



Comhairle Contae
Ros Comáin
Roscommon
County Council



To: The Cathaoirleach and Each Member of Roscommon County Council

Date: 22nd November 2023

Re: Management Report October 2023

Dear Cathaoirleach and Members,

As part of the on-going governance of the Local Authority, Section 136 (2) of the Local Government Act 2001 as inserted by Section 51 subsections (3) and (4) of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 places an obligation on the Chief Executive to prepare monthly management reports, in relation to the performance of his or her executive functions during the preceding calendar month, including implementation of policy or other matters required by the council in the exercise of its reserved functions, and the provision of services by the council, and shall on the set day (4th Monday of each month) furnish a copy of the management report to each member of the local authority.

I refer to circular letter LG 18/2014 which contains the guidelines on the preparation of the monthly management reports. The monthly management reports are intended to assist the elected members discharge their governance responsibilities.

The attached management report for October 2023 has been prepared in accordance with Circular LG 18/2014 and policies which have been adopted by Roscommon County Council are currently being implemented throughout the organisation.

Yours sincerely,

**Chief Executive
Roscommon County Council**



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MANAGEMENT REPORT

October 2023

Roscommon County Council
Revenue Account Income & Expenditure Summary by Service Division
Management Accounts Summary to 31st October 2023

	EXPENDITURE		INCOME		NET
	Expenditure Incurred up to 31/10/2023	Adopted Full Year Budget	Income Receivable up to 31/10/2023	Adopted Full year Budget	Actual Overall Surplus/ (Deficit)
	€	€	€	€	€
Housing & Building	6,974,262	8,947,517	8,598,316	8,958,648	1,624,054
Road Transport & Safety	21,995,137	28,908,117	13,339,783	22,164,121	(8,655,354)
Water Services	5,058,133	6,869,635	5,387,677	6,819,363	329,544
Development Management	7,490,845	9,072,304	3,123,609	3,002,088	(4,367,236)
Environmental Services	5,045,442	6,700,185	771,065	1,065,136	(4,274,378)
Recreation & Amenity	4,431,225	4,728,556	935,953	625,798	(3,495,272)
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	517,281	792,603	159,921	260,156	(357,359)
Miscellaneous Services	4,395,472	6,039,949	4,107,185	5,683,092	(288,287)
Central Management Charges	2,261,450	0	131,823	0	(2,129,627)
Local Government Fund/General Purpose Grant	0	0	8,963,862	10,756,600	8,963,862
Pension Levy	0	0	0	0	0
Rates	0	0	10,400,645	12,723,862	10,400,645
	58,169,247	72,058,866	55,919,837	72,058,866	(2,249,409)

Note 1;
The Central Management Charge is allocated one month in arrears. The costs included in the Central Management Charge are distributed among Divisions A-H and include costs from Area Offices, Corporate Affairs, Corporate buildings, Finance, Human Resources, IT Print & Post Room Services, Pension & Lump Sums.

Summary of Major Collections as at 31st October 2023

Debt Type	Opening Balance	Accrued	Vacant Property Adjustments	Write Off/Waivers	Total for Collection	Collected	Closing Balance	Specific Doubtful Arrears	% Collection	% Collection Previous Year
Commercial Rates	1,343,850	12,473,680	882,807	114,400	12,820,324	10,095,800	2,724,524	18,017	79%	80%
Rents & Annuities	524,603	5,091,543		(7,220)	5,623,366	4,944,558	678,808		88%	90%
Housing Loans	135,470	307,825			443,295	324,067	119,228		73%	68%

Recourse to Overdraft;

There has been no recourse to overdraft during the month of October 2023

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Forward Planning

The *Draft Roscommon Town Local Area Plan 2024-2030*, was sent to the graphic designers on 17th October, with an anticipated turnaround in early December to facilitate the six-week public display period of the Draft Plan. This public consultation will allow all stakeholders to review the Draft Plan and make a submission. Following completion of the public display period for the Draft Plan, the Forward Planning Department will prepare the Chief Executive's Report, in response to all submissions received.

