community and youth organisations. Excellent resource packs were created to inform and create an awareness around the benefits of Physical Activity.
- Coach Education Programmes have continued for Safeguarding, Physical Literacy, Mental Health First Aid, Coaching Children and Disability Awareness.
- Programmes are being delivered through Zoom, there are now 6–8-week programmes around Walking, Kids Home Fitness, Men on the Move, Cycling Turbo Programme, Women on the Move, Buggy Buddies and Desk to 5K. There are over 850 participants on a weekly basis participating in the programmes.
- For more information log onto www.limericksports.ie

THEMATIC PROGRAMMES

Age Friendly

- A request for submissions was made to Age Friendly Ireland by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, in respect of the National Development Plan. Age Friendly Limerick, in collaboration with Age Friendly Ireland, made a submission prior to the closing date.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

- Planning meetings have taken place for the hosting of a series of international Age Friendly webinars. Due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, the webinar series will take the place of a planned visit by a team of Age Friendly Practitioners from the United Arab Emirates. This visit to Ireland came about following an invitation extended by Age Friendly Ireland to the United Arab Emirates in 2019 to showcase Ireland as the first Age Friendly country in the world, and to promote some examples of best practice from across Ireland, including Limerick.

Online Meetings/Webinars attended

- ✓ National Network of Age Friendly Programme Managers.
- ✓ Age Friendly Housing Specialists' Monthly meeting.
- ✓ National Age Friendly Senior Team meetings x 2.
- ✓ Age Friendly Regional Programme Managers' meetings x 2.
- ✓ Northside Older People's Advisory Group (NOPAG).
- ✓ International Webinar Series Planning meetings x 2.
- ✓ Pathways to applying for EU Funding webinar.
- ✓ One Million Stars Domestic Abuse project x 4.
- ✓ PLACE – EE meeting with Southern Regional Assembly.
- ✓ Workshop on Healthy Homes Initiative.
- ✓ Digital Communications Workshop.
- ✓ Equity by Design Web series: Built Environment Principles - Lead Cross Sector Collaboration and Infuse Age-Friendliness in other priorities.

LIMERICK COVID-19 COMMUNITY RESPONSE

- The COVID-19 Community Response Freephone number 1 800 832 005 and email address covidsupport@limerick.ie have operated continuously since March 2020. The service continues to operate from 8am to 8pm, seven days per week, and continues to provide supports to those staying at home and shielding from the virus.

Online Meetings/Webinars attended

- ✓ Re-Mind International Partners' meeting.
- ✓ National COVID-19 Co-Ordinators' meetings x 2.
- ✓ Keep Well Limerick Working Group.
- ✓ Webinar – Will the COVID-19 pandemic help us rethink loneliness and social isolation.

EDUCATION

Online Meetings/Webinars attended

- ✓ Learning Limerick Steering Group.
- ✓ National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC) Information Workshop on National Performance Indicators.
- ✓ Comhairle na nÓg Local Authorities Cluster Meeting.

INTEGRATION

- Limerick City and County Council was invited to join a team, with members from five European countries, to apply to the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF). The AMIF was established by the European Commission to promote the efficient management of migration flows and the implementation, strengthening and development of a common union approach to asylum and immigration, with funding provided for the period 2014-2020. AMIF in Ireland is managed by the Department of Justice. Groups being targeted for benefit under this funding stream are third country nationals, refugees and eligible asylum seekers. The title of the collaborative application is "INTEgreat - Developing and implementing local integration strategies through multi-stakeholder partnerships." Closing date for applications was 16 February.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

Online Meetings/Webinars attended

- ✓ Migrant Integration Subgroup Meeting x 2.
- ✓ EDNIP (Embracing Diversity, Nurturing Integration Programme).
- ✓ INTEgreat European Research Team x 10.
- ✓ Campaigning Together – Intercultural Cities Meeting.

HEALTH and WELLBEING

- ✓ Connecting for Life Regional Meeting.
- ✓ Healthy Cities and Counties Co-Ordinators' meeting.

