

**TUARASCÁIL
BHLIANTÚIL
2020**

**ANNUAL
REPORT
2020**



**COMHAIRLE CONTAE MHUINEACHÁIN
MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL**

Contents

Foreword	Page 2 - 4
District Map/Mission Statement	Page 5
List of Members of Monaghan County Council 2019	Page 6
Finance Section	Page 7
Corporate Services	Page 8 – 10
Corporate Assets	Page 10 – 15
Information Systems	Page 16 – 20
Corporate Procurement	Page 21 – 22
Human Resources	Page 23 – 24
Health and Safety	Page 24 – 26
The Municipal District of Castleblayney-Carrickmacross	Page 26 – 29
The Municipal District of Ballybay-Clones	Page 29 – 34
The Municipal District of Monaghan	Page 35 – 38
Museum	Page 39 – 40
Library Service	Page 41 – 49
County Heritage Office	Page 50 – 53
Arts	Page 53 – 56
Tourism	Page 56 – 60
Fire & Civil Protection	Page 60 – 66
Water Services	Page 67 – 71
Housing and Building	Page 71 – 74
Planning	Page 74 – 77
Environmental Protection	Page 78 – 82
Roads and Transportation	Page 83 – 88
Community Development	Page 89 – 98
Local Enterprise Office	Page 99 – 102
Strategic Policy Committee Updates	Page 103 – 104
Councillor Representations on External and Council Committees	Page 105 – 110
Conference Training attended by members	Page 111
Appendix I - Members Expenses 2020	Page 112
Appendix II - Financial Statement 2020	Page 113 - 114
Appendix III – Corporate Plan 2020-2024 Progress Report	Page 115 - 168

Foreword

We welcome the publication of Monaghan County Council's Annual Report for 2020.

2020 will be remembered as a difficult year for many of us, but also, as a year that has brought out the best in us. Living with Covid 19 presented many new challenges for Local Government. Our achievements in 2020 involved an unprecedented collaboration and cooperation across the entire public service, operating to provide a single integrated response to the pandemic. We embraced new ways of working and implemented business continuity plans to ensure unwavering service delivery in line with the objectives detailed in our Corporate Plan.

This annual report presents an opportunity to present the activities and achievements of Monaghan County Council in delivering public services and infrastructural projects during these unprecedented times. Monaghan County Council continues to provide high quality public services and develop infrastructure for the people of County Monaghan.

In 2020, Monaghan County Council advanced the delivery of significant building projects. Monaghan County Council awarded the main construction contract for the Peace Campus project on Friday 10th July 2020. 'The Peace Campus' will bring much needed neutral shared space to Monaghan. The €17.6 million project is supported by the European Union's PEACE IV Programme, managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) which awarded €9.5 million to Monaghan County Council to deliver the project. The four-storey development, located at the Council's former machinery yard site will provide community space, a youth facility, a new town library and a cultural heritage area. The construction contract was awarded to Felix O'Hare & Co. Ltd. Construction work commenced on site on the 27th July.

New build projects were the main focus of the Housing capital expenditure programme. A total of 97 social houses were added to the housing stock of 1615 units through acquisitions and new builds in 2020. Monaghan County Council continued to make significant progress in delivering the Rebuilding Ireland programme. Construction is well underway for the €6 million Clones Renewal Scheme, providing 24 social housing homes in the centre of Clones Town. 6 units were delivered in 2020 and a further 24 units to be delivered in 2021. The scheme has been a focus of attention nationally winning Excellence in Planning Award at the Property Industry Excellence Awards and very much focused on town renewal and breathing life back into Clones Town. Monaghan County Council will continue to seek additional funding for Social Housing at every opportunity that arises and proactively pursue opportunities for additional social housing provision in areas of Housing Need throughout County Monaghan.

Our work to progress major road infrastructure continued throughout 2020. Emerging Preferred Route Corridors were published for the N2 Ardee to Castleblayney and N2 Clontibret to Border Road Schemes on the 24th August 2020, and a period of public consultation ran until 5th October 2020. Monaghan County Council is working in partnership with Louth County Council and in association with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and Westmeath National Roads Office (WNRO) to develop the 32km N2 Ardee to Castleblayney Road Scheme. Monaghan County Council is also working in association with TII and WNRO to develop the 28km N2 Clontibret to Border Road Scheme. Together with the other improvements planned for the N2/A5 route, these proposed road schemes will significantly improve transport connectivity along the N2 and provide safer and more efficient access to other strategic national roads.

Climate change continues to be a major challenge for us at National and International level with policy responses required in terms of, not only, mitigating the causes of climate change, but also in adapting to the inevitable consequences of our changing climate. Monaghan County Council is committed to playing a lead role in the

protection of the environment and the enhancement of Monaghan's natural and built environment. Monaghan County Council's Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024 represents a proactive step in the process of adaptation planning to build resilience and respond effectively to the threats posed by climate change. During 2020, despite the Covid pandemic, significant progress was made in progressing the measures and actions contained within the strategy and within the national Climate Action Plan 2019. The council has made substantial progress over a relatively short period but these are only the first steps in a journey where the country is in now legally committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2050.

Monaghan County Council continue to support business and enterprise against the unprecedented challenges presented by Brexit and the Covid 19 pandemic. In tandem with government departments and State Agencies, Monaghan County Council is working to support business throughout the county at this uncertain time, through the Restart Grants processes and the Local Enterprise Office system of supports. Financial supports and rate remissions provide short-term assistance to the business community. However, no-one is certain what the post-Covid economic recovery will look like, with sectors of the economy undoubtedly more impacted than others.

The environment in which the public service operates is increasingly complex and interconnected. Public Service innovation will strengthen the strategies, structures and tools we use to meet citizen demands and respond to challenges in the medium and long term. Monaghan County Council was selected to work with the LGMA and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform to help develop a Public Service Innovation Strategy framework which can be rolled-out to all public service bodies. An innovation maturity assessment survey was completed, the outcome of which, has assisted the Council in preparing a draft Innovation Strategy for the organisation. Monaghan County Council's success in securing funding under the Department's Our Public Service 2020 Innovation Fund Schemes is testament of the appetite for innovation among staff. The successful projects included the Komeer Community Alerts Application and the 360 degree virtual house tour and inspection application.

Monaghan County Council achieved CPD Accredited Employers Standard from Engineers Ireland from 01 October 2020 to 01 October 2023. The council is committed to the professional development of its staff and is seeking to harness this national CPD framework to raise competence levels and deliver tangible business benefits to the organisation. The Council wish to promote the implementation of this best practice framework in order to recruit and retain talented staff.

The Patrick Kavanagh Centre, which re-opened its doors on 20 July 2020, following a €1m restoration, triumphed in the Film and Video category at the Heritage in Motion Awards 2020. A joint initiative of the European Museum Academy and Europa Nostra, the Awards are a celebration of the best examples of innovative multimedia and digital projects in cultural heritage in Europe. The centre tells the story of one of the best-loved poets of the 20th century, through an immersive, multimedia experience.

Looking back on a year like no other, we realise how we have had to adapt to working with and enduring the restrictions which have affected every aspect of our family, work and social lives. Many staff and members have suffered the loss of family and friends and the grieving process has been severely disrupted by the Government restrictions around funeral rites and ceremonies. Monaghan County Council were deeply saddened by the untimely loss of staff members in 2020, Paul Mulligan and Roger McQuaid. We will keep them and their families in our thoughts and prayers always.

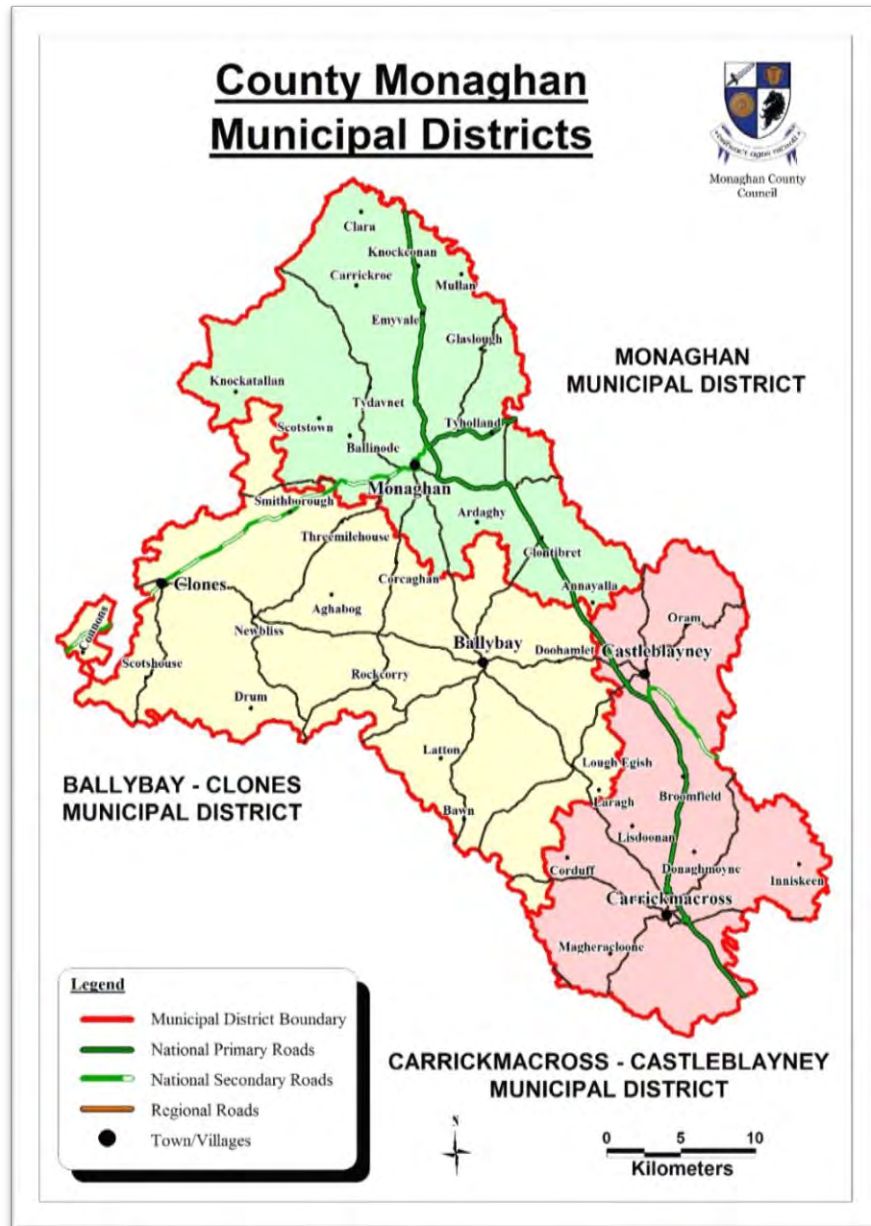
Finally, we would like to acknowledge the support, dedication and co-operation of all staff, throughout the organisation - the Directors of Services, and Monaghan County Council staff, both indoor and outdoor. We would like to thank the elected representatives for their ongoing co-operation and support throughout the year. Much of what we do can only be achieved by working in partnership with our various stakeholders and we would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of them for their on-going support and co-operation.



Eamonn O'Sullivan
Chief Executive of Monaghan County Council



Colm Carthy
Cathaoirleach of Monaghan County
Council



Mission Statement

*Monaghan County Council provides
High Quality, Sustainable Public Services
to enhance the
Economic, Environmental and Cultural Wellbeing
of our People and County.*

LIST OF ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

The following are the Elected Representatives for the County of Monaghan:

BALLYBAY-CLONES MUNICIPAL DISTRICT



**Cllr Seamus
COYLE (FF)**



**Cllr Pat
TREANOR (SF)**



**Cllr Sean
GILLILAND (FG)**

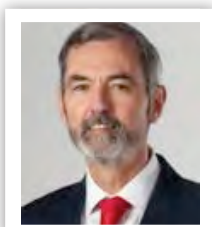


**Cllr Hugh
MCELVANEY (IND)**



**Cllr Richard
TRUELL (FG)**

MONAGHAN MUNICIPAL DISTRICT



**Cllr Sean
CONLON (SF)**



**Cllr Cathy
BENNETT (SF)**



**Cllr Brian
MCKENNA (SF)**



**Cllr Raymond
AUGHEY (FF)**



**Cllr David
MAXWELL (FG)**



**Cllr Seamus
TREANOR (IND)**



**Cllr Paudge
CONNOLLY (IND)**

CARRICKMACROSS-CASTLEBLAYNEY MUNICIPAL DISTRICT



**Cllr Aidan
CAMPBELL (FG)**



**Cllr Mary
KERR-CONLON (FG)**



**Cllr Aoife
MC COOEY (FF)**



**Cllr PJ
O'HANLON (FF)**



**Cllr Noel
KEELAN (SF)**



**Cllr Colm
CARTHY (SF)**

Finance

Rates Waiver 2020

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage offered support for businesses affected by the COVID 19 restrictions through the commercial Rates Waiver. This Waiver was available to the majority of Rate payers in Co. Monaghan and amounted to €6,137,862 for the nine-month period it applied to in 2020. The waiver was applied as a credit directly to the rate payers accounts and did not necessitate an application from the business.

Business Restart Grants

Another form of support offered by the government was the Business Restart Grants. Businesses in Co. Monaghan received a total of €9.4m in Restart Grants during 2020.

The Restart Grants were based on the Rates liability that was payable by the business in 2019. Restart Grant I offered a maximum of €10,000 per business and Restart Grant Plus (RGP) offered a further maximum of €15,000 per business. The majority of businesses received grant payments of at least €7,200. Further add-on RGP payments were also made available to various businesses such as 'wet pubs'. An application and declaration were required in order for the Council to administer these grants. Monaghan County Council operated their own bespoke system using Laserfiche in order to administer these grants which proved very successful.

MCC Covid related costs

In December 2020 Finance submitted a claim to the Department for additional expenditure and unrealised income in 2020 resulting directly from COVID 19. The expected recoupment in relation to this claim is unknown at this point. This will assist in reducing the deficit for 2020.

Reconciliation of Statement of Financial Position (SoFP) and review of Statement of Comprehensive Income (SoCI)

The Finance section carry out regular

reconciliations and reviews of balances on the SoFP, thus adhering to best practice recommendations. This ensures that debts are collected as quickly as possible, funding for capital projects is identified and transactions are monitored and reviewed on a timely basis, loans are reconciled to statements and fixed assets are reconciled to other available registers such as iHouse and the Property Asset Register.

In addition to this, Finance carry out a quarterly analysis of actual versus budgeted revenue expenditure and income to ensure that all expenditure and income are accurately posted and are recognised in the correct period. No audit adjustments have been required in the Council's accounts.

Treasury Management

From April 2017, Bank of Ireland have applied negative interest charges to Local Authorities with credit balances on their bank account over €1m. In order to eliminate these interest charges, Finance staff monitor the bank balance and transfer excess funds to an Investment bank where it can earn interest on deposits.

Finance also monitor capital balances to ensure that sanctioned loans required to fund projects are drawn down at the optimum time.

Reduction of cumulative deficit

Due mainly to the abolishment of the Town Councils in 2014, Monaghan County Council including the former Town Councils had a cumulative opening deficit at the beginning of 2014 of €3,309,389. The Council is committed to reducing the deficit on an annual basis. Normally, this cumulative deficit reduction is achieved by attaining a revenue surplus in the annual accounts. The surplus is achieved through accurate budget preparation, cost reduction awareness and careful monitoring of actual spend versus budget. The cumulative deficit has been reduced from the highest level of €3.3m in 2013 to €1.9m at 2020 year-end.

Corporate Services

Corporate Services provides support to Senior Management, the Cathaoirleach and Elected Members. It is also responsible for the organising and managing of monthly Council Meetings, Corporate Policy Group Meetings, Strategic Policy Committee Meetings and Joint Policing Committee Meetings. The section is responsible for the collation of the Corporate Plan, Annual Report, Annual Service Delivery Plan and the review of Risk Register.

Corporate Services also co-ordinates the compilation of the annual NOAC Performance Indicators for the Council and has a significant role in terms of governance, ensuring the Council is compliant with the Ethics Framework, Children First Act, General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), Freedom of Information and Access to Information on the Environment legislation.

Register of Electors

The Register of Electors is compiled annually so as to ensure that members of the public can exercise their democratic right to vote in any elections/referendum that arise during the year. The Register is published every year on 1st February and comes into effect on 15th February of that year. In compiling the Register we liaise with the Councils' Revenue Collectors who act as fieldworkers and undertake the necessary enquiries to ensure an accurate document is produced. Members of the public can check if they are registered at www.checktheregister.ie. The total number of Electors in the County for the 2021/2022 Register of Electors was 50,832:

- Monaghan Electoral Area = 18,615
- Ballybay – Clones Electoral Area = 14,830
- Carrickmacross-Castleblayney Electoral Area = 17,387

Freedom of Information

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 members of the public have a legal right of access to records held by the Local

Authority. **61 requests** were received by the Council in 2020, from members of the media, Oireachtas, business reps and the general public.

Protected Disclosures

There were no protected disclosures received during 2020.

Twinning

Monaghan County Council is officially twinned with the following areas –

- Geel, Belgium (the parish of Tydavnet in North Monaghan is also twinned with this area)
- Prince Edward Island, Canada
- Miramichi, Canada

Having regard to Covid 19 restrictions in place, no twinning exchanges were undertaken during the year.

Internal Audit

As part of good governance arrangements, Monaghan County Council maintains an appropriate and independent Internal Audit Unit. This assists with improvements in control systems, procedures, greater levels of accountability and confidence in the processes. It provides a level of assurance to the Council, Chief Executive, Management Team and the Audit Committee.

Meetings in 2020

2020 saw many meetings move from traditional venues to online TEAMS platforms in an effort to reduce the potential spread of Covid-19 and to ensure that Monaghan County Council would continue to provide high quality service to the people of Monaghan. From June 2020, Monaghan County Council's monthly meetings were held in the Garage Theatre to ensure that social distancing and other Covid-19 health and safety protocols could be observed.

The following is a summary of the meetings held in 2020:

Council meetings (including AGM & Budget meeting):	11
--	----

Corporate Policy Group:	12
Monaghan Municipal District:	10
Carrickmacross-Castleblayney Municipal District:	08
Ballybay Clones Municipal District:	08
Joint Policing Committee:	02
Local Community Development Committee (LCDC):	11
SPC – Climate Change & Environment:	03
SPC – Economic Development and Enterprise Support:	01
SPC – Housing, Social & Cultural:	03
SPC – Transport & Community:	03
Coiste Gaeilge:	03
Twinning Committee:	0
Audit Committee:	04

General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

Monaghan County Council is committed to the protection of personal data and respects the fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals. It collects and processes a significant amount of personal data and Special Category personal data in various multiple formats on a daily basis in order to provide the most effective and targeted range of services to meet the needs of the citizens, communities and businesses within the County.

In 2020, Monaghan County Council continued to achieve compliance and demonstrate accountability under GDPR and data protection. This work included the development and implementation of a suite of policies and procedures, processing data subject access requests, awareness raising and training and notification of data security breaches.

The Council dealt with the following requests/incidents: -

Data Subject Access Requests	7
CCTV requests	12
Data Breach Notifications to the Data Protection Commission	3

Ethics

Section 19 of the Local Elections (Disclosure of

Donations and Expenditure) Act 1999 requires each elected member to furnish to the Local Authority, not later than January 31st, a donation statement indicating whether during the preceding calendar year, the member received a donation exceeding €600. 18 completed forms were received by the closing date of 31 January 2020.

Part 15 of the Local Government Act 2001 obliges each member of the council and relevant staff to complete a form in respect of their declarable interests held during the prescribed period and furnish the annual declaration to the Ethics Registrar no later than the last day of February. 18 completed forms were received from elected members. 75 relevant staff were requested to complete a declaration form.

In 2020, two possible Part 15 contraventions were reported to the Ethics Registrar. Following consideration by the Chief Executive and the Cathaoirleach, the investigations were brought to a conclusion and no further action was required.

Tuarascáil Bhliantúil Coiste na Gaeilge 2020

Díríonn Coiste na Gaeilge Comhairle Contae Mhuineacháin ar úsáid na Gaeilge a chur chun cinn sa Chontae. Bunaíodh an Coiste agus toghadh na Comhairleoirí seo a leanas: An Comh. Pat Treanor, An Comh. Cathy Bennett, An Comh. Richard Truell, An Comh. Raymond Aughey agus An Comh. Hugh McElvaney.

Bhí dúshlán romhainn i 2020 ach is fíor, áfach, gur éirigh leis an gCoiste réimse leathan gníomhaíochtaí a sholáthar as Gaeilge agus orthusan bhí:

1. Scéim deontas do Sheachtain na Gaeilge trínar bronnadh naoi gcinn de dheontais €200 ar Ghrúpaí Pobail chun imeachtaí as Gaeilge sa Chontae a reachtáil.
2. Is mór an trua go raibh orainn an scéim bhliantúil scoláireachtaí chun mic léinn dara leibhéal a chur go dtí cúrsaí samhraidh sa Ghaeltacht a chur ar

ceal, ach táimid tiomanta don bhfillleadh ar an scéim úd nuair a beidh na cúrsaí samhraidh ar siúl arís.

3. Tharla oiliúint sa teanga do bhaill fhoirne agus baill tofa Comhairle Contae Mhuineacháin go luath sa bhliain agus 12 a bhí páirteach inti. Mí na Samhna tharla oiliúint ar leith don bhfoireann tosaigh sa phlé le custaiméirí as Gaeilge, an eagraíocht Gaelchultúr a sholáthraigh í sin ar bhonn náisiúnta.
4. Le linn an frithdhúnadh mí an Mheithimh d'eagraigh an Coiste trí oíche ceoil, amhrán agus filíochta i sraith beo ar *Facebook* darb ainm Le Chéile Muineachán. Bíodh is go raibh an-chuid srianta i gceist ba mhór an gaisce é a leithéid de chlár ardchaigdeáin a chur ar fáil. Gabhaimid buíochas le gach éinne a bhí ag baint leis na hócáidí.
5. Don Oíche Chultúir bhí an Coiste páirteach in ócáid san Ionad Patrick Kavanagh. Ba mhór an pléisiúr fáiltiú roimh an file áitiúil Caitríona Ní Chléiricín maraon leis an nGaeilgeoir ceolmhar cáiliúil Phillip King agus a bhanna ceoil Scullion.
6. Anuraidh cheannaigh an Leabharlann 250 leabhar nua as Gaeilge do pháistí ar chostas €1466. Anuas air sin d'eagraigh an Leabharlann ócáid le Gráinne McElwaine do mhic léinn meánscoile. D'fháiltíodh freisin roimh dhá Sheimineár Gréasáin leis an údar as Gaeilge Sadhbh Devlin mar chuid d'Fhéile Leabhar na bPáistí ar tharla sreabhadh orthu isteach go Bunscoileanna ar fud na tíre.
7. I ndiaidh tréimhse comhairliúcháin phoiblí sheol an Coiste Scéim nua Teanga go dtí an Aire Stáit Jack Chambers TD. Ghlac an tAire leis an Scéim ar an 27 Nollaig. Tá sé rí-thábhachtach go gcuirfear i bhfeidhm na geallúintí a luadh sa phlean seo go ceann na dtrí bliana atá romhainn amach.

Corporate Assets

Capital Projects

Corporate Assets Section leads the delivery of capital projects as identified in the three-year Capital Programme. It also seeks to bring a consistency of approach to the procurement, management and delivery of projects in line with the Public Spending Code and the improved procurement structures embedded into the organisation in recent years.

Public Spending Code - All public bodies are obliged to treat public funds with care, and to ensure that the best possible value-for-money is obtained. The Council uses the principles of the Public Spending Code as a set of guidelines and procedures to ensure appropriate standards are applied and to ensure value for money, openness and transparency.

The Capital Works Management Framework (CWMF) approach is employed by the Council in procurement and consists of a suite of best practice guidance, standard contracts and generic template documents that form the four pillars that support the Framework. Several major capital projects have been progressed in 2020:

Key Projects



Monaghan PEACE Campus

The execution of the construction stage of the project was delayed due to Covid-19 from April

until July of 2020. Works started on site in July and the piling and below ground works have been substantially completed by the end of 2020. Substantial completion is scheduled for April 2022.



Progress in August 2020



Progress in December 2020

Office Refurbishment to 1 Dublin St. –

Redevelopment of Monaghan Town Hall building as modern office facilities was completed in January 2020 and staff from the Planning & Tourism Departments moved into the building in February 2020.



Dublin Street & Roosky Land – Urban

Regeneration

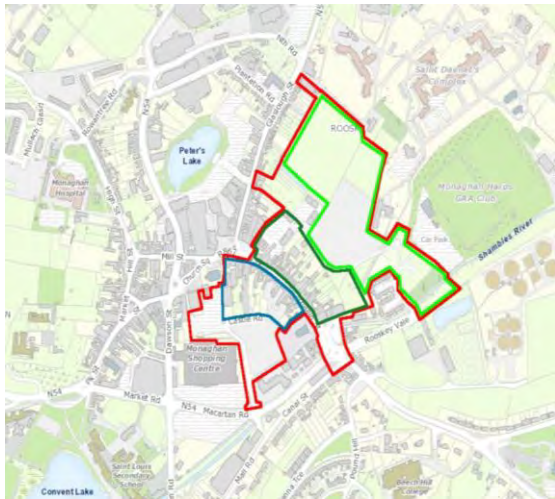
South Dublin Street & Backlands Regeneration Scheme

Preliminary designs for various elements within the regeneration scheme area were progressed by RPS Design Consultants throughout 2020. Some of the major works completed in 2020 were Ecological and Archaeological Surveys, Traffic Modelling Report, Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment of Gavan Duffy Building, Environmental Impact Assessment and Appropriate Assessment Screenings. An Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report was submitted to An Bord Pleanála in December 2020. Detailed Designs will be progressed during 2021, it is envisaged that presentations to the Elected Members and Public Consultation will be held in April 2021 and that a formal planning application for the scheme will be submitted to An Bord Pleanála by the end of Q2 2021.

North Dublin Street & Backlands Regeneration & Roosky Land – Masterplans

Sheridan Woods Urban Planning Design Consultants progressed regeneration proposals and masterplanning concepts for both North Dublin Street and the Roosky Lands during 2020. The masterplan proposals were substantially completed by December 2020. It is anticipated that the final draft of regeneration master plans will be completed in March 2021 and following this it is proposed to arrange presentations to the Elected Members and hold Public Consultation regarding the masterplan proposals.





Castleblayney Market Square Regeneration – Gate Lodge 2 Library & Public Realm

The enabling works phase of the project relating to undergrounding of overhead cables and installation of decorative public lighting in Market Square was completed in October 2020. Broomfield Construction Ltd commenced the main works contract relating to the library building and public realm elements in November 2020. General site clearance and stripping of the old roof structure was completed in December 2020. The anticipated project duration is 16 months and the project is envisaged to be completed in early 2022.



Castleblayney Market Square Regeneration Phase 2 – Castleblayney Market/Court House

A Category 2 RRDF application submitted to the Department in February 2020 was successful in securing grant funding to facilitate design works for the Castleblayney Market House/Courthouse and public realm works in Market Square. The Council engaged AP & E Consultants in November 2020 for a public consultation and stakeholder engagement exercise to determine potential future uses of the Market House. In December 2020 the consultants completed an online public consultation survey and held workshops with various community/stakeholder groups. It is anticipated that the consultants will present their final report to the Council in March/April 2021.



4/5 Mill Street – Emergency Stabilisation Works

Following a structural assessment of the building in November 2020, McGuigan Builders were engaged in December 2020 to execute emergency stabilisation works to the building in the interest of public safety. Preliminary scaffolding and stabilisation measures were completed prior to the Christmas period. The emergency works include removal of internal

debris, installation of stability bracing and replacement of the roof structure, all stabilisation works are scheduled for completion in March 2021.



Property Asset Management

The Council Property Management Software System has been further developed and embedded into the organisation in 2020 to enable effective management of our property portfolio and to link it to the Financial Assets Register (FAR). The Council has worked closely with the



national property database and the National Property Management Network to put in place modern and efficient systems and procedures to ensure that property assets are managed in a professional, coordinated and effective manner and to ensure value for money.

As of December 2020, Monaghan County Council currently has 68 buildings and 1,737 parcels of land in the Property Interests Register. The table below shows breakdown of these Property Assets.

Number of Assets by Type

Asset Type	No. of Asset end of 2020
AMENITY	140
BURIAL GROUND	1
CAR PARK	54
HERITAGE	5
HOUSING	707
LA BUILDING	68
LA BUILDING CAMPUS	14
LAND	3
LAND BANK	3
LANDFILL	3
OTHER	45
PLAYGROUND	1
ROAD	622
WATER SERVICES	71
TOTAL	1737

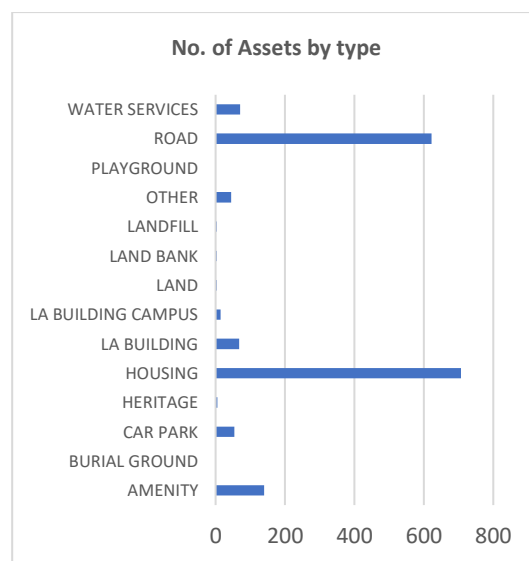


Table of assets totals for 2020

Buildings Asset Management

The Council continues to work towards maximising the use and condition of the Council's buildings. Although Covid-19 has disrupted this work in 2020.

A significant challenge is the provision of suitable office facilities for the effective delivery of services and the Capital Projects section is currently undertaking works to create additional office space in existing buildings to cater for current and expected demand.

Building improvement and upgrade works continue to be undertaken to; improve their energy efficiency, improve facilities to customers and staff and to maintain them in suitable condition.

Monaghan Leisure Complex

Coral Leisure Ltd manages Monaghan Leisure Complex on behalf of Monaghan County Council.

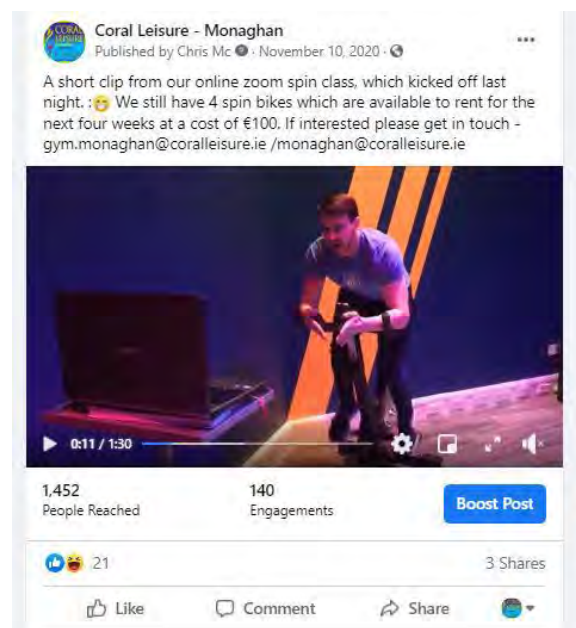
Coral Leisure has operated the facility since 2006 and are one of Ireland's leading service providers - managing nine publicly owned leisure facilities. During late 2020, repairs to the roof and wall cladding were carried out thereby eliminating infiltration problems that had existed for many years.

Also, in 2020, works were commenced to restore the Ground Source Heat Pump system to operational status. These works, which will improve the operational efficiency of the Leisure Complex, will be completed in 2021.



Operations at the Complex were particularly affected by the Covid 19 Pandemic which resulted in significant trading losses and a reduction in footfall of 64% in 2020.

In response to the crisis the operator adapted to meet existing customer needs through on-line training sessions on its social media platforms.



The complex is a base for 86 clubs, schools, community groups and programs – many of which were developed in co-operation with the Monaghan Sports Partnership office. During the year 14 community events were facilitated despite the national health crisis.

Energy Efficiency

Monaghan County Council has made excellent progress towards achieving energy efficiency targets of 33% by 2020. An energy reduction of 37.1% up to end of 2019 has been achieved, and we are one of 13 LA's to have reached the 2020 target, one year ahead of the end of 2020 deadline.



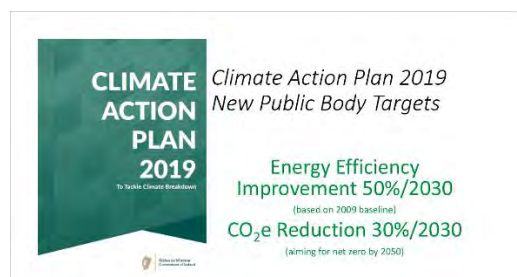
Photo of Solar PV Installation – Scotch Corner

SEAI M&R Report 2020

Energy Section compiles, records and monitors, on an ongoing basis, all energy used by the Council and reports this annually to SEAI for monitoring. The information is used to identify Significant Energy Users (SEU's) within the organisation and these are targeted for action to reduce energy usage. Projects in the past year and into 2021 have targeted Council buildings and public lighting. The Council have worked closely with our energy partners to identify energy reduction projects to Council buildings and through the SEAI's Better Energy Community (BEC) scheme to secure funding to assist in these works.



The **Climate Action Plan 2019** sets new targets after 2020 and the new **Public Sector Energy and Climate targets** sets new targets for **2030 of 50% improvement in public sector energy efficiency and 30% reduction in CO₂**. Monaghan County



New Energy & Carbon Targets

Council actively continues to improve its energy performance and carbon footprint.

Public Street Lighting

Public Lighting is the single biggest energy user in Monaghan County Council, equating to 35% of total energy usage. The Council has an ongoing programme to convert all public lights in the county to energy efficient LED lights by early 2021. This is funded directly by the Council for Non-National Roads and paid back through energy and maintenance cost savings. TII have funded the upgrade of public lights on National Roads to energy efficient LEDs and in 2020 all lights on National Roads have been changed to LED lights.

Overall, 90% of lights were converted to LED by the end of 2020 and all lights to be converted in 2021.

Information Systems & Innovation



The Information Systems & Innovation section leads innovation and digital transformation in Monaghan County Council and provides modern and secure ICT infrastructure and

Broadband Officer

Under the National Broadband Plan, it is anticipated that 3,723 premises will receive high-speed broadband in 2021.



The Council provides public Wi-Fi throughout the county and was active in the latter part of the year rolling out the Wifi4EU scheme across communities. This roll-out will continue into quarter one of 2021 and will deliver broadband to 35 community centres and public buildings, including the installation of external wi-fi at many locations. The Wifi4EU scheme is supported by funding from the EU and Department of Rural and Community Development, with running costs being funded by the local authority.

The Business Applications & GIS Team is responsible for digital transformation and for the Council's extensive suite of software applications and GIS. The team continued to

redesign and automate manual paper-based processes throughout the organisation including the Chief Executive Order process and Staff Increment Approval process. This work was chosen as one of the case studies in the Overview of Local Authority COVID-19 Innovations published by the Local Government Management Agency in May 2020.

Case Study 3 Monaghan County Council Automation of Chief Executive Orders and HR Increment Forms



Laserfiche forms portal was implemented in January 2020 and this proved invaluable during the pandemic and office closures, enabling the Council to provide online access to services. Online application forms and processes were developed for the COVID-19 Emergency Fund, the COVID-19 Business Re-start Grants, the COVID-19 Mortgage Payment Breaks as well as applications for community grants including the Town & Village Renewal Schemes, the Community Enhancement Programme 2020, CLÁR and the Healthy Ireland Fund.

The Re-Start Grant system developed provided a flexible end-to-end solution from online application, validation and approval to payment of the grants. The flexibility of the system meant that it was easily adapted to meet the requirements of additional Re-Start Grants and Grant Top-ups and ensured the Council delivered an efficient, accessible application process for businesses during what was a very difficult and stressful time for many.

On Friday evening 27th March the Government announced a new community support service to be delivered by community groups and led by local authorities. The service, known as the Community Call, was set up to help meet the

needs of vulnerable and older citizens advised to cocoon. The I.S. team worked tirelessly throughout the weekend to ensure that the IT requirements were in place so the service could go live on Monday 30th March. Work involved setting up a freephone and free text service, a call centre, and a GIS-based CRM solution for managing citizen requests.



COVID-19 Community Call

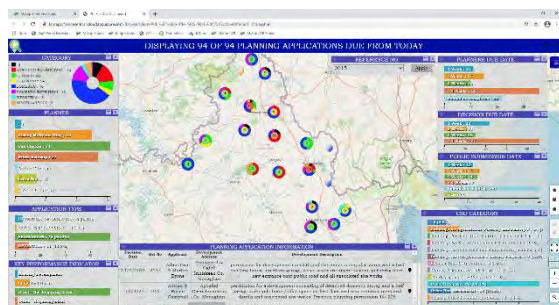
The Community Call system was further developed to facilitate the Library Home Delivery Service. The system includes dashboards and reports enabling library staff to manage and monitor the status of book requests, deliveries and returns. A mobile app with satellite navigation was also developed to help the library van drivers carry out deliveries and returns.

COVID-19 related national and local council initiatives were promoted on monaghan.ie website including the Re-Start Grants, Rates Waivers, Keep Well in Your Community and Shop Local campaigns. Online application forms for grants and funding were made available on the website.

Several business applications were upgraded in 2020 including the Housing Management System, Planning Management System, Register of Electors and Museum cataloguing system. A new version of the National Building Control Management System was implemented which included provision of large monitors for staff, TVs for public viewing, and tablets.

An interactive planning information dashboard which offers a visual aid to decision-making

was developed. The dashboard has created efficiencies in the planning section by allowing staff to view at a glance the current status of all planning applications including application type, category, decision due date, and the planner to whom it is assigned.



Planning Information Dashboard

Security, Networks and Infrastructure

The Security, Networks and Infrastructure team is responsible for ensuring availability and security of ICT systems and services, on-premise and in the Cloud, and for managing the network infrastructure in all Council offices throughout the county including County Offices, MTek1 and 2 Buildings, Planning Office, Municipal District Offices, Fire Stations, Libraries, Museum, and Water Treatment Plants. They also manage the Council's telephony systems, mobile phones, tablets, logger devices and sims.

