Comhairle Cathrach & Contae Luimnigh
Limerick City & County Council

Director General Report on the *Publication of Notice of Intention by Local Authority to Hold Event* for Christmas in Limerick 2026

Prepared in accordance with Section 486 of the Planning and Development Act 2024 (as amended) and Article 193 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

Item	Details
Applicant	Limerick City and County Council
Proposed Event	Christmas in Limerick 2026
Location	Limerick City Centre
Event Period	21st November 2026 to 3rd January 2027

---

1. Background

Christmas in Limerick has become one of the flagship annual festivals delivered by Limerick City and County Council, attracting significant visitor numbers to the city centre during the festive period while supporting local businesses, tourism, hospitality and community participation. The programme has evolved significantly in recent years and has become an important contributor to city centre activation during a key trading period.

The proposed 2026 programme builds on the success of previous years and incorporates lessons learned through operational reviews, stakeholder engagement and event evaluation processes. The programme has been designed to create a coordinated city-wide experience that encourages visitors to move throughout the city centre, increasing dwell time, footfall and economic activity while providing a diverse range of family-friendly attractions and experiences.

The programme consists of nine coordinated event elements operating across multiple city-centre locations and is supported by a comprehensive Event Management Plan addressing safety, security, accessibility, traffic management and operational governance.

While the statutory event licencing process is provided for under section 486 of the Planning and Development Act 2024, the relevant executive function for Christmas in Limerick is a Mayoral executive function under the governance arrangements

established by the Local Government (Mayor of Limerick) and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2024.

---

2. Statutory Process

The proposal has proceeded through the statutory event licence process in accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2024 and associated Regulations.

Table 1: Christmas in Limerick 2026 Event Licence Timeline

Timeline – Christmas in Limerick 2026 Event Licence		
Timeline of Events	**Description**	**Date**
Publication of Notice	Publication of notice in local and national newspapers.	01/10/2026
Public Inspection	Public inspection of proposal and Event Management Plan.	01/10/2026 – 05/11/2026
Prescribed Bodies Notified	Prescribed bodies formally notified and provided with proposal documents.	By 08/10/2026
Submissions or Observations	Public and prescribed bodies may submit observations or submissions.	Up to 05/11/2026
Consultation Deadline	Standard consultation period closes.	05/11/2026
Report to Council	Full Report to Metro Due.	06/11/2026
Council Meeting	Special Meeting of Metropolitan District of Limerick City and County Council – November 2026.	10/11/2026

---

3. Assessment of the Proposal

3.1 Strategic Importance

The proposed programme supports a number of Council objectives relating to economic development, tourism growth, place-making, city centre activation and community wellbeing.

The programme has been designed to animate a broad geographic area of the city centre and encourage pedestrian movement between key destinations including King John's Castle, Arthur's Quay Park, Bedford Row and O'Connell Crescent. This approach

seeks to maximise economic benefit across the wider city centre rather than concentrating activity within a single location.

The varied nature of the programme, comprising installations, family attractions, cultural animation, festive markets and city-centre experiences, is considered appropriate in meeting the needs of residents, visitors and city-centre businesses.

3.2 Economic Assessment

The Christmas period represents one of the most important trading periods of the year for the retail, hospitality and tourism sectors.

The proposed programme is intended to increase visitor numbers to the city centre and extend dwell time through the creation of linked attractions and experiences across multiple locations. Particular emphasis has been placed on encouraging visitors to circulate between sites through the Festive City Trail, festive installations, train service and supporting animation activities.

It is considered that the programme will generate positive economic impacts through:

- Increased city-centre footfall.
- Extended visitor dwell time.
- Additional retail expenditure.
- Increased hospitality spend.
- Enhanced city-centre vibrancy.
- Strengthened tourism profile for Limerick during the festive season.

3.3 Community and Cultural Assessment

A key strength of the proposal is the provision of a broad range of family-orientated and publicly accessible activities.

The programme includes free public realm activations, festive installations, Christmas trees, children's art projections and roaming street entertainment together with ticketed attractions such as the castle Christmas experience and ice rink. This provides a balanced offering capable of attracting a wide demographic while maintaining opportunities for free participation.

The inclusion of children's artwork, local performers and city-centre animation also provides opportunities for community participation and local creative engagement.

3.4 Event Management and Safety Assessment

A detailed Event Management Plan has been submitted in support of the application.