4. Libraries, Gallery and Museum

Libraries

- Limerick Libraries celebrated "Ireland Reads" day on 25 February. Ireland Reads is a new Public Libraries initiative, in partnership with publishers, booksellers, authors and others under the Government's 'Keep Well' campaign. It is supported by President Michael D. Higgins and a host of celebrated Irish personalities as partners and ambassadors. This campaign asks people to take time out of a busy life to "Squeeze in a Read" on this day. To measure the response, people were asked to pledge a number of hours or minutes of reading. The campaign asserted that taking some time for yourself to relax and do the things you enjoy (like reading) is important to help look after your mental wellbeing. Finding your perfect book is the key and the campaign ambassadors have shared their choices online for everyone. A total of 852,291 minutes were pledged by members of the public.
- While this is a national campaign, the local response has involved Limerick Library staff reaching out to celebrity authors like Kevin Barry, Judy Curtin, Helena Close, Darren Shan, Padraig Kenny, Roisin Meaney, Sarah Moore Fitzgerald and Bob Burke to record videos of their own favourite or treasured reads. We were also delighted to have an exclusive interview with Helena Close, facilitated by our own Executive Librarian, Mike Maguire, who asked her all about reading, writing, books and her own writing career. Library members and staff have taken time to post images and messages on Twitter, Facebook and YouTube as a source of inspiration to all potential and experienced readers. Original video content created and posted by Limerick Library staff received 5,255 views on Facebook.
- The Granary Library would normally partner with the Limerick Literary Festival for an event in February but with COVID-19 restrictions this year, we were delighted to have Patricia Hannan from Adare Library combining this with the Ireland Reads Day and recording a tribute to her favourite author, Kate O'Brien, while reminding us that the festival is happening online this year.
- A Healthy Ireland Cook Along was organised by library staff on 03 and 10 February. Two groups of children from St. Patrick's Girls' National School were treated to a Zoom Cook-A-Long with Rebecca Steele (Nutritionist) as part of the Healthy Ireland at Your Library Programme. The children made rainbow vegetable pizzas and healthy flapjacks while learning about healthy eating. The events were a huge success and the children were delighted with the new culinary skills they acquired.
- Watch House Cross Library staff member, Pam, posted two art and craft videos for children and families for Valentine's Day. She also posted a number of videos helping people to make the most of online content from BorrowBox by discovering titles connected to the national Healthy Ireland Programme and the collection of mental health titles recommended by the Jigsaw organisation for young people. Staff also posted a Sensory Scavenger Hunt inviting families to notice all the sounds and smells in their environment while out and about within their 5km. The post included printable sheets inviting children and adults to document sights and sounds while out walking. The Ireland Reads day was marked with a very special video from some younger library users, Ronan aged 9, Christopher aged 7, and Emma aged 5, all read a piece from their favourite book.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

- Newcastle West Library marked St. Brigid's Day on 01 February with Sarah posting an online demonstration of how to make a St. Brigid's Cross. This Irish emblem is rich in folklore as the cross is thought to keep evil, fire and hunger from the home in which it is displayed. An online puzzle "Can You Find" created a little excitement for younger people, as they located popular household items amongst the bookshelves, while at the same time they were becoming familiar with popular books in the library. A presentation by Mary, "It's Time for the Garden", gave all readers encouragement to enjoy the garden and the great outdoors during lockdown. Now that spring has arrived, gardening outdoors is beneficial for all, both physically and mentally. This was emphasised with the collection of books available on the topic both in the library and online. Free gardening books and magazines are available by downloading the apps with library membership. To keep younger readers entertained, Helena posted a story titled "The Way Home for Wolf," by Rachel Bright. Wolf cub, Wilf, does not want help from anyone, whatever it is, he can do it all by himself, but when he finds himself lost and alone in the chill of the Arctic night, Wilf discovers that sometimes we all need the helping hand of a friend. As part of the Ireland Reads campaign, Liam took part in a video, sharing his thoughts on his favourite Author, Ken Bruen. This Irish writer of hard-boiled and noir crime has several titles featuring Jack Taylor including, "The Ghosts of Galway," "In the Galway Silence," "Galway Girl," and the most recent "A Galway Epiphany." Another favourite title chosen by the staff is "Where the Crawdads Sing," by Delia Owens.
- Dooradoyle Library Book Club met on Zoom on 04 February and chose 'Love You Dead' by Peter James, which is available on the Borrowbox App, in both E-book and E-audiobook formats for this month's read. Deirdre, from Dooradoyle, posted a Valentine's Day-themed Arts and Crafts video on social media. Staff took part in the first national 'Ireland Reads' Day by pledging to 'Squeeze in a read' on 25 February.
- Library staff attended the final three online seminars in the 'Recommending with Confidence' series as organised by the Youth Library Group – topics included 'Lego, Animation, Story Creation and Voice Acting' and 'Dialogistic Story Reading.'
- Library staff continue to respond by telephone and email to queries from the public relating to membership, recommended reading, literacy advice and local history research. As the Ireland Reads campaign reminds us, there is a book for everyone and librarians are uniquely placed to recommend great reads in science, biography sport health as well as fiction for all ages.

Limerick City Gallery of Art (LCGA)

- At Home on the Farm, a commissioned series of works by Mary Burke, opened online on 26 February. An online "in conversation" is available on www.limerickgallerypages.com. The participants include the artist, Mary Burke, academic, Niamh NicGhabhann, and broadcaster and writer, Manchán Magan. Further events including virtual walks, talks and webinars are available from the gallery website. There has been an unprecedented amount of press interest in this exhibition with a piece appearing on the Irish Times on 27 February. A publication accompanies the exhibition and is available to view online. Teagasc has confirmed financial support for the exhibition.
- Further events including virtual walks, talks and webinars are available from the gallery website.
- Two other exhibitions have been installed: "Parr's Ireland – 40 years of photography in Ireland," a major touring exhibition of works by international photographer Martin Parr, and "Cows are Mostly Silent" to complement "At Home on the Farm" with works selected from the permanent collection, curated by Adam Stoneman.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

- Work has commenced on upgrading the LCGA website and meetings are taking place with the ICT and Marketing & Communications Departments to advance this important piece of work.
- In addition, the LCGA is working with the Marketing and Communications Departments to develop a work plan for re-branding the Gallery.
- 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 in 2023 of the opening of the Gallery as the permanent home for the Municipal Collection.
- LCGA received a 20% increase in the funding from the Arts Council for 2021

Limerick Museum

- Limerick Museum has completed the removal of its storage facilities to more modern and accessible premises, a process which began in December. Arising from this, it has commenced an audit of its collection.
- The Museum has reorganised its Twitter account by making the daily tweets more engaging, lively and informative.



