



COMHAIRLE | CLARE
CONTAE AN CHLÁIR | COUNTY COUNCIL

Clare County Council Adopted Annual Budget 2025

Comhairle Contae an Chláir
Buiséad A Glacadh 2025



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CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT

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Introduction

I enclose the Adopted Budget for [Clare County Council](#) for the year ending 31st December 2025, together with a report outlining the main provisions contained therein.

Department Circular Fin 11/2024 dated 15th July 2024 set out the prescribed period for the holding of the 2025 budget meeting in accordance with Section 103 of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended), the Local Government (Financial and Audit Procedures) Regulations 2014 and the Local Government (Financial and Audit Procedures) (Amendment) Regulations, as prescribed by the Minister. This period is from 1st November 2024 to 6th December 2024. The statutory meeting for [Clare County Council](#) to consider the draft budget was fixed for Thursday 28th November 2024 at 3pm. At this budget meeting, the Members were asked to make the following decisions:

- Adopt the Budget with or without their balanced amendment.
- Determine the Annual Rate on Valuation for 2025.
- Determine the proportion of rates abatement applicable on vacant commercial properties under Section 9 of the Local Government Rates & Other Matters Act 2019 and commenced by Circular Fin 12/2023 from 6th Nov 2023.
- Approve under Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2001 the Clare County Council Small and Medium Enterprise Scheme (SME), Hospitality Business Grant Scheme and the Long-Term Vacant Property Occupation Incentive Scheme.

The first stage of Budget 2025 required Members to adopt a Local Property Tax (LPT) rate for the relevant budget year. This decision was considered and made at the September 2024 Council meeting where Members approved maintaining the LPT at the same level as the past 5 years, for the next 5 years - the term of this Council. While this positive decision secures €58m LPT income for the term of the Council, it will not provide any significant additional income over the previous year 2024 other than €34k as outlined later in this report. This decision does, however, provide certainty to property owners on the level of LPT applicable over the coming years.

The second stage of the annual budget process required the consideration and adoption of the General Municipal Allocation (GMA) for 2025 within each Municipal District. This was completed at meetings of the Municipal Districts (MD) in early November 2024. The General Municipal Allocation in the Budget presented provides Members with €1.37m to have discretion to allocate within their Municipal District. In early 2025, the individual Municipal Districts will meet and agree this allocation to local community projects, public realm enhancements, etc. Clear guidance on the GMA process and standard practices across each MD within the County will be revisited with Members for implementation in 2025.

The final stage of the budget is to present the overall revenue budget for the following year to Members at the statutory budget meeting. Budget 2025 as presented provides for income and expenditure of €191.9m, an increase of €5.5m over the previous year. This budget has been prepared following consultation with the Corporate Policy Group and full Council budget workshop and framed on a review of the overall budget input to core services, new and emerging services and the fixed nature of the Council's cost base.

The economic implication of geo-political uncertainty continues to prove challenges in presenting a balanced budget to Members for their consideration and adoption. Energy costs are not returning to pre-2021 levels and inflation increases are occurring across all of our cost bases. While the finance markets are stabilizing, they are not returning to pre-2021 levels and this is eroding existing budgets. There has been some easing in inflation but ongoing global financial uncertainty will continue into 2025. Government supports provided for inflation in 2023 of a “once off” grant of €1.9m and the “once-off” impact on LPT uplift in 2024 of €3.7m will not be repeated in 2025. Notwithstanding that, the positive uplift in the Local Property Tax allocation to this Council of €3.7m in 2024 has certainly helped with emerging financial demands.

The last number of years has seen the Council progress, and in doing so, new facilities and services are in place that require an ongoing maintenance and operation budget. This has come in lieu of investment in other services where there is no additional funding identified. The Local Government Funding model is more and more a part-funded model where local income has to fund both infrastructure development and the operation of new services. One of the biggest challenges to the Local Government Funding model is the multiple Ministerial Departments we, the Local Government sector, have a direct link to, for service delivery and funding. Local Authorities are seen as the delivery mechanism for Central Government initiatives that are not always funded 100% by the Government Department. This does provide positive funding for the initial development of infrastructure but does not fund the ongoing delivery of the services. It also provides considerable risk as Government priorities change, Government budget allocations change and at that stage local services are established and embedded. Thereafter the permanent funding commitment falls to the Local Authority to meet. Recent Government initiatives around climate change, Town Centre First, biodiversity, integration and vacant homes amongst others have allocated funding for the staff resources on an initial number of years basis, but no permanent funding plans in place or funding is now discontinued.

The funding model is a growing challenge for this Council and, taking a multi-year forecast, indicated the increase in funding gap between this Council’s expenditure base and the income levels required to deliver services at current levels. The gap is increasing while we take on more facilities and services. A review of the 2 main income sources of this Council - Local Property Tax and Commercial Rates of 2020 and applying the CPI index, 21.5% over the term of the last Council 2020-2024, indicates an **€8.3m loss of spending power** where our income sources have not addressed the increased cost base arising from inflation.

It is interesting to apply the CPI calculation to the Non-Specific Road Grant allocations in 2020. This exercise indicates that up to 2024, Road Grants were not keeping account of inflation. The 2024 Additional Restoration Improvement Grant of €1.26m addresses this. Budget 2025 has been prepared on the assumption that Clare County Council will be allocated at least the same level of non-specific road grants as allocated initially in 2024.

The Council's budget model is easily understood when one sees an imbalance between required expenditure and available income. To balance the budget for presentation to Members, it required us to generate more income or reduce expenditure or a combination of both. The additional services, infrastructure and the impact of inflation over the last Council explains the challenges we have faced and will face over the term of the new Council. There is limited opportunity to invest where needed without reassigning budgets from core services or delivering on increased income and cost base efficiencies in order to support investment in local roads and other local services.

In presenting draft Budget 2025 to the Corporate Policy Group and Members, a €3.8m net funding gap in cost increases was identified, €1.9m that is not discretionary in nature. This was considered at length by the Members with a strong resolve not to pass on any increases to the business community. This budget has been framed with no increase in commercial rates. This has resulted in limited or no increases in budgets across all service areas, particularly roads - local roads, where the preparation of the Schedule of Municipal District Works (SMDW) in Q1 2025 will prove challenging to Members following this budget process.

In order to present a balanced budget, the deficit in funding has been addressed with a combination of the following:

- no increase in expenditure across budget request areas.
- additional income in commercial rates from a national revaluation of ESB networks and Uisce Éireann networks.
- increased income from Goods and Services where a review will be completed on all income from Goods and Services for implementation in 2025.
- reduction in match funding for capital projects through loan finance.
- reduction in salaries and wages where vacant posts occur throughout the year and the timing of their filling will provide this budget saving.
- additionality in street cleaning and resources to burial grounds and roads.

The following Table 1 depicts Revenue Expenditure by Division for 2024 and 2025. This increase in expenditure is matched by increased income. The level of expenditure shown above, at €191.9m, will be financed from the Local Property Tax allocation, Commercial Rates income, Grants and Subsidies and Goods and Services. Further details on these categories are available in the accompanying tables to this report. Table 2 of the report shows the income sources which fund this expenditure.

Table 1: Expenditure by Division

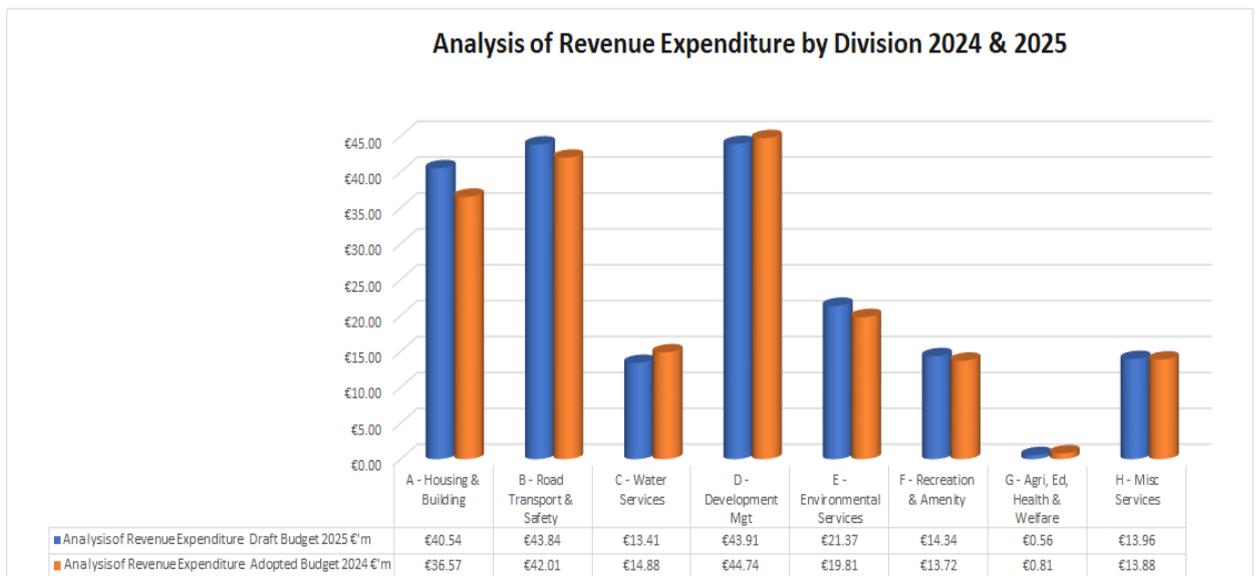
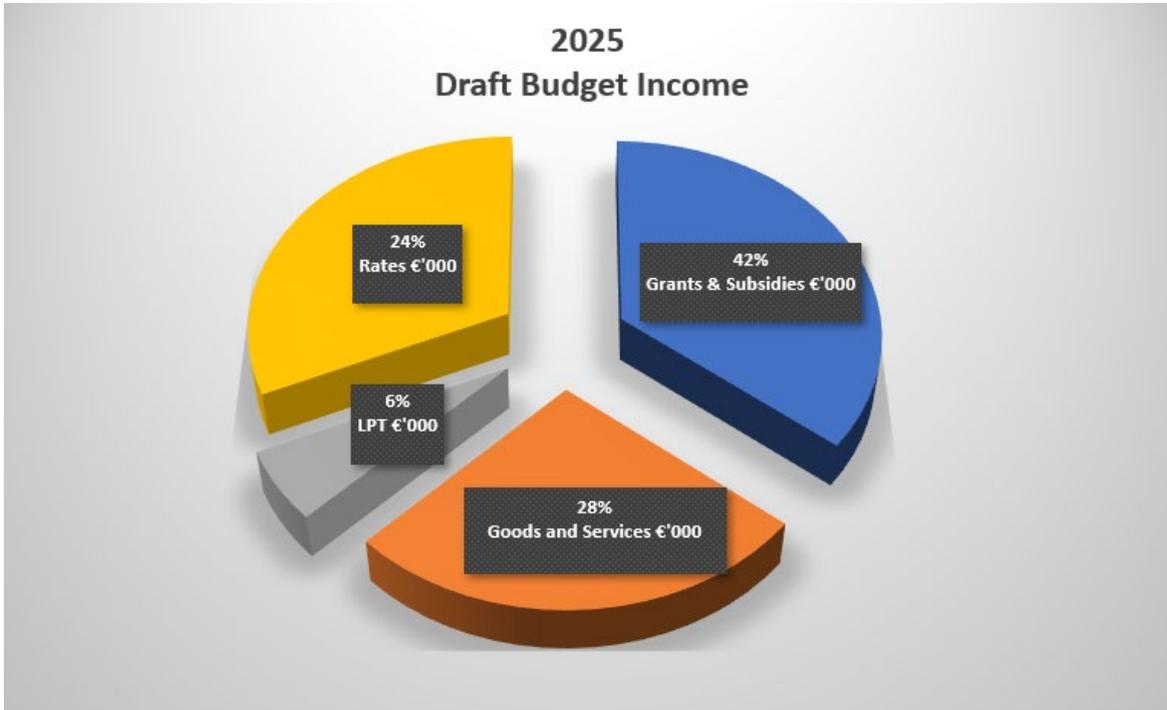


Table 2:



Local Property Tax

The 2025 allocation from Local Property Tax funding to Clare County Council has been confirmed as €11.67m. This represents a €34k increase over the 2024 allocation. The decision of Members at the September 2024 statutory meeting to retain the same level of Local Property Tax for the term of the Council is reflected in the allocation. This is a positive decision by Members in securing the funding and bringing some financial certainty to this process. Details of the 2025 allocation from the Local Property Tax is set out in Table 3:

Table 3:

Clare County Council - 2025 LPT Allocation	2025	2024
	2025	2024
	€m	€m
Total LPT Projected at Unvaried LPT Rate (100%)	9.96	9.74
Amount (to)/ from National Equalisation Fund	0.22	0.44
Total LPT Funding	10.18	10.18
LPT Retained Locally for Revenue Budget	10.18	10.18
Adjustment to LPT Rate	1.49	1.46
Total LPT Retained	11.67	11.64
Net Increase Draft budget 2025	0.03	

Payroll and Pensions

This budget provides for salaries and wages on the revenue budget of €56.57m which includes the impact of National Pay Agreements between Government and Unions and has resulted in an increase in payroll costs for Budget 2025. These centrally negotiated agreements affect pay rates for all public-sector workers including Local Government employees. Confirmation has been received that €12.1m of the additional cumulative cost of pay agreements (2015-2024) associated with the various agreed National Pay Agreements will be met centrally and recouped to Clare County Council by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

Activity on the delivery of capital projects continues to increase significantly. The cost associated with planning, designing and delivery of these projects is mainly borne by the revenue budget. The costs arising on the capital budget will be charged to the relevant capital projects and funded as a project cost. In addition, there is an increasing level of specific posts within the Council that have a payroll recoupment grant as part of the Government initiative. This brings considerable risk where this Council appoints permanent posts in order to attract and retain candidates whilst the funding of the post is temporary in nature and at the behest of a Government Department whether it continues or not. This is the case in relation to some specific posts in 2024 where funding of the post is discontinued in Budget 2025. This Council is carrying a €2.3m risk in relation to recoupable posts.

