Comhairle Chontae Chill Mhantáin
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL
Roinn an Airgeadais - Finance Department

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5th December, 2013.

TO: CATHAOIRLEACH AND MEMBERS OF WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Report of County Manager on the Draft Budget for Wicklow County Council for the local financial year ending 31st December, 2014.

Dear Councillors,

The Annual Budget and Manager's Report for the financial year ending 31st December, 2014 has been prepared in accordance with Section 102 of the Local Government Act, 2001. Per circular Fin 05/2013 the prescribed period for a County Council to hold its 2014 Budget Meeting is 24th November, 2013 to 13th January, 2014. Accordingly, the Annual Budget Meeting is scheduled for 10.00 a.m. Monday 16th December.

Introduction

Over the last number of years, Ireland has continued with the dedicated implementation of necessary fiscal consolidation and structural reforms to position the State to exit the EU/IMF Programme successfully. So far in 2013, Ireland's economy was technically out of recession in Q2 2013 with numbers on the Live Register trending steadily downwards, our deficit falling gradually and tax take in line with expectations. However in its latest autumn forecast, the European Commission warned that while Ireland's economic growth may be stabilising, maintaining the upward curve is proving to be more challenging than originally thought. The Commission has revised downwards its predictions for Irish economic growth for this year and next, mainly due to weaker than expected exports and domestic demand. In the forecast, it predicts that the Irish economy, as measured by GDP (gross domestic product), is expected to grow by 0.3% this year and by 1.7% in 2014, with Ireland's deficit forecasted to be 7.4% of GDP this year, and 5% next year. While the Irish economy is experiencing a moderate recovery, the outlook remains challenging.

Budget 2014 represents another step in bringing Ireland's deficit below the 3% of GDP target. The Budget, announced on October 15th, detailed the requirements in order to deliver a deficit of 5% of GDP for 2014 with a total adjustment of €2.5 billion. This includes €1.6 billion in public spending cuts and €0.9billion in tax hikes. These national measures have a significant impact on Wicklow County Council and the local economy. The effect of a fall in incomes, inflation and reduction in liquidity directly influence Wicklow County Council's capacity to deliver services. With an ever-shrinking resource base, it is increasingly difficult to maintain the same level of services. However, despite the economic, financial and personal challenges faced by staff, they have demonstrated remarkable dedication to delivering quality services to the County.

Local Government Reform

Putting People First- Action Programme for Effective Local Government was published in October 2012 setting out Government policy for reforms across all the main areas of local government. The Action Programme details the most far-reaching changes since the present system of local government began in the 1890's. The reform programme takes account of the prevailing economic circumstances in which both administrative and political elements of the public service at all levels are undertaking radical restructuring and change.

The Local Government Bill 2013, published in October 2013, will give effect to the transformation detailed in the Action Programme. It sets out the reforms the Government has approved in all of the main areas of local government; its structures, functions, resources, operational arrangements and governance. These measures include:

- Modernised and strengthened local government structures at sub-county, county and regional levels, involving the replacement of 114 local authorities with 31 integrated authorities organised on the basis of municipal districts within counties.
- Substantial range of "reserved" functions for elected members at district level on a fully devolved basis.
- Stronger role for local government in promoting economic development given the economic impact of its functions generally, its links with enterprise and its new local development and enterprise functions.
- A central role in the oversight and planning of local and community development programmes, through arrangements based on the report of a Steering Group on the alignment of the local government and local development sectors.

In addition regional structures and functions will be revised and strengthened by replacing the existing two regional assemblies and eight regional authorities with three assemblies for the whole country. The new assemblies will bring a greater focus to the strategic functions for which regional structures are intended, such as regional and spatial and economic planning, and serve as an influential link between central and local government.

The Action Programme for Effective Local Government also provides for a strengthened role for local government in promoting economic development given the economic impact of its functions generally. From 2014, the County Enterprise Board will be abolished and a Local Enterprise Office (LEO) established under the Local Authority. Through the Enterprise Unit of the Council, the LEO will continue its success in promoting the development of enterprise in County Wicklow; focusing on the creation of enterprise awareness, providing management training and mentoring services for small business and by providing a range of financial incentives.

This will be the most radical reform of local government in over 100 years. Members will be aware that Wicklow Local Authorities are preparing now for the change in June 2014. Mr Bryan Doyle, Director of Services, has been appointed Transition Coordinator and together with the Implementation Team and Project Working Groups, is working to ensure the transition proceeds in a comprehensive and consistent way. Through this process we aim to ensure that local government in Wicklow is organised and operates as efficiently as possible, and provides the best possible quality of service to its citizens.

Though this change will happen mid year, each of the Wicklow Local Authorities has been instructed to prepare the Draft Annual Budget 2014 based on the current status, with the exception of councillors' representational payments and expenses, the budget for which takes account of the change in numbers from June 2014.

Draft Budget Overview

The Draft Budget presented to you provides for expenditure of €92,761,248. As the Council is statutorily required to prepare a balanced budget, expenditure provisions must be matched by income. The Draft Budget has been prepared with the following income projections:

Divisional Income	€61.4m
Local Government Fund	€ 3.9m
Rates	€17.7m
Pension related reduction	€ 1.4m
County Charge	€ 8.3m

My priorities in preparing this Draft Budget were:-

- Maintain essential services and deliver core responsibilities at a quality level of service
- Meet statutory obligations
- Deliver our services at most economical cost.

In preparing the 2013 Draft Budget, the impact of national fiscal constraints had to be accounted for. Reducing income and the need to maintain services has made the process very difficult. Unlike central government, a

local authority cannot budget for a deficit; expenditure must equal income. The continued contraction of our income sources has required difficult and unpalatable decisions. Every area and service was looked at. Our aim is to reduce costs and achieve further efficiencies in order to protect frontline and essential services. This has been achieved but not without prioritisation of certain services.

Local Government Fund (LGF) – General Purpose Grant (GPG)
The model for financing local government will change considerably in 2014. The full introduction of the Local Property Tax, the establishment of Irish Water and its financial relationship with the local government sector will have a considerable impact on the funding of local authorities.

The Finance (Local Property Tax) Act 2012 (amended) introduced the Local Property Tax (LPT). Simply put, the tax is based on the market value of the property where homeowners are liable to an annual tax on Irish residential properties from 1 July 2013. Half the annual liability was payable in 2013 with a full year's liability due for 2014. The LPT is to be used to fund local services. Commencing in 2014 the Minister for Finance will pay into the Local Government Fund an amount equivalent to the LPT paid into the Central Fund during that year and this revenue will be allocated to local authorities from the fund.

Previously the Government had indicated an intention to allow 80 per cent retention of all LPT receipts within the local authority area where the tax is raised. Analysing the current LPT data for Wicklow, Wicklow Local Authorities would be at a loss of funds for 2014 when we compare 100% retention of the estimated LPT receipts for the county against the 2013 Local Government Fund allocation. The future mechanism for funding local government will have to allow maximum flexibility in allocating Local Property Tax in 2014 with the priority to support those local authorities with weaker funding bases.

In addition, the establishment of Irish Water presents local government with significant organisational and financial challenges in 2014. In these contexts, the Government has decided to defer defining the proportion of the proceeds of the Local Property Tax to be retained in each local authority until 2015. The needs and resources model upon which the General Purpose Grants are predicated will continue to operate as the basis for funding local authorities in 2014, taking into account the Service Level Agreements (SLA) with Irish Water

Notification of Wicklow County Council's LGF General Purpose Grant 2014 has not yet been received. In preparing the balanced Draft Budget 2014 we have estimated an allocation of €3.96M.

Irish Water
The Government decided last December, based on the recommendations of an independent assessment, to establish a public water utility company, Irish Water, to take over the operational and capital delivery functions of local authorities in the water services area. Irish Water has been established as an independent state owned company within the Bord Gáis Group. It is anticipated the water/waste water operations will continue to be run by Local Authorities for at least 12 years under service level agreements.

The transfer of water services responsibilities, assets and liabilities from local authorities to Irish Water will take place on 1 January 2014. The Water Services Act 2013, together with Water Services Bill (No. 2) 2013, provides for the establishment of Irish Water/Uisce Éireann. The legislation enables the transfer of water services functions, which are currently the responsibility of the 34 water services authorities to Irish Water. As part of this shift, infrastructure will be transferred, financing arrangements will alter and local authorities will operate on behalf of Irish Water under Service Level Agreements. Irish Water, a subsidiary of Bord Gáis Éireann, is also responsible for the installation of water meters for domestic households connected to a public water supply and will have the power to charge households for water services.

The establishment of Irish Water presents local government with significant organisational and financial challenges in 2014. Wicklow County Council together with the National Water Services Transition Office and Irish Water are working together to prepare for the transfer of responsibilities of water services from the LA to Irish Water from 1st January 2014. The transition process to that point is long and complex. It involves the preparation and agreement of Annual Service Plans, Service Level Agreements and protocols. The management of this change process, the training, time and resources required to deliver this transformation is significant. I want to note my appreciation to all the staff involved for their commitment and application.

Commercial Rates
Wicklow County Council is aware of the significant pressures faced by the business community and is mindful of the role that the business sector plays in the economic and social life of the County. Putting People First-Action Programme for Effective Local Government details the stronger role for local government in promoting economic development given the economic impact of its functions generally. The Enterprise Unit, together with the County Enterprise Board (Local Enterprise Office), are committed to working with the sector and local and national development agencies to promote and develop business in County Wicklow.

Despite increasing financial pressures on all income sources and no reduction in demand for services, Wicklow County Council has not increased the annual rate on valuation for four years. I have endeavoured to minimise expenditure across all services while maintaining delivery of our essential services and core responsibilities. In light of the current challenging environment it is proposed to continue this restraint for 2014, and the budget has been prepared with a 0% increase in rates giving an Annual Rate on Valuation of 76.78.

Non Domestic Water
Article 9 of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) obliges governments to ensure pricing regimes take account of the principles of "full cost recovery of the costs for water services" and of "polluter pays". In 1998, the Government adopted a water services pricing policy framework requiring recovery of "average operational" and "marginal capital costs" of Water Services from all Non-Domestic (ND) users. To recover the operational and marginal capital cost of Water Services to the Non-Domestic sector in Wicklow would require an increase on the 2013 water charges. However, with the establishment of Irish Water, the setting of the charge in the future will be the responsibility of the Commissioner for Energy Regulation (CER). In advance of that, the Government has directed that there is to be no change in the water charges for 2014. The combined volumetric charge therefore will remain at €3.04 per m^3 for 2014.

Divisional Income
Rents
The rental income from social housing budgeted for 2014 is €5.275 million, which is down from 2013 due to reducing rents, based on income.

Roads
While the allocation for road grants will not be known until early 2014, current indications are for a reduction in grant funding for both national and non-national roads. However we are anticipating a significant allocation from the National Transport Authority to facilitate further improvement of the integrated transport system in the County.

Landfill Levy
This has increased by €0.75million to €11.25million. This is collected by Wicklow County Council on an agency basis and paid over to the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government.

Planning Fee Income
The sign of some stability returning to the commercial and construction sector is reflected in the planning fee income budget. Outturn for 2013 is expected to exceed the income budget resulting in a slight increase in the 2014 budget, the first planning income increase since Budget 2008.