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

The following table shows progress to 28 February 2021 in the above Social Housing delivery streams:

As at 28 February 2021 (01.01.21-28.02.21)	Complete	In Progress	Overall Complete and In Progress
Build	11	446	457
Buy	1	19	20
Lease	16	112	128
TOTAL	28	577	605

2. SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT (SPOC)

Ten houses were returned in February to be inspected and categorised under four categories:

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:

House Returns February - Categorisation	
Cat1	4
Cat2	6
Cat3	0
Cat4	0
Total	10

House Returns February - Municipal District	
Adare-Rathkeale	1
Cappamore-Kilmallock	1
Newcastle West	1
Metropolitan Area	7
Total	10

The fast-tracking of refurbishment works has continued, with 157 houses currently in the programme under different teams. Fifty units will be retrofitted under the 2021 Energy Efficiency Retrofit Programme, with the initial allocation of €1.3 million for Limerick City and County Council.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

Current Working Programme		
	Completed in February	In Progress
Design and Delivery	2	17
Operations and Maintenance	8	46
Single Point of Contact	0	80
Team to be assigned		14
Total	10	157

3. HOUSING DEVELOPMENT TEAM UPDATE

Staff from Housing Development attended an online Leasing Forum hosted by the Housing Agency on 22 February.

2. Regeneration Strategy Implementation

Regeneration Strategy Implementation Plan – Limerick City

Moyross Residents' Forum

- During the month, Moyross Residents' Forum Development Worker, Tracy McElligott, continued to support residents in the community.
- Moyross Residents' Forum was delighted, following its very successful campaign supporting Moyross Partners' BuildOurRoad, that Transport Minister, Eamon Ryan, released the funds to ensure that the Coonagh/Knockalisheen Road - a vital piece of infrastructure for the Northside of the City and the community of Moyross - will be completed and without further delay. It is not just a road, it is vital to the physical, social and economic fabric of the community and the Northside of the City. Moyross is one of Ireland's black spots for employment and this project will open up education and employment opportunities

and create access and connectivity, cycleways and walkways. Moyross Residents' Forum would like to thank the community of Moyross, Moyross Partners, community groups and business from around the city, Limerick City and County Councillors cross-party support, Local TDs and the Local Authority for their commitment in supporting this vital piece of infrastructure. Moyross Residents' Forum welcomes the announcement as the proposed new development will bring a Medical Centre, Crèche and new homes to the area.

- Having been in consultation, design and planning for over seven years, Moyross Residents' Forum welcomes the progress of the Cosgrave Park, Dalgaish Park and Cliona Park Phase 3 developments in Moyross going to tender and, taking into consideration COVID-19 restrictions, a developer to be onsite to begin these vital homes before the end of 2021. This will repopulate Moyross and help to continue to create a vibrant and sustainable community.
- Moyross Residents' Forum Development Worker, Tracy McElligott, continues to provide daily phone calls and contact on social media to residents for check-in and support with grant applications, queries on bills and supports affecting everyday quality of life.
- The Forum encourages and assists residents to report essential maintenance on the Council's CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system and follows up on repairs.

Southill Hub

- Youth Work continues both online and by socially distanced outdoor home visits. Youth Workers are now also back providing one-to-one support to young people.
- Youth Workers deliver activity packs to club members each week.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

- The community café is working with the local schools to provide 90+ 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 Services Group

General

- Centre opening hours limited to 9am to 1pm by appointment due to COVID-19 restrictions.
- All administrative staff are working mornings in the 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.
- Received Social Intervention Fund (SIF) 40% funding.

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 passes on their repair-and-maintenance issues, or queries, to the 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.
- Environmental Manager keeps in touch with various residents throughout the community by phone, and is trying to keep residents on various committees - such as the Residents' Forum, the Regeneration Committee and the Community Consultative Forum - engaged in meetings. However, this remains a challenge as some are not comfortable with social media platforms.

Older people

- Purchased 45 Valentine's Day packages for older people of the parish and packed and delivered them in person in compliance with social distancing guidelines. It was lovely to see them in person and they rang the Centre afterwards with a lot of great feedback.
- Included in the packs also was a booklet from The Citizens' Information Centre on entitlements for people over 65, and a booklet from the Limerick Sports Partnership on wellbeing, exercise and eating well at home.
- Arranged for 25 bags of coal and blocks to be delivered to some older people of the parish by a local Coalman.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

Limerick Island Community Partners

- The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) Office is open to callers, provided they have made an appointment.
- Community Café is still closed.
- Meals-on-Wheels - ongoing and increasing.
- 19 Nicholas Street, Limerick - second fix taking place.
- King's Island Playground - cleaned and picked three times a week.
- Regeneration Meeting held - briefing arranged with local residents.
- Dog fouling reduced due to availability of bags in Dog Station.
- Flower beds planting has taken place.

Care and Repair

- Care and Repair receive about 15 calls per month, with five being acted upon and others being referred to more suitable services.
- Very busy with calls from the Public Health Nurse and Occupational Health Nurses looking for handrails and extra banisters to be put into clients' homes before they are discharged from hospital and nursing homes.
- A new volunteer is coming on board soon and the Garda vetting process is currently taking place.