A number of competitions and contract offers are currently in process. The broad approach has been to fill vacancies as they arise and to only increase the staffing complement where additional posts are fully funded by Government Departments. The overall staffing complement and its deployment across the organisation and County will be kept under review taking into account budget provision and reduction in this area in order to present a balanced budget to Members.

Fire Service – The implementation of the Workplace Relations Commission’s proposals for Retained Firefighters has been ongoing in 2024 with an initial allocation of €1.15m to this Council in 2024. €1.8m has been allocated for 2025. Budget 2025 has been prepared to reflect this allocation. Any additional costs above this have not been provided for in Budget 2025.

Increased costs continue to emerge in pensions and gratuities that are not met by Central Government but as part of the revenue budget process. This cost of €10.7m as provided for in the revenue budget is met in part by superannuation income collected of €1.3m. Clare County Council does not retain the Pension Related Deduction ASC as this is remitted centrally to the National Exchequer Fund. This reflects an increased net cost of €0.84m. This provision provides for pension payments for circa 640 retired employees.

Uisce Éireann and Service Delivery

In line with the Water Services Bill 2022, from 2023 Irish Water changed to Uisce Éireann (UÉ) and began the transition to assume full responsibility for the delivery of water services in Ireland and move away from a Local Authority-led service delivery based on Service Level Agreements (SLA). This SLA in Clare has now been replaced with new agreements which include a Master Co-Operation Agreement which provides for Uisce Éireann with full accountability for water services functions and the necessary management and direction of water services staff who choose to remain employees of this Council. The new Support Service Agreement signed by this Council captures the arrangements for payment by UÉ for direct water services related costs, therefore reducing the income recoupment to Clare County Council for Central Management Charges of circa €3.45m. To mitigate this income loss,

the Department have agreed to a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the County and City Managers Association to meet these stranded costs that will fall to each Local Authority. This agreement is in place for 2024 and 2025 with further agreement to be reached for future years. The MoU is understood to cover the following:

- Central Management Charge (CMC) Non-Pension @ **2022 levels** – leaving the cost increases in this area to the Local Authority to fund costs and inflation impact.
- CMC Pensions actual levels (subject to further clarification).

This funding does not provide an indefinite funding stream or recognise cost increases since 2022. These costs were factored into the level of Local Government Funding reduced from the sector and individual Local Authorities when Irish Water/Uisce Éireann was established. The total Central Management Cost to Uisce Éireann-managed services in Budget 2025 is €3.45m with a grant income of €3m, leaving a deficit of €0.43m for this Council to fund. This emerging funding gap is met by this Council.

Ukrainian Community Supports and International Protection Applicants

The Council continues to take the lead in coordinating the Government Agencies response to accommodating our Ukrainian community. Budget 2025 provides for this continuation while expanding to supporting the International Protection Accommodation Service (IPAS) within the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY). This budget has been prepared on the basis of full recoupment from Central Government for this cost together with the recovery of all costs of the Integration Team.

Commercial Rates

Commercial rates in the financial year 2024 accounted for 24% of the €186.4m income in the year, circa a quarter of all revenue income of this Council. This income source is the central contributor to the total financial resources for the Council with an actual income from this source projected at €46.3m in 2025. The Local Government Rates and Other Matters Act (LGROMA) 2019 was enacted in 2019, with certain provisions later enacted in late 2023 under the Archaeological, Heritage and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2023. This legislation seeks to modernise commercial rates legislation with a notable change in billing procedures involving the transition from the previous bi-annual “moieties” system to a single annual charge due on the first day of January each year. Commencing in 2026, interest on unpaid rates accounts will be enforced, emphasising the importance of timely payments. Amendments to valuation lists take immediate effect with pro-rata liability and billing applying where occupation begins or ends mid-year. The legislation has many elements but there are 3 sections of the Act that are worthy of mention here:

- (1) Section 12 which provides for the charging of interest on overdue rates from 01/01/2025. In effect from January 2026, interest will be levied on overdue rates applied from 01/01/2025.
- (2) Section 15 provides for Local Authorities to make schemes to support local and national policy objectives by providing a credit against commercial rates. The regulation in this case provides a role for the Economic SPC in this regard. This function together with the relevant regulations will form part of the Economic SPC of this Council’s work programme.
- (3) Section 9 of the Act allows Local Authorities to adopt schemes for the abatement of commercial rates on vacant properties. This section of the Act in effect replaces the previous legislation in

relation to the refund of rates where certain criteria were met. Vacancy abatement under the Act (Section 9) is a reserved function to be approved at the Local Authority statutory budget meeting following a public consultation process - a report is contained herein. Clare County Council Members have applied a tiered scheme for relief on vacant properties for some years now. This scheme is linked to the value of the annual commercial rates of the property. It is proposed to continue this tiered approach to rating these premises in this budget as set out in the attached Report on the Local Government Abatement of Rates in respect of Vacant Properties, with a recommendation to add this to the Economic SPC for their consideration and recommendations for future years.

The 2025 budget continues to provide for the loss of commercial rates from the revision and subsequent revaluation of the ESB Moneypoint site to a loss of €5.47m. Budget 2025 provides Government grant support for this loss of income of €4m on a year-to-year basis with an expectation from the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform (DPENDER) that this will reduce over time. This is a risk that this Council is managing on an annual basis with the Local Government Finance Section of our parent Department.

In 2024 there were a number of revaluations completed on global entities, namely Uisce Éireann and ESB networks. These final certs were issued in recent weeks with an increased income of €800k to this Council in 2025. These valuations may be subject to appeal and this budget provides for a potential loss of income subject to a Valuation Tribunal appeal decision. Outside of this global valuation income buoyancy, there is no real additional commercial rates income from new properties in Budget 2025. This is expected as the Reval project completed in 2023 in this County revised, delisted and revalued all open items with the Valuation Office (now known as Tailte Éireann). This absence of buoyancy available from this source means that Budget 2025 is built on stretched budget lines.

There are circa 4,135 properties valued in this County generating €45.5m income in 2024. Of this total 526 (12.7%) of customers pay €36.3m (80%) of the total rates. 3,145 (76%) pay in total €6m of the total commercial rates income, each €5,000 or less.

The proposed Annual Rate on Valuation (ARV) for 2025 is 0.239. This represents no increase on the 2024 ARV. Budget 2025 proposes to protect 87% or 3,609 of our commercial rates customers with the continuance of the Small and Medium Enterprise Support Grant at the same level as 2024.

Commercial Rates Grant Schemes

Budget 2025 provides for the continuation of a number of commercial rates customer grant schemes for adoption by Members at the statutory budget meeting under Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2001 and are outlined in more detail on the Council's website. Information is also available to any customer from their Account Manager. These are:

- (1) Long Term Vacant Property Incentive Scheme:** This scheme encourages the re-occupation of vacant premises. The grant scheme is a step-in arrangement in the first 3 years of business.

- (2) Hospitality Grant Scheme:** The Adopted Budget 2022 introduced a Hospitality Scheme recognising the need for support to the hospitality sector. The budget provides for a continuation of this scheme from prior year in 2025 budget. Broadly, the scheme will provide for a 5% credit against commercial rates paid by direct debit and/or fully paid by 31st August 2025 capped at €5,000 for hospitality providers who are operating in the tourism support business.

- (3) The Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) Scheme:** This scheme continues for 2025. 87% or circa 9 out of every 10 businesses in the County can qualify for this scheme. Businesses in County Clare with a commercial rates liability of up to €10,000 can avail of a credit of 5% against the subsequent years' rates liability, where the customer discharges their rates invoice by direct debit and/or fully paid by 31st August 2025.

Social Development

The Social Development Directorate has as its mission statement “to enhance the quality of life for the people of County Clare through the provision of appropriate housing supports to those in need”. This vision is reflected in functional responsibility for the delivery of Housing and Sports & Recreation in the County as represented in Divisions A and F of Budget 2025.

Housing

The Council continues to work on delivery of a very ambitious programme for housing under Housing for All. This programme will see Clare County Council deliver a total of 833 new social homes by 2026. Progress to date has been largely positive with the Council comfortably delivering a total of 256 new homes in 2023 through a combination of 118 direct build Local Authority units, as well as 66 new builds through AHBs, 69 turnkey solutions and 3 Buy and Renew properties. Currently the indication is that the 2024 annual target of 149 new homes will also be met.

While the current pipeline for delivery is healthy, the Council remains focused on the ongoing identification and acquisition of suitable development land for delivery of both social and affordable housing and welcomes the recent establishment of the Land Acquisition Fund which is administered by the Housing Agency to support Local Authorities in funding the land costs associated with delivery of social housing targets.

While the scale of delivery over the next few years is not without its challenges, the Council will endeavour to continue to meet and exceed targets where possible. This will, of course, necessitate the continued commitment and support of the Members as well as the ongoing close collaboration with the Approved Housing Body sector which is tasked with delivery of up to 40% of the overall target.

Increasing affordability is one of the cornerstones of “Housing For All”. The Council has received approval in relation to 3 schemes and the first homes were sold under this scheme in Shannon in 2024. A further 28 homes in Shannon and Ennis are to be advertised early in 2025 with further proposals awaiting Department approval. A new online portal went live recently at <https://affordablehomes.ie>.

As the Council continues to increase its housing stock, the importance of maintaining this asset is even more critical. However, the trend in recent years has been a steadily declining contribution from national funding models towards management and maintenance of vacant stock. This, coupled with the urgency to turn around vacant units for reletting to meet housing demand, continues to place a significant financial burden locally, and efforts to address the funding gap will continue in 2025.

The Enhanced Defective Concrete Block (DCB) Grant Scheme went live in mid-July 2023, with the required Act and Regulation in place. The scheme is open and the Council's DCB team have received over 100 applications through the online application portal. Clare County Council's main role is the administration of the DCB Scheme. Clare County Council await details from the DHLGH for the launch of the Local Authority Defective Concrete Block Scheme, which will then allow Local Authority housing stock affected by deleterious materials to be remediated. The Council has a DCB Facilitator in place to assist homeowners with the application process.

Local Authority Integration Team/Ukrainian Services Department

A Local Authority Integration Team (LAIT) to co-ordinate the provision of supports for all members of the migrant community has been established in Clare County Council and continues to lead out on integration programmes within County Clare. The Community Integration Forum continues to support both our Ukrainian guests and refugees from other countries, along with the communities who have acted tirelessly to support them. This budget has been prepared on the basis of full recoupment from Central Government for this cost together with the recovery of all costs of the Integration Team.

Sports and Recreation

Sport and Recreation sits within the Social Directorate. There are a range of facilities included in this increasingly popular amenity offering including Active Ennis, John O’Sullivan Park (Lees Road), Active Ennis Leisure Complex, Active Ennis Tim Smythe Park, Active Ennis Glenina Pitch, Active Ennis Cloughleigh Astro Turf and Active Ennis Coote Park Pitch, as well as Active Kilrush Sports Complex. In addition to the Council-owned Leisure Complex in Ennis, recreational and amenity services are provided by independently owned centres in Lahinch, Kilkee and Shannon.

Clare County Council has been included in a new pilot programme under the 2018-2027 National Sports Policy and it is anticipated that during 2025, we will deliver a countywide “Local Sports Plan” aimed at increasing participation through partnership with the Local Sports Partnership, clubs, organisations and communities amongst others.

Physical Development

The Physical Development Directorate encompasses the following sections: Roads and Transportation, Fire and Emergency Management, Water Services, Environment, Climate Action and the Project Management Office.

The priorities for the Directorate for Budget 2025 are:

- Provide funding for Fire and Emergency Services in line with the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) recommendation.
- Provide funding for resourcing and ongoing maintenance of stormwater infrastructure.
- Provide for Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project (PLEEP).
- Support the implementation of the Climate Action Plan (CAP) objectives.
- Implement a balanced approach to funding investment in the Schedule of Municipal District Works.
- Protection of the environment.

We will continue to work throughout the coming year with the various Government Departments (Department of Transport, Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage, Office of Public Works (OPW), Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), National Transport Authority (NTA)) and other relevant stakeholders in achieving our objectives.

Roads and Transportation

A key focus of the Physical Development Directorate is to maintain and improve the condition of the road infrastructure across the County in line with funding requirements and allocations through Department grants and own resources. A review of General Operative requirements was completed during the year. As a result of this an additional provision has been made in the revenue budget.

The Road and Transportation Section works closely with the Municipal District Engineers in the delivery

of the Schedule of Municipal District Works. The Road Design Office deliver projects across the County and report into the Senior Engineer in Roads and Transportation. The Road Design Office also supports the delivery of Active Travel projects as funded through the NTA. A major priority for 2025 will be the delivery and funding of the Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project (PLEEP).

Fire and Emergency

The key driver in Division E for Budget 2025 is the continued implementation of the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) agreement in the provision of additional fire service personnel. In 2025, it is intended to complete the recruitment of personnel in accordance with the WRC agreement. This includes the provision of training and appropriate equipment for these new personnel to ensure that the Fire Service continues to maintain the high standards that they currently achieve. This cost has already been referenced earlier in the report and is budgeted on a full recoupment basis.

Water Services

Budget 2025 expenditure has reduced by circa €1.6m from 2024. Uisce Éireann (UÉ) is the authority responsible for municipal water services since the effective date which for Clare was 20th Sept 2023. Council staff are now under the control and direction of Uisce Éireann albeit these staff remain employees of the Council until 2026 or a sooner date if the individual decides to transition to Uisce Éireann. Priority for 2025 is to work with Uisce Éireann to ensure the continued delivery of Water Services under the master co-operation and support services agreements. This service will also face challenges as this transition is implemented in the next 2 years.