Cyber-security is a top priority for the Council. A multi-layered cyber-security model is used to protect the Council's systems and data from cyber-attacks, and includes anti-virus, advanced threat protection, group policies, mail-filtering, dns and web-filtering, firewalls and more. In 2020 Pen testing was carried out to identify and address any vulnerabilities or gaps in the network perimeter. Simulated phishing exercises were also carried out in 2020 to maintain user awareness and training regarding one of the most common sources of attack. Work continued replacing and upgrading servers, PCs and laptops to eliminate unsupported systems from the network.

A new asset management system was procured in December 2020. Work will commence in 2021 to ensure all IT assets are

recorded and tracked in the new system.

This team also worked tirelessly throughout 2020 to meet additional challenges of COVID-19. Work included setting up laptops for all office-based staff, implementing and rolling-out multi-factor authentication for remote access, implementing and rolling-out softphones so staff could answer council phone calls remotely, and providing training and support on these services. Training and support was also provided for Microsoft Teams. Council meeting rooms were kitted out with large screens and video conferencing facilities.

Additional work carried out by the team included assisting with the relocation of Community & Environment section to MTek2 and trialling a new wide area network solution, SD-WAN, in the Market House and Crosses Water Treatment Plant. A pilot of windows virtual desktop was also carried out and this is now being implemented as an alternative remote working solution where bandwidth is low.

I.S. Service Desk

The technical support team continued its commitment to delivering a high-quality technical support service to users. 2020 was a challenging year in this regard as staff adjusted to working from home. The number of issues logged with the helpdesk rose significantly in 2020. 4,760 calls were logged, an increase of close to 1,000 calls on the previous year.

Call Statistics	2020	2019
Total Calls Logged	4760	3808
Avg. Calls per Month	397	317
Avg. Calls per Day	19	15
Resolved within 24 hrs	59%	55%

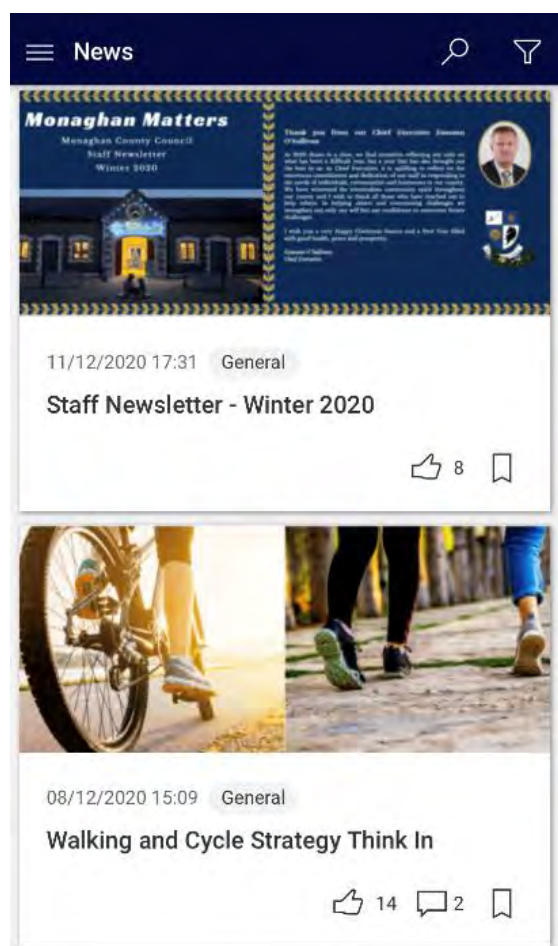
I.S. Service Desk Statistics

Innovation

In its response to the global pandemic the Council demonstrated enormous capability and willingness to innovate. This was clearly visible in the rapid provisioning of the new aforementioned services such as the Community Call, Business Re-Start Grants and

Library Home Delivery Service in addition to other novel services delivered by Sports Partnership, Youth Officer and Cultural Services. Every section in the organisation adapted and innovated to ensure services could be delivered in a safe manner.

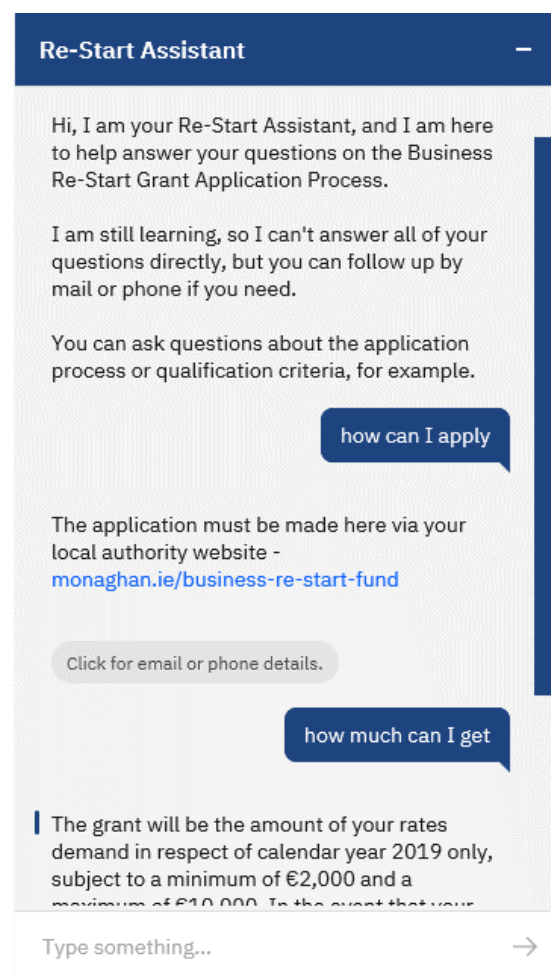
A new all-staff text alert service was set up in February. As not all employees have access to council emails this alerting service proved extremely useful for communicating urgent COVID-19 related messages such as office closures to all staff. Recognising the limits of a one-way texting service a new employee app called Reach was piloted and is now available to all employees of Monaghan County Council.



The app can be downloaded on personal as well as corporate owned devices and allows staff to respond to corporate news items and to create and respond to staff posts. A team comprising IT, HR, Finance and Corporate staff was setup to develop and promote the app and

improve its reach throughout the organisation. Campaigns were run to increase awareness and engagement by staff including a very successful Christmas photo competition.

The section investigates the use of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and virtual reality to improve service delivery. A chatbot/virtual assistant was developed for the Council's website to answer queries on the COVID-19 Re-Start Grant. Some of the benefits of virtual assistants are that they can answer multiple simultaneous queries in a consistent manner and are available 24/7. They free up staff from dealing with repetitive queries so they can get on with other work.



In 2019 the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) launched an innovation fund to help promote a culture of innovation across the public sector. Monaghan County Council achieved success in 2020 for the

second year running receiving €29,900 to develop a 360-degree virtual tour and house inspection app. The app allows housing engineers carry out inspections more efficiently using voice recognition technology and 360-degree photos. Tasks can be assigned to Council craftworkers and external contractors and an estimate of costs to carry out works is automatically generated. A major benefit of the application is the facility to create virtual tours. A secure link to the tour is emailed to prospective tenants so they can take a virtual tour of the house using their smart phone or virtual reality headset.



Virtual Tour and House Inspection App

Monaghan County Council was one of the pilot public sector organisations along with the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA), the Courts Service and the Department of Agriculture who worked with DPER and consultancy firm EY to develop a national innovation strategy for the sector. As well as the national innovation strategy, a set of tools and guidance notes were developed to assist public sector organisations develop their own local innovation strategy in line with the national strategy. The Council participated in DPER run webinars to help promote the strategy and provide training on innovation strategy development to all public sector organisations.



National Public Service Innovation Strategy

National Public Service Innovation Week took place 19th to 23rd October. The section ran a series of live events to showcase the innovation taking place in the organisation. Staff from IT, Corporate, Finance, Libraries and Community & Environment were among those who provided interesting interactive presentations on innovations taking place in their areas. The section launched the Council's innovation fund and opened the call for applications to the fund. An innovation corner on the Staff Portal was also launched.



Public Service Innovation Week 19-23 October

Corporate Procurement

Overview

Despite the initial lockdown and subsequent challenges resulting from the outbreak of Covid 19, Monaghan County Council's procurement activity for 2020 remained consistent with 2019 figures. Monaghan County Council's policy decision taken in 2018 that all procurement competitions above the national threshold be conducted electronically, ensured our procurement activities could proceed smoothly during this turbulent time.

In order to mitigate the risk of Covid 19 on Monaghan County Council procurement competitions, the Procurement Officer prepared a comprehensive report detailing all procurements that may be impacted by Covid 19. Specific advice was issued to all sections as to how to proceed with their procurements, based on both advice from the Office of Government Procurement and independent legal advice received by Monaghan County Council. The advice varied depending on whether the procurement was planned, live or contract had been awarded at the time of the lockdown.

In 2020, Monaghan County Council published over 110 Requests for Tenders through both the eTenders (57) and www.supplygov.ie (56) platforms). Five of the competitions advertised on eTenders competitions were for value which exceed the EU procurement thresholds (i.e. €5,350,000 for works or €214,000 for goods or services).

Monaghan County Council staff conducted 53 quote competitions through the etenders platform using the quick quotes option. Of these competitions, 23 were for the procurement of services, 16 for supplies and 14 for works. Conducting quote competitions through this platform ensures transparency for all our purchases regardless of value.

Corporate Procurement Plan 2020 - 2022

Monaghan County Council's Corporate Procurement Plan (CPP) was adopted by the

Management Team on the 1st of September 2020. The CPP is a framework document that sets out how Monaghan County Council will conduct its procurement function over the three-year period of the plan. The plan sets out 25 actions to be completed over the lifetime of the plan with Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) associated with each. This plan replaces Monaghan County Council's previous Corporate Procurement Plan 2017-2019.

Following the adoption of the Climate Action Charter, encouraging Green Public Procurement will be priority of the Procurement Unit in 2021.

Procurement Procedures

Monaghan County Council's Procurement Procedures Rev 3 were issued to all staff in January 2020, taking account of the updated EU thresholds for procurement. The procedures ensure that procurement is conducted in line with the requirements of Public Sector reform, the Office of Government Procurement, EU Directives and National Guidelines.

Procurement Steering Committee

The Procurement Steering Committee continue to meet on a quarterly basis. The committee take a proactive role in the area of procurement and the preparation of procurement policies and templates.

Procurement Team

Together with the Procurement Officer, this team continues to lead, guide and support all procurement operations to help ensure that goods, services and works are procured in compliance with all relevant legislation and guidelines, while managing risk and achieving value for money. Through ongoing learnings from the management of all Monaghan County Council procurement competitions, the Procurement Leads and Admin Leads in each department have developed significant expertise in procurement.

Public Spending Code

In accordance with the Public Spending Code, Monaghan County Council issued a Quality Assurance Report in August 2020 to NOAC for review to check compliance with the Public Spending Code. In this report Monaghan County Council must submit an inventory of all projects/programmes costing greater than €0.5m distinguishing between capital and current expenditure and categorised by expenditure being considered, expenditure being incurred, and expenditure recently ended was met without exception. The PSC also requires Monaghan County Council to publish procurements more than €10m and to submit self-assessment checklist.

Model Publication Scheme

Monaghan County Council is obligated to report quarterly on public contracts (tenders) awarded, for the Model Publication Scheme, which is part of the Freedom of Information regime. The publication relates to all public works contracts with a value over €25k.

All Sections have assisted in the compilation of contracts awarded for 2020 and this information has now been published on the Council's website and can be found on the following link:-

<https://monaghan.ie/corporateservices/procurement/>

Office of Government Procurement (OGP)

In July 2020, Monaghan County Council signed a 'Memorandum of Understanding' with the Office of Government Procurement. This document sets out the principles governing the procurement relationship between the two parties. It recognises that Monaghan County Council and the OGP are engaged in a partnership focussed on delivering efficient and suitable procurement services and value for money, ultimately to assist the local authority in meeting service delivery needs.

Monaghan County Council are using a number of OGP frameworks at present. Business & Management Consultancy, Franking Machine, Legal Services, Security Cash & Coin Collection, Stationery and office supplies and fuel cards have all been procured off these frameworks, either through mini competitions or direct

drawdowns.

Covid 19 PPE

Due to a worldwide shortage of Covid related PPE, PPE for the entire Local Government Sector was sourced centrally by the OGP. The Procurement Unit collated all Monaghan County Council's PPE requirements, across all sections, to ensure adequate PPE was ordered to meet our needs. The Procurement Unit coordinate the distribution of the PPE to the various sections where it is needed.

Human Resources

Recruitment

The Human Resource Management Section processed 355 applications in relation to 12 recruitment competitions during 2020

As a result of the competitions held in 2020, 52 applicants were deemed qualified and placed on panels, 16 posts were offered and as at 31st December 2020, 10 staff were appointed. At the end of 2020 there were 24 panels in place.

The staff complement for Monaghan County Council at 31st December 2020 was

Core Staff	No.	WTE
Managerial	5	5
Clerical/Admin	173	162.79
Prof/Tech	83	82.55
Outdoor	141	131.05
Total Core Staff	402	381.39
Contract Posts	13	12.14
Temporary/Seasonal	4	4
Retained Firefighters	51	N/A
Non DoEC&LG	8	5.15
Total Other Posts	76	21.29

Retirements during 2020

The following staff retired during 2020:

Joan Ryan, Administrative Officer
Brendan Murphy, Senior Executive Technician
Kathleen McCrudden, Clerical Officer



Training and Development

Training during 2020 had proved challenging to co-ordinate due to Covid-19 lockdown but nevertheless we were still able to deliver a total of 19 In-house Training Courses to staff as detailed below. This figure included relevant In-House Health and Safety Courses. In addition to the in-house courses 127 staff attended various training courses, conferences, seminars, workshops and online webinars/courses

- Temporary Traffic Management Design Level 1 & 2
- Climate Action Adaptation training
- Safe Pass
- City & Guilds Chainsaw Training
- Hazard & Risk Assessment Training
- Irish Classes
- Child Protection Training
- COVID-19 Compliance Officer Training
- COVID-19 Return to Work Safely
- Essentials of Innovation
- Road Opening Reinstatement – Basic
- Road Opening Reinstatement – Advanced
- Driver CPC
- School Warden Training
- First Aid Refresher Training
- Manual Handling Training
- Interviewee Preparation
- Microsoft Teams Training
- Abrasive Wheels Training

Courses of Further Education

A total of twenty-seven staff were approved assistance for courses of further education nine, of which were subsidised or eligible for grant funding.

Engineers Ireland 3 Year CPD Re-Accreditation

Following a CPD accreditation audit on 3rd September 2020, Monaghan County Council were awarded Engineers Ireland “CPD Accredited Employer” status for a further, maximum three-year period which runs until October 2023.

As an Engineers Ireland CPD Accredited Employer, Monaghan County Council is part of an exclusive network of organisations that

have demonstrated commitment to the professional development of the staff. This is not only important for attracting top talent among graduates but also for retaining key talent at more advanced levels.

Managing Wellbeing in the Workplace

New Employee Assistance Services Provider – Spectrum. Life

Monaghan County Council engaged the services of a new Employee Assistance Service provider - Spectrum. Life, to support our employees, our members and their families.

The Employee Assistance Service (EAS) and Wellbeing APP was officially launched on 26th November 2020. The Employee Assistance Service is available to all staff 24/7, 365 days a year and covers Counselling, Wellness, Nutrition, Fitness and Online Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, access to sign posting for support in areas such as; infertility & pregnancy loss, elder care support, parent coaching, international employee support, legal information, financial information and much more.

Flu Vaccinations

Monaghan County Council agreed to reimburse any staff member who opted to avail of the Flu Vaccination in 2020.

Health & Safety Unit

Operational Plan

The Health and Safety Unit (HSU) set out the health and safety targets to be achieved in the 'Annual Service Delivery Plan' (ASDP) 2020 (and in line with the 'Corporate Risk Register'). The HSU documented a programme of work in its 'HSU Operational Plan 2020' to achieve the requirements and targets of the ASDP 2020. The Operational Plan was reviewed on a weekly basis by the HSU as part of the Weekly Team Planning Meetings. The plan was further reviewed on a monthly basis with the Director of Service and the HSU via the monthly MonStat Meetings.

The HSU Operational Plan took a challenging turn in 2020 for Monaghan County Council (MCC) with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The unit adapted its work program very quickly to ensure the safety of its employees and those who could have been affected by works undertaken by MCC. A Local Authority National Committee for COVID-19 Health and Safety was set up to develop a suite of National Procedures to address the health and safety issues raised by the pandemic. MCC's Head of Health and Safety was selected as a member of this committee and along with the other members of the committee the work was successfully completed in a very challenging timescale.

MCC developed HSP55 COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Workplace Protection and Improvement Guide in line with the National Procedures issued. This guide contained all COVID-19 health and safety related procedures, forms and templates. It provided a simplified means for employees to access the information and procedures they needed. This was a complex guide to develop and was completed successfully by the HSU. From March onwards the HSU reviewed HSP55 with a total of 20 updates by year end. Throughout the pandemic the HSU continued with the challenge of COVID-19 while achieving as much of the targets set out in 2020 Operational Plan as was possible.

In order to provide easy to access to the document management system (and reduce paper usage), the HSU moved its inspection methodology to the online Tablet Laserfiche system. This was and continues to be an effective method of inspection that produces a consistent and concise reporting method. It substantially reduced the quantity of paper produced by the HSU. In 2020 the HSU operated at approximately 90% paperless.

Work conducted by the unit from February to June 2020 was mainly COVID-19 related. By July 2020 the HSU returned to work on the Operational Plan as originally set out. The following information details the main elements of work achieved by the HSU in 2020:

- Corporate Safety Statement reviewed six monthly as required by the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005
- Safety Committee Meeting Feb 2020.
- Online Health and Safety Manuals completed for all sections.
- HSP40 Temporary Traffic Management Procedure completed in line with new national requirements.
- HSP53 Emergency Preparedness and Response to Storm Procedure completed with Hazard & Risk Assessments included).
- HSP55 COVID-19 Coronavirus) Workplace Protection and Improvement Guide developed.
- 23 Procedures reviewed and updated.
- 6 Forms reviewed and updated.
- HSM01 Radiation Register completed.
- HSM06 Confined Space Register completed.
- Section Ladder Registers completed.
- HSF14 Health and Safety Inspection Form updated and set up on Laserfiche.
- HMS01 to 09 Safety Registers updated monthly.
- Corporate Risk Register reviewed quarterly.
- COVID-19 Presentations completed and delivered to Members and Employees.
- 38 Covid-19 Compliance raining Sessions delivered by the HSU to employees.
- Two Safety Link Newsletters created and issued.
- Variety of events and information completed for European Health and Safety Week.

- 21 Safety Briefings developed and issued.
- 07 LASOG and Joint Union Health and Safety Steering Committee Meetings attended by the Head of Health and Safety.
- 09 MCC Defibrillators maintained and checked by the HSU.
- 12 HSU Monthly Reports delivered on time to the Management Team.

Inspection Programme

The 2020 Inspection Programme was successfully completed having been adapted to include COVID-19 Inspections. The following table outlines the inspections completed by the HSU:

Target Number of Inspections:	Actual Achieved :	% Achieved :
156	169	108%
Inspection Conducted:	Number Conducted:	
Road Works	110	
Yards	06	
Water	04	
Housing	02	
Corporate/Capita l	01	
COVID-19	44	
Building	02	

Hazard and Risk Assessment

The following table outlines Hazard and Risk Assessments completed by the HSU in 2020:

Assessment Type:	96 Hazard & Risk Assessments conducted in total
COVID-19	12
Playgrounds	30
Plant Rooms	17
Yards/Landfill	03
Procedure	24
Buildings	10

Summary

While 2020 was a challenging year for the HSU it highlighted how quickly the unit can respond to change. It demonstrated the team work within the unit and the leadership of the Director of Service and the acceptance of employees to the changes that were required to keep them and others safe.

The work completed in 2020 by the HSU enabled Monaghan County Council and its employees to meet the legal requirements of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007 and other applicable legislation.

The Municipal District of Carrickmacross- Castleblayney

Road Infrastructure

In 2020, the Carrickmacross-Castleblayney Municipal District managed an investment of €3.55million in the Regional and Local road network (an increase of €780,000 on 2019).

13 roads (4 Regional and 9 Local) were strengthened under the Restoration Improvement Programme and a further 11 roads (2 Regional and 9 Local) were resealed under the Restoration Maintenance Programme.

Funding received under the Active Travel programme enabled the substantial completion of five schemes to provide enhanced walking and cycling facilities in the towns of Castleblayney and Carrickmacross.

The Municipal District also completed improvement works to 4 Local roads under two pilot initiatives - the "Cement Bound Granular Material" and the "Reclaimed Asphalt" pilot schemes.

Two private roads were completed under the Local Improvement Scheme (L.I.S) and 4 local roads were resurfaced under the Community Involvement Scheme (C.I.S) at a cost of €440,000.

Regenerating our Town and Village Centres

The Municipal District was actively involved in the restoration of buildings and facilities investment opportunities throughout 2020.

Works to the Market House, Carrickmacross were completed. The building now houses the new Carrickmacross Lace Gallery, a new Craft Shop, a new craft studio and a unisex public toilet.



The Market House, Carrickmacross

Following investment of €1.2million, the Patrick Kavanagh Centre in Inniskeen opened to the public in July 2020. Funded through Monaghan County Council's Development Contribution Scheme, with grant aid from Failte Ireland and the Department of Arts, Culture, Gaeltacht and Heritage, the Centre is a flagship visitor attraction for the County.



The Patrick Kavanagh Centre, Inniskeen

In 2020, Monaghan County Council, in partnership with Farney Community Development Ltd., purchased the Carrickmacross Workhouse, inclusive of its 6.5-acre site and accompanying buildings, for the sum of €600,000. This acquisition and the future development of the site and buildings will provide facilities for the social and community needs of the South Monaghan area.

An exciting new visitor attraction, the *Workhouse Experience*, funded through the Town and Village Renewal Scheme, together with the Municipal Allocation Fund, will, subject to Covid-19 restrictions, open in time for the 2021 tourism season.



The Workhouse, Carrickmacross

Combined with the Patrick Kavanagh Centre and the Craft Centre at the Market House, the Workhouse will complete a cluster of tourism activities in the South of the County that will help attract visitors and contribute to the local economy.

Funding was received under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) for the development of a new Enterprise Hub ("The Ridge") at McGrath Road, Castleblayney. A joint initiative with Enterprising Monaghan and Castleblayney Community Enterprise, the 1,350 sqm facility will provide a 28-unit business hub. Works are due to commence on site in January 2021, with an anticipated completion date of March 2022. "The Ridge" will be managed by Castleblayney Community Enterprise CLG.



"The Ridge" Enterprise Hub, McGrath Road, Castleblayney

Investing in Public Spaces

The Municipal District has developed Public Realm and Economic Plans for both Castleblayney and Carrickmacross Towns. The Public Realm Plan for Carrickmacross provided the basis for a successful funding application under the RRDF for the development of several town centre and public realm projects.

These included, the development of two Local Area Action Plans for the backlands off Main Street, the development of a Car Parking Strategy for the town, and the on-going development of a detailed design for the Public Realm on Main Street and Bridewell Lane.

Inniskeen Village Public Realm Plan is currently under development. This plan will seek to address access and parking challenges around the village and provide the basis for future funding applications.

Funding, under the Town and Village Renewal scheme, was secured for an external canopy and outdoor screen at the Patrick Kavanagh Centre, together with a bandstand canopy and picnic benches at the Civic Offices in Carrickmacross.

Both these projects will support a safer transition from Covid-19 restrictions, in an open space setting, allowing for physical distancing. They will enhance the Public Realm, providing opportunities for outdoor events and gatherings, whilst encouraging increased footfall to benefit local economies.

Consultants have been appointed to undertake a public engagement study to inform the future use of the Market House and Square in Castleblayney Town. €295,000 has been secured under the RRDF to facilitate preliminary and detailed design for the refurbishment of the Market House building, and the enhancement of the surrounding public realm.

A funding application is also pending for the development of a new technology hub, C:TEK II, in Carrickmacross.

Developing Outdoor Recreational Amenities

Funding under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS), saw the completion of the following projects in 2020:

- Surfacing and drainage works at the entrance to Mindzenty Park, Castleblayney.

- The provision of new seating and recreational facilities at The Point and jetty at Black Island, Castleblayney

Maintenance and upkeep work to the Monaghan Way Trail remains on-going, whilst ORIS funding provided for investment in the “Hilly Way” Cycle route, connecting Kingscourt to Carrickmacross, along the Lough Fea Estate. This cycleway will ultimately connect to the Navan-Kingscourt route.

Funding has been sought to support the development of several outdoor recreational initiatives in 2021. These include:

- Dog walking park at Drummond Otra.
- Biodiversity and Pollinator measures at Tullynaskeagh East & Gallows’ Hill.
- Public realm incorporating seating, landscaping and signage at 5 No. locations.
- Outdoor fitness and exercise Trail at Lough Muckno Park, Castleblayney
- Lough na Glac to Ardee Road Walking Trail, Carrickmacross
- Proposed Music Trail and Walking Trail Signage for Castleblayney and Oram.

Community Actions

The Municipal District works closely with local groups to better target investment and improve service delivery. The MD part-funds and works very closely with the Carrickmacross Chamber of Commerce to help create a trade-friendly environment in the town.

The Chamber assists in planning and provides valuable business feedback on proposed initiatives. The Chamber of Commerce also manages the festive lighting for the town and organises activities in the run up to Christmas. The “Carrickmacross Online Market” was launched on the 8th of December 2020. 17 No. enterprises are currently availing of this online platform, with many more expected to follow in 2021.

In Castleblayney, the Town Regeneration Team has been very active in providing focus for the business and community sectors. The Team meet with the MD executive on a monthly basis and leads initiatives such as the Town

Voucher Scheme; Christmas lights; tourism promotions and events.

Tidy Towns - The Municipal District helps fund these groups with an annual contribution and provides additional supports throughout the year in order to provide them with the best opportunity to achieve their goals.

Tourism Initiatives

Monaghan County Council and the Municipal District office provide ongoing financial and logistical support to tourism initiatives within the district. These activities generate significant income into the local community.

The investment in the Patrick Kavanagh Centre; the Lace Gallery; and the Workhouse in Carrickmacross reflects the core tourism strategy for the South of the county, namely to develop a cluster of tourism products that, combined and alongside existing offerings, will form a significant cultural tourism attraction for the district. A funding application, for a bike rental scheme to complement the Patrick Kavanagh Centre, is also pending.

In Castleblayney, the Council is seeking to develop Lough Muckno and the Hope Castle demesne as a significant regional attraction.

The Municipal District of Ballybay Clones

Roads Programme 2020

In 2020 Ballybay-Clones Municipal District undertook a substantial programme of road infrastructural development. The Municipal District carried out drainage, bitmac overlay and surface dressing works on nine local roads and three regional roads in the district to the value of nearly €2.63million under the restoration improvement grants scheme. There were a further 45km of roads were surfaced dressed throughout the Municipal District. The Municipal District also undertook extensive general repairs/maintenance to the road network in the district such as gully repairs/cleaning, road patching, hedge cutting, sweeping and scavenging.

Low Cost Safety Improvement Works

Low cost safety improvement projects were completed in 2020 at the LP2331/LT23313 Coolkill, Cornawall road , Rockcorry, At the junction of the R162/R184 known locally as Hanrattys Cross, LP39002/R190 Balladian and at the LS6290/R183 junction at Kileevan National School.

Specific Improvement Grant

In 2020 Monaghan County Council secured funding of €650,000 through the Specific Improvement Scheme to replace Brackly Bridge off the R180 at Tossy Cross. This scheme consists of the replacement of the damaged bridge be replaced and there will be significant works undertaken in upgrading both the local and regional road and realigning the junction at Tossy Cross. Monaghan County Council also secured €370,000 through the same grant for realignment of sections of the R181 from Lough Egish to Shercock. This funding is being used for the design of the project and to secure land for the construction stage.

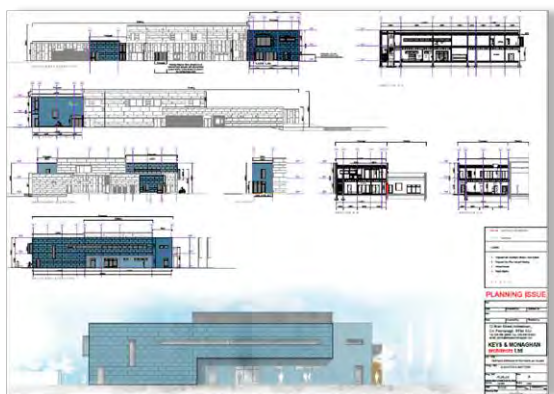
Footpath Repairs

In October, a contractor on behalf of Ballybay Clones Municipal District commenced a programme of works for the repair of defective

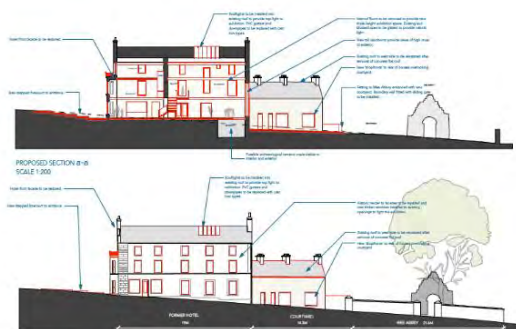
footpaths in Clones Town. The total value of this works is in the region of €100,000.

The Peace Link

Due to the continual increased numbers of people using the existing state of the art facilities at the Peace Link Clones, it has become apparent that the facilities need to be expanded and enhanced to meet the growing demand. The Municipal District of Ballybay-



Clones have been working closely with Clones Erne East Sports Management Company Ltd to agree a scope of works and have procured the services of Keys and Monaghan Architects to design an extension. Part 8 planning application has been approved.



Community Support Hub

The Ballybay Clones Municipal District were delighted to assist in the role out of the Community Support Hub during the public health emergency of April 2020. The MD offices were used for training and for the operation of the confidential telephone line set up to assist venerable members of our society.

Rural Regeneration Development Fund

As part of Project Ireland 2040, the Government has committed to providing an additional €1 billion for a new Rural Regeneration and Development Fund over the period 2019 to 2027. The Fund will provide investment to support rural renewal for suitable projects in towns and villages with a population of less than 10,000, and outlying areas. It will be administered by the Department of Rural and Community Development. This Funding will be awarded through a competitive bid process, based on delivering the objectives for rural Ireland in the National Planning Framework.

Ballybay-Clones Municipal District prepared substantial applications for the towns of Ballybay and Clones and were successful in obtaining funding for both towns.

In Clones the application included St. Tiarnach's Plaza, a Heritage project and a Fermanagh Street Business Hub, and funding was received for all of these projects. Together with match funding, there is a funding pot of €0.5M to develop these projects to a construction ready stage. This funding includes for feasibility studies, property purchases, design process and the planning stage. Consultants have been appointed for all 3 projects and it is planned to have some elements of these projects construction ready by Q1 2021. The Heritage Project is at Detailed Design Stage with the Part 8 Planning adopted at the November 2020 Council meeting. St Tiarnach's Plaza has the preliminary design completed and is at land negotiation stage. The Fermanagh St Business Hub is currently at Preliminary Design Stage.

[illegible]

Monaghan County Council recently acquired the 'O'Mathuna' site in Ballybay through the Derelict Sites Act. It was initially envisaged that this site would form a residential development with the inclusion of a small amount of retail and community elements. However following discussions with stakeholders, it was decided to utilise a part of the site as a town centre car park, to allow more long stay parking off street, freeing up on street parking for short duration stay, also in conjunction with the HSE the car parking



Ballybay Clones Municipal District were successful in securing funding through the Carbon Tax Fund 2020 for €100,000 to further develop the proposals for the provision of a Greenway from Smithborough to Clones, this Builds on the feasibility study that was completed in mid-2019. A tender package to further develop these proposals is currently being completed, with consultants appointed by December 2020, with their work to be completed in Mid 2021.

With strict social distancing in place the Scotshouse Community plan was launched in June of this year. Both the Cathaoirleach of Monaghan County Council Cllr Colm Carthy and the Cathaoirleach of the Municipal District Cllr PAT Treanor were in attendance alongside Council staff and residents of this vibrant community. The plan is a blue print for the future development of Scotshouse village and involved the input of many community groups within the village. The plan was launched in the newly upgraded Scotshouse Park. The works here include a bridge over the river to serve as a pedestrian route to the local primary school. Works to the park were completed in the summer of 2020

Active Travel

Ballybay Clones Municipal District were



successful in securing funding through the Active Travel Scheme 2020 for €20,000 to provide public lighting in the recently developed Ballybay Town Park. These works are currently advised to Airtricity with the works to be completed Q2 of 2021. Significant additional funding was received through the Active Travel fund for the development of a footpath Network in Lough Egish, footpaths in Ballybay and the resurfacing of Ballybay Main Street. It is envisaged that these paths will link into the footpaths previously provided through Town and Village and Outdoor Recreation Schemes.

Visit of Dutch Ambassador Mr Adriaan Palm



On behalf of Monaghan County Council Mr Eamonn O Sullivan Chief Executive welcomed The Dutch Ambassador Mr Adriaan Palm to the Ballybay Clones Municipal District. The Ambassador visited St Comgalls National School in the Connons, ABP Clones, The Peace Link and The Canal Stores. The Ambassador spoke of the importance of this visit in light of Brexit and wanted to see first hand how a no deal Brexit would affect those people living in the border region. The Cathaoirleach of

Monaghan County Council Cllr Seamus Coyle and The Cathaoirleach of the Ballybay Clones Municipal District Cllr Pat Treanor both thanked the Ambassador for visiting the region and spoke of the importance of the visit.

Official Opening of Scoil Mhuire Gransha MUGA

The Cathaoirleach of the Ballybay Clones Municipal District Cllr Pat Treanor welcomed Minister Heather Humphries to the official opening of the Gransha National School MUGA. There was a large attendance of parents and school children at this event. The MUGA was funded through the Clar scheme, the Parents Association and the Ballybay/Clones Municipal District. Minister Heather Humphries performed the official opening and paid tribute to all those involved. Minister Heather Humphries paid special tribute to the parents and children who raised a massive €9000 as part of the match funding requirement of the project. Funding of €43,500 was received through Clar, while the elected members of the Ballybay Clones Municipal District allocated €1000 to the project.

Pride Week



The Ballybay Clones Municipal District were delighted to fly the Pride flag at our offices during Pride Week 2020. The Cathaoirleach Cllr Pat Treanor was joined by the incoming Cathaoirleach Cllr Seamus Coyle and the Cathaoirleach of Monaghan County Council Cllr Colm Carthy at this event. Cavan & Monaghan Rainbow Youth thanked all those who had flown the Pride flag and said that it

showed that Monaghan County Council was a council of inclusion, diversity and of hope.

Ballybay Clones Municipal District AGM

With the monthly Municipal District meetings of March, April and May having been cancelled due to the Coronavirus the elected members held their first post lockdown meeting in June, this was followed immediately afterwards by the AGM. Cllr Seamus Coyle was elected Cathaoirleach and Cllr Richard Truell Leas-Chathaoirleach. The members and the executive paid tribute to the outgoing Cathaoirleach and congratulated Cllr Seamus Coyle and Cllr Richard Truell on their elections.



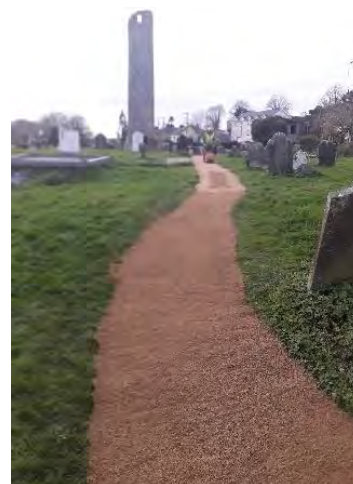
Outdoor Recreation Scheme – Ballybay Town Park

The Municipal District of Ballybay-Clones have been working closely with Ballybay Community through public consultations to develop the park facilities at Ballybay Town Park. The Municipal District of Ballybay-Clones were successful in securing funding from Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme to improve and expand the walking tracks and paths through the park, as well as including an outdoor classroom facility, a picnic area and significant planting. This work complements existing paths, outdoor gym equipment and other facilities in the park. Works were completed in August 2020 by S. Wilkin and Sons Ltd.

Clones Heritage Town initiative

The Ballybay Clones Municipal District were successful in receiving €103,000 from the Heritage Council for the Enhancement of the Monastic Sites of Clones. The funding will go towards the lighting up of the National Monuments at The Round Tower and The Wee Abbey. Works will also be carried out at the wall of the Round Tower and to St Tiarnach's Sarcophagus.

A new pathway was created through the graveyard which will add to the overall visitor experience to the area.



Clones Town Team

Clones Town team appointed the Paul Hogarth company to develop a Heritage and Economic Plan for the town. Through funding from Leader and the Municipal District the plan will be a blue print for Clones' future and its recommendations will, no doubt have an exciting and positive impact, in restoring and



harnessing the town's historical past. It will also inspire the seeds for future developments, so that our community will continue to inspire future generations to come. Public consultation events took place on line and were greatly received by the local community, the plan is due to be launched in March 2021

Tidy Towns in the Municipal District



The young people of the Municipal District were not going to let covid 19 stop them carrying out their duties when it came to keep their towns and

neighbourhoods

clean. In conjunction with the local tidy town's groups and the Municipal District staff these willing young volunteers took to the highroads and byroads in order to keep their county clean. From early April until the end of May scores of family pods walked the roads of the Ballybay Clones Municipal District picking up the rubbish dumped by others. The local Municipal District and County would be far better served if its older citizens took the same sense of pride in it that our youngsters have shown during the difficult lockdown period

planned to complete public lighting on the footpath and extend the works area back towards Lough Egish cross roads These works will be completed in December 2020 / January 2021.

Town and Village Renewal – Farmers Yard

The Municipal District of Ballybay-Clones received funding to prepare a master plan and carry out some works at the former Shortt's Yard and Farmers yard at Lower Fermanagh St, Clones. Craftstudios were appointed for the Feasibility Study and the Design. Works were completed in October 2020 creating a unique outdoor multi-functional community area.

Lough Egish

The area around Lough Egish, is disjointed with no dedicated walking paths. This project will enable pedestrians to move between the different premises in the area (Church, factories, GAA grounds / community Centre, safely and off road as is currently not the practice. The Municipal District of Ballybay-Clones have received funding to provide a dedicated footpath to provide connection to a footpath provided previously adjacent to the GAA Grounds and Aughnamullen Church. As these works tendered below budget, it is

The Municipal District of Monaghan

Retail Strategy for the Town/District - Town Team

The members of Monaghan Municipal District have committed to continuing to support the position of Monaghan Business Support Executive and the Town Team. The following was achieved in 2020:

Monaghan Town Voucher

The Monaghan Town Voucher had sales of



€844,370 during Christmas 2020. Redemptions for the year totaled €902,865. Overall sales for 2020 totaled €984,620.