The Event Management Plan addresses:

- Governance and management arrangements.
- Security and stewarding.
- Medical provision.
- Traffic management.
- Emergency planning.
- Accessibility arrangements.
- Fire safety measures.
- Crowd management.
- Weather contingency planning.
- Child safeguarding measures.

The programme consists primarily of dispersed attractions and locations, thereby reducing the concentration of large crowds within a single venue. The Event Management Plan confirms that all individual event sites remain below the statutory threshold of 5,000 persons at any one time.

Having reviewed the submitted documentation, it is considered that a satisfactory framework has been established for the safe management and operation of the event programme subject to implementation of all measures outlined within the Event Management Plan and continued engagement with the relevant statutory agencies.

3.5 Assessment of Accessibility and Inclusion

The Event Management Plan includes measures to accommodate persons with disabilities and provides for accessible event infrastructure across event sites. Accessible viewing arrangements and dedicated facilities are proposed where appropriate.

The proposal also includes sensory sessions within the castle Christmas experience and accessibility arrangements throughout the wider programme.

It is considered that accessibility has been appropriately integrated into the programme planning process.

3.6 Traffic and Public Realm Assessment

The programme will result in certain temporary impacts on traffic movements and parking arrangements, particularly in relation to the Georgian Christmas Fayre, road closures associated with opening events and city-centre activity locations.

The proposal includes detailed traffic management measures developed in consultation with relevant agencies and incorporates road closures, pedestrian management arrangements and emergency access measures.

While some disruption to normal traffic movement is unavoidable, these impacts are temporary in nature and are considered proportionate when balanced against the wider cultural, social and economic benefits arising from the programme.

3.7 Assessment of the Georgian Christmas Fayre

Given the level of public interest generated by this element of the programme, particular consideration has been given to the proposed Georgian Christmas Fayre.

The Fayre is proposed as a managed and controlled festival space incorporating food vendors, retail traders, entertainment and a licensed bar facility. The Event Management Plan provides for:

- Controlled access arrangements.
- Defined crowd capacity limits.
- Security and stewarding provision.
- Managed alcohol service.
- Dedicated emergency access and egress arrangements.
- Capacity monitoring and crowd management protocols.

The submitted documentation indicates that the emergency egress capacity significantly exceeds the maximum permitted occupancy level of the site.

While the Fayre may generate differing public views, it is considered that appropriate management arrangements and safeguards have been incorporated within the Event Management Plan to facilitate its operation.

---

4. Assessment of Public Consultation

A statutory public consultation process was undertaken in accordance with legislative requirements. All submissions and observations received during the consultation period have been reviewed and considered.

A total of 284 valid submissions were received from the following individuals:

No. of Submissions	Name of Submitter	Organisation (if identified)
1	Niall Quinn	
2	Alan Holmes	
3	Anthony Gaffney	
4	James Lawlor	
5	Aleksandra Filinska	
6	Lucy Kavanagh	Nash Hall Sheltered Housing
7	Fiona O' Sullivan	
8	Fiona O' Sullivan	
9	Hannah Ryan Moloney	
10	Bex Bex	
11	Rebecca Moloney	
12	Sarah Smith	
13	Stephanie B	
14	Randel Hodkinson , J.Hodkinson & Sons ,Decorators Henry St. Nicole Dunphy, Pandora Bell Confectionary, Henry St. Karim Hamadi, Kahns Supermarket Henry Street.	

	Kandahar Grocery , 24/7 shop Henry St. Paul Flynn , CopyThat Henry St. Kakar Sehrawatt , Daybreak Quinlan Street.	
15	Patricia Dundon	
16	Rob Shanahan	Rob Shanahan Architects
17	Martin O' Brien	Rob Shanahan Architects
18	Catriona Maher	Rob Shanahan Architects
19	Anne Marie O' Connor	
20	Anne Burke-McGreen	
21	Siobhan O' Sullivan	
22	Liam Walsh	
23	Sarah Murtagh	
24	Keire Murphy	
25	Bobby Treacy	
26	Javed Omaid	
27	Suzanne Ryan	
28	Ian Foley	
29	Brendan Condon	
30	Elaine Mcinerney	
31	Michelle Duggan	
32	Elaine Murphy Doonaune	
33	Patrick O' Sullivan	