Engagement continues with colleagues in both Westmeath County Council and Leitrim County Council, in regards to pre-draft work on the *Athlone Joint Urban Area Plan (JUAP)* and the *Carrick-on-Shannon Joint Local Area Plan*.

Work on finalising the design of the Athlone JUAP Issues Paper and the Plan website is underway and both the RCC and WCC Forward Planning Teams continue to engage on the associated work i.e. branding, text, images, web content, etc. Pending completion by the consultants, it is anticipated that the Issues Paper will issue very shortly.

Following ongoing engagement between RCC and LCC Forward Planning Teams, the Issues Paper for the proposed Carrick-on-Shannon Joint Local Area Plan was placed on public display on 12th October and submissions from all stakeholders will be accepted up to and including Friday 1st December.

Development Management and Planning Enforcement Activity

The table below summarises Development Management activity in October. A total of 45 valid planning applications were received. The numbers of applications submitted via the new online continue to increase significantly, as agents transition towards the E-Planning model.

Unlike recent preceding months, the number of requests for Section 5 Declarations of Exempted Development significantly decreased with just 3 such applications being received. Decisions issued on 41 planning applications, of which 35 were grants of permission.

The four-week public consultation period for the proposed material contravention of the *Roscommon Town LAP 2014-2020* commenced on 27th October 2023. The public notice outlines that RCC intends to consider granting the proposed Dermot Earley Centre of Excellence, on lands zoned for 'Industrial Uses' in the above referenced Plan. To date no submissions have been received.

Development Management Statistics

Period	Activity	Roscommon North	Roscommon South	Totals
October 2023	Valid applications	27	18	45
	Invalid applications	12	5	17
	Extension of Duration	0	1	1
	DED	1	2	3
	Pre-planning meeting	4	8	19

Enforcement Activity

Period	Activity	Countywide Totals
October 2023	New enforcement case	6
	General letter	3
	Warning letter	9
	Enforcement notice	2
	Closed case	0
	Legal proceedings	0

ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT PROMOTION

Local Enterprise Office:

- **Trading On Line Vouchers (TOVs):** 24 applications have been received and approved to-date. Clients who received TOV approval in 2022 are now all reconciled (i.e.: Paid or De-committed where necessary). Remote Trading Online Voucher Information Seminars are held regularly, with bookings accepted via the LEO website. Seminars in 2023 took place on January 25th, February 22nd, March 7th, April 27th, June 29th, August 17th & October 5th 2023. The next Remote Trading Online Voucher Information Seminar is due on December 7th 2023.
- **Evaluation & Approvals Meeting:** The Evaluation Committee Meeting took place on 2nd October 2023. Two Measure 1 Grants were assessed and funding was approved totalling €59,225. The next Evaluation Committee meeting is scheduled for December 2023.
- **Green for Micro Scheme:** The Green for Micro helps small businesses become more environmentally friendly and sustainable by providing advice and technical support covering topics such as resource efficiency, understanding carbon footprint and implementing an environmental management system. LEO Roscommon has processed 17 applications to date in 2023. The annual target for this scheme is 14 applications for LEO Roscommon. Clients that have completed the Green for Micro can now apply for the new Energy Efficiency Grant.
- **DigitalStart Scheme:** Digital Start is a pilot initiative from the Local Enterprise Office designed to help businesses prepare and implement a plan for the adoption of digital tools and techniques across the business. 5 applications for Digital Start has been approved to date in 2023.
- **Technical Assistance for MicroExporters:** helps small businesses expand into export markets by assisting with the costs of exhibiting at international trade shows. LEO Roscommon has processed 10 applications to date in 2023.
- **Microfinance:** 10 applications were received and sent to MFI up to October 2023. 2 approved, 5 refused and 1 pending decision, 2 withdrawn by MFI. 2 also approved directly with MFI. Work continues on the promotion of this source of finance on social Media and via mentoring clinics.
- **Training:** Training to support the business community has been very active in 2023 and places are in demand and training is well attended. A total of **987** participants have been facilitated to date in 2023.
- **Local Enterprise Week:** This initiative has concluded for 2023 and will recommence in 2024.
- **Remote Mentoring:** 16 Business Advice Clinics & 6 Remote Website & Social Media Review Clinics have been held since January with **167** clients attending the Business Advice clinics. All bookings were taken via the LEO website online booking system. 75 clients in total have been facilitated through One to One Mentoring sessions with a further 31 in progress.
- **REBOOT Training Programme:** (RTP) is a co-operative collaboration between Local Action Groups and Local Enterprise Offices in Mayo, Roscommon and Sligo. A finale event was held on April 19th at the Mc William Park Hotel, Claremorris and this programme has now concluded.

