



Sligo County Council

Public Spending Code Quality Assurance Report for the Year Ended 31st December 2017

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1. Introduction

Circular 13/13: *“The Public Spending Code: Expenditure Planning, Appraisal & Evaluation in the Irish Public Service-Standard Rules & Procedures*, came into effect in September 2013. The objective of the code is to ensure that the state achieves best value for the resources it has at its disposal. The Code covers all bodies in receipt of public funding, including Local Authorities. Each Authority is required to publish an annual report, signed by the Chief Executive, following the completion of a Quality Assurance process. This report is the “Public Spending Code-Quality Assurance Report” for Sligo County Council for the year ended 31st December 2017.

2. Format of Report

The Public Spending Code sets out five steps in the Quality Assurance Process, as follows:

1. Compilation of a list of all projects/programmes, at the different stages of the Project Life Cycle, with an anticipated cost in excess of €500,000 (“Project Inventories”). This list of Capital and Current Expenditure schemes/programmes are further classified under the categories of:
 - Being considered
 - Being incurred
 - Recently ended
2. Where there are procurements in excess of €10m, relating to projects in progress or completed in the year under review, the Authority should publish summary information on its website.
3. Completion of checklists included in the Code.
4. Undertaking an in-depth check on a sample of projects/programmes. The value of the projects selected for in-depth review must follow the criteria set out below;
Capital Projects – minimum of 5% of the total value of all Capital projects on the Project Inventory
Revenue Projects – minimum of 1% of the total value of all Revenue projects on the Project Inventory.
The minimum is an average over a three year period.
5. Preparation and submission of a short report to the National Oversight & Audit Commission (NOAC), summarising the information covered in steps 1-4 of the Quality Assurance process. The report is to be signed by the Chief Executive and be published on the authority’s website.

3. Inventory of Projects/Programmes (Step 1 of QA Process)

Appendix 1 sets out the inventory of Sligo County Council, for the year ended 31st December 2017. The current expenditures, capital grant schemes and capital projects are categorised under the three phases of:

- Expenditure being considered
- Expenditure being incurred
- Expenditure recently ended

Expenditure “being considered” is further analysed by total project cost as follows:

- Between €0.5m - €5m
- Between €5m - €20m
- Greater than €20m

Expenditure being considered

This heading includes expenditure for capital projects and grant schemes that are or were under consideration during the year and new current expenditure programmes/extensions to existing programmes, with annual expenditure greater than €0.5m per annum. Capital projects “under consideration” include those at appraisal and planning and design phases.

Expenditure being incurred

This covers capital projects that are at the implementation stage, capital grant schemes that are incurring expenditure and current expenditure schemes or programmes that are incurring expenditure.

Expenditure recently ended

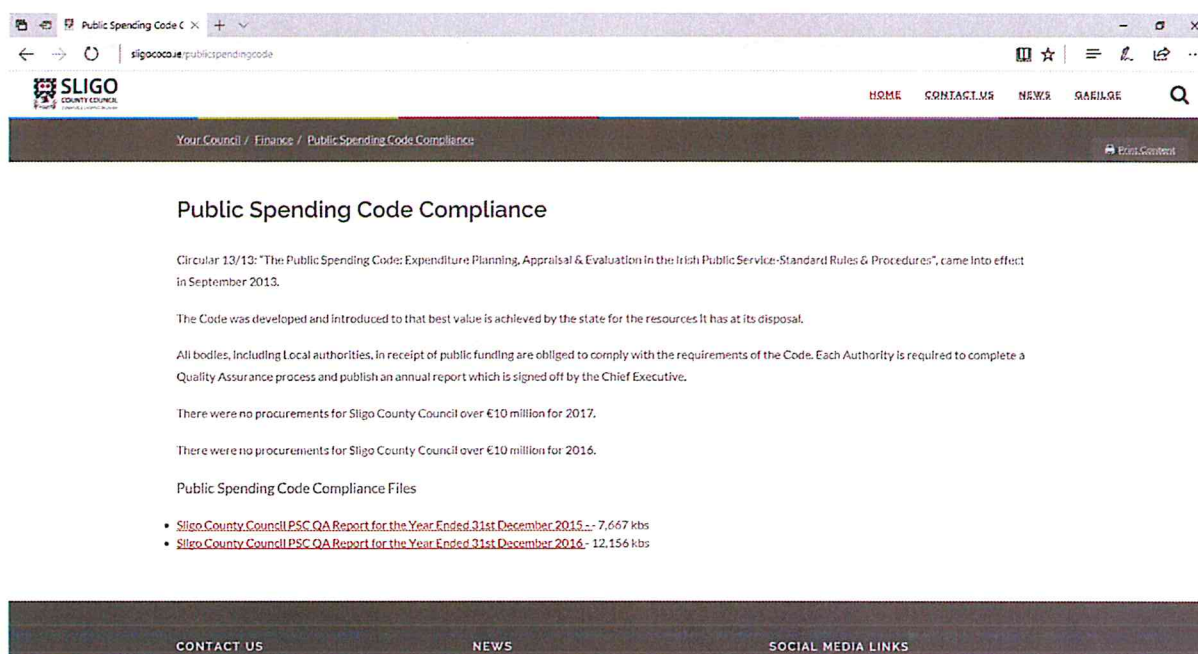
This includes Capital Projects that were completed in the year, capital grant schemes that were completed/discontinued and current expenditure schemes or programmes that were completed/discontinued.

The total inventory value for Sligo County Council for the year ended 31st December 2017 is €381.3m.

4. Published Summary of Procurements (Step 2 of QA Process)

Sligo County Council will publish details of procurements in excess of €10m, for 2017 inventories, on its website at the following link:

<http://www.sligococo.ie/publicspendingcode/>



The Authority will continue to update the information as new relevant procurements arise.

