



Chief Executive's Report

March 2017

To An Cathaoirleach & Each Member of Wexford County Council:

1.Economic Development and Planning & Special Projects:

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UNIT

Retail Ireland Excellence Retreat: Wexford County Council will be showcasing retail opportunities and demonstrating reasons why growing retailers should invest in County Wexford by taking part in the Town & City Investment Village, Retail Excellence Retreat on 9th and 10th May at Croke Park, Dublin.

Over seven hundred leading retailers will attend the event with a stellar line up of interesting speakers, including a focus on Town Revival. The event will be attended by staff from the Economic Development Unit as well as colleagues from the Chambers of Commerce.

Launch of FLAG Southeast Strategy: FLAG Southeast and Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) hosted the official launch of the FLAG Southeast area Strategy and funding programme, under Union Priority 4 of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund at the Hook Lighthouse on morning of Wednesday, March 1st 2017. The Strategy was launched by Mr. Liam Griffin, Chairman of The South East Action Plan for Jobs Group. The Strategy builds on consultation and input from stakeholders within the coastal communities of counties Wicklow, Wexford and Waterford setting out the key priorities for the sustainable development of fisheries and aquaculture dependant areas within the region.

FLAG Southeast: First Call for Projects: The closing date for the first call for projects of 2017 is the 15th of March 2017.

In particular, the funding programme compliments other EMFF and EU funded programmes and forms part of an overall strategy aimed at supported implementation of the objectives of the common fisheries policy, while maintaining the economic and social prosperity of coastal areas.

Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG) Southeast, invites applications for grant aid under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund Operational Programme 2014-2020, co-funded by the European Union and Irish Government.

Project proposals must be consistent with the FLAG Local Development Strategy for the FLAG Southeast area and address one or more of the following themes:

- Adding value to fishery and aquaculture products
- Creating/maintaining jobs in coastal areas
- Promoting innovation in fisheries and aquaculture
- Supporting diversification within coastal communities
- Lifelong learning, attracting young people into fisheries, aquaculture, and marine related careers and activities
- Promoting social well-being and cultural heritage in fisheries and aquaculture areas
- Promoting best environmental practices

- Strengthening the role and governance of fisheries communities in local development.

Applicants should consult the FLAG Southeast strategy, see www.bim.ie for the specific priorities for the area. It is also highly recommended that projects are discussed in advance with your local BIM FLAG Coordinator, Mr. John Hickey.

It is anticipated that project evaluations will be carried out by the FLAGs on a quarterly basis, however budgetary constraints may mean that available funds are limited for evaluations held later in the year.

To guarantee inclusion in the first scheduled evaluation, applications must be received no later than **5.00 p.m. on the 15th of March 2017.**

This programme operates on an open call basis and will remain open to applications until otherwise advertised on www.bim.ie and the projected FLAG website.

TOURISM TEAM

National Tourism Conference 29th / 30th March Enniscorthy: The CCMA and LGMA are hosting a National Tourism Conference - **Collaborate Locally to Compete Globally: Local Authorities Supporting Tourism** in the Riverside Park Hotel, Enniscorthy on 29th/30th March where Minister Patrick O'Donovan will launch all 31 Authorities' Draft Statements of Strategy 2017-2022. The speakers include Paul Kelly, CEO Fáilte Ireland; Prof. Jim Deegan, University of Limerick; ray Coyle, CEO Tayto Park; Simon Kay, Center Parcs.

A Conference Dinner will be held on 29th March, 2017. This event is being sponsored by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport. If any member is interested in attending, please book your place with Mary O'Shaughnessy by emailing moshaugh@lgma.ie. Each county has been asked to compile their own Draft Statement of Strategy which will align with the LECP and existing Local Authority policy.

Pilot Review of Heritage Towns: Wexford Town has been selected as part of a pilot review of Heritage Towns under the Ireland's Ancient East branding along with Athy and Leighlinbridge, Carlow. This will take place in the coming months and will mean that all signage and information will be updated in the new branding.

Ireland's Ancient East - Orientation Signage: Fáilte Ireland have requested information on sites for their next phase of orientation signage (large wheels which are currently hosted at 12 major Tourism sites in the county including Ferns Castle, the INHP, Dunbrody Famine Ship and Wells House) under Ireland's Ancient East Phase 2. Any sites considered appropriate should be forwarded to the tourism section for review.

Upcoming Visit Wexford Stands – Balmoral Show, Bloom, RDS Horse Show: Visit Wexford have hosted a stand at the Holiday World Show in January of this year and will host a stand at the Balmoral Show in Belfast, Antrim in May, Bloom in the Park in the Phoenix Park; and the RDS Horse Show in August.

The group held a strategy meeting on the 15th February in Enniscorthy which will inform the future direction of the group.

Overseas Marketing programme with both Irish Ferries and Stena Line for 2017: Wexford County Council have agreed to take part in a Co-operative Overseas Marketing programme with both Irish Ferries and Stena Line for 2017 in association with Kilkenny, Waterford County Councils, Tourism Ireland; and Rosslare Europort. The campaign will encourage UK consumers to consider travelling to Ireland via Rosslare Europort. In 2016, 9million UK consumers were reached with the Irish Ferries Co-operative Campaign and it is hoped to increase this in 2017.

SouthEastIreland.com: Wexford County Council supported South East landing site www.southeastireland.com will go live in March 2017 and will include information on Wexford, Kilkenny and Waterford and will direct visitors to each county's specific website. This is to support Wexford County Councils involvement in the Tourism Ireland UK Market book which will go to all tour operators and industry personnel in the UK.

LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE (LEO) TEAM

Local Enterprise Week - 6th to 10th March: LEO Wexford, along with the 31 LEOs throughout the county, will run a series of business and enterprise events on the week of the 6th to 10th of March entitled Local Enterprise Week.