Green Space Initiative

The Green Space in front of the Courthouse was not activated in 2020 due to Covid-19 social distance restrictions.

Monaghan Town Team Committee

Monaghan Town Team Committee alongside the Retail Committee team completed a number of projects from September to December to focus on retention of economic spend.

A “Stay Local, Shop Local” Campaign was launched in October with promotion via Northern Sound, Northern Standard and Billboard displays.



There was also a campaign launched to encourage people to spend their town vouchers in the lead up to Christmas, along with a database providing details on other ways to shop locally.



Stay Local Shop Local campaign was once again to the forefront in the 3rd December issue of the Northern Standard as retail businesses reopened after restrictions. Christmas Shop front display competition took place on 14th December, winners as follows:

- 1st prize – Missy A's
- 2nd Prize – Dinkins Bakery & Café
- 3rd Prize – Inbeauty Studio

Monaghan Food Network

Top Foodie Destination. This event was cancelled due to Covid-19

Car Parking

Pay parking was suspended on the 26th March until the 20th July due to Covid-19 pandemic. The purchase of eight new pay parking machines was approved in 2020. A new cashless parking system is currently being developed for Monaghan Town, this will supplement the existing facility to pay by cash which will remain in place.

The Municipal District operated a free Christmas parking campaign, which

commenced after 12 noon each day, from 7th December to 2nd January 2021.

Community

Tidy Towns

Due to Covid 19, no National Tidy Towns awards were held. Therefore, Glaslough hold on to their title as Ireland's Tidiest Town and Village they achieved in 2019.

Ulster Canal Greenway

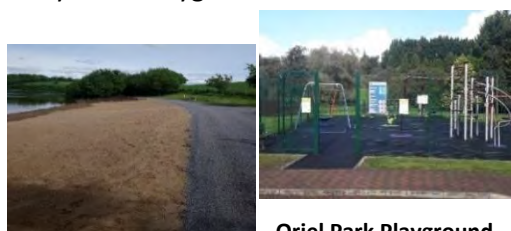
The Municipal District continues to maintain and trim verges on the existing Greenway and carry out litter picks throughout the year.

Community Grants

99 grants were issued to groups in the Monaghan Municipal District but due to Covid-19 restrictions, the Annual Community Grant Awards presentation evening could not take place.

Town and Village Schemes

The 2019 and 2020 Town and Village Renewal Schemes funded works at Emy Lough Amenity Area, Oriel Park Playground and Cluain Lorcan Playground re-surfacing. Department Playground Fund 2019 completed much needed upgrading of surface and equipment at Hollywood Playground.



Oriel Park Playground

Emy Lough Amenity Area

Provision of new footpath and public lights at Annyalla funding secured and design commenced. €78,657

Funding secured for Carrickroe playground and design completed. €73,594

Funding secured to develop a part of the canal into a wildlife area, €57,600.

Town and Village Covid 19 Funding

Funding of €25,000 was secured for the provision of outdoor equipment for 12 villages in Monaghan Municipal District, €25,000 was secured for Monaghan Town Centre Project, €40,000 for the Enhancement of the Market and Fairs Capacity in Glaslough village, and €25,000 to aid access and enhancement to the Blackwater Valley Learning and Community Centre.

Town and Village 2020 Funding

Two schemes were successful, Emyvale Public Realm and overhead cable removal, €200,000 and Clontibret new footpath and public lights €81,315. Monaghan MD to match fund both schemes.

Clar Funding 2020

Two schemes funded - Mullan Village traffic calming, €14,506 and Clontibret GAA car park development €22,473

Outdoor Recreational Infrastructural Scheme (ORIS) 2020

Funding for three schemes was secured under ORIS Measure 1

Ulster Canal Greenway, €20,000 grant and €5,000 match funding for re stoning and drainage.

Emyvale Eco Trail, to compliment the existing funding and enable Emyvale Tidy Towns to complete the Eco Trail along the Mountain Stream river, €20,000.

To enhance the connection between the existing Greenway to Rossmore Forest Park, €20,000 grant and €5,000 match funding.

Active Travel Measures

The Municipal District secured funding under the 2020 Active Travel Fund and completed footpath replacement at Beechgrove Lawns Estate in 2020.

Low Cost Safety Schemes

Schemes included:

- A safety barrier was erected at Drumacruttan NS School on the R162, Monaghan to Ballybay road.
- Land acquisition and earthworks were carried out the Junction of the LP-1400 & LP-1420 to improve the visibility splay lines. This has made a huge improvement to the safety at this junction.
- Land acquisition and earthworks were carried out the Crossroad's of the LS-5111 & LS5112 Edenmore Crossroads, to improve the visibility splay lines.

Events

Due to covid-19, all Events in the town were cancelled in 2020.

The Christmas Lights Switch on took place via video on the 29th November reaching 20,000 people and having almost 6000 engagements.

Promotion & Town Enhancement

Monaghan Town Heritage Walking Tours

Walking Tours were provided every Saturday at 11am where possible due to Covid restrictions from after the end of the initial restrictions in July to the end of September. Walks were free to join and started from the Westenra hotel.

Monaghan Town Dereliction

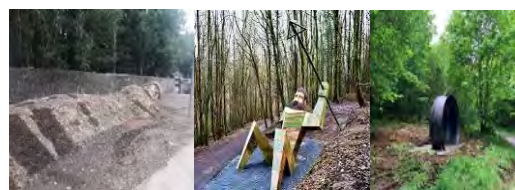
The Municipal District is working with the Economic Development section to reduce dereliction in the town. A number of derelict sites have been acquired under the Derelict Sites Act.

Rossmore Forest Park

Rossmore Giants Trial

'Queen Banba' 'Spike' and 'the Cauldron of plenty' giants were put in place this year in the park. The vision is for a trial of nine giants throughout the park. This project is being ably supported by Monaghan Tourism Section and Monaghan MD in a collaborative effort to

develop a regional visitor attraction for the town, district & county.



Monaghan Municipal District continue to manage the recreational element of the Park.

Annual maintenance works were carried out, grass cutting, path repairs and cutting back of vegetation along walks.

An Outdoor Recreational Infrastructure Scheme grant of €426,000 and local authority match funding of €105,000 from the MD Allocation was secured to complete infrastructural works in the park. Works included were, new car park at main entrance, resurfacing of entrance, extending and resurfacing of the carpark, landscaping and wildflower meadows, and replacement of bridges.

Family Cycle Trail

Funding has been secured under ORIS Grant 2019 to develop a family friendly cycle route in Rossmore Forest Park. The Design Team, the Paul Hogarth Company, has been appointed and they are currently working on the route selection and specifications. When this design stage is completed, the council will undertake a tender process for construction works which will include path developments/improvements, provision of rest points, signage, landscaping etc.

The Friends of Rossmore Forest Park continue to operate their Facebook page with a great interest in the park.

The Park Runs along with other events were cancelled in 2020 due to covid-19 restrictions.

Road Infrastructure Works

- 10.5km of Local roads and 3.15km of Regional Roads were overlaid under

the Road Restoration Improvements 2020 program.

- 22.5km of Local Roads and 5.9km of Regional Roads were surfaced dressed under the Restoration Maintenance 2020 programme.
- 2.5km of Local roads were overlaid under the Reclaimed Asphalt Pilot Programme 2020.
- 1.1km of Local roads were overlaid under the CGBM Pilot Programme 2020.
- National road drainage rehabilitation of 5km was carried out on the N2 from Derrynagrew -Cloghnart.
- Drainage works were completed on the N54 from Monaghan Town to the turn off for the R187.
- Verge Trimming on National Roads. Two verge grass cuts were completed included litter removal in 2020.
- The Municipal District also completed a program of hedge cutting works on their own property and in strategic locations within the District.
- 30km/hr Speed limits in estates, additional 30kmph signs were erected in housing estates taken in charge. Speed limit reviews carried out on Local, Regional and National Roads.
- Winter Maintenance program commenced on 15th October 2020 and will continue until 28th April 2021.

Municipal District Meetings

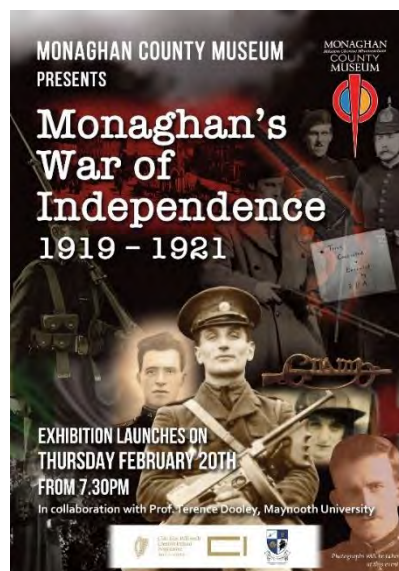
The Municipal District hold their monthly meetings on the third Monday of every month. Meetings were cancelled from March and resumed in June. At our AGM meeting in June, Cllr Seamus Treanor was elected Cathaoirleach for one year. There were a number of other subcommittee meetings to discuss roads, budgets and other issues and programs in the district. The Schedule of Municipal District Works was presented and approved at the June Meeting.

Museum

Monaghan's War of Independence Exhibition 2020

The museum's current exhibition was launched in late February and received hugely positive reviews throughout the national media. This saw record numbers coming to view the exhibit until the museum was forced to close in mid-March due to Covid 19. We have turned several of the display elements from the exhibition into a virtual format and have promoted them through our website and social media platforms. The museum Facebook page has experienced almost a 50% rise in interaction since the initial lockdown in March.

Working in collaboration with Professor Terence Dooley of Maynooth University, Monaghan County Museum new exhibition *Monaghan's War of Independence 1919 – 1921* uses stunning imagery, objects, film and first-hand accounts as well as new research into the history of the conflict in Monaghan. This new and important investigation into what happened in the county during those fateful years reveals a tale, which is more than just a struggle between the IRA and the British forces for control of the county.



Exhibition Poster



Image from Monaghan's War of Independence Exhibition



Media Coverage from the Exhibition Launch

Recording Our Experience

Following the lockdown in March, the museum launched a new online project inviting the public to send in their experiences of life during Covid 19. The response was overwhelming and the resulting archive, which is still being added to, will be an invaluable social collection reflecting the various realities of this tragic and yet historic period in the county and country's history. It is intended to curate this archive into an exhibition, which will be launched as one of the first new displays when the Peace Campus building is opened.

Some of the most impactful images from this archive were chosen as the focus of our calendar for 2021. The museum usually produces 1,500 calendars each year but due to

the enormous success of this community focussed project the museum produced 7,000. These calendars were distributed throughout the county by our colleagues in An Garda Síochána as well as being sent out throughout the country and overseas.



Calendar 2021 Cover



Calendars distributed throughout the county

Peace Campus

Monaghan County Museum are working with the Ulster Scots Agency to develop the new display for the Peace Campus. The project will run in tandem with the construction of the building to ensure that all design and build

elements of the new displays will be ready to go into place once the building is completed. It is anticipated that these new exhibitions will tell the story of the region from all aspects of the community and in doing so serve as a catalyst to bring people together through a shared heritage.

Online Events

The museum reformatted their autumn events programme and where possible, these events ran online through the museum Facebook page and Microsoft Teams. As all cultural institutions move their programme online, new audiences are starting to emerge. The result being that as the impact of the pandemic eases, the museum staff are planning to continue to build their online offering to the public.



Students taking part in some of the Museum's online events.

Library Service

Cultural Team

Creative Ireland Programme 2020

Deirdriu McQuaid, Creative Ireland Coordinator, chairs the Creative Ireland Steering Committee, whose members include Somhairle MacConghail, Arts Officer; Liam Bradley, Curator, Monaghan County Museum; Shirley Clerkin, Heritage Officer; Fintan McPhillips, Economic and Community Development; Dymrna Condra, Tourism Officer; Fiona McEntee, Youth Officer; Darren McCreesh, PK Centre Manager, Eilin Connolly, LEO Office, Laura Carey, Monaghan County Library and Catherine Elliott, County Librarian. The steering committee reports to John Murray, Head of Finance.

This year the committee were presented a challenge in delivering the Creative Ireland Programme during Covid 19. Undaunted, a total of 15 projects were supported by programme funding of €201,000, with additional funding being provided in July for Job Stimulus projects and Positive Ageing and Creative Wellbeing.

The projects are:

Cruinniú na nÓg which is a national day of creativity for children and young people. We moved the entire programme online and set up a YouTube channel for most of the events with over 6000 viewers of them. A broad programme was devised in partnership with the Local Arts in Education Partnership and Cavan County Council.



Festival in a Van visited nursing care homes and centres working with adults who have disabilities between October- December, bringing music and entertainment to the residents during this challenging time while engaging local musicians to deliver.



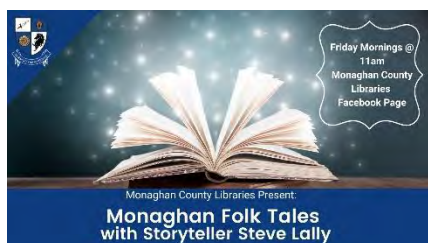
The Nature Project is an innovative new collaborative project with artist Siobhan McDonald, comprised of a series of enquiries connected with Environmental change – such as the roll of bogs in Climate Change and the impact on our health and well-being of our ecosystems and ourselves. Throughout the duration of The Nature Project, Siobhan is proposing a vast programme of activities across the partnering institutions: residencies, exhibitions, pop-up labs, workshops and talks. This project will raise awareness and foster creative and critical reflections about environmental challenges that our society is currently facing.

Patrick Kavanagh Legacy Programme This programme has three distinct project parts involving community groups, the creative

community, schools and various cultural, archival and library council services. It is a series of discreet projects stimulating fresh perspectives on the life and work of Patrick Kavanagh, one of Ireland's most beloved poets, and the significance of his work in a contemporary context.

The Big Houses of Monaghan – A Virtual Learning Quest During the summer of 2019, our partnership enabled a group of young people to create a virtual replica of the former Rossmore Castle using Minecraft. We will expand on this project, by making the castle available as an online world that can be accessed by teachers and young people.

Writer in Residence Over a period of 9 months, Deirdre Cartmill is in residency delivering a diverse programme of creative writing workshops, online tutorials, working with schools and individuals whilst working on her own writing. Alongside Deirdre's residency, Steve Lally facilitated a Monaghan Folk Tales Residency based around his publication of the same name.



Tradoodle Festival Tradoodle Festival is about children and young people, community engagement, and it is about providing opportunities for children and young people to access the traditional arts in innovative, interesting, and meaningful ways.



Elsewhere – The Opera Elsewhere is a new opera project led by composer Michael Gallen,

based on the true story of the world's first Soviet outside the USSR – in the lunatic asylum of a small Irish town – established fleetingly in 1919. Elsewhere will be rehearsed and performed in Lontas Castleblayney and will premiere at the Abbey Theatre in November 2021 with European premiere at the Opera de Rouen.

Song Ties is an intergenerational arts project which connected residents of Castleross Nursing Home with children from a local primary school class in a virtual song exchange and performance



Monaghan Murals Monaghan County Museum, working in partnership with the Patrick Kavanagh Centre as well as other key partners within the County Council and wider community plan to develop a project aimed at supporting local artists and engaging the community in their history and heritage through the medium of murals.

Inscribed histories at the Rossmore Mausoleum - A project to develop a plan around the next stage of conservation of the Mausoleum. Elements being considered include the commissioning of a new stained-glass piece to fit into the existing window revetments, using an element of the heritage of the Westens as an inspiration with virtual tour or art pieces on the viewing platform to reflect the art, architecture and interior of the building and the histories of those buried in the graveyard.



Playwriting Workshops and Performance of Monologue Plays Project - in partnership with Local Arts in Education Partnership

Working with the youth theatre groups in both counties, Shane Mac an Bhaird, a writer from Ballybay worked with the young people on a program consisting of playwriting workshops, writing, rehearsals, performances.



Christmas Theatre to Classrooms

supporting the LAEP where theatre was brought to the classrooms of schools across counties Cavan and Monaghan during December.

Let's Go Digital Course for Creative Practitioners

A digital upskilling course of 7 workshops, delivered by artist/folklorist Michael Fortune. The course gave creative practitioners and community workers an opportunity to learn how to use online digital tools to expand their practice and connect with fellow peers.

Sensory Songs project Led by Dr Thomas Johnston, a traditional musician and Artistic Director of Ceol Connected, and Orla Kelly, a visual artist and Director of Early Childhood Creativity, the project is multisensory in nature, incorporating light, sound, touch, smell, texture etc.

Due to covid restrictions, the artists recorded a workshop in the Market House, Monaghan which was shared with the participating schools and North East Down Syndrome Centre

along with specially made multisensory boxes. An online session was facilitated for the teachers on how to use the video and the boxes.



Culture Night 2020

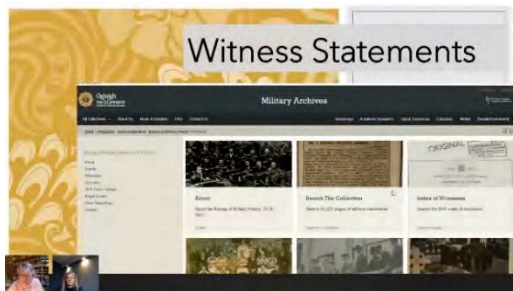
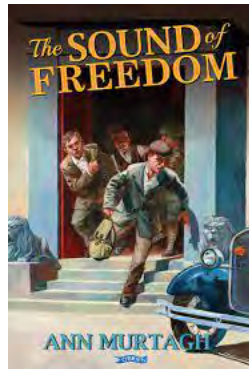
This was the 8th year for the County Council to coordinate Culture Night, an annual all-island public event that celebrates culture, creativity and the arts. This year, it took place on Friday 18th September. We were given the challenge to devise a programme in line with current health and safety guidelines. Thanks to the vibrant rich cultural community in County Monaghan, we were able to present a blended programme for everyone to enjoy. Many of the events took place online but a number which took place outdoors, including a drive -in movie and outdoor concert. The County Council received €6,500 funding from the Department of Culture, Heritage and Gaeltacht.



Decade of Centenaries

One Book One County Initiative

An annual initiative facilitated by Library service, where all schools, book clubs and groups are invited to read the one book and discuss it. The book chosen for 2020/21 is the newly published 'The Sound of Freedom' by Ann Murtagh. After a particularly unusual 2020, it was unclear whether we would even be able to run with our schools project this year, but thankfully, after looking at it from a new perspective, everything eventually worked in our favour.



With more than 25 schools and over 700 children engaging in the project this year, it has been a huge success and schools have embraced the challenges thrown up by this year's online aspect.

Ireland's Poetic Strive to Independence – Poets of the Rising and the Revolutionary Period Project

For 2020, we continued with our programme 'Ireland's Poetic Strive to Independence' which was devised in 2019 with a local award-winning poet Ted McCarthy. For 2020, zoom discussions took place around a number of literary and poetry topics relating to 1920 period.

War of Independence Digital Media Project

Coordinated by Museum Service, the focus for the project is the 'War of Independence' within the context of the 'centenary' exhibition as currently on display in the Monaghan County Museum. Students working collaboratively to research particular perspectives of the 'War of Independence', capture and retelling of stories using a mix of digital techniques and traditional approaches including film, photography, green screen and animation tools.



Library Services

LIBRARY SERVICES DURING COVID 19

Housebound Service

Following the full lockdown, we developed a housebound service for customers, available through the community call service. This was launched on the 5th May 2020.

The service proved incredibly popular. We

have



maintained and developed it, moving it away from the community call helplines and back to the branch library network. We were helped enormously in the development of the service by our colleague in IT, Adrienne Burns, who provided us with a custom designed mapping facility to map and deploy deliveries across the county.

Contact and Collect Service

The Contact and Collect Service was launched in the Monaghan, Carrickmacross and Clones branches on 8th June and the Castleblayney and Ballybay branches on 7th July 2020.

This service allowed customers to call their local branch and request Books, DVDs etc. for collection at an agreed time.

This allowed a greater number of customers to have access to their favourite reading material, without the need to access the branches, which could not be opened to the public at the time.



Browsing Service

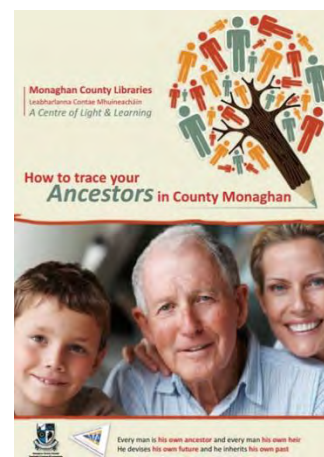
The Drop-In Browsing Service was launched on 29th June 2020 in the Monaghan, Carrickmacross and Clones branches. This followed a considerable process of planning and reconfiguring the interior of each branch, to ensure that they were in line with Covid regulations. This included:

- The installation of Perspex at each customer desk
- The removal of all but essential furniture
- The reconfiguring of library shelving to facilitate short term browsing while maintaining social distance
- The installation of capacity counter at each front door, to control the number of customers entering the branch at any given time
- A 30-minute limit on customer visits
- The installation of hand sanitising units, wipes etc. in all branches
- Resumption of the National Request and Delivery Service

Local History & Genealogy Service

Despite the libraries being closed to the public for most of the year, the local history & genealogy section continued to operate and thrive.

There was a marked increase in the number of genealogy enquiries received, this was due to people all over the world having more time on their hands to research their ancestry. Work continued throughout 2020 on the scanning & indexing of death notices & obituaries from the local newspapers.



Publications in 2020

- An updated version of “How to Trace Your Ancestors in County Monaghan” booklet.
- Death Notices & Obituaries in The Northern Standard Newspaper 1959
- Death Notices & Obituaries in The Monaghan Argus Newspaper 1949-1953
- Death Notices & Obituaries in The Monaghan People Newspaper 1906-1908
- Local History & News packages for Care Homes.

Right to Read Programme

The key objective of this programme to bring together the existing knowledge and experience of skilled staff in local authority services and other agencies to deliver literacy support in the County. Right to Read complements and support existing national literacy strategies and initiatives, including the Department of Education and Skills’ National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy.

The programme focussed initially on support for children and families but will now broaden year on year to cover all aspects of literacy need in the County. The successful delivery of all elements of the Initiative resulted in Monaghan County Council qualifying for the title of **Right to Read Champion for 2019**.

Key Right to Read Events



Summer Stars Summer Reading Adventure

The 1st of July saw the launch of the annual Summer Stars Reading Challenge. The launch was kindly pre-recorded by Cathaoirleach Colm Carthy and was broadcast through the library webpage and Social media channels.

The launch day was also marked with a virtual visit from one of the UK’s top selling Children’s author Cathy Cassidy who read from one of her books and answered some of the many

questions from our young readers.

As it wasn’t possible to host any events within our Branch libraries, we opted instead to put together a comprehensive online programme for young people to engage with. This included:

- I’ll tell you a story about Johnny Magory – A nature adventure with author Emma-Jane Lennon
- Laugh, Hurl & draw with illustrator Alan Nolan
- The Football Reading Game with author Tom Palmer
- The Boy who grew Dragons with author Andy Shephard
- Book readings & craft videos created by library staff.

Family Quiz Night



We encouraged families from across the County to come together for our big Family Quiz nights which ran every Wednesday @ 7pm. These proved to be very popular and very competitive! Between 20-30 families took part each week.

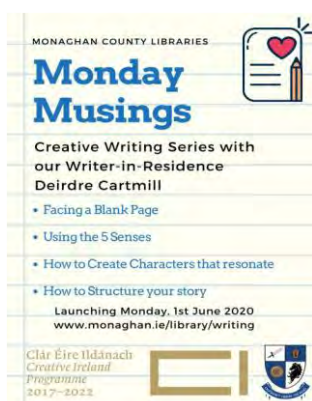
‘An unexpected adventure’ Creative Writing tutorials for Children

Monaghan County Libraries ‘Writer-in-residence’ broadcast weekly video tutorials across July to encourage children to partake in the Short Story Competition entitled ‘An Unexpected Adventure’.

The Writers Room with Deirdre Cartmill

Our Writer in Residence also created a series of videos for adults which demonstrate what life as a Writer is really like. She showcased the highs and inspire those on their own writing journey.

Deirdre was happy to review samples of peoples work and offer constructive feedback. We received very positive feedback from amateur writers including the following: "We were in touch about a month ago about feedback on a story and I just wanted to let you know that I took what you said on board, edited it, sent it out and it's been published! So, thank you very much for your help :) I'm so pleased and the words of encouragement were just what I needed!" – Ciara McGinnity



Irish History Live – Heritage Week Video series

To celebrate Heritage week, we teamed up with the museum to offer a week-long series of videos which took us on a journey through Irish History from the Stone Age to 1916. These humorous videos were produced by Michael Moylan of Irish History Live and were made available on our social media platforms.

Children's Book Festival @ Monaghan County Libraries

October is always a busy month in the libraries as we welcome authors, illustrators and storytellers to celebrate Children's Literature. The original plan of course was to host the authors

in 'live' events within the libraries and invite local schools to take part.

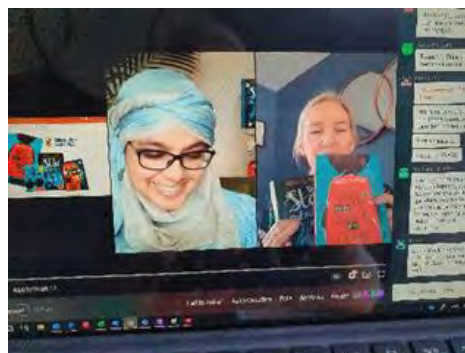
However, it quickly became obvious that this



may not be possible given the ever changing Covid situation. The decision was taken during the Summer months to move the festival completely online. We asked Teachers across the county to connect with us and allow us to beam authors on to the Whiteboards of their Classroom. 114 Teachers welcomed us into their Classrooms for interactive sessions. If we take an average class size to be 27 children, in total we have reached approximately 3,078 children. In each session the author talks about their work and this is followed with a question and answers session facilitated by a Librarian.

When possible, we will also share links with the teachers to Classroom resources based around the authors work.

We have had some wonderful feedback from schools who have taken part. For example, this in response to the session with Onjali Q. Rauf author of 'The Boy at the back of the class', a tale about a refugee boy from Syria who had arrived in a new school:



"Today's session with Onjali truly inspired us all, the children were amazed and heartbroken by what is going on in the world and Onjali's fantastic work to help so many people- I have never seen them as spellbound!!"- Orlaith, Gaelscoil Ultain

Full programme available at: https://issuu.com/monaghancountylibraries/docs/12_page_final_cbf_2020_brochure

Cavan Monaghan Science Festival 2020



2020 was the 5th year of the Cavan Monaghan Science Festival and it was one to remember! As a result of the ever changing Covid restrictions, the festival committee took the decision to move the festival completely online. This meant that a wide range of events were streamed directly into homes & schools across the 2 counties and perhaps beyond. A new Virtual festival site was designed at www.cavanmonaghansciencefestival.ie. The new site comprised of a 'STEM for Schools' tent which housed all of the school specific events. The 'What's On' stand lead visitors to a wide range of talks & events including an opening event with Professor Sam McConkey taking us through his journey from Killeevan to his work as a Covid 19 expert. Other events included The Science of Star Wars, The Science of Teenagers and Engineering the Rossmore Park giants. Visitors to the site also try out experiments with leading scientists in our 'Go Experiment' zone (Live from 1st Nov) as well as see which businesses around Cavan & Monaghan are utilising STEM to enhance their work.

www.cavanmonaghansciencefestival.ie

Europe Direct Information Centre

In 2020 Clones Library entered its third year as the Europe Direct Information Centre, (EDIC), for the Cavan/Monaghan/Louth region.



EDICs give information, advice, assistance and answers to questions about the EU and the rights of EU citizens, the EU's priorities, legislations, policies, programmes and funding opportunities. The service provided valuable information to citizens in relation to the

coronavirus pandemic.

The EDIC receives annual funding of €31,000 from the European Commission to support the service provided and cover the cost of annual event programming.

What services are provided at the Europe Direct Centre in Clones Library?



- A selection of free EU publications and brochures covering a wide range of EU related topics.
- Free public computers to search for specific information about EU related matters.
- Free public telephone where you can call the Europe Direct Citizen's Helpline with queries on any aspect of the EU that are of interest to you: 0080067891011.
- Promotional events, including the Soapbox debating challenge, events on the European Green Deal and the Digital Strategy

Email: cloneslibrary@monaghancoco.ie

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/ClonesEDIC/>

Healthy Ireland at Your Library

A grant of €1,500 was allocated in 2019 by Department of Rural and Community Development to Monaghan County Library to promote the Healthy Ireland at Your Library Campaign through the library service network. The campaign, which complements the County Councils larger scale Healthy Ireland programme, ran from September 2019 to December 2020.



Two online events were hosted in 2020 under the Healthy Ireland Initiative. A further €1,500 has been allocated to the library to continue the programme up to December 2021.



Additional Capital Funding Received in 2020

Title	Description	Grant
Dormant Account Funds 2020	Dormant Accounts funding to provide Library Supports for Marginalised, Socially Excluded and Disadvantaged Communities.	€16,044
Sensory Funding 2020	Funding to purchase sensory toys and facilities for Children and Adults with Autism	€16,095
Small Scale Capital Works Funding	Grant to undertake remedial works to the interior and exterior of Clones Library	€100,000

County Heritage Office

In 2020, the Heritage Office continued to deliver heritage services, implement and co-ordinate heritage and biodiversity policy and practice, and to liaise closely with the **Department of Housing, Local Government and Culture and the Heritage Council** regarding national policy at a local level. The section liaises with other local authorities through the **Local Authority Heritage Officer network**.

The Heritage Section is part of Monaghan County Council's Cultural Team, and sits within the Directorate of Finance, Housing and Culture.

By the end of 2020, there were four **staff** in the Heritage Office – Heritage Officer, Sliabh Beagh Site Co-ordinator, Conservation Assistant, and an Assistant Staff Officer.

The **County Monaghan Heritage Forum** is a multi-stakeholder forum with representatives from civil society, elected representatives, state agencies and organizations and Monaghan County Council staff. The secretariat is provided by the Monaghan Heritage Office. It continued to meet in 2020, using online technology, and welcomed some new members. The forum advises on the development and implementation of the County Monaghan Biodiversity and Strategic Plan. A list of members is available : <https://monaghan.ie/heritage/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2021/01/County-Monaghan-Heritage-Forum-Membership-PDF.pdf>

1. FUNDING

Funding was awarded from several sources – the Heritage Council, Creative Monaghan, DHLGC, and Interreg V.

2. POLICY

A new **County Monaghan Biodiversity and Heritage Strategic Plan 2020-2025** was adopted by the County Council at the

November 2020 meeting. The ambitious plan sets forth a vision for 2025 - the role of heritage and biodiversity for climate change mitigation and adaptation, sustainable communities, functioning ecosystems, health and wellbeing is generally accepted in the county and embedded in the activities of Monaghan County Council.



Thirteen themes are described with objectives for each, and a concise action plan to enable progress. The themes demonstrate the breadth of biodiversity and heritage, incorporating the submission to the plan through the various consultations.

Priority strategic themes are – Climate Change mitigation and adaptation; Monaghan's Wonderful Wetlands; Hedgerows and native woodlands; The Worm Ditch/The Black Pig's Dyke; Pre-historic archaeology; Protected structures; Vernacular and traditional buildings; High Nature Value farmland; Demesnes and Estates; Cross-border heritage; Historic Graveyards, holy wells and church ruins; Indigenous knowledge and traditions; Irish and the vernacular English.

The plan also contains strategic objectives, organisation goals and key performance indicators.

The plan is accessible at <https://monaghan.ie/heritage/biodiversity-and-heritage-strategic-plan-2020-2025/>

3. RESEARCH

Monaghan Wetland Action Plan

The County Monaghan Wetland Action Plan

2020-2021 aims to develop an integrated plan for the conservation of the wetland resource in County Monaghan, through co-operation and engagement with a wide range of partners and community groups.

In 2020, phase 1 was completed with the development of a preliminary scoping and methodology report.

Extensive work has been undertaken over the past fifteen years in identifying and characterising the ecological character of wetlands throughout County Monaghan. The outcome of this work has produced a valuable dataset containing information on 710 wetlands, of which 202 have been subject to field survey.

This information will form the basis of a Wetland Action Plan for the county. As part of this project, the 202 sites for which standard information is available will be evaluated in relation to the multiple benefits (ecosystem services) that these wetlands provide.

MWAP will objectively identify management, restoration and rehabilitation priorities for the wetland resource of the county to, amongst other things, improve biodiversity outcomes and climate mitigation/adaptation.

It will help define climate action as well as management strategies, defining an action plan for wetland protection in County Monaghan.

The project will help determine whether high-carbon ecosystems should be prioritised for restoration and rehabilitation budgets over the coming years to safeguard peat carbon storage and sequestration. In the County Monaghan context, wetlands that are not peatlands may play important roles in flood mitigation and biodiversity protection and the ecosystem services on these sites will also be assessed as part of the project.

Actions will be costed as part of the plan and likely will focus on the re-wetting of drained fens and peatlands, prevention of nutrient inputs to wetlands, removal of invasive species

including self-seeded conifers, awareness raising and capacity building initiatives.

A public engagement strategy will be developed and funding sources identified to ensure the wide uptake of the wetland action plan among partners and community groups, the primary beneficiaries in County Monaghan.

The County Monaghan Wetland Action Plan (MAWP) project is a joint project initiative funded by Monaghan County Council, and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage through the National Biodiversity Action Plan funding.

4. CONSERVATION

Collaborative Action for the Natura Network

The CANN project is an Interreg VA funded project led by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, consisting of an 11 partner consortium of which Monaghan County Council leads the uplands work package.

The project aims to strengthen cross-border co-operation to facilitate the recovery of selected habitats and priority species to meet the targets of the EU Birds and Habitats Directives and the EU Biodiversity Strategy.

Sliabh Beagh is a large upland site contained within the counties of Monaghan, Tyrone and Fermanagh. Monaghan County Council is responsible for delivering direct conservation actions on this site. The actions include fire risk management, drain blocking, invasive species removal, and other activities.

In 2020, the completion of complex procurement exercises enabled the planning of works for many of the coming seasons. Conservation activities must be timed to avoid nesting seasons and other sensitive times for habitats onsite.

Drain blocking was undertaken on a 120 hectare site, putting in place peat dams in drains that were originally cut to facilitate tree planting. This followed a hydrological assessment of the site, and design of the dams and method of installation in accordance with best environmental practice.

Nest protection activities were undertaken, with an aim of improving the breeding success of the Hen Harrier, our protected bird of prey species. This species is under grave threat of declining numbers and extinction from the area.



Pictured – Shirley Clerkin, Heritage Officer, Frank Clinton EPA and Paul Clifford, Director of Services.

Monaghan County Council and the CANN project won the Gold award for Best Environmental / Ecological project at the 2020 **All Ireland Community and Council awards** on the 15th February 2020.

Rossmore Mausoleum

This gothic style building is situated at the edge of Rossmore Park, Monaghan. Designed by E.J. Tarver as a family mausoleum in 1876 for the 4th Baron Westenra after he fell from his horse and died at Windsor Castle in 1874.

New digital survey drawings, conservation plan and interpretation plans for remote access were completed in 2020 with the assistance of Creative Ireland funding.

5. OUTREACH

A number of events took place before the Covid-19 restrictions came into force.

World Wetland Day, February 2020. A presentation on the role of wetlands for climate change mitigation by the Heritage Officer was well attended in the Market House, Monaghan. Workshops with school groups in

Knockatallon on climate change, wetland vegetation and St. Brigid's Day cross making.

A workshop to finalise the draft conservation plan for **Drumsnat old monastic site** and graveyard was held in Threemilehouse with the community.

Heritage Happenings blog was initiated as a response to the first lockdown in March 2020, as a way to communicate quirky and uplifting information about heritage in Monaghan to a wide audience possible through social media platforms. Total post reach for Heritage Office Facebook page was 19,461 in 2020, before Heritage Happenings series commenced. In Spring 2020, when the majority of Heritage Happenings series was published this rose to 161,092.

To enable virtual access, the **Monaghan Gothic** film documentary was edited for YouTube release, and was viewed over 1200 times – and is available online at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oRlw_Dc_vxbw

Filmed on locations in County Monaghan this film looks at the fashion for gothic architecture in the landscape of Monaghan and traces the evolution of the style through old church ruins and abbeys. Presented by architectural historian and author Kevin V. Mulligan and Heritage officer Shirley Clerkin, directed and filmed by Dara McCluskey, its' premier showing was at the International Clones Film Festival in 2017. The film was funded through the Heritage Council and Monaghan County Council. Locations include Magheross Old Church, Killeevan Old Abbey, Clones Round Tower graveyard, High Cross and wee Abbey, Lough Fea House, Bessmont House, St. Josephs Carrickmacross, Adragh Church, Cahans Presbyterian, St. Patricks Church Monaghan, St. Macartan's Cathedral and many more.

The **Gardening for Biodiversity** series was organised by the Local Authority Heritage Officer network, and booklets were distributed around the county and made available online.

A **public information campaign** on radio was aired to communicate the value of biodiversity and nature gardening to the public.

The Heritage Officer contributed an article to the **Cross-border studies journal** on the challenges of cross-border nature conservation. The article is available here: <http://crossborder.ie/the-journal-of-cross-border-studies-in-ireland-volume-15-2020/>

The Heritage Officer spoke at an online European conference entitled **Resilient Heritage, Cohesive Society** which connected countries from around Europe with case studies and good practices.

These mapping exercises, along with considerable stakeholder engagement proceeded during 2019.

Sliabh Beagh was chosen as the location for a joint CANN-CABB project two-day event in September.

Nest protection activities were undertaken 2019 on the site, with an aim of improving the breeding success of the Hen Harrier. These activities have had a positive impact on the numbers of chicks produced.



Devils-bit scabious, the food plant of the protected Marsh Fritillary Butterfly on Sliabh Beagh.

Arts Office

2020 was a year of responding to the existential crisis that seemed to envelope the country with the ensuing pandemic which affected in particular the Arts Sector, its Artists, Venues, Facilitators, Organisers and the Public. Monaghan County Council support for the Arts sector in the county through its Arts office needed to take cognisance of the fact that nearly all audience related events in both indoor and outdoor settings came to an abrupt halt for much of the year.