5. Assessment of Compliance (Step 3 of QA Process)

The following high level checklists have been completed by the Authority:

1. General Obligations not specific to individual projects/programmes
2. Capital Projects/Capital Grant Schemes being considered
3. Current Expenditure being considered
4. Capital Expenditure being incurred
5. Current Expenditure being incurred
6. Capital Expenditure completed
7. Current Expenditure completed

Checklist 1

General Obligations not specific to individual projects/programmes	Self-Assessed Compliance Rating: 1 – 3	Discussion/Action Required
1.1 Does the local authority ensure, on an on-going basis, that appropriate people within the authority and its agencies are aware of the requirements of the Public Spending Code (incl. through training)	2	All relevant staff have been notified of their obligations under the PSC.
1.2 Has training on the Public Spending Code been provided to relevant staff within the authority?	2	Guidance documentation has been circulated and training needs have been identified.
1.3 Has the Public Spending Code been adapted for the type of project/programme that your local authority is responsible for? i.e., have adapted sectoral guidelines been developed?	3	Yes. A guidance document (Feb. 2017) has been developed for the QA adapting the PSC to Local Government structures and approach.
1.4 Has the local authority in its role as Sanctioning Authority satisfied itself that agencies that it funds comply with the Public Spending Code?	N/A	Authority is not a Sanctioning Authority.
1.5 Have recommendations from previous QA reports (incl. spot checks) been disseminated, where appropriate, within the local authority and to agencies?	3	Recommendations are notified to relevant parties for review and application.
1.6 Have recommendations from previous QA reports been acted upon?	2	Recommendations are reviewed by relevant parties.
1.7 Has an annual Public Spending Code QA report been certified by the local authority's Chief Executive, submitted to NOAC and published on the authority's website?	3	2014, 2015 and 2016 report submitted and published.
1.8 Was the required sample of projects/programmes subjected to in-depth checking as per step 4 of the QAP?	3	Yes the required sample was subjected to an in-depth review.
1.9 Is there a process in place to plan for ex post evaluations/Post Project Reviews? Ex-post evaluation is conducted after a certain period has passed since the completion of a target project with emphasis on the effectiveness and sustainability of the project.	3	Yes – standard part of Scheme Management for both TII, DTTAS and Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government in relation to housing capital projects.
1.10 How many formal Post Project Review evaluations have been completed in the year under review? Have they been issued promptly to the relevant stakeholders / published in a timely manner?	3	No post project review evaluations carried out in 2017
1.11 Is there a process to follow up on the		

recommendations of previous evaluations/Post project reviews?	3	Yes
1.12 How have the recommendations of previous evaluations / post project reviews informed resource allocation decisions?	3	Yes- are used as a learning tool for future projects.
Self-Assessed Ratings: 1 - Scope for significant improvements, 2 - Compliant but with some improvement necessary, 3 - Broadly compliant		

Checklist 2: -To be completed in respect of capital projects/programmes & capital grant schemes that were under consideration in the past year.

Capital Expenditure being considered – Appraisal and Approval	Self-Assessed Compliance Rating: 1 – 3	Comment/Action Required
2.1 Was a preliminary appraisal undertaken for all projects > €5m?	3	
2.2 Was an appropriate appraisal method used in respect of capital projects or capital programmes/grant schemes?	3	DHPLG 4 stage capital appraisal process for Housing projects
2.3 Was a CBA/CEA completed for all projects exceeding €20m?	3	Yes, where required.
2.4 Was the appraisal process commenced at an early stage to facilitate decision making? (i.e. prior to the decision)	3	
2.5 Was an Approval in Principle granted by the Sanctioning Authority for all projects before they entered the planning and design phase (e.g. procurement)?	3	
2.6 If a CBA/CEA was required was it submitted to the relevant Department for their views?	3	Approved through the relevant funding Authority.
2.7 Were the NDFA consulted for projects costing more than €20m?	3	Approved through the relevant funding Authority.
2.8 Were all projects that went forward for tender in line with the Approval in Principle and, if not, was the detailed appraisal revisited and a fresh Approval in Principle granted?	3	
2.9 Was approval granted to proceed to tender?	3	
2.10 Were procurement rules complied with?	2	Yes sample audit checks should be conducted to verify compliance.
2.11 Were State Aid rules checked for all supports?	3	Yes where applicable.
2.12 Were the tenders received in line with the Approval in Principle in terms of cost and what is expected to be delivered?	3	

2.13 Were performance indicators specified for each project/programme that will allow for a robust evaluation at a later date?	2	Each project would have budgets and expected outcome defined. Less formality where projects were smaller.
2.14 Have steps been put in place to gather performance indicator data?	2	Yes project managers to track and monitor against objectives.
Self-Assessed Ratings: 1 - Scope for significant improvements, 2 - Compliant but with some improvement necessary, 3 - Broadly compliant		

Checklist 3: - New Current expenditure or expansion of existing current expenditure under consideration

Current Expenditure being considered – Appraisal and Approval	Self-Assessed Compliance Rating: 1 – 3	Comment/Action Required
3.1 Were objectives clearly set out?	3	Part of the Annual Budget process
3.2 Are objectives measurable in quantitative terms?	2	National Key Performance Indicators
3.3 Was a business case, incorporating financial and economic appraisal, prepared for new current expenditure?	n/a	
3.4 Was an appropriate appraisal method used?	n/a	
3.5 Was an economic appraisal completed for all projects exceeding €20m or an annual spend of €5m over 4 years?	n/a	
3.6 Did the business case include a section on piloting?	n/a	
3.7 Were pilots undertaken for new current spending proposals involving total expenditure of at least €20m over the proposed duration of the programme and a minimum annual expenditure of €5m?	n/a	
3.8 Have the methodology and data collection requirements for the pilot been agreed at the outset of the scheme?	n/a	
3.9 Was the pilot formally evaluated and submitted for approval to the relevant Department?	n/a	
3.10 Has an assessment of likely demand for the	n/a	

new scheme/scheme extension been estimated based on empirical evidence?		
3.11 Was the required approval granted?	3	Approved as part of the annual budgetary process
3.12 Has a sunset clause (as defined in section B06, 4.2 of the Public Spending Code) been set?	n/a	
3.13 If outsourcing was involved were procurement rules complied with?	n/a	
3.14 Were performance indicators specified for each new current expenditure proposal or expansion of existing current expenditure programme which will allow for a robust evaluation at a later date?	2	National Key Performance Indicators
3.15 Have steps been put in place to gather performance indicator data?	3	
Self-Assessed Ratings: 1 - Scope for significant improvements, 2 - Compliant but with some improvement necessary, 3 - Broadly compliant		

Checklist 4: - To be completed in respect of capital projects/programmes & capital grants schemes incurring expenditure in the year under review.