Tuesday 7th March: 10am - 4pm | 2 degree Camp: Tackling Climate Change through Entrepreneurship (Wexford County Council, Carricklawn, Wexford)

Wednesday 8th March: 9am - 5pm | [Online Marketing Clinic](#) (Wexford County Council, Carricklawn, Wexford)

1pm - 5pm | [Introduction to Search Engine Optimisation](#) (Wexford County Council, Carricklawn, Wexford)

Thursday 9th March: 12pm - 3pm | Exporters' Lunchtime Seminar in conjunction with Bank of Ireland and Enterprise Ireland (Talbot Hotel, Wexford Town)

1.30pm - 5.30pm | [Twitter for Business](#) (Wexford Town Library)

6pm - 9pm | International Women's Day Event - "Be Bold for Change" (Greenacres, Selskar, Wexford Town)

Friday 10th March: 3pm - 5pm | County Final - [National Enterprise Awards](#) (Wexford County Council Chamber)

The South East Creative Corridor: This project is an initiative of Local Enterprise Offices across 6 counties; Wicklow, Wexford, Waterford, Kilkenny, Carlow and Tipperary. The aim is to create a vibrant, viable and growing creative audio visual industry throughout the region. This project is funded under the Regional Action Plan for Jobs and supports entrepreneurs and businesses with a growth mind-set who are interested in developing their business to the next level, increasing employment and examining the possibilities of trading internationally.

In Wexford we have 13 businesses involved in the project availing of the following project activities:

- 2 Regional Bootcamps and a final Programme Summit
- 4 half-day workshops
- Mentoring
- 3 Accountability peer board meetings

Applicants can also complete for a regional fund of €100,000. The awards range from between €5,000 and €10,000 which the promoters can use for taking on a new employee or expenditure in business development such as purchase of equipment, marketing and promotion. The deadline for applications is the 30th March 2017.

The South East Micro Food Export Initiative: This project is a joint initiative of LEO's in counties Tipperary, Wexford, Carlow, Kilkenny and Waterford. The project is also funded under the Regional Action Plan for Jobs and supports food businesses in explore export opportunities.

The initiative is being launched in Wexford in the Dunbrody House on Tuesday 28th February and Minister Breen will be in attendance. Speakers at the event include Mary Morrissey, Bord Bia, CEO, Seery's Bakery, Rita Guinan, LEO Tipperary and Kevin Dundon.

Participants on this programme will receive intensive support following the selection process through a combination of workshops, mentoring, market intelligence supported by Bord Bia/Enterprise Ireland and a product adjustment funding of €2,500 per company to invest in product development/re-development, packaging and labelling. A market study visit will also be incorporated into the programme.

BUCANIER –An INTEREGG funded project: LEO Wexford, on behalf of Wexford County Council, has successfully applied for funding, along with 5 project partners, to the European Regional Development Fund 2014 – 2020 Ireland Wales Programme for a programme entitled BUCANIER.

BUCANIER, an acronym for Building Clusters and Networks in Innovation Enterprise and Research, will be a six partner project. The Welsh partners are Pembrokeshire County Council, Carmarthenshire County Council, the Institute of Life Science at Swansea University; the Irish Partners are the Institute of Technology Carlow, Wexford County Council, and Bord Iascaigh Mhara (Irish Sea Fisheries Board).

The BUCANIER project will run for 3 years and has secured programme funding of €2.3 million amongst the six project partners. The programme will commence in March 2017.

BUCANIER will build on the positive legacy of the INSPIRE Project, which was a successful collaborative project that Pembrokeshire County Council and the Institute of Technology Carlow in Ireland ran in the previous Ireland Wales programme.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Min Ryan Park, Wexford: The Park has obtained Part 8 Planning in April, 2016 based on a preliminary design by Wexford County Council. Consultants Brady Shipman Martin have been appointed to prepare a detailed design and prepare contract documents for the Works Tender. Design work has commenced with preliminary options under review.

Wexford Quay: Architects Scott Tallon Walker are continuing work on the preparation of an Economic and Spatial Implementation Plan. Traffic surveys have been completed and consultations held with various parties. A Preliminary Report will be prepared for consideration by Wexford County Council, and further consultation will be held.

Templeshannon Regeneration, Enniscorthy: A draft strategy plan has been prepared and is currently being reviewed by Wexford County Council. Further meetings with Department Heads will be held in the coming week.

Enniscorthy Business Park, Killagoley: Tenders for consultants have been received and are currently being assessed. A topographical survey has been completed. The appointed consultants will prepare a masterplan for the development of this 14.5 ha site.

New Ross Business Park: A document is being prepared to obtain Expressions of Interest from development partners for the construction of an advanced factory unit.

Enniscorthy Tourism Strategy: The preparation of a tender document for the procurement of consultants to provide assistance in the preparation of a Tourism Strategy for Enniscorthy is ongoing. The consultants will assist in the preparation of an application to Fáilte Ireland for funding of a Tourism Strategy, as well as identifying capital works that will create a tourism experience for the town.

Wexford Arts Centre: An application for funding from the Department of Arts, Heritage, Culture and the Gaeltacht was submitted in October, 2016. The Department has announced funding of €1m for the Wexford Arts Centre. A review of the existing design will be carried out in light of the available funding.

Gorey Market House: A project has been initiated to determine and procure the development of the Market House. This will involve the invitation of Expressions of Interest from suitable candidates to make proposals in line with the Council's objectives for the building, and in consideration of its status as a protected structure.

PLANNING

Planning Applications:

No. of valid applications received up to 24/02/2017 166

Building Control:

Commencement Notices: *A total of 64 valid commencement notices have been submitted up to the end of February, 2017 on the BCMS. A breakdown of the submitted commencement notices per Municipal District is below:-*

Wexford	21	Gorey	19
Enniscorthy	17	New Ross	7

Works Completed:

Woodview, Castlebridge: Works are now completed in this development. As the works are complete this development is now ready to proceed to the taking in charge process.

Works in Progress:

Slaney Woods: Works are to be completed in early March 2017.

Branogue Park, Riverchapel: Remedial works are being undertaken by the developer.

Coill Aoibhinn: Remedial works are being undertaken to bring the estate up to standard for Taking in Charge.

Wayleave: A Wayleave application is being compiled for Irish Rail. Site investigation works with Irish Water for approval.