<u>Significant Changes in Draft Budget 2014</u>

Division A – Housing and Building	€
Housing Maintenance increased by	30,000
Septic Tanks & Wells maintenance increased by	75,000
Provision for Local Property Tax 2014	213,000
Traveller Accommodation Maintenance income reduced by	60,000
Rental Accommodation Scheme increase (income & expenditure)	136,000
Housing Rental Income reduced by	105,000
Loan interest reduced by (reduction in income also)	75,000

MARP Levy Provision (Mortgage Arrears Resolution Process)	57,000
Homeless Service	76,000
Division B – Road Transportation and Safety	
National roads allocation indicative increase of	99,000
Non-national roads allocation indicative reduction of	69,000
NTA Schemes indicative increase of	2,000,000
Division C – Water Services within direct responsibility of Wicklow County Council:	
Rural Water Programme decrease of	40,000
Division D – Development Management	
Reduction in planning salary costs	66,000
Increase in Property Management costs	9,000
Planning fee income increased by	17,000
Wicklow County Campus decrease of	16,000
Contribution to Wicklow County Tourism reduced by	6,000
Wicklow County Film Commission salaries reduced by	54,000
MERA & SERA demands reduced by	32,000
Heritage Office Programme reduced by	56,000
Division E – Environmental Services	
Landfill Levy Greenstar increase expenditure and income	750,000
Rampere Maintenance	38,000
Historical landfill remediation	30,000
DECLG recycling grant (re Bray) reduction of	268,000
Recycling centres rent decrease of	303,000
Tourist Season Anti Litter Grant reduction (Income & Expenditure)	10,000
Fire Services increase in income of	48,000
Division F – Recreation and Amenity	
Decrease in library costs	43,000
Parks and open spaces maintenance reduction of	42,000
Glendalough & Brittas car park operation income increase of	67,000
Division G – Agricultural Education Health and Welfare	
Arklow Harbour expenditure increase	15,000
Arklow Harbour income decrease	15,000
Control of Horses increased provision by	80,000
Control of Horses income increase	72,000
Higher Education Grants reduction (contra)	864,000
Division H – Miscellaneous Services	
Machinery Yard activity and rates reduction (contra)	56,000
Stores activity increase (contra)	25,000
Motor Tax costs reduction	47,000
Agency Services activity increase expenditure and income (contra)	2,489,000
Rates Doubtful Debt Provision	400,000
NPPR cessation - loss of income	838,000
Members Remuneration & Costs increase of	97,000
Division J – Central Management Charges	
Corporate Services costs decrease (salaries, reallocation & maternity)	49,000
HR services reduction	53,000
Finance services costs increased by (salaries)	48,000

ICT costs decreased by	21,000
Unification costs provision	75,000
Area offices costs decreased by	56,000
Pensions costs increased by	264,000

Commentary

2014 presents the local government sector with a period of the most radical change in over 100 years. There is no doubt we are faced with challenging times ahead. We are continuing the painful process of fiscal adjustment, both nationally and locally. In addition we are undergoing an unprecedented transformation as a sector. While the responsibility for the delivery of water services transfers to Irish Water, the LA will continue to have a central role in water for at least the next 12 years. The reform of local government structures, together with the stronger emphasis on economic development and enterprise, and the strengthened role in the oversight and planning of local and community development programmes provides for a new and exciting environment. It is a challenge we must rise to meet in order to deliver on the reform programme and provide a wider and better service delivery to our citizens.

I am fully aware, given the changes outlined above that the budget reductions proposed in Draft Budget 2014 are at a time when there is increasing demand for all our services, and at a time of significant uncertainty about where the future of local government will lie. However, the options available to us are limited. Due to a contracting resource base, both staff and financial, we must continue reviewing expenditure and services. Savings cannot be made and the same level of service provided without touching sensitive areas.

The Draft Budget 2014 does not provide for contingencies and this will mean increased need for constant review, monitoring and control over expenditure and income throughout the year. It will also require the continuing drive to reduce costs by proactively pushing rationalisation, efficiencies and economies across all services.

Wicklow is a wonderful county and despite the challenges we have faced this year we have had many successes and achievements:

- The contract (PPP) for Arklow Rathnew road improvement scheme, which will finally eliminate the single carriageway on this section of road, has commenced.
- Arklow Library has gone to tender and work is due to commence in 2014.
- New playgrounds will have opened in the communities of Grangecon and Tinahely by end of 2013, with works commenced in Knockananna, Shillelagh and Ashford. It is planned to start further centres in 2014 in Kilcoole, Newtown, Rathnew and Wicklow Town.
- Wicklow Town – Rathnew Development Plan 2013 – 2019 was adopted in September 2013.
- Greystones – Delgany and Kilcoole Local Area Plan 2013 – 2019 was adopted in September 2013.

In November 2013 Hollywood, Co Wicklow took a top runner up award in the annual IPB All-Island Pride of Place Awards announced at the gala ceremony in Derry. They received the accolade in Category 1, which is for populations of between 200 and 500 people. They were also announced as a Livcom nominee.

All of the above was achieved through the terrific commitment from our staff, members and citizens. These qualities will help Wicklow to deal with current difficulties, embrace the opportunities the reform programme offers the county and prepare us to take advantage of future economic growth. 2014 promises to be another eventful and challenging year.

I believe we can continue to deliver core services to the people of Wicklow and be ready to achieve the overall vision of a local government that delivers local services, leads social, economic and community development and represents our citizens.

The staff of Wicklow County Council have demonstrated their dedication to delivering services for the people of Wicklow. The last twelve months have been difficult with reduced staffing levels, increasing pressures on budget and the requirement to handle significant change. Yet the staff have shown their willingness, resilience and ability to adapt to these difficulties and continue to provide quality services. I would like to thank all staff involved in keeping the County working throughout the year.

Conclusion

I prepared the 2014 Annual Budget in consultation with the Corporate Policy Group and in accordance with the Local Government Act, 2001 (Section 133). At these meetings significant factors within the Budget were raised and discussed and I am grateful to the members of the Corporate Policy Group for their contributions to the budgetary process. The draft budget has been prepared in accordance with the relevant statutory provisions, and this report, with the accompanying detailed financial tables, sets out the position for consideration by the Council.

The 2014 Draft Budget before you today is a plan of action to best deal with the unprecedented changing environment and economic realities facing the Council and yet allow us to continue delivering essential services to the citizen.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Members of the Council for their support in what has probably been the most challenging year yet for the Council.

The Draft Budget preparation required significant input from staff across all the Council's Divisions. I thank all the Directors and their staff who have contributed to and supported that process. Finally, I would like to express my appreciation to the Head of Finance, Loraine Lynch and the staff in the Finance Section for their hard work in preparing and framing this Budget.

I recommend the Budget to you for adoption.

EDDIE SHEEHY
WICKLOW COUNTY MANAGER

Division A – Housing & Building

Objective
Plan for and facilitate the provision of sustainable, high quality social, affordable and cost effective housing accommodation to meet the existing and likely future needs, responsive to the requirements of all categories of persons in the County

Key Indicators			
Total Division Expenditure	€11,198,214	Average weekly rent	€109,312
Council Tenancy Houses *	2,362	Total Rental Income 2013*	€5.38 million
Tenant Purchase – Houses sold*	16	House Purchase Loans	4
Number assessed for Housing*	284	Housing Grants*	€679,126
Number housed from Housing list	59	Rental Accommodation Scheme Units	70
Transfers made	6	House Purchases	4
Homeless housed	1		
*Activity level at Nov 2013			

A01 Maintenance/Improvement of LA Housing Units

The cost of maintaining and repairing our housing stock of almost 2,362 units is included under this heading.

Progress/Pressures in 2013

Progress was made in 2013 in addressing issues in a number of defective schemes in Co. Wicklow. These included:

Glending, Blessington - a comprehensive report on the problems with the development was prepared in 2013 and the Housing Directorate is in the process of taking legal action against those responsible so that all of the defects can be put right. Flood Relief works were completed in March 2013. Remedial works on the remaining eight vacant social houses were completed in Sept '13 and all of these houses are now occupied. Works have commenced on four of the 'Affordable' houses in the estate and these works are due for completion in February 2014.

The Council will continue to address the health and safety concerns for the remaining houses in the estate in 2014.

Parknasillogue, Enniskerry - rectification works undertaken in 2013 included the pumping of insulation in the cavities of the walls of all of the houses, increasing the amount of insulation in all of the attic spaces as well as providing tanking to the walls of the houses that have floor levels below ground level.

Farrankelly, Greystones - snagging and other issues with this estate continued to be addressed in 2013; retention monies are being used to fund the outstanding work items.

Fabric upgrade/Energy Efficiency works - Fabric upgrade works consisting of attic insulation, pumped wall cavities and draught-proofing measure completed for 200 houses in the County Council area under the Energy Efficiency Programme for 2013.

Other initiatives undertaken under this category in 2013 included:

- Reduction in nos. of void/boarded up properties to 14 in 2013 – one of the lowest rates nationally
- Construction of extension to Traveller unit on halting site to facilitate needs of seriously ill child
- Purchase of eight houses for social housing purposes.

Objectives for 2014

- Refurbishment of void properties to be closely monitored to ensure minimal delay in turn around times.
- Fabric upgrade works consisting of attic insulation, pumped wall cavities and draught-proofing measure to continue to be undertaken in all eligible properties in 2014. Additional Energy Efficiency works to be undertaken subject to the availability of funding to targeted housing estates across the county.

- Continuing to address defective issues in estates as they arise
- In terms of the sub county municipal re-organisation of local government in 2014, continue to work towards the allocation of housing functions between district and county, agree customer service arrangement at district level as well as the preparation of housing staffing structures going forward.

A02 Housing Assessment, Allocation and Transfer

Progress/Pressures in 2013

- Increased pressure/demand for social housing services throughout 2013 – significant pressure on the Housing Directorate due to reduced resources both financial and staffing wise.
- Limited success in sourcing new properties for RAS/Social Leasing –private stock not being made available to the local authority for a number of reasons including rising rents, involvement of third parties e.g. financial/credit institutions/receivers as well as overall lack of surplus housing stock in the county.

Objectives for 2014

- Work towards creating more shared initiatives/joint ventures with the Voluntary Housing sector

A03 Housing Rent and Tenant Purchase Administration

Rent Assessment, Rent Accounts and Rent Arrears Management for all Council tenancy dwellings is provided for under this heading. The incomes of all our tenants are assessed and the differential rent is calculated accordingly. There is a new national rent scheme to take effect from 1st January 2015 which is a fundamental change in the way we calculate rents in Wicklow. In preparation for this it has been decided to increase housing rents in 2014.

This section also has responsibility for Tenant Purchase Sales and Loans and the management of the old Tenant Purchase Scheme. Applications concluded on the 31st December 2012, with all sales under the 1995 Tenant Purchase Scheme will be finalised by 31st December 2013. It is expected that there will be a new scheme in 2014, to allow tenants acquire their Council house.

A04 Housing Community Development Support

The areas provided for under this heading are: Support to Resident's Associations

A05 Administration of Homeless Service

Progress/Pressures in 2013

As a result of the reconfiguration of homeless services nationally, Kildare County Council assumed the lead role with responsibility for co-ordinating responses to homelessness in the three Mid-East Counties in 2013. Throughout 2013, the Housing Directorate in Wicklow provided a range of homeless support services to an increasing number of people presenting including a significant number of families. An average of 10 cases a week presented to the Council throughout 2013 where there was a significant risk of homelessness. Emergency accommodation via the Rathdrum Hostel was made available throughout the year.

A close working relationship was forged throughout 2013 with the Simon Wicklow Outreach Team, the East Coast Drugs Task Force, Tiglin and relevant Community Welfare Officers.

Objectives for 2014

A significant budget is sought for 2014 to address homelessness in Co. Wicklow to include the following:
- The phasing out of the services of Rathdrum Hostel
- Supporting the opening of the new supported temporary accommodation facility on Kilmantin Hill Wicklow, to be run by the Simon Community.

A06 Support to Housing Capital Programme

This area covers the provision of administrative and technical support for a wide range of housing development, including social and community facilities.

A07 RAS Programme

The current number of RAS units is 469 including voluntary units. The 2014 estimate is based on the RAS Section taking an additional 50 units into RAS.

A08 Housing Loans

The Council offers House Purchase Loans to a maximum of €220,000 under the House Purchase Loan Scheme. A total of four House Purchase Loans were issued in 2013. It is estimated that approximately 4 House Purchase Loans will be issued in 2014.