Through our **framework Agreement with the Arts Council 2020 -2027**, we have modified the outcome on our Annual reporting to align ourselves with our commitments to a more sustainable Arts Investment in the county along with our strategic partners, The Arts Council.

1. **Supporting Artists**

Value and support the work of artists, and extend the range of opportunities for artists to develop their practice

2. **Young people and the Arts**

Increase opportunities for children and young people to create, access and participate in great art

3. **Creating Capacity**

Investing in the professional development of venues, festivals and organisations providing high-quality arts experiences.

With the Arts partners with whom we fulfil our **Creating Capacity** investment, who are in many ways the driving force behind much of the Arts delivery in the county we managed together to forage our way through the world on On-Line presentation, with great gusto.

The Council awarded through its **Arts Partners scheme** a total of **€70,000** to the below named recipients. Even in times of great uncertainty as last year certainly was the Council increased their investment to them by over €7,000 from the previous year.

- Clones Film Festival
- Castleblayney Drama Festival

- The Garage Theatre
- Muckno Mania Festival
- Patrick Kavanagh Centre
- Iontas Arts Centre
- Féile Patrick Byrne
- Carrickmacross Arts Festival
- Scoil Cheoil na Botha
- Ballybay Community Arts

While participation and engagement with the public was more or less curtailed last year, many of our partners resorted to online presentation and became more and more creative with their Artist led initiatives. They Commissioned new work from Artists and produced both live and recorded online content, which in the short term came them an outlet to remain engaged with their public and our citizens. Bar the Castleblayney Drama Festival all our other partners did not manage to hold their events as envisaged due to the restrictions and guidelines as set down by our public health officials.

As the year progressed, we managed a more joined up approach with Arts organisations, Facilitators Venues & Artists in so far as was manageable. We responded to the calls from our arts sector in aligning them together to be able to produce and record events in the Arts Centres that we support through our Arts Partners scheme as well as our own spaces such as the Market House & the Patrick Kavanagh centre.

Just a few examples of these collaborations are Monaghan led band **Pine the Pilcrow** recording their most recent EP at the Market House



Culture Night was celebrated with the collaboration of Composer extraordinaire **Michael Gallen** from Castleblayney along with the literary /theatre giant **John McArdle** in a presentation celebrating the world of Kavanagh which was recorded and broadcast

from the **Kavanagh centre** in Inniskeen



And finally, our full circle brings us to our Christmas broadcast produced by our **Music Generation** partnership in bringing an ensemble of talented musicians together to bring some joy to the end of year proceedings, again hosted by the Kavanagh centre.



In our tribute to our **children / young people and the Arts** in both the upskilling of facilitators, Artists and performers we managed to fulfil much attributable resonances within our duty of care to them all. The County Council through our partnership with Cavan County council and the CMETB led quite an exciting list of Collaborations with our 2 key delivery mechanisms our **Music Generation** roll out and the continued collaborations through our **Local Arts in Education** partnership. We also managed to forge many events with our **Creative Monaghan** investments which allowed for some very exciting events.

We needed to evolve in our delivery of these key services and some enthralling new ventures were explored and delivered. Naturally these appeared in various online portals but engaged by participants was involved. The County Council supported this part of its core commitment to the tune of

around **€50,000 in 2020**.

An important date for the Diary was achieved prior to the world's disturbance from the Pandemic as we were not yet aware of what was coming to pass was the official launch of our Music Generation partnership which was held on the 27th February



An example (below) of the kind of training opportunities that was offered to our Arts facilitators who deliver and work with our younger citizens.



The **Garage Theatre** as the home of **Monaghan Youth Theatre** contributed significantly to the opportunities afforded to our young folk in County Monaghan and are to be commended for their continued investment in this area.

In finishing off our trilogy of the core Shared Strategic Actions with the Arts Council is the most vital cog in the wheel of Arts delivery which is **Supporting Artists**.

As reported in most media outlets the Artist suffered quite substantially with the pandemic restrictions that was the narrative for most of the year in 2020, which looks more than likely to repeat itself for 2021.

Some key supports that Monaghan County

Council delivered to Artists in 2020 were:



Our **Artist Support Scheme** was modified in 2020 in response to the crisis that ensued within the sector and the Council was found wanting in fulfilling its obligation in supporting their needs.

We awarded **€11,000** directly to 21 Artist which was divided between **Established Artists** and for the 1st time we assisted **Emerging Talent** as the council's acknowledgment that we must nurture those who are on their way in developing their creative practice.

Our endeavour in supporting artists also manifested itself in our policy of giving added value to Artists who were successful and fortunate in receiving funding from the Arts Council.

Three Artists from the county were recipients of Arts Council professional bursaries in 2020 in which the value to them was €22,000 the County council added almost €4,000 to their respective projects.

Artists also developed projects that delivered within our 3 strategic actions which also aligned with goals contained in our **Creative Monaghan Plan**, one example of this is **Thomas Johnston's**, Ceol Connected venture where he produced special art packs and aides to Children with special needs.



Tourism Section

The Tourism Unit within Monaghan County Council implements the Tourism Statement of Strategy and Work Programme 2017 -2022. The principal functions of the unit are:

To raise customer awareness of the Monaghan area as a tourism destination.

To develop and contribute towards the development of the county's tourism product.

2020 Completed Tourism Development Projects

Rossmore Forest Park

Major upgrading works were undertaken in Rossmore in 2020. These included the following:

- Improvements to the main entrance, including new giant Sculpture - Banba
- Resurfacing of access road and provision of a segregated footpath for pedestrians
- Two new bridges
- Resurfacing and new lay-out of car park
- Development of trails app
- New Giant sculptures
- Wildflower planting



As a result of all these improvements, Rossmore received the Community Woodlands Award in the RDS Spring Agriculture & Forestry Awards 2020. The Community Woodlands Award is designed to encourage and reward projects involving the communal ownership

and/or management of forests and woodlands which have been established and managed in a sustainable way that is beneficial to the local economy and/or environment. The award was presented to representatives of Monaghan County Council, Coillte, and the Monaghan Town Team in a socially distanced presentation at Rossmore Forest Park in August.



Patrick Kavanagh Centre

The refurbished Kavanagh Centre was completed in early 2020 and the Centre Manager commenced work in April. The centre's website was completely revamped and upgraded to allow for on-line ticket and retail sales and the Centre opened its doors to the public on 20th July, when restrictions lifted. Visitor numbers were very strong, whilst the centre was open and the feedback has been extremely positive.



On 18th September, the Centre hosted a bilingual evening of music and poetry as part of **Culture Night**. Performers included the composer Michael Gallen, Irish band Scullion and there were poetry readings from John McArdle and Caitriona NiChléirchín. The night

was a great success and the musicians and audience were unanimous in their enjoyment. The event was live-streamed as the audience numbers were restricted and there were very strong levels of engagement online.



Additional events included a 'La Feile Padraig' Harp Recital in October, and 'A Christmas Childhood' concert event in December, which was a very successful collaboration with Cavan Monaghan Music Generation. This partnership was a fine demonstration of the power of creative collaboration and featured a new musical accompaniment for Kavanagh's poem 'Advent', commissioned especially for the concert. Music Generation are responsible for supporting the development of music tuition for children in the region which was demonstrated throughout the concert. The concert was screened online and received strong online engagement.

European Heritage in Motion Awards 2020

Heritage in Motion is a multimedia competition which celebrates the best examples of innovative multimedia and digital projects on cultural heritage in Europe. The audio-visual element of the Kavanagh Centre exhibition – The Pincer Jaws of Heaven - was shortlisted under the Film and Video category and won at a virtual ceremony broadcast from Amsterdam on 20 November.



Kavanagh Trail

In July, a 6km walking/cycling trail, taking in 10 stops relating to Patrick Kavanagh, was developed in Inniskeen. The trail starts at the Kavanagh Centre and takes in Billy Brennan's Barn, Kednaminsha School etc, with information panels and branded signage.



Carrickmacross Workhouse Interpretation

Under the Town & Village Renewal Funding 2018, MCC was awarded funding to develop a visitor interpretation experience at the Carrickmacross Workhouse. The project was completed in December and will open to the public when restrictions lift. The new visitor experience is a moving interpretation of life in the workhouse during the Great Famine years and will be a must-see attraction for the county going forward.



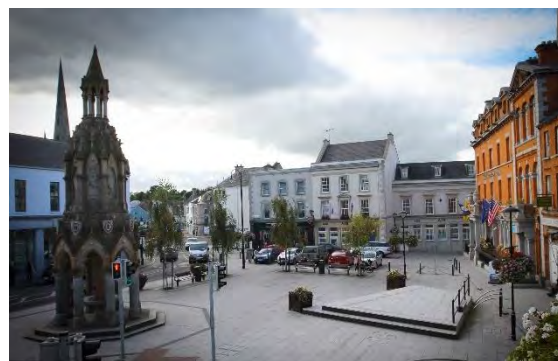
Tourism Development Projects progressed in 2020

Rossmore Forest Park Cycle Trail

Under the Outdoor Recreational Infrastructure scheme, funding was secured to develop a 2.5km family cycling trail in Rossmore. A Design Team was appointed in June and after consultation with Coillte and local cycling groups, a route has now been agreed and the project will progress to construction stage in 2021.

Monaghan Destination Town Plan

Funding of €497,962 was secured from Failte Ireland under the Destination Towns Funding Scheme to develop an outdoor events space in Monaghan Town. An Architect-led Design Team was appointed in July and the project will be progressed through design and planning in 2021.



Tourism Promotion & Visitor Servicing

Tourism Website

The tourism website - www.monaghantourism.com - was completely revamped and now has a new look, structure and lay-out.



Summer Campaign

The Monaghan Tourism Summer Campaign 2020 was conducted on a phased basis with an initial focus on local people to inspire them to get out and explore their home county. As restrictions lifted, the campaign focus widened in an attempt to get visitors from further afield to give Monaghan a try.

The campaign adopted a number of approaches to achieve this. Firstly, a radio campaign consisting of daily ads and a series of weekly radio interviews with key tourism providers was undertaken via Shannonside & Northern Sound.

Alongside this, the 'Secret Spots' series ran across Monaghan Tourism social media channels, as recommended by local experts as well as some well-known names too, amongst them Helen Steele, Pat McCabe and Caitriona Balfe.



The final initiative - **The Monaghan Quest** – ran throughout August and its focus was to encourage participants to get out and discover the gems in Co Monaghan, by answering a series of questions covering heritage sites, outdoor spaces and attractions across the county to be in with a chance to win. Prizes in the form of town vouchers were offered with additional vouchers up for grabs via 'Spot Challenges' released via Monaghan Tourism social media channels. Kids were encouraged to get involved by completing the **Monaghan Mini Quest**.

Throughout the Summer, a number of bloggers and travel journalists were hosted in the county. These included the following: Saucepan Kids, Saltwater Stories Blog, Ireland

before You Die, Sunday World, Her Family, Daily Mail.

Tourist Office

Due to the impact of the lockdown on the tourism and hospitality sector, the tourist office in the Market House, Monaghan town was only operational for a few weeks from 22nd July to end August.

#MyMonaghanChristmas

#MyMonaghanChristmas was a mini-campaign for the tourism sector which ran alongside the shop local campaign, serving to highlight the unique gifts or experiences made here in Monaghan.



The Campaign comprised the following elements and roll-out began in mid-November:

- #MyMonaghanChristmas hamper competition promoted via Monaghan Tourism social media channels and via local press.
- Themed blog posts (decorations/stocking fillers, clothing/accessories, homeware, experiences, food & drink etc) including images and links to purchase published on monaghantourism.com and promoted via the Monaghan Tourism social media channels.
- Curated gift guide in the Northern standard, containing #MyMonaghanChristmas gift highlights across certain themes

- All participating businesses encouraged to share content (blog posts, gift guide teasers, etc) using the #MyMonaghanChristmas hashtag.
- #MyMonaghanChristmas press release detailing hamper competition and featuring 'hero products/experiences' sent to national media.



Overall the campaign was well received with extensive engagement on social media, particularly for the Monaghan-made Christmas Hamper competition (approx. 1,000 entries). Feedback from participants indicated an increased level of on-line and click and collect sales.

Monaghan Fire & Civil Protection



**New Castleblayney Fire Station
2020**

During a challenging year Monaghan Fire and Civil Protection (MFCP) Service provided a range of services for the citizens of Monaghan to ensure and maintain public safety and support the HSE. These services included Fire Safety and Building Control functions, that encompasses implementing the statutory requirements of the Building Regulations and Building Control Regulations, inspection of new and existing building stock for compliance with fire safety requirements, licensing of filling stations, inspection of licensed premises, advice and enforcement under the Fire Services Acts and the promotion of fire safety in the community. Operational services encompassing both Fire Service & Civil Defence include: responding to emergency calls and assisting Community Support, providing assistance to other emergency services, public safety and reviewing and enhancing Major Emergency Planning in consultation with the other Principal Response Agencies.

Operations Section

Monaghan is served by five retained fire stations in Clones, Monaghan, Ballybay, Castleblayney and Carrickmacross providing an operational fire and emergency response service at all times. During 2020 the pandemic necessitated the implementation of protocols to maintain service delivery.



Agricultural fire in Clones June 2020

The breakdown of total calls per station was as follows:

Fire Station	1 st Turn-out	2 nd Turn-out
Ballybay	25	10
Carrickmacross	54	2
Castleblayney	70	14
Clones	23	0
Monaghan	119	2

Monaghan Fire & Civil Protection were mobilised to 291 incidents in 2020 a 6% reduction on 2019 to first attending appliances, while 2nd appliance turnout increased.

In 2020 the top five incident types attended by Monaghan Fire Service were chimney fires, monitoring alarm activations, road traffic collisions, domestic house fires, and tertiary fires (i.e. small fires/bin/skip). Notably 2020 has seen a 30% reduction in road traffic collisions.



Fire-fighters at Diesel Laundry Plant Fire Feb 2020

The most notable incidents attended in 2020 involved an illegal diesel laundry plant fire north of Oram Village and an industrial building fire at Valley Filters, Carrickmacross.



Fire-fighters at Diesel Laundry Plant Fire Feb 2020

Training

The 2020 training programme had to be significantly altered to ensure the safety of all fire personnel and to incorporate social distancing and the addition of appropriate PPE.

Training completed included 'Confined Space', Emergency Service Driving Standard (ESDS) and Emergency Fire Responder. Virtual training programmes were also developed and delivered including an officer Leadership & Development course which offered a learning environment for reviewing and developing critical decision-making skills for fire personnel.



Confined Space training at Castleblayney Fire Station Sept 2020

The Memorandum of Understanding with Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service for attendance to Road Traffic Accidents (RTA) in the border area has been completed in 2020. The MoU sets out agreed geographical identifiers (townlands/roads) to secure the location of an RTA and the deployment of the nearest brigade.



Ballybay crew conducting a pump exercise May 2020

Fire Personnel Welfare

Along with the provision of Critical Incident Stress Management, the Employee Assistance Service has been extended to Fire Personnel and provides support to extended family members.

In 2020 two fire-fighters were recruited to fill vacancies, maximising the fire-fighter compliment in Co. Monaghan.



Carrickmacross drill night incorporating a pump drill

Fire Safety - Fire Prevention

Our Fire Prevention Section reviewed and processed all valid fire safety certificate applications received and provided advice on achieving compliance with Part B of the Building Regulations (Fire Safety). Fire safety inspections were carried out on a range of building types including: licensed premises, residential care homes, preschools, flats, petrol stations and community buildings.



Fire Safety Week focused on fire safety in the home and particularly encouraging all homes to have smoke alarms and ensuring they are tested weekly. A number of intensive fire safety campaigns were held during the year, with specific attention of those working remotely. Campaigns involved the issuance of smoke alarms, while local and social media formed the focus of a very successful campaign during this time of Covid-19.



Community Fire Safety Activity 2020

A total of 180 Fire Safety & Building Control inspections were conducted in 2020, 51 planning referral reports completed. All notified licensing referrals for pubs, clubs,

dances etc were assessed by a fire officer and recommendations provided to the Courts Service. Performance Inspections were limited in 2020, however desktop studies were carried out for 30 pubs/clubs around the county to check on fire safety management and ensure public safety.

The licencing (liquor) process for 2020 was modified involving 61 premises in a novel approach of utilising risk assessment and a self-declaration for several applications. The Court Service online application process is now integral to the administration process, allowing notice parties to receive licensing applications online.

Community Fire Safety

A range of fire safety initiatives were delivered focusing on both schools and community groups. Smoke detectors were distributed as part of the Community Smoke Alarm Scheme and the key messages of Carbon Monoxide Awareness Week and Fire Safety Week were promoted via local and social media platforms. While the Primary Schools Programme was suspended, schools were engaged via the BFIRESAFE initiative. A fire safety awareness information was issued to the Traveller Community.



Aerial special appliance in operation at a House Fire

Emergency Management

Major Emergency Management systems have been deployed and utilised during the course of the pandemic. In 2020, Monaghan County Council, along with the neighbouring Local

Authorities in our region have supported our Principle Response Agencies (PRA's) in providing both logistical and operational support systems.

Severe Weather Guidance issued in 2020 to reflect the development of Met Éireann's colour coded system and the changes in the threshold levels for the various warning levels has been incorporated in Monaghan County Council response processes. The guidance also developed on the role of the Severe Weather Assessment Team and the function of the NDFEM Crisis Management Team at national level. Storm Francis in August was an Orange Level storm event which necessitated the activation of the Severe Weather Assessment Team.



Cappog, Ballinode August 2020

Building Control

Monaghan Building Control Authority received a total of 234 valid Commencement Notices (325 Units) in 2020, an increase of 9% from 2019, reflecting the buoyant nature of house building in Co. Monaghan. An inspection rate of 42% of new builds was achieved this year. In addition, there were 52 applications for Fire Safety Certificates and 19 Disability Access Certificate applications under Building Control legislation.

In 2020 all Building Control Regulatory applications migrated to the Building Control Management System (BCMS). This process has significantly reduced the paper element involved in each application.



Building Control Inspection Sept 2020

Monaghan Fire & Building Control held an Autumn webinar for local construction practitioners/agents with over 200 attending, topics covered included the following:

- BCMS Overview and application demo from the National Building Control Office (NBCO)
- NZEB in Domestic Energy Assessment Procedure from the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI)
- Brexit Impact on Construction Industry from the National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI)

The level of one-off houses 'opting out' of statutory certification has remained relatively high. In opting out of the requirements for statutory certification the homeowner is making the decision to refrain from having their dwelling included on the Certificate of Compliance on Completion register.

NDFEM Capacity Review

The National Directorate for Fire & Emergency Management (NDFEM) conducted (via a video conferencing platform) a Capacity Review of Monaghan Fire & Civil Protection in August 2020 to ensure the provision of safety critical elements of our community, and to capture and share the learnings during this pandemic. The review focused on three areas:

- Public Safety / Fire Safety
- Continuation of provision of an emergency service
- Emergency Management

A subsequent report has been issued by the Capacity Review group recognising the level of

preparedness within Co Monaghan.

Capital Investment

There was again significant Capital investment in MFCP during the year with the completion of Castleblayney Fire Station in August and obtaining NDFEM approval to procure:

- Class B Fire Appliance
- Replacement of chassis on water tanker in Monaghan.

Both vehicles will be operational in April 2021.

Health and Safety

The continuous annual auditing of our Safety Management System and securing the migration from OHSAS 180001 to ISO 45001 registration was achieved in 2020 and affirms Monaghan County Council's commitment to Health & Safety. The ISO 45001 process encompasses a more proactive and preventative approach based on remedying a broader range of risks before they materialise.

A number of H&S supporting documents were developed in response to the Covid19 outbreak.



Industrial Fire Carrickmacross 2020

Monaghan Civil Defence



Civil Defence HQ 2020

Civil Defence activities in 2020 focused on supporting our local community, and particularly the HSE, in dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic and acting in response to requests from the Community Helpline during 2020. Tasks Civil Defence volunteers undertook included:

- Transportation duties: patient transfers to hospitals, nursing homes, testing centres, transporting persons from accommodation centres to other locations to allow for self-isolation.
- Medical cover at outdoor events & Irish Blood Transfusion Service.
- Collection of medications and medical equipment and delivering to patient's homes.



CD Volunteers assisting Irish Blood Transfusion service during Covid-19 Pandemic

- Helping vulnerable persons within communities by delivering food and medications and collecting their post
- Supporting young people with special requirements
- Delivering essential PPE to community groups
- Delivery of essential training & maintenance



Civil Defence HQ Covid-19 Training 2020

Monaghan Civil Defence HQ was completed in 2020 and has been the command centre for Civil Defence deployment during the Covid-19 Pandemic. The new HQ provides training and welfare facilities for volunteers, along with offices and storage capacity to support front line emergency response. The building will be a hub to provide local community support and assist Principle Response Agencies during severe weather events, pandemics and other emergency response capabilities. An official opening will be arranged at an appropriate time.



Civil Defence responding during severe weather

Civil Defence Volunteers provide a crucial role in maintaining critical services and support during the Covid -19 Pandemic, and during spate conditions and severe weather events.

Civil Defence Community Response

Monaghan Civil Defence assisted community and sporting events providing first aid cover, traffic control and stewarding.

- 115 – assistance provided to Community Forum & PRA's during Covid-19 Pandemic.
- 13 - Sports events
- 5 - Search & Recovery operations conducted by Monaghan Civil Defence boat unit.

Training

Monaghan Civil Defence is a volunteer-based organisation where members support the primary emergency services and the local community. Monaghan Civil Defence currently has 53 volunteers. Volunteers are multi-skilled and the main programmes of activities undertaken are:

- Casualty First Aid
- Search & Rescue
- Water & Flooding incidents
- Auxiliary Fire Service
- Welfare and Communications
- Radiation Monitoring & Radio Communications



Civil Defence transportation duties

Courses were provided for volunteers throughout the year at regional, local level and at Civil Defence Branch Headquarters in Roscrea and Phoenix Training Centre, Phoenix Park, Dublin.



Civil Defence Volunteers Missing Person Search January 2020

Membership

The benefits of being a volunteer with Civil Defence include:

- High standard of training
- Personal development and teamwork
- Learning new skills such as Technical Rescue, Boat Training, Emergency First Responder
- Giving back to your community
- Getting involved in local and national events

Fleet Procurement

Monaghan Civil Defence received delivery of a new Command & Control vehicle & also a new Ford Ranger 4x4 jeep.



Water Services

Irish Water is responsible for the operation and maintenance of public water and wastewater services, including:

- Management of national water and wastewater assets;
- Maintenance of the water and wastewater system;
- Investment and planning;
- Managing capital projects; and
- Customer care and billing.

Monaghan County Council agrees a Service Plan each year with Irish Water which commits both parties to deliver specific objectives and standards of performance against a budget covering headcount, goods and services.

The Annual Service Plan ensures service continuity to the customer, value for money and meets targets set by the economic and environmental regulators - Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Initiatives necessary to achieve performance levels are dependent on capital investment by Irish Water and implementation by the Council of transformation initiatives. This performance is measured quarterly by Irish Water with scheduled meetings reporting on progress.

Under the Rural Water Programme, Monaghan County Council is the Water Services Authority in relation to the supervision of Group Water Schemes and small private water supplies under the Drinking Water Regulations 2014.

It also administers payment of grants and subsidies towards the running costs of Groups Water Schemes and grants to upgrade the assets of Group Water schemes, private water supplies – well grants - and Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems.

The section is also responsible for ensuring redundant water and waste water assets are

supervised and maintained to ensure a clean, safe and sustainable environment. It also co-operates with the Council's Planning Section and government departments to supervise the upgrade and subsequent transfer to Irish Water of non-public water and wastewater infrastructure within private developments.

Covid-19 Response

Provision of quality water and collection and treatment of urban wastewater is a critical service that continued during the national period of lockdown through the efforts of 25 caretakers and plumbers who attended to their work daily with support provided by technical and administrative staff working remotely. In 2020 the staff responded to 1820 customer incidents.

To protect our staff, existing Standard Operating Procedures (SOP'S) were amended to deal with the Covid-19 threat and additional PPE was procured including hazmat suits, gloves and visors etc.



Sampling at Smithboro Wastewater Treatment Plant

Capital Investment Programme

The National Water Resources Plan is Irish Water's first 25-year strategy to ensure a sustainable, secure and reliable drinking water supply for everyone. It sets out how the supply and demand for drinking water over the short, medium and long term will be balanced. Local Authorities are integral to ensuring that the right data for water supply and demand is obtained. This is vital to enable supply of water to customers, and to plan into the future.

The National Water Resources Plan commenced its public consultation phase in

December 2020 and is due to be published in 2021.

Irish Water's Capital Investment Programme delivers improvements in drinking water quality, leakage, wastewater compliance, business efficiencies and customer service.

The following tables details projects currently ongoing and completed in Monaghan.

Completed Projects 2020

Contract	Description of Works	Estimated Value
Castleblayney WWTP Upgrade	Full Mechanical & Electrical Upgrade of the existing plant, Installation of a new pumping station within the plant, Construction of a new picket fence thickener and construction of a new access road from Muckno St.	€4,400,000
Lough Egish Regional Water Supply Scheme – Kilkit Water Treatment Plant	Upgrade works at the Kilkit Water Treatment Plant and Lough Bawn abstraction	€4,500,000
Glaslough Mains Rehab Scheme	Water mains renewal works carried out as part of Irish Water's national Leakage Reduction Programme.	€200,000

Castleblayney Wastewater Treatment Plant

Construction of Castleblayney Wastewater Treatment Plant was completed at a cost of €4.4 million. The upgraded plant is fully compliant with EU Urban Wastewater Directives and ensure the continued protection of Lough Muckno.



New Wastewater Treatment Plant Castleblayney – Cost €4.4m

EPS Ltd operated the plant for a 12-month period until the hand over to Irish Water in November 2020.

Kilkit Water Treatment Plant

The treatment plant servicing the Lough Egish Regional Water Supply Scheme completed construction at a cost of €4.5 million. The scheme supplies approximately 12,000 consumers in County Monaghan including Ballybay, Rockcorry and Castleblaney.

This scheme was operated by Coffey Water under Design Build contract until hand over to Irish Water in early 2020.



Upgrade works Kilkit Water Treatment Plant

Glaslough Mains Rehabilitation

In 2020, Monaghan County Council and Irish Water completed a significant program of mains rehabilitation throughout the County. The Water Services section liaised with the Municipal Districts to ensure these works were carried out to minimise disruption to residents and local businesses.

The water network improvement works commenced in Glaslough on the 13th January 2020. These water mains renewal works were

carried out as part of Irish Water's national Leakage Reduction Programme. The works were carried out by Farrans Construction on behalf of Irish Water.

The benefits of these water main improvement works for the community include provision of a more safe and secure water supply, improved water quality and reduced leakage.

Future Capital Works

Contract	Description of Works	Estimated Value
Leakage Reduction programme	<p>Mains Rehabilitation Works</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cortolvin and Park Rd, Killyconnigan 1.5 KM • Castleblaney Town Centre 220m • Newbliss / Clones Roadreplacement 2,8Km cast iron water main. 	
Carrickmacross Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade	Upgrade to intake works and installation of outfall pipe.	€1,500,000
Monaghan Drainage Area Plan	sewer network that is fit for purpose is essential to support business and social development in Monaghan	NA
Small Towns & Villages Growth Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glaslough WWTP • Newbliss WWTP • Clontibret WWTP • Oram WWTP • Knockatallon WWTP 	€1,289,000

Leakage Reduction Programme

Irish Water have indicated to Monaghan County Council that several projects shall commence in 2021 under the Mains Rehabilitation and Back Yard Services BYS / Lead works as part of the Leakage Reduction programme.

These include:

- Replacement of existing AC main including sliplining of 150m in private land in Cortolvin Killyconnigan.
- Replacement of existing 100mm AC in centre of town that was excluded from

previous mains rehab works in Castleblaney Town Centre.

- Replacement of 2800m section of old cast iron watermain on the Clones Road from Newbliss village is at design phase for replacement in 2021. The existing cast iron mains is resulting in high iron noncompliance with current drinking water regulations.
- Transfer of 8 No. Back Yard Services connections to the public mains at the end Terrace at the bottom of the Mall Road in Monaghan Town is scheduled for construction phase this year.

Monaghan County Council has made submissions to Irish Water for network upgrades on the LERWSS & Clones PWS. These proposals are currently being assessed by Irish Water.

Disinfection Programme

The works are progressing at Crosses and Clones Water Treatment Plant and will probably be completed in the first half of this year.

Carrickmacross Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade

Construction of a new 3.3 km final effluent pipeline extending from the Wastewater treatment plant to the Longfield River. The works also involve upgrade to elements of the existing wastewater treatment plant – including new final effluent and inlet pumping stations and new access road off Oriel Road. These upgrade works will improve operational performance and compliance with statutory legislation.

Construction is likely to commence in 2022.

Drainage Area Plan – Monaghan Town

Irish Water is continuing its work to safeguard wastewater services in Monaghan town by undertaking surveys of the existing sewer network in partnership with Monaghan County Council. The Drainage Area Plan process is overseen by ARUP Consultants and involved CCTV surveys and installation of rainfall, flow, depth and conductivity monitors in the sewers

and manholes as part of stages 1 & 2. The data collected presents a clearer picture as to what defects and capacity issues exist in the sewer network and where future upgrades should be prioritised.

Roads and Water Services staff met with ARUP Consultants to review catchment risks regarding flooding, pollution, growth and the structural and operational performance of existing assets as part of stage 3 consultation process.

Small Towns & Villages Growth Program

Small Towns and Villages Growth Programme is primarily intended to provide capacity in Irish Water Wastewater Treatment Plants (WWTPs) to cater for growth in smaller settlements which would not otherwise be provided for in the current Investment Plan. Monaghan County Council has been allocated €1.238m funding under the Small Towns and Villages Growth Programme.

- Glaslough WWTP
- Newbliss WWTP
- Clontibret WWTP
- Oram WWTP
- Knockatallon WWTP

Monaghan County Council identified five settlements that have the least headroom in terms of capacity per Population Equivalent treatment and compliance with current discharge standards.

Irish Water will proceed with works on a phased basis based on priority.

Rural Water Programme

The Rural Water Programme in County Monaghan is administered by Monaghan County Council.

The programme provides measures to address deficiencies in:

- Group Water Schemes
- Group Sewerage Schemes

- Private Supplies where no alternative group or public supply is available

Revised grant amounts and terms and conditions for both domestic wells and domestic wastewater treatment systems (septic tanks) were announced by the Department of Heritage, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG) in June 2020.

The revised grant schemes were introduced for domestic wastewater treatment systems under the Housing (Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems Financial Assistance) Regulations 2020. Under the new schemes householders may be eligible to apply for a grant if they are located in (i) a High Status Objective Catchment area and can directly apply for grant assistance, (ii) a Priority Area for Action and can apply following inspection and referral from the LAWPRO office and (iii) the remaining county area can apply for grant assistance following an inspection and notice under the EPA National Inspection Plan criteria.

The new level of grant aid is now 85% of the eligible costs of remediation, repair, upgrading works, or replacement of a domestic septic tank or €5,000 whichever is the lower amount. The previous domestic wastewater system grant was means tested based on gross household income where the grant ranged from €2,500 - €4,000 no longer applies.

Sixteen well grant applications were received in 2020.

Over €3.7m in subsidy payments were made to twelve group water schemes in 2020 by the Local Authority. Capital grant amount of €345,724 was also paid to seven group water schemes in 2020 under the MARWP 2019 - 2021.

Asset Transfer

Section 12 of the Water Services (No. 2) Act 2013 provides for the transfer of Water Services Assets to Irish Water, which is given effect by Ministerial Order. To date 116 folio

numbers have transferred to Irish Water with 13 transferred in 2020.

There are approximately 77 folios yet to be transferred many of which contain more than one folio.

Detailed work is ongoing preparing supporting material for the transfer of these assets which includes the subdivision of folios and associated mapping, the registration of unregistered sites, the establishment of legal rights of way and the resolution of outstanding title anomalies. Monaghan County Council will aim to transfer a further 11 assets in 2021.

Housing

Capital Building Programme

A total of 97 social houses were provided in 2020. New build projects were the main focus of the capital expenditure programme. In 2020 Monaghan County Council completed 26 houses at Plas an Bhrí in Castleblayney, 6 houses at Cnoc na Greine in Tydavnet and 6 houses at Coill an Ri in Carrickmacross.

Through Part V arrangements 4 additional houses were provided, 2 in Castleblayney and 2 in Carrickmacross. A further 23 social houses were provided in conjunction with Clanmil Housing and Tuath Housing Associations in Rockcorry (12) and Castleblayney (11) respectively.

A further 20 social houses were also provided through individual house purchases. Three houses were added to the council housing stock through the mortgage to rent scheme and the repair and leasing scheme.

Additional units were provided including the first 6 apartments completed under the Clones Renewal Scheme and the first 3 houses under the Gortakeegan redevelopment scheme. These are outlined in more detail below.

Treatment of Vacant Properties

Monaghan County Council dealt with 50 Casual Vacancies in 2020 at a cost of €545,000. The houses were prepared for reletting at an average cost of €10,900 each in an average time of approximately 11.5 weeks. Monaghan County Council does not have any long-term vacant houses (Voids). In 2020, the reletting times were affected by Covid-19 with the National Lockdowns, revised Health and Safety measures and staff working remotely. Notwithstanding these issues Monaghan County Council managed to improve the average reletting time to 11.5 weeks compared to 11.65 weeks in 2019.

Partnership Working with Approved Housing Bodies

Monaghan County Council supported funding

applications from Approved Housing Bodies through the Capital Advance Leasing Facility and were successful in securing funding approval for the provision of 41 homes to be constructed in a new development to be called Macartan View in Monaghan Town and for 12 homes brought into use in an unfinished housing development at Rockriver View in Rockcorry, completed in September 2020. Monaghan County Council also secured funding to support an additional 3 houses to be added to 16 under construction by Oaklee Housing Association at Liseggerton in Clones which when added to 6 unfinished houses that were brought into use previously, brings the total development at Liseggerton to 25 houses. Construction of 38 houses in a new development called Radhairc an Bhrí on the Shercock Road in Castleblayney proceeded in 2020 and the first 11 houses were completed, the remaining houses are to be completed in phases during 2021.

A further 24 houses to be brought into use as social housing at Lough na Glack in Carrickmacross by North & East Housing Association were substantially completed in late 2020 and will be available for letting in Quarter 1 of 2021

Regeneration Schemes

The ongoing work at the derelict sites in Clones as part of the Clones Renewal Scheme is continuing with 6 of the 24 units already delivered in a currently challenging environment for a scheme of this nature.

Construction has also commenced at the unfinished housing development, Lui na Greine, Scotstown where 4 derelict houses are being finished and an additional 28 social houses are being constructed on the derelict site.

Monaghan County Council have final funding approval to renew a vacant house No. 13 McCurtain Street, Clones and will soon enter into a works contract with the successful tenderer. In addition, Monaghan County Council have received tenders to renew a fire damaged derelict site at 12 Church Street, Ballybay and will apply for final Stage 4 Funding

Approval to the Department of Housing, Planning and Heritage shortly seeking permission to proceed to works on site.

Monaghan County Council has appointed a Design Team to address an unfinished housing development in Ballybay town centre where 4 derelict properties exist along with a vacant derelict site. The project "Ballybay Courtyards" is in concept scheme development stage.

Monaghan County Council are continuing to seek opportunities to resolve unfinished, derelict or vacant housing sites to help renew properties at town and village centre locations.

Remedial Works

The Mullaghmatt estate-wide Remedial Works Project are anticipated for completion imminently. The site was closed for a period of time due to the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. All window and roof works were completed in 2020 with the exception of some minor snagging. Six properties which received full refurbishment works were handed over in 2020. The final house receiving full refurbishment works is currently at snagging stage and will be complete by the end of February 2021. Site development works were ongoing throughout 2020 and are due to be completed by the end of February 2021.

Housing Assistance Payment

HAP continues to play an important role as a form of social housing support for those with a long-term housing need. 200 tenancies commenced in 2020 and there were a total of 628 active HAP supported tenancies as at 31st December 2020. Since the introduction of HAP in October 2014, 252 individuals/families in HAP supported tenancies have since been allocated Local Authority tenancies or tenancies provided by Approved Housing Bodies.

Rental Accommodation Scheme

The Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) continues to be an important mechanism for the delivery of social housing support in County Monaghan. The total number of properties providing social housing under the

RAS scheme was 163 at year end 2020 with 81 households in private rented properties and 82 households in properties held by approved housing bodies.

Housing Grants

The Housing Grants Schemes are available to assist in carrying out works that are reasonably necessary for the purposes of rendering a house more suitable for the accommodation of a person with a disability or for an older person living in poor housing conditions to have necessary repairs or improvements carried out to allow them remain in their own homes.

There are three types of grants available namely the Housing Adaptation Grant, the Mobility Aids Grant and the Housing Aid for Older People Grant.

In 2020 Monaghan County Council's Housing Section approved 147 applications, paid out 208 applications and recouped 230 applications.

An initial allocation of €1.277 was received from the Department for Housing Grants in 2020.

Due to the success of the roll out of the grants scheme in County Monaghan an additional allocation was granted bringing the total allocation for 2020 to €1.832m which was successfully recouped from the Department. Monaghan continued in 2020 to secure the highest percentage drawdown in the country from this funding stream.

Homeless Services

Monaghan County Council is responsible for assessing people who present as homeless. In 2020 there were 137 presentations made to the Council. This comprised 105 people, with some people presenting more than once. Of those who presented 16 were assessed as homeless. Of the remaining 89 individuals, who were at risk of homelessness, they were supported by the Housing Section to ensure they did not become homeless.

Solutions involved private rented accommodation with HAP support, advice and support from Housing staff, B&B, hostel,

emergency accommodation, support from Focus Ireland worker, Council housing.

Traveller Accommodation

The Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019 – 2024 was adopted by Monaghan County Council. Monaghan County Council are delivering this programme through the provision of Social Housing, Approved Body Housing and HAP assistance. The Programme also includes the redevelopment of the Traveller specific accommodation at Gortakeegan Monaghan.

Tenancies

The Tenant Liaison Officer, in 2020, was mainly involved in dealing with Breaches of Tenancy. The number of cases opened in 2020 is outlined below.

