



*SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL*  
*ANNUAL REPORT*

*2015*





## Contents

Introduction by Cathaoirleach Councillor Rosaleen O’Grady .....	2
Members of Sligo County Council - 2015 .....	3
The late Councillor Seamie O’Boyle .....	4
Strategic Policy Committee Members .....	5
Housing and Corporate Directorate.....	6
Housing and Building .....	7
Corporate Services .....	14
Human Resources .....	17
Sligo Library Service and Museum .....	19
Public Consultation of Ireland 2016 .....	21
Civil Defence.....	23
Community and Enterprise .....	24
Sligo Arts Service .....	40
Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2015.....	41
The visit of Prince Charles and his wife Camilla.....	44
Infrastructure, Environment.....	46
& Fire Services Directorate .....	46
Road Transportation and Safety .....	47
Environmental Services.....	55
Fire Services .....	61
Planning, Community & Economic Development Directorate.....	63
Development Management .....	64
Enforcement of Planning Control.....	65
Heritage and Conservation Services .....	67
Finance.....	69
Balance Sheet .....	71
Motor Taxation.....	72
Appendices .....	73
Appendix 1 - Staff Retirements in 2015.....	73
Appendix 2 - Conferences and Seminars attended by Councillors in 2015.....	74

## Introduction by Cathaoirleach Councillor Rosaleen O'Grady



2015 was another busy and eventful year for Sligo County Council, with a number of important initiatives rolled out as we continue to provide the optimum level of services with the resources at our disposal.

Over the course of the year I had the privilege of attending many community events and hosting receptions at County Hall to honour those individuals and groups who have excelled in their particular area. In this context I was pleased to revive the Cathaoirleach's Awards Scheme, and we publicly acknowledged the volunteers who have made a special contribution in the areas of Arts & Culture, Community, Environment & Heritage, Schools, Young Enterprise, Sports and a special 'Spirit of Sligo' Award.

Another special highlight for me was the hosting of Fleadh Cheoil Na hÉireann, the second successive year Sligo has had an opportunity to stage our largest cultural celebration. The pride and enthusiasm which energised the people of Sligo will live long in the memory, and great credit is due to the Fleadh Committee for their meticulous planning and organisation in the months leading up to Fleadh week.

The visit of Prince Charles and his wife Camilla was described as 'A milestone in the

reconciliation process, one that cements the new phase in our relationship, where we bring closure to past events and look to the future with optimism in a genuine spirit of friendship.'

The hosting of the Fleadh and the Royal visit were hugely significant, memorable occasions which attracted intense media interest and a major global audience, and I expect there will be a significant impact on tourism numbers to this region arising from these events.

The Tagore monument in Sligo, which was unveiled in June 2015, was a generous gift from the Government of India which will be a permanent memorial to the cultural links between our respective countries, exemplified by the friendship between the great Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore and WB Yeats.

2015 was still very much a year of transition following the many changes introduced to Local Government from the 'Local Government reform Act 2014; One of the most important new functions devolved to Local Authorities is in the area of economic and community development, and the newly established Local Enterprise offices can be the catalyst for the future development and growth of Sligo and the Northwest.

2015 was a year of great loss for this Council, with the passing of many dear colleagues, and we recall in particular the late Councillor Seamie O'Boyle and the late Pdraig Noone.  
Ar dheis De go raibh a anam

**Councillor Rosaleen O'Grady**  
**Cathaoirleach**

# Members of Sligo County Council - 2015

## Ballymote/Tobercurry Municipal District



**Martin Baker**  
Fianna Fáil  
2 Ardkeerin, Riverstown, Co. Sligo.  
071-9127472 086-1608334  
cllrmbaker@gmail.com



**Michael Clarke**  
Non Party  
Knocknacullen, Dromore West, Co. Sligo.  
087-7708691  
michaelclarkesales@eircom.net



**Margaret Gormley**  
Non Party  
Carrolloughlin, Bunninadden, Co. Sligo.  
071-9183239 086-8394795  
gormleymargaret@eircom.net



**Jerry Lundy**  
Fianna Fáil  
Rhue, Tobercurry, Co. Sligo  
071-9185184 087-2900947  
cllrjerrylundy@eircom.net



**Dara Mulvey**  
Fine Gael  
Rockfield, Coolaney, Co. Sligo.  
087-6885050  
dfmulvey@gmail.com



**Joseph Queenan**  
Fianna Fáil  
Lacknaslieva, Enniscrone, Co. Sligo.  
096-36449 087-6214422  
queenanjoseph@eircom.net



**Eamon Scanlon**  
Fianna Fáil  
Keenaghan, Ballymote, Co. Sligo.  
087-6803660  
escanlonmcc@eircom.net



**Paul Taylor**  
Fianna Fáil  
17 Cluain Dara, Gurteen, Co. Sligo.  
087-6794509  
paultaylorstlgo@gmail.com

## Sligo Municipal District



**Declan Bree**  
Independent  
1 High Street, Sligo.  
071-9145490 087-2470802  
dbree@eircom.net



**Marie Casserly**  
Independent  
Streedagh, Grange, Co. Sligo.  
086-3182529  
mariecasserly1@gmail.com



**Thomas Healy**  
Sinn Féin  
Largan, Collooney, Co. Sligo.  
086-3666561  
thealyt@gmail.com



**Hubert Keaney**  
Fine Gael  
Drum Road, Rathcormac, Co. Sligo.  
071-9141090 087-6892610  
hubertkeaney@hotmail.com



**Seamus Kilgannon**  
Fianna Fáil  
80 Rathedmond, Sligo.  
086-8243121  
skilgannonstlgo@gmail.com



**Sinéad Maguire**  
Fine Gael  
29 The Plains, Strandhill, Co. Sligo.  
087-4194039  
sineadmaguire@yahoo.com



**Seán MacManus**  
Sinn Féin  
11 The Green, Strandhill, Co. Sligo.  
071-9161460 086-8198456  
seanmacmanus@eircom.net



**Tom MacSharry**  
Fianna Fáil  
Teeling Street, Sligo  
087-4163730  
tommacsharry@hotmail.com



**Gino O'Boyle** (from 14/9/2015)  
People Before Profit  
1 Stephen McDonagh Place, Sligo  
086-0757915  
ginopbp@outlook.com



**Rosaleen O'Grady**  
Fianna Fáil  
2 Kevinsfort, Strandhill Road, Sligo.  
086-8060171  
ogradyrosaleen@eircom.net



**Seamie O'Boyle, R.I.P.**  
People Before Profit  
Member of Sligo County Council until  
August 2015

## The late Councillor Seamie O'Boyle



It is with shock and deep regret that Sligo County Council's elected members and staff reacted to the sudden passing of Councillor Seamie

O'Boyle in August, 2015.

Seamie was elected to Sligo County Council in 2014 as a People Before Profit representative. He served as Deputy Mayor on the newly established Sligo Municipal District, and also served on the board of the Model, Sligo Harbour Advisory Committee and the Regional Health Forum West. He had a wide range of community interests, was involved in many voluntary organisations.

The Cathaoirleach of Sligo County Council Councillor Rosaleen O'Grady was a close friend who paid tribute to Seamie for being a 'committed and hardworking representative for his community. He had his roots in one of Sligo's oldest communities, and he served them with great distinction. He will be sorely missed by his family and many friends.' While his main interests were in his beloved Northside community, he had a genuine interest in any project that was good for Sligo.'

As a Councillor Seamie treated everyone, fellow Councillors and members of staff, with the utmost courtesy and respect. He took a keen interest in a wide range of projects, and he always made an important contribution to any discussions in the Council Chamber. He is a great loss to this Council, but more importantly, he will be sorely missed as a devoted husband and father.' Ar dheis Dé go raibh d'ainm.

## Strategic Policy Committee Members

### SPC 1 – Housing and Corporate Services

1. Cllr Dara Mulvey, Chairperson
2. Cllr Declan Bree
3. Cllr Martin Baker
4. Cllr Joe Queenan
5. Cllr Gino O’Boyle
6. Cllr Eamon Scanlon
7. Mr Brendan Henry – Business/Employers
8. Mr Gerry O’Connor – Community/Voluntary
9. Ms Marcella Flanagan – Community/Voluntary
10. Ms Rosaleen Doohan – Social Inclusion

### SPC 2 – Environment & Infrastructure

1. Cllr Gerry Lundy, Chairperson
2. Cllr Michael Clarke
3. Cllr Margaret Gormley
4. Cllr Thomas Healy
5. Cllr Hubert Keaney/Cllr Sinead Maguire
6. Cllr Paul Taylor/Cllr Marie Casserly
7. Mr Conor McCarthy – Business/Employers
8. Mr Eddie Davitt – Agricultural/Farming
9. Ms Sharon Eastwood – Environment/Conservation
10. Ms Michelle McMorrow – Community/Voluntary

### SPC 3 – Planning, Community & Economic Development, Arts & Culture

1. Cllr Sean MacManus, Chairperson
2. Cllr Marie Casserly
3. Cllr Hubert Keaney
4. Cllr Seamus Kilgannon
5. Cllr Sinead Maguire
6. Cllr Tom MacSharry
7. Cllr Rosaleen O’Grady
8. Cllr Paul Taylor
9. Mr Paul Keyes – Business/Employers
10. Mr Anthony McCormack – Trade Union
11. Mr Gerard Queenan – Agricultural/Farming
12. Ms Sue Mahon – Community/Voluntary
13. Ms Rosaleen Doonan – Social Inclusion



# Housing and Corporate Directorate

*Housing & Building*

*Corporate Services*

*Human Resources*

*Library & Museum*

*Civil Defence*

*Community & Enterprise*

*Arts Service*

## **Housing and Building**

The overall demand for social housing is influenced by a number of factors, primary amongst these are the availability of credit, the level of disposable income linked to the economic and employment environment and the availability of alternative accommodation in the private market to meet their need.

The range of housing options available to new social housing applicants include:

- Local Authority owned or Leased Social Housing
- Housing Assistance Payment
- Rental Accommodation Scheme
- Voluntary Housing Schemes
- Loans

In addition to administering the above housing services the Housing Section has been active in the following areas:

- Estate Management
- Improving Housing stock
- Homelessness
- Traveller Accommodation
- Housing Adaptation Grant Schemes for Older People and People with a Disability and Mobility Aids Grant Scheme
- Housing for persons with a disability
- Private Rented Tenancies Inspections
- Tenant Purchase Schemes

## **Maintenance and Repairs of Local Authority Housing Stock**

The budget provided for the maintenance and repairs of Local Authority Housing Stock is €715,000. The Council prioritises attending to repair requests that pose and health or safety risk to the tenant and repair requests of the old and those with special needs.

## **Improvements of Local Authority Housing Stock**

### **• Energy Fabric Upgrades**

The Energy Fabric Upgrade programme funded by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government funds the energy fabric upgrades to Local Authority Housing Stock. In 2015 the Council carried out energy upgrades to 540 dwellings at an approximate cost of €560,000.

### **• Returning Vacant Social Properties to Productive Use**

The above programme funded by the Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government enabled the Council to carry out re-letting works to 39 units in 2015 at a cost of approximately €460,000.

## **Housing Assessment**

The Social Housing Assessment Regulations 2011, as amended, sets out the procedure for assessing households who are seeking social housing support. The assessment shall determine if the household is *eligible* and in *need* of social housing support.

The Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2009 defines social



housing support as accommodation provided under any of the following:

- Rented Local Authority Accommodation.
- Rental Accommodation Scheme. -RAS
- Approved Housing Bodies (i.e.) Voluntary/Co-Operative Housing Bodies
- Long Term Leasing Initiative
- Housing Assistance Payment

There are currently 1160 households approved for social housing support with Sligo County Council.

The Housing Section also offers advice on other housing options and supports that households may be eligible to avail of in lieu of social housing or while they are awaiting a housing allocation such as rent supplement.

### **Allocations**

The County allocates properties in accordance with its "Allocation Scheme" which was adopted by the Members in June 2011. A total of 113 housing allocations were made.

### **Disability**

The Government's National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability sets key priority actions in the development of guidance to assist in streamlining the management of the housing assessment and allocation process for people with disabilities, including those living in the community and those transitioning to

the community from residential care, in line with Government policy.

The Strategy stipulates that a Housing and Disability Steering Group shall be established in each county/city council area. The purpose of these groups will be to support and enhance any current local interagency structures that exist. These groups will facilitate better coordination and delivery of housing and related support services for people with disabilities. During the year the steering committee conducted an assessment of need which included the needs for people with a disability living in congregated settings.

### **Housing Assistance Payment**

The implementation of the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) is a key Government priority and a major pillar of the Social Housing Strategy 2020. The HAP scheme will bring all social housing supports provided by the State under the aegis of local authorities. To be eligible, households must be assessed and approved by LA as being qualified for SHS. If eligible and approved for HAP:

1. The LA will pay on behalf of the tenant the monthly rent to the landlord,
2. Tenant is required paying a contribution (differential rent basis) towards rent to the LA.

It will be considered that where HAP is in place that the Housing needs of the household is met. Rent Supplement is still available from the Dept of Social Protection for people

with short term housing need. The scheme will remove a barrier to employment by allowing recipients to remain in the scheme if they gain full-time employment. HAP will also improve regulation of the rented accommodation being supported and provide certainty for landlords as regards their rental income.



The statutory pilot for the scheme commenced in September 2014 and has been introduced incrementally to 13 local authority areas to date - Limerick City and County Council; Waterford City and County Council; Cork, Louth, Kilkenny, South Dublin, Monaghan, Donegal, Offaly, Carlow, Clare, Tipperary County Councils; and Cork City Council. HAP is also available to Homeless households under the homeless HAP pilot managed by the Dublin Region Homeless Executive (DRHE), in a shared-service arrangement between the four housing authorities in the region for which Dublin City Council is the lead authority.

Over 4,000 HAP tenancies have been set up to date across these local authority areas. Arrangements are now underway for HAP to become operational in Kildare, Meath, Mayo, Sligo, Galway County Councils and Galway City Council by end 2015.

While it is the intention that over a two year period all rent supplement applicants and recipients in the County will be transferred into HAP, this will be done on a phased basis. The go live date in Sligo was the 16<sup>th</sup> November 2015.

### **Traveller Accommodation**

The Traveller Accommodation Programme (TAP) 2014-18 has a focus upon meeting the needs of Traveller families through the provision of capital works on halting sites and the securing of tenancies through RAS, the Approved Housing Bodies and Council tenancies. In addition some families will have success accessing the private rented sector although there continues to be difficulties expressed by Traveller families in accessing rented accommodation in certain areas, which presents an obstacle in meeting housing need and the targets of the TAP. Consideration is given to the purchase of houses for Traveller families in areas of choice and to meet specific or special needs.

The Council continues to work with families in need of accommodation assistance either directly or with Sligo Traveller Support Group.

### **Differential Rent Scheme**

The Council operates a Differential Rents Scheme on the basis that tenants are charged a weekly rent in accordance with their ability to pay. The Council are notified by the



Department with regards to the proposed new rents scheme under Section 31 of the Housing Act 2009, as amended, it commenced its own rent review in 2015 under the existing Rent scheme with revised rents applicable from 7<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

### **Tenant Purchase**

The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government ended the 1995 Tenant Purchase Scheme with effect from the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012 with all transactions to be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2013. The Council awaits the publication of a new Purchase Scheme under the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2014.

### **Estate Management Programme**

The Council in managing its housing stock uses the resources of its Estate Management Officers, Housing Investigation Officer and co-operation with Residents Associations and An Síochána to ensure that in so far as possible all Council estates are pleasant and safe areas to reside.

All complaints in relation to Anti-Social Behavior and Estate Management issues are documented and followed up on in terms of Estate Management policies and strategies.

### **Resettlement Tenancy Support & Sustainment**

To minimize the instances of homelessness occurring and to assist in cases where homelessness does

occur the Council has put in place a commissioned Resettlement Tenancy Support and Sustainment Service with Focus Ireland. The aim of this service is to support individuals and particularly families who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. This service works closely with the Homeless services referred to below.