Environment

The focus of the Environment Section for 2025 is compliance with our statutory obligations in the relevant legislation areas, such as compliance with recommendations of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), audit and statutory obligations and commencement of projects to enhance the Closure, Restoration and Aftercare Management Plan (CRAMP) for historic landfills and the National Agriculture Inspection Programme.

Climate Action

The Clare County Council Climate Action Plan was adopted unanimously in February 2024. It contains 126 actions towards achieving the Council's climate objectives. Beginning the implementation phase of this plan is a priority over the next 12 months. The development of a successful collaboration with the SEAI towards the co-funding of deep retrofits on our buildings will be a key target. Initialising solar PV within our assets will also be an important focus in 2025. The Climate Team will also focus on awareness raising projects over the next 12 months.

Project Management Office/General Design Office

There is significant capital expenditure ongoing and planned for 2025 in the Physical Directorate. These projects amount to some €29.9m capital expenditure for 2025. A significant portion of this expenditure is recouped from the relevant parent Department.

Projects such as the Killaloe Bypass and Shannon Bridge Crossing, Ennis Public Realm project, N69/N85 Inner Relief Road - Ennistymon (Blakes Corner), the West Clare Railway Greenway, Kilkee Flood Relief Scheme, Shannon Town & Environs Flood Relief Scheme, N19 Shannon Airport Access Road project are progressing and will incur expenditure during 2025. Priority for 2025 is to continue progressing projects while managing any associated delays.

Economic Development

County Clare is an important driver of economic development both regionally and nationally. Together with our colleagues in the Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce, this Council has highlighted the development potential of the Shannon Estuary area by harnessing global scale offshore wind energy. In the meantime, we are working with Enterprise Ireland to identify funding opportunities to progress the Kilrush Maritime Training Centre and as lead authority for the Integrated Framework Plan (SIFP) for the Shannon Estuary, we are working with the steering group to undertake additional data gathering to support future development.

Members will be aware that Shannon Town is a designated Metropolitan Town in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area (LSMA) and will be aware that 49% of the LSMA is within the Shannon Municipal District area. Moreover, Shannon is a trailblazer in aviation, enterprise and innovation and the Shannon Free Zone is the largest industrial estate outside of Dublin. National and regional planning policy has identified Shannon for significant population growth, more than 30% to 2040. In that context and to support a thriving Shannon community, we are progressing the One Shannon Hub as a business and civic centre of regional importance in the heart of Shannon Town in line with the Shannon Town Masterplan. The concept design is completed and we will be making an application for funding under the next URDF call to progress this important development.

Following the publication of the Ennis 2040 Strategy in 2021, Ennis was designated a key town for investment in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy. Recent data shows that Ennis is growing at a slower rate than the national average in terms of spend and jobs, re-emphasising the importance of the Ennis 2040 Strategy. Development on Council-owned strategic sites at Abbey Riverside, Harvey's Quay, Post Office Field and Francis Street are at various stages of development. As previously committed, alternative car parking will be provided in the town centre before any construction commences on the riverside car parks and the commitment by Government to the Ennis Town Bus Service in the recent budget is also a welcome development following extensive engagement with the Department of Transport. The Council has also secured funding under the THRIVE Town Centre First Heritage Scheme to identify a vacant heritage property that can be brought back into use and is undergoing public consultation in that regard. The remediation of the Roche site is progressing well and we are working with the IDA to promote the site as an ideal location for inward investment.

The Town Centre First Department seeks to create town centres that are viable, vibrant and attractive for people to live, work and visit in County Clare. It will deliver Town Centre First Plans, encourage the establishment of Town Teams and deliver collaborative capital projects.

Through our Local Enterprise Office (LEO), we will continue to support our local businesses across the County with a range of grant funding, productivity interventions, training and mentoring supports. The LEO will also support businesses to enhance their sustainability practices and embrace new digital technologies.

The Derelict Sites Team and the Vacant Homes Team will drive implementation of the Vacant Homes Action Plan and the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) Activation Programme, which has continued to deliver significant results in recent years. The Property Management Unit will continue to support other service areas on property issues and will be delivering on a number of capital projects in the year ahead.

Rural Development

The Rural Directorate Work Programme is broad and varied with communities at the heart of our service provision directly supported through 4 Rural & Community Development Officers – 1 based in each of the 4 Municipal Districts. This dedicated team continues to support communities and organisations in the County while building on collaborative relationships with other local agencies and organisations to deliver on the objectives in the renewed Clare Rural Development Strategy 2030. This includes working with the Municipal Districts and community groups to develop projects and initiatives across the County, targeting local and national funding opportunities.

In 2025, Clare County Council's Local Area Grants Scheme will maintain its vital funding support for community groups and organisations, helping to strengthen the social fabric of local communities. The additional funding provided in 2024 for the maintenance of burial grounds and community playgrounds will continue into 2025. The budget for the Local Area Grant Scheme in 2025 is €690k.

The Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), as a statutory committee of the Council, continues to meet with its primary purpose of “developing, coordinating and implementing a coherent and integrated approach to local and community development”. The LCDC's main responsibility is to oversee the implementation of the community elements of the Local Economic and Community Plan 2030 in conjunction with the lead agencies on the actions identified in the first of three 2-year implementation plans and to coordinate, manage and oversee the implementation of local and community development programmes. The LECP sets out a 6-year vision for the County seeking to target funding and investment into the County to where it is needed and bring together local agencies and organisations to collaborate on the delivery of identified actions in an Implementation Plan.

The Healthy Clare Programme, which sits within the remit of the Local Community Development Company (LCDC), is one of a number of programmes that the LCDC are actively delivering through the Healthy Clare Working Group and Healthy Clare Coordinator. The Healthy Clare Working Group is focused on Healthy Ireland Round 4 Funding 2023-2025 which addresses healthy weight (with a focus on overweight, obesity and malnutrition), and mental health promotion (aiming to reduce the number of deaths by suicide in Clare) based on a Local Authority Health Heat Map Dataset provided by the HSE's Health Intelligence Unit where Clare is above the national average for both of these outcomes.

The Age Friendly Programme in Clare remains a priority for Clare County Council with a new Age Friendly Strategy launched in 2024 that sets out “a collective ambition” for age friendly in Clare for the period 2024-2030. Building on the success of the previous Age Friendly Strategy, the new Strategy presents a 6-year implementation plan that is supported by the Clare Older People's Council and the Clare Age Friendly Alliance.

The Local Community Safety Partnership (LCSP) is a new addition to the Rural Directorate and is expected to be established and operational in early 2025. The LCSP is provided for in Part 3 of the Policing, Security and Community Safety Act 2024. The LCSP, which aligns with similar approaches in related policy areas such as the LCDCC, will operate at Local Authority level and will replace the Joint Policing Committee (JPC). The partnership will have a wider membership than the JPC and will include residents, local councillors, community representatives including representatives of young people, older people, new and minority communities, business and education representatives and a range of public services including the HSE, Tusla, An Garda Síochána and the Local Authority. A primary function of the LCSP is to develop and implement a Local Community Safety Plan for County Clare. The Plan, which is expected to be delivered in 2025, will ensure that the partnership takes a strategic approach to their work so that community safety issues can be dealt with in a coordinated manner and addressed collectively by relevant service providers in partnership with the local community.

Tourism Development

County Clare Tourism Strategy 2030 – Guiding our Journey to a Vibrant New Future in Tourism

The County Clare Tourism Strategy 2030 has defined a clear direction. It reflects the aspirations of local government, industry and communities and has established a new level of consensus that will stimulate collaboration and coordinated action. The concept of sustainability underlies the entire ethos of the strategy and is embedded within its strategic priorities. It offers a path toward a greater level of resilience which is crucial and it highlights the regenerative potential of tourism when all players work together toward the same vision.

Through ongoing strategic planning and experience development, each theme can elevate the distinctive strengths of Clare and can further strengthen the international designation of the Burren and Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark, as well as providing further leverage to Fáilte Ireland's regional proposition of the Wild Atlantic Way and Ireland's Hidden Heartlands.

Highlighting a more streamlined approach to marketing and communications and improving the relevant tools and systems plays a key role in promoting what Clare as a destination has to offer to the market positioning in line with the Strategy. Implementation of this streamlined approach is underway and attention is focused on ensuring that progress can be measured so that the Strategy can remain responsive to emerging opportunities (www.visitclare.ie).

For 2025 and in line with the objectives set out in the Clare Tourism Strategy 2030, County Clare is ambitiously pursuing Global Sustainable Tourism Council certification for the destination. This process supports transparent and evidence-based decision-making by responding to data collected from residents, businesses and visitors. This will help to continue to develop Clare as a destination that supports local communities and businesses, gives visitors great experiences and manages our social, cultural, economic and environmental future.

To further strengthen the direction and economic benefit of tourism throughout the Council, in 2024 Clare County Council formed a dedicated Tourism Directorate.

Twinning

The visitor spends arising from a series of delegations visiting County Clare consequent on established twinning arrangements has been identified as a key economic benefit to tourism in Clare and this will be a key focus to further enhancing these relationships throughout 2025 in addition to forming new UK-based twinning relationships.

Cliffs of Moher Experience

Clare County Council has prepared the Cliffs of Moher Strategy 2040 and associated Strategic Environmental Assessment incorporating extensive public, stakeholder and statutory consultation. The 4 key strategic pillars for implementation include delivering economic benefits, providing sustainable access including transport solutions, transforming the landscape for conservation and optimising the visitor experience. Visitor management and environmental protection will continue to be managed closely to deliver on strategic outputs.

At the core of the strategy is a focus on sustainable tourism development and spreading the benefits to the Clare economy, with local towns and villages benefitting significantly from new mobility plans and visitor upgrades to increase visitor dwell-time in the County. Ambitious masterplan designs will be advanced from design to planning stage, continuing the work on delivering critical infrastructure.

Clare Tourism East

2024 was a successful year across the Shannon Heritage/Clare Tourism East sites with record admission numbers delivered into Craggaunowen for the year and banquet numbers delivered into Knappogue and Bunratty outperforming previous years since 2019. Multiple major decisions taken in 2024 that would have considerable positive impacts on future years, chiefly amongst them the outsourcing of retail and catering across the relevant sites. Considerable players in their chosen fields won the respective tenders with The Kilkenny Group now operating our retail since 1st Aug 2024 and Corporate Catering being the chosen operator for catering services commencing on 1st Dec 2024. Budget 2025 reflects this change in operations.

Knappogue Castle refurbishment has commenced and will be serving the overnight market from April 2025 onwards. It will be a significant addition to Clare Tourism and will enhance the County's reputation as a tourism product and provider of accommodation.

The above attractions were branded as the "Clare Collections". All of the above, under the remit of Clare County Council, provides for a solid base from which local towns and villages can thrive from the tourism promotion and visitor flow throughout the County in addition to collaborating with neighbouring attractions and businesses.

Broadband and Digital Department

The Digital Hubs provided by Clare County Council through its DigiClare initiative have now become established facilities within the local communities with 11 hubs now in operation throughout the County. Continued upgrading and adoption of the facilities to meet the ever-changing requirements of our users will continue in 2025. A number of actions identified as part of our Hub Marketing Strategy will be carried out in 2025 to include engagement with larger regional, national and international employers and companies to promote these facilities to their employees. Also locally, the hubs are being utilised by communities for local events and projects further exploiting their potential.

Capital Investment Programme

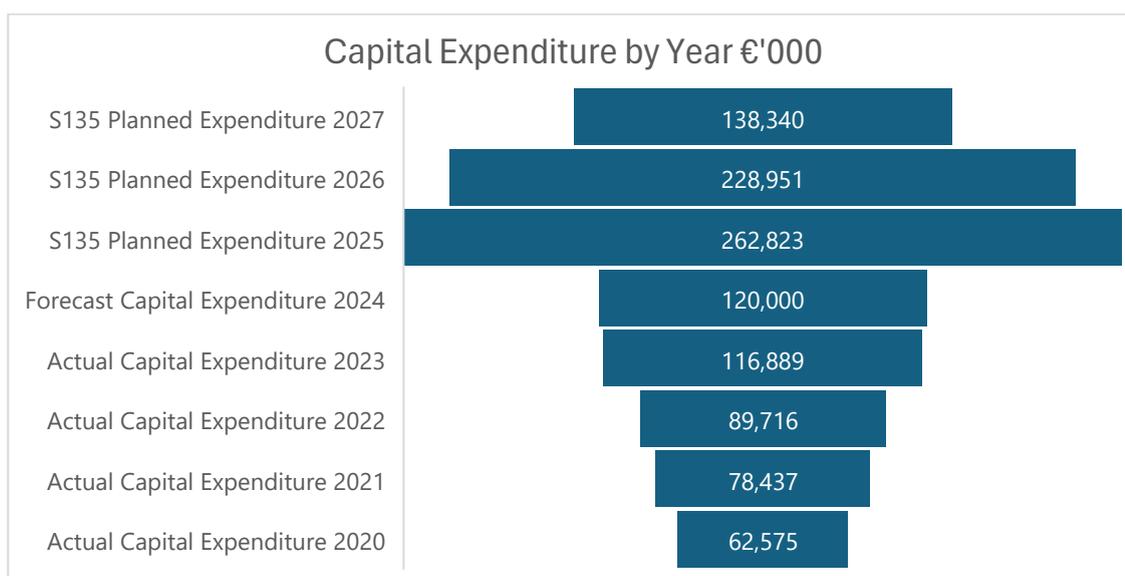
In accordance with Section 135 of the Local Government Act 2001, the Capital Investment Programme for the 3-year period 2025–2027 is in the attached Section 135 Report. This programme sets out the proposed capital expenditure of this Council across all Directorates for the coming 3 years. The proposed projects outlined in this report have indicative planned investment of more than €630m which comprises projects at various stages of delivery, ie. concept, early planning, design and delivery.