A09 Housing Grants

There are three grant schemes:

1. **Housing Aid for Older People Grant** is available to assist older people living in poor housing conditions to have necessary repairs or improvements carried out.
2. **Mobility Aid Grant** is available to cover a basic suite of works to address mobility problems, primarily but not exclusively associated with ageing.
3. **Housing Adaptations Grant for People with a Disability** is available to assist in the carrying out of works which are reasonably necessary for the purposes of rendering a house more suitable for the accommodation of a person with a disability who has an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual impairment.

Matching funding of 20% is required from the Council's own resources. A provision of €100,000 has been included. A total of 81 grants were paid out in 2013. It is anticipated that a similar number will be paid out in 2014.

Division B - Road Transport & Safety

Objective
To promote and facilitate the provision of all transport in an integrated manner and so to foster social and economic development, having regard to environmental considerations, sustainable development, social inclusion and Health and Safety

Key Indicators			
Total Programme Expenditure	€19,483,096	Number of Pay & Display Machines – Greystones only	43
Number of kilometres of Roadway	2,198		
Number of Public Lights Maintained	9,956	Number of Traffic Signals	64

B01 – B02 National Road Maintenance and Improvement

National Primary Projects completed in 2013:

- Median and Verge vegetation maintenance on the N11 Arklow bypass Dual Carriageway prior to nesting season.
- Barrier repairs along N11/M11
- Eradication of Japanese Knotweed along N11/M11
- Continue repair of failing N11 single carriageway pavement between Arklow and Rathnew
- Repair of isolated portions of failing N11 pavement between the Glen of the Downs and Fassaroe
- Continued investigations into accident cluster at the Glen of the Downs
- Installed safety barrier and screen fencing as proposed by consultants to address accidents cluster at Glen of the Downs
- Transfer of maintenance of section of N11/M11 (Bray to Ballinabarney) to NRA Direct Motorway Maintenance and renewals Contract MMarC.
- Manage transfer of section of N11 (Arklow Bypass to Wexford county boundary) to BAM PPP as part of RARIS

National Primary - Proposed Works 2014

- Ballymoyle Lane / Johnstown Lane Link Road
- Continue Minor Drainage improvements along N11
- Ongoing liaison with NRA MMarc Contractor
- Ongoing liaison with BAM PPP
- Clean and cut vegetation between Beehive and Arklow By-Pass.
- Clean Gullies and Channels between Beehive and Arklow Bypass
- Continue eradication of Invasive Japanese Knotweed along N11/M11
- Continue repairs to failing N11 Pavement between Arklow and Rathnew within available funding streams.

National Secondary Projects completed in 2013

N81 HD 28 Schemes.

The NRA introduced a document number NRA HD 28/11 entitled 'Management of Skid Resistance'. This is a new method of monitoring skid resistance and identifying sites that require improvement works. Under the new system, SCRIM is measured annually as per standard practice.

- N81 at Carlow County Boundary - Double surface dressed using polymodified binder.
- Eldon Bridge - Tracblasting
- Waterloo Bridge - Double surface dressed using polymodified binder.
- Russborough Bend - Overlay and roadside drainage improvements
- The Rookery - Tracblasting.

National Secondary - N81 Resurfacing works contracts 2014

N81 Knockroe Bends realignment – consists of the realignment of 800m section of N81 at Knockroe Bends. A project appraisal report is being prepared for submission to the National Roads Authority in advance of the CPO.

B03 – B04 Non National Road Maintenance and Improvement

Maintenance works on Non National roads are carried out by direct labour units working from 5 area offices and also by private contractors. Maintenance can be broken down into two categories:

> **Planned Maintenance** consists of the works programme for the year that is prepared following consultation with the area staff and can be subdivided into the following categories: Carriageway and footpath reconstruction. or resurfacing and winter maintenance.
> Grant funding in the amount of €1.136 million was received in 2013, which funded the surface dressing of both regional and local roads throughout the County.
>
> **Reactive Maintenance** includes everything other than planned maintenance and mainly consists of pothole repairs and works to surface water drainage systems and can also arise from Members' questions and or correspondence and complaints from members of the public.

Specific Improvement Grant works

Works were carried out at the following locations in 2013:

Silverbridge	Ballinguilehill Bridge
Ballynabarney Bridge	Ballymaghroe Bridge
Baltinglass railway bridge	Kiltegan Bridge Upper
Arklow Bridge	Ticknock Bridge

Circular RLR 3/2013 notified that the current programme of Specific and Strategic road improvement grant allocations were to be suspended with effect from 2014. In place of the normal programme, grant allocations are to be provided to fund bridge rehabilitation works arising out of the current principle inspections framework. The council were invited to submit a number of applications for bridge rehabilitation and repair works the total of which should not exceed €200,000. This level of funding is insufficient to fund a dedicated bridge maintenance crew and consequently it has been necessary to re-assign the three staff members directly involved to other roads areas.

Funding proposals were submitted for the following two projects:

Manor Kilbride Bridge Strengthening works	Annacurragh Railway Bridge Deck Replacement

B05 Public Lighting

Wicklow County Council overall expenditure on public lighting can be broken down into two main categories, maintenance and energy supply. Approximately 70% of all our public lighting expenditure is dedicated for energy supply with the remaining going on Maintenance and overheads etc.

The NPS (National Procurement Service) tendered for energy supply on behalf of Wicklow Co. Co. and other local authorities. This has seen a small saving in energy costs in 2013.
Wicklow Co. Co. are included in the new public lighting maintenance contract, which commenced in April 2012. This contract has resulted in a saving of approximately 20% for 2013 when compared to the same period in 2012. However it should be noted that maintenance costs can not be predicted and this figure can go up as well as down.
However the overall trend in the cost of maintaining and improving the public lighting in Wicklow continues to increase. This is mainly due to:

- Increased energy costs (latest increase in October 2013)
- Increased numbers of public lighting that Wicklow Co Co maintain and look after. In 2013 to date there have been 206 additional lights and as estates continue to be taken in charge by the Council this figure will continue to rise.
- Increases in pass-through charges (DUoS, electric tax and Public Service Obligation Levies)

B06 Traffic Management Improvement

The National Transport Authority funded the following projects in 2013

Bray Main Street
Marine Rd to Greystones Harbour Cycle way
Bray /Dublin Road QBC
Sea Road Kilcoole
Delgany Village Vulnerable Road User Audit
Arklow- Woodenbridge- Shillelagh Greenway
Fitzwilliam Square Wicklow
Cycle Route from the Port Access road to Wicklow Town
Baltinglass Traffic Management
Junction Wicklow Gap/Glendalough
Killincarrig Roundabouts
Blessington - N81 Footpath
R761 Three Trout's footpath
NTA Boghall Road Cycling QOS upgrade
Bray To Greystones Cycleway
NTA Putland Road Cycle track
Strand Road Cycle Scheme
Laragh-Glendalough
Pedestrian Access to Wicklow Rail Station
Harbour to Lidl Cycle Route

Projects submitted for funding to the National Transport Authority in 2014 include:

- QBC Street works - Bray Town/ Bray Bridge/ Dublin Road QBC and Traffic Management Scheme
- Strand Road Cycle Track Bray
- R761 Three Trouts Footpath
- Harbour to Lidl Cycle Route Greystones
- Marine Road Dog Walk Cycle Route
- Sea Road Kilcoole – Provide Footpaths on Sea Road and improve junction with Main Street Kilcoole
- Glendalough Traffic Control Measures / Glendalough Junction
- Bray Dart Interchange - detailed design
- Baltinglass Traffic Management - design to improve parking and pedestrian movement around the Town
- Fitzwilliam Square Wicklow Town – Redevelopment – design cycle route from Port Access Road to Fitzwilliam Square
- Wicklow Town Junctions and Access Improvements
- Bray to Greystones Cycle way – design
- Arklow to Shillelagh cycletrack – complete feasibility study
- R772 Wexford Road Cycle lanes
- Rathdrum Traffic Management Scheme – improvement of pedestrian facilities and control of parking
- Enniskerry traffic calming and car parking
- Killincarrig Double roundabouts
- R772 Dublin Road Arklow design to improve footpath
- Arklow Main Street Junctions
- Blessington Junction R410/N81
- Boghall Road completion of upgrades
- Green Schools Clusters – supporting projects
- Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network – design of cycle routes

B07 Road Safety Engineering Improvement

Low cost safety improvements works were carried out at the following locations in 2013:

L6144 Ballinaclash
R752 Glenealy
R760 Enniskerry
R725 Main Street Carnew
L3232 Ballard Cross Roads
R755 Kilmacanogue
R1048 Newtownmountkennedy
R752 Glasnarget Rathdrum

Proposed Low Cost Safety Improvement Works for 2014:

Tynte Park Crossroads Dunlavin
Ballygahan Avoca
Tinoranhill South Baltinglass
Glen Road Delgany
Slievecorragh Hollywood
Shramore Roundwood
Borkill More Kiltegan
Rossmore Newtown Mount Kennedy
Tinoranhill North Baltinglass
Ballinaclash
Killough Kilmacanogue

B08 Road Safety Promotion and Education

The Road Safety Together Committee, which includes members of the Gardaí, Fire Service, Road Safety Authority, National Roads Authority and Council Officials, meets on a quarterly basis to review road safety in the county. The main objective of the Road Safety Plan is to reduce the number of casualties on County Wicklow's roads and to provide focus on making Wicklow a safer county for both motorists and pedestrians.

B09 Maintenance and Management of Car Parking

Greystones paid parking
Pay Parking was introduced in Greystones in August 2008 with the aim of increasing the supply of short-term parking and reduce the problems caused by illegal/inappropriate parking. In 2011 Wicklow Council invited tenders for a three-year period and APCOA was the successful tenderer. The current contract runs until 2014 and includes the provision of traffic warden service, issue and collection of fines, review of appeals and administration of permits.

B10 Support to Roads Capital

This includes technical and administrative costs associated with the capital programme that Wicklow County Council is not permitted to recoup from any Department or agency. Major road improvement projects are charged to the capital programme; provision is made in the Support to Roads Capital Programme sub-service for payment of loan charges in respect of these projects (Wicklow Port Access and Town Relief Road)

B11 Agency and Recoupable Services

An agency and recoupable service within each sub-service with the purpose of catering for non-core services carried out by Wicklow County Council including repayable works such as Road Opening Licences.

Division C – Water And Wastewater Services

Objective
To provide and maintain drinking water and wastewater facilities to meet existing and future demand, adhering to the principles of sustainable development.

Key Indicators			
Total Division Budget	€14,719,854	Annual Cost of Wastewater Treatment per head Total C02 / Population 126,330	58.7
No. of Discharge Licenses (Section 4 & Section 16)	150	Individual Water Grants paid (101 Grants)	€164,000
No. of Wastewater Discharge Authorisations	10 Licences 18 Certificates	Total volume of water supplied (m3p/d)	28,995
Annual Cost of Water per head Total C01 / Population 126,330	49.29	Volume of unaccounted for water (m3p/d)	6,443

**All Based on 2012 Indicators

With effect from 1st January 2014, Irish Water will assume responsibility for the provision and maintenance of Water and Waste Water Facilities country wide. Wicklow County Council will enter into a Service Level Agreement to provide services to Irish Water with respect to Water Services functions and accordingly the Agreement defines and provides a framework for the relationship and delivery of service over a 12 year period.