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

Housing Waiting List	2,374
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• **Allocations**

	No. of Units FEBRUARY 2021	Year to Date
Adare-Rathkeale	0	0
Newcastle West	2	6
Metropolitan District	10	26
Cappamore – Kilmallock	3	7
Total	15	39

• **Allocation Refusals**

	No. of Units FEBRUARY 2021	Year to Date
Adare-Rathkeale	0	0
Newcastle West	0	1
Metropolitan District	1	1
Cappamore – Kilmallock	1	1
Total	2	3

• **Traveller Housing Welfare**

No. of Units offered FEBRUARY 2021	Year to Date
1	3

*these figures are included in Allocations figures

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

2,475 of active HAP Tenancies monitored, reviewed and maintained.

No. of HAP tenancies set up this month	20
No. of Amendments	302
No. of Cessations	23

• **Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS)**

There are currently 1,281 RAS tenancies (791 private and 490 Approved Housing Bodies) being sustained by the RAS Unit.

During February, there were 11 new tenancies created and 12 existing contracts renewed.

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

February 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	€16,786.34	3	€4,342.55	2	€17,730.65	4	€0.00	0
Newcastle West	€5,750.00	1	€17,210.00	3	€11,222.80	3	€0.00	0
Metropolitan	€7,550.00	2	€40,282.50	4	€4,090.00	2	€0.00	0
Cappamore - Kilmallock	€28,000.00	5	€18,050.37	3	€9,000.00	2	€0.00	0
Total	€58,086.34	11	€79,885.42	12	€42,043.45	11	€0.00	0
Total Monies issued in February 2021 = €180,015.21								
Total Grants issued in February 2021 = 34								

2021 to date	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	€27,736.34	5	€4,342.55	2	€64,896.55	14	€0.00	0
Newcastle West	€33,000.00	6	€46,023.44	7	€40,078.20	11	€0.00	0
Metropolitan	€28,493.00	2	€69,874.28	8	€53,863.50	18	€0.00	0
Cappamore - Kilmallock	€49,287.54	9	€74,750.37	8	€56,763.95	10	€0.00	0
Total	€138,516.88	22	€194,990.64	25	€215,602.20	53	€0.00	0
Total Monies issued year to date 2021 = €549,109.72								
Total Grants issued year to date 2021 = 100								

RENT COLLECTION

Rent Collection Limerick City & County Council					
Opening Balance at 01/01/2021	Accrued Income	Total for collection	Receipts	Closing balance 28/02/2021	% Collection
€5,040,713	€2,601,122	€7,641,835	€2,674,076	€4,967,759	35%

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

Individuals – 22/02/2021		
Location	Description	No.
McGarry House	Mixed Low threshold accommodation for singles	30
St. Patrick's Hostel	Higher threshold accommodation for single males	45
Thomond House	Higher threshold accommodation for single females	14
B&B (no children)	Adults without children accommodated in B&B	7
Clare Street Emergency Pods	Adults without children accommodated in low threshold emergency accommodation	10
Temporary Emergency Provision TEP 1 (Edenvilla)	Low threshold, night by night (9pm-9am) emergency accommodation. Mixed	13
Temporary Emergency Provision TEP 2 (Phoenix Lodge)	Low threshold, night by night (9pm-9am) emergency accommodation. Mixed	18
Total		137

Families			
Location	Description	No. Adults	No. Children
Suaimhneas	Family Emergency accommodation	6	6
		Families - 6	
B&B/Hotel Accommodation	Families	8	18
		Families - 6	
Twin Oaks Family Hub	Family Hub	12	12
		Families - 10	
Totals		Adults	Children
		26	36
		Families - 22	

**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	6
Tenant Purchase Applications: No. Approved	2
Rebuilding Ireland Home Loans	
Loan Applications: No. Received	6
Loan Applications: No. Approved	6
Deed of Discharge	
Deed of Discharge Applications: No. Received	15
Consent to Sale	
Consent to Sale Applications: No. Received	6
Cottage Purchase Annuity	
No. of Cottage Purchase Annuity Applications	0
Ground Rent	
No. of Ground Rent applications	4

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION, DATA REQUESTS AND OMBUDSMAN

Freedom of Information requested submitted	6
Ombudsman Query Cases	7



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

2. Planning & Environmental Services

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

- 228 complaints were received in February.
- 553 inspections were undertaken during the month.
- The Department issued five Statutory Notices.
- 11 Directions were served by the Department.
- 48 Warning Letters were issued in February.
- 11 litter fines were issued during the period.
- Legal proceedings were initiated in 11 cases.

Economic Development and Planning

Planning Applications

A total of 133 new planning applications were received as follows:

The current applications include proposals for:

Part 8	3
Housing Developments	1
Domestic Developments	81
Agricultural Developments	15
Commercial Developments/Change of Use	7
Sporting/Community and Educational Developments	17
Other Developments	9

Part 8 for the construction of 253 residential units including 36 two-bed houses, 110 three-bed houses, 26 four-bed houses, 2 six-bed community dwellings, 37 two-bed apartment units, and 42 one-bed apartment units, a crèche facility with capacity to accommodate 70 children, a community facility with ancillary café, two local retail service units, public toilet, landscaping works including provision of playground/kick about areas, new pedestrian and cycle connections and public square, associated site and infrastructural works including provision for water services, foul and surface water drainage at Dromdarrig, Mungret.