### **Private Rented Accommodation Standards**

Minimum standards for rental accommodation are prescribed by means of Regulations made under Section 18 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1992, updated by the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2009. The relevant standards are currently set out in the Housing (Standards for Rented Houses) Regulations 2008 (S.I. 534/2008) and the Housing (Standards for Rented Houses) (Amendment) Regulations 2009 (S.I. No. 462 of 2009).

All landlords have a legal obligation to ensure that their rented properties comply with the aforementioned Regulations and responsibility for the enforcement of the Regulations rests with the relevant local authority.

The Council is active in the area of enforcement of the standards in private rented accommodation having carried out inspections of 804 rented dwellings in 2014, and over 419 inspections at the end of 2015.

## Cranmore Regeneration Project



Building on the feedback from the work of the Project in 2014, the development of the Regeneration Masterplan continued during 2015.

A wide range of local agencies were consulted and collaborated in the refinement of the social and economic strategies. Many initiatives are currently underway and a number of new actions have been identified to build on the progress achieved to date.

The Design Team currently reviewing and analyzing the feedback and it is expected that the Stage 4 reports describing the findings from the public exhibition and the social and economic actions will be delivered shortly. Further information sessions will be held later this year, with the Community and the Steering Group to consider and discuss the recommendations of the Design Team for the final Masterplan.

It is expected that the Masterplan will be completed early in 2016. When completed, it will be brought before Sligo County Council for consideration.

The inaugural meeting of the Regeneration Steering Group also took place in March 2015. The Regeneration Steering group will work with the County Council and the Regeneration Team to oversee the Regeneration Process.

The physical works programme for consisted of Refurbishment of Properties and a Sundry Works/Early Wins programme.

The investment in the social initiatives such as the Tenancy Support Service, the Community Warden Scheme, the installation of CCTV, the Sport and Recreation Programme, the Cranmore co-op, the East Sligo Music Generation Programme, the Cranmore Sports & Recreation Programme, all focus on the quality of life issues that affect people on a daily basis, have been effective in addressing the social issues that undermined estate for years.

Application was made earlier in 2015, to the Department of the Environment, community and Local Government to fund a number of new initiatives in 2015. Approval was received and all of the projects listed are underway at present.

Examples of some of these are

- Age Friendly Cranmore
- Tenancy Sustainment Project
- History & Heritage Group
- Sports Initiative



- Breakfast Club

#### Other work of the Regeneration Project Office

- Liaising with other agencies through regular development meetings,
- Liaising with CLUID, FOCUS Ireland, Family Resource House,
- Contribution to the LCDC process,
- Estate Management Activities,
- Production of Newsletters,
- Promotion of Regeneration Project through Media & Website,
- Recoupment and Allocation of Funding

#### **‘Regeneration Through Sport’ Initiative**

In March 2015, Sligo County Council launched an ‘Evaluation Report on the Cranmore Regeneration Through Sport Initiative’. In attendance were the Cathaoirleach and Chief Executive, President of IT Sligo, President Vincent Cunnane, Chairperson of Sligo Sport & Recreation Partnership, Maura McCallion, and author of the Report Dr Carol Moran.

The Cathaoirleach said it was an important day for the local community; ‘The report we are launching today confirms the hugely positive impact sport has in people’s lives. Becoming involved in a pattern of recreation and sporting activity not only increases levels of fitness, it

enhances our sense of well-being and confidence. This initiative was inspired and driven by the local community, it has brought benefits to all walks of life, and I would like to pay tribute to the many coaches, volunteers and mentors who have been at the heart of this project.’



#### **Homelessness**

During 2015 Sligo County Council continued to embrace the Department Policy set down in relation to Homeless Prevention and supports and offer supports to those who find themselves in this situation. Over 2013 and 2014 the Council has taken the opportunity to review the many services provided locally to those who find themselves homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

Services are available at the following locations:

- Maryville, Finisklin (Sligo Social Services Council Ltd) – Capacity of 10 beds in main house and 4 x 1 bed units to rear.
- Ballytivnan (Sligo Social Services Council Ltd) - capacity 5 beds

- Shalomar (Finisklin Housing Ltd) - capacity to provide total no of beds of 21, comprising of 17 in main house and 4 x 1 bed units to rear
- Provision of 23 units of transitional supported housing at Citygate.
- 2 units for families requiring intensive supports under SLA with Focus Ireland.
- Assistance is also provided in certain instances for deposits , B & B accommodation where absolutely necessary and sleeping bags as part of the Severe Weather Initiative.

Sligo continues to be the lead authority for the North West Region responsible for budget management and the co-ordination of funding for the region. The North West region's allocated budget towards the cost of homeless services in 2015 was €414,620 with each authority continuing to provide for 10% of expenditure from within its own resources.

Sligo County Council's Homeless Action Team (HAT) which was set up in November 2013 meets on a fortnightly basis to assess individual cases and adopt approaches to best support and assist homeless individuals or those at risk of becoming homeless and put in place support services for them. This case management approach is key to achieving the principle contained in national policy of a housing led

approach whereby homeless persons should be accommodated in the first instance in suitable accommodation with or without supports rather than in so-called expensive emergency accommodation. This has proven very effective in Sligo County Council.

### **Housing Capital Programme**

The Social Housing Strategy was launched by Government in late 2014. It supports the vision that every household should have access to secure, good quality housing suited to their needs at an affordable price and in a sustainable community.

The Department notified the Council of its target for delivery of units under the programme in the period 2015 to 2017 as follows:

- Current & Capital Targets of 301 units of accommodation, with estimated cost of delivery at €20.2m
- This further breaks down into a target of 101 units under the Capital Programme which covers Construction, Acquisition, Part V, Capital Assistance Schemes and Void properties.
- Together with a target of 200 units under the Current/RAS/Leasing programme including leasing through approved housing bodies.

This is a welcome announcement for Sligo and every effort will be made to achieving the target as a minimum



subject availability of supply of quality units in the private sector and obtaining approval of the Department to Capital Schemes progress particularly those with higher land costs.

### **Leasing**

The Council has a total of 39 houses leased under the Long Term Leasing Scheme in Sligo city and county. Sligo County Council hopes to increase this figure in 2016 with special emphasis on the high demands areas in Sligo city and surrounding hinterland.

### **Approved Housing Bodies**

The Council in partnership with Approved Housing Bodies considers ways of meeting the needs of specific target groups such as disability, homeless and the elderly by way of capital funded schemes or Leasing.

### **RAS Programme**

The Rental Accommodation Programme assists households who are in receipt of Rent Supplement for more than 18 months and who have been assessed by the Housing Authority as having a long-term housing need (excluding asylum seekers or other non-nationals who do not have leave to remain in the State permanently).

In 2015, over 50 new contracts were secured in Sligo County Council. There were also 20 contracts renewed after their initial 4 year period expired

and for a number of reasons, 28 transfers have also been granted during the year taking the activity to 98 contracts. It is expected that the activity in RAS will reduce with the commencement of HAP.

### **Housing Loans**

Applicants may be considered for house purchase loans who did not previously own a dwelling and who have been refused by a Bank/Building Society. The Housing (Local Authority Loans) Regulations 2009 set out the requirements and process for the approval of loans by a Local Authority.

### **Housing Grant**

The Allocation under this heading for 2015 was €531,063 (100%).

The three applicable schemes are as listed below:

- Housing Adaptation Grant Scheme for People with a Disability.
- Mobility Aids Housing Grant Scheme.
- Scheme of Housing Aid for Older People.

The Grants scheme remained for 2015 with all applications for assistance to those with Disability, Mobility and the Elderly being accepted and processed.

### **Corporate Services**

Corporate Services includes a range of important functions, including administration of Council and Municipal District meetings, providing support for elected

members, preparation of the register of electors, administration of higher education grants, the provision of Information Services, administration of Freedom of Information system, and the delivery of customer services.

### **Sligo County Council Draft Corporate Plan 2015-2019**

Section 134 of the Local Government Act 2001, amended by Section 49 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014, obliges Local Authorities to prepare a corporate Plan 'prepared on the basis of an organisational wide strategic approach encompassing the various activities of the local authority concerned.'

The Plan was adopted by the Council at its meeting in April 2015. In their joint introduction, the Cathaoirleach and Chief Executive set out the context for the Plan:

'While the model of Local Government has changed, the primary objective remains the same - to plan and deliver the optimum level of services with the available resources.

An important element in delivering this goal is the process of meaningful engagement with all stakeholders, to work in active and dynamic partnership on behalf of the people of County Sligo.

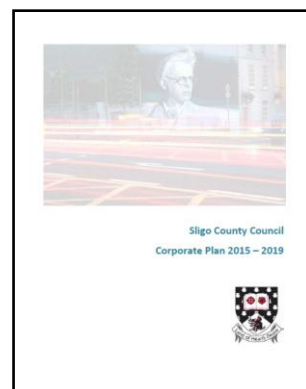
While all Local Authorities are facing enormous challenges, there is a strong

consensus that Sligo has the capacity and will to deliver in a number of strategically important areas, and Sligo County Council will be driving this endeavour with ambition and purpose.

The outstanding success of Fleadh 2014, which attracted over 300,000 visitors, provided invaluable marketing opportunities, showcasing the many outstanding scenic and cultural attractions of our wonderful county. It was also an example of our ability to work alongside and energise the local community and the business sector, who share our resolve to capitalise on our county's enormous tourism potential.

Local Government is in a process of transition, but the local authority remains the 'arm' of government closest to the people. The spirit and drive of our local communities provide a robust platform to build for the future, and this Council is committed to working alongside our communities and key partner agencies for the benefit of people who live, work or invest in our county.'

The Corporate Plan can be accessed by clicking on the image below.



### **Higher Education Grants**

In the academic year 2014/2015 Sligo County Council assisted 20 students with the award of a Higher Education Grant. All were renewal students whom qualified for student grant together with fees for continuing their studies at higher education level.

The student grant application process was centralised nationally in recent years, and all new applications are now made through the online student grant application facility. Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI) accept all new student grant applications including applications from existing students changing their courses or progressing to new courses (be they add-on courses or otherwise) in the 2016/2017 academic year. Sligo County Council continues to process renewal applications for students to whom they are already paying grants until those students have completed their current courses. In 2016 the number of students will be significantly reduced.

### **Register of Electors**

Since the publishing of the 2013 Local Electoral Area Boundary Committee report, County Sligo has been divided into two electoral areas (previously five), Ballymote-Tubbercurry and Sligo. Following

the Local Elections held in May, 2014 8 No. Members were elected to the Municipal District of Ballymote-Tubbercurry with 10 No. Members elected to the Municipal District of Sligo.

Sligo County Council prepares the Register of Electors annually and as always a major effort was made to achieve the highest possible degree of accuracy and comprehensiveness in compiling the Register. On the final Register for 2015/2016, 52,429 electors were registered. You can check the register online by visiting <http://www.checktheregister.ie>.

In 2015 a landmark Referendum was held on 22<sup>nd</sup> May, 2015 in relation to Marriage Equality. Ireland became the first country in the world to bring in same-sex marriage by a popular vote. A total of 1,201,607 people (62.1%) voted Yes and 734,300 (37.9%) voted No. The total poll was just under two million.

### **Information Services, Customer Services and Freedom of Information**

The Information Services Office provides information services to the Elected Members, staff, media and general public, as well as providing administrative support to the Cathaoirleach. The office also administers Freedom of Information requests and monitors and updates our websites in conjunction with IT



Section, and coordinates the placement of advertisements in relation to Sligo County Council.

### **Customer Services**

Sligo County Council expects its services to be appraised to the highest standards, and the Customer Service Desk enables the authority to provide a professional, customer-focused service. The 'Desk' provides a first point of contact for visitors to County Hall, or people who e-mail or phone the Council.

### **Website**

Sligo County Council's website ([www.sligococo.ie](http://www.sligococo.ie)) provides up to date information and online services. Many of the main service areas, including Finance and Motor Tax, enable customers to transact their business online. Information Services works with the Information Technology Section to monitor, review and update the Council website on a regular basis.

You can also keep up to date with Council alerts, press releases, upcoming events and public announcements by following [@sligococo](https://twitter.com/sligococo) on Twitter.

### **Emergency alerts**

Information Services works with the IT Section to prepare and issue 'out of office' emergency alerts, particularly in relation to roads and water services.

## **Human Resources**

The Human Resources Department looks after all staffing related matters in Sligo County Council, (e.g.) recruitment, training, maintenance of personnel records, industrial relations, superannuation, etc. It is also responsible for implementing statutory and non-statutory staff welfare policies and procedures and maintains stable industrial relations.

The HR Department works to create an equitable, consultative and supportive working environment within Sligo County Council.

### **Staff Recruitment**

The Council has only been in a position to undertake limited recruitment of staff in recent years due to the moratorium on recruitment in the public service. However, the HR Department did process applications for various positions during 2015. Vacancies for open posts were advertised in the local and/or national press and also on the Sligo County Council and Local Government Jobs websites. In total, 12 recruitment competitions were held during the year and 27 persons were appointed, 20 of which were filled by open competition.

### **Internship Scheme**

On 1 July 2011, the Government launched a new National Internship Scheme as part of its jobs initiative programme. Sligo County Council continues to facilitate Internship

placements under the National Scheme as a Host Organisation and facilitated a total of 4 interns in 2015.

### **Gateway**

Gateway is a Government labour activation scheme introduced in 2014. The scheme offers persons on long term (2 years) Social Welfare payment 22 months employment with Local Authorities. Local Authorities employ candidates on 19.5 hour per week contracts. Sligo County Council was set a target of employing 55 persons on this scheme. By the end of 2015, Sligo County Council had employed 53 persons on this scheme.

### **Retirements**

During 2015, a total of 16 staff retired from the service of Sligo County Council. (See Appendix 1).

### **Training and Development**

Sligo County Council is dedicated to providing relevant Training to all staff within its resources. Training activity in 2015 particularly focused on Health & Safety. Funding for training was also made available to the Council under the headings of Non-National Roads Grant, Water Services Grant and Environmental Grant and these were expended on relevant courses for staff working in those areas.

### **Industrial Relations**

It is the policy of the Human Resources Department to foster a good industrial relations climate and, in this regard, regular meetings take place

between the HR Department and Union representatives/officials. The Council is committed to resolving IR issues as soon as possible once an issue arises in an open and co-operative manner.

### **Workforce Planning**

Sligo County Council's Draft Work Force Plan for the period 2015 - 2019 was prepared as recommended in the Transition Framework Guidance issued by the re-organisation Advisory Group (July 2013) and in accordance with the recommendations of the Workforce Planning Group (2012). The Management Team together with Section Heads analysed existing staffing levels across all grades in the existing departmental structure and having regard to the reduction in Directorates, also considered necessary re-alignment of Directorate functions as a result of the amalgamation of Sligo County Council and Sligo Borough Council as provided for in the Local Government Reform Act 2014. This analysis included an examination of the age profile of the organisation and a review of Acting Posts, staff numbers and structures for each service area, gaps arising during the life of the Plan, etc. The finalisation of the Workforce Plan was deferred in 2015 pending the outcome of engagements with the Department in relation to a 5 year Financial Plan to address the Council's financial situation. A review of the Draft Workforce Plan and consultations with

Trade Unions is to take place taking account of the final agreed Financial Plan.

### **Staff Welfare**

The Human Resources Department is responsible for formulating and implementing a range of policies and support mechanisms to help staff manager their work-life balance. The HR Department manages the Sick Leave Scheme and provides employee assistance when required, with the services of a full-time Staff Welfare Officer available to all staff. In 2015 the Council also entered into an agreement with Health Assured to deliver Employee Assistance to all staff as required.

Details of all family friendly policies are available on the Council's intranet and many staff avails of these policies, which include Shorter Working Year Scheme, Parental Leave Scheme, Work Sharing Scheme, Career Breaks, Force Majeure Scheme, Compassionate Leave and Maternity & Paternity Leave.