- **Enquiries:** Appropriate support provided on an ongoing basis. **396** enquires were logged in from January 3rd to October 31st 2023.
- **Student Enterprise Programme:** The programme for 2023/24 academic year recommenced in September with all 9 secondary schools registering to take part in the programme once again. In school workshops are ongoing and these are being delivered by Whizzkids Training.
- **National Enterprise Awards:** This initiative has concluded for 2023 and will recommence in 2024.
- **Promotion:** All LEO supports were promoted on the LEO website and on various social media platforms.
- **EI:** LW continues to work with Meabh Conaghan, the new West Region Manager and Noeleen Hussey.
- **IDA:** LW is keeping the line of communication open between IDA, CE & Senior Management of RCC in the hope of encouraging FDI to Roscommon.

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT

LEADER

- Project Claims Up to date
- Monthly Administration Returns for July and August reviewed
- H2 Administration Prepayment processed/ H1 Reconciliation complete
- Department Audit on Feb 23 Monthly Returns scheduled for November 3rd

Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) and LECP

- LECP with North Western Regional Authority for comment.
- Next LCDC Meeting is scheduled for 22.11.23
- For 3 members of the LCDC Committee, their 3-year term was up in October. 2 of these members have confirmed that they are happy to remain on the Committee while one is seeking confirmation from the Group that he represents if they are happy for him to continue for another 3 years. Currently liaising with the Department for the last 4 weeks around the guidelines as they were last revised in 2016.

Joint Policing Committee (JPC)

- Next scheduled JPC meeting scheduled for 04.12.23 with Sub Committee meeting 27.11.23
- CSIF Interim Report completed and submitted to the Department. Still some funding remaining so will look at promotional material prior to year end
- Property Marking Machine - Liaising with AGS around further education from Property Marking Ireland
- Policing Plan 2024 - Philip O'Byrne, Sergeant in the Performance Assurance Functional Area for the Mayo Roscommon Longford (MRL) Division was in contact. Initial steps of the pre drafting stage for the 2024 MRL Divisional Policing Plan. Looking for engagement from Stakeholders and liaising with the JPC Committee.

Citizen Rural Project

- 19.10.23 - Citizen Rural Seminar - 'Rural Data Café' Conference took place in the Abbey Hotel. There was good representation from colleagues in the County Council, and they received positive feedback from many of the participants. 86 people registered, and over the day 50 people attended. As well as strong Roscommon representation, there were individuals from Local Development Companies, the Local Government Management Agency, the Western Development Commission, DRCD, and from third level institutes. They will be sharing the recordings once they are available, and a report is being drafted to capture their findings. They will be sending the web tool 'WILD Roscommon' as soon as possible to those who attended our September workshops for their feedback.

Comhairle Na nÓg

- 18.10.23 - Annual Youth Conference took place in The Hub in Castlerea. Una Ni Chuinn and Bridie McHugh helped to facilitate discussions at the World Café Workshop. All 9 Schools in Roscommon were represented at the event. These discussions involved exploring and prioritising issues affecting young people
- Next Steering Group meeting is scheduled for 08.12.23

Healthy Ireland

With the commencement of the Fit Farmers program in Gortaganny in October 2023, three out of the seven proposed programs under the Roscommon Healthy Ireland Round 4 funding are now actively running. These include the Transition year on yer bike (TYOYB) initiative and the Woodlands for Health Wellness Walks.