Derelict Sites and Dangerous Structures:

No. of cases under the Derelict Sites Act 1990

Notices under Section 8(2) Intention to Place Site on Derelict Site Register	4
Notices under Section 8(7) Place Site on Derelict Site Register (Section 8(4))	0
No. Removed from Register	1
Notices Issued under Sanitary Services Act 1964	0

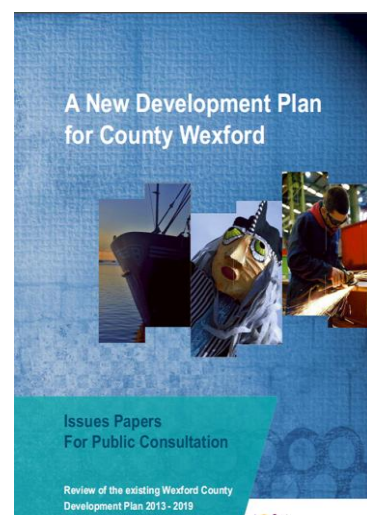
Planning Enforcement:

➤ Cases Opened	17
➤ Live Cases	482
➤ Cases Closed	19

Draft Gorey Town and Environs Local Area Plan 2017-2023: The Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft LAP were placed on public display on Wednesday, 1st February 2017. Written submissions or observations can be made until 4pm on Thursday, 2nd March 2017. Once the public consultation period is finished, the Chief Executive will prepare a report on the submissions and observations received and submit the report to the Members for their consideration. The report will be presented to and discussed with the Gorey Municipal District members at a special meeting to be held in March. It is anticipated that the LAP will be made at the April monthly meeting of Wexford County Council. The LAP will come into effect 4 weeks from the day that it is made.

Review of the Wexford County Development Plan 2013-2019: On the 7th February 2017, the Planning Authority gave notice of its intention to review the Wexford County Development Plan 2013-2019 and to prepare a new County Development Plan. This notice was published in the local newspapers and on the Council's website. Issues Papers have been prepared and are currently on public display. The purpose of the Issues Papers is to highlight strategic planning issues, outline the plan preparation process and explain the purpose and content of the County Development Plan. Written submissions or observations in relation to the review of the existing Plan and the preparation of the new Plan can be made by 4pm on Tuesday, 11th April 2017. The Forward Planning team will be attending each of the Municipal District meetings to discuss the plan preparation process and hear the issues which the Members would like to see addressed in the Draft Plan. The Forward Planning team will also hold a public consultation event in each of the four districts during the month of March. Once the public consultation period is finished, the Chief Executive will prepare a report on the submissions and observations received.

The report will also state the Chief Executive's recommendations on the policies to be included in the Draft Plan. The report will be submitted to the Members for their consideration by the end of May, 2017.



Ireland 2040-Our Plan'-The National Planning Framework: The National Planning Framework (NPF) will be a national spatial plan for the Country, taking into account a range of social, economic and environmental factors, with the term 'spatial' meaning 'space' or 'place'. It will replace the existing National Spatial Strategy.



The NPF will be a high-level document that will provide the framework for future development and investment in Ireland. It will be the overall Plan from which other more detailed plans will take their lead including city and county development plans and regional strategies. The NPF will also have statutory backing.

An 'Issues and Choices Paper' was launched on the 2nd February 2017. It is a consultation document that has been prepared in advance of the drafting of the new National Planning Framework, and its purpose is to provide members of the public and all interested parties with an overview of some of the main national planning issues that affect Ireland today and to prompt national debate and discussion in relation to the spatial development of Ireland. It also provides the opportunity to submit comments and suggestions on the issues raised and other topics considered relevant to the NPF. It is requested that submissions relate to matters that are of national significance, are strategic in nature, and have a 'spatial' or 'place-based' focus.

Written submissions at this first stage of the NPF process **can be made by 12 noon on Thursday, 16th March 2017** as follows:

- Online through the dedicated NPF website www.ireland2040.ie
- By e-mail to npf@housing.gov.ie
- Or in writing to:
NPF Submissions,
Forward Planning Section,
Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government,
Custom House,
Dublin 1, D01 W6X0

2. Housing, Community, Libraries, Arts, Emergency Services & Community:

HOUSING:

Repair and Leasing Scheme (RLS): Minister Simon Coveney recently announced €32m for the National rollout of the Repair and Leasing Scheme for vacant houses. The main criteria include:

1. The Property must be vacant for at least 12 months
2. There has to be social housing demand in the area
3. Property will then be assessed to ensure suitability for social housing
4. Minimum lease term is 10 years
5. The maximum cost of repairs allowable under the initiative will be €40,000

Housing Section will proceed to promote this scheme throughout the county.

Housing Supply: A number of housing capital projects have been approved and are progressing to construction stage:-

Funding approved: Following recent approval from the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government (DHPCLG) the following two projects will start construction within the next few weeks:-

- 5 Mountain View in Rathnure – Stage 4 Approval - A post tender budget has been approved in the amount of €123,095 and construction is due to commence on 27th February 2017
- 41 St Martin's Park, Ballycullane – Stage 4 Approval - A post tender budget has been approved in the amount of €104,450 and construction is due to commence in March 2017

Construction Projects

- Construction at Francis Street, Wexford to complete in April 2017.
- Stage 4 submitted to DHPCLG for 2 Special Needs Houses in Oilgate. Awaiting Stage 4 Approval and Construction currently projected to commence in Q2 2017
- Stage 3 approved for 9 houses in Baile Eoghain, Gorey. Construction tendering in March 2017 and Stage 4 to be submitted.

Design Teams: Design Teams have been contracted for:

- 36 Housing Units at Whiterock Hill, Wexford.
- 10 Houses at Slippery Green, Wexford.
- 10 Houses in Creagh, Gorey.
- 10 Houses in Danescastle.
- 14 Houses in Killeens, Wexford

Refugee Resettlement Programme: The 20 refugee families allocated to County Wexford have begun arriving for the 12 week induction programme at the designated Emergency Reception and Orientation Centre in Dungarvan, County Waterford and are currently expected to arrive in Wexford in late May 2017.

Wexford County Council is currently in the process of contracting a designated refugee support worker who will be employed on an initial one year contract to support the refugees when they arrive and assist them to integrate into the Irish community.

An information and intercultural awareness session will be held both for WCC members and interagency staff in advance of the arrival of the refugees.

Social Housing Award & Residents Day: Housing Section in association with the Community Development Section will introduce a Wexford County Council Social Housing Awards Scheme in 2017. The Scheme will be run on a Municipal Basis with a Best Social Housing winner for each Municipal District.