### **Cycle to Work Scheme**

Sligo County Council also promotes the Cycle to Work Scheme. In 2015, the Council assisted 8 employees to purchase bicycles under this Scheme.

## **Sligo Library Service and Museum**

### **Library Management System**

Sligo is in phase three for the implementation of the National Library Management System which is scheduled to commence in October 2016. In order to continue to provide funding for the change over to the single library management system in 2016 the library estimates has made a provision of €10,000 towards ongoing preparatory work for the upgrade. In order to achieve a standard approach to the implementation of the LMS all charges nationally are to be assimilated.

### **Open Libraries**

In 2014, an 'Open Libraries' initiative was piloted in Co. Sligo, offering seven day opening from eight in the morning until ten at night. An innovative service, Open Libraries grants members the freedom to use the library at the hours that suit them best. During the extended hours, the services are available to the public on a self-service basis for borrowing and returning items, using the internet via library PCs or via Wi-Fi using their own devices, browsing, printing, photocopying, individual study and community activities and meetings. During extended hours, users gain access to the library via an automated system by using their unique membership card and an authorised pin number. Membership is confined to adults 18 years + for the purposes of the pilot. At scheduled times; library staff continue to provide expert and additional services, support users and



develop community engagement and programming.



Councillor Dara Mulvey tries out the new Open Library system with County Librarian, Donal Tinney.

The Open Libraries pilot is operated from the Branch Library in Teach Laighne, Tubbercurry and to date has proven to be very successful with over 250 members at present. There is a need to promote the concept of Open Libraries to the general public and a need to actively target members as the idea of the Open Libraries is relatively new to the general public in Ireland. To this end a marketing budget of €1,000 is included in the book of estimates.

### **Book Fund**

Funding for the provision of books for Sligo's Libraries has been severely curtailed in recent years due to the Council's financial constraints. €50,000 was provided for in 2015. It is proposed to increase the Book Fund to €60,000 for 2016. Included in the draft Budget for 2016 is €8,000 to provide online materials such as eBooks and e-magazines which are procured centrally.

### **Reading and Literacy Programmes**

Sligo Library services will continue to roll out its programme of reading initiatives and support for The Right to Read policy throughout County Sligo in partnership with the education sector. The 2016 funding requirement is estimated at €10,000.

### **Europe Direct**

The EDIC based in Tubbercurry Library goes from strength to strength as the Information Centre fulfils its role throughout Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim. In 2015 an exciting and broadly themed programme of events and activities were held in libraries in Sligo such as lectures and debating competitions, events for new communities all of which were highly successful in promoting the centre throughout 2015. Funding of €24,000 annually is provided from the EU to cover the cost of the EDIC.

### **Museum**

The number of visitors to Sligo Museum continues to grow and this year so far over 12,000 visitors have been recorded. The continuing programming of exhibitions and the improvements in opening hours have in the main contributed tremendously to the increase.

In celebration of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Easter Rising in 2016, Sligo Museum will commission an exhibition on the role played by

Sligionians in the Rising. The exhibition will run from June to October 2016.

### **Archives**

The ongoing work on the records of Sligo County Council will continue in 2016 as work continues in the Old Gaol on conservation and indexing of material. The main deliverable for 2016 will be the re-housing of the records held in the Old Gaol to new premises.

### **Public Consultation of Ireland 2016**

Sligo County Council hosted a series of meetings in April 2015 for anyone interested in participating in the development and delivery of Sligo's local programme, as part of Ireland 2016.



Ireland 2016 is a year-long programme of activity, in which everyone is invited to participate, to commemorate the events of the 1916 Rising, to reflect on our achievements as a democratic state over the last 100 years and to look towards Ireland's future.

The national programme, which was announced by the government in March 2015, included seven strands; State Ceremonial; Historical Reflection; An Teanga Bheo/The Living Language; Youth and Imagination; Cultural Expression; Community Participation; Global and Diaspora.

The Community Participation strand is being led by local authorities across the country and Sligo County Council has appointed Donal Tinney as local co-ordinator who will be responsible for coordinating the local programme.

Speaking at the announcement of the local meeting, Chief Executive, Ciarán Hayes said "Ireland 2016, as a year of reflection and engagement for everyone on this island, goes far beyond the formal marking of a key historical moment. It is a once-in-a-century invitation to people of all ages, at home and overseas, to shape and take part in a diverse range of historical, cultural and artistic activities, all designed to nurture reflection, commemoration, celebration and debate. There is a wealth of imagination, energy and vision available to us in County Sligo and I want to encourage everyone to get involved in their own way so we can make Ireland 2016 a truly national event."

## **Background information**

The Ireland 2016 Centenary Programme was launched by An Taoiseach Enda Kenny on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 at Collins Barracks, Dublin. A national initiative, based within the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Ireland 2016 is the centre-piece of the 'Decade of Centenaries'.

The Programme is an invitation to all of the people on the island of Ireland, to families and people of Irish ancestry living abroad, who share our cultural identity and heritage, and all of Ireland's friends, to participate in an intensive year of remembrance of the past, of reflection on our achievements and of re-imagining our Republic for future generations.

### **The Programme of events and initiatives comprises Seven Strands:**

**1. State Ceremonial** - Formal commemorative events include a parade from Dublin Castle, down O'Connell Street to Parnell Square on Easter Sunday 2016; a special State Reception for 1916 Relatives; an event to highlight the significant role of women in 1916; synchronised wreath laying ceremonies on Easter Monday marking the time when the first shots were fired; an event at Liberty Hall to commemorate James Connolly. Official openings will also take place at the seven flagship commemorative projects - the GPO Interpretative Centre, Richmond Barracks, Teach an

Phiarsaigh, the Tenement Museum, Kilmainham Gaol and Courthouse, the National Concert Hall and the Military Service Pensions Archive.

**2. Historical Reflection** - A range of history-based activities and initiatives will include a series of conferences on various elements of 1916 at our universities; the National Library of Ireland will run a major digitisation project making over 20,000 items linked to the Rising available online; the Library will also hold community collection days for privately held 1916 memorabilia; the National Archives is publishing secret files compiled by the Dublin Metropolitan Police during 1916; a commemorative avenue of trees will be planted in the Phoenix Park; An Post will issue 16 commemorative stamps which, when scanned using a Smartphone app, will link to interactive material on the Rising; the Central Bank will issue commemorative coins.

**3. An Teanga Bheo - The Living Language** - The central place of the Irish language in the ideals of the revolutionary generation will be reflected in a diverse programme of events and activities in Irish, including a digitisation programme, lectures, debates, seminars, online learning resources and arts events.

**4. Youth and Imagination** - A detailed education programme, to extend from primary to university level, will place children and young



people at the centre of Ireland 2016. It includes 'Proclamation for a New Generation' which will encourage students to examine the Proclamation and to write their own version to reflect their values; an inter-generational ancestry project; 'Proclamation Day' will take place in all educational settings in March 2016; a teaching resource will be developed on the National Flag, and a flag will be delivered to every school in the country by the Defence Forces; a new Leaving Certificate subject - 'Politics and Society' - will be rolled out on a trial basis; children aged 8-17 will be consulted on the theme of 'Imagining our Future', which will form the basis of a Children's Day event, which will also commemorate the children killed during the Rising.

**5. Cultural Expression** - The Arts Council and our National Cultural Institutions have developed an extensive programme of arts and culture events. The Arts Council, for example, has issued an open call for large scale public arts projects; it will also stage a large scale choral event, involving a high number of choirs from across the country and there will be a national touring theatre programme; the National Concert Hall will stage a series of seven concerts over Easter Week 2016, arranged around the key themes of the Proclamation and its signatories; the Abbey Theatre will stage new productions of national and

international classics and has also commissioned a series of new plays from young Irish playwrights.

**6. Community Participation** - Local Authorities are working with Ireland 2016 to develop commemorative events and activities in every county across the country and to encourage widespread citizen engagement; the GAA is getting involved through its clubs network; the Heritage Council is facilitating local events and regional museums are planning 1916 themed exhibitions.

**7. Global and Diaspora** - Ireland 2016 is inviting the global Irish family from all over the world to join us in remembering, reflecting and re-imagining. Our diplomatic missions are working with Culture Ireland to develop significant events in the US, the UK, Australia, Argentina, France and many other countries. A three week Irish culture festival will be held in Washington; the Irish Embassy in London will stage a flagship event in one of London's main cultural venues and a series of academic conferences examining the impact of the Rising are planned in Australia.

### **Civil Defence**

Civil Defence under the leadership of the Civil Defence Officer has 84 active volunteer members and 6 training centres throughout the County and train in many skills in order to be in a position to provide a response to the 3

Primary Response Agencies in an emergency situation. The Civil Defence also provided very valuable service to the community by providing first aid cover for their events which numbered 130 for the year.

In 2015, Sligo Civil Defence were activated to assist all three Primary response agencies as follows:

- We assisted the HSE by providing the medical cover required for the All Ireland Fleadh which Sligo hosted in August with circa 450,000 people attended over an 8 day period.
- We also provided assistance to the Local Authority during the severe flooding that hit the area.
- We provided assistance to An Garda Síochána in the search for a missing person in Sligo Town.

Budget for Civil Defence was €123,000 which is grant aided by the Department of Defence.

## Community and Enterprise

### Community and Economic Development

The Community & Economic Development section supports inter-agency strategic collaborative work with other organisations on a local and regional level in promoting and encouraging community and economic development within the County. It supports community organisations,

promotes volunteerism, promotes and active citizenship including the youth sector and provides a range of supports and grant aid to a myriad of organisations throughout the County.

### Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

The Sligo LCDC was established in 2014 under the Local Government



Reform 2014 Act for the purposes of developing, co-ordinating and implementing a coherent and integrated approach to local and community development. The committee is made up of representatives from the local government and local development sectors, public bodies and representatives of social, economic, environmental and community interests.

The focus of the work of Sligo Local Community Development Committee is to initiate the implementation and monitoring of the various actions in the Local Economic and Community Plan 2015-2021. Key elements include maximising opportunities for Sligo out of European funding, promoting investment in Sligo and establishing structures to ensure better

collaboration at a county level, in particular an Economic Development Forum and Tourism Forum. Actions are focused on enhancing the strategic capacity at a county level by ensuring research base to support collective action in relation to economic and community development. This to include the organisation of an annual Community and Economic Conference to discuss the development of the County, the implementation of the LECP and to reaffirm inter-sectoral commitment to collaborative action and to share ideas and learning on how to best improve the quality of life in the County. Other initiatives will include supporting the development of a Sligo Diaspora Network to create mutually beneficial linkages with the international Sligo Community and examining how we can make Sligo a more child Friendly environment.

The LCDC is also responsible for monitoring the delivery of the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme and acts as the Local Action Group for the delivery of the Rural Development Programme in Sligo.



*Address by Councillor  
Sean MacManus,  
Chairperson of County  
Sligo LCDC at  
presentation of Draft*

*Local Economic and Community Plan  
to Sligo Municipal Council.*

I do not think it is over-stating the relevance of the Draft Local Economic and Community Plan to say that it is one of the most significant documents to be brought before Sligo County Council in recent years. The recent changes in Local Government have devolved a number of important responsibilities to local authorities, including the promotion of both local economic and community development.

Economic development or community enhancement cannot happen in a vacuum, it requires a strategic vision to give focus and direction to our agreed objectives. To make a simple comparison, our County Development Plan provides the context for all planning activities in the county, and the level of research, consultation and debate during its preparation, highlights its importance.

Similarly, the process of preparing the Draft Local and Economic and Community Plan has involved extensive engagement with all stakeholders who share our commitment to the betterment of Co Sligo. It represents the end product of eighteen months work involving extensive research, public

consultation, analysis, numerous workshops and strategic planning meetings.

This Plan identifies specific, key actions across a wide range of economic and community activity; it suggests realistic goals and sets out how they can be achieved. A key ambition which has guided this process is to 'promote and develop Sligo as the economic driver of the North-West, and as an attractive location for investment, tourism, commerce, entrepreneurship and employment.'

Each of these areas are hugely important in their own right, collectively they represent a very positive blueprint for the future of our county in the areas of economic and community development.

Individuals, agencies and groups involved in economic activity or community endeavour should familiarise themselves with the Plan, particularly in the context of funding applications, as the Plan will be the reference points for assessing applications for grant assistance for economic or community development.

The various aspirations set out in the Plan can be summarised in one overriding objective. 'To promote the well-being and quality of life of citizens and communities', and I think this is an ideal we can all readily subscribe to and support.



**Joint Policing Committee:  
Promoting consultation and  
co-operation in policing.**

The Garda Síochána Act 2005 provides for the establishment of a Joint Policing Committee in each Local Authority. The purpose of the Joint Committee is to develop greater consultation, co-operation and accountability between An Garda Síochána, Local Authorities and elected members, with the participation of the Community and voluntary sector, on the management of policing issues. Revised Guidelines governing the operation of Joint Policing Committees were issued in August, 2014.

In accordance with the Guidelines, the Joint Policing Committee will consist of 28 members, i.e. 13 elected members of the Council, 5 Oireachtas members, 2 Local Authority Officials, 2 nominees of the Garda Commissioner, and 6 Community nominees.

The first meeting of the Joint Policing Committee (JPC) was held in the Radisson Blu Hotel, Sligo on 18<sup>th</sup> December. At this meeting, Councillor Rosaleen O'Grady was elected Chairperson of the Committee, and in her opening remarks she highlighted the importance of continued cooperation between the local authority and An Garda Síochána in housing, policing and special events. She stated that "To achieve our

objectives, we have to harness the collective intelligence, acumen and experience of the committee members. Our task is to see how we can develop a six year Strategy and an Annual Plan which include objectives derived from the Annual Policing Plans, linked in to the relevant objectives in the Draft Local Economic and Community Plan of Sligo County Council and the JPC Guidelines, which will enable us to promote local and community development."

The Cathaoirleach anticipated a busy work programme for the Committee and noted that "We have to set realistic objectives for meaningful actions through collaboration with local communities and structures on matters affecting the policing of this county. The new committee has renewed its commitment to collaborative efforts to supporting policing and to enhance community safety."

A Steering Group was established to oversee this process, consisting of the Chief Executive of the County Council, Mr Ciarán Hayes, a representative of An Garda Síochána and the Chairperson of the JPC. This group will be assisted by the JPC secretariat provided by the Council, and they will develop a process to harness all of the views and aspirations from the various organisations. It is intended to provide supports for the JPC members in terms of training and workshops.

## **JPC Membership**

### Local Authority Elected Members

- Cllr Rosaleen O'Grady, Chairperson
- Cllr Eamon Scanlon
- Cllr Paul Taylor
- Cllr Jerry Lundy
- Cllr Martin Baker
- Cllr Hubert Keaney
- Cllr Dara Mulvey, Vice Chairperson
- Cllr Marie Casserly
- Cllr Thomas Healy
- Cllr Gino O'Boyle
- Cllr Margaret Gormley
- Cllr Michael Clarke
- Cllr Sean MacManus

### Oireachtas Elected Members

- Senator Marc Mac Sharry - Fianna Fáil
- Senator Susan O'Keefe - The Labour Party
- Deputy Tony McLoughlin TD - Fine Gael

### Local Authority Official members

- Ciarán Hayes, Chief Executive
- Margaret McConnell, Senior Executive Officer

### An Garda Síochána members (2)

2 members appointed directly by the Garda Commissioner:

- Chief Superintendent Clancy
- Superintendent Murray

### PPN Community Members (6)

- Vanessa Clarke
- David Tuffy
- Patrick Benson
- Tom Mc Gettrick
- Pat Conway
- Alan Mc Menamin

## SICAP

SICAP (Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme) is a national programme which aims to



tackle poverty and social exclusion through local engagement and partnership between disadvantaged individuals, community organisations and public sector agencies and operates across the Republic of Ireland. The Local Community Development Committees manages SICAP at a local level with support from Pobal and funding from the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government. The SICAP Programme commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 and will continue until 2017, subject to satisfactory review by the LCDC. Sligo LEADER Partnership Company has been contracted to deliver the programme on behalf of Sligo LCDC. The SICAP programme itself involves the provision developmental support for marginalized groups and disadvantaged communities. Sligo County Council staff are responsible for administration of the contract and the preparation of monitoring and oversight reports on behalf of the LCDC.