3. Veterinary Services

- 15 stray or wandering equines were impounded.
- The dog control unit dealt with three dogs.
- Three food samples were submitted during the month for analysis under the National Residues and Microbiological Sampling Programme.

4. Cemeteries

Number of Burials in City Cemeteries.

Mount St. Lawrence	16
Mount St. Oliver	15
Castlemungret	10
Kilmurry	4



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

5. Municipal District Offices

Metropolitan District of Limerick

Online Meetings

The Elected Members of the Metropolitan District of Limerick had their Online Monthly Meeting on 15 February. In addition, Online Operational Area Briefings, along with several other Online Briefings for Elected Members, also took place during the month.

Upgrade and Extension of Castletroy Playground

This project comprises a substantial upgrade to the existing playground, along with an extension to the playground, with the provision of playground equipment and the resurfacing of the existing playground surface. The total contract cost is €344,785.03, excluding VAT, and the contract period is five weeks approximately.

Active Travel Measures

During February, the Council awarded a contract to Neville Civil Engineering in the tender sum of €517,532, which provides for new paths/mini-parks in Vartry Field in Raheen, Mayorstone Quarry, Boro Field in Janesboro, surfacing of all paths in Castletroy Park and extension of footpath in Caherdavin Green to complete a circuit for the local community.

A separate contract was awarded to English Tarmac Ltd., in the tender sum of €44,742, for upgrade works to the Red Path from the Mill Road to Corbally Baths.

All Ireland Pollinator Plan

Pollinator-friendly planting is being provided in the People's Park and Shelbourne Park as an action to comply with the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan which the Council has signed up to.

Municipal District of Adare-Rathkeale

Croom

- **Croom Traffic Management Project**

The works on the Main Street, High Street Junction are now complete. Works are also complete at the Main Street Pedestrian Crossing. An application for funding of the Main Street Carpark under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme was successful and works will commence there in the coming weeks.

Bye-Laws for a two-hour parking zone have also been drafted for consideration by the Members and public consultation.

Rathkeale

- **Rathkeale Inner Relief Road**

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

- **Rathkeale Footpath Links**

Funding has been secured to widen and surface the Riverside Walkway connecting the 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.

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT****Adare**

- **Walkway to the GAA Pitch along the Black Abbey Road**

The lands required for this walkway are currently subject to probate and this will delay these works for now. Nonetheless, this project has been included in proposals for Active Travel Projects.

- **Contactless Water Font, Adare Heritage Centre**

A Contactless Water Fountain has been installed at the Adare Heritage Centre.

Municipal District of Newcastle West

- On 03 February, the first Online Meeting of the Municipal District of Newcastle West took place.
- The Ellis Wood Estate, Abbeyfeale, was taken in charge in accordance with Section 180 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and Section 11 of the Roads Act 1993 during February.
- The public consultation period on the options for the N21 Newcastle West Road Scheme and the N21 Abbeyfeale Road Scheme commenced in February. An online public consultation platform has been developed and is available on the project websites.

Municipal District of Cappamore-Kilmallock

- The February Monthly Meeting of the Municipal District of Cappamore-Kilmallock was held online on 18 February. This was the first online Meeting of the Municipal District.
- Access to the Public Office and Library continues to be 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 Team and Roads Maintenance Team.
- A new Housing Maintenance Foreman, Ger Kirwan, started working in the Kilmallock Office.
- During the month –
 - ▶ 102 cases were assigned to the Housing Maintenance Team.
 - ▶ 115 cases were assigned to the Roads Maintenance Team.
 - ▶ 10 Private House Grants were paid out and, to date, 26 Pilot House Refurbishment Grant applicants have completed the works.
- An update on the Bruff Public Realm Draft Plan was presented to the Working Group by Redscape.



**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT****Capital Investment Directorate****1. Design & Delivery****Project Updates**

- **Coonagh - Knockalisheen Distributor Road**

Roadbridge has been appointed as contractor for the Coonagh to Knockalisheen Road. The scheme is funded by the Department of Transport in the amount of €28,886,153.88 excluding VAT.

The works involve the construction of a new Distributor Road between Coonagh Roundabout on the Ennis Road and the Knockalisheen Road in the Moyross area of the city and comprise of:

- ▶ construction of 2.2 Km of new urban dual carriageway road with 2 x 7.0 metre carriageways, footways, cycleway, verges, and embankment construction works.
- ▶ 0.6 Km of new urban single carriageway road with footways, cycleways, and verges.
- ▶ 2.0 Km of major improvements to an existing urban single carriageway road with footways, cycleways and verges.
- ▶ 1 Km of minor improvements to existing rural single carriageway roads.
- ▶ Two bridges over railway tracks.
- ▶ Three new roundabouts.
- ▶ Two traffic signal-controlled junctions.

The objectives of the Scheme are to:

- ▶ facilitate the future commercial, residential and recreational development of north Limerick City.
- ▶ improve pedestrian and cycle facilities, to reduce travel time for this sector, thereby encouraging this mode of travel.
- ▶ aid in the implementation of the Limerick Regeneration Programme.