This €630m represents a significant increase over the previous 3-year capital programme and over actual expenditure incurred in recent years. It is primarily driven by an ambitious Housing Capital Programme aligned to Central Government commitments in this area.

This report sets out a number of proposed projects that are in the planning pipeline and will only progress subject to funding being secured. It represents significant project planning in this County in providing new and improved infrastructure primarily in the areas of Social Housing, Roads Infrastructure, Tourism Development and Capital Grant schemes such as the Urban Regeneration Development Fund and Rural Regeneration Development Fund among other schemes.

Capital programmes are, by their nature, multi-year plans that are rolling in nature which involve review and possible adjustment subject to business case evaluation, success in grant applications and/or the ability of this Council to fund these projects from our own revenue budget. The table below outlines the capital expenditure in recent years and future projections. There is further detail in the Section 135 Report which highlights **funding of circa €122m** to be secured before some of these projects can proceed.

Table 3



The revenue budget presented to Members here today does provide for loan charges for the match funding element of some projects into 2025 as outlined earlier.

Conclusion

The Adopted Annual Budget for 2025 is reflected in the statutory tables as detailed herein. This is the fifth consecutive budget that has been prepared in the midst of an unprecedented global crisis and has again presented challenges in preparing an appropriate budget to deliver on expanded public services with stretched resources. The proposed expenditure of €191.9m together with our capital programme spend represents a very considerable investment of monies in the development of the County and the delivery of services throughout the County.

Budget 2025 has been presented without an increase in commercial rates to the business sector and will undoubtedly present great challenges to this Council in delivery of the Schedule of Municipal District Works in 2025 as it provides for minimal increases above 2024 levels to this service area.

This budget process was completed with the assistance of the Members of the Corporate Policy Group in the consideration of budgetary issues and also the Directors of Service and their staff for their compilation of budget submissions and their support in producing the budget.

I would also like to convey my thanks to the Director of Finance, Ms. Noeleen Fitzgerald and her staff for their co-ordination of the budget process and their assistance to myself and the Council.

I wish to acknowledge the support, courtesy and co-operation of the Elected Members and staff over my tenure in Clare County Council. I wish to record my appreciation to all for their commitment and dedication in the delivery of services for the people and businesses in County Clare.

Is mise le meas,



Pat Dowling
Chief Executive

20/11/2024

Date



**ADOPTED
BUDGET
2025**

TABLE A - CALCULATION OF ANNUAL RATE ON VALUATION FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR

Summary by Service Division	Expenditure €	Income €	Budget Net Expenditure 2025 €	%	Estimated Net Expenditure Outturn 2024 €	%
Gross Revenue Expenditure & Income						
A Housing and Building	40,538,889	36,321,460	4,217,429	7.3%	3,819,799	6.7%
B Road Transport & Safety	43,839,540	29,776,142	14,063,398	24.2%	12,579,229	22.1%
C Water Services	13,410,975	12,217,260	1,193,715	2.1%	1,066,680	1.9%
D Development Management	43,912,416	32,515,440	11,396,976	19.6%	11,008,836	19.4%
E Environmental Services	21,369,336	4,608,261	16,761,075	28.9%	16,014,540	28.2%
F Recreation and Amenity	14,341,206	1,576,044	12,765,162	22.0%	12,311,570	21.6%
G Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	558,357	132,278	426,079	0.7%	411,955	0.7%
H Miscellaneous Services	13,956,823	16,775,845	(2,819,022)	(4.9%)	(326,877)	(0.6%)
	191,927,542	133,922,730	58,004,812	100.0%	56,885,732	100.0%
Provision for Debit Balance	-		-			
ADJUSTED GROSS EXPENDITURE AND INCOME (A)	191,927,542	133,922,730	58,004,812		56,885,732	
Financed by Other Income/Credit Balances						
Provision for Credit Balance		-	-			
Local Property Tax		11,673,909	11,673,909			
SUB-TOTAL (B)			11,673,909			
AMOUNT OF RATES TO BE LEVIED C=(A-B)			46,330,903			
Net Effective Valuation (E)			193,853,152			
GENERAL ANNUAL RATE ON VALUATION (C/E)			0.2390			

TABLE B: Expenditure and Income for 2025 and Estimated Outturn for 2024

Division & Services	2025				2024			
	Expenditure		Income		Expenditure		Income	
	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €
A Housing and Building								
A01 Maintenance & Improvement of LA Housing Units	6,802,480	6,802,480	10,057,241	10,057,241	6,197,369	6,667,369	9,457,241	9,927,241
A02 Housing Assessment, Allocation and Transfer	817,707	817,707	12,199	12,199	794,423	789,423	12,199	12,199
A03 Housing Rent and Tenant Purchase Administration	950,790	950,790	12,023	12,023	927,623	922,623	12,023	12,023
A04 Housing Community Development Support	1,370,214	1,370,214	49,804	49,804	1,329,467	1,324,467	49,804	49,804
A05 Administration of Homeless Service	4,544,179	4,544,179	3,647,546	3,647,546	4,167,745	4,167,745	3,382,566	3,382,566
A06 Support to Housing Capital Prog.	2,984,637	2,984,637	705,042	705,042	2,959,963	2,954,963	705,042	705,042
A07 RAS and Leasing Programme	14,044,681	14,044,681	14,234,483	14,234,483	12,227,463	12,227,463	12,450,238	12,450,238
A08 Housing Loans	1,091,817	1,091,817	642,157	642,157	1,085,685	1,079,685	642,157	642,157
A09 Housing Grants	7,551,419	7,551,419	6,709,577	6,709,577	6,504,957	6,504,957	5,763,309	5,763,309
A12 HAP Programme	380,965	380,965	251,388	251,388	377,071	377,071	251,388	251,388
Division A Total	40,538,889	40,538,889	36,321,460	36,321,460	36,571,766	37,015,766	32,725,967	33,195,967

TABLE B: Expenditure and Income for 2025 and Estimated Outturn for 2024

Division & Services	2025				2024			
	Expenditure		Income		Expenditure		Income	
	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €
B Road Transport & Safety								
B02 NS Road - Maintenance and Improvement	3,114,772	3,114,772	2,737,647	2,737,647	3,128,582	3,098,488	2,767,741	2,737,647
B03 Regional Road - Maintenance and Improvement	10,253,950	10,253,950	8,193,896	8,193,896	9,861,772	11,119,330	7,879,396	9,136,954
B04 Local Road - Maintenance and Improvement	24,050,687	24,050,687	16,376,882	16,376,882	23,314,011	23,387,168	16,622,746	16,695,903
B05 Public Lighting	2,490,356	2,490,356	181,853	181,853	2,313,248	2,313,248	201,853	181,853
B06 Traffic Management Improvement	202,296	202,296	261	261	190,877	190,877	261	261
B07 Road Safety Engineering Improvement	723,020	723,020	614,200	614,200	635,730	718,130	531,800	614,200
B08 Road Safety Promotion & Education	510,944	510,944	30,703	30,703	492,906	506,106	17,503	30,703
B09 Car Parking	1,254,201	1,254,201	1,617,523	1,617,523	1,000,498	1,000,498	1,401,523	1,401,523
B10 Support to Roads Capital Prog	1,239,314	1,239,314	23,177	23,177	1,067,605	1,067,605	23,177	23,177
Division B Total	43,839,540	43,839,540	29,776,142	29,776,142	42,005,229	43,401,450	29,446,000	30,822,221

TABLE B: Expenditure and Income for 2025 and Estimated Outturn for 2024

Division & Services	2025				2024			
	Expenditure		Income		Expenditure		Income	
	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €
C Water Services								
C01 Water Supply	5,898,758	5,898,758	5,671,592	5,671,592	6,773,969	6,773,969	6,743,682	6,743,682
C02 Waste Water Treatment	3,144,714	3,144,714	2,987,812	2,987,812	3,496,766	3,496,766	3,327,017	3,327,017
C03 Collection of Water and Waste Water Charges	412,471	412,471	389,855	389,855	459,453	459,453	447,163	447,163
C04 Public Conveniences	270,063	270,063	4,400	4,400	281,166	281,166	4,400	4,400
C05 Admin of Group and Private Installations	2,677,317	2,677,317	2,403,672	2,403,672	2,671,449	2,671,449	2,403,672	2,403,672
C06 Support to Water Capital Programme	583,515	583,515	554,478	554,478	711,157	711,157	700,308	700,308
C08 Local Authority Water and Sanitary Services	424,137	424,137	205,451	205,451	487,695	487,695	188,733	188,733
Division C Total	13,410,975	13,410,975	12,217,260	12,217,260	14,881,655	14,881,655	13,814,975	13,814,975

TABLE B: Expenditure and Income for 2025 and Estimated Outturn for 2024

Division & Services	2025				2024			
	Expenditure		Income		Expenditure		Income	
	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €
D Development Management								
D01 Forward Planning	1,576,145	1,576,145	25,385	25,385	1,583,118	1,538,641	25,385	25,385
D02 Development Management	2,014,350	2,014,350	443,348	443,348	1,985,515	1,935,515	493,348	453,348
D03 Enforcement	1,430,084	1,430,084	22,316	22,316	1,418,771	1,388,771	22,316	22,316
D05 Tourism Development and Promotion	28,292,805	28,292,805	27,595,385	27,595,385	23,919,129	23,919,129	23,168,095	23,168,095
D06 Community and Enterprise Function	5,703,326	5,703,326	2,511,247	2,511,247	6,217,082	6,217,082	2,999,252	2,999,252
D07 Unfinished Housing Estates	372,185	372,185	5,142	5,142	370,456	365,456	5,142	5,142
D08 Building Control	523,932	523,932	38,465	38,465	522,330	512,330	38,465	38,465
D09 Economic Development and Promotion	3,021,946	3,021,946	1,624,426	1,624,426	7,742,004	8,882,250	6,546,426	7,736,672
D10 Property Management	431,963	431,963	116,858	116,858	455,444	425,444	116,858	116,858
D11 Heritage and Conservation Services	422,388	422,388	132,868	132,868	412,758	412,758	139,312	139,312
D12 Agency & Recoupable Services	123,292	123,292	-	-	116,305	116,305	-	-
Division D Total	43,912,416	43,912,416	32,515,440	32,515,440	44,742,912	45,713,681	33,554,599	34,704,845

TABLE B: Expenditure and Income for 2025 and Estimated Outturn for 2024

Division & Services	2025				2024			
	Expenditure		Income		Expenditure		Income	
	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €
E Environmental Services								
E01 Landfill Operation and Aftercare	1,121,818	1,121,818	522,363	522,363	1,294,035	1,294,035	497,363	510,363
E02 Recovery & Recycling Facilities Operations	2,628,481	2,628,481	471,969	471,969	2,555,823	2,555,823	466,969	456,969
E05 Litter Management	1,265,942	1,265,942	48,788	48,788	1,082,501	1,082,501	48,788	48,788
E06 Street Cleaning	2,513,617	2,513,617	36,931	36,931	2,397,423	2,397,423	36,931	36,931
E07 Waste Regulations, Monitoring and Enforcement	697,535	697,535	276,805	276,805	671,392	671,392	276,805	276,805
E08 Waste Management Planning	237,791	237,791	87,213	87,213	228,594	228,594	87,213	87,213
E09 Maintenance of Burial Grounds	680,721	680,721	69,914	69,914	543,997	553,997	69,914	69,914
E10 Safety of Structures and Places	1,696,825	1,696,825	240,977	240,977	1,579,454	1,569,454	210,977	230,977
E11 Operation of Fire Service	8,199,034	8,199,034	2,251,927	2,251,927	7,395,876	7,434,876	1,572,193	1,612,193
E12 Fire Prevention	765,528	765,528	202,706	202,706	696,398	696,398	202,706	202,706
E13 Water Quality, Air and Noise Pollution	1,073,455	1,073,455	174,116	174,116	985,277	985,277	108,854	108,854
E15 Climate Change and Flooding	488,589	488,589	224,552	224,552	375,562	375,562	189,079	189,079
Division E Total	21,369,336	21,369,336	4,608,261	4,608,261	19,806,332	19,845,332	3,767,792	3,830,792

TABLE B: Expenditure and Income for 2025 and Estimated Outturn for 2024

Division & Services	2025				2024			
	Expenditure		Income		Expenditure		Income	
	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €
F Recreation and Amenity								
F01 Leisure Facilities Operations	2,306,248	2,306,248	956,003	956,003	2,170,052	2,170,052	790,003	890,003
F02 Operation of Library and Archival Service	6,369,448	6,369,448	89,824	89,824	6,108,991	6,108,991	89,824	89,824
F03 Outdoor Leisure Areas Operations	3,335,290	3,335,290	119,218	119,218	3,307,377	3,310,577	119,218	119,218
F04 Community Sport and Recreational Development	458,259	458,259	86,000	86,000	447,145	447,145	86,000	86,000
F05 Operation of Arts Programme	1,871,961	1,871,961	324,999	324,999	1,682,049	1,808,049	348,199	348,199
Division F Total	14,341,206	14,341,206	1,576,044	1,576,044	13,715,614	13,844,814	1,433,244	1,533,244