There were 70 Breaches of Tenancy cases: 70 of which the following applied

- Category A - Drug Activity: 1
- Category B - Non-Drug Related Anti-Social Behaviour Activity (e.g. property damage or actions hostile to a person): 8
- Category C - (Other- breaches of tenancy): 61

In respect of these matters the investigations of the cases resulted in the following:

- (1st warning) Tenant Notifications issued: 7
- Statutory Warnings served (Housing Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2014.): 8
- Abandonment Notices served: 2
- Dwellings voluntarily surrendered (following the service of statutory tenancy Warnings/Notices) 5
- Application to court- 1 case initiated regarding Excluding Order/Re-possession
- Dwellings re-posessed (following Court Order): 0

A substantial level of work is involved in investigating these matters. It is sometimes necessary to initiate sanctions for the recovery of a dwelling due to breaches of tenancy agreements. For a timely response to issues

and to save resources it is preferable to recover a dwelling without resort to the courts, however tenants and the Council have the right to have the District Court determine the facts of a case.

Housing Maintenance

Monaghan County Council is responsible for the maintenance requirements of the Council's housing stock of almost 1700 properties. In 2020 a budget allocation of €750,000 provided for reactive & planned general maintenance of this stock. The Housing Section received and logged in excess of 1500 repair requests in 2020. This number is less than previous years due to the restrictions imposed by the covid-19 pandemic. In order to keep Monaghan County Council Craftworkers safe during times of lockdown only emergency repairs were attended to and the Craftworkers were re-assigned to work on vacant housing stock which in the past was completed by external contractors.

The key areas of housing maintenance for occupied dwellings include:

1. Response Maintenance which involves responding to tenant emergencies and reported repair requests. The Housing Maintenance Department continues to engage with tenants to provide appropriate information in relation to these responsibilities.
2. Planned Maintenance involves the delivery of targeted programmes for specific improvement and replacement works. In 2020 targeted planned maintenance works were focused on external works, building fabric and ensuring the safety within properties. This included heating upgrades, septic tank upgrades, electrical works and roof replacements.

Planning

Development Plan

The Monaghan County Development Plan for the period 2019-2025 was adopted on 4th of March 2019 and provides an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of County Monaghan which is consistent with both national and regional spatial planning policies and objectives.

The Monaghan County Development Plan comprises a written statement which includes strategic objectives and policies for the development and use of land within the County, with supporting maps and appendices. Spatial planning through the development plan objectives and policies endeavours to achieve balance between the common good and the interests of individuals.

In accordance with Section 15 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) a review on the progress of achieving the objectives of the County Development Plan two years after it has been adopted is required. Work on the progress review commenced in late 2020 and report from the Chief Executive will be issued to the elected members detailing same in 2021.

Variations

Two variations to the Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025 were completed in 2020.

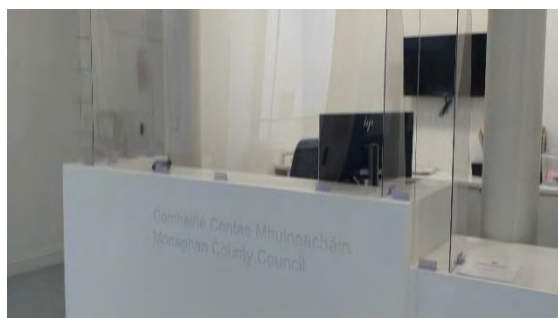
Variation 1 provides for the inclusion of policy NRP 7 to the Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025 which reads as follows "To protect the selected route of the N2 upgrade road scheme between Ardee and Castleblayney and the selected route between Clontibret and the Border with Northern Ireland, and to prohibit development that could prejudice their future delivery." This variation affords for the protection, when identified, of the selected routes for the upgrade of the N2 from Clontibret to the Border and between Ardee and Castleblayney, from inappropriate development that may

compromise the progression of these upgrades or prejudice their future delivery.

Variation 2 provides for the inclusion of the following text within Section 1.12 of Chapter One of the development plan “The Monaghan County Development Plan (MCDP) was prepared concurrently with both the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Northern & Western Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (NWRA RSES) and a significant amount of synergy was achieved between the provisions of the MCDP and the provisions of both the NPF and the NWRA RSES as a consequence. However, for the purposes of clarity the provisions of the NPF and the NWRA RSES will take precedence over the provisions of MCDP.” This variation demonstrates that the Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025 is aligned with the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Northern & Western Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (NWRA RSES).

New Planning Offices

The renovation and extension of the former Monaghan Town Council Offices were completed in 2020 and the Planning Section began operating from the new office on Monday 10th February 2020.



Reception Desk at Planning Offices, Dublin Street

Development Management

Planning application numbers were up slightly in 2020 despite COVID-19 restrictions.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, specific legislation was introduced to allow for the period between 29th March 2020 and 23rd May 2020 to be disregarded in respect of specified/appropriate periods and timelines within the Planning & Development Act 2000

(as amended), which provided for an additional eight weeks to facilitate the processing of planning applications during the COVID-19 restrictions. Accompanying circulars were also issued by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government providing advice in this regard.

As in previous years the majority of applications received were for single dwellings and home extensions, followed by agricultural developments.

Planning applications 2020	
Received	615
Invalid	13
Granted	512
Refused	23

A total of 54 Section 5 Declarations for exempt development were received in 2020.

Unfinished Housing Developments

By the end of 2020 there were four developments in Monaghan classified as unfinished in accordance with Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government definition. Construction work is actively taking place on two of these (Bothar Na Mullan, Scotstown & Drummond Ross, Carrickmacross) and they will likely be removed from the list shortly. The two other developments are Forest Walk Monaghan, and Corr na Ghlass, rear of Main Street Ballybay.

Taking in Charge

Several developments were brought to an advanced stage of assessment in terms of the taking in charge process during 2020, and negotiations are underway on several developments with regards bond draw downs and negotiations with Irish Water.

Planning Enforcement

When the Planning Authority becomes aware of a breach of permission or unauthorised development, discussions with offender(s) are often sufficient to ensure remedy. However, where issues are not addressed by the offender(s) then formal enforcement action is taken. Enforcement statistics for the year are set out below. Benefits continue to accrue

from early invoicing and enforcement action in recovery of unpaid development contributions. Receipts in 2020 amounted to €628,795.

2020 Enforcement Statistics	
No. of new cases subject to complaints	119
No of cases closed/resolved	27
No of ongoing enforcement cases	357

Refundable Deposits Project

Work was completed on the reconciliation of refundable deposits in March 2020. At the end of 2020 Monaghan County Council held an amount of €1,756,768 in the refundable deposits account. By the end of 2020, €94,445 of deposits had been refunded to customers.

Derelict Sites

At the end of 2020, there were 36 properties on the Derelict Sites Register and work on addressing dereliction continued throughout 2020, where COVID-19 restrictions permitted.

Regeneration

Castleblayney is one of six towns nationally, that was selected in 2019 by the Department of Rural and Community Development to look at innovative ways to encourage more town centre living. In 2020, Shaffrey Architects and Space Engagers, completed a report commissioned by Monaghan County Council, 'Castleblayney: A Town Centre For Living In Well'. The report provides recommendations to increase the potential for residential development within Castleblayney Town Centre, thereby promoting Castleblayney as an attractive location to live and stimulating investment in residential development.

Continuing input was provided by the Planning Section during 2020 in respect of the Dublin Street Regeneration Plans in Monaghan Town, and the Local Area Action Plans for Carrickmacross town centre.

Built Heritage

Monaghan County Council's Planning Section administer two annual heritage grant schemes, the Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS)

and the Historic Structures Fund (HSF).

Built Heritage Investment Scheme

The BHIS encourages the investment of private capital in small scale, labour intensive projects to repair and conserve historic structures and to support the employment of skilled and experienced conservation professionals, craftspeople and tradespersons. County Monaghan received an overall allocation of €60,000 in 2020.

In 2020 five projects availed of funding under the BHIS as follows:-

- Monaghan Methodist Church, Dawson Street
- Anderson's Pub, Drum
- Station Master's House, Kilnacloy
- Creighton Hotel, Clones
- St Salvator's Church, Glaslough



New windows installed in Station Master's House with built heritage funding to reflect the openings of the recently restored Railway Station building adjacent

Historic Structures Fund

The primary focus of the Historic Structures Fund is on conservation and enhancement of historic structures and buildings for the benefit of communities and the public. It aims to enable conservation works to be carried out on heritage structures which are deemed to be significant and in need of urgent support. Total funding for 2020 was €90,000.

In 2020 three projects received funding under the HSF as follows:-

- Bessmount Park House
- Monaghan Railway Station
- St Macartan's Cathedral (Stream 2)



Repair of external lime render to Bessmount Park House, Music Room

Additional Funding for Built Heritage was announced in July 2020 under the Government's Jobs Stimulus Package. The aim of the package was to expand existing built heritage funding schemes in response to significant demand from communities, to progress actions under Climate Change Action Plan in relation built heritage stock, and to ensure completion of projects interrupted by the COVID-19 restrictions. Local authorities were able to apply for funding for two projects under the categories of:-

- 1) support for urgent conservation works and
- 2) additional funding for existing grantees.

Total funding of €50,000 was secured for two projects under this package as follows:-

- Carrickmacross Workhouse
- Bessmount Park House – Music Room



Roof of rear Carrickmacross Workhouse building partially collapsed and dangerous



Carrickmacross Workhouse windows have been shored and boarded up and damaged elements of the roof structure removed

Section 57 Declarations

Under the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) works which would normally be considered exempted development under Section 4(1)h of the Act may not be exempt in respect of a Protected Structure or a Proposed Protected Structure.

Section 57 of the Act allows for the owner or occupier of a Protected Structure or a Proposed Protected Structure to make a written request to the Planning Authority to issue a declaration as to the type of works which it considers would or would not materially affect the character of the structure or any element of the structure, thereby clarifying which works would be considered exempted development and those which would require planning permission.

Monaghan County Council issued 4 Section 57 Declarations in 2020.

Environmental Protection

Environmental Services are responsible for implementing EU and National Environmental Policy and legislation to protect the Environment of County Monaghan

In its Corporate Plan, Monaghan County Council committed to promoting and protecting a clean, safe environment in a manner which is viable and sustainable. In this regard, the Council's priorities and objectives for the Environment division are outlined in Appendix 2, together with the performance standards to be met. In summary the objectives include

- Implement the County Monaghan Litter Management Plan 2018-2020
- Implement the Connacht-Ulster Waste Management Plan 2015-2021
- Operate Scotch Corner Landfill in accordance with EPA Licence requirements
- Implement the River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021 and associated Water Framework Directive requirements
- Progress the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework

Waste Enforcement and Regulations

Two NOAC indicators are relevant to waste enforcement work

E1 No. or % of Households with access to a 3-Bin Service

E2 – Environmental Pollution Complaints Closed

Waste Enforcement continued to be a challenge in 2020 with several significant large-scale illegal dumping sites discovered that were both cross border and cross county in their operation. Monaghan County Council incurred significant costs (€43,000) in removing this waste, however this was recouped from Government funding through the Anti-Dumping Initiative 2020. It is

expected that illegal waste activities will continue to pose a threat to the Environment and public health in 2021.

Currently there are three full time Waste Enforcement Officers in the County and Monaghan County Council recoups €192,000 towards their costs from Central Funding

Currently there are three full time Waste Enforcement Officers in the County and Monaghan County Council recoups €192,000 towards their costs from Central Funding



Clean up of illegally dumped waste

National Waste Enforcement Priorities 2020

Circular WP05/19 issued on the 31st October 2019 has set out the National Waste Enforcement priorities 2020. They are

- Tackling significant illegal waste activity.
- Construction and demolition activity.
- End of Life Vehicle directive.
- Waste Collection at household and commercial level.
- Sites that require multi agency responses.

In delivering on these priorities Monaghan County Council completed the

- 443 routine waste inspections
- 217 non-routine inspections
- Dealt with 508 environmental complaints
- Initiated 163 waste enforcement actions

Drone Training

Seven members of Environmental Services

recently undertook theory training on the use of a drone. It is intended that Environmental Services will now register with the Irish Aviation Authority as a competent operator of the drone. All seven members that have received the training will now undertake a final practical assessment and be registered pilots of the drone. Once this is completed the drone will be used by Environmental Services as a tool to assess compliance with Environmental Legislation

The purchase of the drone and training was one of the projects funded through the Anti-Dumping Initiative 2020 at a cost of €8844.

Other projects completed under this scheme included clean ups of illegally dumped waste, aerial surveys and bulky goods collections at Civic Amenity Sites

Litter Management Plan 2018-2020

Litter Management has three relevant NOAC indicators

E2: % Environmental pollution complaints closed

E3: % LA area within the 5 levels of litter pollution

E4: % of schools that have been awarded green flag status

1. Total spend on street cleansing in 2020 was €758,745]
2. 200 on the spot litter fines were issued in 2020.
3. Monaghan County Council had an extensive CCTV programme at bottle banks in 2020.
4. Due to COVID 19 the schools programme was curtailed and limited but it is hoped once restrictions are lifted this can be resumed.

Towards the end of 2020 Environmental Services began a process of reviewing the litter management plan, which will be published in 2021.

Environmental Awareness

Whilst some work on environmental

awareness was curtailed, projects completed in 2020 include

- Musical instrument repair project funded by LAPN
- Collaboration between Monaghan County Council, WEEE Ireland and EPA on repairmystuff.ie website
- Supports to Tidy Towns and resident association's through annual funding programme
- Litter awareness campaign at public playgrounds and parks

Waste Infrastructure / Landfill

Whilst the Scotch Corner landfill facility no longer accepts waste for disposal and all cells have been remediated and capped as per EPA requirements, significant monitoring and sampling works continued in 2020 to ensure compliance with our licence. During 2020 two separate audits were carried out on site and the facility was deemed fully compliant with no



non-compliances noted. Dealing with leachate still represents a significant costs on site but in late 2020 the council successfully negotiated a revised leachate treatment fee with Irish water with treatment costs reduced from €3.81/m3 to €1.10/m3 which will result in major savings going forward.

During 2020 design works for the new site office building previously damaged by fire were completed and a procurement competition to appoint a contractor to carry out the rebuild process was progressed. It is proposed to commence construction works during 2021 once Covid restrictions regarding construction are relaxed.

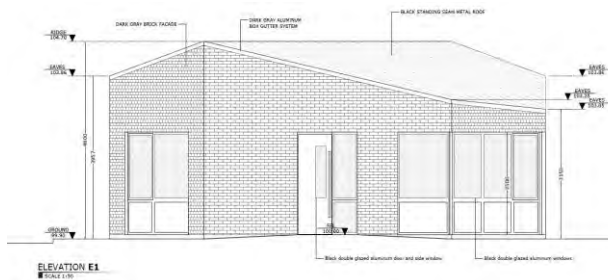


Figure 1 - Landfill Office Building Design

Under the Waste Management (Certification of Historic Unlicensed Waste Disposal and Recovery Activity) Regulations 2008, local authorities are required to carry out an environmental assessment of closed landfills that were previously operated by local authorities during the period 1977 to 1997. During 2020 for Certificate of Authorisation applications were lodged for 2 high risk historic landfill sites at Killycard and Knockcronaghan. Draft certificate of authorisations were subsequently issued by the EPA in Q3 2020 will final certificates expected during 2021. In December 2020 a further Certificate Of Authorisation application for the historic landfill at Scotch Corner was lodged with the EPA. It is expected, envisaged that significant remedial measures will be required on these sites funded through grant assistance from the DCCA.

During 2020 Environmental Services continued to progress a technical amendment application with the EPA to amend the current waste licence at Scotch Corner. A formal technical amendment application was submitted in early September with additional information lodged with the EPA in December. If the technical amendment proposal is successful, this would enable the MRF and Civic Amenity site to operate under a Waste Facility Permit which would facilitate an increase in the range of waste activities allowed on site thereby further allowing Monaghan County Council to further maximise the potential of the facility. Currently, the EPA licensing section are assessing the application and whilst there is not a prescribed date by which the EPA has to issue its decision, it is anticipated that an EPA decision may be issued during the first quarter of 2021.

During 2020 the recycling centres at Scotch

Corner and Carrickmacross and the bring site network remained open throughout the covid restrictions being deemed an essential service. Additional capacity was provided at a number of the bring sites during the year to cater for the extra demand experienced at a number of bring sites particularly during the early stages of the lockdown.

Water and Air Quality



In December 2019 The National Water and Air Priorities were forwarded to each local authority for 2020 through correspondence issued by the EPA. These priorities included:

- Improving water quality in all water bodies
- To protect public health and to improve and maintain air quality.

Under the 2020 RMCEI plan Monaghan County Council's water quality team continued its program of water quality sampling in conjunction with the EPA, carried out investigate assessment work on selected river and lake waterbodies, undertook a comprehensive farm inspection program, investigated a significant number of water pollution incidents, regulated effluent discharges through licensing, and worked with the recently formed Local Authorities Waters Program (LAWPRO) with the aim of improving water quality in areas designated as priority areas for action under the River Basin management plan which sets out the actions that Ireland is taking with the aim of improving water quality and achieving 'good' ecological status in water bodies (rivers lakes, estuaries and coastal waters) by 2027.

During 2020 over 1,000 water quality related inspections were carried out including:

- 228 samples taken as part of Water Framework Directive monitoring on rivers and lakes.
- Investigation of 127 water pollution complaints/incidents.
- 41 Farm inspections.
- Assessment of over 250 planning applications from a water quality perspective.

In relation to air enforcement over 60 routine air quality inspections were carried out under the Solid Fuels Regulations, the Petroleum Vapour Regulations, the Solvent Regulations and the Decorative Paints Regulations during 2020.

Climate Action

Back in September 2019 The Monaghan County Council Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024 was formally adopted at by Monaghan County Council. The Climate Change Adaptation Strategy will assist Monaghan County Council in planning for, responding to and adapting to climatic events and aims to make Monaghan County Council and the communities that it serves more sustainable and climate resilient. This strategy also complements the national 'Climate Action Plan – To Tackle Climate Breakdown'.

During 2020, despite the Covid pandemic, significant progress was made in progressing the measures and actions contained within the strategy and within the national Climate Action Plan 2019 – To Tackle Climate Breakdown.

Some of the major milestones achieved in 2020 include:

- Signing of the Climate charter
- Piloting of Climate Action training by Monaghan County Council in conjunction with the Eastern and Midlands Climate Action Regional Office.
- Setting up of a designated Strategic Policy Committee on Climate Action and Environmental Services.
- Inclusion of climate action as a core objective in the new Corporate Plan.
- Preparation of an in-house Climate Action Delivery Plan 2020-2021 to identify and progress specific actions in the Climate

Change Adaptation Strategy for delivery or part delivery over an 18-month period.

In 2021 work on climate action will focus on the further implementation of the actions identified in the Climate Delivery Plan 2020-2021. The delivery plan covers all sections within Monaghan County Council and contains actions for delivery or part delivery under the following thematic areas.

- Local Adaptation Governance and Business Operations.
- Infrastructure and Built Environment.
- Landuse and Development.
- Drainage and Flood Management.
- Natural Resources and Cultural Infrastructure.
- Community Health and Wellbeing

It is expected that going forward, Department funding will be provided to assist local authorities in progressing measures aimed at transitioning to a low carbon and becoming more resilient to climatic events.

The council has made substantial progress over a relatively short period but these are only the first steps in a journey where the country is in now legally committed to achieving the target of Carbon neutrality by 2050.

Veterinary Services

Food Safety

Monaghan County Council has a contract with the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI), to provide food safety control and support services to small food business operators in the County engaged in the slaughtering, processing and wholesaling of meat and meat products, ranging from fresh meat to ready-to-eat foods containing cooked meat. A list of approved food businesses is available on the Council's website. The Council employs veterinary inspectors to check animals before and after slaughter, audit the structural and operational hygiene standards in premises, and operate sampling and training programmes to assist owners and staff in attaining the required standards set out in national and EU legislation. The purpose of the service is to ensure the safety of the food produced by these food businesses, the welfare of the animals slaughtered and the safe and proper disposal of animal by-products. These are essential services and, during the pandemic lockdown and throughout 2020, the service was maintained with inspections and sampling completed as planned.

Dog Control Service

The Council employs one full-time Dog Warden for the county. Shelter facilities for the detention and care of stray and unwanted dogs are provided on behalf of Monaghan County Council by Carrick Dog Shelter in Lisdoonan and MSPCA in Emyvale. 2020 saw a dramatic drop in the number of dogs admitted to the Dog Pound – a total of 197. This is the lowest number of dogs impounded in a single year by the Council since records began and is approximately half the number impounded in 2019.

While the lockdown partly explains this reduction, there has been a steady decrease in

the numbers of dogs admitted to Council Dog Pounds for over 10 years now. Almost all of these dogs were either reclaimed or rehomed to members of the public or dog rescues. 6 dogs were put to sleep, 3 due to severe injuries that had occurred before admission to the Pound, and 1 dog had been killed in a road traffic accident before being brought to the Pound.

The Dog Control service was significantly curtailed by pandemic restrictions during the year, but the Dog Warden collected all stray dogs reported and attended to all complaints received.

The number of dogs licenced in Monaghan in 2020 was 6,137, a slight drop on the number licenced in 2019. The number of licences bought online increased from 20% in 2019 to 30% in 2020. The number of people buying lifetime licences for their dogs increased from 65 to 81. The Council distributed its information leaflet on dog owners' responsibilities, when possible, and continued its advertising campaign to highlight the danger of straying dogs to sheep.

The Council also continued its inspections of registered Dog Breeding Establishments (DBEs) within the county. Two new DBEs were registered in 2020, while 3 others were deregistered, leaving a current total of 8 DBEs.

Horse Control Service

The Council employs the services of Hungry Horse Outside, a horse charity based in Longford, to collect stray horses in the county. No stray horses were seized in 2020. This is the first year since 2011 that no stray horses were seized in Co. Monaghan. There were a number of complaints of stray horses dealt with during the year, but seizure of the horses was not necessary. The Council also investigated a number of complaints about horse welfare.

Roads & Transportation

During 2020 the Roads Division carried out a comprehensive programme of work on the county's road network, while dealing with the very challenging conditions posed by the Covid 19 pandemic. Nevertheless, significant progress was achieved during the year.

The road network in the county is funded from three main sources: Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) funds the design, construction and maintenance of the National roads while the Department of Transport and Monaghan County Council co-fund Regional and Local Roads. Road Safety is funded from the Council's own resources.

During 2020 the Transportation Section delivered and progressed the following projects on National and Non-National roads:

N2 Clontibret to Border and N2 Ardee to Castleblayney Road Schemes

Monaghan County Council is working in association with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and with the assistance of Westmeath National Roads Office to develop two major road projects in the County. The upgrade of a 28km section of the N2 National Primary Road between Clontibret and the Northern Ireland Border. and the upgrade of a 32km section of the N2 between Ardee and Castleblayney. Monaghan is working in partnership with Louth County Council for the latter project. Together with other projects proposed on the N2 Dublin-Derry Road, these projects aim to enhance North/South and Regional connectivity and improve road safety. The projects are being undertaken in accordance with the TII 'Project Management Guidelines'.

In 2020 the Consulting Engineers

progressed the route option appraisals for the two schemes. Early in the year they considered feedback from the Public consultations that took place in 2019 and undertook comparative assessments. In August 2020 'Emerging Preferred Route Corridors' were published for both schemes, and a third non-statutory public consultation took place. Despite the Covid-19 restrictions in place at the time, which prevented the running of traditional public consultation events, the public consultation process was well received and achieved a good level of public engagement. An extensive publicity campaign saw information distributed to 6,000 households, and the project website, which incorporated a 'Virtual Consultation Experience', attracted over 7,000 visitors. The project team held 235 face-to-face meetings and more than 120 remote meetings with stakeholders over the six-week consultation period.



The online 'Virtual Consultation Experience' used for the third non-statutory public consultation on the 'Emerging Preferred Route Corridors'

Feedback and submissions received through the public consultation process were then considered by the project team, with Preferred Route Corridors to be finalised and published in early 2021. This will allow the project to progress to Phase 3 of the TII Design process; Design & Environmental Evaluation, which will see the project developed to a stage where statutory approvals can be applied for in 2022.



Covid-19 compliant venues for were utilised for face-to-face meetings during the third non-statutory public consultation events.

N2 Monaghan to Emyvale Phase 3

The final phase of the realignment of the National Primary road between Monaghan and Emyvale was completed in January 2020 with a total project cost of €13 million for construction, design, land acquisition, archaeology and all ancillary surveys & studies. The Phase 3 scheme is an upgrade of the 3.3km of the road from Tydavnet junction through Corracrin to Emyvale Village and incorporates a new footway/cycle track.



Aerial view of N2 Phase 3 Scheme.

N54 Tullybryan

In 2020 the scheme to realign 3.1kms of the National Secondary N54 route Tullybryan between Tullygrimes and Annaghervy progressed through Phases 1 and 2 of the Transport Infrastructure Ireland Project Management Guidelines for Minor Projects. The scheme which is currently in Phase 3 (Design & Environmental Evaluation) has an estimated Total Scheme budget of €16 million. The proposed scheme will deliver improvements to the visibility and cross section and aims to provide significant improvement to long-term accident rates

and reduction in fatalities. A tender for Site Investigations was advertised in December, 2020.



Map of the N54 scheme location.

N2 Blackwater Bridge Replacement

The replacement of the bridge at Coolshannagh, Monaghan Town was substantially completed in November 2020. The overall project costs including construction, design, accommodation works, archaeology and advance works were €6 million.

Construction commenced in January 2019 and required a temporary bridge to be installed to maintain traffic on the N2 whilst the works proceeded on the replacement of the old masonry arch bridge. The single span precast arches were installed in November 2019 and the road was open to traffic in July 2020. Extensive accommodation works were carried out including a bus lay-by and parking at St. Macartan's College.



Ariel view of the Blackwater Bridge scheme and accommodation works.

N53 Ballynacarry Bridge

The Ballynacarry Bridge is located on the border with Northern Ireland on the N53 National Secondary route and A37 route in Co Armagh. In 2020 a Feasibility Report and a Strategic Appraisal Report for a new

bridge were prepared by Monaghan County Council Roads Division and submitted to Transport Infrastructure Ireland, on foot of which approval was received to progress the project to detailed design.

The new bridge crossing, which will address the geometry and safety issues, will also include road widening and reconstruction of the existing road on either side of the bridge.

In 2021 the Roads Division will procure Consultants to progress the project through the design and planning stages.



View of Ballynacarry Bridge (N53)

Monaghan County Council is liaising with the Department for Infrastructure (Roads) Northern Ireland, and is exploring possible funding for the project through the Shared Island Programme and the PEACE PLUS Cross-Border EU Programme 2021-27.

Safety Schemes

During 2020 Monaghan County Council progressed three national road safety improvement schemes with Transport Infrastructure Ireland Road Safety. This required the submission of Feasibility and Options Reports, Preliminary Design Reports and Road Safety Audits to TII for approval for construction in 2021. The schemes are:

- N54/R867 Roundabout Pedestrian Safety Scheme. This scheme will include the construction of a zebra

crossing on Market Road (N54) and Park Street (R867) and a signalised pedestrian crossing on the Clones Road

- N2 Tirnaneill Junction Realignment
- N54 Smithborough Pedestrian Crossing Scheme

Bridge Rehabilitation Programme

In 2020 the Roads Division piloted the new DTTaS Bridge Asset Management System and have surveyed 390 of the bridges in the county. A funding allocation of €840,000 was received to carry out substantial repair works on 13 bridges with site investigations and design packages carried out at a further 9 bridge locations.

In addition, twenty -four bridge work repair designs were completed as part of the Climate Actions Scheme to mitigate climate effects on road infrastructure.



Corskea Bridge Rehabilitation works.

In 2020 Restoration Improvement work (resurfacing) was completed on 45.1km of the Regional and Local road network, and Restoration Maintenance work (surface dressing) was completed on 85.6km of Regional and Local Road network. This work was supported by a fleet of over 120 pieces of plant and machinery, which are managed, maintained and replaced as necessary through the Council's machinery yard operations.

Seventy-six Winter Maintenance callouts were carried out during the 2019/2020 season. The Winter Maintenance routes cover 24% of the county's road network.



Snow plough in operation on regional route

Nine Low Cost Safety Improvement Schemes were delivered throughout the county on the local and regional road network.



Low cost safety works, at Coolmuckbane, Monaghan MD.

During 2020 the Council surveyed 100% of the Regional roads as part of the PSCI Road Condition Survey. Achieving improvements in the road conditions and maintaining a steady state condition is challenging and heavily dependent on available budget. Monaghan Co. Council continues to target available budgets as far as possible to roads with the poorest ratings and highest traffic volumes.

The Part VIII Planning process was completed in 2020 for two Specific Improvement projects, at Brackley Bridge and R181 Drummillard.



R181 route.

During the year a reclaimed asphalt pilot project was undertaken at three test sites, where 5km of surfacing was laid using recycled materials. Monaghan County Council is reusing 100% of road milling material to create a Low Energy Bound Material (LEBM) by screening an existing stockpile of millings at Glenmore Quarry. The millings are then mixed with bitumen and binder rejuvenators to produce a low-cost product to be used through the road network.



Reclaimed asphalt pilot trial.

In 2020 the Council also undertook a pilot scheme to test the use of Cement Bound Granular Material (CBGM) as an alternative to conventional bitmac resurfacing. The CBGM material was laid and double surface dressed at 6 locations. The product is a cost-effective way of resurfacing roads with 30% savings achievable on bitmac alternatives.



CBGM resurfacing in progress

During 2020 the Council initiated 10 projects countywide under the Active Travel Funding Scheme.

Twelve private lanes were resurfaced under the **Local Improvement Scheme** throughout Co. Monaghan, and five roads were completed under the **Community Involvement Scheme** encompassing 5.1 kms of road and ancillary works.

1.75km of new passively safe fencing was retro-fitted on National Roads and repairs to Vehicle Restraint Systems (crash barrier) carried out at ten locations across the network.



New fencing at N54 Clones



Monaghan County Council as the Contracting Authority is delivering the Ulster Canal Greenway project from Smithborough to Middleton in partnership with Waterways Ireland (Lead Partner), Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon

Borough Council and East Border Region. Funding of €4.95m has been granted under the INTEREG VA Sustainable Transport Programme.

Following a thorough route selection process, the preferred route for the Greenway was published on the project website, (www.ulstercanalgreenway.com), in July 2020 and public information events to present the preferred route to the local communities were held in Tyholland and Middletown in August 2020. Those events were run strictly in accordance with the prevailing government guidelines on Covid 19, and the feedback received was overwhelmingly positive. The event planned for Smithborough on the 27th August had to be postponed due to changes to the government guidelines, and it will be rescheduled when conditions allow. A Planning application for the Northern Ireland section, (2.6km from the Border to Middletown), will be submitted to Armagh Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council before the end of February 2021. A Part 8 Planning application for the Monaghan to the Border section (7.4km) will be submitted to MCC in March 2021. Further Part 8 Planning applications will be submitted later in 2021. Discussions with landowners along the route have been severely disrupted by the Covid 19 restrictions and will resume as soon as restrictions are eased. Construction of the Monaghan to Middletown section is expected to commence in mid-2022 subject to planning and land acquisition being completed and additional funding being secured.

Ballybay-Clones MD received an additional €100k funding under the Greenways Funding Round from the Department of Transport in December 2020 to progress the design of the Smithborough to Clones section. The MD will continue to explore alternative funding opportunities to make up the budget shortfall to complete this project.



Public Consultation for the Ulster Canal Greenway at Tyholland Community Centre

Road Safety

There were two fatal accidents in the county in 2020, resulting in the loss of three lives. This was an increase on 2019, when there were two fatalities.

The Co Monaghan Road Safety Action Plan which is based on the RSA Road Safety Strategy 2013-2020 concluded in 2020.

The RSA is currently working with stakeholders and key agencies to develop the next government Road Safety Strategy for the period 2021-2030. When this is published Monaghan will in turn develop a new Road Safety Action Plan for the period. A short road safety film, supported by Monaghan Drug & Alcohol Forum, focusing on the consequences of Drug Driving was released in December 2020.



Video shoot for Road Safety video on the effects of drug & alcohol driving.

Pavement Renewals on National Routes

Two major Pavement Renewal Projects were progressed with 2.1kms of road renewed on the N2 at Aclint and also on the N54 Monaghan Town, Glaslough Street & Dublin Street.



N2 Aclint – Pavement renewal

National route Maintenance & defects works

Road Resurfacing and repairs were carried out at various locations on the National road network including the N2 Clontibret, N2 Carrickmacross (access ramps), N2 Shercock ramp, N2 Emyvale, N2 Moybridge, N54 Skeagh Bridge, N54 Smithborough, N12 Tamlat. New periodic speed limits signage was installed at three schools on National routes: N54 Gransha National School, N2 Corracrin and N2 Collegiate.



New periodic speed limit signs introduced at schools on the N2 National routes.

Community Development

Covid19 Response

Community Section in Monaghan County Council oversaw the set up and management of the Covid 19 Community Response Forum in April 2020. The group met weekly initially, then fortnightly and then as required by members. Representatives from over 30 groups participated in the Forum, including various services from within Monaghan County Council, the HSE, the PPN, An Garda Síochána, Cavan Monaghan ETB, Department of Social Protection, ALONE, IFA, GAA, Local Link, MID, Tusla and others. The Forum considered priority actions for support and facilitated a wide range of interagency discussions on managing the challenges facing the community.

A Covid Emergency Fund of €62,247 was delivered through Monaghan County Council and promoted through the Forum with over 50 groups supported. A second allocation of €43,137 was received in December. A food hub was established in the county through which vulnerable people were supported with food and contact supports.



Covid 19 Helpline

The Community Response Covid19 Helpline has operated since 31st March. It was set up

over the weekend of 28/29th March through Community Section and IT Unit and supported by other sections within Monaghan County Council.

The Helpline staff coordinated a community wide response to the crisis, taking calls from vulnerable people and assigning calls for assistance to a wide array of volunteers, particularly from within the GAA, Gardai, Civil Defence and others. At the end of 2020 the Helpline has taken and dealt with over 800 calls from members of the public.



The Community Development Section is also responsible for implementing a wide range of programmes and initiatives within Monaghan County Council

Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

Monaghan Local Community Development Committee meets monthly to provide a strategic overview and to support community and economic development in the county. Working with key stakeholders and agencies, the LCDC monitors progress on the Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021 (LECP) for the County and is responsible for co-ordinating, planning and overseeing local and community development.



LOCAL ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY PLAN (LECP)

Monaghan LCDC and Monaghan County Council continue to implement the Monaghan Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021. The plan contains 127 economic and community actions for implementation by fifteen organisations by 2021. Progress is monitored bi-annually and the LCDC will be conducting a review of

the plan in 2021. To date there has been significant progress in delivery of the community elements of the plan see below:-

- Local Link have implemented Route176 , which services both Cavan and Monaghan Institutes and Monaghan and Cavan Hospitals. Route M1 has now extended to include Knockatallon and Route M2 has extended to include Castleblayney. All routes service towns and villages along the way.
- A large range of technology classes consistently take place in the libraries. These are organised through getting citizens online and CMETB Literacy and Community Education Programmes.
- Monaghan Youth Network supported the application for funding submitted to SEUPB for new facility in Monaghan Town. This has been successful and is ongoing with the development of Monaghan Peace Campus.
- Drug and Alcohol Forum established and Drug and Alcohol Strategy produced and being implemented.

A new LECP is due to be drawn up in 2021.

LECP Actions update at end of December 2020

66 Community Actions	3 Yet to Commence	46 On-going	17 Completed
61 Economic Actions	5 Yet to Commence	14 On-going	42 Completed

SOCIAL INCLUSION COMMUNITY ACTIVATION PROGRAMME (SICAP)

The objective of SICAP, delivered by Monaghan Integrated Development CLG and overseen by the LCDC, is to provide

social inclusion support to disadvantaged individuals and groups throughout society.

The 2020 budget for SICAP in Monaghan was €650,606. The programme targets for 2020 were to assist 34 groups and 364 individuals.

Mid-year and End of Year reviews of the programme took place in 2020 and all targets set under the programme were either reached or exceeded.

MONAGHAN LEADER Programme 2014-2020



The Monaghan LEADER Programme 2014-2020 continues to attract high levels of interest and demand for project funding. A budget of €7.59 million was allocated for its implementation and delivery. Monaghan LCDC is the Local Action Group (LAG) and is the decision maker in respect of project applications. Monaghan Integrated Development CLG (MID) is the implementing partner and Monaghan County Council is the financial partner for the Programme. Monaghan LEADER aims to develop sustainable rural communities throughout the county, by promoting social inclusion, economic development and stimulating Enterprise, Tourism, and Community Services while protecting the natural and built heritage of the county. The funding was awarded based on a Local Development Strategy (LDS) for Monaghan which sets out the priority areas for the programme.

LEADER Programme - Progress at 31st December 2020

- The LAG met monthly, except for August but twice in December.
- At the close of 2020, 112 projects were approved to the value of €5,698,098 (99.82% of total budget)
- In December 2020 the programme was extended by three months, with a Transitional LEADER programme also announced at the same time.

Community Enhancement Programme 2020

Monaghan LCDC implemented the Community Enhancement Programme in 2020 in two Rounds. In total €165,398 was approved to 68 projects.

DRCD Rural Funding Schemes

Funding was allocated in 2020 by the Department of Rural & Community Development under the following schemes:

CLÁR – This programme for rural areas aims to provide funding for small infrastructural projects in areas that experience disadvantage. €287,371 was allocated under the CLÁR Scheme 2020 for 7 projects.

Town & Village Renewal Scheme – The aim of the Scheme is to support the revitalising of towns and villages, to improve the living and working environment of their communities and increase their potential to support increased economic activity into the future. In 2020, the Town and Village Renewal Scheme was tailored to address the emerging challenges associated with COVID-19 with the introduction of the Accelerated Measures.

- Round 1 Accelerated Measure allocated €137,320 – 5 Projects
- Round 2 Accelerated Measure allocated €155,000 – 5 Projects
- Round 3 Accelerated Measure allocated €130,000 – 4 Projects
- Main Town & Village Scheme 2020 received an allocation of €806,543 – 7 projects.

The Council will provide match funding of €258,592 for the projects.

Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme

The aim of the ORIS is to provide outdoor recreational infrastructure in countryside areas. The 2020 scheme did, in particular, support recreational infrastructure that not only provides an outlet for the communities in which they are situated but that also delivers added value from a tourism perspective, positioning rural areas to respond to the post-COVID-19 economic

environment. €103,623 was allocated under Measure 1 for 6 projects.

Community Planning

Following the successful completion of community plans in Scotshouse and Oram in early 2020, these two communities began to see the fruits of their labours as projects started to appear on the ground. In Oram, CLAR funding saw the completion of a section of footpath connecting the school to the social centre and the realignment of the car parking outside the social centre and the development of a memorial garden for Big Tom.

In Scotshouse, Town & Village funding saw the completion of the town park.