34	Jennifer McCarthy	
35	Ahmed Khazai	
36	Alan Mcnamara	
37	Terry Breen	
38	Brid Nash	
39	Muzammil Ahmad	
40	Claire Barry	
41	Leticia de Sousa Macedo	
42	Eileen Holmes O' Dea	
43	Lorna Hodkinson	
44	Clare Sammon	
45	Nicole Dunphy	Pandora Bell Confectionery
46	Kevin O' Shea	
47	Kos- Limerick Lane Studios	
48	Kevin O' Shea	
49	Kevin O' Shea	
50	Kevin O' Shea	
51	Sean McIlfatrick	
52	Sheila Walsh	
53	John and Jos Walsh	
54	Maria Smith	
55	Naqee Bullah Durrani	

56	Catherine Doherty	
57	Tim Hogan	
58	Sohail Ahmed	
59	Kakar Sohail	
60	Liz Quill	
61	Nimatullah Mohmand	
62	Josephine Walsh	
63	Damien Duggan	
64	Frank Larkin	
65	Denis O' Meara	
66	Joe Sheehan	
67	Vicki Nash	
68	Tom O' Connor	
69	Mary Harvey	
70	Sarah Scales	
71	Naomi O' Nolan	
72	Yasin Kakar	
73	Kakar Zobair	
74	Vincent Donnelly	
75	Sana Kakar	
76	Fiona Costelloe	
77	Lisa Egan	

78	Maria Kelly	
79	Eoin O' Shea	The Commercial Bar
80	Ahmad Khawaja	
81	Kulsum Kakar	
82	Pamela Downes	
83	Dee Maguire	
84	Irene Caulfield	
85	Pat New Road Clinic	New Road Clinic
86	Niall O' Keeffe	
87	Stephen Cunneen	Treaty City Brewery
88	Rory Collins	
89	Karthik Vasisht	
90	James O' Sullivan	
91	Salman Momand	
92	Josephine Byrne	
93	Sarika Hule	Wellness Veda Herbal and Naturopathy Clinic
94	Paddy O' Carroll	
95	Paddy O' Carroll	
96	Ivan Shaw	John Shaw Auctioneers
97	Conor Keane	
98	Karthik Vasisht	Avinya Technology Consulting
99	Vijayalaxmi Hegde	

100	Dermot Whelan	
101	Paul O' Brien	
102	Daragh Kirby	
103	Srinivas Rao	
104	Catherine Cornelius	
105	Rebecca Hogan	
106	K. Mcnamara	
107	Evan O' Connor	
108	Anthony Griffin	
109	Therese Rochford	
110	Nicole Griffin	
111	Ray Ryan	
112	Gerard Clancy	
113	Kate Hehir	
114	Elvan Dilmac	
115	Carmel Whyte	
116	Cathal Ryan	
117	Tim Roche	
118	Séan Rice	
119	Danny O' Flaherty	
120	Jake Connolly	
121	Jamie Mcgarry	

122	Emma Lynch	
123	Margaret - Deebert Hotel	Deebert House Hotel
124	Walter O'Brien	
125	Ross Kelly	
126	Megan Hehir	
127	Brian Leddin	
128	Evan Cusack	
129	Molly Sheedy Cusack	
130	Barbara Keogh	
131	Michael Vaughan	
132	Ruairi Nealon	
133	Marie Therese Loughran	
134	Denis O' Dwyer	
135	Noel Naughton	
136	John Logan	Limerick City Centre Residents Voice
137	Nyle Wolfe	
138	Orla Condron	
139	Declan J Mcdermott	
140	Charlie Coughlan	
141	Riah Hogan	
142	Kathleen Regan	
143	Mike & Cathy Corry	

144	Daniel O' Connell	
145	Noel Malone	
146	Michael Mulvihill	
147	Tom Ksciuk	
148	Pamela Skaufel	
149	Dave Griffin	
150	Ciara Sexton Nolan	Ciara Sexton Dance
151	Jean McGlynn	
152	Oonagh Maguire	
153	Michael Fahey	
154	Andy Cunneen	
155	David O' Mahony	
156	Gearoid O' Tiarnaigh	
157	Pat& Shirley Carroll	
158	Mary Treaty City Brewery	
159	Timothy O' Sullivan Glynn	
160	Seamus Flynn	
161	Richie Ryan	
162	Patricia Coughlan, Bridget Ryan. Georgian Quarter Limerick	
163	Brid O Sullivan Glynn	
164	Eoin Buckley	
165	Kevin J Condron	