An overall WCC County Winner will then be selected from these four Municipal winners and announced as part of Residents Day.

The Area Housing Officers will be organising a Residents Day for residents associations of all Local Authority Housing Estates that work with the Council for the upkeep of their estates. The event provides the LA with an opportunity to offer relevant advice to committee members by presenting topics of interest, promoting positive interaction with residents and providing an opportunity to thank committee members for their continued voluntary work to maintain and improve the Local Authority housing estates on which they live.

Demonstrations to the Associations vary each year but generally centre around topics of interest including gardening, safety / security in the home, maintenance, cooking, developing amenity areas, sports and leisure in the community, estate management and presentation.

Traveller Accommodation Programme (TAP): The DHPCLG recently announced a capital provision of €9m for Traveller specific accommodation for 2017 and requested Local Authorities to submit details of existing contractual commitments for 2017 and projects purposed for their area up to the end of 2018 based on the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014-2018. The Housing & Community department submitted a request for **€736,180** to fund the following proposals:

- CCTV upgrade
- Heating upgrade
- 2 x 3-bed bungalows
- 2 extensions
- Replacement of 3 mobile homes
- Radon remedial works

Housing Assistance Payment (HAP): A briefing session on the HAP scheme was given to the constituency office staff of Dáil elected members recently. Housing staff will meet with the Dept of Social Protection next week to discuss the commencement of the transfer of long-term rent supplement recipients into HAP on a phased basis commencing in March 2017.

PRTB Inspections: Wexford County Council is responsible for the enforcement of the regulations prescribing minimum standards for private rented housing in County Wexford under the Housing (Standards for Rented Houses) Regulations 2008 and 2009.

Housing Section has set a target of 1,500 inspections in 2017 which is 20% approx. of all private rented properties in the county. These inspections will be evenly spread across the county.

ENVIRONMENT

Air/Water Quality/Noise: A major report on the operation of wind farms in the Kilrush area is due for completion in Q2 2017.

Recycling & Litter Activities:

Civic Amenity Sites: Due to the significant increase in operating costs at Civic Amenity Sites it is proposed to introduce a flat charge of €2 for entry to our 4 sites in 2017. The charging should commence at sites in Q2 2017

Litter: Wexford County council's Draft Litter Management Plan is out for public consultation until Thursday 16th March 2017. Any submissions can be made to hugh.maguire@wexfordcoco.ie

COMMUNITY REPORT

LEADER Expressions of Interests that will roll out over the course of 2017. The total value of these calls is €2,640,000. The focus area of the targeted calls is outlined in the table below.

Community	Enterprise
Community Centres Development of Walking Trails Arts & Culture	Artisan Food & Drink Marine Tourism Activity/Adventure Tourism
Youth Facilities Community Playgrounds & Outdoor Gyms Community Shops Community Wifi	Eco-tourism Creative Industries Heritage Tourism General Enterprise Social Enterprise

Rural Economic Development Zones (REDZ) 2016/17 – Bunclody:

Progress has been made over with the Community Department holding meetings with a number of key stakeholders in Bunclody including schools, FDYS, Art Bank, Bunclody Adult Education Centre, Bunclody Library, etc. Further meetings are planned with groups including business representatives, older persons groups, tidy towns and other community groups.

A steering group comprised of many of these stakeholders, State agencies and Council Representatives (both Wexford and Carlow) has been set up and met during the month. A further meeting of the Steering Group is scheduled for early March during which the actions and work plan for the next 8 months will be agreed on. A town team has also been put in place which it is envisaged will continue after this REDZ project is completed.

Celtic Trails – Interreg: The application is at an advanced stage and a decision is expected April or May 2017. If successful, this grant funding is worth €1 million euro to Wexford, Waterford and Wicklow Local Authorities.

Wexford Public Participation Network (PPN): Wexford PPN County Membership Meeting (Plenary) was held on Monday 27th February in the Riverside Hotel, Enniscorthy. This event included an Expo of members and non-members and included linkage with Wexford County Council Arts Department giving PPN Members the opportunity to meet the Artists for the Artist in the Community Funding Stream. The event also includes a keynote address by Wexford Hurling Manager, Davy Fitzgerald. Wexford PPN has also begun development of a social media presence – with setting up of both facebook and twitter accounts.

Wexford Age Friendly Programme: The Minister Paul Kehoe TD, Minister of State at the Departments of an Taoiseach and Defence, launched the Strategy on Friday 10th February 2017 in County Hall, Carricklawn, Wexford. The Chairman of Wexford County Cllr. Paddy Kavanagh joined him at the launch. The launch was attended by over a hundred members of the public and there was twenty information stands for participants to obtain information from a range of service provider.

The final draft of the Age Friendly Action Plan was presented to the Age Friendly Alliance in January and it was agreed to proceed to the implementation stage.

SPORTS PARTNERSHIP

Safeguarding Courses (Child Protection): Safeguarding 1 for February; 44 attending Courses: total for 2017: 59

Sport Ireland: The partnership has secured its Annual Funding grant of €135,254. We have also received a grant from the HSE South for €8500 for walking programmes and Swim a Mile.

Operation Transformation: The programme has initiated great interest and with the culmination of the 8 week programme on Sat 18th February Mairead successfully completed the 5km in Phoenix Park. Our park runs in Wexford have seen great attendance. Since 14th January the runs (Gorey, JFK and Johnstown) have seen 3385 runners take part.

Staff: We are delighted to have Mary Ellen Doyle appointed as the co-funded community sports Development officer, she will be joining our team on 13th March on a three year temporary contract. We hope this will greatly enhance our work.

Event Support: We have supported the launch of the Age Friendly strategy and Public Participation Network by holding information stands.

CYPSC: As part of the work plan for the health and wellbeing we have supported a training programme for Physical activity for childcare providers.

LIBRARIES, ARTS & ARCHIVES

Creative Ireland Programme: The Creative Ireland Programme was recently launched. Creative Ireland is the Government's Legacy Programme for Ireland 2016 – a five-year initiative, from 2017 to 2022, which places creativity at the centre of public policy.