Incurring Capital Expenditure	Self-Assessed Compliance Rating: 1 – 3	Comment/Action Required
4.1 Was a contract signed and was it in line with the Approval in Principle?	3	
4.2 Did management boards/steering committees meet regularly as agreed?	2	Yes for all large projects.
4.3 Were programme co-ordinators appointed to co-ordinate implementation?	3	
4.4 Were project managers, responsible for delivery, appointed and were the project managers at a suitably senior level for the scale of the project?	3	
4.5 Were monitoring reports prepared regularly, showing implementation against plan, budget, timescales and quality?	2	Yes for all large projects.
4.6 Did projects/programmes/grant schemes keep within their financial budget and time schedule?	2	
4.7 Did budgets have to be adjusted?	2	
4.8 Were decisions on changes to budgets / time schedules made promptly?	3	

4.9 Did circumstances ever warrant questioning the viability of the project/programme/grant scheme and the business case incl. CBA/CEA? (exceeding budget, lack of progress, changes in the environment, new evidence, etc.)	2	
4.10 If circumstances did warrant questioning the viability of a project/programme/grant scheme, was the project subjected to adequate examination?	3	
4.11 If costs increased was approval received from the Sanctioning Authority?	3	Yes Sanctioning Authority approved increased costs where relevant.
4.12 Were any projects/programmes/grant schemes terminated because of deviations from the plan, the budget or because circumstances in the environment changed the need for the investment?	3	None in 2017
Self-Assessed Ratings: 1 - Scope for significant improvements, 2 - Compliant but with some improvement necessary, 3 - Broadly compliant		

Checklist 5: - To be completed in respect of current expenditure programmes incurring expenditure in the year under review.

Incurring Current Expenditure	Self-Assessed Compliance Rating: 1 – 3	Comment/Action Required
5.1 Are there clear objectives for all areas of current expenditure?	3	Annual Budget defines the expenditure for the year.
5.2 Are outputs well defined?	2	National Key Performance Indicators.
5.3 Are outputs quantified on a regular basis?	2	Yes, National Key Performance Indicators are set annually. CSO monthly reports
5.4 Is there a method for monitoring efficiency on an on-going basis?	2	Budget monitoring on a monthly basis and regular team meetings to review activities carried out.
5.5 Are outcomes well defined?	3	
5.6 Are outcomes quantified on a regular basis?	3	

5.7 Are unit costings compiled for performance monitoring?	2	
5.8 Are other data compiled to monitor performance?	2	Other Reports submitted to Sanctioning Authority
5.9 Is there a method for monitoring effectiveness on an on-going basis?	2	
5.10 Has the organisation engaged in any other 'evaluation proofing' ¹ of programmes/projects?	1	
Self-Assessed Ratings: 1 - Scope for significant improvements, 2 - Compliant but with some improvement necessary, 3 - Broadly compliant		

Checklist 6: - To be completed in respect of capital projects/programmes & capital grant schemes discontinued in the year under review.

Capital Expenditure Completed	Self-Assessed Compliance Rating: 1 – 3	Comment/Action Required
6.1 How many post project reviews were completed in the year under review?	2	No post project review required in 2017
6.2 Was a post project review completed for all projects/programmes exceeding €20m?	N/a	
6.3 Was a post project review completed for all capital grant schemes where the scheme both (1) had an annual value in excess of €30m and (2) where scheme duration was five years or more?	N/a	
6.4 Aside from projects over €20m and grant schemes over €30m, was the requirement to review 5% (Value) of all other projects adhered to?	2	In-depth checks carried out per PSC requirements
6.5 If sufficient time has not elapsed to allow for a proper assessment, has a post project review been scheduled for a future date?	2	

¹Evaluation proofing involves checking to see if the required data are being collected so that when the time comes a programme/project can be subjected to a robust evaluation. If the data are not being collected, then a plan should be put in place to collect the appropriate indicators to allow for the completion of a robust evaluation down the line.

6.6 Were lessons learned from post-project reviews disseminated within the Sponsoring Agency and to the Sanctioning Authority? (Or other relevant bodies)	3	
6.7 Were changes made to practices in light of lessons learned from post-project reviews?	3	
6.8 Were project reviews carried out by staffing resources independent of project implementation?	2	Independent reviews undertaken in certain instances
Self-Assessed Ratings: 1 - Scope for significant improvements, 2 - Compliant but with some improvement necessary, 3 - Broadly compliant		

Checklist 7: - To be completed in respect of current expenditure programmes that reached the end of their planned timeframe during the year or were discontinued.