Socially distanced launch of Scotshouse Development Plan in the then almost completed community garden, which had been identified as a need in the Plan

The consultation work on the Lough Eish plan was completed during 2020 and potential projects identified for funding application. A successful application was made to Town & Village for funding to address the need for footpaths and lighting from Lough Eish cross up to the food park.

Work commenced on a Community Plan for Ballinode. A community needs survey has been completed, along with a survey of the needs of each group operating in the area. A draft plan will be available in early 2021.

Monaghan Community Alerts

Monaghan County Council continues to support the local Community Alert groups by operating the countywide Monaghan Community Alerts service. Since starting up in April 2019, the service assisted in bringing about a reduction in criminal activity in the

county. The scheme now has over 4,500 subscribers, who can sign up to receive alerts from their local group as well as from the Garda and the Council.

Active Travel

A Walking & Cycling Strategy for Co Monaghan has been drafted and will be completed in early 2021

A new Staff Cycling Initiative has been commenced, with seven electric bikes purchased for the use of staff.

Playgrounds Development

€19,500 was awarded to Monaghan County Council by the Dept of Children & Youth Affairs to improve the playground at O'Neill Park in Clones. Following consultation with residents, Council Horticulturalist Michael Carroll has designed an imaginative amenity based on the idea of escaping from the Norman-era motte & bailey structure nearby, using the sloped site to provide several routes up and down between two 'forts'. Designing the amenity in-house has allowed the Council to put all available funding into the purchase of play equipment, providing a much bigger amenity for the same money to the children of Clones. Installation is due to take place in early 2021.

Tidy Towns

The National Tidy Towns competition did not take place in 2020 due to the Covid pandemic. However, Monaghan County Council still supported the work of the local groups through the provision of information and funding. Newsletters were issued to groups, and for the first time, an online meeting of the Network took place, at which the groups participated in a consultation on the Council's new Litter Management Plan.

Age Friendly Programme

Monaghan Age Friendly County Programme

Monaghan Age Friendly programme delivered a programme of work to support the older people of Monaghan during 2020.

Throughout the year the programme manager maintained regular contact with older people's groups in the county, to provide information, support and activities to support our most vulnerable citizens during the COVID 19 pandemic.

Monaghan Age Friendly Strategy 2020-2024

Following an inclusive public consultation with older people and service providers during 2019, Monaghan's second Age Friendly strategy was developed during 2020. The strategy outlines a programme of work to be delivered over the coming five years. Monaghan Age Friendly Alliance, supported by Monaghan County Council, as an interagency committee will oversee and direct the implementation of Monaghan Age Friendly Strategy.

Age Friendly Strategy actions 2020

Town and Village Programme

All applications submitted to the Round 1 of the Town & Village Programme included actions to improve accessibility to towns and villages for older people and people with mobility difficulties.

Audit of Pedestrian Crossings

An access audit of all pedestrian crossings across the county took place in 2020. The aim of the audit was to ensure all visual and audio signals at pedestrian crossing were operating correctly and that sufficient crossing times are in place to allow safe crossing for pedestrians with reduced mobility.

Age Friendly initiatives to support older people during COVID 19

It's Good to talk GAA initiative

Monaghan Age Friendly programme participated and organised a range of activities and programmes including:

- Working with Monaghan GAA County board it launched a joint initiative to reach out to isolated older GAA fans in the county. Monaghan GAA players and

management volunteered their time to make a call to an older GAA fan to have a chat.

- It produced a 64-page activity pack for people cocooning in the county. The cocooning activity pack contained riddles, quizzes poems and stories along with some useful information on services and supports for older people in the county. 7,000 were distributed to older people across the county.



- The “I just called to say” campaign encouraged people in the community to check in on their older neighbours, in particular older people who are living alone.
- “Have you a spare chair or dinner to share this Christmas” encouraged people to reach out to older people in the community who may be alone at Christmas.
- 8000 Age Friendly “Keep Well” booklets were produced in December 2020, and contained important information on keeping well with tips and advice on looking after your mental health.

Supporting people with a Disability Supporting the Right to Vote

During the campaign for the 2020 General Election the Access Officer delivered four training workshops on voter participation. Using the *Your Vote Your Voice* booklet the workshops focused on filling out a ballot paper correctly and highlighting the various supports available to voters to assist them in exercising their right to vote.

Make Way Day – Accessibility awareness 2020

Due to public health restrictions Make Way Day 2020 was held online. Chaired by MCC Cathaoirleach, Cllr Colm Carthy, a virtual meeting took place with representatives of disability groups in the county, Gardai and the local authority Access Officer in September. Issues in relation to accessibility on the streets of the county were raised and discussed. At the meeting each Municipal District agreed to conduct quarterly accessibility audits on the streets of the five main towns. An accessibility checklist presented to the Make Way Day meeting was agreed and quarterly access audits started in December 2020.



International Women’s Day 2020

To celebrate International Women’s Day 2020 Monaghan County Council along with Dochas for Women and Blayney Blades hosted an event in the Garage Theatre in March. The event included a unique photo exhibition “Women’s Voices” created by Dr Lisa Butterly and Lisa McCormack. The exhibition was made by women for women of Ireland. The portraits provide a visionary and respectful view of Irish women in the twenty-first century.

Women and Diversity in local government funding

The Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government has awarded Monaghan County Council a grant to deliver a project that aims to increase the participation of

women in all aspects of local government in County Monaghan. The project includes the establishment of Monaghan Women's Assembly, a platform to create opportunities for Elected members of Monaghan County Council to engage with women in the county on issues that impact on their lives and to highlight the barriers to participation in local government experienced by women. The project will also develop training and awareness raising resources for Elected members on diversity in local government.

Supporting Migrant Integration

Monaghan Migrant Integration strategy

Monaghan LCDC Equality subgroup and Monaghan Integrated Development worked in partnership during 2020 to develop "We Belong" – a migrant integration strategy for Co. Monaghan. The strategy was launched virtually in November by Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD. It identifies a range of actions to promote and progress the integration of the migrant community in the county over the next five years.

Monaghan Together Unique and United

In 2019, Monaghan County Council secured funding from the Asylum Migrant Integration Fund (AMIF), administered by the Department of Justice to deliver a project entitled *Monaghan Together Unique and United*. It involves a detailed programme of activities to support the Third Country Nationals (TCN) community in the county. An Integration Officer was appointed to deliver the project in September which will deliver a number of programmes supporting and developing migrant integration across the county. Some of the activities that took place in 2020 include:

- **Monaghan Sanctuary Runners** This programme brings asylum-seekers and Irish people together for runs and races or just a walk in the spirit of solidarity, friendship and respect.
- **Celebrating Christmas across Cultures**

The Integration officer in partnership with NCCWN Dóchas for Women delivered a Christmas craft making project. The project engaged with people living in Direct provision and members of the wider community in Co. Monaghan to create some Christmas crafts for older people.

Supporting the LGBTI+ Community

For the first time, Monaghan County Council raised the Pride rainbow flag over a number of council buildings during Pride week 2020. Led by Cathaoirleach Cllr Colm Carthy, the event was attended by members of Monaghan County Council, representatives from Monaghan Equality Subgroup and members of the LGBTI community.



Community and Environment Fund 2020

The annual Community and Environment funding Scheme allocated €90,000 in 2020 to support community development activity in the county. Projects impacted by COVID 19 restrictions were given the opportunity to reschedule their activities.

Monaghan Public Participation Network



Monaghan Public Participation Network with support from Monaghan County Council continued to develop as the main link through which the local authority connects with Community, Social Inclusion and Environment sectors across the county. 569 groups were registered with the PPN by

end of 2020, an increase of 45 member groups from 2019.

Some of the Key Activities for Monaghan PPN in 2020 included:

Representation: 37 community representatives represented the PPN across 12 committees. Five new PPN Representatives were elected in 2020.

Consultations: At the heart of everything we do is our membership having a say in local and national policy planning. Some examples of written submissions are outlined below:

- Monaghan Migrant Integration Strategy
- Public Participation Network National Handbook
- Delivering Deliberative Democracy and Participation by PPNs in Local Government

Community Wellbeing Statement:

Monaghan PPN carried out a consultation workshop in each Municipal District in March 2020 to develop a Community Wellbeing Statement. The Community Wellbeing Statement is a vision for what is needed for communities to achieve wellbeing for now and future generations considering different themes.

Following extensive consultation with its membership the final draft was adopted by the PPN in October. PPN representatives attended training on how they can use the vision statement at their respective committee meetings. The PPN will also use the statement to identify key areas of work and training.

Training: The PPN delivered free training on topics such as:

- Introduction to Sustainable Development Goals
- Collaborative Induction training with Monaghan County Council for PPN Reps
- Back to business for Community Buildings Post Covid 19
- How to Conduct Online Meetings

- How to Use the Community Wellbeing Statement for PPN Reps
- One to one support for PPN representatives and members

Meetings: The Secretariat that manages the PPN met regularly in 2020. The AGM was held online in early December and over 65 groups attended. The Cathaoirleach, Cllr Colm Carthy and the Chief Executive Eamonn O'Sullivan attended the meeting and took the opportunity to express their sincere gratitude for the support of the PPN during such a difficult year. An overview of all the PPN key achievements in 2020 was provided at the very successful meeting by the PPN Resource Manager.

Local Government: Monaghan County Council and Monaghan PPN's strong working relationship was evident through many funding allocations the Council received from Government and out of its own resources. The benefits of this collaborative working approach can be seen by the many innovative funded projects spread across the county.

Communications: The PPN continued to ensure through its dedicated website, email and Facebook page that registered groups were kept up to date on information about funding, training, consultation calls and community initiatives.

Staff Resources: In a partnership approach the Department of Rural and Community Development and Monaghan County Council continued to provide funding to retain a PPN Support Worker who provides administrative supports to the PPN Resource Manager.

Covid 19: The PPN was a member of the Monaghan County Council COVID 19 Community Response Forum from its inception.

PPN members provided excellent feedback to the Forum on critical supports they were providing, where they were providing this

and the main contacts. This feedback helped Community Call Helpline staff assign calls for assistance in those areas.

Despite the challenges of Covid 19, many positive developments emerged out of the crisis that we can build on in the future. The PPN found new way of staying connected in 2020 and we will continue to strengthen those communications in 2021. The PPN was recognised as a key stakeholder in the Government Resilience and Recovery 2020 – 2021 plan for Living with Covid 19.

Youth Development **Monaghan Comhairle na nÓg**

In 2020 the committee worked on the topic of Inclusion and Disabilities. This work involved the production of a video for Lámh users and the development of a youth friendly booklet which highlights 7 different Hidden Disabilities. The booklet also includes personal stories and artwork by young people from across Co. Monaghan who are living with a Hidden Disability. Both were launched at a very successful online AGM in October 2020.

The committee were very active on all their social media in response to the COVID19 crisis.

- They collated information on a list of help line/support services available for young people both locally and regionally and shared this on their Facebook and Instagram accounts.
- They participated in various national initiatives such as World Autism Awareness day, the #mindyourselfie campaign and also World Down Syndrome Day.
- They worked with Monaghan CYPSC in developing a survey on Drugs & Alcohol usage amongst young people and presented the findings on a webinar hosted by the Alcohol Forum.
- They participated in a variety of local and regional consultations where the views of young people were being sought.

Healthy Ireland, Youth & Drug & Alcohol Forum

Healthy Ireland Funding 2019-2021 secured

In January, a budget of €246,050 was approved under Round 3 of the Healthy Ireland Fund, to deliver a range of actions from January 2020 to the end of December 2021.. Lead partners in supporting the delivery of these actions are The Peace Link, HSE, Monaghan Sports Partnership, Monaghan Integrated Development, Foroige, and Ballybay-Clones Municipal District.

All partners who secured funding from the Healthy Ireland fund to deliver actions amended their projects as a direct response to the Covid 19 crisis and new emerging needs.

Community Mental Health Fund 2020/2021

An additional €32,050 was secured to deliver a youth mental health service in South Monaghan under a co-operation project (in partnership with Monaghan CYPSC, led by the ISPCC). In addition, the fund allowed the roll out of a small grants scheme to community, voluntary and sporting organisations. Twelve local projects received varying amounts to deliver mental health actions.

Community Resilience Fund and Healthy Ireland Keep Well Campaign Launched

Monaghan County Council was allocated €67,225 to support the delivery of initiatives under a number of the themes of the government's National "Keep Well" campaign as part of the response to the Covid crisis. A programme of work was developed with a variety of actions to be delivered between December 2020 and March 2021. Key internal partners are Creative Monaghan, Monaghan Sports Partnership, Monaghan Age Friendly Programme and Monaghan libraries as well as external partners on the Community Response/Call Forum.

Monaghan Drug & Alcohol Forum

The forum undertook a review of the strategic plan in 2020 and revised the action plan for the remainder of 2020/2021. Following the review, 3 distinct sub-committees have been formed which focus on the following thematic areas.

1. Prevention & Education
2. Services Development
3. Communications

All Subgroups are making progress on identified actions. A drug driving DVD produced by a film & media company which highlighted the consequences of drug driving was launched in November 2020.

Dormant Accounts Funding secured for LGBTI Youth Group

The Dormant Accounts Action Plan 2020 provides funding to address disadvantage nationally. We supported Cavan Monaghan Rainbow Youth in submitting a successful application to the fund and they secured €15,000 to provide a range of supports in the area.

Monaghan Sports Partnership (MSP)

Monaghan Sports Partnership, funded by Sport Ireland, delivered a wide range of projects during 2020 to encourage people to continue to be active in physical activity. Like so many other services, our overall work in 2020 was significantly affected by the impact of Covid19, which resulted in many changes to programming, design and implementation.

Community based programmes

Activity programmes were organised in 11 different community settings in January-February, alongside Schools programmes. Over 180 participants were involved and the programmes had reached 80% completion prior to suspension due to Covid19.

Schools/ Pre Schools programmes:

Prior to closures in March 2020, Monaghan Sports Partnership had facilitated programmes for:

- 381 children representing 13 primary schools.

- 113 pre-school children representing 4 pre-schools and
- 52 children representing 2 after schools

Supporting National Events/ Initiatives: -

Operation Transformation In January, walks linked to national events took place at 8 Monaghan locations, in partnership with Community Groups and GAA Clubs. Over 600 participated. A, 6-week “Community Transformation” follow-up activity programme at 3 locations attracted a further 220 participants.

National Bike Week (Sept)

Monaghan Sports Partnership, on behalf of Monaghan County Council, coordinated and delivered a variety of cycling events for the 2020 National Bike Week. The event week was postponed from June to September and a series of localised events were held to promote the use of e-bikes and use of Greenway.



125 specially designed bike repair and resource packs were put together for children across the county and made available through local libraries

National Play and Recreation event 2020

Due to Covid19 restrictions, MSP could not hold physical events, and instead developed play packs of equipment for children. These were distributed by local family support service providers to 300 children. The initiative was combined with a Healthy Ireland project called ‘Let’s Play Monaghan!’

Increasing Activity – redesigning the work

2020 started positively with a host of activity programmes taking place in schools and in local communities, but Covid19

restrictions resulted in a redirection of activity into self-led 'virtual' programmes that encouraged people to stay active.

These included:

- 0-3 km Walk / Jog programme – 281 participants
- 100 days of walking – 281 participants
- Cycling Challenges – 115 participants
- Active Schools supports – 50 participants
- Nature Walks – 52 participants

Healthy Ireland funded projects

MSP purchased a set of playground marking stencils for distribution to Primary schools. Despite restrictions imposed, the target of 4 schools were completed in 2020.

Let's Play Monaghan!

Let's Play Monaghan! – MSP created a family fun booklet of games and activities to provide ideas for families at home during the summer months.



Cycle training for DEIS Schools

200 children representing 4 primary schools took part in a cycling programme facilitated by Monaghan Sports Partnership in January/February.

Online exercise activities

Under Level 5 restrictions in October, a series of online activity classes were developed in conjunction with local exercise instructors.

8 classes were organised targeting different age groups e.g. men only, women only, older adults, primary school age children, pre-school age children. A total of 672

participants took part across all age groups.

Women in Sport

As part of the European Week of Sport in September MSP coordinated a 'virtual' women's minimarathon event. 200 women of all ages took part in a local 5km / 10km walk / run event



All participants received a participant's t-shirt and finishers medal.

Social Inclusion through Sport & Physical Activity

MSP along with Sport Ireland developed two activity booklets of exercises aimed at older adults and adults with a disability. Booklets were posted to individuals and disseminated through local disability service providers. The booklets were also printed in the Northern Standard for people to cut out and keep. The older adult information was also included in the Age Friendly Keep Well booklet.

Supporting Club Development through Education & Training

- Safeguarding 1: 6 courses were delivered (4 online) with 69 participants
- Autism in Sport: 1 course was held (online) with 14 participants

Covid19 Small Grants programme

MSP administered funding of €48,300 from Sport Ireland to provide 40 sports clubs with small grants towards Covid19 related supports. 5 additional clubs were supported via their relevant National Governing Body of Sport.

Local Enterprise Office

Financial Supports & Job Creation

In 2020 circa €441,494, was approved in grant aid with a potential to create an additional 61 jobs.

Training

We delivered 78 programmes to 1,291 participants, 829 whom were female and 462 who were male. The above figure includes 6 Start Your Own Business Programmes and 4 events dedicated to Brexit. Several bespoke workshops were designed and ran to support target groups such as the food and retail services sector assisting in the reopening their business post COVID lockdown 1.

Local Enterprise Week 2020



A hugely successful Local Enterprise Week ran from 2nd -6th March 2020. Over 300 individuals attended 7 enterprise orientated events during the week. This national initiative seeks to encourage nascent entrepreneurship and foster an entrepreneurial culture in County Monaghan. Our headline event for Local Enterprise Week 2020 was an Innovation conference hosted at Silver Hill Foods Ltd.

Brexit

As an enterprise support agency have been advocating innovation, lean and competitiveness as competencies to be developed by our stakeholders, enabling businesses to mitigate the onset of Brexit and have run the following programmes:

- Co-Innovate (Innovation programme) 63 businesses participated
- Lean for Micro 15
- Enterprise Excellence Programme 12

In December 2020, LEO commenced the recruitment of the Brexit specific programmes: Superior Retail and Exporting and plan to deliver Financial Capability, Innovation and the Green Business Management development programmes in Spring 2021.

Business Continuity Voucher

The voucher was the primary COVID support and available to sole traders and companies across every business sector. The voucher was worth up to €2500 per business, in third party consultants' fees to develop short term and long-term strategic responses to Covid-19. Monaghan LEO approved 226 vouchers to a value of €322,237.56.

Trading Online Voucher Scheme

Following significant changes to the scheme in 2020 and a drive from businesses to bring their business online, the Trading Online Voucher Scheme has seen an unprecedented increase in popularity. With restrictions being placed on non-essential retail and services for a large portion of the year, businesses were forced to go online if they wanted to continue trading. The Trading Online Voucher was available to help them set up an ecommerce website, covering 90% of eligible expenditure up to a maximum of €2500. In 2020 LEO Monaghan approved 129 applications, a 645% increase on 2019.

Covid-19 Business Loans

The Covid-19 Business loan from Microfinance Ireland (MFI), in partnership with Local Enterprise Offices is a Government funded initiative to support small businesses. In 2020 we worked with 15 Monaghan businesses to prepare MFI business loan applications. 8 have been approved to a value of € 201,000.00.

Student Enterprise Programme

The LEO undertook a complete review and rejuvenation of the SEP at local level and all 12 schools participated in 2020. The success of this revised programme was evident at this year's virtual Student Enterprise Programme Final where two Monaghan entries took prizes home.



An overall award was given for “My Entrepreneurial Journey” in the Junior category. The winning student was Fiachra Murray, from Patrician High School, who worked under the guidance of his teacher, Leona McKenna. Again, an overall National award was bestowed to business “Sofatop” in the Junior Category. The winning students from Ballybay Community College, were Ferne Duffy, Tess McFadden and Mary- Kate Black, who worked under the guidance of their teacher Eimear Harvey. Their student enterprise was called “Sofatop”, which is/was a flexible and stylish tray, enabling you to curl up on the sofa and enjoy your cup of tea, safe in the knowledge that you can set it down within safe and easy reach.

Look
For
Local



Monaghan LEO launched the #LookforLocal campaign in December, to encourage businesses and individuals to shop local and support local businesses. To further endeavours, an online directory with over 150 Co. Monaghan businesses was created.

Women's Programme

Monaghan Women in Business (MWIB) is an informal network which is open to all women in business and in management positions in County Monaghan and surrounding areas. The aim is to provide information, support, promotional and networking opportunities to all who take part. This year has seen a new challenge for the network in that only one event at the start of the year was held in person. The rest of the events this year have been held virtually but the network has adapted well to this change. 111 females have participated in events in 2020.

Monaghan IT Service Providers Network

During 2020 Monaghan LEO initiated The Monaghan IT Services Providers network. It is recognised that a business can be more successful when there is a consistent management of organisational and financial data with efficient information systems. Innovative and effective systems can support an organisation with better planning, decision-making and hence desired results. The network brings together IT Managers and service providers in a safe and confidential environment to discuss IT related issues, share best practice and upskill to embed a culture of IT excellence in local businesses.

Monaghan Tourism Business Network

As part of the continuing effort by Monaghan Local Enterprise Office to build resilience and innovation within businesses, LEO launched a bespoke network for craft and tourism businesses in conjunction with Monaghan Tourism. The pilot network provided a forum to build business relationships in County Monaghan.

Economic Development

The Economic Development Unit within Monaghan County Council operates from the Planning Department, Local Enterprise Office and Tourism Department. The principal function of the unit is to encourage and develop economic development and investment in the county. Many of the Economic Development initiatives are developed and delivered through the Municipal Districts and the Unit has a role in co-ordinating funding applications and long-term strategic investment planning.

Selected 2020 Projects

Bioconnec Research and Innovation Centre

Monaghan County Council and Monaghan Mushrooms initiated the concept in 2019 to develop a nation research centre for biotechnology research. Having successfully, received €4.90m in grant-aid from the Enterprise Ireland Regional Enterprise Fund, Bioconnect will employ four staff over three years to provide research capacity for the agrifood sector to collaborate, research and develop new products and processes, that can then provide the basis to expand existing enterprises or establish new businesses in the region. In addition, a new 1,500sqm research laboratory will, following completion in 2022, host 125 scientists and researchers in a National Centre of Excellence for Biotechnology. Monaghan Municipal District made a significant investment in initiating this project in 2019. David Macauley, CEO for the project commenced work in March 2020 and construction work will commence on site at Knockaconny in Q2 2021.



Image of Bioconnect Innovation and Research Centre

The Ridge - Castleblayney Enterprise Hub

The concept of The Ridge evolved in 2018, when Monaghan County Council together with Castleblayney Enterprise Centre initiated a survey to establish the need for business accommodation in the Castleblayney area.

Having established the need and demand for specific facility-types, the partnership together with Enterprising Monaghan was successful in attracting €2.613 million from the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund towards the overall cost of a €3.5 million, three storey office and logistics facility at McGrath Road, Castleblayney. The design and build contract was awarded to PJ Tracey & Sons Ltd. In late 2020 with an anticipated 18 month completion date. The Ridge will provide up to 28 individual business units in the 1,350 sqm facility and host over 60 persons when completed. The construction phase is being managed through the Carrickmacross Castleblayney MD office.



Image of The Ridge, Enterprise Centre, McGrath Road, Castleblayney

North East Digital Innovation Hub

Monaghan County Council received funding approval funding of €609,000 from the Enterprise Ireland Brexit Stimulus Fund in June 2020 to develop a centre to encourage SMEs in the region to complete the digital transformation to Industry 4.0 – use artificial intelligence, edge computing and data analysis to upgrade their products and processes, to help compete globally and innovate.

The Centre, based in MTek, Monaghan, employs two experts that provide support to companies who wish to develop new concepts and/or processes through to production ready stage in the Incubator Programme. The need for SMEs to tool up for the digital age was identified at a conference hosted by Monaghan County Council in Combilft's HQ in November 2019. Three ex-pats from Co. Monaghan, David Moloney, Peter Woods and Brian Quinn engaged in the digital sector identified the need and pointed the potential future to over 180 attendees.

The Hub provides expertise, education and advice directly and links local and regional companies with research and innovation centres and major technology companies such as Microsoft. The Centre also hosts an Education Programme for IT engineers employed by SMEs throughout the region, delivering advanced courses on AI, edge computing, robotics and data analysis. Over the next three years over 300 SMEs within the North East region will have partaken in the Incubator or Education Programmes. John Shaw was appointed CEO of the Hub in November 2020, with a major launch planned for March 2021.



Strategic Policy Committees

The role of Strategic Policy Committees is to formulate policy proposals, evaluate and report on policy implementation for consideration. Provide policy centred committees which can harness the experience of external bodies in the formulation of policy the Committees are not designed to deal with routine operational matters in relation to the delivery of services.

The SPCs which consists of elected members of Monaghan County Council and others who are nominated by / or representative of the sectors relevant to the work of the particular SPC. Monaghan County Council has 4 Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs):

SPC 1 - Housing, Cultural and Social

SPC 2 – Community & Transport

SPC 3 – Planning & Economic Development

SPC 4 - Environment and Transport

Report of Strategic Policy Committee Activities during 2020

Housing, Cultural and Social SPC (3 meetings held 2020)

The following policies were approved at meetings of the SPC during 2020:

- County Monaghan Heritage and Biodiversity Action Plan 2020-2025
- Meeting Room/Exhibition Room Policy

The SPC committee received Presentations on:

- Housing Acquisition Policy
- Social Housing – Refusal of Offers report

- Pilot Scheme for Boiler Servicing
- Management of Pre Pay Meters
- Museum Events Guide 2020
- Meeting Room/Exhibition Room
- Library Service during COVID
- Alternative Housing Models

Community & Transport SPC (3 meetings held in 2020)

The committee discussed the following strategic policy documents:

- Consultation on preparation of Corporate Plan 2020-2024
- Draft County Monaghan Migrant Integration Strategy and Action Plan 2020-2023
- Monaghan Age Friendly Strategy 2020 -2024
- Roadside Hedge Cutting Pilot Project Report

In addition, the members received presentations from the Transportation section on:

1. Blackwater Bridge
2. N2 Major Road Schemes
3. Reclaimed Asphalt Pilot Scheme

and from the Community section;

1. Community Funding Overview 2020
2. Leader & Peace Overview

Planning & Economic Development SPC (1 meetings held in 2020)

Due to Covid 19 restrictions only 1 meeting took place in 2020. As this was a new group, the first meeting entailed presentations on the role of the Strategic Policy Committee and Corporate Plan. The roles of the Planning Sections, Economic Development Unit and Fire and Building Control Department were also outlined.

The Committee was advised that work is ongoing on the Economic Community Plan and there has been engagement with various agencies in seeking investment in

County Monaghan, lands have been purchased and planning permission is in place for development. The role of the LEO and how they work with small industries to help develop and support local enterprise was outlined. The long-term plan to upgrade the value of employment in the County and a higher range of jobs and opportunities for remote working.

Climate Action & Environmental Services SPC (3 meetings held in 2020)

The inaugural meeting of the Climate Action and Environmental Services SPC was held on 28th January, 2020. Since then, 2 further meetings have been held; one in September and the other in November. Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the latter 2 meetings were held virtually.

Members received presentations on the Litter Management Plan, Control and management of Dogs, Revised Grant Allocations for Domestic Water Treatment Systems and Wells. Members were also advised on the continuing principal activities in which the local authority has been engaged in the year 2020 relating to climate change. Other presentations to members included those on the River Basement Management Plan for 2022 – 2027, the Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy and the Potential effects of Brexit on small food business.

Councillor Representation on External and Council Committees

Cathaoirleach 2020/2021 (June 2020-June 2021)

Cllr. Colm Carthy

Leas-Chathaoirleach 2020/2021 (June 2020-June 2021)

Cllr. Richard Truell

Municipal Districts

Monaghan Municipal District

Cllr. Seamus Treanor (Cathaoirleach 2020/2021)

Cllr. Raymond Aughey (Leas-Chathaoirleach 2020/2021)

Cllr. Cathy Bennett

Cllr. Sean Conlon

Cllr. Paudge Connolly

Cllr. David Maxwell

Cllr. Brian McKenna

Carrickmacross-Castleblayney Municipal District

Cllr. Aidan Campbell (Cathaoirleach 2020/2021)

Cllr. Cllr. P.J. O'Hanlon (Leas-Chathaoirleach 2020/2021)

Cllr. Colm Carthy

Cllr. Mary Kerr Conlon

Cllr. Noel Keelan

Cllr. Aoife McCooey

Ballybay-Clones Municipal District

Cllr. Seamus Coyle (Cathaoirleach 2020/2021)

Cllr. Richard Truell (Leas-Chathaoirleach 2020/2021)

Cllr. Sean Gilliland

Cllr. Hugh McElvaney

Cllr. Pat Treanor

Corporate Policy Group

Cathaoirleach of the Day

Cllr. Noel Keelan

Cllr. Sean Gilliland

Cllr. Raymond Aughey

Cllr. Pat Treanor

Strategic Policy Committees

SPC for Housing, Social and Cultural

Cllr. Pat Treanor, Chair

Cllr. Aidan Campbell

Cllr. Colm Carthy

Cllr. Mary Kerr-Conlon

Cllr. Aoife McCooey

Cllr. PJ O'Hanlon

SPC for Economic Development and Enterprise Support

Cllr. Sean Gilliland, Chair
Cllr. Sean Conlon
Cllr. Noel Keelan
Cllr. David Maxwell
Cllr. Brian McKenna
Cllr. P.J. O'Hanlon

SPC for Transport and Community

Cllr. Raymond Aughey, Chair
Cllr. Sean Conlon
Cllr. Sean Gilliland
Cllr. Hugh McElvaney
Cllr. Brian McKenna

SPC for Climate Action and Environment

Cllr. Noel Keelan, Chair
Cllr. Raymond Aughey
Cllr. Cathy Bennett
Cllr. Seamus Coyle
Cllr. Pat Treanor
Cllr. Richard Truell

Co. Monaghan Joint Policing Committee

Cllr. P.J. O'Hanlon
Cllr. Brian McKenna
Cllr. Noel Keelan
Cllr. Aoife McCooey
Cllr. Pat Treanor
Cllr. Cathy Bennett
Cllr. Raymond Aughey
Cllr. Aidan Campbell
Cllr. David Maxwell
Cllr. Sean Gilliland
Cllr. Richard Truell
Cllr. Colm Carthy
Cllr. Hugh McElvaney

Local Steering Group for the Use of Irish in Monaghan County Council (Coiste Gaeilge)

Cllr. Pat Treanor
Cllr. Richard Truell
Cllr. Cathy Bennett
Cllr. Raymond Aughey
Cllr. Hugh McElvaney

Local Monitoring Committee (Rural Water Programme).

Cllr. Brian McKenna
Cllr. Aidan Campbell
Cllr. P.J. O'Hanlon

Muckno Development Committee

Cllr. Mary Kerr-Conlon
Cllr. Aidan Campbell
Cllr. Aoife McCooey
Cllr. Brian McKenna
Cllr. Colm Carthy
Cllr. PJ O Hanlon

Twinning Committee

Cllr. Aoife McCooey
Cllr. Aidan Campbell
Cllr. Sean Conlon

Clones Erne East Partnership

Cllr. Richard Truell
Cllr. Pat Treanor
Cllr. Hugh McElvaney
Cllr. Seamus Coyle
Cllr. Sean Gilliland
Cllr. Cathy Bennett

Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee.

Cllr. Aoife McCooey
Cllr. Colm Carthy
Cllr. Richard Truell
Cllr. Seamus Treanor

Local Community Development Committee

Cllr. Seamus Coyle
Cllr. Cathy Bennett
Cllr. David Maxwell

Audit Committee

Cllr. Raymond Aughey
Cllr. David Maxwell

Museum Advisory Committee

Cllr. Cathy Bennett
Cllr. Raymond Aughey
Cllr. David Maxwell

Monaghan Leisure Complex Management Committee

Cllr. David Maxwell
Cllr. Sean Conlon
Cllr. Raymond Aughey

Monaghan Local Sports Partnership Board

Cllr. Sean Conlon

Road Safety Committee

Cllr. Richard Truell

Speed Limits Committee

Cllr. Raymond Aughey
Cllr. Richard Truell
Cllr. Pat Treanor
Cllr. Sean Conlon
Cllr. Aidan Campbell
Cllr. P.J. O'Hanlon

County Monaghan Heritage Forum

Cllr. Mary Kerr-Conlon
Cllr. Pat Treanor
Cllr. Aoife McCooey

Local Improvements Scheme Committee

Cllr. Aidan Campbell
Cllr. PJ O Hanlon
Cllr. Pat Treanor
Cllr. Noel Keelan
Cllr. Sean Gilliland

Appointment of members to witness the affixing of the Official Seal

All Members of Monaghan County Council appointed to witness the affixing of the Official Seal

Cavan/Monaghan Education and Training Board

Cllr. Sean Conlon
Cllr. Aidan Campbell
Cllr. Colm Carthy
Cllr. P.J. O'Hanlon
Cllr. David Maxwell

Peace IV Partnership Board (nominees)

Cllr. Aidan Campbell	Carrickmacross-Castleblaney M.D.
Cllr. Pat Treanor	Ballybay-Clones M.D.
Cllr. Aoife McCooey	Carrickmacross-Castleblaney M.D.
Cllr. Cathy Bennett	Monaghan M.D./LCDC

Northern and Western Regional Assembly (NWRA)

Cllr. Brian McKenna
Cllr. David Maxwell

East Border Region Members Forum

Cllr. P.J. O'Hanlon
Cllr. Sean Conlon
Cllr. Aoife McCooey
Cllr. Aidan Campbell
Cllr. Sean Gilliland

Management Board of ICBAN Ltd., (Irish Central Border Areas Network)

Cllr. David Maxwell
Cllr. Pat Treanor
Cllr. Seamus Coyle

Regional Health Forum – Dublin and North East

Cllr. Seamus Coyle
Cllr. Brian McKenna
Cllr. David Maxwell

Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurances

Cllr. Richard Truell

Association of Irish Local Government (AILG)

Cllr. Brian McKenna
Cllr. David Maxwell
Cllr. Sean Gilliland

Local Authority Members Association (LAMA)

Cllr. Sean Conlon

An Coiste Logainmneacha

Cllr. Pat Treanor
Cllr. Aoife McCooey
Cllr. Richard Truell
Cllr. Hugh McElvaney

Standing Orders & Procedures Committee

Cllr. Richard Truell
Cllr. David Maxwell
Cllr. Brian McKenna
Cllr. Pat Treanor
Cllr. Seamus Coyle
Cllr. Hugh McElvaney

North Eastern Regional Drugs and Alcohol Task Force

Cllr. Colm Carthy

Peace Campus Steering Committee

Cllr. Sean Conlon
Cllr. David Maxwell
Cllr. Raymond Aughey
Cllr. Paudge Connolly

Directors to the East Border Region Ltd

Cllr. Sean Conlon
Cllr. P. J. O'Hanlon (changed at June 24 meeting from Cllr McCooey to Cllr O'Hanlon)
Cllr. Aidan Campbell

Connecting to Life Suicide Prevention Working Group

Cllr. Colm Carthy
Cllr. Raymond Aughey

Board of the Garage Theatre

Cllr. Pat Treanor
Cllr. Richard Truell

Offices Working Group

Cllr. Brian McKenna

Cllr. Colm Carthy

Cllr. David Maxwell

Cllr. Hugh McElvaney

Cllr. Raymond Aughey

Cllr. Seamus Coyle

Cllr. Seamus Treanor

Cllr. Sean Gilliland

Conferences/Training Attended by Members in 2020

Promoting Authority	Subject/Theme	Venue	Dates	Number of Members Attended
Celtic Conferences	Tackling Carbon Emissions and Fuel Poverty	O'Donovan's Hotel, Main Street, Clonakilty, Co. Cork	24 th , 25 th & 26 th January	1
AILG	The Development Plan Making Process – A briefing for Elected Members	Hotel Kilmore, Dublin Road, Cavan	Thursday, 13th February 2020	1
AILG	The Development Plan Making Process – A briefing for Elected Members	Dooley's Hotel, Waterford	Saturday 15 th February	2
Celtic Conferences	Health & Safety in the Workplace	O'Donovan's Hotel, Main Street, Clonakilty, Co. Cork	21st to 23rd February 2020	1
AILG	Climate Action – Solving Global Challenges through Local Leadership	Longford Arms Hotel, Longford	4 th & 5 th March 2020	8
AILG	"Moorhead Report – A briefing for Elected Members" Module 3	Clayton Whites Hotel, Abbey Street, Wexford	Saturday 25 th July 2020	2
AILG	"Moorhead Report – A briefing for Elected Members" Module 3	Carrickdale Hotel, Carrickarnon, Ravensdale, Dundalk, Co. Louth.	Thursday 30 th July 2020	4
AILG	"Moorhead Report – A briefing for Elected Members" Module 3	Sligo Park Hotel, Pearse Road, Sligo	Saturday 8 th August 2020	2

Appendix I Members Expenses

Payments to Monaghan County Council Members in 2020 from 1 January - 31 December 2020

	Name of Councillor	Representational Payment / Salary (Subject to PAYE etc.)	Annual Allowance	Municipal District Allowance	Cathaoirleach / Leas Cathaoirleach / Cathaoirleach of MD Allowance (Subject to PAYE etc.)	SPC Chair Allowance	Travel & Subsistence (Training, Conferences, Crossborder and Other Meetings)	Foreign Travel (Twinning etc., Cost of Flights and Expenses)	Mobile Phone Allowance Claimed	Other	TOTAL PAID
	Cllr. Aidan Campbell	€ 17,375.43	€ 4,752.52	€ 1,000.00	€ 2,150.00		€ 655.00		€ 0.00		€ 25,932.95
	Cllr. Aoife McCooley	€ 17,375.43	€ 5,554.36	€ 1,000.00			€ 28.70		€ 0.00	€ 1,500.00	€ 25,458.49
	Cllr. Brian McKenna	€ 17,375.43	€ 4,652.20	€ 1,000.00			€ 293.73		€ 161.49		€ 23,482.85
	Cllr. Cathy Bennett	€ 17,375.43	€ 4,303.12	€ 1,000.00			€ 0.00		€ 173.04		€ 22,851.59
	Cllr. Colm Carthy	€ 17,375.43	€ 5,821.72	€ 1,000.00	€ 10,888.82		€ 58.23		€ 180.67		€ 35,324.87
	Cllr. David Maxwell	€ 17,375.43	€ 4,303.12	€ 1,000.00			€ 1,026.58		€ 288.45		€ 23,993.58
	Cllr. Hugh McElvaney	€ 17,375.43	€ 4,338.12	€ 1,000.00			€ 0.00		€ 0.00		€ 22,713.55
	Cllr. Mary Kerr Conlon	€ 17,375.43	€ 6,022.12	€ 1,000.00			€ 0.00		€ 0.00		€ 24,397.55
	Cllr. Noel Keelan	€ 17,375.43	€ 5,955.28	€ 1,000.00	€ 2,650.00	€ 6,000.00	€ 31.35		€ 541.53		€ 33,553.59
	Cllr. Pat Treanor	€ 17,375.43	€ 4,685.68	€ 1,000.00	€ 2,715.00	€ 6,000.00	€ 0.00		€ 0.00		€ 31,776.11
	Cllr. Paudge Connolly	€ 17,375.43	€ 4,303.12	€ 1,000.00			€ 1,129.36		€ 316.23		€ 24,124.14
	Cllr. P.J. O'Hanlon	€ 17,375.43	€ 5,955.28	€ 1,000.00			€ 0.00		€ 0.00		€ 24,330.71
	Cllr. Raymond Aughey	€ 17,375.43	€ 4,303.12	€ 1,000.00		€ 6,000.00	€ 0.00		€ 0.00		€ 28,678.55
	Cllr. Richard Truell	€ 17,375.43	€ 4,752.52	€ 1,000.00	€ 2,177.76		€ 795.54		€ 337.78		€ 26,439.03
	Cllr. Seamus Coyle	€ 17,375.43	€ 5,420.68	€ 1,000.00	€ 12,316.63		€ 991.42		€ 436.71		€ 37,540.87
	Cllr. Seamus Treanor	€ 17,375.43	€ 4,303.12	€ 1,000.00	€ 5,416.65		€ 0.00		€ 129.11		€ 28,224.31
	Cllr. Seamus Conlon	€ 17,375.43	€ 4,303.12	€ 1,000.00	€ 2,650.00		€ 471.40		€ 332.30		€ 26,132.25
	Cllr. Sean Gilliland	€ 17,375.43	€ 5,420.68	€ 1,000.00		€ 6,000.00	€ 144.28		€ 0.00		€ 29,940.39
	Totals	€ 312,757.74	€ 89,149.88	€ 18,000.00	€ 40,964.86	€ 24,000.00	€ 5,625.59	€ 0.00	€ 2,897.31	€ 1,500.00	€ 494,895.38

Appendix II

Financial Statement 2020

Summary of Expenditure, Income and Balances

The activities of the Council, on both Capital and Revenue, in 2020 accounted for a turnover of c.€127 million.