A public meeting to outline the Creative Ireland Programme and to seek public input into its implementation in County Wexford will be held on Thursday 6th April at 6.30 p.m. in Wexford Library.

Under the programme, each local authority will appoint a Cultural Team and develop a Culture and Creativity Plan. Eileen Morrissey, County Librarian has been appointed Cultural Co Coordinator for Wexford. First meeting of Cultural Team is on 8th March.

LIBRARIES

Wexford County Council Library Service, in partnership with CTEC, is providing free IT courses to hundreds of people throughout the County to provide them with the confidence and skills to participate in today's digital world.

These courses are free and funded by Dept. of Communications, Climate Action & Environment. Participants must meet one of the following criteria to be eligible for a place: Over 45+/farming communities/small business owners (<10 people)/unemployed persons/persons with disabilities/disadvantaged groups.

Workshops were provided by library staff during February to staff of the Local Enterprise Office and the INTREO caseworkers on the national Work Matters pilot and on library services and E-resources to support business and employment research.

Research has begun on the new phase in the Decade of Centenary programme. The next event will be the launch in June of a new exhibition on Major Willie Redmond the mark the centenary of his death at the Battle of Messines.

The Reading Together Preschool Storytelling Festival was a big success during February. With events in all libraries in the County, families participated in activities that encouraged early literacy and library membership.

ARTS

Film location database for Wexford: Film location manager Gordon Wycherley, location manager for Brooklyn etc., has been contracted by Arts and Economic Dept in Wexford County Council to compile a photo database for all locations of potential interest to film companies in Wexford i.e., Castles and Large Period Houses, Villages, Beaches, Landscapes, Institutions, Architecture, Streetscapes etc. This involves 4 weeks work in Wexford in February – March 2017. This photo data base will be made available on Wexford County Council website via Arts Dept.

Arts Plan: work is currently ongoing for Wexford's next 5 year arts plan and will involve focused group meetings with artists, arts organisations and other

stakeholders around the county in May 2017. This plan will build on consultations and finding from Creative Wexford Report and County Development Plans, Department of Arts and Arts Council Strategic Plans.

Music Generation: National Music Education Programme for young people. Call out for the funding scheme 2017-2020 application opened 9th Jan 2017. Closing date is 31st May 2017. Wexford and Waterford County Councils are applying under the lead partner WWETB (Wexford Waterford Education training Board) – registered on 19th February 2017. A Current audit of music provision is taking place in Wexford and Waterford for the application. Next meeting is in Dublin 7th March for all applicants to be attended by WWETB and Wexford and Waterford Arts Officers.

VETERINARY SECTION

- The required ante-mortem and post-mortem inspections were carried out in the abattoirs. The required inspections meat plants and abattoirs were carried out.
- An application for registration for an on farm poultry abattoir was received in Gorey area.

CIVIL DEFENCE

Training: Weekly training classes have commenced for 2017 in Wexford, New Ross and Gorey.

We carried out Boat Training in Wexford Harbour on Sunday 5th February 2017, two boats operated with 7 crew members.

Civic Duties: There was a total of 6 Civic Duties for February 2017, a total of 6 duties so far for 2017.

- Head of the River Race in New Ross on Saturday 18th February, ambulance cover with 6 volunteers.
- Tintern Abbey Fun Run, Sunday 19th February, Ambulance cover with 4 volunteers.
- Gorey Community School, Equestrian Event, Sunday 26th February, ambulance cover with 6 volunteers.

Training Courses: We completed a Community Cardiac First Responder Course (AED) for groups using the Park in Gorey. 10 members from the following community groups completed the course, Gorey Park Run, All Saints, Wexford Eagles and members of the Gateway Scheme.

12 Staff members of Wexford County Council completed the FAR – First Aid Responder course on Wednesday 22nd February. This was the first FAR course to be completed in Wexford; this course replaces the OFA (Occupational First Aid) course.

General: Wexford Civil Defence will host a Regional Competition on 25th March in the Curracloe Area. Four teams will take part, Carlow, Dublin, Kilkenny and Waterford. We held a briefing meeting for Civil Defence Officers on Friday 3rd February 2017. Planning is well underway for the competition.

3. Transportation, Water Services:

ROADS AND TRANSPORTATION

COUNTY WEXFORD'S NATIONAL ROADS SCHEMES:

1. N25 New Ross Bypass

Progress Update February 2017

Transport Infrastructure Ireland awarded the PPP Contract to a BAM Iridium consortium (the PPP Co.) on 26th January 2016. The PPP Co's contractor for the works is a BAM Civil Ltd and Dragados Ireland Ltd joint venture. The works are progressing well and the road remains on programme to open in early 2019.

Earthworks operations are ongoing and expanding along the western end of the scheme between Glenmore and Ballymacar, particularly in Cuts 2 to 4 and Fills 2 to 8. Blasting operations are ongoing in cut 3 at Stokestown and are anticipated to commence in cut 4 at Camlin in mid March. "SMS Text Alert" groups have been set up with local residents and a text message is sent to all relevant residents as well as property and land owners the evening before each blast indicating the time of the blast for the following day. It is anticipated that there will be 2 blasting events per week in both cuts for the coming months. Topsoil stripping has commenced along the eastern end of the scheme from the N25 at Ballymacar to the N30 at Corcoran's Cross. Earthworks activities will intensify over this section in the coming months.

Piling operations are ongoing for pier 4 of the Barrow Bridge (river pier) and will be complete by the end of February. Foundation preparatory works for piers 1 & 2 of the Barrow Bridge on the Co. Kilkenny side are progressing and the foundations for pier 3 at Pink Rock are progressing. Piling works for Piers 5, 6, & 7 on the Co. Wexford side at Stokestown are complete and foundations are currently being progressed. The construction of the road bridge over the R733 Campile Road is well advanced and bridge beams were lifted and placed over the R733 under traffic management on 20th & 21st February. Works are also progressing on the Stokestown Road Underbridge and Ballymacar Road Underbridge with the installation of the precast box units complete for both bridges. Five watercourse culverts are substantially complete and works are progressing on the construction of 7 other watercourse culverts and 3 underpasses throughout the site.