## Rural Development Programme

The Sligo Local Community Development Committee will be the Local Action Group (LAG) for the delivery of the Rural Development Programme (RDP/LEADER) working in partnership with LAG Partners Sligo County Council and Sligo LEADER Partnership Company. RDP/LEADER supports the delivery of local development actions in rural communities and has formed part of EU rural development funding supports since 1991.

The key themes for RDP/ LEADER 2014-2020 are:

- 1. Rural Economic Development / Enterprise Development and Job Creation** - Rural Tourism - Enterprise Development - Broadband - Rural Towns
- 2. Social inclusion through building community capacity, training and animation** - Basic Services for hard to reach communities - Rural Youth
- 3. Rural Environment** - A cross cutting requirement for all LEADER interventions - Targeting multiple environmental objectives including the protection and sustainable use of water resources, the protection and improvement of biodiversity and the development of renewable energy.

#### **4. Support for Food Producers**

An allocation was made to Sligo, subject to the submission of a satisfactory Local Development Strategy. Sligo County Council is the Lead financial partner for the Local Action Group and responsible for the financial administration of the programme at a local level.

##### **Public Participation Network (PPN)**

The Local Government Reform Act 2014 provides for the adoption of a Framework for Public Participation in Local Government which will set out the mechanisms by which citizens and communities will be encouraged and supported to participate in the decision - making processes of local authorities.

In order to support the ongoing development of the Sligo Public Participation Network it is proposed to provide ongoing support to strengthen the capacity of the community and voluntary sector in Sligo including the Environmental and Social Inclusion groups. This will be achieved through capacity building measures, training and the support of key structures such as the PPN secretariat and the various linkages groups established to feed into various aspects of policy making.

##### **Local Enterprise Office**

The Local Enterprise Office is the first-stop-shop for those entrepreneurs starting a small business or expanding

an existing one. It provides an integrated support service centred on the needs of small businesses from the Council's offices in City Hall. Supports provided include training, mentoring, financial assistance, advice, counselling and promotion of an enterprise culture (including through programmes run in schools). It also assists broader economic development through for example the advancement of tourism, city centre developmental activities, membership of relevant local development bodies, etc. It provides a key role in signposting clients to the Council's other business-related services and to business-related services operated by other agencies.

The Local Enterprise Office is also involved in driving a number of Government initiatives locally. For example, it is heavily involved with the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources in the delivery of its ICT vouchers programme and in the delivery of the Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur Programme on behalf of the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation. A significant element of its funding is provided by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation and channelled through Enterprise Ireland, which also provides key back-up expertise and assistance.

##### **Sligo's Best Young Entrepreneurs**

Three of the county's best young entrepreneurs won a total investment



of €50,000 through the Local Enterprise Office Sligo, as part of the €2 million Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur competition (#IBYE).

Aimed at young and aspiring entrepreneurs between the ages of 18 and 30, Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur competition is an integral part of the Action Plan for Jobs and is supported by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation through the network of 31 Local Enterprise Offices.

At a ceremony in City Hall in October 2015, awards were made for Sligo best start-up, best new idea, and best existing business, as well as an overall award for the best young entrepreneur in the county.

- The local winners and investments won were as follows: Best New Idea (winning a €10,000 investment) - Amr Dawood, Loyee from Ballisodare
- Best Start-Up (winning a €20,000 investment) - John Divers (Movers & Makers) from Sligo.
- Best Established Business (winning a €20,000 investment) - Rhona Togher (Restored Hearing) from Shannon Eighter.
- Rhona Togher, from Restored Hearing was also named as Sligo's "Best Young Entrepreneur".

All local winners will now represent Sligo at the regional finals in Carrick-on-Shannon on 27th October. A total of 24 finalists will then compete at the Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur National Finals in December.

The Cathaoirleach of Sligo County Council, Cllr. Rosaleen O'Grady said, "The competition's overall aim is to stimulate and promote local youth entrepreneurship in particular and spread the message to the young and indeed the not so young that entrepreneurship and self-employment are real options. They are challenging ones, very often demanding long hours of hard work to bring an idea to fruition and to achieve business success. Businesses can, and do on occasion fail but, more often, they succeed. Business success brings with it not just a means to make a living but also a sense of accomplishment and pride for the entrepreneur. Business success also brings local jobs. It helps to sustain communities. For a select and indeed growing cohort it brings the opportunity to become established in national, European and world-wide markets and we have many fine examples of such business persons here in Sligo."



John Reilly, from the Local Enterprise Office Sligo, paid tribute to all the young entrepreneurs in the region, saying "As the first stop shop for entrepreneurs and small businesses, it is heartening to see a growing and vibrant community of young entrepreneurs locally. Through Business Bootcamps, mentoring and general business advice, the Local Enterprise Office plays a vital role in supporting the next generation of entrepreneurs, on a year-round basis. We will also be working closely with this year's IBYE winners, to help maximise the return on the investment that they have been awarded."

This year's judging panel were also thanked during the ceremony for their role in the competition and members included John Reilly (LEO Sligo), Síle Haran (Sligo Tourism) and Geraldine Reynolds (LEO Leitrim).

Details around Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur competition are available through [www.ibye.ie](http://www.ibye.ie) and information on supports for all small businesses can be accessed through [www.localenterprise.ie](http://www.localenterprise.ie).

### **Background**

Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur is a competition that is open to everyone with an innovative business idea including:

- individuals
- venture teams
- partnerships

- existing businesses with a new idea
- people overseas (including Irish emigrants) who will headquarter in Ireland

The competition is broken down into three categories:

- Best New Idea (pre-trading), with €10,000 investment prize fund available through every LEO
- Best Start up Business (up to 24 months), with €20,000 investment prize fund available through every LEO
- Best Established Business (over 24 months) with €20,000 investment prize fund available through every LEO

### **Tourism Development**

2015 was a strong year for tourism in Sligo. The importance of the tourism sector to Sligo cannot be overstated. The continuing investment in tourism infrastructure and the growth in visitor numbers acts as an economic driver to the region, while also reinforcing important social and cultural benefits locally.

### **Festivals & Events**

Many festival events that took place during the year delivered significant additional numbers of visitors to the county and region. Sligo County Council would have been to the fore in supporting and assisting the organisers in their efforts. Among them included the successful Yeats 2015 annual programme of events, Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, Sligo Live,

the Yeats Tread Softly festival in combination with International Yeats Summer School, An Post Tour of Sligo, Heritage Week, Sligo Summer Festival, Christmas Fayre, International Choral Festival, Strandhill Warrior's Run, Tubbercurry Old Fair Day and Enniscrone Black Pig Festival, to mention but a few. Events are proven to attract visitors to the region and many will continue into 2016.

### **Wild Atlantic Way**

The successful rollout of the Wild Atlantic Way is another key milestone, with improved visitor numbers attracted to the area, as a result. Sligo has seven Discovery Points along the route; Enniscrone, Easkey, Aughris, Strandhill, Rosses Point, Streedagh and Mullaghmore.



Mullaghmore has 'Signature Discovery Point' status, allied to its spectacular seascape backdrop, 'Big Wave' surfing phenomenon, Classibawn Castle and Ben Bulbin mountain backdrop. Improvements will continue at these locations to ensure the visitor experience is consistent with other WAW locations. For more information about Wild Atlantic Way, click on the logo above.



Stunning Mullaghmore has achieved 'Signature Discovery Point' status.

### **Adventure Tourism**

Adventure products continue to grow in popularity and Sligo County Council support many exciting opportunities throughout the year including, Maritime Centre redevelopment at Strandhill, Off-road national Mountain Biking Centre on the Ox mountains near Coolaney in conjunction with Coillte and the pursuit of a Greenway recreational walking/ cycle trail along the SLNCR (Sligo, Leitrim and Northern Counties Railway) from Sligo to Enniskillen in Co. Fermanagh. Work is on-going in preparation of an impending cross border INTERREG V funding application involving, Sligo, Leitrim and Cavan Councils.

### **Promotion of Sligo**

Sligo County Council's ongoing collaboration with Sligo tourism Ltd. and the broad range of stakeholders engaged in the promotion and development of Co. Sligo as a premier tourism visitor destination is evident in the exhaustive range cultural experiences, natural amenities and outdoor activities developed throughout County Sligo annually.

### **Border Uplands Project**

The Border Uplands Project was completed in June 2015. Sligo County Council was a partner in the Border Uplands Project, a joint venture between ICBAN, Fermanagh District Council and the County Councils of Cavan, Leitrim and Sligo which will

create necessary rural recreation and leisure infrastructure in the scenic uplands of the ICBAN region. In Sligo, the project focused on the following key goeheritage sites: Ben Bulbin Range incorporating the Gleniff/Glencar Valley, Mullaghmore/Streedagh Coastal. Strandhill/Knocknarea (Queen Maedbh) Walk, Ox Mountains/Sligo Way Trail and the Bricklieve (Carrowkeel) Miners Way and Historical Trail. The works concentrated on providing high quality walking routes and associated infrastructure such as signage, waymarking, site interpretation panels, site furniture, car parking etc. Sligo County Council secured a dedicated award of €663,000 from the overall grant aid award of €3,183,804.

### **Pride of Place**

Local communities throughout the county are encouraged to showcase their achievements and have participated in the IPB Pride of Place competition held in association with Co-operation Ireland since its inception in 2004. Entries are accepted in either population categories or single issue categories and Sligo County Council supports entrants in their preparation for and during judging day. The competition fosters community participation and highlights the importance of communities working together to create civic pride in their area. In 2015 the communities of Grange and



Strandhill represented the county in the competition.

Next year, community groups will again be supported to enter and represent the county in this All Island competition.

### **Age Friendly Programme**

The Age Friendly Cities & Counties Programme is part of a World Health Organisation response and strategy to our ageing population. The Irish Age-Friendly Cities & Counties Programme aims to create communities where all of us as we age, enjoy a good quality of life and continue to participate fully in the life of those communities. Sligo is part of the national Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme, an initiative aimed at making Ireland the best country in the world in which to grow old.

An Age Friendly Ireland is a place where all of us, as we age, can

- Lead healthier and active lives for longer
- Stay living in our own homes and communities
- Get to where we want to go, when we want
- Have the information we need to lead full lives
- Feel and be safe at home and out and about
- Be enabled by the build and social environment
- Continue to learn, develop and work

- Participate in social, economic and public life
- Be truly valued and respected

The 'Sligo Age Friendly Alliance' established in October 2014 and made up of the key decision makers from a host of organisations across the county including HSE, Sligo LEADER Partnership Co. Ltd, An Garda Síochána, Active Retirement Ireland, Sligo Sport & Recreation Partnership and Muintir na Tíre who have the opportunity to improve quality of life for people as they age.

An Age Friendly Strategy and Action Plan for the county is being developed and this work will continue in 2016 in addition to the delivery of individual Age Friendly actions.

### **Development of Play Opportunities**

Sligo County Council, as part of the Local Authorities Play & Recreation Network takes part in national initiatives - National Play Day and National Recreation Week - which receive funding from the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

Activities in Sligo as part of the National Play Day initiative cater for children up to 12 years. This free event is organised through the partnership of Sligo County Council, Sligo County Childcare Committee and Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership and includes outdoor

activities, arts & crafts, storytelling and colouring competitions.

Sligo County Council in association with local agencies and organisations holds a week of recreation events for 12-18 year olds, in the summer, as part of the National Recreation Week initiative. Activities organised in previous years include art workshops, horse-riding for teenagers with autism, dance class, zumba, movie & pizza night, stand-up paddle boarding and outdoor pursuits.

It is expected to continue to organise and co-ordinate activities under both initiatives in 2016.

### **Support for the Community & Voluntary Sector**

The Community & Voluntary Grant Scheme covers a broad range of community activity in the county including support for community groups, Tidy Towns Committees, Burial Ground Committees, Festival committees and organizers of international / national and local events that will promote the county. A new policy was prepared and adopted by the Council in 2015 where groups could apply for funding under four different categories, as follows: Community Event, Community Heritage, Community Enhancement and Community Enterprise. A budget of €100,000 was set aside for this initiative in 2015 and it is hoped to maintain this in 2016.

### **Good year for Sligo's entrants in Tidy Towns Awards**



2015 was a very encouraging year for Sligo's entrants in the National Tidy Towns Awards as they all reported an improvement in their results from 2014. Coolaney was awarded a Silver medal and also received the County Award for Sligo. Prizes were also awarded to Riverstown (highly commended) and Ballintogher (Commended).

Enniscrone won the Endeavour Award, which is presented for the biggest improvement by an entrant in each County from the previous year. Sligo town received awards in two categories, 'Value Water' and 'Waste Prevention.'

The various murals around Sligo town received high praise for the adjudicators. In the Adjudication Report, it stated that 'the murals seen in Sligo this year rival anything this adjudicator has seen anywhere in Ireland. Jaw-dropping isn't something easily owned up to but the rendering of Maud Gonne was this good.'

The Cathaoirleach of Sligo County Council Councillor, Rosaleen O'Grady,

paid tribute to the various Tidy Towns Committees for their outstanding work by expressing that 'the fact that there has been an improvement right across the board speaks volumes for the spirit and energy of our communities. People take great pride in their environment, and I am delighted that their efforts have been acknowledged and rewarded.'

Chief Executive Ciaran Hayes, echoed the Cathaoirleach's commendation of the local communities, observing that 'Sligo has a long tradition of volunteerism which is reflected in the marvellous work carried out all over the county. I would also like to acknowledge the dedication of Council staff who work with great energy and enthusiasm alongside the Tidy Towns committees, and their achievements this year will inspire them to even greater efforts in the future.'

### **Matching Funds**

Funding has been provided under Matching Contributions for 2016 to allow the Council to drawdown and match fund a number of grant schemes and programmes during the year. These include initiatives under tourism and recreational development, economic development, social inclusion, rural / community development etc.

In 2015 match funding was approved for a number of different initiatives including the following:

- Contribution to Volunteer Centre
- Diaspora Fund
- Public Area Enhancement
- Tracks & Trails
- REDZ Proposal
- Agri-Food & Marine Tourism Initiative
- Surf Summit

### **Town Twinning - Kempten students visit Sligo**

The Cathaoirleach of Sligo County Council hosted a reception in County Hall in October 2015 for a visiting group of students from Kempten who are involved in an exchange programme with St Angela's College. The college was represented at the reception by Evelyn McManus, Lecturer, Department of Nursing, Health Sciences and Disability and Dr. Michele Glacken, Head of Department. The reception was also attended by members of the Town Twinning Committee and Elected Members.

In her address the Cathaoirleach said she 'was honoured to have the opportunity to join you in celebrating the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the very special friendship between Kempten and Sligo. Over the last 25 years, the people of Kempten have been both welcome visitors and exceptional hosts, and this has been the foundation of our enduring association. The first contact between Kempten and Sligo involved a student exchange programme, and the networks and friendships established by that

initiative provided the inspiration to develop other projects.

share and develop new ideas and concepts.'

The association was formalised with the signing of a Charter in Kempton in February 1990 and two months later in Sligo. The Charter expressed our shared ambition that 'personal contacts be strengthened' and focused on the important role to be played by young people in particular in fostering and nurturing this friendship.

The origins of this particular initiative date from a visit to Kempton in December 2013 by myself and Marissa Gillgan. The discussions in Kempton prompted an engagement with St Angela's college to discuss the feasibility of an Exchange Programme, and very quickly a consensus evolved that there would be significant benefit from sharing the experiences and practices in our respective colleges. The wider context to the programme is that it enables students to explore the nursing ethos and traditions in another EU country, to examine how nursing services are funded and administered, and to consider the public health issues and challenges being faced by our communities.