The final preparations are in progress for the launch of our fourth program in 2023, the Health & Wellbeing Support Events. These events are specifically designed for the target group of disadvantaged men and women. We have scheduled one event in November and two in December to address the health and wellness needs of this demographic.

SICAP

- Evaluation Meeting hosted 5th October with Initial Scoring complete
- Negotiation Meeting held with Tenderer 13th October
- Updated Tender received 27th October
- Final Evaluation Meeting scheduled for 9th November

Community Support Fund 2022/23

- All Operating Costs have been paid to groups - €137,443
- Total Capital Costs paid to date - €128,776.14
- Balance of 9 projects to be paid. (€14,964.86)

Age Friendly

- We held an Age Friendly event in the Hub, Castlerea in conjunction with Leader on the 12th of October. Approximately 300 participants enjoyed the day's festivities. The event was organised by Roscommon Older Persons Network Committee in association with Roscommon County Councils Age Friendly Office and Roscommon Leader Partnership. Highlights of the daylong event included presentations on Community Alert and the Message in a Bottle awareness campaign by An Garda Siochana, blood pressure testing by nurses with CROI, a display of traditional threshing and social dancing. A number of supporting networks came together to provide information and advice on the day also.
- OPC Training is scheduled for the 22nd of November. Ms. Eileen Hughes, Midlands Regional Age Friendly Programme Manager, will be delivering the training to all Older Persons Council members.

Community Recognition Fund (CRF)

- Total funding allocation - €689,057. CRF 2023 - Department Returns Complete - A total sum of €294,694.25 has been drawn down. Mairead & Una is working with Lorcan assisting Community groups in progressing their projects.

Social Inclusion Unit

- Applications for SI Week grants extended into Nov
- 7 Successful community groups/schools awarded funding ranging from €300 to €500. Total of €2900 allocated
- Hosting RWN Intercultural Arts Project Launch 16th Nov

Offer a Home

Scheme was launched on the 24th Nov 2023. Applications can be made via Offer a Home website and this will be followed up with inspections to determine the suitability of the property. Advertisements of the scheme have been placed on line (RCC website and Social media) and in the local newspapers.

To-date

- 174 properties have been offered in Co. Roscommon.
- 112 properties have been allocated to Ukrainian families. (359 persons)
- 4 are in the process of being offered.
- 38 houses have been withdrawn.

There are approximately 1100 Ukrainians in the County that we are aware of, however, there are also a number of privately arranged units of accommodation. There are 16 accommodation Service Providers, three of which are under contract with Roscommon County Council and the remaining are under contract with IPAS. A new National Call out has taken place.

Emergency Refurbishment Ukraine Project (ERUP)

- 2nd Letter of Intent issued with expected delivery of accommodation in 2024
- Fire Safety Certificate pending for 2nd property
- 6 properties remain on refurb tracker
- Ukraine Community Car
 - Payment on SLA signature paid to RLP
 - Claim submitted to Department for recoupment

PPN

- Suite of New Marketing Resources developed for PPN using their new brand.
- Attended National launch of Pobal & DRCD's "Guide for Inclusive Community Engagement in Local Planning and Decision Making" where our "Planning Roscommon Together" initiative was featured as a best practice in the publication
- First phase of Strategic Planning Course delivered with community groups in conjunction with GRETB and University of Galway lecturers.
- Participated in National PPN Conference in Wicklow.
- Liaised with Climate Action Team in RCC re PPN's role in LA CAP.
- Continued increase in PPN Registrations during October.
- PPN commenced preparations for their bi-annual plenary & Community Networking Expo which has been agreed for 29th November in Abbey Hotel, Roscommon Town

TOURISM

Regional

- Attended workshop for the Upper Shannon, Shannon Erne & Border Destination and Experience Plan development – plan in final stages.
- Attended Waterways Ireland session on the Shannon & Shannon Erne Waterways Interpretation Project
- Attended presentation & discussion at Burren Eco-tourism Network in Ennistymon.
- Just Transition funding meetings attended with launch of Investment Grant aid Scheme for private & community SME's.
- Tourism Presentation delivered at TUS, Athlone