Irish Water will assume responsibility for the areas of :
C01 Operation And Maintenance Water Supply
C02 Operation And Maintenance Wastewater Treatment
C01 & C02 will now include the Water & Wastewater Quality element of Pollution Control & Enforcement
C03 Collection Of Water And Waste Water Charges
C06 Support To Water Capital Programme
C07 Agency & Recoupable Services

Wicklow Local Authorities will retain responsibility for the areas of :
C04 Operation And Maintenance Of Public Conveniences
C05 Administration Of Group And Private Installations

C01 Operation And Maintenance Water Supply
C02 Operation And Maintenance Wastewater Treatment

Objectives for 2014

- Continue to operate and maintain water supplies and wastewater facilities to the highest standards and continue to deliver high quality water and wastewater services in County Wicklow while meeting objectives and requirements of Service Level Agreement and Annual Service Plan in conjunction with Irish Water
- Ensure that existing water and wastewater schemes continue to function efficiently and effectively
- Promote the value of drinking water through public awareness programmes and continue implementation of Water Conservation scheme.

Water & Wastewater Quality – Pollution Control & Enforcement

Wicklow County Council, on behalf of Irish Water will continue to monitor and control water and wastewater pollution in accordance with legislation and EU regulations.

Objectives for 2014

- Continue to deliver high quality water & wastewater pollution monitoring and enforcement services in County Wicklow and to meet objectives and requirements of Service Level Agreement and Annual Service Plan in conjunction with Irish Water.

C03 Collection Of Water And Waste Water Charges

The National Water Services Pricing Policy requires that all non-domestic customers be charged for water and wastewater services on the basis of metered consumption. Wicklow County Council will continue to bill all non-domestic users for an interim period during 2014, before transfer to Irish Water. Rates for Non Domestic water charges will remain the same as 2013. The Regulator will fix water pricing in the future.

Domestic meter surveys were carried out by Wicklow County Council on approximately 41,000 homes in 2013. Installation of domestic meters will commence in Wicklow in April 2014. All domestic installations are to be installed by a regionally appointed contractor (Sierra Ltd) and charging of domestic customers is expected to be commenced by Irish Water from Quarter 4 2014.

C04 Operation And Maintenance Of Public Conveniences

This area includes operation of Public Toilets in Enniskerry, Greystones, Roundwood, Glendalough and Blessington. Operation includes three automated facilities. Wicklow Local Authorities will retain responsibility for this area.

C05 Administration Of Group And Private Installations

Wicklow Local Authorities will retain responsibility for this area of operation that includes:

- Administration of Water supply to private houses through Well Grant System.
- Progression of Group Water Schemes by seeking funding under the national Rural Water Programme and to advance such schemes in a prioritised manner.

C06 Support To Water Capital Programme

Includes costs of Support Service Staff both technical and administrative in support to Capital Programmes.

C07 Agency & Recoupable Services

This area accounts for connections to public water & sewer network. Applications for connections will be reviewed by Irish Water at an early planning stage.

Division D - Development Management

Objectives

To provide for proper effective planning, balancing the need for sustainable development, the rights of individuals, social inclusion, the protection of the environment and the social and economic needs of each area of County Wicklow.

To promote, through a proactive strategy between the local authorities and the private sector, the industrial development and economic growth of the county.

To develop and promote the social, cultural and economic health and well being of County Wicklow within a partnership framework.

Key Indicators

Total Division Expenditure	€5,883,481	% of applications refused*	11%
Planning applications received*	980	Enforcement - Warning Letters*	250
2012 income from planning application fees*	€197,000	Enforcement Notices*	95
		Proceedings *	35
% of applications granted*	89%	Commencement Notices Received*	280
* Estimated Level of Activity 2013			

D01 Forward Planning

The Forward Planning Section ensures planning and economic development takes place within an agreed framework, developed in consultation with the members, the public and other stakeholders, with responsibility for preparing County Development Plans, town development plans and / or local area plans for towns and their environs. All Strategic Environmental Assessments, Appropriate Assessments and Flood Risk Assessments are also done in house.

It also provides mapping expertise, inputs, data and analysis to various internal and external bodies.

Progress in 2013

Wicklow Town – Rathnew Development Plan 2013-2019
The plan was adopted in September 2013 and is subject to a draft Ministerial direction.

Greystones – Delgany and Kilcoole Local Area Plan 2013-2019
The plan was adopted by the elected members in September 2013.

Newtownmountkennedy Local Area Plan 2008
A decision on the extension of this plan is due to be made in late 2013 / early 2014.

Enniskerry Local Area Plan 2009
Analysis commenced in 2013 to determine whether to prepare a new town plan or extend the duration of the existing plan.

Objectives for 2014

Wicklow County Development plan 2016-2022
To commence the statutory review of the County Development Plan, to include:

- analysis and audit of the existing County Development Plan including the eight town plans, prepare papers for consultation with the public, with first stage of consultation by September 2014 and commence the Strategic Environmental Assessment / Appropriate Assessment / Strategic Flood Risk Assessment processes.

Wicklow Town – Rathnew Development Plan 2013-2019
To finalise this plan following the completion of the Ministerial direction process.

Newtownmountkennedy Local Area Plan 2008
To complete the process of extending the duration or commencing new draft.

Ashford Local Area Plan 2008 and Dunlavin Local Area Plan 2008
Publish and progress to adoption new Ashford and Dunlavin town plans.

Enniskerry Local Area Plan 2009
Either extend the duration of this LAP or publish and progress to adoption a new Enniskerry town plan.

Other Projects
Progress in 2013 and Objectives for 2014

Other responsibilities and functions that were carried out in 2013 and will continue in 2014 including:

- A member of the Forward Planning Team provides planning services to Bray Town Council three days per week
- Detailed analysis of CSO / ESRI data including population and housing development and employment trends
- Participation in the Mid-East Region Economic Development Strategy Group
- Coordination with Regional Planning Unit and participation in Regional Planning Guidelines (RPG) technical working groups
- Annual Housing Land Availability Returns
- Providing planning expertise in CPO procedures and operation of other departments of the Local Authority
- Identifying and acquiring suitable sites for schools on behalf of the Department of Education and Skills.

D02 Development Management

Development Management Section deals with the planning applications from date of receipt to completion, which includes up to any appeal process to An Bord Pleanala. Pre- planning is also dealt with under Development Management.

The decision making process under Development Management is governed by the policies and objectives of the Wicklow County Development Plan and other plans adopted by Wicklow County Council. It is also governed by the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.

Progress in 2013

- The number of planning applications received this year up to the end of October is 814. It is expected that this figure will reach 1,000 by year end.
- For the period lst January, 2013 to 30th October 2013, 300 requests for Further Information have been made.
- 40 time extensions have been granted this year to date.
- 58 applications have been withdrawn.
- A total of 198 invalid applications were received in 2013 to date

Objectives for 2014

- Continue to provide a quality and consistent service
- Continue to provide greater accessibility to planning files using available technology

Section 261 (A) – Registration of Quarries
Section 261(A) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) came into force in November 2011 which required the complete assessment of all quarries within the functional area of the Council. Following this assessment, the Council had to issue a determination in relation to each quarry as it related to the provisions of this section of the Act. In 2012, a total of 93 quarries were assessed with 19 quarries receiving notices. Of the 19 notices, a total of 8 requested reviews by An Bord Pleanala.

Progress in 2013

- Enforcement action has commenced in respect of appropriate cases
- Of the 8 requests for reviews, the board permitted 2 applications for Substitute Consent. Decisions awaited on same from the board.

Objectives 2014

- Review decisions that issue from An Bord Pleanala
- Proceed to issue enforcement notices where appropriate.

Other Projects

Progress in 2013

Section 5 referrals relate to the planning authority issuing declarations when a question has arisen as to whether a development is exempted development.

- 35 applications received up to the end of October 2013

Compliance submissions continue to increase, with a compliance assessment carried out, to ensure compliance with the permission granted.

- A total of 732 submissions were received up to the end of October 2013

The Taking in Charge (TIC) and Completion of Developments document prepared by the planning section, sets out the policy for the taking in charge of private housing developments (i.e. a development of two or more houses) and the completion of developments.

- A total of 8 estates were taken in charge in 2013 to date.

In addition, there are

- 91 Live Estates
- 41 taking in charge applications in process;
- 34 estates subject to Enforcement Process;
- 7 estates with completion works being carried out by WCC using the bond;
- 31 estates substantially complete, no TIC application received.

The collection of development contributions remains a priority for the planning section as they are vital for the provision of infrastructure in the county. A project team was set up to co-ordinate the invoicing and collection of contributions, with the collection of monies has become more challenging in recent years. To date in 2013, a total of €2,872,120 has been collected in development contributions.

Objectives for 2014

- Continue to process Section 5 and compliance submissions in a timely fashion
- Progress the Taking in Charge of the 91 live estates on hand and encourage developers to apply to have their estate dealt with under the TIC policy document
- Continue to pursue and monitor contribution collection rates and ensure the collection of all outstanding amounts.

D03 Enforcement

A major objective of the Planning Department is to ensure increased compliance with the planning law and continue a proactive approach to the consistent implementation of Part VIII of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended). The continuation of a culture of enforcement in the County is critical to ensure that the planning control system works properly, fairly, and for the benefit of the whole community. It is essential that the full rigours of the enforcement provisions of the Planning Acts are applied to ensure that the integrity of the system is maintained.

The enforcement provisions of the planning code are designed not only to regularise the situation i.e. to ensure that an unauthorised development obtains consent or is removed, but also to deter future unauthorised development.

It remains, however the focus of Wicklow County Council to work to resolve situations outside the legal process, e.g. through mediation and negotiations which while not evident to the public, can achieve in practice a more positive outcome in a speedy and more effective manner, which is the ultimate goal of the Council.

Progress in 2013

- From January, 2013 to end September 2013, the Council received 149 written complaints.
- A total of 200 Warning Letters, 86 Enforcement Notices have issued with 32 cases referred to legal action.

Objectives for 2014

- Provide effective response to complaints received
- Continue to discourage unauthorised development through rigorous action.

Other Projects
Progress in 2013

- At 1st January 2013 there were 3 sites on the Derelict Site Register. From January 2013 to the end of September 2013, a total of 10 sites were inspected under the Derelict Site legislation. This resulted in one site being removed from the register. Two sites remain on the register up to the end of September 2013.

Objective for 2014

- Continued consultation with owners of sites to have works undertaken to render the sites non derelict.

D04 Operation and Maintenance of Industrial and Commercial Facilities

Sites for Enterprise/Employment uses

Wicklow County Council has invested some €1.3m on the construction of Avondale Business Park, Rathdrum over the past four years. The park is divided by four roads, linked by a main roundabout. The bulk of the work has been carried out to Road no. 1 and 2 and also to the new roundabout with most of the utility providers' ducts and pipes laid on Road no. 1 and 2. High quality fencing has been erected to the front perimeter of the site as well as construction of entrance pillars and gateway etc.

Work commenced on the construction of the first business premises in May of this year and it is expected that the development will be complete and operational before the end of the year. This is a very positive step for Avondale Business Park, having regard to the current economic conditions which overtook activity and discouraged private investment somewhat in the past. The Enterprise Unit is in communication with businesses that have expressed an interest in locating to the Business Park, and the Council will continue to push forward with its plans for the development of the park into the future.

In addition to this site, the Council has some varying size landbanks at a number of locations throughout the County including Arklow, Aughrim, Blessington, Ashford and Tinahely.

The Council's 6.7 acres of land at Ashford forms part of an Action Area comprising two adjoining private landowners. An Action Plan has been approved for the area and Wicklow County Council will continue to work with the landowners over the coming twelve months with a view to examining the possibility of preparing a planning application for the construction of internal infrastructure to service the lands. The Council's vision for the site is for a high quality innovative business park creating some 200/300 jobs over time.

Clermont House and College, Wicklow County Campus

Progress in 2013
IT Carlow is a key stakeholder in the Wicklow County Campus Project. In 2013 the number of students registered for the Lifelong Learning Education and Training courses has increased to 250 (circa 240 in previous academic year). In excess of 30 alternative courses were offered to students in the Campus. At a double conferring ceremony in November 2013, over 90 students graduated with an award or degree . This shows a growing number of students being conferred in Clermont each year.
County Wicklow Enterprise Board and Teagasc are located on the Campus offering a range of advice/supports for their clients.
The offices and class rooms in Clermont are also available for hire to other training providers during the day.