166	Cillian Flynn	
167	Johan Van Der Stok	
168	Ger Mcnamara	
169	Brendan McMorrow	
170	John Begley	
171	David O' Sullivan Glynn	
172	Geraldine McLoughlin	
173	Kevin Volf	
174	Tommy Moran	Moran Hospitality / The Savoy Collection
175	Kishore Prabha	
176	Evelyn Cosgrave	
177	Gerard Ryan	
178	Eamonn Farrell	
179	Cecilia Madden	
180	Mary Hann Toner	
181	Carla Nellis	
182	Darragh Boyce	
183	Anne Kavanagh	
184	Joe O' Connell	
185	Patrick O' Sullivan	
186	Anita Cunneen	
187	Duncan Casey	

188	Yvonne Lane	
189	James Hillier	
190	Thomas Campion	
191	Paul Patton	
192	David Ochoa	Local food entrepreneur
193	Aracely Sansores	Local food entrepreneur
194	Gerard Nellis	
195	Charlotte Eglington	
196	John Moran	
197	Tom O' Brien	
198	Lationo Malekum	
199	Adriana McCormack	
200	Oonagh Mcgowan	
201	Beatriz Murillo	Rain Outdoors
202	Komal Goel	
203	Karina Ug	
204	Lily Ryan Hofler	
205	Kealan McMahon	
206	Adria Sousa	
207	Bryan Le Gear	
208	Donal Cantillon	
209	Néill Foley	

210	Moya Ni Cheallaigh	
211	Brenda O' Keefe	
212	Sean Upton	
213	Caoimhe Maguire	
214	Aisling Egan	
215	Mossie Egan	
216	Helen Mcelligott	
217	H.Pat Barriscale	
218	Eileen Quinlan	
219	Donal Ryan	
220	Tony Murphy	
221	Kenia Lopez	
222	Monse Maldonado	
223	Mary Hughes	
224	Almar Jan	
225	Marie Cremin	
226	Mary Danagher	
227	Andrew O' Connell	
228	Anne O' Sullivan	
229	Michael Tiernan	Tiernan Properties
230	Caroline Carmody	
231	Derek O' Halloran	

232	Joe Ryan	
233	Katie O' Neill	Silverwood Jewellery
234	Janet Kingston & Stephen Ryan	Angel Times
235	Geraldine Duff	Irish Handcrafts Ltd
236	Jospephine Garvey	Seabreeze Seafoods
237	Aldis Kazakevics	
238	Matthew Ryan	Matthew Stephens Jewellers
239	Billy O' Connell	O'Connells, 46 William Street
240	Owen Silke	
241	Eddie Molloy	
242	Roger Daly	J.C. Daly's Hardware
243	John Fitzgerald	Jack Fitzgerald Electrical
244	Eats of Eden Healthfood Shop	Eats of Eden Health Food Shop
245	Steve Gleeson	Gleeson Sport Scene
246	Janine Nehrig	Arch Therapy
247	Shane Gleeson	SPAR
248	Mike O'Connell Menswear	Mike O'Connell Menswear
249	Mary Fogarty	
250	James J	
251	John O'Sullivan	
252	Jordana Noble	
253	Elaine Cantillon	

254	Michelle Smyth	
255	Karen Hackett	
256	Paula Lynch	
257	Susan Ahern	
258	Julie Spratt	
259	Gary Kirwan	
260	Gerry O'Brien	
261	Dympna Ryan	
262	Mary Delahunty	
263	Martina Kiely	
264	Kerry Mein	
265	Sarah Fahy	
266	Aaron Mcnamara	
267	Carmel Costello	
268	Sean Golden	Limerick Chamber
269	Liam Burke	
270	Mark Tiernan	Tiernan Properties / Arthur's Quay Shopping Centre
271	Shane Reynolds	
272	Orla Hilton	
273	Jamie O' Byrne	
274	Gary Kirwan	
275	Catherine Coleman	

276	Breda Shanahan	Chiropodist, 7 The Crescent
277	Linda Cornstore Limerick	Cornstore Limerick
278	Linda Coqbull	Coqbull
279	Paul Craughan	
280	Jean Hartigan	
281	Mark Mulqueen	
282	Laura Ahern	
283	Ann Roche	
284	Larry de Cléir	

For analytical purposes, 197 submissions were fully supportive, 28 were supportive while seeking a change, clarification or mitigation, one was conditional or mixed, and 58 opposed a specific element of the proposal. No substantive submission opposed the Christmas programme generally.

Supportive submissions welcomed a more ambitious Christmas offer for Limerick and its potential to animate the city centre, increase footfall and visitor dwell time, support local enterprise, and provide a family-focused festive experience. The Georgian setting of The Crescent, the creation of a pedestrian space and the proposed route between King John's Castle, Arthur's Quay, the retail streets, and the Crescent were repeatedly identified as strengths. A recurring supportive position was that the 2026 arrangement should be treated as a trial, measured after the event and refined in future years.

