



# Division G

## Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare



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

### **G01 Land Drainage Costs**

Sligo County Council as a drainage authority is statutorily obliged to maintain the above river systems to a reasonable degree. The amount available in the estimates, are adequate to continue this maintenance in 2010.

### **G02 Operation and Maintenance of Piers and Harbours**

Sligo County Council continues to control and manage the operation of the Harbour and its associated assets. Although the economy worldwide is in recession, Sligo Harbour has maintained the same level of commercial shipping in 2009 as in 2008.

Funding was received from the Department of Transport and Marine to carry out investigations for a major dredging programme for the port which would then have the possibility of increasing commercial shipping potential. Marine consultants have been appointed and a number of progress meetings have taken place during 2009. The Report is expected shortly and the estimated cost for the dredging contract appears to be of the order of €6m. Funding for this work will be sought from the Department on receipt of the Consultant's report.

Minor maintenance dredging was carried out at the Barytes and Deepwater Jetties in September/October 2009. The Harbour Navigation Lights were also replaced and upgraded in 2009. Both of these operations were carried out for Health and Safety reasons.

The new floating pontoon is a major asset to users of Sligo Harbour and the area in general. It is used by locals and visitors alike and its attractive visual aspect enhances the appearance of the Harbour while also contributing as an additional tourist facility for Sligo and its environs.

The Sligo and Environs Development Plan came into effect in December 2009 which identified zoning and general objectives for the Harbour Area. Pre-draft consultation and a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) scoping exercise for the Sligo Docklands Local Area Plan will commence in 2010.

### **G03 Coastal Protection**

Funding applications to government have been made for the following Coastal Protection Schemes at an estimated value of €3.31m:

Coastal Protection of Strandhill Effluent Treatment Works, Protection of Bellawaddy River Bank, Lifeguard, toilet block and Pumping Station at Enniscrone, Mullaghmore Dune Management, Easkey Scenic Drive Protection, Finnod River Outfall Reconstruction, Rathlee coast road protection, Raghly Storm Berm Strengthening to neck of Peninsula, Rosses Point Dune Protection, Strandhill Dune Protection and Pollacheeny Coast Protection.

The Strandhill Effluent Treatment Works Coastal Protection Scheme planning procedure is nearing completion and will go before the Council for approval in early 2010 and funding has been requested to construct same, (€0.5m).

The OPW has funded a Coastal study for the Rosses Point –Drumcliffe Bay area to provide information and advice in future protection measures in the area.

## G04 Veterinary Service

### 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 slaughtering cattle, sheep, pigs and deer. Two meat plants are also under supervision. Funding for the contract comes from the Food Safety Authority and was reduced by 6% in 2009. Further cuts in 2010 may necessitate a review of how the contract is delivered.

### Animal Welfare

The economic downturn has resulted in an increase in the number of complaints about horse welfare. There has also been an increase in the incidence of horses being illegally grazed on land. Horse seizures will be carried out if the funds are available.

Funding for the Dog Warden service was affected by the increase in the fee per licence payable to An Post for selling licences. This increased from €1.17 to €3.50 with a corresponding reduction in income to the Council. A promised increase in the Dog Licence (the first in 10 years) to compensate has not so far materialised. The number of licences is stable at about 4,250 per annum. Income is also generated by fees at the dog shelter but this has been under pressure in the closing months of 2009

## G05 Educational Support Services

Sligo County Council assisted 601 students under the current Higher Education Grant Scheme. There were 329 new applicants and 314 continuing students bringing combined total in 2009/2010 to 643 grants. The scheme is administered by the Council on behalf of the Department of Education and Science.