TABLE B: Expenditure and Income for 2025 and Estimated Outturn for 2024

Division & Services	2025				2024			
	Expenditure		Income		Expenditure		Income	
	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €
G Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare								
G02 Operation and Maintenance of Piers and Harbours	108,683	108,683	32,379	32,379	107,211	107,211	32,379	32,379
G04 Veterinary Service	419,796	419,796	99,899	99,899	672,373	672,373	361,899	361,899
G05 Educational Support Services	29,878	29,878	-	-	26,649	26,649	-	-
Division G Total	558,357	558,357	132,278	132,278	806,233	806,233	394,278	394,278

TABLE B: Expenditure and Income for 2025 and Estimated Outturn for 2024

Division & Services	2025				2024			
	Expenditure		Income		Expenditure		Income	
	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €
H Miscellaneous Services								
H01 Profit & Loss Machinery Account	637,392	637,392	39,479	39,479	513,249	513,249	39,479	39,479
H03 Administration of Rates	7,602,238	7,602,238	87,241	87,241	7,800,727	7,650,727	87,241	87,241
H04 Franchise Costs	301,466	301,466	2,405	2,405	322,112	452,112	2,405	2,405
H05 Operation of Morgue and Coroner Expenses	295,690	295,690	3,306	3,306	249,543	289,543	3,306	3,306
H07 Operation of Markets and Casual Trading	76,819	76,819	20,845	20,845	73,289	73,289	20,845	20,845
H09 Local Representation & Civic Leadership	3,652,627	3,652,627	28,590	28,590	3,570,853	4,102,853	28,590	28,590
H10 Motor Taxation	1,182,606	1,182,606	61,169	61,169	1,145,445	1,145,445	61,169	61,169
H11 Agency & Recoupable Services	207,985	207,985	16,532,810	16,532,810	204,544	188,544	13,839,001	14,499,604
Division H Total	13,956,823	13,956,823	16,775,845	16,775,845	13,879,762	14,415,762	14,082,036	14,742,639
OVERALL TOTAL	191,927,542	191,927,542	133,922,730	133,922,730	186,409,503	189,924,693	129,218,891	133,038,961

TABLE C - CALCULATION OF BASE YEAR ADJUSTMENT

	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)
Rating Authority	Annual Rate on Valuation 2025 €	Effective ARV (Net of BYA) 2025 €	Base Year Adjustment 2025 €	Net Effective Valuation €	Value of Base Year Adjustment €
<u>Clare County Council</u>	<u>0.2390</u>				
Clare County Council	0.2390		-	193,853,152	-
TOTAL				193,853,152	-

Table D

ANALYSIS OF BUDGET INCOME 2025 FROM GOODS AND SERVICES

Source of Income	2025 €
Rents from Houses	11,340,000
Housing Loans Interest & Charges	500,000
Parking Fines & Charges	1,602,789
Uisce Éireann	6,367,795
Planning Fees	386,000
Recycling Charges	518,000
Fire Charges	445,000
Recreation/Amenity/Culture	956,000
Local Authority Contributions	84,000
Superannuation	1,273,682
NPPR	-
Other income	30,249,437
Total Goods & Services	53,722,703

*Miscellaneous income above is prescribed format but includes fees and charges, for example:

Tourism income

Sales/leasing of other properties

Road opening licences

IPB dividends

Local contributions to local improvement and community involvement schemes

Dog licences

Burial ground fees

Table E

ANALYSIS OF BUDGET INCOME 2025 FROM GRANTS & SUBSIDIES

	2025
	€
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	
Housing and Building	24,236,909
Water Services	5,618,603
Development Management	1,658,538
Environmental Services	2,206,580
Miscellaneous Services	16,135,302
Sub-total	49,855,932
Other Departments and Bodies	
TII Transport Infrastructure Ireland	2,915,546
Media, Tourism, Art, Culture, Sport & the Gaeltacht	206,000
Defence	118,677
Arts Council	76,800
Transport	23,367,700
Agriculture, Food, & Marine	10,000
Enterprise, Trade & Employment	1,283,929
Rural & Community Development	1,757,000
Environment, Climate & Communications	219,360
Food Safety Authority of Ireland	-
Other	389,083
Sub-total	30,344,095
Total Grants & Subsidies	80,200,027



DIVISION A

Summary

The Housing Department provides housing supports to households who are unable to provide accommodation from their own resources. A range of supports and services are provided to vulnerable persons, housing applicants and housing tenants. Certain housing services are also provided to private tenants.

The Housing Department implements Government Policy in line with 'Housing for All – A New Housing Plan for Ireland.' Progressing the objectives and actions of the plan involves working in partnership with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH), Approved Housing Bodies, the Land Development Agency, the Housing Agency as well as the private sector.

A01 - Maintenance and Improvement of Local Authority Housing

Our housing stock continues to increase each year as we avail of all methods of delivery including new builds by the Council and the AHB sector, acquisitions and Part V delivery. The number of properties we manage and maintain exceeded 3,000 for the first time in 2024 and will continue to grow in 2025. An appropriate management, maintenance and estate management response regime is therefore vital to ensure sustainable communities.

As we continue to increase delivery, there is a consequential impact on the number and cost of properties to be refurbished before re-letting. Additional costs are also expected in 2025 due to an increase in contract and energy prices.

2024 will be the fourth year we have upgraded properties as part of the Energy Efficiency Retrofit Programme to meet the target of a B2/cost optimal BER. Forty-six properties are expected to be completed for 2024. The programme provides for improvements to the fabric of the home including attic and external

insulation, windows and door replacement, heat pump installation and low energy lighting. Additionally, capital replacement upgrades, for example replacement windows, doors, plumbing, heating systems or insulation measures amongst other upgrades will be completed in 200 properties, which improves the quality of the overall housing stock and improves living conditions for our tenants. It is planned to establish a small capital team to increase the overall capital project-based maintenance output. This team will allow the increasing of the energy retrofit delivery target to 76 properties, focusing on Kilkee as per the Clare Climate Action Plan as well as increasing output on other stock improvement works.

Rents are reviewed annually with the objective of all tenants' rents being reviewed every 2 years. Collection rates are holding at a consistent 84% of all rents at present. Rental income will increase in 2025 by €0.6m due to the number of new properties being delivered and this additional income will be ringfenced within the service to support housing maintenance.

Traveller Accommodation

The Council will continue to provide a comprehensive range of on-site services to members of the traveller community, including site management and maintenance and the provision of a mobile caretaker service and Traveller Liaison Person. A new Traveller Accommodation Programme for the period 2025-2029 will be published in Q1 2025 and implementation of same will be monitored by the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee. Department approval has been obtained for a number of upgrade works to properties in existing sites and this work will be progressed through 2025.

A02 Housing Assessment, Allocation and Transfer

The number of properties allocated in 2024 is expected to exceed 300. We expect the level of

allocations to grow in 2025 with many new developments due to be delivered both by the Council and through AHBs. The needs of those applicants with disabled needs continue to be prioritised in accordance with our Social Housing Allocation Scheme and the County Clare Housing Disability Strategy 2022-2027.

A03 - Housing Rent and Tenant Purchase Administration

This service reflects the administration costs of Tenant Purchase Schemes and Rents. Interest in the Tenant Purchase Scheme remains high with 4 properties sold to tenants to the end of Sept 2024 and 4 more to close before end of year. We expect this trend to continue in 2025. The Elected Members agreed to withhold all properties built or acquired since 2016 from the scheme and this will be reviewed at the end of the current Housing Delivery Plan in 2026.

A04 Estate Management

Estate management is an integral part of the Social Directorate function where the team proactively engage with and support tenants in sustaining their tenancies. Clare County Council enhanced the Housing Estate Management Unit by appointing 3 Tenancy Enforcement Officers (TEO) to support existing staff and to help address and enforce instances of anti-social behaviour in Local Authority tenancies in a more proactive manner. The Tenancy Enforcement Team carry out continued patrols of Local Authority housing estates and traveller sites and have a very visible presence to manage and mitigate against complaints of anti-social behaviour across the county. The working hours of the TEO Team are flexible, involving working after hours and weekends as the need dictates. Clare County Council intend to continue this in 2025.

A new venture in 2024 by Estate Management saw tenancy visits of almost 2,000 properties and these visits helped tackle issues related to refuse, pets, general upkeep, unauthorised occupants, etc. 2024 also saw the Council

successfully secure 3 repossession orders through the court system in relation to anti-social behaviour, illegal occupancy and rent arrears issues. A number of additional cases are presently progressing through the legal system and we will continue to stringently pursue same in 2025.

A05 Administration of Homeless Service

The Homeless Action Team is based in Clare County Council's offices. The team provides support and advice to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, following assessment of their needs. Where appropriate, assistance can be given with emergency accommodation. The Homeless Action Team in Clare County Council was established in 2019. Since this date, the Homeless Action Team has developed and expanded and it is hoped that this team growth will continue into the future. Within this team a multi-disciplinary, inter-agency team approach has been employed and has proved to be most effective in providing outreach and additional specialist services and linking with mainstream services.

Budget 2025 includes a new Service Level Agreement for the acquisition of a Homeless Hub. Management of the hub is at tender stage and we expect it to be operational in Q2 2025 providing further supports to single women and families of women and children. In addition, approval has been received for new FOCUS Housing First staff and it is expected that these staff will be in place for Q1 2025. The Homeless Team are also looking at further support projects including the provision of a 9pm-to-9am Temporary Emergency Provision (TEP) service if a suitable location can be sourced. In this respect, the estimated provision for homeless services in County Clare will be increased in 2025. The administration of homeless services is 90% funded with the Council funding the remaining 10% from its revenue budget. Additionality for 2025 will increase net costs to the Council's revenue budget. The total 2025 provision of homeless services is €4.34m.

A06 Support to Housing Capital

The provisions under A06 relate to operational costs and are primarily housing capital salaries that are not met from a Department capital grant.

A07 Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) and Leasing

The Long-Term Leasing (LTL), Repair to Lease and RAS schemes are important options for the delivery of housing. While LTL is being phased out, the increased budget provision in A0702 reflects the targets set by the DHLGH and the number of homes already delivered under leasing. The cost of leasing payments is recouped from the DHLGH. The increased provision for AHBs under Payment and Availability Agreements in A0703 reflects the increased delivery of new homes by AHBs in partnership with the Council. These payments are fully recouped from the DHLGH.

A08 Housing Loans

Housing loans provides for the income and expenditure for mortgage loans as managed by Clare County Council. Changes to the Local Authority Home Loan Scheme came into effect in March 2023. These changes increased the house price limit band from €250k to €300k for Clare and increased the income limit from €50k to €70k for single applicants and €75k to €85k for joint applications. The Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loan was introduced in July 2024 to enable applicants to buy and renovate a derelict or uninhabitable home which are eligible under the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant. This has opened the opportunity for Local Authority Home Loans to a far greater cohort of Clare's households and will continue in 2025.

Thirty-five loan applications have been received and 12 home loans were approved in principle totalling €1.99m to the end of Sept 2024. The Housing Department will continue to administer the Local Authority Home Loan Scheme in 2025.

A09 Housing Grants

The Housing Department administers the Housing Grant Schemes for private houses. This suite of grants provides grant assistance for elderly and disabled people through Housing Adaptation, Housing Aid for Older People and Mobility Aid Grants. The schemes are subject to means testing and grant levels vary based on income bands.

The demand for private house grants continues to be strong and exceeds available resources year on year. Funds are targeted at essential works only to ensure that optimum benefit is derived from limited resources. Inflation and general rising construction costs are adding extra pressures to the grants process as applicants struggle to deal with additional costs incurred over the grants support provided.

A review of the Housing Adaption Grants has recently taken place. Some of the changes recommended include increasing the grant levels having regard to rising costs, increasing income thresholds, changes to means testing and adjusting the burden for Local Authorities by reducing their funding contribution.

A new on-line grants system is now in place which facilitates applicants to apply electronically. This will streamline the grants system and enable applicants to log on and see the status of their application. Approval and administration when works are completed can also be done through this system. The housing staff are always available to assist applicants with this new process.

The funding model of housing grants will change in Budget 2025 to an 85/15 split where this Council will have to fund 15% of expenditure from budgetary resources as opposed to 20% in prior years budgets.

A12 Housing Assistance Payment

The implementation of the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) Scheme provides housing assistance to households with long-term

housing needs by enabling them to find accommodation in the private sector. Clare Council's HAP Team provide the administrative support in processing of applications for clients and landlords, along with conducting rent reviews. Payments by clients and payments to landlords are processed through Shared Services in Limerick City and County Council. For 2025, the administration payment will be circa €250k and is recoupable quarterly from the Department based on the number of HAP tenancies we support.

Sub-Service Description – Division A

Service / Sub-Service	Description of Activities	
A01	Maintenance & Improvement of LA Housing Units	
A0101	Maintenance of LA Housing Units	Maintenance of Council housing stock, including re-lets, reactive maintenance requests, planned maintenance and security of vacant properties, energy retrofits.
A0102	Maintenance of Traveller Accommodation sites	Routine maintenance costs relating to traveller accommodation.
A0103	Traveller Accommodation Management	Renovation of vacant units, clean-ups, hire of plant and security of properties.
A02	Housing Assessment, Allocation & Transfer	
A0201	Assessment of Housing Needs, Allocs. & Trans.	Processing of housing & transfer applications.
A03	Housing Rent and Tenant Purchase Administration	
A0301	Debt Management & Rent Assessment	Costs associated with rent assessment, collection & arrears management.
A04	Housing Community Development Support	
A0401	Housing Estate Management	Management of housing estates through estate committees.
A0402	Tenancy Management	Tenancy management costs including elimination of anti-social behaviour.
A0403	Social & Community Housing Service	
A05	Administration of Homeless Service	
A0502	Homeless Services	Assessment & placement service for homeless persons. Delivery of temporary emergency accommodation & tenancy sustainment services to those that are at risk of homelessness.
A06	Support to Housing Capital Programme	
A0601	Technical & Administrative Support	Housing Capital administration team costs.
A0602	Loan Charges	Repayment of loan charges for voluntary housing bodies. These loan charges are fully recoupable.
A07	RAS & Leasing Programme	
A0701	RAS Operations	Costs associated with Rental Accommodation Scheme which include payments to landlords. These costs are recoupable net of tenants rents.
A0702	Social Leasing	Long term leasing of units. These costs are fully recoupable net of tenants rents.
A08	Housing Loans	
A0801	Loan Interest & Other Charges	Costs associated with management of house purchase loans, payment of loan charges to HFA on mortgage-related borrowing. Repayments from borrowers are also included.
A0802	Debt Management Housing Loans	Costs associated with assessment, collection & arrears management

A09	Housing Grants	
A0904	Housing Grant Payments	Grants provided to private homeowners who are either elderly or disabled & are 85% recoupable. Also Vacant and Derelict Sites Grants
A12	HAP Programme	
A01201	HAP Operations	Costs associated with administration of Housing Assistance Payments.