Vibration, noise and dust monitoring is ongoing throughout the site, and results are being reviewed to ensure compliance with allowable limits. Baseline monitoring has been established for private wells in the vicinity of the site and the next series of testing will be undertaken at the end of February.

Wheel wash facilities are operational at all active site exit points in order to minimise the transport of mud onto public roads, and an intensive road cleaning regime is being implemented on the public roads in the vicinity of the site exit points.

Traffic management remains in place at site access points and site crossing points throughout the scheme. More significant traffic management operations will be implemented in the coming months on the N25 at Ballymacar and Glenmore to facilitate the construction of online roundabouts at both locations. 60km/h road works speed limits and traffic management plans will be implemented for the duration of these diversions. Road Works Speed Limit Orders have been executed to facilitate these works. It is anticipated that these diversion will remain in place until the latter half of 2018, and full 2-way traffic flows will be maintained during this time. Short term temporary local road closures will also be required at both of these locations to facilitate the works. These will be notified in local newspapers and shall be subject to the normal statutory process. The 'Pink Rock' Road (LS7512) in Co. Kilkenny remains closed to facilitate access to the bridge site and also for the construction of a bridge pier. A temporary diversion route and traffic management plan is in place for this closure.

The fourth quarterly project newsletter will be published in March and circulated widely at local conveniences and public buildings. The dedicated project website www.n25newross.ie provides progress updates as well as information on traffic management and road works, and also provides contact details for the project. A 24 hour telephone hotline is also operational to deal with any queries or complaints from the public. The number is 1800 815672, and this number has been posted on both the newsletter and website. The Project Liaison Office will continue to liaise and consult with all landowners and other interested parties for the duration of the project.



1. Barrow Bridge - Preparatory works for pier foundations on Co. Kilkenny side in foreground with Pier 4 in background.



2. Barrow Bridge - Piling operations at Pier 4 (river pier)



3.
Barrow
Bridge -
Steel
fixing for
Pier 3

foundations at Pink Rock.



4.

Barrow Bridge - Foundation Works at Piers 5, 6 & 7 at Stokestown in foreground.



5. Earthworks operations in Cut 3 at Stokestown in foreground, earthworks operations at Cut 4 in Camlin in background.



6. Beam Lift operations under traffic management at R733 Underbridge



7. Farm accommodation underpass under construction



8. Farm accommodation underpass under construction

2. M11 Gorey to Enniscorthy PPP Scheme update

Program

The contractor has 63% of their certified design issued for construction and is on target in their overall program for construction. The Permit to Use date remains the same at July 2019.

Construction to Date

The following table indicates site work progression to date.

	Progress Reported in November	Progress Reported in December	Progress Reported in Jan 2017	Progress Reported in February
Site Clearance	96%	96%	98%	98%
Fencing	85%	85%	85%	86%
Drainage & Service Ducts	7%	7%	7%	9%
Earthworks	17%	23%	25%	26%
Structures – main Bridges				3%
Structures – Culverts	24%	29%	38%	45%
Structures – Access Structures	5%	12%	17%	25%
Accommodation Works	6%	6%	8%	8%

- Works have commenced on main structures in Jan/ Feb
- Earthworks below monthly average due to weather conditions
- Earthworks reported this month:-
 - Mainline M11, Total volume Cut to Fill 70,108m3
 - N30, Total volume Cut to Fill 56,978m3
 - N80, Works commenced

Blasting

Blasting is continuing on a weekly basis at Frankfurt interchange and Knockrathkyle (Darby's Gap) area. A third area for blasting has been opened up between Bessmount and Templescoby. Affected landowners have been notified by the contractor 14 days in advance of blasting commencing and 3 days by either text or a phone call in advance of the blast taking place. Results to date for Vibration and Noise Monitoring have returned below the maximum permitted levels for the contract.

Applications submitted to WCC from the PPP:

Use of Non Permitted Site Access

The contractor has applied for permission to use the site access at L22011 Tinnacross Road from the Harrow for the importation of precast box units and fill material for culvert units. This application is to be finalised.

Road Closure Applications

WCC are progressing the following road closure applications

Road	Application Status	Closure Date	Duration	Status
L2020, Ballynabarny	Granted	Nov 2016	3 months	Reopened 23/1/17
L5093, Rocksprings Road	Granted	Jan 2017	6 months	Open June 2017
L2021, Crane Road	Submitted	March 2017	6 months	Statutory Process
L2012, Killalligan Road	Granted	Feb 2017	6 months	Closed
L6122, Templescoby	Submitted	April 2017	6 months	Statutory Process
L6125, Monart East	Granted	Feb 2017	6 months	Closed
L6055, Drumgoold Road	Submitted	March 2017	6 months	Postponed
L2040, Knockrathkyle	Granted	Feb 2017	6 months	Closed
L6052, Scurlocksbush	Submitted	March 2017	6 months	Statutory Process
L1027, Ballygullen Road	Submitted	April 2017	2 months	Statutory Process

Public Relations

Drone Survey

The Drone survey will be completed this week with the associated video of the construction works to date being uploaded to Wexford County Councils website.

Newsletter

The Newsletter for Q1 of 2017 has been uploaded on the website. The N11 website WWW.m11qtoe.ie is updated on a monthly basis providing information on blasting, road closures and traffic management.

A 24 telephone hotline is also operational to deal with any queries or complaints from the public. The number is 1800 815701, and this number has been posted on both the newsletter and website. The Project Liaison Office will continue to liaise and consult with all landowners and other interested parties for the duration of the project.

Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) Allocation:

TII initially allocated a sum of €5,394,000 for pavement and minor improvement works in 2016. Some of the schemes are due to be completed in 2017.

N25 Ross By-Pass Residual Network *N30 from Irishtown to R700 junction.*

This contract is being completed in 2 phases.

Phase 1 from Irishtown to R700 junction was substantially completed on 26th. August 2016.

Phase 2 from Irishtown to New Ross swimming pool will be completed in 2017 following works to the sewer network by Irish Water.

N11 Gorey to Enniscorthy Residual Network R702 Enniscorthy Kiltalea Road

This scheme will be carried out as 2 contracts.

Contract 1 from Milehouse to Monart East will be carried out in March.

Contract 2 will be from Milehouse Crossroads to Duffry Gate.

A contractor has been appointed.