County

- Autumn digital & print Visit Roscommon Marketing Campaign rolled out
- Preparation for Christmas marketing campaign underway
- Co-ordinated two Top Travel Influencer visits & two press media visits to Roscommon
- Destination Boyle Project ongoing
- Explore Roscommon promotional material & website update completed
- Marketing content capture Shoot across the county completed

HERITAGE

Royal Sites of Ireland UNESCO Bid – a Steering Group meeting took place on 27/10/2023. Items on the Agenda were: Mapping OUV Attributes by Dr. Patrick Gleeson; Preliminary Climate Vulnerability Assessment of Irish Tentative List Sites by Dr Cathy Daly & Dr Will Megarry; Update from World Heritage Unit of the Department; Working Group update and the Work Programme for 2024.

A discussion took place on the draft *'Memorandum of Understanding between the National Monuments Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the partner local authorities in relation to the nomination of the Royal Sites of Ireland as a World Heritage Property'*. It was agreed that each local authority will need to sign this individually. This will require sign off in Q1 2024.

The Steering Group meet 4 times /year, usually online. It is important that a Director of Services attend Steering Group meetings. I explained that RCC will have a new DoS coming into post.

Built Heritage Investment Scheme –19 projects were allocated a total of €102, 984 and letters of offer were issued to all successful applicants. Heritage officer continued following up with applicants to get invoices, completion reports etc. for the 2023 recoupment. Heritage Office does not have operational capacity and is no longer in a position to deliver the Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS) grant scheme for 2024 (reference email to Nollaig Whyte & Sean Mullarkey 07/09/2023).

Historic Structures Fund - 4 x projects were allocated a total of €107,800 and letters of offer were issued to all successful applicants. Heritage officer continued following up with applicants to get invoices, completion reports etc for the 2023 recoupment. Heritage Office does not have operational capacity and is no longer in a position to deliver the Historic Structures Fund (HSF) grant schemes for 2024.

Community Monuments Fund – 4 x projects were allocated a total of €164,944 and letters of offer were issued to all successful applicants. Heritage officer continued following up with applicants to get invoices, completion reports etc. for the 2023 recoupment.

Cloonshanvile Abbey Conservation Management Plan (CMP) – Blackwood Associates Conservation Architects are continuing to prepare the CMP. his project is funded by the Community Monuments Fund.

Elphin Cathedral Conservation Project – Blackwood Associates are continuing to prepare specifications and a schedule of works for this project. This project is also funded by the Community Monuments Fund.

Local Biodiversity Action Fund - This scheme is administered by the Heritage Office on behalf of the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage. 4 x projects were allocated a total of €53,194.

- LBAF #01 Quagga Mussel Project – this has high implications for water quality and biodiversity in the county. – Project complete.
- LBAF #02 Tree Mapping project – in association with the Climate Action Team – project complete.
- LBAF #03 Invasive Alien Species Treatment – Athlone, Boyle & Castlerea Area Offices are participating in this project. Sites treated under this funding scheme have been logged on <https://invasives.ie/log-your-actions/> and data gathered as per required recording template by Giorria Environmental Services.
- LBAF #04 County Actions for Pollinators & Biodiversity – as set out below:
 - **Council Actions for Pollinators** – The need for grass mowers capable of cutting and lifting long grass has been identified as a major stumbling block for area offices in managing a 6 week cut & lift grass mowing regime as recommended at selected sites around the county. ‘Action for Pollinators’ plans for 6 x area offices have been reviewed and updated by Giorria Environmental Services.
 - **Pollinator Awards as part of the Greener Spaces Competition** – waiting for date of awards ceremony.
 - **National Pollinator Awards as part of the Tidy Towns Competition** – Roscommon County Council supports this national awards scheme.
 - **Bee Hotels** – Bee hotels have been erected by Boyle Area Office at 3 x agreed sites.