The Erasmus Programme has proven to be an excellent initiative in terms of broadening the students horizons, opening up new avenues in terms of study and research, and establishing an invaluable network of contacts to



## Celebrating cultural links with India

### Bust of Indian Poet Tagore unveiled



A bust of Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore was unveiled in Wine Street, Sligo in June 2015 by the Cathaoirleach of Sligo County Council, Councillor Rosaleen O Grady. The ceremony was also attended by Minister for Justice and Equality Frances Fitzgerald, Minister of State for External Affairs, Government of India, General V K Singh, Indian Ambassador to Ireland, Her Excellency Radhika Lokesh and members of the Oireachtas. Tagore was a contemporary and friend of WB Yeats, and the bust was a gift by the Indian Government to the people of Sligo for the Yeats 150 Birthday celebrations.

In her address, the Cathaoirleach said the function was being hosted 'to celebrate the literary achievements of Nobel laureate and revered poet Rabindranath Tagore and reflect on his special association with our own Nobel Laureate and cultural icon, WB Yeats. This evening's events are very significant at a number of levels. First and foremost, the decision of the

Government of India to present the people of Sligo with a gift of the bust of Tagore is a wonderful gesture which is greatly appreciated by our community. The monument will be a permanent testament to the generosity of your Government, it symbolises the cultural links exemplified by the association between Tagore and Yeats, and from a local perspective it is indicative of our close friendship with the Indian community of Sligo.'

The Cathaoirleach recalled the special association between Tagore and Yeats, 'an association that sustained and inspired both these great poets. Tagore was the first non-European to win the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913. His prose and magical poetry were translated into many languages, earning him international popularity and academic acclaim. WB Yeats wrote the introduction to Tagore's collection of poetry which was published in 1912, and he referred to his first meeting with Tagore in London as 'one of the great events of my artistic life'. Yeats also remarked on one of Tagore's works 'If someone were to say he could improve this piece of writing, that person did not understand literature.'

The Cathaoirleach thanked the Indian Association for their active role in the celebration; 'The people of Sligo are renowned for their hospitality, they welcome opportunities to celebrate and promote cultural diversity, and

the active and vibrant role played by our Indian community reflects this culture and ethos.

The Cathaoirleach recalled the tributes paid to Yeats when he won the Nobel Prize; 'At a function in Dublin in 1923 to honour WB Yeats on winning the Nobel Prize for Literature, the poet was told that 'his genius would be appreciated by posterity and that his name would be revered in every age and in every land where there were lovers of literature and true learning' Yeats replied that he became a poet because of the place he lived as a child, recalling in particular the view of majestic Benbulbin from his Grandparents' house. This evening we honour and celebrate the lives and cultural legacy of Tagore and Yeats; These are occasions to value and cherish, and may well be the catalyst and inspiration for further engagement and cooperation in the future.'

The Cathaoirleach concluded her address by quoting words of Tagore 'which would certainly have resonated with his friend Yeats' - "Let your life lightly dance on the edges of time, like dew on the tip of a leaf."

### **Sligo Arts Service**

2015 saw an impressive anniversary celebration of W.B. Yeats which the Council supported through its own programme of events organized by the Library and Arts Services. The Arts

Service also supported Yeatsian events organized voluntarily by the arts community such as the Harp Festival of Moons.

Sligo County Council's Arts Service in partnership with the Arts Council of Ireland, HSE West and other key stakeholders locally, regionally and nationally delivered an annual arts programme that built upon previous successful years of arts activity in local communities enhancing the quality of life for the people of Sligo.

### **HE+ART Participatory Arts & Health Programme & Bealtaine Festival**

The ongoing annual programme of arts and health work was delivered in partnership with the HSE West Services for Older People and Health Promotion, schools and community groups. Projects were Intergenerational, in Day Care and Residential settings and with Active Age & Active Retirement networks throughout the County. The theme for all projects in 2015 was "Place". The Intergenerational projects took place in Easkey and Ballymote. A new project took place with Gallagher House, Tubbercurry. A workshop and exhibition programme continues to grow in St. John's Community Hospital.

The Sligo Arts Bealtaine Festival programme featured fourteen free events and exhibitions throughout the County. The Arts Service and the Hawk's Well Theatre jointly

commissioned “Old Flames” by Brian Leydon who performed with Seamy O’Dowd in Rathcormac Hall, Nazareth House and the Hawk’s Well Theatre.

### **Children and Young People**

The Primary Colours workshop and exhibition programme delivered 18 workshops in 9 schools with 240 students participating. 6 Gallery tours took place with 150 students participating.

**County Sligo Youth Theatre** delivered weekly workshops to 90 young people in three age groups between the ages of 10-18. The Youth Theatre staged four productions including an original show for Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann and ‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream’.

### **Culture Night**

In partnership with the Model and the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, the Arts Service produced Culture Night events with a family focus which were very well attended.

### **Contributions to the Arts**

Twenty two grants were awarded to organisations, venues and festivals.

### **Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2015**

Sligo played host to Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann for the 2<sup>nd</sup> successive year running. Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann is one of Ireland’s greatest cultural attractions, and year after year grows in numbers and in terms of profile internationally. In 2014, Sligo really

pulled off a huge community effort in delivering what was a really remarkable and memorable Fleadh and was an incredible opportunity for Sligo to be showcased on a world stage.



The launch of the Fleadh was performed by Minister of State at the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, Michael Ring TD. Among the invited guests was Senator Labhrás O Murchú, Ard Stiúrthóir of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann, Michael Brennan, Chair of the Connacht Council of Comhaltas, Bartley Gavin, Chair of

Fleadh Cheoil 2015, Members of the Fleadh Executive Committee, Fleadh volunteers, sponsors, supporters, and many more.

The Fleadh programme itself was extended in 2015 to include hundreds of events. Due to the success of the outdoor gig rig in 2014 there was an increase in the number of days the gig rig was in operation, from 6 days to 8. A free programme of events took place every day from the opening on Sunday August 9th through the entire week until the Fleadh drew to a close the following Sunday August 16th. A second outdoor stage was added outside of City Hall on Quay St., which ensured that different parts of Sligo Town were able to cater for the large numbers of visitors which descended for the week.

In addition, the hugely popular Fleadh TV was broadcast live on TG4. The shows featured some of the biggest names in traditional Irish music, as well as providing a platform for many of the up and coming musicians. RTÉ Radio broadcast live from the Fleadh and also recorded their 6-part television series. Raidió na Gaeltachta and Ocean FM also broadcast live to Millions of people worldwide.

Over the course of this week long event, an estimated 350,000 people attended the various events run as part of the Fleadh.

## Cathairleach reflects on Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2015



When I spoke at the closing Ceremony of Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2015, I remarked that the over-riding sentiment was one of enormous pride tinged with regret; Pride that we somehow managed to surpass the outstanding success of Fleadh 2014, regret that we are bidding farewell to our many wonderful visitors who graced the occasion with their presence.

It speaks volumes for the calibre and mind-set of the Fleadh Committee that, in the aftermath of Fleadh 2014, they wasted no time in reflecting on its success or basking in the universal acclaim that came their way; They immediately set about preparing for Fleadh 2015, and what a thoroughly enjoyable and successful week it was. One very noticeable factor of Fleadh 2015 around the streets of Sligo was the number of repeat visitors, people who came here 2014 and discovered it whetted their appetite for more.

But for many people the abiding legacy of Fleadh 2015 will be the spirit and energy of the Fleadh Committee and their crew of exceptional volunteers. Any corner you turned in

Sligo during Fleadh week, there was a friendly and obliging volunteer to help you on your way, and indeed that spirit is evident all over communities in County Sligo.

While I am reluctant to single out particular groups, I must acknowledge the special role of Sligo Tidy Towns, they have been a hugely active and dynamic organisation which has energised the whole community. It was also a great pleasure to meet the members of the overseas Branches of Comhaltas, people who are promoting our tradition and culture all over the world.

Sligo's reputation as the Centre of cultural tourism in the northwest has been enhanced, and there is a responsibility on all the key local agencies to capitalise on the goodwill and global profile generated by the Fleadh.

**An Cathaoirleach, Councillor  
Rosaleen O'Grady**

### **Major Award for Fleadh TV**

The outstanding television coverage provided by Fleadh TV during Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann has been acknowledged by the Irish Film and TV Academy (IFTA). 'Fleadh TV' was broadcast live on TG4 for 8 hours over 3 nights from 15th - 17th August 2014, and in selecting them for an award, IFTA described Fleadh TV as 'a groundbreaking live music and entertainment series that showcased

the best of traditional Irish and folk music from the 2014 Fleadh Cheoil in Sligo.'

The Cathaoirleach of Sligo County Council Councillor, Rosaleen O'Grady, said the Award 'was a fitting and deserved acknowledgement of the tremendous work carried out by Fleadh TV and the Fleadh Cheoil Committee. The quality of their coverage gave enormous exposure also to the wealth of musical talent in Sligo across the full music spectrum, and was invaluable in terms of showcasing Sligo's many attractions to a national and international audience.'

Sligo County Council's Chief Executive, Ciaran Hayes, credits 'Fleadh TV' as being 'one of the many success stories of Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann. In the immediate aftermath of the Fleadh, people were universal and genuine in their praise for the organisation and the tremendous community and voluntary spirit which were the inspirational back-drop to the event. There was a tangible sense of pride among the people of Sligo at our ability to host an event of this scale and importance to such a high standard.'

Chairman of the Fleadh Committee Bartley Gavin said 'Fleadh Cheoil Sligo are delighted to have partnered with Gifted Empire Productions to create Fleadh TV. The Fleadh Committee saw the opportunity to



showcase Sligo to a large TV audience through a collaboration that led to the creation of Fleadh TV. Sligo part funded the productions and also commissioned and produced the TV advertisements of Sligo that were broadcast during each commercial break'

The advertisements featured many of Sligo's unique strengths captured beautifully by Fleadh PRO Micheál Ó Domhnaill of Omedia Productions. Those Sligo advertisements have gone on to be incorporated in an array of promotional material now used by various organisations to promote Sligo.'

## **A milestone in the reconciliation process**

### **The visit of Prince Charles and his wife Camilla**

On 20<sup>th</sup> May 2015 Prince Charles and his wife Camilla made an historic visit to County Sligo, their itinerary including a poignant visit to Mullaghmore and a civic reception in their honour at the Model Gallery. In terms of logistics and preparation it was the largest such event hosted by Sligo County Council, with the events broadcast to a world-wide audience.

The reception at the Model was attended by representatives of community groups and special guests included Minister for Foreign Affairs Charlie Flanagan, Ambassador

Chilcott, Ambassador Mulhall, Elected Members, MEP's and Members of the Oireachtas.



In his welcome address at the reception, Cathaoirleach Councillor Joe Queenan outlined the significance of the occasion, stating 'We are at a point where the Peace Process has been embedded and we are all witnessing the many benefits. We are seeing greater trust arising from growth in cross-border co-operation, trade and collaboration.'

### **Spirit of friendship**

We now have a generation with no experience of 'The Troubles' Your visit today is a milestone in the reconciliation process, a milestone that cements the new phase in our relationship, where we bring closure to past events and look to the future with optimism in a genuine spirit of friendship. I welcome you to Sligo and to invite you to explore and sample all that it has to offer.

We have much in common. Throughout the years and to the present day, tens of thousands from this county have found livelihood and made homes in the United Kingdom.

Likewise, there are many residents of County Sligo who were born in Britain and maintain strong ties to your country. British people live and work in every community in the county. Such intermingling of our two peoples brings diversity to all of our lives and reinforces our shared humanity.

### **Special gift**

The Cathaoirleach presented Prince Charles with a musical composition specially commissioned to mark this event. 'It is Sligo's gift to you and one that is full of meaning and symbolism. On this momentous occasion, where in the words of Uachtaráin Na hÉireann, *'a shadow of the past has become the shelter of the present'*, it was considered fitting to commission a musical composition from Michael Rooney. The challenge set for the composer was to draw on our shared history and

reflect in music the deepening relationship born out of a difficult past. I believe in this composition of three movements, he has achieved that objective.

### **Symbolism**

As with the music, so too the choice of musician is full of symbolism. Drawing from a rich vein of musical talent in Sligo, we have deliberately chosen the next generation, a generation with whom we look forward with hope and confidence and in whom we entrust our traditions, culture and heritage. It is in good hands.

Music makes audible what ultimately becomes visible. It is therefore my pleasure to present this composition, as a gift, in honour of your visit to Ireland and to Sligo in particular.'

# Infrastructure, Environment & Fire Services Directorate

**N4**

Road Transportation & Safety

Environmental Services

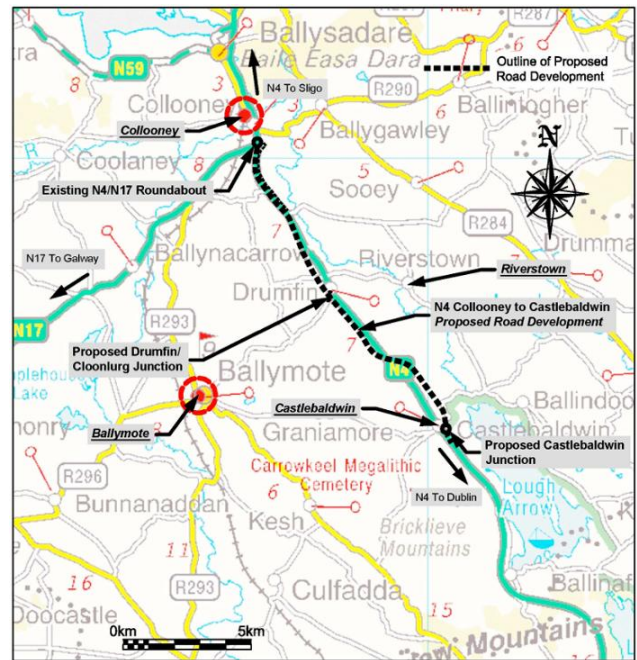
Fire Services



## Road Transportation and Safety Sligo Roads Projects Get Green Light €100M N4 scheme will be the largest project developed in Sligo

The N4 Collooney to Castlebaldwin Road project and the Eastern Garvogue Bridge and Approach Roads have been included as “key priorities in the roads programme which will support economic growth” in the Department of Tourism Transport & Sport (DTTAS) seven Year Transportation Investment Plan 2016 – 2022 which was published in October 2015.

Sligo County Council welcomed the news that the N4 Collooney to Castlebaldwin Road Development has been included in the DTTAS €10 Billion Transportation Investment Plan which was announced by Minister for Tourism Transport & Sport Pascal Donohoe TD. Funding for the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport is being made as part of the Government’s overall Capital Plan, as announced by Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, Brendan Howlin TD today. The Scheme was well positioned to be included in the Plan following receipt of Planning Approval and Confirmation of the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) by An Bord Pleanala in July 2014. This followed an Oral Hearing in Castledargan Hotel in April 2014.



The Proposed Road Development is one of the biggest and most complex infrastructural projects ever proposed to be developed in County Sligo. It constitutes the remaining portion (As indicated in image above) of the N4 in Co. Sligo requiring improvement and measures approximately 14.71km in length passing through the townlands of Rathrippin, Collooney, Toberbride, Mullaghnabreana, Ardcurley, Cloonamahan, Doorly, Knocknagroagh, Drumfin, Cloonlurg, Carrowkeel, Carrownagark, Kingsbrook, Aghaleneane, Ardloy, Springfield, Tawnagh, Cloonymeenaghan, Sheerevagh, Cloongad, Drumderry, Annaghcor, Castlebaldwin, Cloghoge Upper and Cloghoge Lower. The road type will be Type 2 Dual Carriageway tied into the existing network to the south via a section of Standard Single Carriageway.