The construction period is expected to be 8 to 10 weeks. This contract should commence in the summer.

N11 Scarawalsh to Ferns South

A third scheme has been added to the N11 Gorey to Enniscorthy Residual Network. This contract involves the overlay of 5km of the N11. A contractor has been appointed. The construction period will be 8 weeks. This contract will commence in April.

2017 National Pavement Schemes

Transport Infrastructure Ireland has provided funding for the following scheme.

N11 Ferns Village

It is expected this scheme will be tendered in the March. The contract should be constructed in the third quarter of 2017.

Additional Pavement Improvement Works

The following 7 pavement schemes have been identified by TII as priority schemes.

- Ballynabola to Cushenstown Pavement Scheme (1.0km)
- Carrigadaggan to Ballynabola Pavement Scheme (2.3km)
- Kileen to Newtown Pavement Scheme (2.6km)
- Kyle Upper Pavement Scheme (1.1km)
- Tinnahask to Ballynaslaney Pavement Scheme (1.2km)
- Ballygillane Little Pavement Scheme (0.7km)
- Ballygoman to Knockeen Pavement Scheme (3.2km)

Design works have commenced on these schemes. Tenders will be invited for the first of these schemes in the first quarter of 2017. TII will release funding as these schemes are tendered during the year.

Ballynabola to Cushenstown Pavement Scheme

Tenders will be invited in March with a tender return date of 16th. March

Ballygillane Little Pavement Scheme

Survey works will commence on 28th February. Tenders will be invited in early April.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL ROADS

Strengthening

Macadam surfacing at Annagh Lane (Gorey District).

Preparation works for strengthening ongoing in all districts.

Strengthening programme scheduled to start on Monday March 6 in the Gorey District.

Improvement Works

Road improvement works ongoing on the R741 - Wexford to Castlebridge road (Wexford District).

Footpath and road surfacing works ongoing at The Avenue (Gorey District).

General Maintenance

Drainage, patching and road surface repair works ongoing in all Districts.

Winter Maintenance

The 2016/2017 winter maintenance programme commenced on Monday 17th, October. There have been 38 no. call outs up to 28th February 2017.

WATER SERVICES

A. Irish Water – Asset Management

Irish Water Capital Schemes

IW Asset Management: Enniscorthy Sewerage Scheme – Stage 3 (included in IW – CIP14-16 i.e. Irish Water Capital Investment Programme (CIP) 2014 to 2016)

Planning permissions were granted by WCC for the upgrading of St. John's and Promenade Pumping Stations. The WWTP is to be extended to cater for a PE of 26,000, an increase of 10,000 PE from the existing 16,000 PE. The tenders for the DBO contract were received in October, 2016 and tender evaluation is complete. Contract notification for successful and unsuccessful candidates is in progress. Contract due to be signed in March/April, 2017.

IW Asset Management: Enniscorthy and Sow Regional Water S.S. (included in IW - CIP14-16)

IW Asset Strategy has approved the following elements of work on this Scheme:

- New intake and pumping station at Clonhasten.
- New rising main from Clonhasten to Vinegar Hill WTP.
- Hydraulic model of the Enniscorthy and Sow Schemes.

Terms of Reference are being agreed with Irish Water in order to appoint Consultants to progress the above work.

Preparation of budget application for Concept Design is underway; this includes for Strategic Report and review of options for the entire scheme.

IW Asset Management: Fethard-on-Sea Sewerage Scheme (included in IW - CIP14-16)

Site Investigations have been completed along the proposed outfall route. Foreshore application was lodged. The land acquisition process has also commenced for the selected WWTP site and Pumping Station site. Revised terms of reference and new appointment for the Consulting Engineer, is currently being finalised. Preliminary design is in progress.

IW Asset Management: Gorey Sewerage Scheme – Stage 2 (included in IW - CIP14-16)

The DBO contract with AECOM/SIAC Construction to upgrade the wastewater treatment plant was substantially completed in March 2016. Official Opening was on the 29th September, 2016.

The 75% OPW-funded flood relief works minor scheme for Gorey Town is underway.

IW Asset Management: Gorey Regional Water Supply – South Wellfield (included in IW - CIP14-16)

Asset Strategy has completed its review of the Gorey RWSS and has recommended an 8 Ml/day WTP and 7,500m³ reservoir at Ballyminaun. A DWSP and catchment yield review is to be done. A CCTV Survey and hydrogeological assessment of the existing boreholes is mostly completed. Consultants have been engaged by IW to review the design and revise the contract documents.

Planning applications have been submitted by IW to WCC to upgrade the borehole sites and build a new water treatment plant at Ballyminaun. Negotiations for wayleaves ongoing with landowners.

IW Asset Management: Wexford Sewerage Scheme (included in IW - CIP14-16)

Distillery Rd. Pumping Station Upgrade is now operational.

IW Asset Management: Bundled Sewerage Schemes

Village Bundle 1 (included in IW - CIP14-16)

Arthurstown, Ballycanew, Ballyhack, Campile, Clonroche, Duncannon, Wellingtonbridge have been included in the CIP and approved to continue through the planning stage. A decision from Irish Water is awaited on how this scheme will progress from here on. A Business case has been submitted to Irish Water for upgrades of the plants in Ferns, Camolin, Ballycanew. The Village Bundle Scheme is under review by Irish Water.

Irish Water has engaged Consultants to carry out an 'Untreated Agglomeration Study' in a national project which includes Duncannon, Kilmore Quay, Ballyhack and Arthurstown. An 'Options Report' has been prepared for the 4 Wexford villages.

A Final Design Report was produced for the 3 Villages (Duncannon, Ballyhack and Arthurstown) and for Kilmore Quay and Irish Water have approved a budget for the next phase, which is Scheme Design.

IW Asset Management: Murrintown Sewerage Scheme

The rising main from Piercestown to Murrintown is complete. Irish Water have approved the provision of a new pump station at Murrintown under minor programmes.

IW Asset Management: Water Conservation – Pipeline Rehabilitation Phase 2

IW has approved construction budget of €2m for 9km of watermain rehab at Gorey, Screen and Bridgetown. Site investigation works took place at the end of 2016. Site investigations identified high levels of PAH in some areas and further testing is required to limit the amount of specialist disposal of spoil.