Progress in 2013

- The Area Action Plan for the Clermont and surrounding area was approved in 2012.

- Access improvement works to Wicklow County Campus are completed as well as installation of additional lighting at the overflow car park.
- A CE worker was appointed as assistant caretaker to maintain the buildings and grounds.
- Considerable maintenance works were carried out during the year such as the painting of windows at first and second floor level and renewal of security cameras.

Objectives for 2014

- To continue with the development of Wicklow County Campus through physical improvements to the campus and the buildings and through the growth of student numbers at the Life Long Learning Centre.
- To encourage other business support agencies to locate at Wicklow County Campus.
- To commence the review of the Strategic Plan for Wicklow County Campus.
- To continue to market Wicklow County Campus for class room hire and film location hire etc.

D05 Tourism Development and Promotion

County Wicklow Film Commission

Progress in 2013

In 2013 County Wicklow was used by a large number of international and national feature film and television productions. Feature films that used Wicklow locations include 'Frank' starring Maggie Gyllenhaal and Michael Fassbender. Two Cecilia Ahern stories called 'Love Rosy' and 'Where Rainbows meet' were also filmed in some of the beauty spots of the county. Television series and dramas that came to Wicklow include 'Moonfleet', 'Moone Boy' with Chris O'Dowd and 'Penny Dreadful'.

- The second series of internationally popular 'Vikings' was again located in the new film studios in Ashford.
- 350 shooting days for feature films, television productions and commercials were recorded for 2013, which makes it a very busy year in terms of filming.
- Some of the most used locations included Glencree, Sally Gap Roads, Luggala Estate, Brittas Bay beach, Silver Strand Beach, Lough Dan, Bray and Killruddery House and Gardens.
- Assistance was provided to a number of potential audio-visual projects for 2014 who are now scouting for locations.

The free Movie Map for County Wicklow for tourists was distributed throughout parts of County Dublin and County Wicklow during 2013.

Objectives for 2014

- To work with incoming television and feature film productions and to continue to provide assistance to their locations managers in finding and securing public locations.
- To continue to promote County Wicklow as a prime film location and also to continue to increase the benefits from film induced tourism.
- To liaise and work with location managers and production managers as well as local and national film industry related stakeholders and agencies.
- To update the website.
- To work with the newly established Local Enterprise Office.

D06 Community, Cultural and Social Development Function

Local Government Reform

"Putting People First" – Action Programme for Effective Local Government detailed a range of reforms aimed at improving the delivery of services for citizens, achieving greater efficiency and effectiveness and enhancing the role of Local Government in local and community development.

These reforms included the dissolution of the County Development Boards (CDB), which will be replaced by new Local Community Development Committees (LCDC). These will comprise representatives of Local Authorities and other State Agencies, local and community interests, civil society and economic and social partners. These

LCDC'S will be tasked with the preparation of a new five year Local and Community Plan encompassing the broad range of local and community development programmes and interventions within the Local Authority area.

The Wicklow County Development Board had its final meeting on 10th December 2012. A great deal of interagency projects and actions were successfully completed through the structures and support that the CDB gave. It is recommended that the new Local Community Development Committees (LCDC) retain this role.

In the interim, many of the structures/interagency projects below are continuing:

The Social Inclusion Measures Group; Traveller Interagency Group; Community & Voluntary Fora; Anti-Racism & Diversity Group; Volunteer Groups Network in County Wicklow; Comhairle na nOg; Wicklow/Kildare Tourism Initiative; County Wicklow Children Services Committee (involves a number of agencies including the HSE, Education and Training Board (ETB, formerly VEC), An Garda Siochana and Wicklow County Childcare Committee); County Wicklow Network for Older People; The County Wicklow Community Forum; Bray Local Drugs Taskforce (BLDT) and The East Coast Regional Drugs Taskforce (ECRDT); County Wicklow Outdoor Recreation Strategy and Recreational Trails; Wicklow Way Partnership; Blessington Greenway Walk Partnership.

Community, Cultural & Social Development - other functions include:

- The Community, Cultural and Social Development Strategic Policy Committee (SPC).
- Community Playgrounds and sustainable Community Development/Facilities and Social Infrastructure.
- Sport and Recreational Amenity Policy Programme.
- Input into the Council's Planning and Development process.
- The Arts Programme for County Wicklow.
- The Library Programme and Service for County Wicklow.
- Wicklow County Council's Community Awards Funding Scheme.
- County Wicklow Playbus Project (Buala Bus) , which is a mobile interagency facility, offering play opportunities for children and family support and adult education for adults and youths in areas throughout the County that have limited social and community services.
- The Wicklow Local Sports Partnership.
- Analysis and dissemination of societal related data emanating from Census 2011.

RAPID (Revitalising Areas by Planning, Investment and Development)

The Bray RAPID Programme concluded at the end of 2012, due to the withdrawal of funding by Pobal.

Social Inclusion Unit

The Social Inclusion Unit (SIU) function involves:

- Support County Wicklow Social Inclusion Measures (SIM) Group and its associated sub-structures.
- Support County Wicklow Traveller Interagency Group.
- Provide statistical research and data on social, community and economic development issues.
- Co-ordinate a Programme of Events for County Wicklow Social Inclusion Week.
- Represent social inclusion issues on the Community, Cultural & Social Development SPC.
- Work in partnership with communities to develop sustainable recreational amenity facilities.
- Advise Planning Directorate on the community facility needs of new, existing and future residential areas and towns.
- Liaise on issues of social exclusion with local statutory and community organisations.
- Participate on regional and national committees, networks and structures.
- Interagency Family Support intervention for families in crisis.
- Promotion of Integration Programme.
- The Community Smoke Alarm Scheme.

D07 Unfinished Housing Estates

This relates to a small percentage of area engineer's time being spent on private unfinished housing estates.

D08 Building Control

The main objective of the Building Control section is to ensure that building control regulations and standards are adhered to. Site visits and continuous communications with those undertaking construction works form the basis of ensuring this.

Progress in 2013

Commencement & 7 Day Notices registered	246	Recoupment of Enforcement Notices costs	0
Percentage of new buildings inspected	30%	No of new dwellings commenced	96
Warning & Enforcement Notices issued	0	No of Access Cert & Part M Applications	61

Objective for 2014

- Continue to enforce the Building Control Acts.

D09 Economic Development and Promotion

Progress in 2013

Networking and Collaboration with Local and National Development Agencies
During 2013 the Enterprise Unit met with representatives of Enterprise Ireland (EI) and the IDA. Formal and informal networking continues with the local Chambers of Commerce and the County Wicklow Chamber to promote and develop business in County Wicklow and develop job opportunities in County Wicklow.

Memorandum of Understanding
In April, 2013 Wicklow County Council and the County Wicklow Chamber of Commerce entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to jointly promote the successful economic development and growth of employment in County Wicklow. The memorandum of Understanding lists a number of objectives both parties will work towards, in the interest of economic development in County Wicklow. Wicklow County Council has a very good working relationship with the County Wicklow Chambers of Commerce and the staff of the Enterprise Unit will continue working in partnership with the chambers to promote economic development initiatives and discuss issues of mutual concern. The memorandum of understanding is an agreement between both parties to holistically promote the County and engage with agencies to work together and market the County as one package.

Think Tank for County Wicklow
The Government's Action Programme for effective Local Government *'Putting People First'* provides for an enhanced role for Local Authorities in promoting and facilitating Enterprise and Economic Development. In order to adopt a more co-ordinated approach to enterprise development and job creation, Wicklow County Council held an Information Meeting on the 4th of November, 2013 at Wicklow County Campus, to discuss the establishment of an Economic Think Tank for County Wicklow. The proposed Think Tank for County Wicklow is modelled on the very successful Bray Economic Think Tank and the CEOs and MDs of Companies in various sectors in the County including Retail, Manufacturing, Technology, Food, Film, Tourism, Pharma, Medical Care, and the Service Industry etc. were invited to attend. The purpose of the Think Tank is to make recommendations to the County Council on how Wicklow can attract and nurture business and promote sustainable economic development that creates jobs in the County. The inaugural meeting of the Think Tank will take place in December with a view to working on a number of strategic objectives in 2014.

Objectives for 2014:

- Maximise the potential growth of the business sector to create jobs and develop economic growth in the County working with local and national stakeholders.
- Work with existing enterprise centres to expand existing centres and develop centres in locations where needed.
- Work with/encourage the private sector to provide commercial units for small start up enterprise companies.

D10 Property Management Costs

Property Asset Register
The project team which was formed in 2009 has been strengthened with the appointment of a dedicated conveyancing solicitor on a 2-year contract basis from January 2012, and a Property Manager in a part-time (2 days/week) role from mid-2012.

The task of the project team is to secure Council-owned property, and to implement consistent business processes for acquisition, disposal, management and leasing.

Considerable work has already been done to compile a mapped inventory of the Council's property ownership and current usage. Cross-checking of compatible registers such as the financial asset register and mapped social housing continues with GIS support.

A register of leases has been completed and audited for compliance, with required actions identified. A register of known encroachments has also been created; investigations are ongoing to prioritise actions for relevant sections (e.g. regularisation of leases, disposal of land where appropriate).

The dedicated conveyancing solicitor has reviewed in excess of 533 conveyancing law department files in the period January 2012 – December 2013, of which 367 applications have been lodged in the Land Registry for registration. 247 of these applications have been completed by the Land Registry. There are approximately 120 applications pending in the Land Registry and circa 166 "live" file at various stages of the pre-lodgement process and are being progressed in collaboration with the corresponding instructing departments.

The Property Register team has continued to work with the Environment & Sanitary Services section to secure legal title to water, wastewater, graveyard, playing fields, and other sites. Rights of way and wayleaves recorded in legacy files have been mapped with a view towards future registration. As of end 2013, the team is assisting the Irish Water Transition Office regarding facilities to be transferred to Irish Water's legal ownership in early 2014.

D11 Heritage and Conservation Services

The Heritage Officer has responsibility for

- Input to the Strategic Environment Assessment and Appropriate Assessment Screening processes for development plans
- Provides best practice for other departments in relation to historic graveyard management, management of trees, protection of natural habitats, architecture, archaeology and the development of walks
- Coordinate the Wicklow Heritage Forum
- Production and implementation of actions in the Heritage and Biodiversity Plans
- Secure finance from the Heritage Council to carry out these actions
- Coordinate activities for Heritage Week
- Assess applications for Structures at Risk grant applications

Progress in 2013

- Heritage input to the Wicklow Town & Environs Plan and Greystones Delgany & Kilcoole Local Area Plan.
- Heritage reports on planning applications.
- Four meetings of Wicklow Heritage Forum took place to monitor and implement actions of Heritage Plan
- Hosting of two day Industrial Heritage Conference in association with 'Glens of Lead'.
- Wicklow Wetlands Project: Photography competition, exhibition, talks and publications.
- Production of heritage film clips on Preban Graveyard.
- Co-ordination and promotion of a programme of Biodiversity Week public events under theme ' Wild Wicklow Week'
- Co-ordination and promotion of 100 plus activities for National Heritage Week.
- Continued participation in the development of Heritage (GIS) Viewer to present natural and built heritage information
- Development and maintenance of Online Community Heritage Archive
- Co-ordinated application process to Structures at Risk Fund and the successful completion of works at Nuns Cross Church under the scheme

- Assisted in the development and adjudication of the PURE mile competition
- Participated as a member of Irish Ramsar Wetlands Committee in hosting a Local Authority workshop in July.

Objectives for 2014

- Continue to provide a heritage advisory service within the Local Authority for staff, the wider public and outside agencies and stakeholders
- Ensure implementation of actions of the Heritage Plan and co-ordinate the Heritage Forum
- Commence a review process of the Heritage Plan
- Seek heritage funding as appropriate from outside bodies such as the Heritage Council and the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

D12 Agency & Recoupable Services

This relates to the payroll costs and recoupment of two seconded planning staff.