### Partnership

The Cathaoirleach of Sligo County Council, Councillor Rosaleen O’Grady said ‘This was a concerted effort by the Council members and staff, the N4 Action Group and the local community, our colleagues in the Dail, Sligo Chamber and the local business community, the IDA and the NRA and the Department of Transport. When people come together to work in a spirit of partnership towards a common objective, there is no limit to what they can achieve, and this is a great day for all concerned.’ The Cathaoirleach paid tribute to the Council’s project

team by adding 'Their years of meticulous preparation and planning has come to fruition, and today's news represents a major boost for every sector of our community as it will greatly improve access to this region. This is a very significant day for Sligo County Council, the residents along the existing N4, members of the N4 Action Group and the wider public who regularly travel along this stretch of the N4.'

### **Economic benefits**

Sligo County Council's Director of Services Tom Kilfeather said 'The N4 Collooney to Castlebaldwin scheme will greatly improve the safety of this stretch of road which has seen 30 fatalities over the past 40 years or so.

The improvement of this road has been a priority for Sligo County Council for a number of years with designs going back to the early nineties. Along with improving road safety for all road users, this Scheme will alleviate traffic congestion and reduce journey times and time reliability which will generate positive economic benefits to businesses and consumers. This major investment in our roads infrastructure is very significant in the context of the Council's new responsibilities in the area of economic development, and will be welcomed by local enterprise, our hospitality sector and the increasing number of visitors to Sligo and the Northwest.'

The scheme was designed in-house by Sligo County Council's Major Road Schemes Design Team, with input to the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) from Environmental Specialists. The CPO was put together by the same in-house design team.

### **Support of NRA**

The National Roads Authority (NRA) have been very supportive of the N4 Collooney to Castlebaldwin Road Scheme and in 2015 allocated a budget to Sligo County Council to carry out Advanced Works and Land Purchase. The Advance Works include Permanent Fencing along the route boundary and Archaeological Investigations, both of which have commenced on site.

### **€100 million investment**

The estimated overall scheme cost of the scheme is €100m and when developed will be the biggest infrastructural project to be undertaken in Sligo in modern times. Sligo County Council's Major Road Design Team will examine the detail of the Capital Plan to determine the mechanism and timescale for the delivery of the schemes but it is likely that the delivery mechanism will be Design / Build rather than Public Private Partnership (PPP).

For further information on the Scheme visit <http://www.sligococo.ie/N4>



### **Eastern Garvogue Bridge and Approach Roads Scheme**

Also included in today's 6 Year Capital Plan announcement is the Eastern Garvogue Bridge and Approach Roads Scheme. This Scheme received Planning Approval and CPO Confirmation from An Bord Pleanála in 2009. The Detailed Design of this Scheme is at an advanced stage.

The main benefits for Sligo Residents and the wider community will include much reduced journey times for walkers, cyclists and vehicles between the North and South sides of the River Garvogue in the eastern quadrant. It will significantly reduce travel distance and improve access to the many facilities on opposite sides of the river. The route will also greatly reduce response times for emergency services e.g., ambulance, An Garda Síochána and fire services. The total length of the Scheme is 2km.

Sligo County Council's Senior Engineer with responsibility for Roads and Transportation Tom Brennan, said 'The Eastern Garvogue Bridge & Approach Roads Scheme is clearly now seen nationally as well as locally

as an essential project in meeting the objectives which are required for Sligo to develop and grow as a Gateway and to achieve its development potential.

The delivery of this project will greatly enhance overall confidence in Sligo's ability to grow and its ability to attract funding for other projects such as Cleveragh Regional Park Development, Cranmore Regeneration and for the improvement of educational institutions, health services etc. and in its ability to develop other key elements essential to meeting its development potential.'

A total of €19,128,876 was initially allocated for the improvement and maintenance of the public road network in County Sligo in 2015. Work continued on the planning, design & construction of key strategic national and non national road projects serving County Sligo and Sligo City - the gateway city of the north-west. The National Roads Authority and the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport in addition to Sligo County Council were the key funding agencies for this programme.

The tables below show the details of the National and Regional Roads in Sligo.


<b>National Primary Roads</b>		
<b>Route</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Length (km)</b>
N4	Sligo City to Roscommon Co. Boundary	34.35
N15	Sligo City to Bunduff Br.	27.04
N16	Sligo City to Leitrim Co. Boundary	10.39
N17	Collooney to Bellaghy	34.06
<b>Total</b>		<b>105.84</b>

<b>National Secondary Roads</b>		
<b>Route</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Length (km)</b>
N59	Ballysadare to Mayo Co. Boundary	47.38

<b>Regional Roads</b>		
<b>Route</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Length (km)</b>
R277	Killaspugbrone to Sligo Airport	1.70
R278	Sligo to Carrickoneilleen	7.63
R279	Cliffoney to Mullaghmore	4.40
R284	Carrowroe to Roscommon Co. Boundary	26.60
R286	Sligo City to Leitrim Co. Boundary	11.20
R287	Sligo City to Leitrim Co. Boundary via Carrowroe	15.89
R290	Ballysadare to Ballintogher	14.63
R291	Sligo City to Rosses Point	7.83
R292	Sligo City to Strandhill to Ballydrehid	18.23
R293	Ballinaboll to Gurteen to Roscommon Co. Boundary	25.80
R294	Cloonloo to Tubbercurry to Lough Talt	42.50
R295	Ballymote to Keash to Roscommon Co. Boundary	14.60
R296	Ballymote to Bunnannaddan to R294	10.20
R297	Dromore West to Enniscrone to Co. Boundary	29.80
R298	N59 to Lacknatlieva to R297	4.90
R361	Roscommon to Co. Boundary to Killaraght to Rosc. Co.	1.60
R870	Sligo City - Pearse Road / Markievicz Road	1.37
<b>Total</b>		<b>238.88</b>

## National Road Major Road Schemes

### N4 Collooney to Castlebaldwin

 Following An Bord Pleanála's confirmation of the EIS and CPO for this Scheme in July 2014, Sligo County Council's Majors Road Design Team has continued to progress the development of the Scheme. SCC's Majors Road Design Office is Project Managing the Scheme and is also the Lead Road Designers for the Scheme.

The Notice to Treat and Notice to Enter were issued to affected landowners early in 2015 to enable Advance Works Contracts to commence and to begin land purchase negotiations. The Advance Works Contracts will continue in 2016, with the aim of completing all Advance Works Contracts by the end of 2016. The Advance Works Contracts to be undertaken and completed in 2016 are as follows:


- Permanent Fencing
- Archaeology Stages (ii) - (iv)
- Ground Investigation (G.I)
- Service Diversions
- Topographical Survey
- Building Demolition

Land purchase continued in 2015 along with the progression of the outstanding Land Acquisition Agreements.

There was very positive news for the Scheme in September 2015 with its inclusion as a 'key investment priority' project in the Government's published


Capital Investment Programme 2016-2022. The Scheme is currently second on the priority list, therefore making it very likely that it will progress to construction in the early years of the Capital Plan.

### N16 Sligo to County Boundary

 In 2015, Sligo County Council's Majors Road Design Office progressed the Constraints Study and Route Selection process for the N16. A route is being selected for the full length of the N16 in County Sligo with a view to developing 2-3 Minor Projects along the route. SCC's Majors Road Design Office is Project Managing the Scheme and is also the Lead Road Designers for the Scheme.

A Preferred Route is expected to be selected by mid 2016. This will enable the selection of a Minor Scheme to be developed thereafter. This will involve carrying out a number of detailed tasks including design, preparation of EIS or Environmental Report, landowner liaison, landowner mapping, CPO process, Planning process and Project Appraisal. It is planned to have a Minor Scheme ready for construction in 2018.


## **N4/N15 Traffic Improvement Scheme (Hughes Bridge Widening Scheme)**

 Construction of the Hughes Bridge Widening Scheme was completed successfully in 2015. This Scheme involved the provision of two additional traffic lanes across Hughes Bridge by the removal of the existing footpaths on both sides of the bridge and the carrying out of strengthening works to the existing bridge. It included the construction of two new dedicated pedestrian/cycle bridges outside of the existing bridge structure on both sides.

The Scheme was Project Managed by Sligo County Council's Major Road Schemes Design Team. Engineering consultants on the scheme were ARUPs and the Contractor was L & M Keating Ltd. from County Clare. Sligo County Council provided the Resident Engineering staff for the Contract. Works commenced on site on in October 2014 and the Contract was substantially complete and fully open to traffic on 07<sup>th</sup> August 2015, in time for Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann Sligeach 2015.

The successful completion of this Scheme has enabled the progression of the next stage of the N4/N15 Sligo Urban Improvement Scheme.

## **N4/N15 Sligo Urban Improvement Scheme**

 Following on from the N4 Hughes Bridge Widening Scheme, the N4/N15 Sligo Urban Improvement Scheme is the next section being developed by Sligo County Council's Majors Road Design Office. This Section commences at the northern end of the Hughes Bridge Widening Scheme and finishes north of the Rosses Point junction.

Jacobs Engineering are engaged to carry out the detail design of this Scheme under the guidance of SCC's Majors Road Design Team. It will include upgrading the National Primary Road from the northern end of Hughes Bridge to north of the Rosses Point junction, along with the Rosses Point, Duct Street and Markievicz Road Junctions. The Copper River Bridge will be upgraded as part of the works. A new Traffic Management System will be designed and upgraded to an Urban Traffic Control System.

It is expected that the Preliminary Design, EIS and CPO documents will be completed and ready for publication in May 2016.

## National Road Maintenance Works

### National Primary Road Maintenance

The NRA allocation for National Primary Maintenance in 2015 was as follows:

Ordinary Maintenance	€316,238
Winter Maintenance	€180,000
Bridge Maintenance	€20,000
Route Lighting	€97,108
Local Authority Support Maintenance	€55,900
<b>Total</b>	<b>€669,246</b>

### National Secondary Maintenance

The NRA allocation for N59 Maintenance in 2015 was as follows:

Ordinary Maintenance	€82,454
Winter Maintenance	€40,000
Bridge Maintenance	€30,000
Route Lighting	€17,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>€169,454</b>

## Non National Roads

### Low Cost Accident Schemes

A grant of €164,000 for six schemes was obtained in 2015 at the following locations:

R294	Cashel, Cloonloo	retain the road edge
L-2601-0	Cliff Road Enniscrone	
R296	Cuan Iosa, Ballymote	crash barrier
R297	Easkey Vocational School	traffic calming beside school
R294	Powellsborough Cross	improve sightlines
R284	Soeey Village	traffic calming/footpaths

### Restoration Improvement Grant

An allocation of €3,662,957 was provided by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport for the restoration improvement of Regional and Local Roads. Approximately 47km of road at 62 locations was programmed to be improved with this grant.

The types of work carried out included:

- Laying bitumen macadam surfacing to shape and strengthen the roads followed by surface dressing.
- Laying crushed stone to shape and strengthen the road and double surface dressing the stone to seal the



- road surface and provide skid resistance.
- Recycling – this was done where there were adequate stone already in the road structure but the road had disintegrated (typically used in bog road locations).

**Restoration Maintenance Grant**

A grant of €1,130,327 was provided in 2015 for surface dressing Regional and Local roads. This programme included the surface dressing of approximately 59km in total at 59 locations.

**Discretionary Grant**

A grant of €2,878,642 was allocated in 2015 for improvement and maintenance works on Regional and Local Roads in County Sligo.

A grant of €2,878,642 was allocated in 2015 for improvement and maintenance works on Regional and Local Roads in County Sligo.

**Regional Roads Signposting Programme**

A grant of €160,000 was provided by the Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport under this heading in 2015. This funding has enabled the Council to provide directional signage, advanced directional signage and local road number identification plates for the following eight routes and for some signage on other routes.

R284	Carraroe to Co. Boundary with Roscommon
R293	Ballymote to Co. Boundary
R294	Lough Talt to Co. Boundary (Roscommon)
R295	Ballymote to Co. Boundary (Roscommon)
R296	Ballymote to R294 Junction
R297	Dromore West to Mayo Co. Boundary (N59)
R298	Lackancahill to N59
R361	Beside Roscommon Border

## **Environmental Services**

### **Recovery and Recycling Facilities Operations**

#### **Bring Banks**

The maintenance and upkeep of the Bring Bank Network throughout Sligo Town and County is the responsibility of the Environmental Services Section. Sligo County Council has full ownership of the Bring Bank network and employs a dedicated General Operative to maintain the sites to reduce disposal costs of illegal dumping.



#### **Textile Banks**

The contract for the provision of textile banks is currently at tender stage and the successful contractor to win this tender should be in situ in the first quarter of 2016. At present, Textile Recycling Ltd have clothes banks placed on 12 public Bring Bank sites and 19 private Bring Bank sites throughout Sligo Town and County. Textile Recycling Ltd makes monthly payments to Sligo County Council and to Landowners/Communities for clothes recycled at these banks. They also contribute to a charitable organisation.

#### **Recycling Centre Tubbercurry**

Sligo County Council re-tendered the running of the Tubbercurry Recycling Centre in 2014 and achieved savings.

#### **Ballisodare Composting Facility**

Sligo County Council part fund this facility which accepts green waste and sells peat free compost generated at the site.

#### **Litter Management**

In 2016, activity will continue on the enforcement of the Litter Pollution Act, 1997 - 2003 as amended.

#### **Environmental Awareness**

Sligo County Council supports a number of environmental awareness initiatives including National Spring Clean, Anti litter/ Anti Graffiti Grant Scheme and LA 21 Partnership. One of the most successful campaigns is the Green Schools programme. Themes include energy awareness, water conservation, sustainable transport, biodiversity and global citizenship.

#### **Waste Regulations, Monitoring and Enforcement**

Waste Management continues to be to the fore of EU and Governmental priorities. It receives recognition through increased amounts of legislation and funding. Waste enforcement activities continue to be fully recoupable from Governmental funding while other waste management activities are partially recoupable. This funding originates from initiatives such as the plastic bag levy and landfill levy. The legislation introduced by Government has encompassed producer responsibility

which also generates additional monies.

There are ever increasing demands placed on organisations and families but the need for proper waste management continues to be of importance for economic, legislative and environmental reasons.

There is a continuing need to avoid the production of waste at source and try and divert as much as possible from landfill. This diversion of waste is achieved through the provision of facilities and services followed by education and enforcement. The Bring Bank Network, Civic Amenity Sites, Composting Site, Kerbside Recycling, Home Composting and the introduction of a separate organic collection all help divert waste from landfill. Following the adoption of the new Waste Bye-Laws, the Environment Section has undergone a Pilot Project called the National Brown Bin Pilot Project.

Another element of waste management is trying to ensure that people manage their waste in a manner that avoids the creation of environmental pollution. Ongoing waste enforcement activities will endeavour to reduce this to a minimum.

Waste Management and Enforcement priorities will continue to involve bringing unauthorised sites into environmental compliance, increasing

the recycling and recovery rates and to try and ensure that works undertaken by Sligo Local Authorities are carried out in compliance with Environmental Legislation.

The Waste Enforcement Office also continues to deal with historic situations and the environmental problems caused by them. Risk assessments were carried out on one of the closed landfills and proposals for remediation of same have been put forward to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA in considering the proposals can specify actions to be taken that will have to be adhered to, at a financial cost. It is anticipated that the necessary measures will be implemented to reduce any of the environmental impacts which may be associated with the landfill. The Department may fund the monitoring pending the decision of the EPA. The cost of monitoring this landfill and others will have to be budgeted for.

### **Waste Management Planning**

For the purposes of Waste Management Planning the country is divided into 3 waste regions. Sligo is in the Connacht Ulster Region. A 6 year plan was agreed in 2015 which sets out a road map for achieving commitments, and is the framework for the prevention and management of waste. The plan is a statutory document and Sligo County Council has obligations to fund initiatives in the plan as well as the regional office based in Mayo County

Council. Sligo is represented on the Regional Waste Steering Group.

### **Catchment Management**

The principal piece of legislation relating to the protection of surface water, groundwater, tidal, and coastal water quality in Ireland is the EU Water Framework Directive. Nationally, work has now commenced on the second cycle of implementing the Directive. Preliminary consultation work has commenced with the aim of delivering updated River Basin District Management Plans, which will be delivered in the second half of 2017 instead of the stipulated target of December 2015. Local authorities play a key role in implementing programmes of measures detailed in the relevant RBD plans within their functional areas. The current focus on updating the RBD plans may potentially place increased demands on Environment Section resources during 2016. Nationally, emphasis is on integrated catchment management and relates primarily to the following specific areas of work, which will continue to be prioritised during 2016.