Current Expenditure that (i) reached the end of its planned timeframe or (ii) was discontinued	Self-Assessed Compliance Rating: 1 – 3	Comment/Action Required
7.1 Were reviews carried out of current expenditure programmes that matured during the year or were discontinued?	n/a	No Projects in this Category for 2017
7.2 Did those reviews reach conclusions on whether the programmes were efficient?	n/a	No Projects in this Category for 2017
7.3 Did those reviews reach conclusions on whether the programmes were effective?	n/a	No Projects in this Category for 2017
7.4 Have the conclusions reached been taken into account in related areas of expenditure?	n/a	No Projects in this Category for 2017
7.5 Were any programmes discontinued following a review of a current expenditure programme?	n/a	No Projects in this Category for 2017
7.6 Were reviews carried out by staffing resources independent of project implementation?	n/a	No Projects in this Category for 2017
7.7 Were changes made to the organisation's practices in light of lessons learned from reviews?	n/a	No Projects in this Category for 2017
Self-Assessed Ratings: 1 - Scope for significant improvements, 2 - Compliant but with some improvement necessary, 3 - Broadly compliant		

Main issues arising from Checklist Assessment

The above checklists represent Sligo County Council's assessment of its compliance with the Public Spending Code. Overall, while there is a good level of compliance in most areas, the quality assurance process also has assisted in identifying areas where there are weaknesses and where improvements are required.

The authority has met the obligations in preparing and submitting to NOAC, the PSC report for the expenditure year ended 31st December 2017, which includes the completion of the required inventories and checklists and the in-depth review on the required sample of total inventory.

Where current expenditure was incurred during the year, the rating of compliance was mainly in band 2 which is "Compliant with some improvement necessary". The authority will review the measurements of output, efficiency and effectiveness currently employed and assess if additional methods of monitoring outcomes could be developed to strengthen the process. Under the current expenditure categories there were no programmes ended/discontinued within the year. There was one area where new/extended programmes were under consideration – the Housing budget for the Maintenance and Improvement of LA Housing Units increased.

The capital checklists prepared for 2017 show, in general, a high level of compliance with the code. In the case of smaller scale schemes/projects there is the opportunity to introduce more structured procedures to strengthen documentation and management of such projects.

The QA process highlighted the need for training, to ensure that all staff, who will be involved in expenditure and budgetary management, will be familiar with the code and its related obligations. Further internal training will be provided to ensure relevant staff are made aware of the requirements of the PSC. Staff from the Council will avail of future external training when this occurs.

6. In-depth Checks (Step 4 of QA Process)

The following section presents a summary of the findings of this In-Depth Check on

Revenue Project - Public Lighting

Capital Project - Rural Development Programme – LEADER element

Revenue Project – Public Lighting

Sligo County Council is responsible for the provision public lighting throughout the county which currently consists of 7,800 public lights. The budget for Public Lighting is approved on an annual basis as part of the Annual Budget. The maintenance contract is currently held by Electric Skyline and covers the period up to the end of August 2018. The unmetered supply is provided by Energia under an agreement in place until 31st October, 2018. The metered supply is provided by Airtricity under an agreement in place until 30th June, 2019. Sligo County Council uses the DeadSure Public Lighting Asset Management System to manage details of maintenance schedules, faults, night patrols etc.

The in-depth check included a review of the contracts in place and the monthly reports available to monitor activity and compliance with contract terms. National and regional procurement frameworks have been used to procure the maintenance element and the supply of energy. The provision of Public Lighting in Sligo for 2017 as reviewed complies with the broad principles of the Public Spending Code.

Capital Project – Rural Development Programme - LEADER element

The LEADER Programme 2014-2020 was designed to aid the development of sustainable rural communities and promote the economic development of rural areas. The Programme is being delivered in Sligo through the Sligo Local Action Group (LAG) which has ultimate responsibility for the oversight of the Programme. Sligo County Council as Financial Partner has responsibility for overall administrative and financial management. A budget of €7.6m is available for implementation of the current programme up to the end of Dec 2020.

The programme must adhere to the Operating Rules which provide a governance framework for the implementation of LAG Local Development Strategies, in accordance with the Programme's priorities, relevant EU Regulations and national regulatory and governance requirements. The various stages of delivery of the programme and of individual projects are subject to regular checks by the Implementing Partner, the Financial Partner, the LAG, Pobal and the Department of Rural and Community Development. The material examined for the purposes of this review, which covers the period from 2015 to the end of 2017, demonstrates that the Sligo Local Action Group complies with the principles of the Public Spending Code in the delivery of the LEADER Rural Development Programme.

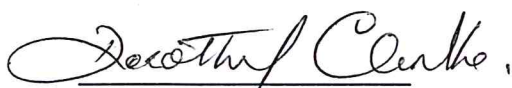
7. Conclusion

The Public Spending Code Quality Assurance Report, inventories and checklists have been completed by the Authority for the year ended 31st December 2017. While there are no serious areas of non-compliance with the PSC noted in the report, the Authority has identified some areas where compliance with the PSC requirements could be strengthened and improved. The Authority will continue to review these areas and identify and implement improvements in its processes.

8. Certification

This Annual Quality Assurance Report reflects Sligo County Council's assessment of compliance with the Public Spending Code. It is based on the best financial, organisational and performance related information available across the various areas of responsibility.

Signed by:



Ms. Dorothy Clarke,
Deputy Chief Executive

30th May 2018

9. Appendices

Quality Assurance – In Depth Check

Revenue: Public Lighting

Capital: Rural Development Programme

Project Inventory

Quality Assurance – In Depth Check

Section A: Introduction

This introductory section details the headline information on the programme or project in question.

Programme or Project Information	
Name	Public Lighting
Detail	Current Expenditure to operate and maintain the public lighting system in Sligo
Responsible Body	Sligo County Council
Current Status	Expenditure Being Incurred
Start Date	January 2017
End Date	December 2017
Overall Cost	€677,482

Project Description

Sligo County Council is responsible for the provision public lighting throughout the county in rural and urban areas which currently consists of 7,800 public lights.

The budget for Public Lighting is approved on an annual basis as part of the Annual Budget. Expenditure on Public Lighting mainly relates to the maintenance of the lights, the supply of electricity and an annual fee for the IT system.