The Capital Account expenditure of €39,025,714 reflects the investment by the Council in improving the infrastructure in the County. The major areas of activity were Housing and Roads.

Capital Account

Activity by Programme Group	2020 Expenditure	2020 Income	2020 Net cost
Housing & Building	23,444,119	22,994,096	(450,023)
Roads Transportation & Safety	8,395,203	8,724,361	329,158
Water Services	398,095	395,824	(2,271)
Development Management	2,994,727	3,164,648	169,921
Environmental Services	996,233	1,369,829	373,596
Recreation & Amenity	1,783,024	1,665,636	(117,388)
Miscellaneous Services	1,014,314	197,477	(816,837)
Total Expenditure / Income	39,025,714	38,511,871	(513,843)
		2019	2020
Balance (Debit) / Credit January 1		6,223,151	3,305,848
Expenditure		47,492,928	39,025,714
Income		43,574,815	38,511,871
Transfers to Revenue		(845,702)	(157,451)
Net Transfers from Revenue Account		1,846,511	3,635,192
Balance (Debit) / Credit December 31		3,305,848	6,269,745

Revenue Account

Activity by Division	2020 Expenditure	2020 Income	2020 Net cost
Housing & Building	8,588,870	9,317,363	728,493
Roads Transportation & Safety	23,790,351	17,339,149	(6,451,202)
Water Services	7,651,049	7,565,317	(85,732)
Development Management	21,055,684	16,301,398	(4,754,286)
Environmental Services	6,273,314	1,177,758	(5,095,556)
Recreation & Amenity	4,595,636	286,645	(4,308,991)
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	481,072	333,815	(147,257)
Miscellaneous Services	11,880,850	9,956,125	(1,924,725)
Total Expenditure / Income	84,316,827	62,277,570	(22,039,256)
Net Cost of Programmes to be funded from County Rates and Local Government Fund			(22,039,256)

	€
Rates	14,295,991
Local Property Tax	11,813,214
Pension Related Deduction	
Surplus / (Deficit) for Year	4,069,949
Transfer to Reserves	(3,711,528)
Overall Surplus/ (Deficit)	358,421
Balance (Debit) / Credit @ 1st January	(2,223,600)
Balance (Debit) / Credit @ 31st December	(1,865,179)

Revenue Account

Income and Expenditure Account	2020		2019	
Income				
State Grants and Subsidies	48,610,507	55.0%	27,873,035	41.9%
Contributions from other LAs	412,301	0.5%	359,670	0.5%
Goods and Services	13,254,761	15.0%	13,999,193	21.0%
Local Property Tax	11,813,214	13.4%	11,238,572	16.9%
Rates	14,295,991	16.2%	13,047,421	19.6%
Total Income	88,386,775	100.0%	66,517,890	100.0%
Expenditure				
Payroll Expenses	26,782,913	31.8%	26,299,947	43.4%
Operational Expenses	48,429,492	57.4%	31,731,675	44.5%
Administration Expenses	2,885,209	3.4%	2,527,584	3.9%
Establishment Expenses	1,126,953	1.3%	1,045,890	2.1%
Financial Expenses	4,341,853	5.1%	3,212,609	5.3%
Miscellaneous	750,406	0.9%	395,364	0.8%
Total Expenditure	84,316,826	100.0%	65,213,069	100.0%
Surplus for Year before Transfers	4,069,949		1,304,821	
Transfers to Reserves	(3,711,528)		(1,227,954)	
Overall Deficit for Year	358,421		76,867	
General Reserve at 1st January	(2,223,600)		(2,300,474)	
General Reserve at 31st December	(1,865,179)		(2,223,600)	

**Progress Report for 2020
on Corporate Plan 2020-2024**

CORPORATE PLAN HIGH LEVEL GOALS

This Corporate Plan - underpinned by our Core Values - proposes twelve High Level Goals which will deliver our Mission and ensure the improvement of Council services and infrastructure over the period of the Plan 2020 - 2024. For each High Level Goal, we have identified a number of supporting strategic objectives for which actions and activities are identified by relevant Departments in their Annual Service Delivery Plans

1 TO ENSURE A CLEAN, SAFE AND SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT	Support biodiversity and ensure the sustainable management of water, waste, and all other environmental resources
2 TO SUPPORT LOCAL DEMOCRACY	Support the Elected Members, Corporate Policy Group, Strategic Policy Committee, Joint Policing Committee, Public Participation Network and all other committees in their leadership and representative role in response to the needs of the Community
3 TO DELIVER QUALITY & INCLUSIVE CUSTOMER SERVICES	Improve Accessible Services, improve communications and engagement with the public to drive efficiency and effectiveness for our customers.
4 TO SUPPORT OUR LOCAL ECONOMY	Support the Business Community to stimulate growth, encourage start-ups and maximise job creation. Improve prosperity through cross border partnerships i.e. ICBAN and EBR. Deliver on the economic objectives in the Local Economic and Community Plan.
5 TO ENHANCE CULTURE AND CREATIVITY	Strengthen the capacity of the culture and creative sectors within County Monaghan.
6 TO STRENGTHEN OUR COMMUNITIES	Develop, Support and Enhance the quality of life of sustainable, inclusive communities in County Monaghan as envisaged in the Local Economic and Community Plan.
7 TO IMPROVE INFRASTRUCTURE AND PROVIDE ACCESSIBLE SERVICES	Progress key infrastructure projects.
8 TO DELIVER HOUSING AND HOUSING SUPPORTS	Increase the supply of social housing, improve existing housing stock and develop quality amenities to enhance Monaghan as a place to live.
9 TO IMPLEMENT ROBUST BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE	Develop and implement sound financial, management and governance systems to enable organisational and operational efficiency
10 TO DEVELOP OUR PEOPLE AND ORGANISATION.	Ensure Monaghan County Council, is an employer of choice, builds our workforce for the future, supports and values managers as people developers.
11 TO ENSURE EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY THROUGH ADVANCING INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND TECHNOLOGY.	Accelerate the digital delivery of improved and accessible services by promoting a culture of innovation.
12 TO TRANSITION TO A LOW CARBON & CLIMATE RESILIENT SOCIETY	Working in partnership with other key stakeholders to deliver on the adaptation and mitigation actions identified in the Climate Action Plan, Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and Climate Action Charter.

Housing

In the Corporate Plan, Monaghan County Council is committed to seeking to ensure that every household will have access to secure, good quality housing suited to their needs at an affordable price in a sustainable community. The Council's priorities and objectives in this area are outlined below, together with the performance standards to be met. Objectives will be delivered in compliance with Monaghan County Council's adopted governance processes & procedures.

Supporting Strategy	High Level Goal	Progress in 2020	Performance Standards
To identify the categories of Social Housing need of all communities in County Monaghan and prioritise their needs in capital expenditure programmes	3, 6, 7, 8	Ensure social housing applications are dealt with within a 12-week period. Reviewed social housing waiting list to identify and allocate vacant properties to priority cases having regard to the scheme of letting priorities. 103 housing units allocated by MCC in 2020	Completion of the Social Housing Assessment 2020.
To deliver good quality accessible social housing through planned programmes for construction, acquisition, leasing, maintenance and refurbishment.	3, 7, 8	94 units completed in 2020 through continued construction, acquisition, leasing, maintenance and refurbishment programmes. Restrictions due to COVID delayed the completion of 50 units in 2020 which will be completed in 2021 Continued the preparation, submission of own applications for social housing developments by Monaghan County Council as well as providing supporting documentation and information for funding applications for additional social housing by Approved Housing Bodies.	Rebuilding Ireland targets and NOAC Housing Stock statistics.
To optimise the use of housing land banks and increase land bank reserves.	7, 8	Examined potential and feasibility of land in the ownership of Monaghan County Council having regard to sustainability for development of land. Advertisements by MCC issued for acquisition of additional land for future development as well as liaising regularly with landowners and agents on opportunities arising	

To ensure casual vacancies are re let in a timely fashion.	7, 8	Reduction in letting time achieved from 11.65 weeks in 2019 to 11.5 weeks in 2020	NOAC Housing Vacancies/Average reletting times and cost
To optimise the use of housing stock while at the same time achieving value for money.	3, 8		NOAC - Housing Maintenance Costs
To provide for the housing needs of Vulnerable Groups	6, 8	<p>12.6% of the total allocations made by MCC were to persons with disabilities. Of the remainder 23% were made to persons over 55.</p> <p>Target in the Housing and Disability strategy is for 20% of allocations to be made to persons with disabilities. Difficulties arose achieving these targets having regard to the form and location of housing vacancies arising and the suitable applicants on the list</p>	Assessment having regard to targets contained in the Housing and Disability Strategy
To meet the needs as set out in the Traveller Accommodation Plan.	6, 8	All targets set out in the plan for 2020 were met through provision of allocations and other social housing supports.	Traveler Accommodation Programme 2019-2024
To meet the needs of Homeless in County Monaghan.	6, 8	<p>137 Presentations made to Monaghan County Council in 2020 and addressed to address the individuals needs</p> <p>Progression of the North East Homeless Action Plan 2018 -2024</p>	<p>North East Homeless Action Plan 2018 -2024</p> <p>NOAC – Homeless Figures</p>
To promote home ownership by increasing the range of housing accessible procurement alternatives.	8	<p>16 dwellings sold in 2020 by MCC under the tenant purchase scheme.</p> <p>The sale of houses will continue under the Tenant Incremental Purchase Scheme. Subject to the development of a proposed new affordable housing scheme Monaghan County Council will endeavour to provide affordable housing where feasible and needed.</p>	
To co-ordinate a programme of work to bring Derelict / Vacant properties back into use.	1, 6, 8	Continued inspections of properties and follow up to determine whether vacant or occupied. Liaise with property owners to encourage reoccupation of properties.	Assessment against the provisions of the Vacant Homes Strategy

To ensure Private House grants for people with a disability and older people in our communities to meet the priority needs in County Monaghan.	8	Provision of 147 no housing grants in 2020	No's of Housing Grants issued per annum
To promote a high standard of private rented dwellings.	8	<p>MCC carried out 245 inspections on 243 different dwellings in 2020. 160 of these were physical inspections mostly from a strong performance in Q1 prior to Covid 19. We also carried out 85 Virtual inspections in Q3 and Q4 which is commendable giving the new challenges faced.</p> <p>The NOAC target for 2020 prior to Covid 19 was to inspect 451 privately rented dwellings of which we achieved approximately 55% of this target (243).</p> <p>It is intended to continue the private rented Inspections programme during the COVID pandemic through use of virtual inspection process until restrictions are lifted and it is safe to undertake physical inspections</p>	NOAC performance indicators relating to private rented inspections

Transportation

In its Corporate Plan, Monaghan County Council is committed to developing and managing County Monaghan's built and natural assets in partnership with other agencies to best utilise and promote economic, social and cultural benefits of our citizens. The Roads Service is key to delivering these benefits. The specific priorities and objectives for the Roads Service are outlined below, together with the performance standards to be met. Objectives will be delivered in compliance with Monaghan County Council's adopted governance processes & procedures.

Supporting Strategy	High Level Goal	Progress in 2020	Performance Standards
To maintain & improve the structural quality of the road network.	7	<p>Progress Overlay Schemes at approved sites.</p> <p>Deliver Regional and Local Road Restoration Improvement.</p> <p>Implement funding for Specific Improvement Grants on Regional roads.</p> <p>Implement LIS & CIS Schemes</p> <p>Bridge Rehabilitation Programme</p>	<p>Phase 1 of the N54 Monaghan Town Scheme delivered.</p> <p>45.1Kms of road improvement carried out.</p> <p>85.6kms of Local & Regional roads.</p> <p>11 LIS lanes completed, 6 CIS schemes.</p> <p>13 bridges completed, designs and site investigations completed at 9 other bridge structures.</p>
To plan, develop and progress strategic infrastructural routes.	7	<p>Implement Road Improvement Schemes identified in Ireland 2040 and County Development Plans. Clontibret to the Border Ardee to Castleblaney.</p> <p>Complete Phase 3 of the Emyvale to Monaghan National Primary Improvement Works Scheme.</p> <p>Construction of the Blackwater Bridge.</p>	<p>Preferred Route Corridors finalised and prepared for publishing in 2021.</p> <p>3.3km scheme completed.</p> <p>Bridge Replacement scheme and accommodation works</p>

		<p>Progress N54 Tullybryan as Minor Improvement Scheme</p> <p>N53 Ballinacarry Bridge</p> <p>Plan, design & provide infrastructure to assist with modal shifts to walking and cycling routes.</p> <p>Implement funding for Specific Improvement Grants on Regional roads.</p>	<p>completed with a total project cost of €6 million.</p> <p>3.1kms road realignment scheme progressed to Phase 3 of the Transport Infrastructure Ireland Project Management Guidelines for Minor Projects.</p> <p>Completion of the Strategic Assessment Report for the bridge realignment scheme.</p> <p>Ulster Canal Greenway progressed to preparation of Part 8 approval for Phase 2.</p> <p>Completed the Part VIII process for Specific Improvement works at Brackley Bridge and R181 Drummillard.</p>
To provide an appropriate and adequate road maintenance service.	1, 7	Implement PSCI Road Survey and monitoring programme in line with national targets.	<p>100% of roads surveyed.</p> <p>NOAC R1: 100% PSCI Survey of Regional Network completed. 100% PSCI resurvey of Local Tertiary Road Network completed.</p> <p>NOAC R2: Completed Regional Road Grants Works in accordance with agreed Restoration programme.</p>

		<p>Implement Winter Maintenance schedule</p> <p>Deliver Regional & Local Road Restoration Maintenance</p> <p>Maintain appropriate resources to provide a core road maintenance service.</p> <p>Co-ordinate Severe Weather Action Team</p>	<p>Winter Maintenance Plans reviewed and operational. 76 call outs were completed in 2019/2020.</p> <p>Implementation of 11 LIS roads, 6 CIS roads and piloting of the CBGM and Reclaimed Asphalt trails.</p> <p>Plant, Stocks and staffing levels and training in place.</p> <p>The SWAT team met on 3 occasions to monitor & co-ordinate emergency responses.</p>
Ensure effective administration & governance of Roads Programmes.	2, 7, 9	<p>Administer road opening licensing, permits, road closures, signage and customer service requests efficiently. Enforcement of the 1993 Roads Act offences.</p> <p>Facilitate the administration of projects and budgetary spend.</p>	<p>The following number of applications were responded to:</p> <p>Roads & Services Abutting: 238</p> <p>Abnormal Loads: 89</p> <p>Road closures: 41</p> <p>Customer Service Queries: 212</p> <p>All monies recouped in a timely manner from funding Departments: DTTAS, TII & Dept of Community & Rural Affairs in line with eligibility of expenditure.</p>
Enhance the safety of the road network.	1, 3	Deliver Safety Improvement Schemes on National road network.	Progressed three HD17 safety improvement schemes on national routes (N54

		<p>Implement Safety Improvement scheme works on Regional & local roads.</p> <p>Deliver National Road Maintenance Programmes.</p> <p>Implement the VRS safety barriers repair/ replacement programmes on the applicable National routes.</p> <p>Implement actions in the Noise Action Plan.</p> <p>Implement Fencing Retrofit programme.</p>	<p>Monaghan Town Roundabout, N2 Tirnaneill & Smithborough Pedestrian crossing</p> <p>9 Low Cost Safety Improvement Schemes throughout the county on the local and regional road network.</p> <p>Works carried out at N2 Clontibret, N2 Carrickmacross (access ramps), N2 Shercock ramp, N2 Emyvale, N2 Moybridge, N54 Skeagh Bridge, N54 Smithborough, N12 Tamlat. Repairs to VRS (crash barrier) carried out at ten locations across the network.</p> <p>Noise monitoring undertaken as required.</p> <p>1.75kms of fencing installed at 2 locations on National Roads.</p>
--	--	---	--

Water Services

Monaghan County Council is committed to the development and management of County Monaghan's built and natural assets in partnership with other agencies to best utilise and promote the economic, social and cultural benefit of our citizens. A key element in the delivery of the strategic objective is fulfilling our obligations under the Irish Water / Monaghan County Council Service Level Agreement and managing the implementation of the Rural Water Programme in County Monaghan. These priorities and objectives are summarised below. Objectives will be delivered in compliance with Monaghan County Council's adopted governance processes & procedures.

Supporting Strategy	High Level Goal	Progress in 2020	Performance Standards
To fulfil obligations under the Service Level Agreement and Annual Service Plan with Irish Water.	1, 3, 7	Requirements under 2020 Annual Service Plan Met	Q1 91.2% Q2 100% Q3 97.9% Q4 94.8%
Execute duties as the Water Authority for Group Water Schemes and small private water supplies under the Drinking Water Regulations 2014. Implementation of The County Monaghan Rural Water Programme	1, 3, 7	<p>Sampling plan for rural water was completed in 2020 taking 141 samples across private group water schemes and small private supplies.</p> <p>Compliance for 2020 with drinking water regulations was 99.6% for all regulatory sample parameters assessed. Some small private supplies were not sampled as they were closed due to Covid 19 restrictions. Exceedances and operational issues reported by group water schemes were risk assessed and notified to the HSE were relevant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • €3.7 million subsidy payments issued to twelve group Schemes • €345,724 capital payments issued to seven group water schemes towards projects under the MARWP 2019 -2021. • 16 Well Grant applications received. 	<p>141 Samples</p> <p>99.6%</p>

Planning

In its Corporate Plan, Monaghan County Council is committed to promoting and protecting a clean safe environment which is viable and sustainable. A further corporate objective is to develop and manage County Monaghan's built and natural assets in partnership with other agencies to best utilise and promote economic, social and cultural benefit of our citizens. The Council's priorities and objectives for the Planning Service in these areas, together with the performance standards to be met, for 2021 are outlined below. Objectives will be delivered in compliance with Monaghan County Council's adopted governance processes & procedures.

Supporting Strategy	High Level Goal	Progress in 2020	Performance Standards
<p>To provide an effective, equitable and consistent planning service.</p> <p>Operate a Development Management System in compliance with legislative and policy requirements.</p> <p>Operate an enforcement system in line with legislative and policy requirements.</p> <p>Implement development contribution scheme within legislative and policy requirements.</p>	<p>1, 3, 4, 6</p>	<p>Despite the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions in place, the Planning Section continued to provide the level of service and access to information required to deliver an effective, equitable and consistent planning service.</p> <p>Despite increased numbers of planning applications, the Planning Section fulfilled its statutory duties in respect of development management in line with legislative and policy requirements.</p> <p>The Planning Section fulfilled its statutory duties in respect of enforcement in line with legislative and policy requirements.</p> <p>The provisions of the Development Contribution Scheme were applied to all planning application decisions, and development contributions due were collected.</p>	<p>Performance is bench marked through NOAC indicators P2, P3 and P4.</p> <p>All planning application further information requests and decisions were issued within the legislative timeframes.</p> <p>Enforcement actions adhered to the legislative timeframes and policy requirements.</p> <p>All planning applications were determined in accordance with the provisions of the County Development Plan, national policy and the Development Contribution Scheme.</p>
<p>To ensure a planning policy framework for balanced and sustainable development in the urban and rural areas.</p> <p>Develop a planning policy framework within legislative and policy requirements.</p>	<p>1, 4, 6</p>	<p>The Planning Section continued to formulate planning policy which is balanced and sustainable, and to progress same to adoption by the elected members within the legislative timeframes and policy requirements.</p>	<p>Two variations to the County Development Plan were adopted in 2020.</p>

Manage and protect the built heritage within the County.	3, 5, 6	The Planning Section continued to administer the Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS) and the Historic Structures Fund (HSF).	Nine properties were awarded funding under the BHIS and HSF in 2020
Resolve remaining unfinished housing developments in the county and take in charge developments as required.	1, 6	The Planning Section continued to seek resolution of unfinished housing developments in collaboration with other sections of the Council and Irish Water.	By the end of 2020 the number of unfinished housing developments had been reduced to four.
Reduce the level of dereliction.	1, 6	Work on addressing dereliction continued with the completion of the redevelopment of a number of derelict sites and additional Derelict Sites Notices being served.	Three additional properties were added to the Derelict Sites Register in 2020.

Economic Development & Tourism

In its Corporate Plan, Monaghan County Council is committed to providing support to the business community to stimulate growth, encourage start-ups, maximise job creation and improve competitiveness. The Council's priorities and objectives in this area are outlined below, together with the performance standards to be met. Monaghan County Council committed to delivering on its tourism strategy in partnership with stakeholders. The Council also has a leading role in supporting the local community sector in developing local initiatives. The following priorities/objectives and performance standards are relevant to these commitments. Objectives will be delivered in compliance with Monaghan County Council's adopted governance processes & procedures.

Supporting Strategy	High Level Goal	Progress in 2020	Performance Standards
<p>Develop a strategy to promote entrepreneurship, foster business start-ups, and develop existing businesses, including those sectors with significant export potential</p> <p>Promote economic sustainability and development in County Monaghan by progressing the County as a location for investment and employment creation through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a strategy to attract public and private investment • Devise a strategy to improve the quality and diversity of employment in the County 	4	<p>Job Creation 2020 was 175 but we had losses of 194 due to Covid, some of those jobs may come back in 2021. The areas badly effective was food & service sector.</p> <p>78 training programmes took place, TOV 129 to move to on-line trading & we ran 6 Business Start to encourage start-up</p> <p>Promoting Economic Sustainability Bio Project, AI Project, the Engineering Network to explore new opportunities through collaboration & working with ETB to develop new training programmes to meet the needs of industry in Monaghan</p> <p>Grant Thornton Economic Appraisal of County Monaghan</p>	<p>Process 18 grant applications in 2021</p> <p>Deliver 50 training programmes in 2021, included 6 Business Starts TOV approve 25 in 2021 Planning Permission Grant for Bio-connect Project Engineering Cluster Established AI funding secured & CEO appointed Discussion in progress with ETB</p> <p>Publish Report in 2021</p>
To develop a sustainable tourism industry in the county which will lead to an increase in visitor numbers and visitor revenue.	1, 4, 5	<p>New look Tourism Website for the county developed</p> <p>Major new interactive visitor experience at the Patrick Kavanagh Centre completed and opened to the public</p>	<p>Website complete</p> <p>New Visitor Attraction opened with promotional material (brochure, website) all developed</p>

		<p>New interactive visitor experience at Carrickmacross Workhouse delivered in conjunction with Farney Development Group</p> <p>Delivered major infrastructural upgrade project at Rossmore</p> <p>Commenced delivery of Failte Ireland's Destination Town funded project in Monaghan Town</p> <p>Commenced delivery of family cycle trail in Rossmore Forest Park</p> <p>Feasibility study on Heritage Sites Access & Interpretation undertaken in conjunction with Louth and Cavan County Councils</p> <p>Branded Kavanagh Trail developed in Inniskeen</p> <p>Monaghan Tourism Summer Campaign undertaken comprising of radio ads and interviews, social media postings, and the Monaghan Quest initiative</p> <p>MyMonaghan Christmas campaign undertaken to promote local crafts and vouchers for visitor experiences and accommodation</p>	<p>New Visitor Attraction developed and ready for opening in 2021</p> <p>Entrance improvements, resurfacing of access road and car park, wildflower planting, new giant sculptures installed</p> <p>Design Team appointed and initial design work commenced</p> <p>Design team appointed and initial design work commenced</p> <p>Feasibility Study Completed and further application submitted to LEADER for capital funding</p> <p>Signed Trail with Interpretation Panels at 10 key sites installed</p> <p>Significant engagement from public during campaign and national coverage in travel articles and blogs</p> <p>Strong engagement during the campaign feedback from participants indicated an</p>
--	--	--	--

		<p>Tourist Office opened and staffed for 6 weeks when restrictions allowed.</p> <p>Participation of Kavanagh Centre in ICBAN funded Spot-Lit (Literary Tourism) Programme</p>	<p>increased level of on-line sales.</p> <p>Opened for enquiries</p> <p>Training undertaken by Centre Manager</p>
--	--	---	---

Community Development

In its Corporate Plan, Monaghan County Council is committed to ensuring that everyone in our community has an opportunity to become actively engaged in shaping the future development of the County. Monaghan County Council is committed to leading the promotion and support of Social Inclusion and access to services through the review, development and implementation of its strategies. The Council's priorities and objectives in the area of Community Development are outlined below, together with the performance standards to be met. Monaghan County Council committed to lead the promotion and support of social inclusion through the review, development and implementation of strategies, policies and practice that promote, equality, protect human rights and eliminate discrimination for all services users and staff of the organisation in line with National Government Policy. Objectives will be delivered in compliance with Monaghan County Council's adopted governance processes & procedures.

Supporting Strategy	High Level Goal	Progress in 2020	Performance Standards
<p>Support and facilitate the work of the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) in partnership with Statutory and Non-Statutory Agencies</p> <p>LCDC to deliver and implement Social and Economic Development through the Local Economic and Community Planning Process (LECP), Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) and the Rural Development Programme (LEADER).</p>	3, 6, 12	<p>Ongoing Administration and co-ordination of the following programmes Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP), Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP), LEADER:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LCDC Programme being administered in accordance with Department Guidelines. • 11 meeting of LCDC & 12 LAG meetings held in 2020 • LCDC work programme agreed and delivered. <p>Local Economic and Community Plan actions delivered.</p> <p>SICAP Programme being delivered in accordance with the SICAP Programme 2018-2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2020 SICAP Plan agreed • Mid-Year Review (MYR) completed • End-of-Year Review (EYR) completed • 2021 SICAP Plan submitted and approved by the LCDC <p>LEADER Programme administered in accordance with Department Guidelines and budget allocated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 LAG Meeting held in 2020 	<p>Local Community Development Committee Programme administered in accordance with Department Guidelines</p> <p>SICAP Programme administered in accordance with the SICAP Programme 2018-2022</p> <p>LEADER Programme administered in accordance with Local Development Strategy, Department</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the close of 2020, 112 projects were approved to the value of €5,698,098.16 (99.82% of total budget) <p>Community Enhancement Programme 2020 Monaghan LCDC implemented the Community Enhancement Programme in 2020 in two Rounds. In total €165,398 was approved to 68 projects.</p> <p>DRCD Rural Funding Schemes Funding was allocated in 2020 by the Department of Rural & Community Development under the following schemes:</p> <p>CLÁR – This programme for rural areas aims to provide funding for small infrastructural projects in areas that experience disadvantage. €287,371 was allocated under the CLÁR Scheme 2020 for 7 projects.</p> <p>Town & Village Renewal Scheme – The aim of the Scheme is to support the revitalising of towns and villages, to improve the living and working environment of their communities and increase their potential to support increased economic activity into the future. In 2020, the Town and Village Renewal Scheme was tailored to address the emerging challenges associated with COVID-19 with the introduction of the Accelerated Measures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Round 1 Accelerated Measure allocated €137,320 – 5 Projects Round 2 Accelerated Measure allocated €155,000 – 5 Projects Round 3 Accelerated Measure allocated €130,000 – 4 Projects 	<p>Guidelines and budget allocation.</p> <p>Funding Schemes allocated in accordance with Department Guidelines.</p>
--	--	--	---

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main Town & Village Scheme 2020 received an allocation of €806,543 – 7 projects. <p>The Council will provide match funding of €258,592 for the projects.</p> <p>Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme</p> <p>The aim of the ORIS is to provide outdoor recreational infrastructure in countryside areas. The 2020 scheme did, in particular, support recreational infrastructure that not only provides an outlet for the communities in which they are situated but that also delivers added value from a tourism perspective, positioning rural areas to respond to the post-COVID-19 economic environment. €103,623 was allocated under Measure 1 for 6 projects.</p> <p>Monaghan Drug & Alcohol Forum met 4 times. Cavan, Monaghan DAF Communications subgroup established. Strategic plan actions progressed.</p>	
To achieve Peace programme/s objectives	4, 5, 6, 7	Peace IV programme delivered with one project outstanding which required SEUPB approval to relocate and revise timeline for delivery. Approval obtained in December 2020. Delivery deadline extended to March 2022.	Programme delivered. One project outstanding and plan for completion of that in place.
To promote equality and inclusion for all service users by developing cross departmental actions and policies.	3, 6,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality proofing assessment of the Corporate plan 2020-20204 completed • A guide to Inclusive Consultation produced <p>Monaghan Public Sector Duty plan 2020-2024 produced</p>	
Support the Public Participation Network (PPN) in realising its role and function.	3, 6, 12	<p>MCC and MPPN developed a Memorandum of Understanding which clearly sets out the key roles of both parties. This is reviewed annually by both parties and is ratified by the PPN plenary.</p> <p>MCC provide ongoing support to the PPN through an appointed LA liaison officer.</p>	<p>MOU adopted by both parties.</p> <p>4 no. meetings held with MCC and MPPN. Attendance of Senior MCC staff at PPN meeting.</p>

		<p>MCC and MPPN regularly collaborate on projects/events.</p> <p>MCC notifies the PPN of all its consultations in a timely manner. It recognises the benefits of the PPN with 550 registered groups as the main vehicle of engagement with community sector.</p>	<p>1 no. collaborative induction training session held for new PPN Reps.</p> <p>1 no. submission made to Monaghan Migrant Strategy. 14 no. notifications sent to PPN of local and national consultations.</p>
<p>Work to strengthen local community groups by supporting the Local Community Sector in developing local initiatives.</p>	<p>3, 6, 12</p>	<p>The PPN has strengthened MCC relationship with community sector. This is evident through the LA working with community groups on the many funding streams such as Clár, Town and Village, Community plans and many more. Funding is now being distributed more fairly and equally across the county. This is down to the strengthened partnership approach from both parties in working together. Community groups are now heavily involved in the development of their local towns/villages.</p> <p>The PPN is a valuable tool in informing LA's of the views and needs of the communities it serves.</p> <p>Community Plans launched in Scotshouse & Oram Community Park completed in Scotshouse Funding secured to upgrade walking trail/track in Scotshouse Car Park & footpath completed in Oram Funding secured to create Memorial Garden for Big Tom in Oram. Lough Egish development plan completed Funding secured for road realignment & footpaths</p> <p>Connons/Drummully, assisted to access Covid funding to create an outdoor social area.</p>	<p>100 no. notifications sent to the PPN regarding funding announcements. A well resourced and funded community and voluntary sector.</p> <p>6 no. Monthly Management report submitted. 3 no. submissions to Monaghan County Council newsletter.</p>

		<p>Work commenced on a Community Plan for Ballinode</p> <p>Natural Playground designed in-house for O'Neill Park, Clones</p> <p>Monaghan Community Alerts now has over 4,500 subscribers</p>	
Implement the National Cycle Policy Framework actions for LAs	3, 6, 12	Staff Cycling Initiative in place – 10 cycle lockers installed at Council buildings & 7 Electric bicycles purchased for staff use	Staff usage of electric bikes.
Implement Monaghan Sports Partnership Strategic Plan 2019-2023	5, 6	<p>Community based programmes organised in 11 different community settings in Jan-Feb (184 participants aged 50+)</p> <p>Schools/ Pre Schools based programmes: 381 children representing 13 primary schools. 113 pre-school children representing 4 pre-schools and 52 children representing 2 x after-school services</p> <p>National Events/ Initiatives: - Operation Transformation National Walks (Jan) – 8 local walks for 600 participants. Community Transformation activities at 3 locations for 220 participants (6 week progs).</p> <p>National Bike Week (Sept) Local cycling events using e-bikes and utilising the Monaghan Greenway 125 x bike repair and resource packs for children made available through local libraries</p> <p>Creation of 'virtual, self-led activation challenges'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0-3 km Walk / Jog programme – 281 participants • 100 days of walking – 281 participants • Cycling Challenges – 115 participants • Active Schools supports – 50 participants • Nature Walks – 52 participants 	Activity programmes delivered in line with MSP Strategic Plan.

		<p>Healthy Ireland funded projects Purchase of playground marking stencils for distribution to Primary Schools. 4 Schools completed in 2020 as per targets set.</p> <p>Let's Play, Monaghan! MSP created a family fun booklet of games and activities to provide ideas for families at home during the Summer Months. 300 booklets and play packs were distributed to family support services.</p> <p>Cycle training for DEIS Schools Cycle training provided to 200 children within 4 DEIS Primary Schools</p> <p>Online exercise activities A suite of 8 different options offered for online exercise activity. 672 participants of all ages from pre-school age to older age too part.</p> <p>Women in Sport As part of the European Week of Sport (22nd-29th Sept), MSP coordinated a 'virtual' women's Mini Marathon event. 200 women of all ages took part in their own 5km / 10km walk / run event</p> <p>Social Inclusion through Sport & Physical Activity MSP along with Sport Ireland developed two activity booklets of exercises aimed at Older Adults and Adults with a Disability – booklets were posted to individuals and disseminated through local disability service providers. The booklets were also printed in the Northern Standard for people to cut out and keep. The older adult information was also included in the Age Friendly booklet produced.</p>	
--	--	--	--

		Supporting Club Development through Education & Training Safeguarding 1 – 6 courses delivered (4 online) with 69 participants Autism in Sport – 1 course held (online) with 14 participants Covid19 Small Grants programme MSP administered funding from Sport Ireland for the support of sports clubs with Covid19 related supports through a small grants programme. €48,300 was dispersed to 40 Sports Clubs in Monaghan. 5 additional clubs were supported via their relevant National Governing Body of Sport.	
Implement Healthy Monaghan Strategy 2019 - 2022	6	Due to Covid19 some 2020 actions have moved into 2021. Administration and delivery of HI funding and associated actions ongoing.	Healthy Monaghan Strategy Actions for 2020 delivered.
Implement Migrant Integration Strategy 2020-23	3, 5, 6	Monaghan Migrant Integration Strategy 2020-2024 produced and implementation commenced.	Implementation of Integration Strategy actions delivery commenced.
Implement Monaghan Age Friendly Strategy 2020 - 2024	3, 6	Monaghan Age Friendly Strategy 2020-2024 produced and implementation commenced.	Age Friendly Strategy actions delivery commenced.
Implement Comhairle na nÓg programme	2, 6	Comhairle na nÓg programme of work completed and funding application for 2021 made.	Programme delivered, funding approved and young people engaged. Due to COVID 19 – 10 out of the 12 Secondary Schools took part in the on-line AGM.