Table F - Expenditure

Division A - Housing and Building

Expenditure by Service and Sub-Service	2025		2024	
	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €
A0101 Maintenance of LA Housing Units	4,969,114	4,969,114	4,471,820	4,941,820
A0102 Maintenance of Traveller Accommodation Units	564,299	564,299	465,906	465,906
A0103 Traveller Accommodation Management	226,487	226,487	222,239	222,239
A0199 Service Support Costs	1,042,580	1,042,580	1,037,404	1,037,404
A01 Maintenance & Improvement of LA Housing Units	6,802,480	6,802,480	6,197,369	6,667,369
A0201 Assessment of Housing Needs, Allocs. & Trans.	448,656	448,656	453,232	448,232
A0299 Service Support Costs	369,051	369,051	341,191	341,191
A02 Housing Assessment, Allocation and Transfer	817,707	817,707	794,423	789,423
A0301 Debt Management & Rent Assessment	450,738	450,738	455,247	450,247
A0399 Service Support Costs	500,052	500,052	472,376	472,376
A03 Housing Rent and Tenant Purchase Administration	950,790	950,790	927,623	922,623
A0401 Housing Estate Management	546,772	546,772	550,982	545,982
A0402 Tenancy Management	283,557	283,557	270,484	270,484
A0403 Social and Community Housing Service	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
A0499 Service Support Costs	534,885	534,885	503,001	503,001
A04 Housing Community Development Support	1,370,214	1,370,214	1,329,467	1,324,467
A0501 Homeless Grants Other Bodies	3,895,100	3,895,100	3,601,100	3,601,100
A0502 Homeless Service	365,583	365,583	281,255	281,255
A0599 Service Support Costs	283,496	283,496	285,390	285,390
A05 Administration of Homeless Service	4,544,179	4,544,179	4,167,745	4,167,745
A0601 Technical and Administrative Support	1,187,307	1,187,307	1,191,733	1,186,733
A0602 Loan Charges	995,000	995,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
A0699 Service Support Costs	802,330	802,330	768,230	768,230
A06 Support to Housing Capital Prog.	2,984,637	2,984,637	2,959,963	2,954,963
A0701 RAS Operations	2,731,122	2,731,122	2,723,265	2,723,265
A0702 Long Term Leasing	11,086,084	11,086,084	9,288,274	9,288,274
A0799 Service Support Costs	227,475	227,475	215,924	215,924
A07 RAS and Leasing Programme	14,044,681	14,044,681	12,227,463	12,227,463
A0801 Loan Interest and Other Charges	703,643	703,643	705,242	702,242
A0802 Debt Management Housing Loans	173,684	173,684	175,211	172,211
A0899 Service Support Costs	214,490	214,490	205,232	205,232
A08 Housing Loans	1,091,817	1,091,817	1,085,685	1,079,685

Table F - Expenditure

Division A - Housing and Building

Expenditure by Service and Sub-Service	2025		2024	
	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €
A0904 Other Housing Grant Payments	6,575,985	6,575,985	5,719,659	5,719,659
A0905 Mobility Aids Housing Grants	793,000	793,000	610,000	610,000
A0999 Service Support Costs	182,434	182,434	175,298	175,298
A09 Housing Grants	7,551,419	7,551,419	6,504,957	6,504,957
A1201 HAP	273,366	273,366	276,364	276,364
A1299 HAP Service Support Costs	107,599	107,599	100,707	100,707
A12 HAP Programme	380,965	380,965	377,071	377,071
Division A Total	40,538,889	40,538,889	36,571,766	37,015,766

Table F - Income

Division A - Housing and Building

	2025		2024	
	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €
Income by Source				
Government Grants & Subsidies				
Housing, Local Government & Heritage	24,236,909	24,236,909	21,207,534	21,207,534
Total Government Grants & Subsidies	24,236,909	24,236,909	21,207,534	21,207,534
Goods & Services				
Rents from Houses	11,340,000	11,340,000	10,773,882	11,243,882
Housing Loans Interest & Charges	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000
Superannuation	131,551	131,551	131,551	131,551
Other income	113,000	113,000	113,000	113,000
Total Goods & Services	12,084,551	12,084,551	11,518,433	11,988,433
Division A Total	36,321,460	36,321,460	32,725,967	33,195,967



**DIVISION
B**

Summary

Division B includes provision for the maintenance and improvement of roads, public lighting, road safety, car parking and support to the road's capital programme.

Like previous years the budget for Transportation has been prepared in the absence of notification of road grant allocations from both Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and the Department of Transport for 2025 and consequently assumes a similar level of funding as in 2024.

B01 and B02 National Primary and Secondary Roads – Maintenance and Improvement

Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) provides funding for all maintenance and improvement works on Clare's motorway, national primary and secondary road network including pavement renewals, public lighting maintenance, ordinary maintenance and winter maintenance.

The national primary network in Clare is managed and maintained exclusively by the TII except for the cost of the power component of its public lighting which the Council is allocated a grant of €0.2m to cover. Clare County Council carries out improvements to the national secondary network in relation to national secondary overlay and pavement renewal; winter maintenance and public lighting with the funding provided by TII. The overall TII allocation to Clare in 2024 was €6m (includes capital).

B03 Regional Road - Maintenance and Improvement

The Department of Transport (DoT) provides funding to Clare County Council towards the maintenance, management and improvement of the regional and local road network through the following grants: Restoration Improvement; Restoration Maintenance; Discretionary; Drainage; Safety Improvement

and Community Involvement Schemes. The Department of Transport also provides funding for Strategic and Regional Local Roads projects such as the Shannon Bridge Crossing. The DoT allocation to Clare County Council in 2024 was €43.6m (includes capital) and a similar allocation is expected for 2025.

It is anticipated that specific national funding will again be made available by the Department of Rural and Community Development for the Local Improvement Scheme (LIS) for non-public roads in 2025. A grant allocation of €1.21m was made available under the LIS in 2024.

B04 Local Road - Maintenance and Improvement

Clare County Council complements the funding received from the Department of Transport for regional and local road improvements and maintenance through its own resources.

Water Services staff traditionally maintained and managed the flood risk associated with the surface water network of streams, rivers, culverts and pipe network throughout the County. Given that this staff complement is either transferring to Uisce Éireann or to vacant roles within the Council, it is necessary for the Council to put a plan and fund in place for the delivery of this service going forward. Budget 2025 provides for an additional 20 staff.

B05 Public Lighting

Public Lighting Section manages and maintains 15,144 public lights within the County, in urban, industrial and rural areas, regional and local roads, as well as residential developments that have been taken in charge.

Public Lighting remains the single largest consumer of power for the Council and the costs associated with same continue to increase, arising from both higher maintenance costs associated with ageing stock, as well as increased consumption costs as more private estates are taken in charge.

Although 2024 saw a reduction in energy prices, due to the uncertainty in supply, the market remains volatile which creates uncertainty for 2025. Energy-saving measures commenced in 2015 and have been ongoing since, with the replacement of lamps with higher efficiency LED lamps under the maintenance programme. In response to the ongoing inflated energy costs, opportunities where savings can be made are being investigated such as trimming (reducing the lighting hours) at suitable locations and retrofit of floodlights to LEDs.

Clare County Council continues its engagement in the South-Western Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project and has agreed to use loan funding for the capital investment required to undertake the project. As per current programmes, 2025 shall see the completion of retrofitting of lights in Clare in addition to the necessary infrastructure works to upgrade the network in some locations. Budget 2025 provides for this loan finance.

The OGP Frameworks for Metered and Unmetered electricity supplies are also being utilised by Clare County Council to procure competitive energy rates.

The annual budget provides for the cost of public lighting including maintenance. The signing of a new maintenance contract in 2024 following the exit from the market of the appointed maintenance contractor for Clare has led to increased rates accounting for inflation on the rates in the previous contract being set back in 2019. However, the completion of works under the PLEEP project shall result in a reduction of the works required under the maintenance contract. The total budget for public light energy costs including repairs and maintenance is €2.4m.

B06 Traffic Management Improvement and B07 Road Safety Engineering Improvement

In 2024 a total of €529k was allocated to Clare County Council to enable safety improvement works to be carried out on various roads. The 2025 budget has provided a similar allocation.

B08 Road Safety Promotion/Education

Budget 2025 provides €320k for the provision of the School Warden service and the promotion of road safety.

B09 Car Parking

The Transportation Department is responsible for the maintenance and management of parking areas throughout the County.

Parking bye-laws and pay & display facilities are currently in operation in Ennis, Kilrush, Kilkee, Lahinch and Doolin. A review of parking bye-laws in the County is still ongoing and the outcome of this will inform future budgets. Provision has been made in this service for additional parking income from The Cloister car park.

B10 Support to Roads Capital Programme

The Roads Capital Programme will be concentrated on the roads infrastructural improvements required for the implementation of the Council's strategy, including:

- Ennistymon Inner Relief Road
- Shannon Bridge Crossing
- Shannon Airport Access Road

Costs associated with developing these projects are primarily borne in the revenue budget.

Sub-Service Description – Division B

Service / Sub-Service	Description of Activities	
B01	National Primary Road - Maintenance & Improvement	
B0101	National Primary Roads	Maintenance of National Primary Roads
B02	National Secondary Road - Maintenance & Improvement	
B0204	NS – Winter Maintenance	Sanding & gritting of Secondary Roads over winter months.
B0207	NS - General Improvement Works	General improvement works to National Secondary Roads.
B03	Regional Road - Maintenance & Improvement	
B0301	Regional Road Surface Dressing	Maintenance and improvement of Regional Roads Surface Dressing.
B0304	Regional Road Bridge Maintenance	Survey of Local & Regional Bridges.
B0305	Regional Road General Maintenance Works	Maintenance of Regional Roads & footpath network including grass cutting, guardrails, safety fences, road signs, etc.
B04	Local Road - Maintenance & Improvement	
B0401	Local Road Surface Dressing	Maintenance and improvement of Local Roads Surface Dressing
B0402	Local Rd Surface Rest/Road Reconstruction/Overlay	Local Roads overlay, road restoration and reconstruction programmes.
B0405	Local Roads General Maintenance Works	Maintenance of Local Roads & footpath network including grass cutting, guardrails, safety fences, road signs, etc. Also Bridge Maintenance Programme, Footpath Programme & Road Restoration Programme.
B0406	Local Roads General Improvement Works	
B05	Public Lighting	
B0501	Public Lighting Operating Costs	Costs of public lighting including energy, general maintenance & repairs. Also includes costs associated with the LED lantern replacement programme.
B06	Traffic Management Improvement	
B0699	Service Support Costs	Support costs associated with Traffic Management Improvement programmes
B07	Road Safety Engineering Improvement	
B0701	Low Cost Remedial Measures	Costs associated with the implementation & delivery of low cost remedial measures.
B08	Road Safety Promotion & Education	
B0801	School Wardens	Costs associated with the operation of school warden service at various locations.
B0802	Publicity & Promotion Road Safety	Costs in relation to road safety publicity & promotion which includes cycle training programme in schools.

Service / Sub-Service		Description of Activities
B09	Car Parking	
B0901	Maintenance & Management of Car Parks	Maintenance of car park meters, barriers, surfacing, signs & lines. Also income from off-street parking.
B0902	Operation of Street Parking	Ongoing provision of on-street parking including the purchase, installation & maintenance of on-street parking meters, signs & lines. Also cash collection and issuing permits.
B0903	Parking Enforcement	Warden service, court costs & parking enforcement
B10	Support to Roads Capital Programme	
B1001	Administration of Roads Capital Programme	Costs associated with support provided for the Roads capital programme.