Construction of these watermain are scheduled to start in March, 2017 and will be undertaken by Wexford County Council's direct labour crew. The section at Screen will be the first to commence.

IW Asset Management: Wexford Town Watermain Rehab and Gas Network

Site Investigation works are 16% complete and estimated for completion by the end of May. The hydraulic model for Wexford town is to be updated to allow for the design works to progress; work on this has commenced. There will be a number of road closures around Wexford town week commencing the 27th February in relation to this project.

New Ross Sewerage Scheme – Irishtown to Nunnery Lane Sewers

Finalised tender documents have been received from T.J. O'Connor and this project is ready to proceed to tender. The estimate for the construction works is €627k. Wayleave agreements have been drafted and are currently with the convent's solicitor for signing.

B. IRISH WATER MINOR SCHEMES & SPECIAL SCHEMES

IW Asset Management: Murrintown P.S.(Wastewater to Wexford WWTW)

Tenders assessment ongoing.

Flow Monitoring & Sampling Programme

Works 95% complete. Snagging ongoing.

Sewer network pump station maintenance contract

Works ongoing in New Ross area.

WWTP pre-planned Maintenance Contract

Approved by IW. To go to Tender stage.

IW Asset Management: Newtown WTW (pumps, blowers etc.)

IW to arrange meeting with Contractor Avonmore.

IW Asset Management: Kilmallock & Taylorstown WTW (new pumps, automated treatment, replacement of chlorine gas etc)

Civil works ongoing.

IW Asset Management: pH Emergency (Automated dosing control)

Coolgreaney wayleave agreement to be resolved.

IW Asset Management: Vinegar Hill Air Blowers replacement

Contractor appointed RCC Engineering Ltd – Works ongoing.

IW Asset Management: Coagulation automation at Creagh, Vinegar Hill and Newtown WTW

Tenders being assessed.

IW Asset Management: Disinfection and pH Control Programme

To date Aecom have carried out six (6) site assessments in County Wexford (Phase 1 site assessment. 4 reports received to date – Newtown, Ballygarron 2, Ballynellard and Glynn). Remaining thirty three (33) Phase 1 site assessments to commence on the 27th March 2017. Progress meeting No. 3 held on 16th February 2017. Value Engineering Workshop to be held in Kilkenny on 14th March.

Suppressed Capital Maintenance scheme

IW have advised that a new Suppressed Capital Maintenance Fund will be made available. No details available in regard to budget and timeframe. Works are ongoing on the existing approved budget.

C. RURAL WATER PROGRAMME

Group Water Schemes > 50 Persons

Blackstairs (GWS 111)

Palace East Contract 8 – Contract complete

Kilanerin (GWS 15)

Supply and installation of 136 AMR's and 5 No. Data loggers complete

Framework Agreement for Private Group Water Schemes and Private Group Water & Sewerage Schemes.

Tender assessment ongoing.

WATER CONSERVATION

Watermains Rehabilitation Summary:

- Completed Direct Labour Crew Projects:
 1. Rehabilitation of 525m of Watermains at Redshire Road, Murrintown is now complete.
 2. Rehabilitation works in Oulart complete (Meadowbrook and Hillview Court).
 3. Rehabilitation works in Summerhill Enniscorthy complete.
 4. Connecting Clohamon to Bunclody complete (Marker Plates to be installed).
 5. Watermains replacement (2.9km) at Kilhile, Arthurstown is complete (WCC Direct Labour Crew).
 6. Pipe rehabilitation at Mayview Park, Oulart.
 7. Site investigations for the Phase 2 Rehab Work Package 1 (Millands, Ballymurn to Screen, and Kilmore to Bridgetown) complete.
 8. Clearistown (Glór Na Gaoithe) 95% complete. To be connected.
 9. Direct Labour Crew currently carrying out works in Cahore.
- Watermains replacement at Ballymitty, Wellingtonbridge and Newtown Ferns. Tender awarded to Shareridge. Phase 1 – Site Investigation works Complete. Phase 2 to commence in 2017.
- Watermains Rehabilitation has been approved on 860m of distribution mains from Smithscross to Ballinamona, Gorey. Works to be carried out at a later date (Contractor).
- Further sections of mains are still being reviewed by Irish Water and we await their decision.
- ANB for the replacement of Back Yard Services (BYS) recently been approved for New Ross and Enniscorthy. The New Ross works will most likely progress as part of a gas network project that is currently being scoped out. The Enniscorthy works will most likely be delivered as part of the Water Network Management Framework that is due to be rolled out later next year.
- ANB for replacing BYS at two blocks of four houses in St. Aidan's Villas, Enniscorthy has recently been approved. Works have commenced, two houses connected to mains. Two more to be connected week beginning 30/01/17.
- ANB for replacing BYS including installation of a new main to facilitate supplies to four houses in JKL estate (New Ross) approved.
- ANB for replacing BYS including installation of a new main to facilitate supplies to two houses in St. Johns Villas (Enniscorthy) awaiting approval.

4. Finance:

Annual Financial Statement (AFS) 2016

Work is continuing on the finalisation of the 2016 Accounts. The statutory date for submission of the accounts is 31st March 2017.

Finance Report – Qtr 4 2016

The Q4 financial report has been circulated and provides a provisional position in relation to the 2016 financial performance. Preliminary figures indicate a surplus of €800k on the Revenue Account for the year which makes 2016 the third consecutive year to report a surplus. A more detailed report on the 2016 financial performance will be presented to members once the final accounts for 2016 are complete.

The Local Government Auditor has commenced some preliminary work on the LGAS audit of the 2016 Accounts.

Audit Committee

In accordance with regulatory requirements the Audit Committee have prepared

- a. Report setting out their view of the 2015 Accounts and associated Audit report.
- b. The annual report on activity of the Audit Committee during 2016
- c. Audit Committee 2017 Work Programme.

All three submissions are included in a consolidated report for the council to be considered at the March meeting.

The next Audit Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 19th April.

Cash Flow/Overdraft

The Council continues to operate in overdraft, Ministerial Sanction is in place for borrowing by way of overdraft in the amount of €13m for the period up to 31st December, 2017.

**Tom Enright,
Chief Executive.**