Environment In its Corporate Plan, Monaghan County Council committed to promoting and protecting a clean, safe environment in a manner which is viable and sustainable. In this regard, the Council's priorities and objectives for the Environment division are outlined below, together with the performance standards to be met. Objectives will be delivered in compliance with Monaghan County Council's adopted governance processes & procedures.			
Supporting Strategy	High Level Goal	Progress in 2020	Performance Standards
<p>To implement legislation and policy with regard to water quality for both surface and groundwaters in the County.</p> <p>Working toward achieving an improvement in water quality status in all water bodies in the County.</p>	1, 12	<p>Annual inspection plan completed and submitted to EPA. Work carried out by Environmental Services in this area in 2020 included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 638 routine water inspections • 135 complaint investigations • Initiated 119 water enforcement actions • Monitoring of 26 licenced facilities. • 41 farm inspections. • Preparatory work on the 3rd cycle of the River Basin Management Plan. <p>WFP sampling program delivered on behalf of EPA with 97% of samples taken.</p> <p>Draft River Basin Management Plan substantially completed.</p>	<p>RMCEI Plan produced and submitted to EPA.</p> <p>E2 – Environmental Pollution Complaints Closed</p> <p>% of sampling program delivered</p>
<p>To implement legislation and policy with regards to waste management.</p>	1, 12	<p>Annual inspection plan completed and submitted to EPA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 443 routine waste inspections • 217 non-routine inspections • Dealt with 508 environmental complaints • Initiated 163 waste enforcement actions 	<p>EPA assessment framework</p> <p>E1 No. or % of Households with access to a 3-Bin Service</p> <p>E2 – Environmental Pollution Complaints Closed</p>
<p>To provide and maintain recycling infrastructure in towns and villages in the County.</p> <p>To seek EPA authorisation for historic landfills previously operated by Monaghan County Council.</p>	1, 7, 12	<p>Contract in place with contractor in 2020 for the servicing of the bring site network in the County.</p> <p>Technical Amendment application lodged with the EPA in 2020 to remove recycling facility from EPA licence to allow</p>	<p>Bring sites operate in compliance with service contract and EPA authorisations.</p> <p>Recycling sites operate in compliance with waste</p>

		<p>increased recycling activities on site through the granting of a Waste Facility Permit.</p> <p>All outstanding capping works at Scotch Corner licensed landfill completed.</p> <p>EPA licence compliance investigation works completed at Scotch Corner landfill.</p> <p>Funding secured from DCCAE to progress historical authorisation applications to the EPA</p> <p>Three Certificate of Authorisation applications for 3 historic landfills submitted to EPA in 2020.</p>	<p>authorisation and concession contract</p> <p>Compliance with Scotch Corner EPA licence</p> <p>Funding secured</p> <p>Compliance with EPA authorisations.</p>
To develop innovative environmental awareness projects for targeted audiences.	1, 3, 11, 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Musical instrument repair project funded by LAPN • Collaboration between Monaghan County Council, WEEE Ireland and EPA on repairmystuff.ie website • Supports to Tidy Towns and resident association's through annual funding programme • Litter awareness campaign at public playgrounds and parks 	E4: % of schools that have been awarded green flag status
To implement the objectives of County Monaghan Litter Management Plan.	1	<p>1 Total spend on street cleansing in 2020 was €758,745]</p> <p>2. 200 on the spot litter fines were issued in 2020.</p> <p>3. Monaghan County Council had an extensive CCTV programme at bottle banks in 2020.</p>	E3: % LA area within the 5 levels of litter pollution
<p>To improve air quality through the implementation of air quality legislation.</p> <p>Work with EPA in roll out of the national Ambient Air Monitoring Program.</p>	1, 12	<p>Annual inspection plan completed and submitted to EPA. During 2020 work carried out by Environmental Services in this area included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 complaint investigations. • 14 inspections under the DECO paints and Solvents regulations. • Sampling of 10 retailers under the solid fuel regulations. routine waste inspections. 	<p>RMCEI Plan produced and submitted to EPA.</p> <p>E2 – Environmental Pollution Complaints Closed</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiation of 60 waste enforcement actions (i.e. air related warning letters) <p>New AAMP Air monitor became operational in 2020 at the Machinery yard.</p>	Ambient Air Monitors in place as per EPA program and providing local Air Quality data.
<p>To protect public health by ensuring food safety compliance in food businesses under Monaghan County Council supervision.</p> <p>To ensure public safety from uncontrolled animals and to protect health and welfare of animals in establishments under supervision of Monaghan County Council.</p>	1, 3	<p>Annual inspection plan for 18 food businesses completed and submitted to FSAI.</p> <p>762 cattle and 1453 sheep inspected before and after slaughter. 56 samples taken for residues in raw meat, tuberculosis in cattle, meat hygiene, production hygiene and water potability.</p> <p>Inspection of all cattle and sheep, and a proportion of turkeys, slaughtered in establishments.</p> <p>197 dogs admitted to Council Dog Pound; 22 reclaimed, 172 rehomed, 7 euthanased; 6,142 dog licences issued in Monaghan; Investigation of 309 dog complaints, including 7 attacks on sheep, and 6 horse complaints. 7 inspections on registered Dog Breeding Establishments (DBE's); Investigation of 4 suspected DBE's.</p>	<p>EU legislation</p> <p>EU and Irish legislation Dog Breeding Establishment Guidelines</p>

Climate Change

In its Corporate Plan, Monaghan County Council aims to progress the transition to a low carbon and climate resilient society. Whilst the Environmental Services section has developed the Monaghan County Council Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024 it will be the responsibility of all the units within Monaghan County Council to ensure progression of the strategy and to progress the measures and action as outlined in the Climate Action Charter and in the National Climate Action Plan – To Tackle Climate Breakdown. In this regard, the Council's priorities and objectives in the area of Climate Action are outlined below, together with the performance standards to be met. Objectives will be delivered in compliance with Monaghan County Council's adopted governance processes & procedures.

Supporting Strategy	High Level Goal	Progress in 2020	Performance Standards
<p>To build resilience to the impacts of climate change across all council functions and services through the implementation of the Monaghan County Council Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024.</p> <p>To progress Climate Change Mitigation through further reducing greenhouse gas emissions.</p> <p>Deliver on the actions and commitments in the "Local Authority Climate Action Charter".</p> <p>Build appropriate staff confidences and capacities to lead and drive the Climate Change agenda.</p> <p>Lead and support local communities, businesses and industry in delivering initiatives to tackle Climate Change.</p>	1, 12	<p>Climate Action Delivery Plan developed during 2020 to progress a significant number of the actions in the Climate Change Adaptation strategy over the period from June 2020 to December 2021.</p> <p>Confirmed during 2020 that Monaghan County Council was ranked 8th out of all Local Authorities having already achieved a 37% energy improvement by the end of 2001. (national requirement was for local authorities to achieve a 33% energy efficiency improvement by the end of 2020)</p> <p>Monaghan County Council in conjunction with the Eastern and Midlands Climate Action Regional Office piloted climate action training for elected members, senior staff, and designated staff from all units of the council.</p> <p>Climate Action steering committee in place with bi-monthly meetings held under direction of Director of Service.</p> <p>Monaghan County Council assisted in the setting up of Community Sustainable Energy Communities (SEC) during 2020.</p>	Annual submission of Climate Adaptation implementation report to CARO

		<p>Advancement of the Smithboro to Middletown greenway project.</p> <p>Progression of a Green for Micro programme to help identify cost savings and improve the green credentials of businessess by looking at them from an environmental perspective.</p> <p>Biodiversity Plans being developed for 33 community organisations.</p>	
--	--	--	--

Fire & Emergency Services In its Corporate Plan, Monaghan County Council committed to promote and protect a clean environment which is viable and sustainable. The Council's priorities and objectives for the Fire Service, Civil Defence & Building Control under this remit are outlined below, together with the performance standards to be met. Objectives will be delivered in compliance with Monaghan County Council's adopted governance processes & procedures.			
Supporting Strategy	High Level Goal	Progress in 2020	Performance Standards
Provide and develop an inclusive, effective & efficient prevention, protection and response fire & rescue service, locally identified risks, responsive to the needs of our community and in a manner that reflects the diversity of our communities.	3, 6	1. Implementation of Fire & Emergency Operations Plan 2018-2022 2. Delivery of new Fire Station in Castleblayney and transfer from old Fire Station 3. Completion of Fire Service Capacity Review 2020. 4. Procure new Class B Fire Appliance and secure funding for the re-chassis of current water tanker completed. 5. Review station, equipment and training facilities	1. Section 26 Plan key objectives implemented as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOAC F2: Service Mobilisation (Fire target 5.15min achieved) • NOAC F3: Percentage of time in attendances at scenes (Fire target 35% < 10min achieved) • Tetra Communication system installed • Revised recruitment programme implemented. • Training plan revised due to covid-19 and implemented • MoU delivered with NIFRS for Road Traffic Accidents • PPE Policy developed. 2. Transfer from old Fire Station to new Fire Station in Castleblayney completed.

			<p>3. Fire Service Capacity review process completed.</p> <p>4. Fleet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Class B Fire Appliance procured • funding approval for new Water Tanker obtained. <p>5. Preventative Maintenance Programmes implemented for vehicles and equipment (22 vehicles with CVRT rating of 67% achieved)</p>
<p>To provide a healthy and safe working environment.</p> <p>Provide accessible community support.</p> <p>Develop response to Major Emergencies.</p>	1, 3, 6	<p>1. Achieve IOS 450001 accreditation</p> <p>2. Building Control Regulations: Operate public consultation and information service. Provide timely support, assistance and processes applications within statutory time frames.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Building Control Inspection Plan • Construction Products Regulations Policy implementation 	<p>1. IOS 450001 accreditation achieved</p> <p>2. Building Control:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOAC P5: Applications for Fire Safety Certificates (51 No.): 87% completed within 2 months. • BCAR applications migration completed to BCMS. • 77 Number of inspections completed (in accordance with Fire & BC Inspection plan), • Agents Webinar completed.

		<p>3. Fire Safety: Implement recommendations of Task force on Fire Safety in Ireland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare, adopt & implement Community Fire Safety Policy • Implement Fire Safety Inspection Policy • Process Dangerous Substance Licences & Vapour Recovery requirements <p>4. Civil Defence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of Civil Delivery HQ • Implementation of Civil Defence 2030 Strategy and MCC development plan. <p>5. Implement Road Safety Action plan targets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 No. of Construction Products Regulations inspections completed. <p>3. Fire Safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Fire Safety Plan implemented. • Completion of annual inspection plan completed with 103 inspections • 38 No. of pre-consultation meetings and conducted via Teams. • 10 No. RMCEI inspections completed <p>4. Civil Defence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New CD HQ fully operational and utilised as a control centre for Community Response. • 160 No. Community Response and public safety duties completed • Revised Training Plan delivered. <p>5. Actions (EDU 26 & 27) ongoing</p>
--	--	--	--

		<p>6. Major Emergency Management inter-agency operations through participation in appropriate training and exercises</p> <p>7. Implemented Community Fire Safety Programme</p>	<p>6. Major Emergency Management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous support delivered to NERSG and NERWG • MCC MEM plan updated. • Completion of MEM regional work plan <p>7. Community fire Safety messaging delivered via Local Radio & Press, Social Media and</p>
--	--	--	--

Library Services The Library, Museum, Heritage and Arts services of Monaghan County Council play a key role in the Council's commitment to promote economic, social and cultural benefit of our citizens. The main priorities and objectives for these services are outlined below, together with the performance standards to be met. Objectives will be delivered in compliance with Monaghan County Council's adopted governance processes & procedures.			
Supporting Strategy	High Level Goal	Progress in 2020	Performance Standards
Implement Monaghan County Library Development Plan 2019 – 2022.	3, 5, 6	<p>Construction contracts signed for new branches in Monaghan and Castleblayney. Construction companies on site in both locations</p> <p>Work commenced on the installation of My Open Library Service in Clones Branch</p> <p>Grant issued to address long-term remedial works required for Clones Branch to address leaks</p> <p>Workforce Plan completed and all vacancies filled</p> <p>Marketing and Promotion: The Library Website pages were updated and Social Media was used extensively to reach customers during lockdown periods.</p>	<p>NOAC L1: Number of library visits, number of items issued, number of active members</p> <p>NOAC L2: Cost of operating the Library Service</p> <p>LG Returns issued to LGMA</p>
Implement annual Right to Read Action Plan.	3, 5, 6	<p>Right to Read Champion Status achieved. Programme successfully migrated to online format for 2020, some of which will be retained and utilised in future blended delivery formats.</p>	<p>NOAC L1: Number of library visits, number of items issued, number of active members</p> <p>NOAC L2: Cost of operating the Library Service</p> <p>LG Returns issued to LGMA</p>
Implement Monaghan Culture & Creativity Strategy Monaghan 2018-2022.	3, 4, 5, 6	<p>A full Programme completed despite disruptions caused by Covid 19 restrictions. Funding increased for 2020. In all, programme funding totalling €201,750 was utilised under a number of headings, including Creative Monaghan (€96,750), Positive Ageing and Creative Wellbeing (€10,000), Job Stimulus Funding (€50,000),</p>	<p>Number of Creative Practitioners engaged in initiatives</p> <p>Audience Figures</p>

		Cruinniú na nÓg funding (€15,000) and Decade of Commemorations (€10,000), along with Council funding of €20,000.	Virtual Audience figures
Appoint a County Archivist.	3	No progress made in 2020. A Business case for the appointment of a County Archivist will be submitted for the consideration of the SMT in 2021	

Arts Office

Monaghan County Council through their Arts Section aims to champion, develop and invest in artistic expression to enrich peoples' lives. The Council works to nurture and create the conditions in which great art can happen, while at the same time ensuring that as many people as possible can engage with the arts and discover what art can do for them. Objectives will be delivered in compliance with Monaghan County Council's adopted governance processes & procedures.

Supporting Strategy	High Level Goal	Progress in 2020	Performance Standards
Implementation of the Co Arts Development Plan	5	<p><u>Value and support the work of artists</u>, and extend the range of opportunities for artists to develop their practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• open call for applications by professional artists to an Artists Support Scheme• Provide value added funding where artists have secured external funds for a project from bodies such as the Arts Council, Culture Ireland or other state bodies <p><u>Provision of appropriate arts infrastructure</u> spaces and places for artists to create and present their work is vital to the development of an environment where the arts can flourish.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the provision of adequate spaces for the creation, production and presentation of creative work for artists and communities• Partner with communities that have strong arts advocate groupings to develop an arts hub in locations across the county to address a range of arts development needs for people, spaces and places.	<p>21 Artists funded</p> <p>3 artists supported</p> <p>Artists become resident in old Clones "post Office"</p> <p>Patrick Kavanagh centre delivers Arts events in conjunction with Arts office</p>

		<p><u>Support venues, festivals and organisations</u> providing high-quality arts experiences for all</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and develop good practice in audience development and public engagement • Encourage arts organisations to commission new work, to experiment with co-productions and to engage directly with artists in the development of their annual programmes • Ensure that investment is strategic and sustainable <p><u>Opportunities Children and Young People</u> to access and participate in the arts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase opportunities for engagement in the arts • strategic view in planning for and investing in the arts for children and young people • strategic partnership with relevant local agencies for jointly funded initiatives to extend and expand arts outreach 	<p><u>Arts Partnership scheme</u> awarded 10 Grants of €70K under these objectives.</p> <p><u>3 M.O.U.</u> supported with Arts Organisations in seeking increased Arts Council funding</p> <p>Continued strategic alliance between Cavan CC & CMETB in rolling out <u>Music Generation</u> €30K annually</p> <p>Partnership funding and delivery of training and support projects under <u>Local Arts In Education Partnership</u> €9K invested</p> <p><u>Creative Monaghan</u> successful in supporting this objective.</p>
--	--	--	--

Heritage

In its Corporate Plan, Monaghan County Council committed to promoting and protecting a clean, safe environment in a manner which is viable and sustainable. The Council's Heritage Office plays a key role in this area and in the local implementation of the National Heritage Plan and National Biodiversity Plan. The Heritage section's priorities and objectives are outlined below, together with the performance standards to be met. Objectives will be delivered in compliance with Monaghan County Council's adopted governance processes & procedures.

Supporting Strategy	High Level Goal	Progress in 2020	Performance Standards
Implement Monaghan Heritage and Biodiversity Strategic Plan 2020-2025	3, 5, 6	<p>Monaghan Biodiversity & Heritage Strategic Plan 2020-2025 adopted by MCC, November 2020. Contains thirteen priority themes and <i>Vision for 2025 - the role of heritage and biodiversity for climate change mitigation and adaptation, sustainable communities, functioning ecosystems, health and wellbeing is generally accepted in the county and embedded in the activities of Monaghan County Council.</i></p> <p><i>Theme – Historic graveyards & church ruins.</i> Conservation Plans for historic graveyards finalised. 3 workshops held with communities. Drafts edited and finalised.</p> <p><i>Theme - Indigenous knowledge & traditions.</i> County Holy Well survey. Public call for submissions.</p> <p><i>Theme – Climate Change Mitigation & Adaptation.</i> County Monaghan Wetlands Action Plan. Scoping and project methodology completed for 710 sites on Monaghan wetland database.</p> <p>Biodiversity expertise increased on Monaghan Heritage Forum.</p>	<p>Draft presented to SPC in March, final adoption in November 2020.</p> <p>Funding awarded from Heritage Council for implementation of annual work programme.</p> <p>ICOMOS, Venice & Burra Charters. James Semple Kerrs <i>The Conservation Plan (2013)</i></p> <p>Phase 1 successfully complete.</p> <p>Funding awarded from DHLGH. Ramsar RAWES.</p> <p>Regular meetings held in 2020.</p>
Implement the Culture & Creativity Strategy Monaghan 2018-2022	3, 5, 6	Rossmore Mausoleum – Inscribed Histories.	Architectural and historical reports and surveys completed to support conservation and interpretation.

		Advising artist on bogs and Sliabh Beagh, ongoing through Nature project. Video and exhibition online gallery.	Enabling creativity through exploration of local habitats.
Pollinator Plan Guidelines for Local Authorities	1, 5, 12	Gardening for Biodiversity publications produced in conjunction with the Local Authority Heritage Officers Network. Series of radio adverts issued on Northern Sound.	Distributed online and by post to members of the public.
Collaborative action for the Natura Network Interreg V project	1, 5, 12	<p>Collaboration – steering group, work package meetings, government meetings.</p> <p>1200 peat dams installed on section of blanket bog to reinstate hydrological conditions to support this habitat type.</p> <p>Nest protection activities to support Hen Harrier breeding.</p> <p>Planning for fire-risk management commenced.</p> <p>Invasive species removal</p>	<p>6 steering group. 6 WP meetings. Bi-annual north-south government departments.</p> <p>Procurement standards, Interreg rules and reporting.</p> <p>NPWS & NIEA best practice guidance.</p> <p>Species Action Plan for Hen Harrier.</p> <p>Detailed specifications for procurement of services, issued on e-tenders.</p> <p>Detailed mapping and specifications for removal agreed, tender issued on e-tenders.</p>

Museum			
Supporting Strategy	High Level Goal	Progress in 2020	Performance Standards
Implement Peace Campus Programme Plan.	3, 4, 5, 6, 7	<p>Project relating to key themes in the PC Programme Plan have been progressed to funding application stage under; Partition, Immigration/Emigration and Decade of Centenaries.</p> <p>The museum are working with their cross border partners in the Ulster Scots Agency to carry out a project recording the impact of partition on the Ulster Scots community in Monaghan</p>	<p>Funding sourced</p> <p>Project progressed in 2021</p> <p>Number of contributors to project</p> <p>Cross border input from project participants.</p>
Implement the Monaghan Culture & Creativity Strategy Monaghan 2018-2022.	3, 5, 6	<p>Monaghan Mural Project progressed in partnership with the Patrick Kavanagh Centre</p> <p>Virtual Rossmore learning projected progressed using the Minecraft computer platform</p> <p>Cross border project reflecting the impact of partition developed. Project partners in Fermanagh confirmed.</p> <p>Bordering Realities 2021 - 2023 project developed and application for funding submitted.</p>	<p>3 murals completed in 2021</p> <p>Project launched</p> <p>Number of schools that take part</p> <p>Number of cross border project partners</p> <p>Funding achieved</p> <p>Project elements progressed in 2021</p>

Corporate Assets

In its Corporate Plan, Monaghan County Council is committed to promoting and protecting a clean safe environment in a manner which is viable and sustainable. The Council seeks to develop and manage County Monaghan's built assets to best utilise and promote economic, social and cultural benefits. The Council seeks to develop Capital Projects in line with the strategic objectives of the Council and to provide high quality facilities for all users. The Council seeks to bring a high level of consistency of approach to the procurement, management and delivery of projects across the organisation in line with the Public Spending Code and the improved procurement structures embedded into the organisation. The specific priorities and objectives for the Corporate Assets Section are outlined below, together with the performance standards to be met. Objectives will be delivered in compliance with Monaghan County Council's adopted governance processes & procedures.

Supporting Strategy	High Level Goal	Progress in 2020	Performance Standards
Asset management of Public Lighting & continued optimisation of energy efficiency.	7, 12	Have reached 90% LED retrofit as at end Dec 2020. Have reduced PL energy consumption by 26% in 2020	NOAC E5 - Energy efficiency performance performance indicators report: A. The cumulative % of energy savings achieved by 31/12/2020 relative to baseline year (2009) Achieve Public sector Energy targets
Continue to progress Public Sector energy efficiency target.	7, 12	Have achieved 37.11% energy improvement as at end 2019 (reported in 2020), one year ahead of the 2020 deadline.	NOAC E5 - Energy efficiency performance performance indicators report: A. The cumulative % of energy savings achieved by 31/12/2020 relative to baseline year (2009). Achieve Public sector Energy targets.
Delivery of Capital Programme.	7, 12	Peace Campus – Construction Commenced Office Refurbishment to 1 Dublin St. – Completed and Open	Public Spending Code. MCC Procurement Governance and Guidelines

Application of Monaghan County Council Accessible procurement strategy to all capital projects.		Dublin Street & Roosky Land – Urban Regeneration – Progressed through Detailed Design Castleblayney Market Square Regeneration – Gate Lodge 2 Library & Public Realm – Progressed through Procurement & Construction has commenced 4/5 Mill Street – Emergency Stabilisation Works – Emergency Stabilisation Works commenced.	Effective Project Management Systems and Governance. Manage project Costs and Risk mitigations. Delivery of building projects
Coordinate the management of the Council's property portfolio & ensure modern facilities for the delivery of services.	7, 9	Maintain and update Property Interest Register. 1737 assets in PIR at end of 2020. Renovation works completed on Monaghan Leisure Centre. New office facilities opened at 1 Dublin Street. Planning and Tourism sections relocated from port-a-cabins.	Property Interest Register in place to ensure a comprehensive inventory of property currently owned by M.C.C is effectively managed by Sections. Acquisition & Disposals to be recorded on PIR system. Disposals in line with Section 183 of L.G. Act.

Support Services

The delivery of the front-line services to the public is underpinned and supported by the services provided internally by the Corporate, Health & Safety, Finance, Human Resources and Information Systems departments of the Council. A summary of the priorities, strategies and performance standards of each of these support sections is set out below. Objectives will be delivered in compliance with Monaghan County Council's adopted governance processes & procedures.

Corporate Services			
Supporting Strategy	High Level Goal	Progress in 2020	Performance Standards
<p>To ensure democratic accountability and effective governance.</p> <p>Provide robust business management, risk management, audit and corporate governance structures and systems in compliance with statutory obligations.</p>	2, 3, 9, 11	<p>11 Co Co Meetings held 12 CPG meetings held</p> <p>18 Donation Statements submitted by 31/01/2020 deadline 18 Annual Declaration statements submitted by end of February 2020 deadline 75 Annual Declaration statements from Relevant staff submitted by end of February 2020 deadline</p> <p>4 Audit Committee meetings held</p> <p>Annual Report adopted by June 2021 Annual Service Delivery Plan adopted by 31 March 2021 Monthly Management Report submitted to Council NOAC returns submitted by specified date NOAC report reviewed and analysed Risk registers reviewed January, April, November 2020</p>	<p>Agenda business transacted effectively, follow-up actions implemented.</p> <p>Up-to-date and complete Ethics Register in place by 28/02/2021</p> <p>2020 Internal Audit Plan delivered 2020 Audit Committee work plan delivered Training undertaken by staff and Audit Committee</p> <p>All statutory deadlines met and Reports submitted to elected members for adoption</p> <p>Quarterly reports to SMT and Audit Committee</p>

<p>Manage the Annual Register of Electors. Organise Local Elections and Election Count.</p> <p>To promote and deliver accessible information on voter participation.</p>	3	<p>Up-to-date register published in accordance with statutory dates</p> <p>Promote 'Your Vote Your Voice'. Campaigns promoted via Social Media, Website and local Newspapers</p>	<p>Publish up-to-date register</p> <p>No. of campaigns promoted through social media platforms and local print</p>
<p>To ensure compliance with legislative and statutory obligations in service delivery.</p>	3, 9	<p>Developed and supported the council implementing a suite of policies and procedures to achieve compliance and demonstrate accountability under GDPR</p> <p>Delivered training on Section 40 Policy to Elected Members and awareness raising and training on GDPR and Data Protection to all staff</p> <p>Child Safeguarding Awareness training delivered to staff in compliance with Children's First Act 2015</p> <p>Ensure compliance with the Official Languages Act 2003</p>	<p>Having appropriate policies, procedures and protocols in place to demonstrate that Monaghan County Council is achieving compliance with data protection legislation.</p> <p>Delivering awareness training to all staff and Elected Members to ensure compliance with GDPR and data protection</p> <p>MCC Safeguarding Statement and Policy & Procedures in place</p> <p>Scéim na Gaeilge actions for 2020 implemented.</p>
<p>Deliver quality inclusive services to our customers that reflects the diversity of our communities</p>	3	<p>Communications Officer appointed Draft Communications Strategy prepared</p> <p>90% of services catalogued in National Catalogue of Services Project. MCC point of contact to continue to liaise with National Project Board Phase 2 of project underway</p>	<p>Communications Strategy approved and circulated</p> <p>Customer Care Plan updated</p> <p>Progress roll out of National Catalogue of Services Project</p>

Enable the public to gain access to records held by the Council to the greatest extent possible consistent with the right to privacy and the public interest.	3	<p>Processed 7 'Data Subject Access' requests under GDPR in a fair and timely manner</p> <p>61 FOI requests received 06 AIE requests received No Protected Disclosures received</p>	<p>Ensuring compliance of the rights of individuals under GDPR and Data Protection</p> <p>Respond to information requests, complaints and protected disclosures in line with statutory requirements</p>
---	---	---	---

Finance			
Supporting Strategy	High Level Goal	Progress in 2020	Performance Standards
Compliance with Statutory Regulations.	9	All submissions are completed on time	All performance standards are met
Operate efficiently to support all Council functions/ Members of the public/ Local businesses.	2, 3, 6, 9	Revenue collections monitored and collection rates maintained or improved year on year. New LA customer App introduced during 2020 which facilitates easy payment of invoices and review of balance etc for the customer. Rates Waiver in 2020 also contributed to high rates collection rates in 2020.	Collection rates are not yet available however rates are expected to be in line with prior years.
Monitor and strive to continuously improve Financial Management.	9	Financial reports prepared and issued regularly especially due to Covid 19 restrictions monitoring of budget requirements. Large capital project budgets are reviewed regularly and funding requirements are considered.	Current capital projects all fully funded. Forecasts are reviewed and plans put in place in advance where necessary.
Demonstrate effective Asset Management.	9	FAR vs. ihouse reconciliations completed quarterly. FAR completed at year end.	All reconciling items are adjusted or corrected where necessary.
Continuously review and improve Financial Administration function.	9	Regular capital balance reviews and reconciliations conducted. All payroll and suppliers are paid promptly and accurately.	

Human Resources

In its Corporate Plan, Monaghan County Council committed to ensuring that there is an appropriately resourced, skilled and motivated workforce to meet the priorities and objectives of the organisation. The HR section has the lead role in delivering on the Council's commitments in this area. The 2021 service delivery plan for HR is set out below. Objectives will be delivered in compliance with Monaghan County Council's adopted governance processes & procedures.

Supporting Strategy	High Level Goal	Progress in 2020	Performance Standards
Plan and deliver our Organisation's Workforce requirements.	3, 10	<p>Develop a Workforce that is equipped with the skills and competencies to meet the challenges of our evolving environment</p> <p>Completed 'Our People Strategy' document in draft form.</p> <p>Signed up to new Makodata HR Analytics software to assist in continuous workforce planning for the organization.</p> <p>Legislation and statutory obligations</p>	<p>381.39 WTE at 31/12/2020</p> <p>Presented to MT. Objectives being progressed</p> <p>Business continuity plan drafted for the organisation in light of COVID-19.</p> <p>Critical training needs were met.</p> <p>Compliance with legal and statutory obligations and Data Protection regulations. Policies/procedures communicated to all staff in HR</p>
Be an employer of Choice.	3, 10	<p>Suitable candidates are recruited in timely fashion, in compliance with DECLG sanction/guidelines.</p> <p>Promote the career opportunities and the potential for development and progression offered by working in the organisation.</p> <p>Enhance recruitment and selection processes by utilizing the full range of marketing and communication channels</p>	<p>12 recruitment campaigns – 355 applications processed. 52 applicants were deemed qualified and placed on panel.</p> <p>16 posts were offered and as at 31st December 2020, 10 staff were appointed</p> <p>PDP's agreed, and mid-year and end year reviews completed.</p>

		to promote recruitment campaigns while also ensuring ease of access through technology.	<p>Laserfiche Project Files cleansing completed. Back scanning of files commenced. Superannuation Data transfer completed. CE Orders Automated. Increment Forms Automated. Project Plan Laserfiche working group established in HR to progress further automated processes.</p> <p>Signed up to Makodata HR analytics software to assist in decision making.</p>
Create culture of continuous learning and development.	3, 10	Create a Training & Development Programme in line with corporate priorities and career development.	<p>31 in house courses were delivered to staff including 15 relevant in-house Health and Safety Courses during 2020.</p> <p>Courses of Further Education Nineteen staff members were approved assistance for courses of further education.</p> <p>Six staff members were grant funded.</p>
Empower and enable our managers and supervisors.	10	<p>Develop and update policies, procedures and practices that underpin and support effective people management.</p> <p>Support newly appointed team leaders in people management.</p>	<p>New Policies/Protocols developed during 2020. Protocol for the outsourcing of unplanned/unforeseen works – agreed SIPTU 06/20.</p>

		Roll-out mentoring, support and induction of new employees and newly promoted staff.	<p>New Parents Leave – Adopted by MT 11/2020.</p> <p>PMDS implemented and monitored.</p> <p>Monitor of sick leave to reduce absenteeism. Report on % of working days lost through sick leave. Reduced sick leave in 2020 and achieved less than the 3.5% national requirement.</p> <p>Successful outputs from section business plans.</p> <p>Satisfactory integration and monitoring progress of new staff.</p>
Promote positive employee relations and engagement.	10	<p>Maintain collaborative employee relations with unions and staff representatives.</p> <p>Contribution from sections to quarterly newsletters on events and achievements.</p>	<p>Regular Union meetings were held during 2020.</p> <p>Staff and organisation recognition.</p>
Create a fair, supportive and healthy working environment.	10	<p>Implement Dignity at Work Policy.</p> <p>Promotion of employee assistance programme, Health and Wellbeing events. Range of Family friendly initiatives offered</p> <p>Improve the quality and diversity of employment.</p>	<p>Safe, secure working environment, differences respected, staff valued.</p> <p>New Employee Assistance Programme and Wellbeing APP procured for staff, fire fighters and elected members and their families.</p> <p>Flu Vaccinations offered</p>

			<p>Remote working hybrid rotas facilitated throughout organisation.</p> <p>Work-life balance achieved.</p> <p>Raised awareness of equality and diversity, equal treatment for all.</p>
--	--	--	--

Health & Safety Unit			
Supporting Strategy	High Level Goal	Progress in 2020	Performance Standards
Manage and implement the Health and Safety Management System (HSMS) to ensure the safety, health and welfare of employees and others that could be affected by Monaghan County Council's operations by being compliant with legislation, codes of practice and best practice.	10	<p>2020 Health and Safety Unit Operational Plan completed for 2020 successfully.</p> <p>Corporate Safety Statement (CSS) in place and compliant.</p> <p>HSMS kept current throughout 2020</p> <p>HSP40 Temporary Traffic Management Procedure developed and issued.</p> <p>H&S Unit Corporate Risk Register updated quarterly in 2020.</p> <p>12 x Health and Safety Unit Monthly Reports produced on time.</p> <p>2019 Annual Health and Safety Unit Report developed and approved by DOS.</p> <p>Health and Safety Intranet kept updated and a new layout developed in 2020 for easier access for users.</p> <p>2 x electronic Health and Safety Newsletters completed.</p> <p>22 x Safety Briefings (Toolbox Talks) issued.</p>	<p>2020 Health and Safety Unit Operational Plan in place.</p> <p>Corporate Safety Statement (CSS) in place that is compliant.</p> <p>HSMS up-to-date.</p> <p>HSP40 Temporary Traffic Management Procedure updated in line with new Chpt 8.</p> <p>Main the H&S Unit Corporate Risk Register.</p> <p>12 x Health and Safety Unit Monthly Reports produced.</p> <p>2019 Annual Health and Safety Unit Report produced.</p> <p>Health and Safety Intranet populated with current and relevant safety, health and welfare information.</p> <p>2 x electronic Health and Safety Newsletters.</p> <p>4 x Toolbox Talks.</p>

		<p>1 x Safety Committee Meetings took place due to COVID-19 restrictions.</p> <p>European Health and Safety Week successfully delivered.</p> <p>Consultation and assistance provided to HR with Health and Safety related training throughout 2020.</p> <p>Advice and support provided and in particular with regard to COVID-19 which took a huge demand on the H&S Unit.</p> <p>Review of HSMS and CSS completed.</p> <p>96 x Hazard and Risk Assessments conducted in 2020.</p> <p>Incident register completed for 2020.</p> <p>Audit and Inspection Programme completed for Operational Plan 2020 with main focus moved to COVID-19 inspections</p>	<p>4 x Safety Committee Meetings.</p> <p>Activities scheduled for European Health and Safety Week.</p> <p>Consultation and assistance provided to HR with Health and Safety related training.</p> <p>Advice and support provided, to seek to reduce, minimise or eliminate occupational risk and accidental loss.</p> <p>Review of HSMS (including CSS Management Review) to identify gaps or change required with control measures implemented where identified.</p> <p>Hazard and Risk Assessments conducted as required.</p> <p>Investigations and reports conducted as required. Assistance and cooperation provided to relevant statutory agencies.</p> <p>Audit and Inspection Programme 2020 conducted as per Operational Plan 2020.</p>
--	--	---	---

ICT

In its Corporate Plan, Monaghan County Council has committed to delivering an efficient, effective and accessible service through advancing information systems and technology and promoting a culture of innovation. The Information Systems and Innovation department has the lead role in delivering on the Council's commitments in this area. The 2021 service delivery plan for this department is set out below. Objectives will be delivered in compliance with Monaghan County Council's adopted governance processes & procedures.

Supporting Strategy	High Level Goal	Progress in 2020	Performance Standards
Provide a modern, secure, green and accessible ICT infrastructure to enable efficient and reliable service delivery.	1, 3, 11	<p>Continued to manage, maintain, upgrade and secure all ICT infrastructure and services including hyperconverged server infrastructure, cloud services, switches, routers, firewalls, telephony systems, PCs, laptops, mobile devices, and wide area network links</p> <p>Carried out disaster recovery testing for critical services Developed business continuity plan</p> <p>Piloted SD-WAN wide area network solution</p>	<p>NOAC indicator – Overall cost of ICT provision per WTE</p> <p>NOAC indicator – Cost of ICT provision as a proportion of revenue expenditure</p> <p>All Servers, PCs and Laptops running supported, licensed Operating Systems</p>
Lead innovation, and develop and support initiatives through collaboration at local, regional, national and EU level.	3, 11	<p>Worked as a pilot site along with the LGMA, Courts Service and Department of Agriculture to assist EY develop a national public sector innovation strategy on behalf of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform</p> <p>Participated on national webinars to help promote the national public sector innovation strategy</p> <p>Prepared applications for submission to Our Public Service 2020 Innovation Fund and achieved success with an application for €29,900 to develop a virtual reality house tour and inspection app</p> <p>Supported and promoted national public service innovation week, 19th – 23rd October, and ran a series of live virtual events locally during the week</p>	<p>No. of ideas submitted through local innovation ideas form</p> <p>Attendance at national innovation public sector network events</p> <p>Success with OPS Innovation Fund</p> <p>Level of participation in locally run public service innovation week events</p> <p>No. visits to innovation hub</p>

		<p>Secured a small in-house innovation fund and ran a local innovation competition</p> <p>Developed an innovation hub on Staff Portal</p> <p>Developed an online form for submission of innovative ideas</p> <p>Attended online national public sector innovation network events</p>	
Upgrade and Implement new and emerging software and systems where appropriate, including AI and Robotics, while keeping in mind accessibility, security, privacy and information management requirements.	3, 11	<p>Upgraded iPlan, iReg, iHouse, Museum Adlib, National Building Control System and Laserfiche applications</p> <p>Continued to transform manual paper-based processes in Planning, HR and Roads sections using Laserfiche</p> <p>Implemented 360-degree virtual reality tour and voice recognition enabled house inspection app</p> <p>Piloted artificial intelligence virtual assistant for Re-Start Grant</p> <p>Implemented planning information dashboard and roads defects dashboard using GIS business intelligence software</p>	<p>Applications running on latest / latest minus 1 versions</p> <p>No. of processes automated using Laserfiche</p>
Implement and maintain high quality GIS systems and open data technologies.	3, 11	<p>Implemented GIS solution for Community Call and Library Home Delivery Service</p> <p>Provided mapping data to third parties</p> <p>Continued to support and maintain GIS systems</p>	<p>Legacy GIS system replaced with new IMGS solution</p> <p>New mapping format implemented</p> <p>Open data sets published</p>
Provide broadband, wi-fi facilities and online services to staff, libraries and the community.	3, 4, 6, 7, 11	Continued to facilitate the rollout of the National Broadband Plan across the county - wireless broadband	<p>No. of BCPs live</p> <p>No. public Wi-Fi access points</p>

		<p>services delivered to nine broadband connection points (BCPs)</p> <p>Continued to support and maintain public Wi-Fi in libraries, town centres and play parks</p> <p>Continued to support corporate Wi-Fi in council offices</p> <p>Procured a service provider and initiated roll-out of Wifi4EU scheme</p> <p>Developed a draft digital strategy for county Monaghan</p> <p>Continued to support library facilities</p> <p>Implemented Laserfiche Online Forms Portal and developed online application forms for citizens to safely access services during lockdowns including business Re-Start Grants and Top-Ups, Mortgage Payment Breaks, COVID-19 Emergencies Fund, and Community Grants.</p> <p>Continued to develop www.monaghan.ie website</p>	<p>No. of online forms available for service applications</p> <p>NOAC indicator – No. of visits to website</p> <p>Improved bandwidth and reliability</p>
Implement and promote remote working technologies including mobile devices and apps, virtual teams, conferencing facilities.	3, 4, 7, 11	<p>Deployed laptops to all office-based users</p> <p>Implemented laptop docking stations to facilitate portability between office and remote working</p> <p>Rolled-out remote access solutions for staff to work from home</p> <p>Piloted Windows Virtual Desktop</p> <p>Implemented multi-factor authentication for remote access</p>	<p>No. staff & councillors trained in Office 365</p> <p>Process efficiencies and cost savings</p> <p>No. users registered for Reach employee app</p> <p>Average no. views per Reach post</p>

		<p>Installed video conferencing facilities in conference room and council meeting rooms</p> <p>Provided training for Microsoft/Office 365 including MS Teams to staff and councillors</p> <p>Setup All Staff text alert service</p> <p>Piloted Reach Employee App and initiated roll-out to all staff</p>	
Provide high quality technical support to all our customers.	3, 11	<p>Continued to provide high quality technical support</p> <p>Procured new service desk and asset management system</p>	<p>No. of Support Calls logged / resolved</p> <p>Average time taken to respond to and to resolve support requests</p>



COMHAIRLE CONTAE MHUINEACHÁIN TUARASCÁIL BHLIANTÚIL 2020

MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2020