- Licensing and enforcement of trade and domestic effluent discharges to waters under the Local Government (Water Pollution) Act 1977 as amended.
- Assessing planning proposals for domestic, commercial, agricultural and forestry developments in terms of environmental impact, with

particular reference to protection of water quality.

- Implementation of the National Inspection Plan for domestic wastewater treatment systems as published by the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Implementation of Pollution Reduction Programmes for designated shellfish waters.
- Implementation of the European Union (Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters) Regulations 2014 (S.I. no. 31 of 2014).
- Complaint and query response relating to general environmental, water quality and planning related issues.

### **Local Laboratory**

The local laboratory will close in 2016 as part of a proposed cost saving measure outlined in the current financial plan. Arrangements are being put in place to subcontract out all sampling programmes for 2016. This will include drinking water, bathing water, rivers, lakes, discharge licences and pollution incident monitoring.

### **Drinking Water**

The quality of drinking water in Ireland is governed by the EU (Drinking Water) Regulations, 2014. All public water supplies and regulated Group Water Schemes will be monitored in 2016, in accordance with statutory requirements and those set by Irish Water where relevant. Legislation

defines what parameters are tested, and the monitoring frequency. Sligo County Council will continue to act as the supervisory authority in relation to the provision of drinking water by private water suppliers, however due to resource constraints the level of work being carried out in this area is limited.

### **Bathing Water**

In 2015, Sligo County Council formally identified five beaches under the 2008 Bathing Water Regulations; these were Rosses Point, Enniscrone, Mullaghmore, Streedagh and Mullaghmore. Monitoring of all beaches will continue in 2016. Results of this monitoring will be displayed locally at each of the beaches and on the council's website throughout the 2016 bathing season. Applications will be made to An Taisce for the Blue Flag and Green Coast Awards.

### **Lifesaving**

Sligo County Council aim to provide lifeguard cover for the 2016 bathing season at Rosses Point, Enniscrone, Streedagh and Dunmorán along with Beach Warden cover for Strandhill.

### **Rivers and lakes**

All rivers and lakes listed in the National Monitoring Programme will be monitored in 2016.

### **Air and Noise Pollution**

#### **Noise Control**

The Section provides advice and information on residential and commercial noise under the

Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992.

### **Air Pollution**

Environment will continue to enforce the 2 Air Pollution Licences and provide advice and information on odours and air pollution complaints.

### **Ban on Smoky Fuels**

In 2012 the Dept. introduced new Regulations extending the restricted area with regard to the marketing, sale & distribution of smoky fuels (bituminous coal). They also made the use of this fuel type, within the restricted area, an offence. Sligo County Council is responsible for the enforcement of these Regulations. Due to the changes introduced, this will be challenging and will require a change in habits for inhabitants of Sligo Town and Environs regarding the type of fuel they use to heat their homes. However it should ensure that the increase in air quality, observed since the original Regulations were introduced in 2003, are maintained and improved upon. From 2018 a nationwide ban on "smoky fuel" is envisaged.

### **Casual Trading**

The Casual Trading Act 1955 covers open air trading of goods at designated bays throughout the County of Sligo. The Environment Section enforces Casual Trading Bye Laws in order to regulate casual trading on public property. Regular inspections will continue to be carried out by the



Council's appointed Trading Officers to ensure that the trading bays are being operated in accordance with the Bye Laws.

### **Climate Change & Energy Efficiency/Corporate Building Costs**

Sligo County Council participates in the *Partnership* Programme developed by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) to assist public bodies to save money, improve the environment and make significant reductions in energy usage. The supports available include energy management training, annual action planning and facility energy assessments. It is hoped to make further use of this valuable service during 2016 in an effort to make our Local Authority more energy-efficient.

### **Agriculture, Education, Health and Welfare**

Sligo County Council continues to implement all relevant food safety legislation under the Service Contract between Sligo County Council and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland. This includes the supervision of two abattoirs and two seasonal poultry slaughter plants along with three Small meat manufacturing plants. Discussions are ongoing regarding a Shared Services model for delivering the service.

### **Animal Welfare**

The Council continues to implement the Control of Horses Act and has seen a major reduction in abandoned horses.

The Dog Warden service tender is currently being finalised. Re-homing from the shelter is continuing with a number of charities involved in the process. Inspections of Dog Breeding establishments also takes place with 2 establishments registered.

### **Cathaoirleach honours Environmental Staff on National Awards - Sligo County Council wins Cré, Repak, and Green Fleadh Awards for 2015.**

The Cathaoirleach of Sligo County Council Councillor Rosaleen O'Grady hosted a reception in November 2015 to honour the staff of Sligo County Council's Environmental section on their achievement of receiving three major national awards.

Among the guests were Percy Foster representing Cré, Michal Hannon of Repak, County Councillors, Tom Kilfeather, Director of Services and Chairman of the Fleadh Committee, Bartley Gavin, representatives of Sligo Tidy Towns, with the focus very much on the award-winning staff of Environment Section

In her address, the Cathaoirleach Councillor O'Grady said 'One of the most important responsibilities a Local Authority has is in the area of Environment, and it is a great source of pride to everyone in Sligo County Council, elected members and staff, when news of your recent awards was announced. The dedicated staff who

work in Environment section do so with an enthusiasm and spirit that is clear for all to see, and the presentations of these major awards was a public affirmation of what was privately accepted, that Sligo County Council is fortunate to have one of the best Environment Teams in any local authority'

The Cathaoirleach added 'Encouraging people to be more protective of their environment is a difficult and hugely important challenge. The 'Brown Bin' project, expertly planned and delivered by our staff, was a master-class in project management and team work. The quality and scope of this exercise attracted two major awards, the Cré Award and the Pakman award for excellence in waste management and recycling'

Director of Services Tom Kilfeather reflected on the many receptions that have been hosted by Cathaoirleach over the years to honour people and groups for their achievements across the full spectrum of activity in the county, and said it was a very special occasion for the staff to have their work publicly acknowledged in this manner by the Cathaoirleach. While noting the many challenges being faced by the Council, 'it does not mean that you drop your standards, it creates an opportunity and opening for Councillors and staff to work together to do things differently.' Mr Kilfeather commended the Environment staff who worked on

the project, including Siobhan Gillen, Matthew Byrne, Peter Murtagh and their team of Waste Management Advisors.

Percy Foster of Cré outlined how Sligo County Council had successfully applied to be a national 'pilot' for the Brown Bin project. He said the work undertaken by the Sligo Waste Management Team was exceptional. Not only did their work have an enormous impact in terms of presentation of waste, it enabled the Council to comply with EU Directives and also helped to create jobs in the composting sector. Mr Foster observed that Local Authorities all over the country were taking note of what was happening in Sligo with a view to replicating our success in their own areas. He concluded his remarks by saying that the Sligo County Council Waste Management team 'had made an outstanding contribution to the sector.'

Waste Management Enforcement Officer Matthew Byrne presented a report on the National Brown Bin Pilot Programme; He explained that the aim of the programme was to divert as much recyclable and food waste as possible from the landfill bin and to improve the quality of the waste in the brown bin. It entailed delivering an awareness campaign, organising door-to-door visits around Sligo, and monitoring the results. The outcome was hugely impressive, with a pre-awareness contamination rate of 45%

being reduced following the project to a rate of 1%. Mr Byrne paid special tribute to the Waste Management Advisors who worked on the project, Margaret Dunleavy, David McGovern and Rachel Finan.

Emer Concannon of the Fleadh Executive Committee summarised the background to the Fleadh Committee's success in winning the 'Responsible Travel and Tourism' Award for 2015. She said 'Sligo was proud to host the Fleadh in successive years, it energised the whole community to work together to showcase our town to a global audience.. The efforts of the Green Fleadh volunteers resulted in a significant improvement between 2014 and 2015 through the delivery of a number of initiatives, including the placement of recycling stations throughout the town, re-useable Fleadh glasses, and a sustainable transport scheme. The volunteers were hugely committed to the project, and the manner in which it was planned and rolled out formed a template for the organisation of future festivals.

## Fire Services

Sligo County Council is statutorily designated as the Fire Authority for the County of Sligo under Section 9 of the Fire Services Acts 1981-2003 and provides a range of Fire Safety, Enforcement and Emergency Management Services and



is also responsible for managing the delivery of operational emergency fire and rescue services across 4 Fire Brigade Units located in Sligo, Ballymote, Tubbercurry, and Enniscrone.

Sligo Fire Service was active in promoting community fire safety throughout the year, focusing particularly on vulnerable groups in the community and personnel from each fire station facilitated visits to their stations and requests from voluntary groups to provide fire safety talks. The fire service also conducts schools fire safety programmes every two years in all national schools. It is planned to develop this aspect of the fire service work during 2016.

The Fire Services Department process all applications for Fire Safety Certificates under building control legislation and is also involved in planning referrals for commercial developments, inspecting and reporting on Circuit and District Court applications for Places of Public Entertainment, Registration of Fire Arms and Explosives Stores and Petroleum

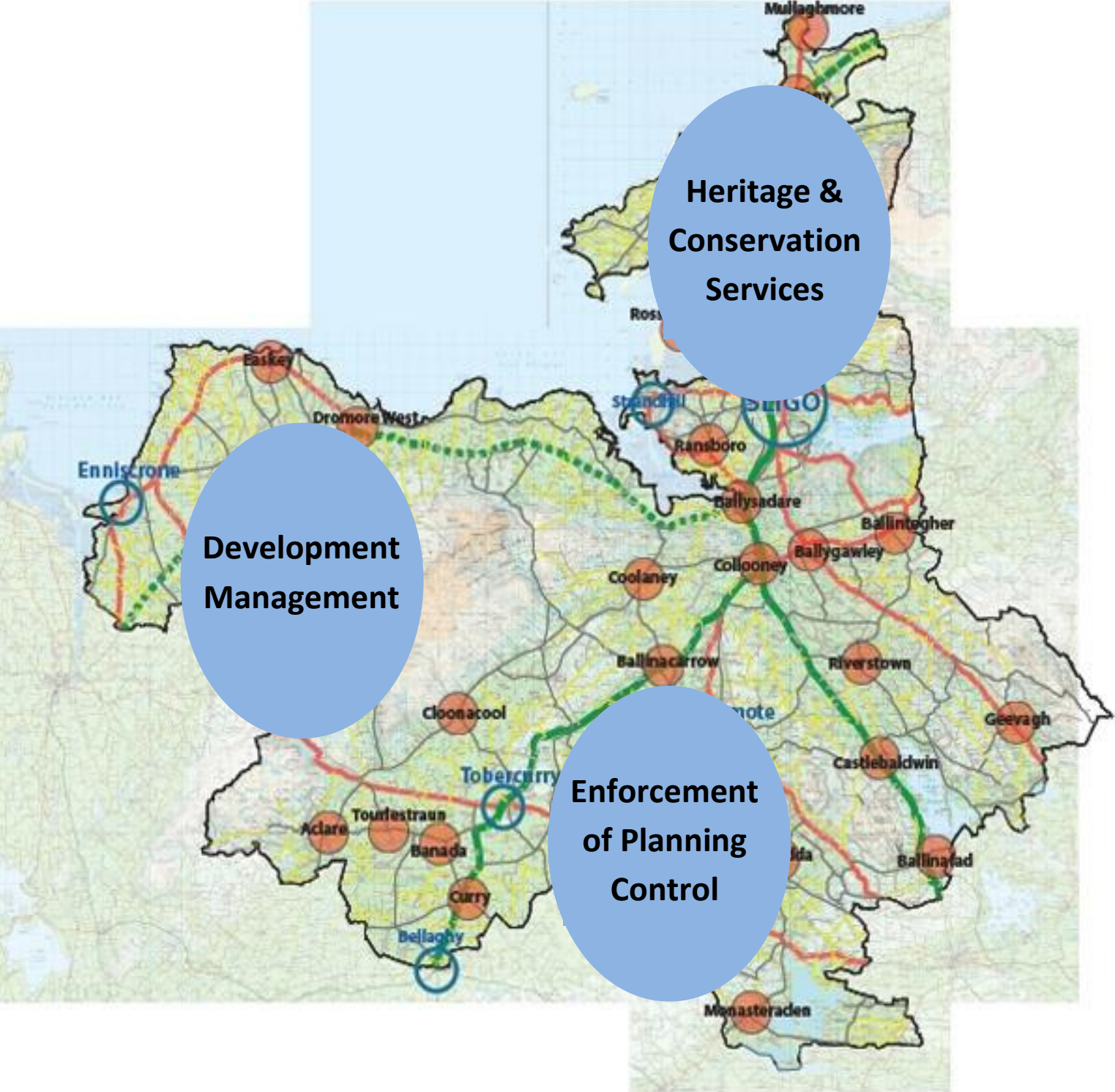
## Regulations Licences

Sligo Fire Service, in recognition of the potentially hazardous roles performed by its personnel, is required to implement a continuous programme of training, including mandatory refresher training in both core and specialist

skills for all fire-fighting personnel. Annual charges to neighbouring counties who provide both fire and rescue response services within the County of Sligo and call-out systems through CAMP West in Castlebar, all

represent a major part of the 2016 budget. The 2016 budget also reflects an intensive programme of preventative maintenance and replacement of specialist equipment, plant and facilities.

# Planning, Community & Economic Development Directorate





## Development Management

### Development Planning Unit (DPU)

The Development Planning Unit is responsible for drafting planning and development policy for Sligo County and City, in consultation with the public, members, officials, prescribed bodies and other stakeholders. The Development Planning team also carries out research, advises on development proposals, facilitates plan implementation and participates in a range of initiatives, at both local and regional level.

The year 2015 has seen the commencement of a major development plan review on an unprecedented scale. Following the abolition of Sligo Borough Council, Sligo County Council has become the single planning authority for both County Sligo and Sligo Town. Therefore, the County Council is now in the process of preparing a single development plan covering its entire jurisdiction.

The statutory review of the County Development Plan (CDP) commenced on 15 May 2015, with a period of pre-draft public consultation that ended on 10 July 2015. In total, 36 submissions were received during this period. The First Chief Executive's Report on pre-draft submissions was sent to the elected members on 31 August 2015. The formal preparation of the Draft CDP commenced following directions

from the elected members, given at the Council's November meeting.

The new CDP 2017-2023 will include general policies and objectives for the current Sligo & Environs Development Plan (SEDP) area, for which a local area plan will be prepared after the adoption of the new CDP.

The Draft Plan is expected to be published in April/May 2016. Public consultation on the Draft CDP will take place in Summer 2016 for a period of a minimum ten weeks, with the Second Chief Executive's Report on submissions due by mid-September 2016. The elected members will adopt or amend the Draft CDP in December 2016. Any proposed amendments must go on public display for a further four weeks, with the deadline for adopting the new CDP 2017-2023 in early April 2017. The Plan will become operational in May 2017.

### Development Management

The Planning section continues to manage development in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and associated Regulations.

The number of planning applications received in 2015 has remained consistent with that of 2014 (approximately 450). However it is notable that pre-planning consultation activity has increased significantly and it would be expected that 2016 will see

a corresponding increase in the number of planning applications received.

The Planning Section is continuously monitoring its operations with a view to implementing improvements and efficiencies to deliver the optimum service to the public. Through improved monitoring and engagement with agents the number of invalid applications has been reduced by 20% in 2015. The planning department is committed to reducing this figure further during 2016.

The Planning section also continues to review the quality of our on-line services including the following:

- self Service Pre-planning facility
- e-referral system for the transmission of documentation to prescribed bodies, (e.g.) An Bord Pleanála
- the Council website, to ensure that the on-line information is comprehensive, up-to-date and easily available
- potential to facilitate the on-line booking of pre-planning meetings.