The maintenance contract is currently held by Electric Skyline and covers the period up to the end of August 2018. The contract was procured by Mayo County Council in 2015 on behalf of Sligo County Council, Leitrim County Council, Mayo County Council, Galway County Council, Galway City Council and Mayo County Council. The contract was for a period of 2 years with the possibility of renewal for further additional periods of one year to a maximum of 3 no. extensions.

The energy supply on the N4 road and interchanges is through a metered supply provided by Airtricity under an agreement in place until 30th June, 2019.

The energy supply to all other public lights is through an unmetered supply and is provided by Energia under an agreement in place until 31st October, 2018.

Costs incurred in relation to public lighting on National Primary (NP) and National Secondary (NS) roads are 100% recouped from Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII).

Section B - Step 1: Logic Model Mapping

As part of this In-Depth Check, Internal Audit has completed a Programme Logic Model (PLM) for the supply and maintenance of Public Lighting. A PLM is a standard evaluation tool and further information on their nature is available in the [Public Spending Code](#).

Objectives	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
To provide public lighting throughout the county	Energy costs Maintenance costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor the repair, service and maintenance of Public Lighting Process payments for maintenance works and for energy supply 	The provision of efficient and effective public lighting in county Sligo – 7,800 public lights	Enhanced safety for all road users and pedestrians Reduction in anti-social behaviour Reduction in energy consumption through the increased use of LED
To maintain public lighting	IT support system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recoup expenditure on Public Lighting of National Primary & National Secondary roads Identify future requirements 		Contributes to the retention of Purple Flag status

Description of Programme Logic Model

Objectives: Each Local Authority is responsible for the provision and maintenance of Public Lighting within their area.

Inputs: The budget for 2017 was approved by Sligo County Council members at their meeting on 21st November, 2016.

Activities: The operation and maintenance of 7,800 lights. The energy supply was provided by Airtricity and Energia with maintenance supplied by Electric Skyline. Costs incurred in relation to public lighting on National Primary and National Secondary roads are 100% recouped from Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII).

Outputs: The provision of public lighting throughout county Sligo.

Outcomes: Enhanced public safety through the provision and maintenance of public lighting.

Section B - Step 2: Summary Timeline of Project/Programme

The provision of Public Lighting is an on-going annual spend. The timeline below outlines the milestones applicable to the 2017 period.



2015	<p><u>Unmetered electricity</u></p> <p>In 2015, the OGP invited supplementary tenders from members of the Multi-Supplier Framework Agreement for the supply of Unmetered Electricity to Local Authorities; Viridian Energy t/a Energia was successful. A 3 year agreement commencing 1st November, 2015 was accepted.</p>
2016	<p><u>Metered electricity</u></p> <p>In 2016, the OGP invited supplementary tenders from members of the Multi-Supplier Framework Agreement for the supply of Metered Electricity to Local Authorities; SSE Airtricity Ltd. was successful. A 3 year agreement commencing 1st July, 2016 was accepted.</p>
2015	<p><u>Repair, service/maintenance of public lighting</u></p> <p>Mayo County Council as Lead Contracting Authority procured on its own behalf and on behalf of the following local authorities; Galway County Council, Galway City Council, Roscommon County Council, Leitrim County Council and Sligo County Council a contract for the repair, service/maintenance of its public lighting.</p>
2015	<p>Sligo County Council entered into a contract with Electric Skyline for the repair, service/maintenance of its public lighting commencing 1st September, 2015.</p>
2017	<p>Sligo County Council extended the agreement with Electric Skyline until the end of August 2018.</p>

Section B - Step 3: Analysis of Key Documents

The following section reviews the key documentation relating to appraisal, analysis and evaluation for the provision of Public Lighting.

Project/Programme Key Documents	
Title	Details
Tender Documents / Contract Documents / Chief Executive's Orders	During 2017 – the period under review – a 1 year extension of the contract with Electric Sklyine was agreed. All other relevant contracts and Chief Executive's Orders pre-date the period under review
Annual Budget 2017	Revenue budgets for the year 2017 were approved by Sligo County Council at the Budget Meeting on 21 st November, 2016.
Monthly Activity Reports	Reports from the DeadSure system are issued to the engineer responsible for Public Lighting on a monthly basis. Information available includes faults reported, job ticket numbers and works activity.
Financial Reports	Reports from the Agresso system are reviewed on a monthly basis, and more frequently if required, to monitor expenditure and recoup income.

Key Document 1: Tender Documents / Contract Documents / Chief Executive's Orders

Supplementary Tenders were invited by the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) from members of the Multi-Supplier Framework Agreement for the Supply of Metered Electricity to Local Authorities and from members of the Multi-Supplier Framework Agreement for the Supply of Unmetered Electricity to Local Authorities. Mayo County Council was the Lead Contracting Authority which procured on its own behalf and on behalf of; Galway County Council, Galway City Council, Roscommon County Council, Leitrim County Council and Sligo County Council a contract for the repair, service/maintenance of its public lighting. Information on the tenders is available on the e-tenders website <http://etenders.gov.ie/> Contract documents and Chief Executive Orders for the agreements were reviewed.

Key Document 2: Annual Budget 2017

The budget amount for Public Lighting was approved by Council at their annual Budget meeting in November, 2016. The Budget document is available on Sligo County Council's website <http://www.sligococo.ie/YourCouncil/Publications/>

Key Document 3: Monthly activity reports

Monthly reports from the DeadSure system are reviewed by engineer responsible for Public Lighting.

Key Document 4: Financial reports

Reports from the Agresso financial system are available to monitor income and expenditure.

Section B - Step 4: Data Audit

The following section details the data audit that was carried out for the provision of Public Lighting. It evaluates whether appropriate data is available for the future evaluation of the project/programme.