Table F - Expenditure

Division B - Road Transport & Safety

Expenditure by Service and Sub-Service	2025		2024	
	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €
B0204 NS - Winter Maintenance	129,406	129,406	159,500	129,406
B0206 NS - General Maintenance	237,009	237,009	237,009	237,009
B0207 NS - General Improvement Works	2,367,800	2,367,800	2,367,800	2,367,800
B0299 Service Support Costs	380,557	380,557	364,273	364,273
B02 NS Road - Maintenance and Improvement	3,114,772	3,114,772	3,128,582	3,098,488
B0301 Regional Roads Surface Dressing	565,370	565,370	565,370	565,370
B0302 Reg Rd Surface Rest/Road Reconstruction/Overlay	4,717,800	4,717,800	4,401,800	5,660,858
B0304 Regional Road Bridge Maintenance	615,000	615,000	612,000	615,000
B0305 Regional Road General Maintenance Works	3,039,000	3,039,000	3,043,500	3,039,000
B0399 Service Support Costs	1,316,780	1,316,780	1,239,102	1,239,102
B03 Regional Road - Maintenance and Improvement	10,253,950	10,253,950	9,861,772	11,119,330
B0401 Local Road Surface Dressing	2,859,042	2,859,042	2,862,157	2,862,157
B0402 Local Rd Surface Rest/Road Reconstruction/Overlay	9,914,550	9,914,550	9,914,550	10,233,571
B0405 Local Roads General Maintenance Works	3,806,454	3,806,454	2,828,973	2,741,109
B0406 Local Roads General Improvement Works	1,282,000	1,282,000	1,440,000	1,282,000
B0499 Service Support Costs	6,188,641	6,188,641	6,268,331	6,268,331
B04 Local Road - Maintenance and Improvement	24,050,687	24,050,687	23,314,011	23,387,168
B0501 Public Lighting Operating Costs	2,397,080	2,397,080	2,223,916	2,223,916
B0599 Service Support Costs	93,276	93,276	89,332	89,332
B05 Public Lighting	2,490,356	2,490,356	2,313,248	2,313,248
B0699 Service Support Costs	202,296	202,296	190,877	190,877
B06 Traffic Management Improvement	202,296	202,296	190,877	190,877
B0701 Low Cost Remedial Measures	614,200	614,200	531,800	614,200
B0799 Service Support Costs	108,820	108,820	103,930	103,930
B07 Road Safety Engineering Improvement	723,020	723,020	635,730	718,130
B0801 School Wardens	273,979	273,979	280,792	280,792
B0802 Publicity and Promotion Road Safety	46,073	46,073	32,756	45,956
B0899 Service Support Costs	190,892	190,892	179,358	179,358
B08 Road Safety Promotion & Education	510,944	510,944	492,906	506,106

Table F - Expenditure

Division B - Road Transport & Safety

Expenditure by Service and Sub-Service	2025		2024	
	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €
B0901 Maintenance and Management of Car Parks	352,500	352,500	136,500	136,500
B0902 Operation of Street Parking	91,549	91,549	95,378	95,378
B0903 Parking Enforcement	485,012	485,012	463,877	463,877
B0999 Service Support Costs	325,140	325,140	304,743	304,743
B09 Car Parking	1,254,201	1,254,201	1,000,498	1,000,498
B1001 Administration of Roads Capital Programme	406,678	406,678	285,365	285,365
B1099 Service Support Costs	832,636	832,636	782,240	782,240
B10 Support to Roads Capital Prog	1,239,314	1,239,314	1,067,605	1,067,605
Division B Total	43,839,540	43,839,540	42,005,229	43,401,450

Table F - Income

Division B - Road Transport & Safety

	2025		2024	
	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €
Income by Source				
Government Grants & Subsidies				
TII Transport Infrastructure Ireland	2,915,546	2,915,546	2,965,640	2,915,546
Transport	23,367,700	23,367,700	23,045,464	24,629,779
Rural & Community Development	1,210,000	1,210,000	1,368,000	1,210,000
Total Government Grants & Subsidies	27,493,246	27,493,246	27,379,104	28,755,325
Goods & Services				
Parking Fines & Charges	1,602,789	1,602,789	1,386,789	1,386,789
Superannuation	292,707	292,707	292,707	292,707
Other income	387,400	387,400	387,400	387,400
Total Goods & Services	2,282,896	2,282,896	2,066,896	2,066,896
Division B Total	29,776,142	29,776,142	29,446,000	30,822,221

A circular inset image showing a close-up of a water tap with a stream of water flowing from it. The background is blurred, suggesting an indoor setting like a kitchen or bathroom.

DIVISION C

Summary

Clare County Council holds responsibility for the Rural Water Programme with the responsibility for municipal water and wastewater treatment now resting with Uisce Éireann.

The Rural Water Programme includes the management of projects involving new or upgrading of Group Water and Sewerage Schemes under the Multi-Annual Rural Water Programme. The programme also provides grants for domestic bored wells under a devolved programme. Clare County Council also facilitates and compiles the submissions for taking-in-charge applications to Uisce Éireann for Group Water and Sewerage Schemes. Funding for these continues to be provided by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

C01 Water Supply / C02 Wastewater Treatment / C03 Collection of Water and Wastewater Charges and C06 Support to Water Capital Programme

Since 20th September 2023, Uisce Éireann are in charge of the management and direction of the delivery of water services under the terms of the Master Co-Operation Agreement. The Council will continue to support Uisce Éireann in the delivery of this function until the end of 2026 in line with the Master Co-operation Agreement. Costs incurred by the Council in the provision of this support service are recouped in full.

The new agreement signed by this Council captures the arrangements for payment by U for direct water services related costs. These costs have reduced by circa €1.6m for 2025 versus 2024 which reflects the costs borne directly by UÉ. Service support costs are no longer being funded by UÉ but directly from DHLGH.

C04 Public Conveniences

Provision has been made for the continued operation, maintenance and cleaning of public conveniences.

C05 Admin of Group and Private Installations and C08 Local Authority Sanitary Services

Clare County Council maintains its statutory function for Group Water and Sewage Schemes and bored well grants. Expenditure under this heading includes the anticipated total to be paid in operational subsidies to Group Schemes which is recouped in full from the DHLGH. Budget 2025 has provided €2.25m in respect of this grant.

With effect from 1st January 2024, Uisce Éireann have been assigned responsibility for the remediation of Developer Provided Infrastructure (DPI). It is not the intention that Uisce Éireann will immediately take charge of any roles that are currently being undertaken at present by the developers, owners and users of DPI infrastructure. Any such current operating and maintenance arrangements for each site should remain in place pro-tem. The role of Uisce Éireann will be to continue any roles undertaken by Local Authorities to maintain and operate such infrastructure.

Sub-Service Description – Division C

Service / Sub-Service		Description of Activities
C01	Water Supply	
C0101	Water Plants & Networks	Maintenance & Operation of the water networks- Costs associated with the Master Co-takeover Operation Agreement (MCA) for water services provided by Uisce Éireann.
C02	Wastewater Treatment	
C0201	Waste Plants And Networks	Operation maintenance of the drainage network- Costs associated with the Master Co-takeover Operation Agreement (MCA) for water services provided by Uisce Éireann
C03	Collection of Water and Wastewater Charges	
C0301	Debt Management Water and Wastewater	Collection, management of water and wastewater charges - Costs associated with the Master Co-takeover Operation Agreement (MCA) for water services provided by Uisce Éireann.
C04	Public Conveniences	
C0401	Public Conveniences	Provision, maintenance & cleaning of Public Conveniences.
C05	Administration of Group & Private Installations	
C0504	Group Water Scheme Subsidies	Well grants/group schemes.
C06	Support of Water Capital Programme	
C0601	Technical Design & Supervision	Water and Drainage Capital projects- Costs associated with the Master Co-takeover Operation Agreement (MCA) for water services provided by Uisce Éireann..
C08	Local Authority Water & Sanitary Services	
C0801	Local Authority Water & Wastewater	Costs associated with Surface Water Drainage & flood alleviation.

Table F - Expenditure

Division C - Water Services

Expenditure by Service and Sub-Service	2025		2024	
	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €
C0101 Water Plants & Networks	3,656,596	3,656,596	4,519,684	4,519,684
C0199 Service Support Costs	2,242,162	2,242,162	2,254,285	2,254,285
C01 Water Supply	5,898,758	5,898,758	6,773,969	6,773,969
C0201 Waste Plants and Networks	1,564,259	1,564,259	1,891,727	1,891,727
C0299 Service Support Costs	1,580,455	1,580,455	1,605,039	1,605,039
C02 Waste Water Treatment	3,144,714	3,144,714	3,496,766	3,496,766
C0301 Debt Management Water and Waste Water	223,595	223,595	285,004	285,004
C0399 Service Support Costs	188,876	188,876	174,449	174,449
C03 Collection of Water and Waste Water Charges	412,471	412,471	459,453	459,453
C0401 Operation and Maintenance of Public Conveniences	260,771	260,771	271,000	271,000
C0499 Service Support Costs	9,292	9,292	10,166	10,166
C04 Public Conveniences	270,063	270,063	281,166	281,166
C0504 Group Water Scheme Subsidies	2,251,000	2,251,000	2,251,000	2,251,000
C0599 Service Support Costs	426,317	426,317	420,449	420,449
C05 Admin of Group and Private Installations	2,677,317	2,677,317	2,671,449	2,671,449
C0601 Technical Design and Supervision	339,622	339,622	481,760	481,760
C0699 Service Support Costs	243,893	243,893	229,397	229,397
C06 Support to Water Capital Programme	583,515	583,515	711,157	711,157
C0801 Local Authority Water Services	143,596	143,596	208,242	208,242
C0802 Local Authorities Sanitary Services	209,000	209,000	212,000	212,000
C0899 Local Authority Service Support Costs	71,541	71,541	67,453	67,453
C08 Local Authority Water and Sanitary Services	424,137	424,137	487,695	487,695
Division C Total	13,410,975	13,410,975	14,881,655	14,881,655

Table F - Income

Division C - Water Services				
Income by Source	2025		2024	
	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €
Government Grants & Subsidies				
Housing, Local Government & Heritage	5,618,603	5,618,603	5,589,792	5,589,792
Total Government Grants & Subsidies	5,618,603	5,618,603	5,589,792	5,589,792
Goods & Services				
Uisce Éireann	6,367,795	6,367,795	7,994,321	7,994,321
Superannuation	226,462	226,462	226,462	226,462
Other income	4,400	4,400	4,400	4,400
Total Goods & Services	6,598,657	6,598,657	8,225,183	8,225,183
Division C Total	12,217,260	12,217,260	13,814,975	13,814,975



**DIVISION
D**

Summary

Division D has a broad remit and makes provision for the activities of Forward Planning Infrastructure, Planning Infrastructure, Development Management, Tourism, Community and Social Inclusion, Economic Development and Enterprise to include The Local Enterprise Office, Conservation, Heritage and Biodiversity.

D01 - Forward Planning

The Forward Planning Section's primary focus is on planning policy and active land management.

The areas that will require the greatest attention and workload from a forward planning perspective in 2025 under statutory requirements include on-going monitoring and reporting on the Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029, preparation of the Shannon Town and Environs Local Area Plan 2024-2030 and Local Transport Plan, commencement and preparation of the Ennis Town and Environs Local Area Plan 2025-2031, meeting statutory requirements associated with the Residential Zoned Land Tax, Vacant Sites Levy and Marine Spatial Planning.

D02 - Development Management

The number of planning applications received to date in 2024 is 767. Determinations have been made on 655 planning applications, of which 598 were granted and 57 were refused. Of the 42 applications determined by An Bord Pleanála, 27 decisions of the Clare County Council were upheld.

The introduction of e-planning has streamlined and improved efficiencies in the planning process by reducing the potential for invalid applications and delivering on the Government strategy to move more public services online. To date in 2024, 461 E-planning applications

and 1,600 planning submissions have been made online.

D03 – Enforcement

Enforcement activity levels remain consistent with those of 2023.

To date in 2024, a total of 175 enforcement complaints have been received. Of these complaints, 76 were deemed to require action and enforcement files were set up. It is expected that this level of activity will continue for the remainder of the year and into 2025. These new complaints vary from significant to minor breaches of the planning code. In addition, there are a significant number of legacy files that remain open and under investigation.

D05 - Tourism Development and Promotion

As part of the delivery of key objectives in the Clare Tourism Strategy 2030, the Tourism Department of Clare County Council in 2025 will focus on the delivery of:

- Facilitating the Clare Tourism Advisory Forum in the continuation of promoting the destination of Clare locally, nationally and internationally throughout the seasons. This will be delivered through a series of targeted promotional campaigns throughout the year.
- The positioning of Clare as a destination to be recognised nationally and internationally for its commitment to responsible tourism and sustainability. This will be achieved through the work programme of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) Green Team in partnership with Atlantic Technological University (ATU) Sligo in achieving established Earthcheck accreditation.
- Working with local stakeholders and colleagues on a cross-Directorate basis to identify and address key traffic management concerns within north-west Clare.

- Retention of the international UNESCO status through the development of a renewed 5-year Management Plan for the Burren and Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark.
- A return on investment and ensuring the sustained viability of key West Clare attractions, in particular Loop Head Lighthouse Visitor Centre under the remit of the Tourism Department. Attractions will be operated to ensure the provision of local employment whilst also proving to be a collaborative partner to the neighbouring tourism industry.
- Tourism Facilities Operations: the budget for 2025 continues to recognise the income and expenditure from the Cliffs of Moher Visitor Experience and Loop Head together Shannon Heritage sites - Bunratty Castle and Folk Park, Craggaunowen Bronze Age Park, Knappogue Castle and Gardens and the retail unit at the Cliffs of Moher Experience all of which are now managed, developed and promoted by Clare County Council and its subsidiary.

D0601 - Rural Development

The Rural Directorate is responsible for functions relating to Rural and Community Development, Corporate Services, Library, Cultural Services and the Arts. The Rural Work Programme is broad and varied with communities at the core of our service provision as follows:

- Implementation of the Clare Rural Development Strategy 2030
- Community Capacity Building
- Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) Work (plans, programmes and funding opportunities) including:
 - Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP)
- Local Economic and Community Plan 2030 (LECP)
 - Local Enhancement Programme (LEP)

Healthy Clare

- National and Local Funding Schemes including:
 - Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF)
 - Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Projects
 - CLÁR
 - Town and Village Renewal Projects
 - Clare Local Area Grants Scheme (CLAGS)
- Clare Age Friendly Strategy
- Community Playground and Burial Grounds
- Pride of Place and Tidy Towns Supports

D0603 – Social Inclusion

Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP)

Under the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), Rural Development are responsible for the co-ordination and monitoring of the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) through the programme implementors contracted by the LCDC. The programme tackles poverty and social exclusion at a local level through engagement and partnerships between disadvantaged individuals, community organisations and public sector agencies. Budget 2025 allows for the same level of support in accordance with the new SICAP programme 2023-2029.