## **Enforcement of Planning Control**

The Enforcement Section's role in this area involves investigating all complaints from the public with regard to unauthorised development, random inspections of developments in progress, and dealing with prior to commencement conditions or

conditions which have not been complied with. The Section conducts site visits and issues Warning Letters, serves Enforcement Notices and institutes legal proceeding, as appropriate. The Costs provided in the Budget for 2016 reflect the likely level of activity in this area with more than 200 new complaints expected. Hereunder are some relevant details of activity during 2015.

- 154 new complaints lodged
- 151 new complaints investigated
- 114 warning letters
- 57 enforcement notices
- 12 prosecutions initiated
- 144 complaints resolved through negotiation
- 46 complaints dismissed

## **Collection of Development Contributions**

The Enforcement Section is responsible for the collection of development contributions. Staff resources continue to be allocated to ensure that contributions are paid in a timely manner and to follow up defaulters. The position in relation to the collection of arrears has improved significantly in the last number of years. Most of the outstanding money is in respect of unsold new build property, mainly dwelling houses and will be paid in due course on the sale of the properties. It is anticipated due to the upturn in the economy that the arrears position will continue to improve during 2016.

### **Unfinished Housing Developments**

Sligo County Council facilitated the building of a significant number of housing developments since 2000. A number of these developments were left unfinished. The Council, unlike most other Local Authorities which put multi function teams specifically in place to deal with unfinished developments, relied on its own existing Enforcement Section staff to address the issue. The satisfactory completion of these developments represents a significant challenge for the Section. Working with developers, Financial Institutions, Receivers and Residents is very time consuming but a lot of progress has been made over the last couple of years and in particular in 2015, where works have been carried out in over 50 developments. The taking in charge of many of these developments will be progressed during 2016. In addition Site Resolution Plans are being prepared for a further 17 developments where it is hoped that works will continue next year. The Council has been aided in its work by a significant allocation of Site Resolution Funding from the Department of the Environment, Community and local Government for nine developments. Financial Institutions which provided Bonds for developments are also now engaging to a much greater degree than heretofore with this Section and this has helped considerably in

progressing the completion of a number of developments.

### **Taking Estates in Charge**

The expenditure sum provided under this heading relates to the costs to the Council in arranging for the carrying out C.C.T.V. surveys of all main runs of foul and storm sewers in housing estates, as part of the taking in charge process. These Surveys are required in order to ensure satisfactory standards of construction. Taking in charge fees provided under income in the Budget more than cover these costs. The Council commenced the process of taking 4 estates in charge during 2015. Eight estates were taken in charge in 2015.

### **Building Control**

The objective of the Building Control Section is to encourage good building practice, to ensure that buildings are constructed correctly and that access for the disabled and elderly is provided for in building plans. Under inspection targets set nationally, the Council is required to inspect between 12% and 15% of new construction works notified by way of the submission of a Commencement Notice. The budget provided allows the Council to carry out its function in this area. The Council inspected thirteen (13) buildings in 2015.

### **Disability Access Certificates (D.A.C.)**

A D.A.C. is required for all new non-domestic buildings (including apartments and flats), material alterations and extensions to buildings and certain changes of uses. This requirement was introduced with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2010. A fee of €800 per Certificate is generally payable (€500 where it coincides with a Fire Safety Certificate application) with certain exemptions for small schools. A sum of €16,000 for 26 Certificates has been provided in the budget under this heading. Twenty one (21) no. applications for Certificates were submitted in 2015.

### **Derelict Sites**

The Council is required by law to establish and maintain a Register of Derelict Sites. The Enforcement Section therefore investigates all complaints of dereliction. It serves, on owners/occupiers (where appropriate), Notices of Intention to enter sites on the Register. It will in cases where no effort is made to clear up a site enter details of the Site on the Register. It can also serve Notices on an owners or occupiers of derelict sites specifying the measures to be taken to prevent it from becoming or continuing to be derelict. The sum provided under this heading meets the costs of the Council in dealing with Derelict Sites.

### **Heritage and Conservation Services**

#### **County Sligo Heritage Plan 2016-2020**

During 2015, County Sligo Heritage Forum prepared the draft County Sligo Heritage Plan (2016-2020). The Forum was supported in its work by the Heritage Office, Sligo County Council. The draft Plan was presented to Sligo County Council for consideration and adoption in December 2015. At its core, the draft Plan will seek to protect, conserve, manage and promote the value of Sligo's heritage in recognition of its significant contribution to the quality of life of communities and the socioeconomic development of the county. The draft Heritage Plan will continue to inform and underpin heritage measures promoted through the County Development Plan, the Local Economic and Community Plan and the Local Development Strategy.

Accordingly, an indicative budget of €850,000 is envisaged for the implementation of the third Heritage Plan for Sligo over a five year period, realising an annual programming budget of €170,000/annum. To date, a significant proportion of the funding for implementation of heritage plan actions has been provided by The Heritage Council through its Heritage Plan Grant Scheme, with matching funding being provided by Sligo County Council. Every opportunity will be taken to explore external and alternative funding streams for heritage projects, particularly under the Rural Development Programme,

EU Structural Funds and new Peace IV Programme. In light of the above, the delivery of the third County Sligo Heritage Plan 2016-2020 will be subject to adequate resources being sourced and allocated to implement the strategic actions proposed.

### **County Sligo Biodiversity Action Plan 2011-2015**

In December 2010, Sligo County Council adopted the first Biodiversity Action Plan for County Sligo which set out 28 biodiversity actions to be undertaken over a five year period. An indicative budget of €250,000 was envisaged for the implementation of the Biodiversity Action Plan, realising an annual programming budget of €50,000/annum. However, due to budgetary restrictions no funding has been in place to implement the Plan to date. In light of the above, the delivery of the County Sligo Biodiversity Action Plan 2011-2015 will be subject to external funding opportunities and resources being

sourced and allocated to implement the actions proposed.

The heritage budget includes an allocation of €3,000 towards matching funds for the preparation of the Green Fort Conservation Plan.

### **Conservation Services**

In 2015, the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht allocated €15,000 to Sligo County Council under the Structures at Risk Grant Scheme 2015. Following a call for applications to the Structures at Risk Grant Scheme, an allocation of €15,000 was awarded to Dromard Parish Select Vestry for urgent conservation works to the Former School House, Christ Church, Beltra, County Sligo. For 2016, allocation of building conservation grants for protected structures will be subject to a future announcement of a grant scheme and county allocations by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.



# Finance



Investment	Investment Value at Year end
339 970	373 967
56 969	804 029
817	1 296 731
58	1 859 317
	2 499 808
	3 227 076
	4 050 935
	R 28 331

Investment	Investment Value at Year end
424 963	467 459
446 211	1 005 037
468 522	1 620 915
491 948	2 324 149
516 545	3 124 764
<del>542 372</del>	4 033 850
569 491	5 063 675

Start at monthly

Can we do this? R 35 414

The Income & Expenditure Account Statement brings together all the revenue related income and expenditure. It shows the surplus (deficit) for the year. Transfers to/from reserves are shown separately

and not allocated by service division. Note 16 allocates transfers by service division in the same format as Table A of the adopted Local Authority budget.

**STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME (INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT STATEMENT)  
FOR YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2015**

**Expenditure by Division**

	Notes	Gross Expenditure 2015 €	Income 2015 €	Net Expenditure 2015 €	Net Expenditure 2014 €
Housing & Building		11,787,481	10,007,419	1,780,063	991,679
Roads Transportation & Safety		22,392,847	17,747,922	4,644,925	4,994,221
Water Services		4,970,927	4,925,922	45,005	139,698
Development Management		4,630,233	1,467,098	3,163,135	2,939,149
Environmental Services		6,356,416	958,199	5,398,217	5,018,281
Recreation & Amenity		4,055,059	368,523	3,686,536	3,585,156
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare		821,480	531,633	289,847	467,565
Miscellaneous Services		8,190,628	3,811,516	4,379,111	5,399,236
<b>Total Expenditure/Income</b>	15	<b>63,205,071</b>	<b>39,818,233</b>		
<b>Net cost of Divisions to be funded from</b>				<b>23,386,838</b>	23,534,984
<b>Rates &amp; Local Property Tax</b>					
Rates				13,161,447	13,034,073
Local Property Tax				9,993,352	9,243,352
Pension Related Deduction				1,194,041	1,209,275
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) for Year before Transfers</b>	16			<b>962,002</b>	(48,284)
<b>Transfers from/(to) Reserves</b>	14			(302,324)	(526,979)
<b>Overall Surplus/(Deficit) for Year</b>				<b>659,678</b>	(575,262)
<b>General Reserve @ 1st January 2015</b>				(26,602,277)	(26,027,015)
<b>General Reserve @ 31st December 2015</b>				<b>(25,942,599)</b>	(26,602,277)

## Balance Sheet

### STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION (BALANCE SHEET) AT 31st DECEMBER 2015

	Notes	2015 €	2014 €
<b>Fixed Assets</b>	1		
Operational		431,961,600	428,143,800
Infrastructural		1,186,499,237	1,186,797,687
Community		9,063,942	9,063,942
Non-Operational		19,673,719	19,673,719
		<b>1,647,198,498</b>	<b>1,643,679,149</b>
<b>Work in Progress and Preliminary Expenses</b>	2	92,384,944	80,056,487
<b>Long Term Debtors</b>	3	34,702,816	36,954,128
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Stocks	4	235,804	233,470
Trade Debtors & Prepayments	5	5,573,730	20,034,074
Bank Investments		2,666,053	3,005,150
Cash at Bank		5,255,163	-
Cash in Transit		1,625	1,625
		<b>13,732,375</b>	<b>23,274,319</b>
<b>Current Liabilities (Amounts falling due within one year)</b>			
Bank Overdraft		-	1,762,250
Creditors & Accruals	6	25,961,447	34,454,490
Finance Leases		-	2,826
		<b>25,961,447</b>	<b>36,219,566</b>
<b>Net Current Assets / (Liabilities)</b>		<b>(12,229,072)</b>	<b>(12,945,248)</b>
<b>Creditors (Amounts falling due after more than one year)</b>			
Loans Payable	7	103,000,765	105,508,672
Finance Leases		-	-
Refundable deposits	8	1,586,458	1,965,359
Other		911,309	1,088,238
		<b>105,498,532</b>	<b>108,562,270</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>		<b>1,656,558,654</b>	<b>1,639,182,245</b>
<b>Represented by</b>			
Capitalisation Account	9	1,647,198,493	1,643,679,144
Income WIP	2	90,200,170	79,463,618
Specific Revenue Reserve		664,372	664,372
General Revenue Reserve		(25,942,599)	(26,602,277)
Other Balances	10	(55,561,783)	(58,022,611)
99999 ERROR Account			
<i>Balancing Figure</i>		-	
<b>Total Reserves</b>		<b>1,656,558,654</b>	<b>1,639,182,245</b>

## Motor Taxation

The Motor Taxation Offices in County Sligo are located in County Hall, Riverside, Sligo Tel: 071 9111830 and in Teach Laighne, Humbert Street, Tubbercurry, Co Sligo Tel: 071 9111719, where applications for Motor Tax are processed for owners of vehicles which are ordinarily kept in County Sligo.

During the year 2015, €7,440,753 was paid by the registered owners of vehicles to the Motor Tax Offices in Sligo and Tubbercurry for Motor Tax transactions. This was a decrease from the €8,547,070 recorded for 2014, a 13% drop.

### Declaring a Vehicle Temporarily off the Road

New procedures were introduced in 2013 for declaring a vehicle is temporarily off the road so that customers do not have to pay motor tax for that period. Since 1 October 2013 it is necessary to declare in advance that a vehicle will be off the road and not in use for a period of between 3 and 12 months using [Declaration of Non-Use of a Motor Vehicle Form RF150 \(pdf\)](#). The declaration of non-use must be made in the same month that the current motor tax disc expires. If arrears in motor tax are due these must be paid in full plus a minimum of 3 months motor tax, before a declaration of non-use can be made.

## Motor Tax Online



Motor Tax Online [www.motortax.ie](http://www.motortax.ie) is an online service provided by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport and motor tax customers are encouraged to tax their cars on line to avoid queuing delays. The Dept of Transport Tourism and Sport statistics show Motor Tax transactions on line for Co. Sligo as follows:

- 30% transactions were carried out online in the Year 2011
- 35% in 2012
- 39% in 2013
- 48% in 2014
- 53% in 2015

## Driving Licences

The Road Safety Authority assumed full responsibility for the driving licence service since 2013. The National Driver Licence Service office in Sligo is located at Ground Floor, Millenium House, Stephen Street, Sligo, opposite the Ulster Bank - Tel: 076 1087880 and is open from 9am to 5pm from Monday to Friday and from 9am to 2pm on Saturdays. See also [www.ndls.ie](http://www.ndls.ie)



## Appendices

### Appendix 1 - Staff Retirements in 2015

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>
Eamon Scanlon	Ganger
Brendan O'Dowd	Clerk of Works
Seamus Murrin	Driver / Plant Operator B
Pat Lynch	Driver / Plant Operator B
James Canavan	Ganger
Padraig Mullarkey	General Operative
Seamus O'Toole	Senior Executive Engineer
Joanna Dykes	School Warden
Pauline Brennan	Staff Officer
John McMunn	Handyman
Malachy Flynn	Handyman
Al Keane	Senior Executive Technician
Redmond Gillen	Harbour Officer
Tommy McSharry	School Warden
Mairead Scanlon	Assistant Staff Officer
Stephen Gilgan	Foreman Craft



## Appendix 2 - Conferences and Seminars attended by Councillors in 2015

<b>Conference/Seminar name</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Date</b>
Finance Act, 2014	Carlingford	23 <sup>rd</sup> to 25 <sup>th</sup> January
AILG Training Seminar for Councillors	Castlebar	26 <sup>th</sup> February
The Councillor and Irish Water (Water Services Bill, 2014)	Letterkenny	6 <sup>th</sup> to 8 <sup>th</sup> March
AILG Annual Conference	Carrickmacross	12 <sup>th</sup> & 13 <sup>th</sup> March
LAMA Spring Conference	Tuam	10 <sup>th</sup> & 11 <sup>th</sup> April
AILG Training Seminar for Councillors	Galway	23 <sup>rd</sup> April
AILG Training Seminar for Councillors	Sligo	16 <sup>th</sup> May
Community Projects by Oughterard Conservation and Heritage Company	Oughterard	29 <sup>th</sup> May
Education and the Law Conference	Sligo	30 <sup>th</sup> May
E.U. Support Programmes for Irish Regions	Clonakilty	5 <sup>th</sup> to 7 <sup>th</sup> June
AILG Training Seminar for Councillors	Athlone	25 <sup>th</sup> June
Local Economic Community Plan	Clonakilty	10 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> July
LCDC Training for Elected Members	Cavan	22 <sup>nd</sup> July
Planning and Building Regulations	Galway	27 <sup>th</sup> & 28 <sup>th</sup> July
Changes to Community Development Conference	Galway	31 <sup>st</sup> July & 1 <sup>st</sup> August
Housing and Regeneration Seminar	Maynooth	10 <sup>th</sup> September
AILG Training Seminar for Councillors	Inchydoney	1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> October
AILG Training Seminar for Councillors	Carrick-on-Shannon	5 <sup>th</sup> October
LAMA Autumn Seminar	Kilkenny	9 <sup>th</sup> & 10 <sup>th</sup> October
Budget 2016 Overview	Clonakilty	23 <sup>rd</sup> to 25 <sup>th</sup> October
AILG Training Seminar for Councillors	Carrick-on-Shannon	27 <sup>th</sup> October
AILG Training Seminar for Councillors	Ballinasloe	5 <sup>th</sup> November
Ground water and water pollution and Registration of Lobbying Act, 2014	Dublin	14 <sup>th</sup> November
New Regions, New Roles, New Responsibilities	Loughrea	20 <sup>th</sup> November

*LAMA: Local Authority Members' Association*

*AILG: Association of Irish Local Government*

*LCDC: Local Community Development Committee*