Data Required	Use	Availability
No. of faults reported	To monitor works carried out by contractor	Yes, through the IT system - DeadSure
No. of faults repaired	To monitor compliance with contract	Yes, through the IT system - DeadSure
Financial analysis	To monitor value for money and compliance with contract	Yes, through the Financial management system - Agresso
Cost down for NP, NS and other routes	To monitor costs for various elements	Yes, through the Financial management system - Agresso

Data Availability and Proposed Next Steps

Sligo County Council uses the DeadSure Public Lighting Asset Management System to manage details of maintenance schedules, faults, night patrols etc. Monthly reports are issued to the relevant staff to enable them to monitor works undertaken.

The public can report faults directly to Electric Skyline by phone, text, e-mail, app or website. Sligo County Council's website outlines the different methods for reporting a fault <http://www.sligococo.ie/Services/RoadsandParking/Roads/ReportaFaultyStreetLight/>

From 2018 the Council will use social media on a more frequent basis – every 6-8 weeks - to inform the public on the reporting methods available.

Work is on-going to group information relating to NP, NS and other routes on the DeadSure system. This information can then be forwarded to Electric Skyline and updated on the Register of unmetered supplies. This will increase the quality of information available for analysis in relation to public lighting on the different types of roads in the county.

Section B - Step 5: Key Evaluation Questions

The following section looks at the key evaluation questions for the provision of Public Lighting based on the findings from the previous sections of this report.

Does the delivery of the project/programme comply with the standards set out in the Public Spending Code? (Appraisal Stage, Implementation Stage and Post-Implementation Stage)

The provision of Public Lighting in Sligo for 2017 as reviewed complies with the broad principles of the Public Spending Code.

Is the necessary data and information available such that the project/programme can be subjected to a full evaluation at a later date?

Data from the DeadSure system and Agresso system is available to enable evaluation of the programme.

What improvements are recommended such that future processes and management are enhanced?

Improved analysis of the information in the DeadSure system will be further enhanced by the work that is currently being carried out to further breakdown the identification of unmetered supplies relation to National Primary, National Secondary and other routes.

Section: In-Depth Check Summary

The following section presents a summary of the findings of this In-Depth Check on the provision of Public Lighting.

Summary of In-Depth Check

Sligo County Council is responsible for the provision public lighting throughout the county which currently consists of 7,800 public lights. The budget for Public Lighting is approved on an annual basis as part of the Annual Budget. The maintenance contract is currently held by Electric Skyline and covers the period up to the end of August 2018. The unmetered supply is provided by Energia under an agreement in place until 31st October, 2018. The metered supply is provided by Airtricity under an agreement in place until 30th June, 2019. Sligo County Council uses the DeadSure Public Lighting Asset Management System to manage details of maintenance schedules, faults, night patrols etc.

The in-depth check included a review of the contracts in place and the monthly reports available to monitor activity and compliance with contract terms. National and regional procurement frameworks have been used to procure the maintenance element and the supply of energy. The provision of Public Lighting in Sligo for 2017 as reviewed complies with the broad principles of the Public Spending Code.

Quality Assurance – In Depth Check

Section A: Introduction

This introductory section details the headline information on the programme or project in question.

Programme or Project Information	
Name	Rural Development Programme - LEADER element
Detail	EU rural development programme to revitalise rural areas and create jobs
Responsible Body	Local Action Group i.e. Sligo Local and Community Development Committee (LCDC), a committee of Sligo County Council
Current Status	Expenditure Being Incurred
Start Date	2014
End Date	2020
Overall Cost	€7,655,648

Project Description

The LEADER Initiative (Liaisons entre actions de developpement de l'économie rurale) was established by the European Commission in 1991. It was designed to aid the development of sustainable rural communities following the reforms of the Common Agricultural Policy. LEADER promotes a 'bottom-up' approach to rural development, with the implementation of business plans and decisions on funding being made at a national level on projects. The LEADER 2014-2020 Programme is supported through the European Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). The Programme supports locally identified initiatives that seek to address locally identified needs and challenges. It is delivered by a Local Action Group (or LAG), which has been selected to implement Local Development Strategies.

Key Entities

Managing Authority – Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Contracting Authority - Rural and Community Development

Technical and Administrative Support – Pobal

Local Action Group – Sligo Local Action Group (LAG)- Sligo Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

Lead Financial Partner – Sligo County Council

Independent Evaluation Committee – Sligo LEADER IEC Committee

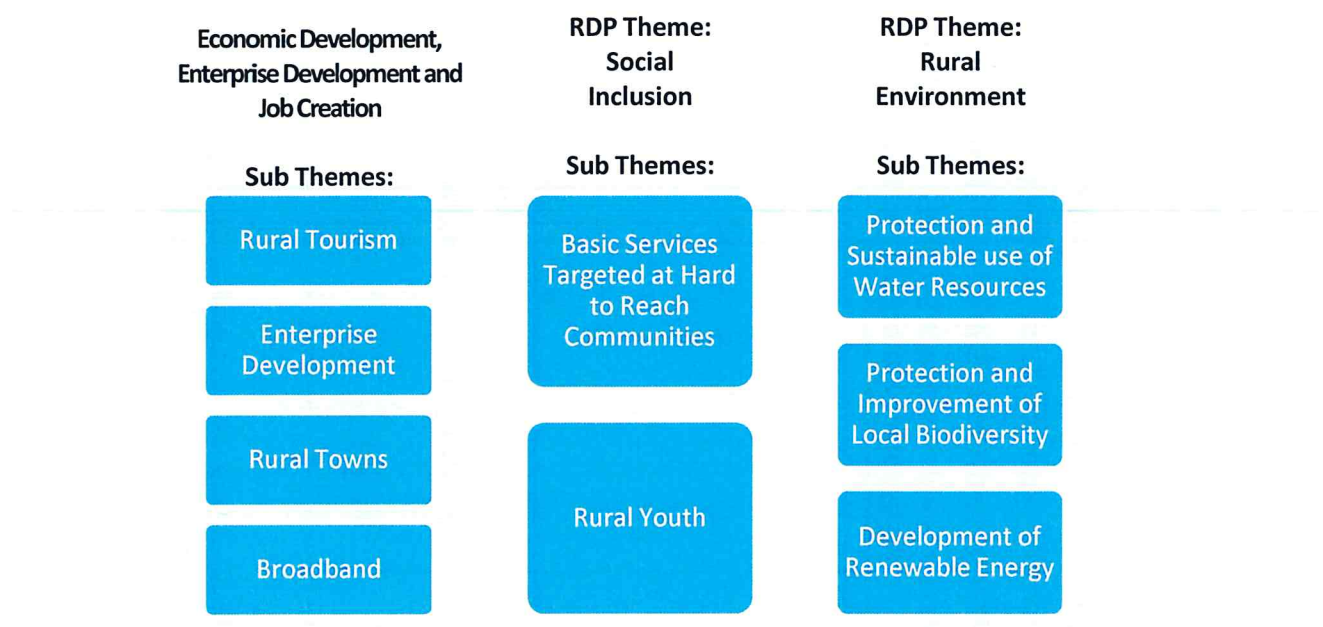
Implementing Partner – Sligo LEADER Partnership Co. Ltd