- ▶ improve connectivity of the local and regional road network in the northern part of Limerick City.
- ▶ promote balanced local and regional development.
- ▶ reduce travel times for commuters in the north of the city.
- ▶ facilitate the development of an effective public transport system to serve north-west Limerick City.

- **O'Connell Street, Limerick**

- ▶ Contractor and reserved stone specialist appointed.

National Transport Authority (NTA) Projects**Dublin Road Bus Corridor (University of Limerick to Parkway):**

- ▶ Consultation with key stakeholders underway.

Clare Street to Condell Road Cycleway Phase 1:

- ▶ Revised report reviewed and comments returned to consultant.

Father Russell Road Cycle Lanes:

- ▶ Review of Racefield Roundabout underway.
- ▶ Section 38 proposed for Scheme from Quinn's Cross to Gouldavoher Junction.

South Circular Road to Bishop's Quay Cycle Lanes

- ▶ Punch Consulting appointed on this project.
- ▶ Review of RPS Options Report underway, plus high-level feasibility of South Circular Road from Ballinacurra Junction to Fennessy's Roundabout.

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT****Atlas Avenue, Limerick**

- ▶ Part 8 passed by Elected Members.
- ▶ Land acquisition ongoing.

Projects Completed

- ▶ Construction works completed on 11 social housing units on Lower Carey's Road, Limerick.

Home Improvement Schemes

Inspections and Recommendations for Home Improvement Schemes – February

Inspection Types	Pre-application	Initial Inspection	Re-Inspection	Final Inspection	Total Inspections by Grant Type
MAGs (Mobility Adaptation Grant Scheme)	0	8	0	2	10
HAGs (Housing Adaptation Grant Scheme)	0	13	0	4	17
HOPS (Housing Aid for Older Persons Grant Scheme)	0	14	0	1	15
Total Inspections by Inspection Type	0	35	0	7	42
Total Inspections Year to date	0	83	0	19	99

Finance

In February, Design and Delivery:

- ▶ Applied to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage for €2,428,841.
- ▶ The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage paid €723,684.

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

- There were 60,715 active HAP tenancies nationally, managed by the HAP SSC at the end of February.
- A weekly average of 308 HAP tenancies have been set up during 2021.
- The February landlord payment run was over €52.6 million.
- The weekly tenant debit at the end of February was over €2.9 million.
- The Debt Management Unit of the HAP SSC collected a total of €23.5 million in differential rent to end of February.
- The HAP tenant rent collection rate at the end of February was 97%.
- The Debt Management Unit issued 2,875 HAP debt reminder letters in February.
- The Debt Management Unit issued 2,664 HAP COVID-19 temporary reminder letters in February.

2. Fire and Emergency Services

Statistics

	No. of Fire Related Calls	No. of Non Fire Related Calls	Total
No. of call-outs 01/02/2021 – 28/2/2021	51	64	115
% of calls where on scene in < 10 mins from time of call	60%	65%	
% of calls where on scene between 11 and 20 mins from time of call	31%	33%	
% of calls where on scene in > 20 mins from time of call	9%	2%	

	No. Received / Assigned	No. Validated	No. Invalidated / Refused	No. Granted	No. Completed
Fire Certificate Applications February	12	11	0	14	
Disability Access Cert Applications February	8	9	0	9	
Licensing Applications February	2	2	0		
Commencement Notice February	21	18	2	18	20
Completion Certificate February	10	9	0	9	9
Planning Referrals February	17				15
Sugar CRM Cases February	0				4

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

The Chief Executive and Director of Service attended Regional Co-Ordination Meetings in relation to COVID-19.

Fire and Emergency Training Events

Risk Assessments have been completed on training that can be delivered during Level 5 restrictions. A number of courses are currently running as follows:

- Manual Handling.
- Abrasive Wheels.
- Emergency First Responder Training Courses.

These courses commenced on 15 February with many additional control measures in place. Some other training courses remain postponed as it was deemed unsafe to run them during the current restrictions.

Civil Defence attendance at Events

- Patient transfer for appointment from Newcastle West to Edward Street, Limerick, and back to Newcastle West – assisting Kerry Civil Defence – 1 day.
- Irish Blood Transfusion Service - Blood Donor Clinics:
 - ▶ Castletroy Park Hotel, Limerick – 2 days.
 - ▶ Greenhills Hotel, Limerick – 2 days.
 - ▶ Devon Inn, Templeglantine, Co. Limerick – 3 days.
 - ▶ Coláiste Iósaef Community College, Kilmallock, Co. Limerick – 3 days.
 - ▶ St. Munchin's College, Corbally, Limerick – 1 day.
 - ▶ South Court Hotel, Limerick – 2 days.
- Essential Work Transfer during severe weather – 2 days.