Division E - Environmental Services

Objective
To protect and enhance the natural environment of County Wicklow in accordance with the principles of sustainable and balanced development, in partnership with all sections of the community, having regard to national and EU policies and programmes.

Key Indicators			
Total Division Budget	€20,999,929	Total no. of Recycling Centres**	5
Tree Planting Grants to Residents Groups and Tidy Towns Associations	€5,000	*Total tonnage of household waste**:* Collected from kerbside	27,998
Tidy Town Awards	€6,300	Collected and sent for recycling	5,470
Projects Funded under LA21 Grants 2012	€23,000	Household waste recycled collected at recycling centres	6,213
Litter Grant Aided Projects	€11,540	Tonnage of household waste collected sent to landfill	22,528
Special Environmental Community Awards	€3,200	No. of Environmental Complaints received and investigated **	1,745
Total no. of houses provided with a waste collection service	23,081	Total no. of incidents in respect of other emergency incidents **	142
Total no. of Bring Sites in Local Authority Area	130	Total no. of incidents in respect of fire only **	495

**All Based on 2012 Indicators

E01 Operation, Maintenance, And Aftercare Of Landfill

Rampere landfill closed for the acceptance of waste for disposal in 2011. This landfill and the landfill at Ballymurtagh will continue to produce leachate and landfill gas for a number of years. Provision is made in the estimates for this together with funding to enable the Council to comply with the waste licence for each landfill.

E02 Operation And Maintenance Of Recovery And Recycling Facilities

Progress in 2013

- Wicklow County Council purchased the building used as Bray Recycling Centre.
- Continued support to Tinahely Development Association in operating community-recycling centre at Lugduff, Tinahely.
- The continued downturn in the economy is reflected in the fact that the quantity of recyclables collected continues to reduce.

Objectives for 2014

- The continued operation of five Recycling Centres across the county.
- Provide and Maintain Reuse and Recycling Facilities which incorporate education throughout the county
- Promote Ethical and Sustainable Routes for all recovered materials
- Increase environmental awareness and responsibility through the Council's Environmental Awareness Programme
- The Council continue to work in the area of Environmental awareness through the following projects/activities: -
    - Green Schools, Community Education, Workshops, Children's Summer Activities, Local Authority Prevention Network Programme, Environmental Competitions, Waste Prevention and Reuse promotion, School Book Exchange, Oxfam and Five Loaves Community Shops, National Council for the Blind in Ireland, Composting, Seasonal Recycling, Schools Recycling, Reuse in the Garden, Commercial recycling, Tidy Towns and Tree Planting.

E04 Provision Of Waste Collection Services

Progress in 2013

- The PURE (Protecting Upland and Rural Environments) project has been highly successful in reducing the visible amount of waste dumped on public areas in the county but also in raising the issue of illegal dumping and the harm it does to the environment and tourism.

Objectives for 2014

- Facilitate the Provision of an Effective Waste Collection and Disposal Service through the Waste Collection Permitting System

E05 Litter Management

Objectives for 2014

- Prepare and Adopt a county wide Litter Management Plan.
- Litter pollution and quantification surveys carried out as part of National Litter Monitoring System.
- ATM Surveys to be carried out as part of the Negotiated Agreement between the Department and the Banking Sector.

E06 Street Cleaning

Street Cleaning & Litter Bin Service is provided in association with Area Offices

E07 Waste Regulations, Monitoring And Enforcement

New legislation in the area of Waste Management continues to impose a cost burden on this service.

Objectives for 2014

- Enforce Environmental Legislation and the Polluter Pays Policy
- Continued work with National TFS office, appointed as competent authority for all hazardous waste movements in Ireland

E08 Waste Management Planning

- **Waste Management Plan** - Under the EC (Waste Directive) Regulations 2011, Three national regions have been agreed and three lead authorities appointed. Wicklow will form part of the Dublin Region. The lead Authorities will outsource the SEA/AA and core National Sections of the Plan and will prepare the Regional elements/framing the overall document from in-house resources.

E09 Maintenance Of Burial Grounds

There are approximately 30 burial grounds currently in use, which are controlled by Wicklow County Council. Wicklow County Council employs part time Registrars to sell grave spaces and maintain registers and works with voluntary communities in the maintenance and upkeep of burial grounds.

Progress 2013

- Extension work completed at Castlemacadam, Avoca and Manor Kilbride, Blessington.

Objectives for 2014

- Continue to identify burial grounds that may require extensions. The focus will be in higher populated urban areas.
- Complete extension works at Rathbran and works at Glendalough
- Carry out review of Burial Ground Policy for all cemeteries

E10 Safety Of Structures And Places

Civil Defence
There are currently 130 registered Civil Defence Volunteers, 90 of whom are active.

The new Civil Defence Building in Greystones was completed in late 2013. Training will continue for Civil Defence Members in 2014.

Dangerous Structures
Environment services will continue to inspect and act on reports of potentially dangerous lands and buildings.

Water Safety
The Water Safety Programme will continue in 2014 under the direction of the appointed Water Safety Officer.

E11 Operation Of Fire Service

Wicklow County Council operates a retained fire service deployed from 10 fire stations.

Progress in 2013

- Regular meetings of Major Emergency Management Committee
- Co-ordinated meetings and training with all Principal Response Agencies including An Garda Síochána, HSE and Defence Forces
- A new fire tender delivered in early 2013.

Objectives for 2014

- To provide an efficient and effective Fire Service and secure compliance with fire safety standards, in order to protect and save lives.
- Regularly review and update the Major Emergency Plan, ensure personnel are trained and exercised regularly for roles assigned in the plan.
- Provide effective training programmes, including safety and health, for all Fire Service personnel.
- Continue to upgrade existing fire stations and to provide new stations where required.
- Provide funding (€90,000 per annum over 5 years) for Court Fines in relation to Fire at Adelaide Villas, Bray

E12 Fire Prevention

Objectives for 2014

- Carry out inspections of works under the Fire Services Act, 1981 and 2003 to ensure compliance and bring enforcement proceedings where appropriate.
- Complete review of Major Emergency Plan
- Continued development of National Standard Operating Guidelines
- Carry out fire safety education programmes to increase public awareness.

E13 Air, Noise & River Basin– Pollution Control & Enforcement

Wicklow County Council monitors and controls air and noise pollution in accordance with legislation and EU regulations.

Objectives for 2014

- To protect the environment by preventing pollution thereby achieving a clean safe, healthy and sustainable environment.
- Ensure adequate enforcement of all pollution control legislation and meet the requirements of national and EU policy directives in relation to water quality requirements

- Compliance with River Basin Districts National Monitoring Programme (Eastern & South Eastern River Basin Districts)
- Prepare/update/implement Air Quality Management Plan
- Lab Accreditation
- Groundwater Source Protection Plans
- Wicklow County Council continues assigned responsibility for operational and investigative monitoring of rivers and lakes under the Water Framework Directive national monitoring programme.

Division F – Recreation and Amenity

Objective
To maintain designated parks and open spaces and to promote Blue Flag Beaches within the county.

Key Indicators			
Total Division Expenditure	4,111,090	Total Library Opening Hours	322 per wk
Number of Public Library Points* Full Time Part time Mobile Library	 5 8 1	Number of Library Visits* Full Time Libraries Part Time Libraries Mobile Libraries	 395,299 74,606 20,634
Library Membership* Active 3 years Active 1 year	 50,915 32,777	Number of items loaned (included downloaded Audio Books 3,308)*	521,961
		Public Internet Access Sessions*	36,160
Number of Blue Flag Beaches	3	Caravan Park Licences issued 2012	14
**Indicators refer to 2012 year*			

F01 Leisure Facilities Operations

Wicklow County Council pays an annual contribution to Shoreline Leisure to operate and maintain the Skatepark and Playground facilities at Charlesland in Greystones.

F02 Operation of Library and Archival Service and Genealogy

Library Service
Wicklow County Council Library Service operates thirteen branch libraries throughout the county. The Mobile Library serves a further 34 locations throughout the county. A library service is also provided to Avoca IT Centre and Shelton Abbey Open Prison, and to nineteen nursing homes including Carnew Community Care, Cheshire Home Shillelagh and St. Coleman's Hospital, Rathdrum.

Membership and Items Issued
Wicklow County Council provides a quality library service to the public. The Councils policy of 'free library membership' ensures that the public library service remains accessible to everyone and membership remains constant at over 33,000.

The number of items borrowed has decreased by some 13% since 2011. It is very important to provide for an adequate 'book fund' to purchase and maintain a modern and up-to date book stock in our libraries to redress this downward trend. A modern up-to-date book stock is essential and the essence of any library. It is proposed to provide an E-book service to users in 2014, to complement the current service of downloadable audio books and other recent online advances.

Activity Programme in 2013 included:

- Regular class visits
- Exhibitions
- Culture Night events
- Book Clubs for adults and teenagers
- Arts and crafts activities
- Historical talks
- World Book Week activities
- Music Circle
- Story reading for children
- Quizzes

SOLAS (formerly FAS) E-Learning
This programme enables the public to work through a structured IT programme with qualified trainers at Arklow, Ballywaltrim, Bray Library HQ, Greystones and Wicklow Town.

Wi-Fi Access
Wi-Fi access in libraries is proving very popular, with over 10,000 Wi-Fi sessions availed of in 2013, compared to 1,700 in 2012.

Objectives for 2014

- Provide a quality library service to the public.
- Maintain a full-time library service (30+ hours per week) at the five full-time libraries and a part-time library service at the eight part-time libraries.
- Continue to provide a branch library from Tinahely Market House.
- Retain and develop the Mobile Library service.

Arklow Library
The Tender Stage for the construction of Arklow Library will be completed in 2013. The estimated 60 week construction period will commence in Spring 2014.

Dunlavin Library
The Dunlavin Market House building was acquired by Wicklow County Council in the 1970's and the Dunlavin Library was relocated there shortly afterwards. This architectural gem was designed by Richard Cassells, who also designed Russborough House, and was constructed in the 1740's. The building was refurbished during 2013 to incorporate a modern library facility.

New Technology and IT
The Library Service has created a page on **Facebook** to engage directly with users and other Agencies to advertise and promote events, facilities and new services as they come on-stream.

Family History Centre

Wicklow Family History Centre
The Wicklow Family History Centre is a genealogy research service established in 1987 by Wicklow County Council and FÁS and has computerised County Wicklow's Roman Catholic and Church of Ireland parish registers. It has completed 100's of Family History Projects for enquirers from around the world with 'Wicklow Roots'.

The Wicklow Family History Service and the County Archive Service, while restricted in 2013, will resume in early 2014.

The Irish Family History Foundation (IFHF)
The Irish Family History Foundation represents over 30 Irish county centres and administers the *Rootsireland* site.

Online Research Service – Pay per View records on www.rootsireland.ie
The *Rootsireland* site currently holds over 19 million records. The Wicklow Family History Centre feature on this worldwide site, offering Irish parish records as a genealogical resource.

County Wicklow Heritage Forum
The Heritage Forum promotes County Wicklow in terms of genealogy and heritage tourism.

The **County Wicklow Heritage Website**, is part of a network of heritage websites created by the National Museum of Ireland. Wicklow will be the first county site in this network and the site will provide information on Wicklow's genealogy, history and heritage.

The Gathering Ireland 2013
The County Wicklow Steering Committee for the Gathering 2013 supported numerous Gathering events throughout the county during this unique year.

Wicklow County Archives Service

Records Management Programme:
The archives service has developed documented systems for the retention and disposal of the records of Wicklow County Council, in partnership with Filestores. The programme to transfer the County Council's Housing Section and Environment Section records to Archives continues.