Applicants / Promoters – Private / Community

Three long term strategic objectives have been identified for EU Rural Development policy in the 2014-2020 programming period:

- Improving the competitiveness of agriculture
- The sustainable management of natural resources and climate action
- A balanced territorial development of rural areas

The Programme includes themes that reflect the overarching needs of rural Ireland. They reflect the key challenges facing rural Ireland, with regard to economic recovery, employment creation, tackling social exclusion and reducing the impact of global warming and resource depletion. Each theme contains a number of sub-themes (see table below), which are considered the key areas in need of the greatest support and have the greatest potential to promote the sustainable development of rural communities.



Types of funding support available:

- Capital (Building / Adaptation / Works / Equipment)
- Analysis & Development (Feasibility studies / Plans / Designs)
- Marketing (Advertising / Promotion / Branding)
- Training / Capacity Building

The LAG has ultimate responsibility for the oversight and delivery of the Programme while Sligo County Council as Financial Partner has responsibility for overall administrative and financial management.

A budget of €7.6m is available for implementation of the current programme up to the end of Dec 2020.

During 2017:

No. of Expressions of Interest received	160
No. of Expressions of Interest that moved to Application stage	38
No. of Projects approved	29
Actual project approval value to year end 2017	€622,775
Actual project expenditure to year end 2017	€260,546

Section B - Step 1: Logic Model Mapping

As part of this In-Depth Check, Internal Audit has completed a Programme Logic Model (PLM) for the Rural Development Programme. A PLM is a standard evaluation tool and further information on their nature is available in the [Public Spending Code](#).

Objectives	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
To deliver the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 in Sligo	EU funding of €7.6m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set-up a Local Action Group (LAG) Develop a Local Development Strategy Deliver the Local Development Strategy Recoup expenditure Evaluate programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Development Strategy Funded projects Annual Progress Report and Final Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in employment Increase in rural based projects Improved infrastructure Increased co-operation between agencies

Description of Programme Logic Model

Objectives: Sligo LAG will deliver the Rural Development Programme in Sligo over the period 2014 – 2020.

Inputs: Budget of €7,655,647 available through the European Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)

Activities: Using the approved Local Development Strategy to deliver the RDP for the county.

Outputs: To the end of 2017 the Local Development Strategy was approved, 28 no. projects were approved and the Annual Progress Report 2017 and Implementation Plan 2018 were completed.

Outcomes: The envisaged outcomes of the project are to increase the number of SMEs supported, the number of rural dwellers participating in local development actions and the number of jobs sustained. Collaborating organisations include Sligo County Council, Fáilte Ireland, Sligo Tourism Ltd., Business Development associations, IT Sligo, St. Angela's Food Centre, MSLETB and community groups.

Section B - Step 2: Summary Timeline of Project/Programme

The following section tracks the delivery of the Rural Development Programme in Sligo from inception.



May, 2015	Ireland's 2014-2020 Rural Development Programme was formally adopted by the EU Commission on the 26th May 2015 Department of Environment, Community & Local Government issue a call for Expressions of Interest to form a Local Action Group for the delivery of the Rural Development Programme
July, 2015	Sligo LCDC successful in bid to act as LAG
September, 2015	Public Consultations on Local Development Strategy held
March, 2016	County Sligo Local Development Strategy approved
July, 2016	Contract between Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs and Sligo Local Community Development Committee (Local Action Group) in conjunction with Sligo County Council (Lead Financial Partner) and Sligo LEADER Partnership Company Ltd. (Implementing Partner) for the Rural Development Programme 2014 - 2020 in the sum of €7,655,647
September 2016	Service Level Agreement between Sligo LCDC – LAG, Sligo County Council (Financial Partner) and Sligo LEADER Partnership Co. Ltd. (Implementing Partner) Inaugural meeting of Sligo LAG Public Information sessions held throughout the county
November, 2016	Independent Evaluation Committee established
October 2017	Standard Application Form, Standard Application Form Checklist, Standard Project Assessment Report, Revised Article 48 Checklist questions Forms issued by Dept. Of Rural & Community Development
December 2017	Local Agreement between LAG, Sligo LEADER Partnership Co. Ltd and LEO on their respective roles and co-operation
On-going	Submission of Expressions of Interest / submission of applications / approval of projects

Section B - Step 3: Analysis of Key Documents

The following section reviews the key documentation relating to appraisal, analysis and evaluation for the Rural Development Programme.

Project/Programme Key Documents	
Title	Details
Sligo Local Development Strategy	A Strategy for the delivery of the LEADER RDP in Sligo
Contracts / Service Level Agreements	Agreements between the relevant parties
Annual Progress Report	Progress Report based on template provided for all LAGs

Key Document 1: Sligo Local Development Strategy

The strategy details the formation of the LAG, the Area Profile, the Consultation Process, specific LDS Actions, strategic integration, networking and co-operation, monitoring, review and evaluation methods and the financial plan. The Strategy as approved in March, 2016.