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 February
No. of Call-Outs 01/02/2021 – 28/02/2021	1,040	870	1 minute, 17 seconds	1,910

Water Safety

Number of lifebuoy replacements	Total January	January-February	Total 2021
Metropolitan Area	0	1	1
Municipal Area	0	0	0



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

3. Digital Services and EU Programmes

Digital Services

- On 08 February, the Limerick Broadband Officer in Digital Services, and staff from Roads and Planning, met with representatives of National Broadband Ireland to discuss the streamlining of an application process for Section 254 (pole installation) licences for the rollout of the National Broadband Plan in Limerick. As part of the rollout, National Broadband Ireland estimates that they may have to install up to 5,000 poles in the county during the remainder of the seven-year plan.
- On 17 February, representatives from Digital Services attended the latest meeting of the All-Ireland Smart Cities Forum. At this meeting, two options for the future of the Forum were presented and discussed. Feedback from these discussions will inform the development of a draft strategy for the Forum, which will be presented at the next Forum meeting on 31 March.
- Digital Services, in conjunction with the ICT and Business Improvement Departments, launched the new Staff Portal on 17 February to all users in Limerick City and County Council. The new portal has been modernised to make it crisper, clearer and more user-friendly.
- The LITe programme was rolled out to the Motor Tax Department in February, bringing the total number of users in Limerick City and County Council to 607.
- Digital Services rolled out a new Gallery feature on Limerick.ie this month. Similar to a photobook, it will allow art gallery exhibitions and photos of events in Limerick to be published and then browsed through on limerick.ie.

EU Programmes

- On 04 February, staff from the Council working on the +CityxChange project attended an online event on "Renewable Energy Investment in the Southern Region," organised by the Southern Regional Assembly.
- On 05, 08 and 22 February, Corina Hanrahan organised three learning sessions as part of the URBACT FindYourGreatness project. These were focused on Smart City Marketing and Brand Implementation; all cities involved shared their experiences, and the Limerick Edge and Embrace Brand was presented as an exemplar.
- On 09 February, an URBACT local group meeting was held to work further with local Limerick stakeholders on the development of the Smart Limerick brand.
- On 15 February, the first +CityxChange National Advisory Team meeting was held. Chaired by Caroline Curley, Director of National and Regional Shared Services, this meeting brings together representatives from the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland, Irish Heritage Council, All Ireland Smart Cities Forum, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and South Dublin County Council, to contribute their expertise to the project and to keep it aligned with developments across sectors.

**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 28 February 2021*	10,694,120*	59,984,574**	105,668	139,883	70,433,143	7,133,602	63,299,541	4,180,453	11%

** The Date for Making the 2021 Rate was 02 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 28 February 2021*	357,871*	^	-	357,871	425,123	67,252	119%

* subject to finalisation of year end accounts for 2020

^ Accruals not updated for loans for January & February 2021

Recourse to Overdraft Facility

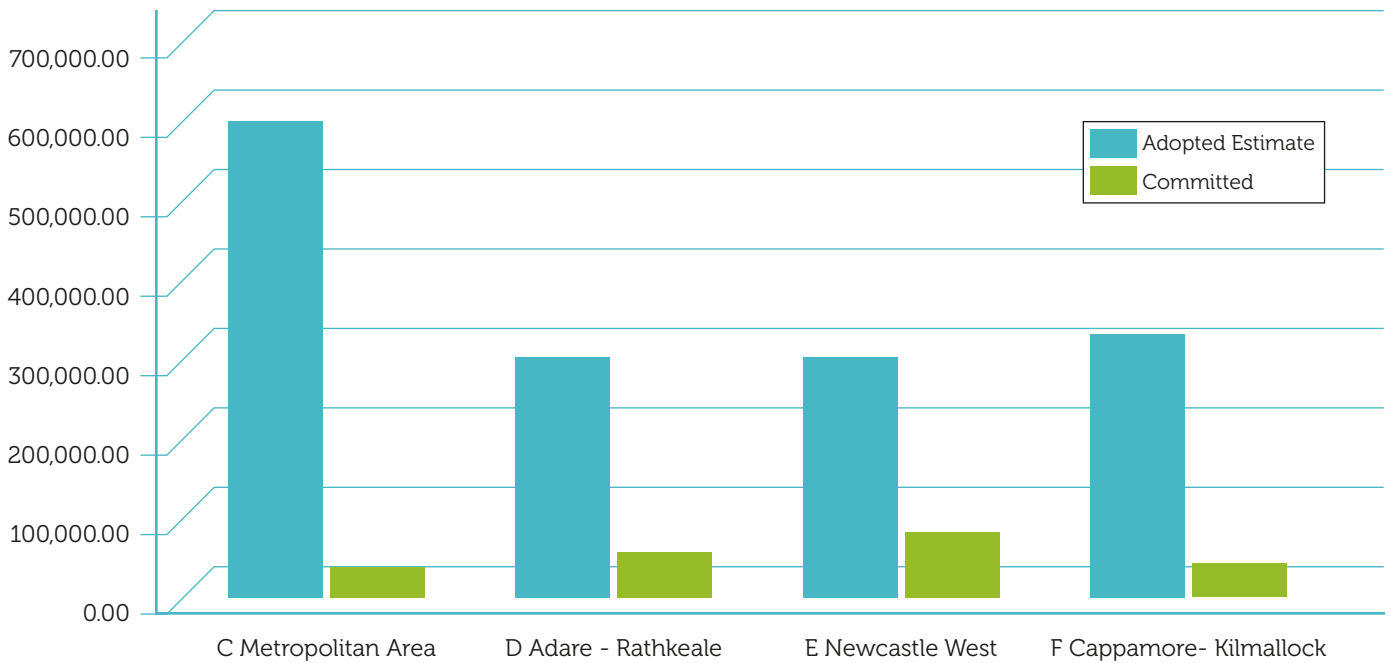
No of days in overdraft **0**



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

General Municipal Allocation 2021 Adopted Estimate €1.403 Million

Graph outlining adopted budget and draft committed expenditure up to 28th February 2021