County Heritage Plan Projects – 3 x applications funded by The Heritage Council were allocated €56,250.00 to be recouped in November 2023. These include the projects below:

- **Farming Rathcroghan EIP Community Archaeology Project** – project ingoing.
- **Roscommon Field Names Project** - maps of 12 x townlands were provided to project volunteers during October.

- **Survey of holy wells in Co. Roscommon Phase 1** – Public consultation for this survey closed on 08/10/2023.
- **Roscommon Schools Heritage Programme** – project complete.
- **Historic Graveyards Recording Project** – project complete
- **Kilmeane Graveyard Book** – In association with Mote Park Conservation Group, gone to print. To be launched before Christmas.
- **Roscommon Folklore & Oral History** – Audit of our existing collection is now complete. 19 x recommendations to be actioned.

Creative Ireland – 2 x projects are being delivered by the Heritage Office:

- **Táin March Festival / Royal Rathcroghan Schools Project** – Táin March festival complete. Schools project underway 6 x schools 158 pupils participating.
- **Building of Ireland North Connacht Guide** – Report on 2023 research has been received. Project is progressing well.

Owen O’Conor Mausoleum Conservation Project – works ongoing. Site meeting with conservation architect, archaeologist, contractor & heritage officer took place on 18/10/2023.

County Roscommon Heritage Forum: Meeting 3 of 4 for 2023 took place on 11/10/2023. A new logo for ‘County Roscommon Heritage Forum’ was signed off on.

Heritage Office News – 69 emailed circulated to date in 2023

Heritage Office Social Media – 49 social media posts to date in 2023

Heritage Office needs admin support – Heritage Office has been unable to respond to planning referrals, derelict sites notice referrals & dangerous site notice referrals. Also unable to progress the preparation of a new County Heritage Plan, which has been impossible to achieve in 2022 & 2023. Heritage Office needs consistent administrative support to allow for delivery of a high quality heritage work programme.

ARTS OFFICE

Arts Participation Programme

- **CARE: Creative Ageing in Roscommon - Artist Residencies Programme** in HSE Nursing Homes 2023 ongoing.
- Call Out to artists for **Slow Art Bursaries 2023**.
- Call out for applications to **RCC Artist/Creative Panel** for facilitators who wish to work in participation contexts in the Arts, Libraries, Heritage etc.

Roscommon County Youth Theatre weekly workshops resumed at Roscommon Arts Centre.

Creative Places Ballaghaderreen

- Meeting of Steering Committee and 3 Artist Researchers

Capital Programmes in collaboration with Regeneration

- Stage 2 Assessment for Roscommon Town URDF Artist Commissions – Sculpture on the Square (timeframe extended) and Living Laneways (2 artists commissioned).

Funding Applications to the Arts Council for Arts Office and Arts Centre 2024

Ongoing development and delivery of the **Creative Ireland** and the **Decade of Centenaries** Programmes, liaising with artists, creatives, communities and coordinating the work of the internal **Culture Team** comprising Arts, Heritage, Tourism, Library, Community, LEO. Working with the national Creative Ireland Office and Commemorations Unit – both in the Department of Tourism Culture Arts Gaeltacht Sports & Media. Guided by Roscommon County Council **Culture and Creativity Strategy 2023-2027**.

Roscommon Arts Centre's monthly programme contributes to an inclusive and vibrant arts space for artists and audiences through:

- Performance: a diverse programme of live events in the Centre's 194-seater auditorium.
- Visual Art: curated and exhibited in the Centre's dedicated Gallery
- Outreach & Engagement: a series of on-site and off-site opportunities for the public to expand and deepen their engagement with the arts which is inclusive and compliments the Performance and Visual Art pillars.
- Artist Supports: A programme of supports for professional artists across all artforms including residencies, mentoring, commissions, access to studio & work spaces at the centre, opportunities to develop and share work in progress.

Recruitment in process for

- Director / Venue Manager
- Box Office Assistant / Manager