Submissions expressing opposition were directed overwhelmingly at the location of the Georgian Christmas Fayre and the associated continuous closure of The Crescent, rather than at the wider Christmas programme. Concerns related to traffic displacement and commuting, access to the city centre, the effect on Christmas trading, parking, public transport and taxis, premises access, deliveries and loading, access to services and educational premises, pedestrian safety during darker winter conditions and emergency service access. A substantial proportion proposed alternative locations, most frequently Bedford Row and Arthur's Quay, with Honan's Quay, the Hunt Museum area, Cruises Street, Pery Square, People's Park, Thomas Street and other civic or pedestrianised spaces also suggested. A relocation of the Christmas Fayre for 2026 is not legally viable under this event licence application as per Section 486 of the Planning and Development Act 2024, however, the aforementioned locations will be reviewed as part of the 2027 planning process.

The concerns were concentrated to a degree among retailers and hospitality businesses in the established retail core, businesses and services directly affected by the Crescent arrangements, and commuters using the cross-city route. Limerick Chamber submitted a detailed objection to the continuous closure while supporting an ambitious Christmas programme. It requested a published programme, comprehensive traffic and access arrangements, business communications and wayfinding, a named liaison contact and transparent post-event evaluation. Recurring or template wording appeared on both sides; those responses were retained as separate participation but were not treated as separate evidence of additional themes.

The Draft Christmas in Limerick EMP addresses a number of the matters raised. It provides a controlled Fayre site with a stated maximum capacity of 750 persons, controlled entrances and exits, security and crowd monitoring, a licensed-bar management regime, fire and emergency procedures, medical provision, waste and sanitary arrangements and generic accessibility measures. It also provides for a traffic-management system in consultation with An Garda Síochána and identifies a proposed continuous 24-hour road and parking closure from 16th November to 31st December 2026.

However, the consultation identifies matters requiring further specification before the Crescent arrangements are implemented. In particular, the final plan will include:

- a Crescent-specific traffic and access plan;
- agreed arrangements for residents, businesses, deliveries, loading, schools, service users and assisted collection;
- a site-specific accessible arrival plan;
- confirmed operating hours and security, medical, fire, cleaning, noise and sanitary arrangements; and
- clear parking, public-transport, taxi, diversion and wayfinding information.

There has been no formal submission from a prescribed body but a comprehensive consultation process (with the HSE, AGS, Traffic Management, Cleansing and the Civil Defence) in relation to the Draft EMP has taken place since October 2026.

A post-event evaluation should measure traffic performance, footfall at the Crescent and within the retail core, business and resident feedback, accessibility, incidents, complaints and remedial actions. Its outcome should inform any decision on the location and closure model for future years.

4.1 Summary Assessment of Public Consultation

Overall, the consultation demonstrates substantial support for the Christmas programme and for trying a Georgian Christmas Fayre at The Crescent. It also raises focused and credible concerns about the scale and management of the associated road closure. Those concerns do not, on the evidence received, warrant rejection of the wider nine-element programme.

If the Crescent element is retained, the concerns identified through the consultation are capable of being addressed through proportionate conditions, a strengthened final Event Management Plan and traffic/access arrangements, direct stakeholder liaison, clear public communication and transparent post-event review. The consultation therefore supports proceeding with the wider programme while ensuring that the particular operational impacts associated with The Crescent are appropriately mitigated and monitored. This assessment should be read in conjunction with the Director General's overall assessment and recommendation.

---

5. Conclusion

Having regard to:

- The proven success of previous Christmas in Limerick programmes;
- The strategic importance of the programme to the city centre;
- The anticipated economic, social, cultural and tourism benefits;
- The comprehensive Event Management Plan submitted;
- The proposed safety, accessibility and traffic management measures;
- The outcomes of the public consultation process; and
- The temporary nature of the impacts arising from the proposal,

it is considered that Christmas in Limerick 2026 represents an appropriate, beneficial and strategically important use of the public realm which can be delivered in a safe, effective and well-managed manner.

---

6. Recommendation

Having considered the Planning and Development Act 2024 (as amended), the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), the submitted Event Management Plan and the outcomes of the statutory consultation process, it is recommended that the Members of the Metropolitan District approve the proposed Christmas in Limerick 2026.

Signed:



Sean Lenihan
Director of Services
Economic, Tourism, Culture, Property & Corporate Buildings Directorate

Date: 6th November 2026