F03 Outdoor Leisure Areas Operations

This includes the operation, maintenance and improvement of the following facilities:

- Charlesland Sport and Recreation Park and Skatepark.
- Playgrounds (existing) at Aughrim; Baltinglass Recreation Park; Blessington; Eden Gate, Charlesland; Enniskerry; Greystones; Kilmacanogue; Newcastle; Rathdrum; Tinahely (Children's and MUGA)
- Public parks and open spaces.
- Licensing and inspection of caravan parks.
- Public Carparks (Brittas Bay & Glendalough are franchised)
- Designated Beaches - Retention of Blue Flag is key.

Objectives for 2014

Playgrounds (future planned in Partnership with County Wicklow Partnership LEADER) at Ashford; Dunlavin; Knockananna; Shillelagh; Wicklow Town (The Murrough) Playground and Skatepark.

F04 Community, Sport and Recreational Development

County Wicklow Outdoor Recreation Strategy

The County Wicklow Outdoor Recreation Committee was established in July 2009, as a sub-committee of the former County Development Board, to implement the strategies as outlined in the County Wicklow Outdoor Recreation Strategy.

This strategy is managed by County Wicklow Partnership in partnership with Coillte, Fáilte Ireland, Irish Sports Council, the National Parks and Wildlife Service, Wicklow County Council, Wicklow IFA and Wicklow Uplands Council.

The five strategic objectives for outdoor recreation in County Wicklow for the period 2009 – 2013 are:

- Integrated outdoor recreation management.
- Improving opportunities and facilities for sustainable outdoor recreation.
- Supporting conservation through outdoor recreation.
- Promotion, education and raising awareness of outdoor recreation.
- Stimulating outdoor recreation tourism and entrepreneurship.

Co-operation Ireland All-Island Pride of Place Awards 2013

Hollywood Co. Wicklow and The Enniskerry Forum represented County Wicklow in the 2013 Annual Co-operation Ireland All-Island Pride of Place Awards.

"Wicklow Receives All-Island Pride of Place Award"

Hollywood, County Wicklow took a top runner up award in the annual IPB All-Island Pride of Place Awards announced at the gala ceremony in The Venue, Derry~Londonderry during its tenure as UK City of Culture 2013, on Saturday 16th November 2013. Hollywood received the accolade in Category 1, which is for populations of between 200 and 500 people. They were also announced as a Livcom nominee.

Wicklow Local Sports Partnership, C/o Shoreline, Greystones

The objectives of Wicklow Local Sports Partnership are identified in its Strategic Plan 2010-2013.

1. **Sports Training and Development:**
   Work in partnership with sports in County Wicklow to increase participation.
   Deliver quality training to sports leaders.
   Increase opportunities to support people with a disability.

2. **Physical Activity:**
   Increase physical activity opportunities in primary schools, pre-schools and the wider community.
3. **Leadership and Management:**
   Provide effective leadership and management of the Local Sports Partnership.
   Provide funding and grant aid to priority groups, insofar as resources allow.
4. **Marketing and Communications:**
   Brand, link and promote the Local Sports Partnership with its members.
   Raise the profile of sport, physical activity and the work of the Local Sports Partnership through its website, (www.wicklowlsp.ie), communications and newsletter.
   Communicate with key stakeholders.
   Identify and track participants who are involved in Local Sports Partnership programmes.
   Wicklow Local Sports Partnership is on Facebook and Twitter.

F05 Operation of Arts Programme

The role of the Council's Arts Programme is to nurture and develop a wide range of vibrant, artistic and cultural activities taking place in the visual arts, music, theatre, literature, sculpture, youth arts, community arts and festivals.

Advice and support is offered to individual artists, craft practitioners, arts facilitators, art centres, art groups, art organisations, festival committees, schools and community groups in relation to the Arts in County Wicklow.

Wicklow County Arts Office is involved in Absolutely Wicklow, Music Generation, Artist Residencies, Artists seed funding grants and other creative industries which promote tourism, enterprise, culture and employment.

Arts Programme For 2014 Includes:

Visual Artist Development Programme
Development of a Music Educators Network
Artist Residencies – in education and community contexts
Grants and Bursaries
Youth Dance, Theatre and Music Programmes
Visual Arts Discussion Group
Artlinks Programme
Absolutely Wicklow
Wicked Young Film Makers Programme
Music Generation

F06 Agency and Recoupable Services

Youth Project and Culture Nights are run through Agency Services through the Wicklow Arts Office.

Division G – Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare

Objective
To protect public health, animal health and animal welfare

To administer the Higher Education Grant Scheme in an efficient manner

Key Indicators			
Total Division Budget	€2,699,157	No. of dog licences issued	5,321
No. of ante and post-mortem inspections	141	No. of general dog licences issued	5
No. of hygiene inspections	132	No of Lifetime of Dogs Licences issued	17
No. of cattle inspected	297	No. of stray/unwanted dogs surrendered / brought to the pound	222
No. of sheep inspected	1470		
Microbiological analysis (meat)	83	No. of dogs reclaimed by their owners	41
Microbiological analysis (water)	18	No. of dogs re-homed	150
Veterinary residues analysis	2	No. of dogs euthanized	33
Chemical Analysis (meat)	11	No. of on-the spot fines issued	4
Number of Higher Education Grants (Academic Year 2012-2013)	680	No. of prosecutions	0

G01 Land Drainage Costs

This is provision for pension payments relating to the former County Committee of Agriculture.

G02 Operation and Maintenance of Piers and Harbours

Progress 2013

- Steel sheet piling
- New slipway for small boats
- Offshore Site Investigation for disposal at sea

Objectives for 2014

- Dredging

G03 Costal Protection and Flood mitigation works

Works in association with the Office of Public Works continue.

G04 Veterinary Services

Objectives for 2014

- Carry out hygiene audits of all abattoirs and meat manufacturing plants based on risk assessment.
- Promote best practice in relation to animal welfare.
- Work with the statutory bodies in order to ensure a comprehensive inspection service of food premises.
- Wicklow County Council will continue to work with the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, the Health Service Executive and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
- Requirements under Dog Control & Dog Breeding Establishment Act will be enhanced

G05 Educational Support Services

Higher Education Grants
Wicklow County Council acts on behalf of the Department of Education & Skills in administering the Higher Education Scheme, under the Student Support Act 2011 and supporting legislation. All monies paid in respect of maintenance and fees are recoupable with the exception of a fixed contribution of €6,019.83, which the Council is obliged to pay under the 1968 Act.

Progress in 2013
Over 680 students in County Wicklow applied for a Higher Education Grant in the 2012/2013 academic year. After all applications were processed, 663 students were awarded a grant, with expenditure of over €3,044,872.

The centralised authority, Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI) now deals with Higher Education Grants for first time college students. This has reduced the number of applications being made to Wicklow County Council, as only renewal students are now being processed locally.

To date in 2013, 376 applications have been received and processed with 321 students awarded a Higher Education Grant. Wicklow County Council will continue to accept applications until the end of December 2013.

Objectives for 2014
The Higher Education Grant Section aims to continue to:

- Assess fully completed applications received within three weeks of submission of application.
- Make payments on a monthly basis and post to the colleges in a timely manner.
- Complete all statistical returns and recoupment claims to the Department in a timely manner.
- Respond to queries raised by students and/or colleges as efficiently as possible.

Division H - Miscellaneous Services

Objective

To prepare, maintain and publish the Register of Electors for County Wicklow each year.

To work in partnership with the Gardaí and community interests to consult, discuss and make recommendation on matters affecting the policing of the area.

Key Indicators

Total Division Expenditure	€13,716,427	Total Motor Tax Receipts 2012	€14,925,783
No. of designated casual trading spaces (reviewed 2011/12)	17	Net receipts due to Local Government Fund	€14,884,874
Number of voters included in the Register of Electors 2013/14	91,364	No. of Motor Taxes issued	82,999
No. of Casual Trading licences renewed (6 month & 12 month)	11	No. of Drivers Licences issued	18,933
		No. of cars newly registered	2,010

H01 Profit/Loss Machinery Account

Wicklow County Council own 115 items of Plant consisting of small and large vans, jeeps, pick up trucks frost gritters etc. They are discharged on a weekly basis out to the five engineering areas. Some items of plant, for example frost gritters and surfacing machinery, are seasonal and only discharged at certain times of the year. Any profit made from the discharge of the machinery yard is used to continually maintain and update the plant stock.

H02 Profit/Loss Stores Account

Wicklow County Council operate a central stores for the supply of all general building materials such as cement, pipes, water fittings and electrical items. The stores also purchase and issue fuel to the various areas from three depots one in Wicklow, Raheen in Roundwood and Tinahely. The stores have recently taken on the purchasing and distribution of paper and office supplies.

H03 Administration of Rates

Wicklow County Council's Rates Office bills and collects rates from over 2,300 properties in the county each year. Rates are a property tax levied on the occupiers of all commercial and industrial property. The Valuation Office in accordance with the Valuation Act 2001 determines the valuation of each property. The valuation of each property is multiplied by the annual rate on valuation (ARV) to give the amount of rates payable by each occupier per annum. Wicklow County Council sets the annual rate on valuation.

H04 Franchise

Under the Electoral Acts, Wicklow County Council is charged with preparing and publishing the Register of Electors for the County each year. A Draft Register is published on 1st November annually and, following a period for display and amendment, a final Register of Electors is published on 1st February of the following year. This comes into force on the 15th February.

The total local government electorate on the 2013/2014 register is 91,364

The Council strives to provide a comprehensive and accurate Register of Electors to facilitate the democratic process at election time. Through extensive local advertising and initiatives, both web based and traditional, coupled with the efforts of a well trained and resourced team of field workers covering the county, a Register is produced which is tested at each election and referendum. Every opportunity is provided to any qualified person to be included in the Register.

A team of 38 fieldworkers is employed to visit every household in the County during the months of July, August and September each year.

The Budget provision includes for payroll and travel expenses for the field-staff and office staff along with local advertising, postage and printing.

Progress in 2013
2013 was busy due to the recent Referendum on the Abolition of the Seanad and new Court of Appeal on the 4th October 2013 resulting in the need for the preparation of a Supplement to the Register of Electors 2013/14.

The percentage turnout in the Wicklow constituency was higher than the national average. The standard of accuracy of the register is a major factor in that achievement.

Objectives in 2014

The objectives for the 2014/2015 Register are to continue with the high level of accuracy which has been achieved to date and to build on the competency of the 38 fieldworkers in supplying the most accurate and up to date information available.

The standard of accuracy in compiling the Register needs to be maintained due to the Local & European Elections that will be taking place next year.

H05 Operation of Morgue and Coroner Expenses

The Coroner is an independent judicial officer with responsibility under the law for the medico-legal and forensic investigation of certain deaths occurring in County Wicklow. If a death is due to unnatural causes for example in a road traffic collision, suicide, accident at work or by drowning then an inquest must be held by law.

There is a legal responsibility on the Doctor, Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Funeral Undertaker, Householder, An Garda Síochána and every person in charge of any institution or premises in which the deceased person was residing at the time of death to inform the Coroner. The death may be reported to a Sergeant of An Garda Síochána who will then notify the Coroner. However, any person may notify the Coroner of the circumstances of a particular death.

Wicklow County Council retains the services of two Coroners.

H06 Weighbridges

The former weighbridge located at Newtownmountkennedy has been out of commission for a number of years, an amount of €10,000 has been provided in this years budget in order to allow for the use of privately owned weigh bridges under the provisions of the road traffic act 1961 as amended.

H07 Operation of Market and Casual Trading

Objectives for 2014
Continued implementation of Casual Trading Acts and Wicklow County Council Casual Trading Byelaws 2012.

H09 Local Representation and Civic Leadership

Wicklow County Council Joint Policing Committee (JPC) – Public Meetings
Section 36(2)(c) of the Garda Siochana Act provides that the function of a joint policing committee is, inter alia, to 'arrange and host public meetings concerning matters affecting the policing of the local authority's administrative area.'