Key Document 2: Contracts / Service Level Agreements

A Contract between the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs and Sligo Local Community Development Committee (Local Action Group) in conjunction with Sligo County Council and Sligo LEADER Partnership Co. Ltd. was signed in July, 2016.

A Service Level Agreement between Sligo Local Community Development Committee (Local Action Group), Sligo County Council (Financial Partner) and Sligo LEADER Partnership Co. Ltd (Implementing Partner) was signed in September, 2016.

Key Document 3: Annual Progress Report

An Annual Progress Report and Implementation Plan must be submitted by the end of February each year. The plan sets out the Management and Decision-making Structures, a progress review, implementation plan and project case studies.

Section B - Step 4: Data Audit

The following section details the data audit that was carried out for the Rural Development Programme. It evaluates whether appropriate data is available for the future evaluation of the project/programme.

Data Required	Use	Availability
No. of Expressions of Interest received	To evaluate the programme	Yes, through the LEADER IT system
No. of projects approved	To evaluate the programme	Yes, through the LEADER IT system
Programme expenditure	To monitor costs and compliance with the Programme	Yes, through the LEADER IT system and Agresso
Minutes of meetings	To monitor governance	Yes, available from files

Data Availability and Proposed Next Steps

Information is held on the LEADER IT system from which reports can be compiled. Files in relation to LAG, IEC and sub-committee meetings are kept in Sligo County Council offices.

A mid-term Evaluation Report is due in 2018.

Starting in June 2016, and each year until 2024, Member States must submit an Annual Implementation Report (AIR) to the European Commission. The AIR provides information about the implementation and progress of the Rural Development Programme (RDP). Enhanced AIRs, which combine both monitoring and evaluation elements and must be submitted in 2017 and 2019. Information from each LAG will feed into this report. The report for 2017 is available at the following link:

<https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/media/migration/ruralenvironment/ruraldevelopment/ruraldevelopmentprogramme2014-2020/2017EvaluationofIrelandsRDP180917.pdf>

Section B - Step 5: Key Evaluation Questions

The following section looks at the key evaluation questions for the Rural Development Programme based on the findings from the previous sections of this report.

Does the delivery of the project/programme comply with the standards set out in the Public Spending Code? (Appraisal Stage, Implementation Stage and Post-Implementation Stage)

The Rural Development Programme as reviewed complies with the broad principles of the Public Spending Code. Approval for the Local Development Strategy was given in 2016. This document forms the basis for the delivery of projects under the various themes. Each project is subject to standard checks at all stages from the initial Expression of Interest to project completion.

Is the necessary data and information available such that the project/programme can be subjected to a full evaluation at a later date?

The Local Development Strategy lists the Programme Indicators and also outlines the proposed evaluation methods. Data and information will be available for evaluation purposes as it is regularly uploaded to the LEADER IT system. Guidance documents are provided by Pobal e.g. <https://www.pobal.ie/Publications/Documents/LEADER-Performance-Monitoring-Guidance-Document.pdf>

What improvements are recommended such that future processes and management are enhanced?

The early stages of the delivery of the RDP Programme have focussed on developing the strategy and ensuring that the delivery and governance structures are in place. As the programme moves to the project delivery and monitoring phases it is important that the communication channels and good working relationships that have been developed from the start of the programme continue.

Section: In-Depth Check Summary

The following section presents a summary of the findings of this In-Depth Check on the Rural Development Programme.

Summary of In-Depth Check

The LEADER Programme 2014-2020 was designed to aid the development of sustainable rural communities and promote the economic development of rural areas. The Programme is being delivered in Sligo through the Sligo Local Action Group (LAG) which has ultimate responsibility for the oversight of the Programme. Sligo County Council as Financial Partner has responsibility for overall administrative and financial management. A budget of €7.6m is available for implementation of the current programme up to the end of Dec 2020.

The programme must adhere to the Operating Rules which provide a governance framework for the implementation of LAG Local Development Strategies, in accordance with the Programme's priorities, relevant EU Regulations and national regulatory and governance requirements. The various stages of delivery of the programme and of individual projects are subject to regular checks by the Implementing Partner, the Financial Partner, the LAG, Pobal and the Department of Rural and Community Development. The material examined for the purposes of this review, which covers the period from 2015 to the end of 2017, demonstrates that the Sligo Local Action Group complies with the principles of the Public Spending Code in the delivery of the LEADER Rural Development Programme.

Local Authority	Expenditure being considered				Expenditure being incurred		Expenditure recently ended		Notes		
	Current > €0.5m	Capital Capital Projects			Current Expenditure	> €0.5m Capital Grant Schemes	Capital Projects	Current Expenditure		> €0.5m Capital Grant Schemes	Capital Projects
		€0.5 - €5m	€5 - €20m	€20m plus							
Local Authority Name											
Council											
Housing & Building											
A01 Maintenance/Improvement of LA Housing	€0.5				€2.3						
A01 Maintenance/Improvement of LA Housing - additional budget					€0.5						
A03 Housing Rent and Tenant Purchase Administration					€0.8						
A06 Support to Housing Capital & Affordable Programme					€4.2						
A07 RAS Programme					€1.4						
A08 Housing Loans					€1.4						
A09 Housing Grants					€7.2						
Housing Construction Knappagh Beg											
Proposed Social Housing at Rosses Point Road			€4.1								
Proposed Social Housing at Collooney		€3.5									
Social Housing Development at Maugheraboy		€1.7		€17.9							
CAS 2015 St VdP at Cuan Iosa Ballymote											
Housing Construction Carrowbunaun, Strandhill		€3.1									
Refurbishment 96 units Cranmore		€2.2									
Community Centre Cranmore		€2.8									
New link via Joe McDonnell Drive		€0.8									
Fr O'Flanagan Tce										€3.7	

[illegible]