Municip (Code) + (Text)	Value Adopted Estimate (€)	Value Committed (€)
C Metropolitan Area	568,000.00	0
D Adare - Rathkeale	270,000.00	10,920
E Newcastle West	270,000.00	44,892
F Cappamore - Kilmallock	295,000.00	2,715



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

2. Corporate Services, Governance & Customer Services

Corporate Services

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

- EU Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy Europe – virtual attendance at EU Covenant Board Meeting and discussion with European Commissioner for Energy, Kadri Simson.
- Virtual attendance at Coffee Morning to mark Fairtrade Fortnight. Fairtrade Fortnight raises awareness about the positive impact that Fairtrade has on farmers/producers in the developing world.
- Virtual attendance at 'Online Tribe Gatherings' for Collins, Fitzgerald and Ryan Online Global Family Gatherings. Diaspora engagement project which aims to connect the global diaspora network with communities in Limerick, in partnership with Limerick City and County Council, The Sunday Business Post and Ireland101.

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 was published on 01 February and came in to force on 15 February.
- Copies of the Live Register 2021/2022 have been circulated to all Councillors, Members of the Oireachtas, Members of the European Parliament, Post Offices, Libraries, Garda Stations and other Public Bodies.
- www.checktheregister.ie has been updated with the Live Register for 2021/2022.

- Staff from The Register of Electors Team attended a webinar briefing, presented by the Electoral Register Modernisation Project Team, outlining the next steps being implemented regarding the Modernisation of the Electoral Registration Process. The team provided Management in Corporate Services and Governance with an updated report in relation to work to be carried out prior to migration of data to a new system.
- 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: All Safe Pass Training has been suspended until after 05 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 05 March, due to Level 5 COVID-19 restrictions.

Customer Services

15 February saw the closure for this year of the Refuse Waiver Scheme and Customer Services aided the Urban and Rural Community Development Department by fielding all calls for the Team and helping customers with their various queries. In total, the Customer Services Department took 648 calls for the Refuse Waiver Team during February.

Throughout the month, Customer Services continued to support customers at first point of contact by answering customer queries, processing payments, posting application forms on request and generally facilitating applications for Council services, while working both remotely and in the office while Council buildings remain closed.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

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

- Customer Services Call Centre dealt with 11,943 calls. This represents an average of 597 per day, with the number of calls exceeding 650 on several occasions. 60% 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.
- 3,261 cases were created, with 986 of these logged on behalf of Public Representatives. 3,281 cases were closed, with 1,001 of these being cases logged by Public Representatives.
- 3,391 emails were processed through the Customer Services email platform.
- Customer Services staff processed a total of 561 requests received through the Voxpro out-of-hours services.
- The logging of cases through the MyLimerick portal continued, with a total of 766 cases being logged, 696 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, 842 cases were logged for Housing Maintenance.
- Customer Services continued to provide other frontline services to the general public, such as the processing of Residential Parking Permits. 53 new Residential Parking Permits were processed throughout the month.

3. Schedule of Meetings for February

Name of Meeting	Date	Location
Special Meeting of the Council		
To discuss the Coonagh - Knockalisheen Road	05.02.2021	Virtual
Operational Briefings		
Limerick City East	01.02.2021	Virtual
Limerick City North	01.02.2021	Virtual
Limerick City West	02.02.2021	Virtual
Municipal District of:		
Newcastle West Monthly Meeting	03.02.2021	Virtual
Adare-Rathkeale Monthly Meeting	09.02.2021	Virtual
Cappamore-Kilmallock Monthly Meeting	18.02.2021	Virtual

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT**

Name of Meeting	Date	Location
Audit Committee	12.02.2021	Virtual
Metropolitan District of Limerick		
Monthly Meeting	15.02.2021	Virtual
Strategic Policy Committees		
Community, Leisure & Culture	01.02.2021	Virtual
Economic Development, Enterprise & Planning Meeting	08.02.2021	Virtual
Adjourned Meeting	15.02.2021	Virtual
Special Meeting to discuss National Water Resources Plan	22.02.2021	Virtual
Climate Action, Biodiversity and Environment	09.02.2021	Virtual
Travel & Transportation	16.02.2021	Virtual
Home & Social Development	17.02.2021	Virtual

4. Access to Information

	February	2021 (to date)
Total Freedom of Information Requests	20	41
FOI Internal Appeals	1	1
Information Commissioner Appeals	0	0
Total Ombudsman Requests	3	10
Total AIE Requests	0	0



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

5. Business Improvement

- The Council's new intranet, named "Staff Portal," went live on 17 February. The intranet is housed on a Sharepoint platform.
- Business Improvement partnered with Strategic Housing Development and Limerick 2030 to launch the "Mungret Part 8 Residential Development" consultation on MyPoint.
- Business Improvement worked with the +CityxChange Programme to roll out the "Open Innovation Call #2" application form and the "Georgian Neighbourhood Energy Survey" on MyPoint.
- 14 employees received training on MyPoint consultations and/or surveys.
- A total of 870 users are now live on the employee app, an increase of nine on last month's figures. Councillors were also granted access to the app.
- 24 colleagues received training on the Cora Project Management System.