The Wicklow County Council JPC held a Public meeting in July, 2013 in Arklow. In considering where to hold the public meetings the committee had regard to the County's geographical area, the locations of its towns and the existence of the four other JPCs in each of the Town Council areas of Arklow, Greystones, Bray and Wicklow.

Progress 2013
One public meeting held in Arklow, County Wicklow.
Continued engagement with community interests regarding policing in the area

Objectives 2014:
Continue to work in partnership with the An Garda Síochána, local public and community representatives and community interests regarding policing in the area.

H10 Motor Tax

Wicklow County Council provides Motor Taxation services from three offices. Motor Taxation Services are also available online at www.motortax.ie. From January 2013 the Road Safety Authority (RSA) became the licensing authority for Driver Licences. Wicklow County Council continued to accept and process applications on behalf of the RSA until end October 2013. From October 29th the RSA has taken over the entire process for issuing of Driving Licences.

Current Motor Tax Hours are:

Wicklow	Monday – Friday	09.00 – 15.30
Bray	Tuesday – Thursday	10.30 – 14.00
Blessington	Tuesday	09.00 – 12.30 and 14.00 – 15.30

H11 Agency and Recoupable Services

This includes the cost for services provided by Wicklow County Council on behalf of third parties and the associated income.

Central Management Costs

Central Management Charges are overhead costs incurred in Wicklow County Council. These costs are reallocated to the services within each Division to get a true cost of the provision of that service. This reallocated cost appears as part of the service support costs of each service. Central Management Charge overheads are reallocated on the basis of cost drivers as follows:

Order of Allocation	Cost Pool	Cost Driver - Division	Cost Drive - Service
1	Pensions & Lump sums	Salary and Wages costs	Salary and Wages costs
2	Corporate Buildings	m^2 per division	Salaried Staff per service
3	Corporate Affairs	Salaried Staff numbers	Salaried Staff numbers
4	IT	PC nos. or % usage	PC nos. or % usage
5	Human Resources	Staff nos.	Staff nos.
6	Finance	No. of transactions	No. of transactions
7	Area Offices	% Usage	% Usage

Pension and Lump Sum

Wicklow County Council currently pays 322 pensioners at a cost of €3,876,778 (outturn 2013). Included under this heading is a provision for €3,845,729 for 2014. This includes an amount of €557,770 for lump sum payments.

Corporate Buildings Overhead

This includes costs for heating and lighting, building and grounds maintenance, caretaking and cleaning, file storage, recycling, rates and insurance and loan charges.

Corporate Affairs Overhead

The salaries and administrative costs for staff providing general corporate services are provided here. Areas for specific mention include:

Freedom of Information

The Freedom of Information Act 1997 came into effect for local authorities on 21st October 1998 (amended by Freedom of Information Act 2003). All records created after this date come within the scope of the FOI Acts and can be requested subject to the exemptions provided.

The Freedom of Information (FOI) Acts 1997 and 2003 establish three statutory rights:

1. A legal right to access information held by public bodies
2. A legal right to have information relating to oneself amended where it is incomplete, incorrect or misleading
3. A legal right to obtain reason for decisions affecting oneself.

Progress in 2013

The total number of requests received during 2013 was 22 at end of November 2012.

Being processed	1	Refused	7
Granted	7	Withdrawn/Deemed Withdrawn	1
Part Granted	6	Handled outside of FOI	0

Objectives in 2014
To continue to process all Freedom of Information requests in accordance with the statutory deadlines as set out in the Act. To implement the provisions of the new Freedom of Information Act (not yet enacted).

Accessibility

Throughout 2013 Wicklow County Council has continued its commitment to promote 'equal access for all'. The 'Wicklow Local Authorities Disability implementation Plan 2005 – 2015' continues to be the main focus of the local authority and a number of further actions have been completed.

Progress in 2013
The Access Officer strives to ensure that all the legal obligations in relation to accessibility are met.

A new project was instigated by the Access Officer Network which aims to raise the awareness of the difficulties that people with disabilities are faced with. A national module called Enabling Access Across Generations was created for transition year students. Over 40 schools took part in 2012 and more have registered to take part in 2013.

Objectives for 2014
- To ensure that all documents and plans are proofed against the current disability plan and to make them accessible on request.
- To update the current Disability Plan.
- To increase awareness amongst staff of accessibility issues experienced by the public when availing of Local Authority services through the NDA e-learning module.

Internal Audit

Internal Audit is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve an organisation's operations. Wicklow Local Authorities Internal Audit unit endeavours to provide this service across the organisation and including the Town Councils. An Annual Audit Plan is compiled following a consultative process with the Council's Management Team and the perceived needs of the organisation. Internal Audit attends the meetings of the Audit Committee and presents reports on an on-going basis. Progress with the implementation of the Audit Plan and audit reports is monitored by the Audit Committee.

Audit Committee

Wicklow Local Authorities has a five member Audit Committee. Two of the members are elected Councillors with the remaining three being external appointments who bring their professional expertise and experience to bear on the work of the Committee. The Audit Committee has two principal roles
- Review the Council's financial and budgetary reporting activities and procedures
- Foster the development of best practice in the internal audit function.

The Audit Committee meets quarterly and presents an Annual Report on its activities to the members of the Council. The Audit Committee is supported by the Head of Finance and the Director of Corporate Services who, along with the Internal Audit Unit, attend each of its meetings.

Information & Communication Technology

The Council's I.S. Department's Operational Plan for 2013 has been substantially progressed against a background of reduced budget and resources. The operational plan supports the objectives of the Corporate Plan and is the agreed prioritised list of projects and ongoing support for the Departments and Functions that I.S. serve. Strict adherence to the I.S. budget was a feature of operations in 2013 as in other years.

The strategic objectives for 2014 are:
- Timely and seamless facilitation of the unification of County and Town Councils,
- Virtualise our servers and storage, thus incorporating a myriad of different locations and facilities into a seamless whole,

- Updating our data connectivity and resilience,
- Installation of a Voice over Internet Protocol (VOIP) for the Council's telephony solution,
- Extension of Shared Services initiatives where appropriate,
- Improvement of internal communications and the development and sharing of best practice,
- Provision of Business Continuity and risk reduction by the use of advanced fault tolerant data storage and disaster recovery solutions,
- Improved I.S. security and data protection policies

The importance of I.S. to the functioning of the Council has grown in line with the modernisation programme and in the delivery of new automated business systems in the past number of years.

The highlights of 2013 include:

- The Managed Print Service (MPS) contract was extended to Bray Town Council and to the area offices in Blessington and Greystones, the contract leverages high levels of cost effectiveness, energy efficiency and rapid response to maintenance calls.
- Property Interest Register (PIR); Work is ongoing in supporting a dedicated in-house solicitor to perfect title to Council-owned lands. All social housing has been mapped, as have other property assets belonging to each section. Review of existing land leases continues, as does strategic land assessment.
- Wicklow's mapped data is now fed through to public map viewers, myplan.ie and mypp.ie, as part of an all-Ireland viewer
- The IS section provides an in-house GIS technical service to streamline and improve decision-making processes, e.g. considerable time has been dedicated to the production and support of Local Area Plans and Strategic Environmental Assessments during 2013.

Given the level of new systems development and implementation over the past number of years, there has been a significant increase in the burden of support on I.S. staff which has been managed very well with support being kept to previous year's high standards. Operational support and maintenance for critical Council systems continues including Financial Management System (Agresso), Revenue Collections, Housing, Planning, Fire Service, Environment, Payroll, Roads, Library, Voter Registration, Major Emergency Planning, etc.

Plans for 2014 include:

- Providing support for the unification of County and Town Councils,
- Providing support for Irish Water,
- Support the national Transforming Public Services strategy and the Haddington Road agreement including the Collective Agreements in the Local Authority Sector,
- Continue to support national and local shared services initiatives,
- Reduction of monetary and carbon costs where possible,
- Continue to support PIR with title registrations, formalised business processes, strategic land use, audit of completed CPOs, linkage with financial and other systems during 2014,
- Implement any infrastructural changes required with the aim of improving network performance and its protection from external and internal threats,
- Support as required for upgraded regional water & drainage systems,
- Test the backup and recovery of systems and data in the event of a disaster,
- Through application upgrade and replacement, the display of spatial data to both external and internal users in a more effective and user-friendly manner,
- Continue to provide support to utilise digitally mapped data from various sources in decision-making processes,
- The enhancement of Wicklow Co Council's website www.wicklow.ie will continue in 2014 with the introduction of the online payment facility and the introduction and integration of further interactive services and applications.

Human Resources Function

Human Resources, Payroll & Superannuation Project

In recognition of the major changes facing local government, the Local Government Management Services Board commissioned PA Consultants to undertake a wide-ranging review of the HR function in local authorities in order to address the structures, resources and processes required to meet the various strategic and operational requirements of local authorities.

Core International was selected as the supplier of a Human Resources, Payroll and Superannuation integrated system for the local authority sector. The system has now been substantially implemented in Wicklow Local Authorities, with Superannuation Module upgrade live at the end of November 2013

As Core is an integrated HR, Payroll and Superannuation system, Wicklow Local Authorities are now able to implement any statutory changes in legislation, or requirements from the Croke Park Agreement/Haddington Road Agreement in a more efficient and timely manner.

Objective 2014
It is envisaged that the Health & Safety and Performance Management modules will be rolled out in 2014.

Health and Safety

Wicklow County Council subscribes to a dynamic and interactive Health and Safety process. Accordingly the Health and Safety Office avails of every opportunity to reflect these principles in terms of consultation, training and the development of a comprehensive Health and Safety Management System.

Training is provided throughout the year on a proactive basis. Training provided includes: Safe Pass, Safety Awareness, Basic and Advanced Chainsaw, Confined Spaces Entry, Abrasive Wheels, Manual Handling, Construction Skills Certification Scheme (C.S.C.S.), Managing Safely in Construction Projects, First Aid, Chemical Awareness, Signing, Lighting & Guarding and Locating Underground Services.

Policies and procedures in Wicklow County Council are constantly being reviewed in line with new best practices and legislative changes. Staff participation in the process is encouraged and the input of the Safety Representatives is valued.

The Corporate Safety Statement is reviewed on an annual basis. In addition Ancillary Safety Statements/Local Safety Statement for each Department are reviewed annually.

The Health and Safety Management Committee meet on a monthly basis and the Safety Representatives Committee meets every two months. Health and Safety is a permanent item on the agenda of the Management Team

Progress in 2013

- Continuing review of Draft National Local Authority Policies & Procedures.
- Working closer with the Regional Training Centre to ensure value for money on all training courses provided.
- Ongoing audits of workplaces.
- Ongoing review of H&S Statements etc.

Objectives for 2014

- Continuing the roll out of the National Local Authority Policies & Procedures.
- Continue implementation of a Safety Health and Welfare Management System.
- Ongoing Health and Safety training for Staff.

Training And Development

Wicklow County Council recognises that training and development assists staff to realise their full potential and can lead to greater organisational performance and job satisfaction and therefore is committed to ensuring that every member of staff has the opportunity and support available to them.

Staff members also regularly attend seminars and conferences directly related to their area of work and expertise. The Council also encourages and assists staff to undertake relevant further education at all stages of their career.

Progress in 2013
Training was delivered to staff throughout the year on a wide variety of topics including: Health and Safety, Customer Care, Personal Development Training, Agresso Training, Legislative Training, IT Training, Risk Management Training, Disability Awareness Training, Managerial Development Training, and Water Services specialised training.

Objectives in 2014
To continue to offer training and development to all staff members and elected members to ensure greater organisational performance and personal job satisfaction.

Finance Function Overhead

This includes the salaries and administrative costs for Finance staff and financial costs such as bank changes incurred in Wicklow County Council.

Area Office Overhead

There are five Area Offices in county Wicklow in Arklow, Wicklow, Bray/Greystones, Tinahely and Blessington, which operate in conjunction with most Directorates to provide services to their areas.