Ukrainian Services/Local Authority Integration Team

During 2024, the crisis in Ukraine continued to be felt across our communities with solidarity and co-operation forming the backbone of the response in Clare. Multi-agency responses at all levels aligned with community efforts and volunteering meant that many services were enhanced and that message and outcomes were understood at local level.

As the year progressed, it became clear through an exercise of accommodation consolidation by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) that the numbers of Ukrainian beneficiaries of temporary protection had begun to reduce in the County. At the same time, global geo-politics, economics and climate change has impacted on the numbers of people on the move internationally. In Ireland, those seeking international protection increased dramatically and in Clare, this population adjustment also became apparent as new centres for international protection opened and existing centres signed new contracts with the International Protection Accommodation Service (IPAS). There is a shifting dynamic in our County's story of migration.

In 2024, the Local Authority Integration Team (LAIT) was established in Clare County Council with a Co-ordinator and Support Team. Based in the Social Directorate, this new team works alongside the Ukrainian Services Team and on a cross-Directorate, cross-agency basis throughout Clare. LAITs have been set up in all Local Authorities. Their purpose is to help co-ordinate the different kinds of support available for people who are applying for international protection, refugees and others in similar situations. LAIT also continues to promote inclusion and integration at community level through the facilitation of community clinics open to all members of the community.

As we look towards 2025, the LAIT are leading Community Integration Forums at both a countywide and regional level with strong levels of engagement. The Forums play a key role in strengthening working relationships with our partner agencies such as the Clare Immigrant Support Centre, Clare Local Development Company (CLDC), TUSLA – Child and Family Agency, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB), An Garda Síochána and the Health Service Executive (HSE) to name a few.

It is proposed to develop a Migrant Integration Strategy into 2025 which will be aligned to the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) County Sport Plan and the Outdoor Recreation Plan. An Integration Signposting Engagement Document was commissioned in 2024 that will provide a stocktake of achievements, baselines, issues, challenges and opportunities to date and this will inform the forthcoming Clare Migrant Integration Strategy.

Our Ukrainian Services Team will continue to work with homeowners and Ukrainian beneficiaries through the "Offer a Home" Scheme. Clare County Council continues to support the national Ukrainian response and Budget 2025 for this service is cost-neutral assuming full recoupment of all associated costs.

D0609 - Digital hubs

DigiClare is an initiative of Clare County Council which provides a county-wide network of flexible and affordable hot desks and co-working spaces where individuals and small teams can work.

The network enables Clare residents and visitors to work locally in a fresh, dynamic and safe environment that provides global connection through high-speed broadband.

All DigiClare Hubs include individual hot desks and highspeed broadband.

Other facilities, which can vary by location, include co-working desks, private workspace units, privacy and zoom booths, board rooms, meeting rooms and training rooms.

DigiClare is also a member of the Connected Hubs Network, a Government of Ireland initiative, which offers people the opportunity to work comfortably and securely in professional environments all over Ireland.

We have 11 hubs at present, and these consist of Council-owned facilities and community hubs. DigiClare's Hubs are located at:

- Corofin, North Clare
- Cross, West Clare
- Ennis, Co. Clare
- Ennistymon, North Clare
- Feakle, East Clare
- Flagmount, East Clare
- Inagh, North Clare
- Kilrush, West Clare
- Kilkee, West Clare
- Miltown Malbay, West Clare
- Sixmilebridge, South Clare

D07 - Unfinished Housing Estates

In 2024 to date, 4 estates have been taken-in-charge with further developments being progressed through the statutory process.

A substantial programme of remedial works on existing private housing developments is being carried out to bring these developments to taking-in-charge standard. These works will significantly improve the appearance of these developments.

The Planning Department is currently monitoring 23 housing developments under construction, incorporating over 600 housing units and these developments will all be completed in the next 12-15 months.

D08 - Building Control

The Building Control Section is responsible for the enforcement of the Building Control Acts 1990-2014, and Regulations made under those Acts.

The national Building Control Management System (BCMS) website provides for the completion of a mandatory online assessment. It also allows for the online submission of applications for Fire Safety Certificates and Disability Access Certificates.

D0901 - Economic Development and Promotion

This area contains the primary Economic Development budget for Clare County Council.

The main initiatives provide economic development promotion, support of public realm works and support to businesses such as the Long-Term Vacant Property Incentive Scheme, by encouraging the re-occupation of vacant premises in commercial areas. This scheme will continue to apply in 2025.

Also for 2025, the Economic Development Strategy includes the following:

- Advance Ennis 2040 Development Strategy across various sites.
- Advance the delivery of the Kilrush Maritime Training Centre
- Advance the delivery of the One Shannon Hub proposal for Shannon Town
- Explore the opportunities for Clare County Council associated with the review/updating of the existing Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary and the further benefits associated with the preparation of a Designated Marine Area Plan for the estuary in partnership with adjoining authorities.

D0903- Twinning

During 2025, Clare County Council Twinning Committee will further enhance the established relationships of Ennis-Langenfeld and Ennis-Phoenix as well as Killaloe-New London, Wisconsin.

Following on the visit from the Lord Mayor of Birmingham in 2024 to Clare, there will be further work on the development of these economic and cultural links between both regions.

D0906- The Local Enterprise Office (LEO)

The Local Enterprise Office (LEO) is operated on an Service Level Agreement (SLA) basis on behalf of Enterprise Ireland. The LEO administers grants for micro startups and provides a range of supports and mentoring programmes for all businesses operating in the County. In 2022, the remit of the LEO was expanded to incorporate a suite of supports for

enterprises employing more than 10 people. In 2024, new supports were introduced to assist all businesses employing up to 50 people achieve cost savings by transitioning to a more sustainable and digitally-enabled operating model.

To date in 2024, 913 people have participated in our training programmes of which 113 undertook our Start Your Own Business course. 158 one-to-one mentor supports have also been provided to assist enterprises overcome specific business challenges. On the funding side, 38 enterprises have been approved funding of €476k.

The methodology for grant approval changed in 2024 with actual funding only being provided to fund actual drawdowns. This does not have a budgetary impact. Budgets for training and mentoring support are expected to be broadly similar in 2025. Additional funding will be provided to implement the new sustainability and digital supports.

The Council provides a net cost of circa €150k above Enterprise Ireland supports for this service.

D10 - Property Management

The Property Management Unit is responsible for the management of Council-owned land and management and maintenance of corporate buildings and this includes leasing and licensing for property and buildings. In addition, the grazing of lands, co-ordination of the Shannon Allotments and title and other issues that arise are dealt with by the Property Management Unit, thus ensuring good governance on property transactions.

Income arises from leasing of Council-owned properties and buildings, allotments and grazing of land. Where possible, we seek grant funding towards specialised repair works.

D11 - Heritage and Conservation Services

As part of the Forward Planning Section the primary focus on heritage, biodiversity and conservation for 2025 include:

- Facilitation of the newly formed Heritage and Biodiversity Forum
- Finalisation and implementation of the Clare County Heritage Plan 2024-2030
- Preparation of the Clare County Biodiversity Plan 2024-2030
- Delivery of grant-aided projects for Heritage, Conservation and Biodiversity

Sub-Service Description – Division D

Service / Sub-Service		Description of Activities
D01	Forward Planning	
D0101	Statutory Plans & Policy	Review of the County Development Plan & on-going preparation of Local Area Plans.
D02	Development Management	
D0201	Planning Control	Costs & income associated with the Planning process. Development management which includes E-Planning & electronic scanning of planning applications. Evaluation & reporting on roads, traffic, parking & sustainable travel aspects of planning applications done by Transportation Section.
D03	Enforcement	
D0301	Enforcement Costs	Planning enforcement costs.
D05	Tourism Development & Promotion	
D0501	Tourism Promotion	Management of Tourist & promotion and tourism initiatives. Implementation of Tourism Strategy.
D0502	Tourist Facilities Operations	Operational costs associated with management of all Tourism sites.
D06	Community & Enterprise Function	
D0601	General Community & Enterprise Expenses	Costs associated with Rural Development including Public Participation Networks, LCDC, Healthy Ireland and Age Friendly initiatives.
D0602	RAPID Costs	Costs associated with the RAPID programme
D0603	Social Inclusion	Costs associated with Social Inclusion events & activities to promote social inclusion and cultural diversity. Ukrainian Response costs.
D07	Unfinished Housing Estates	
D0701	Unfinished Housing Estates	Provision for the Taking In Charge of private housing estates.
D08	Building Control	
D0801	Building Control Inspection Costs	Building Control expenses which has associated income e.g. Commencement Notices, Disability Access Certificates.
D09	Economic Development & Promotion	
D0901	Urban and Village Renewal	Costs associated with renewal schemes.
D0903	Town Twinning	Twinning with other jurisdictions
D0905	Economic Development & Promotion	Costs associates with the promotion of Economic Development including Vacant Property grants
D0906	Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation	Administration of Local Enterprise Office on an SLA basis for Enterprise Ireland. Most of the costs associated with this service are recouped from Enterprise Ireland. Activities include processing grant applications for start-ups & micro-businesses and an extensive programme of training and mentoring which is available to all businesses.

D10	Property Management	
D1001	Property Management Costs	Management of Local Authority property portfolio including refurbishment, maintenance, leasing, security, property tax, Property Interest Register & Valuers' fees.
D11	Heritage & Conservation Services	
D1101	Heritage Services	Costs associated with the Heritage Service.
D1102	Conservation Services	Costs associated with the Conservation Service and Bio -diversity.
D1103	Conservation Grants	Grants receivable and payable for conservation projects.

Table F - Expenditure

Division D - Development Management

Expenditure by Service and Sub-Service	2025		2024	
	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €
D0101 Statutory Plans and Policy	998,996	998,996	1,037,552	993,075
D0199 Service Support Costs	577,149	577,149	545,566	545,566
D01 Forward Planning	1,576,145	1,576,145	1,583,118	1,538,641
D0201 Planning Control	1,078,987	1,078,987	1,124,952	1,074,952
D0299 Service Support Costs	935,363	935,363	860,563	860,563
D02 Development Management	2,014,350	2,014,350	1,985,515	1,935,515
D0301 Enforcement Costs	888,769	888,769	915,075	885,075
D0399 Service Support Costs	541,315	541,315	503,696	503,696
D03 Enforcement	1,430,084	1,430,084	1,418,771	1,388,771
D0501 Tourism Promotion	1,307,803	1,307,803	1,196,043	1,298,043
D0502 Tourist Facilities Operations	26,372,845	26,372,845	22,133,533	22,031,533
D0599 Service Support Costs	612,157	612,157	589,553	589,553
D05 Tourism Development and Promotion	28,292,805	28,292,805	23,919,129	23,919,129
D0601 General Community & Enterprise Expenses	2,471,499	2,471,499	2,217,106	2,217,106
D0602 RAPID Costs	79,137	79,137	64,987	64,987
D0603 Social Inclusion	1,882,320	1,882,320	2,734,740	2,734,740
D0699 Service Support Costs	1,270,370	1,270,370	1,200,249	1,200,249
D06 Community and Enterprise Function	5,703,326	5,703,326	6,217,082	6,217,082
D0701 Unfinished Housing Estates	264,331	264,331	269,723	264,723
D0799 Service Support Costs	107,854	107,854	100,733	100,733
D07 Unfinished Housing Estates	372,185	372,185	370,456	365,456
D0801 Building Control Inspection Costs	65,000	65,000	65,000	65,000
D0802 Building Control Enforcement Costs	331,662	331,662	339,621	329,621
D0899 Service Support Costs	127,270	127,270	117,709	117,709
D08 Building Control	523,932	523,932	522,330	512,330
D0901 Urban and Village Renewal	168,000	168,000	173,000	168,000
D0903 Town Twinning	33,000	33,000	33,000	33,000
D0905 Economic Development & Promotion	1,067,707	1,067,707	5,794,288	6,939,534
D0906 Local Enterprise Office	1,331,966	1,331,966	1,331,091	1,331,091
D0999 Service Support Costs	421,273	421,273	410,625	410,625
D09 Economic Development and Promotion	3,021,946	3,021,946	7,742,004	8,882,250
D1001 Property Management Costs	331,248	331,248	359,297	329,297
D1099 Service Support Costs	100,715	100,715	96,147	96,147
D10 Property Management	431,963	431,963	455,444	425,444

Table F - Expenditure

Division D - Development Management

Expenditure by Service and Sub-Service	2025		2024	
	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €
D1101 Heritage Services	79,239	79,239	79,690	79,690
D1102 Conservation Services	169,612	169,612	165,456	165,456
D1103 Conservation Grants	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000
D1199 Service Support Costs	98,537	98,537	92,612	92,612
D11 Heritage and Conservation Services	422,388	422,388	412,758	412,758
D1299 Service Support Costs	123,292	123,292	116,305	116,305
D12 Agency & Recoupable Services	123,292	123,292	116,305	116,305
Division D Total	43,912,416	43,912,416	44,742,912	45,713,681

Table F - Income

Division D - Development Management

	2025		2024	
	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €
Income by Source				
Government Grants & Subsidies				
Housing, Local Government & Heritage	1,658,538	1,658,538	1,905,070	1,905,070
Enterprise, Trade & Employment	1,283,929	1,283,929	6,238,929	7,429,175
Rural & Community Development	547,000	547,000	187,000	187,000
Other	292,083	292,083	900,000	900,000
Total Government Grants & Subsidies	3,781,550	3,781,550	9,230,999	10,421,245
Goods & Services				
Planning Fees	386,000	386,000	436,000	396,000
Superannuation	183,862	183,862	183,862	183,862
Other income	28,164,028	28,164,028	23,703,738	23,703,738
Total Goods & Services	28,733,890	28,733,890	24,323,600	24,283,600
Division D Total	32,515,440	32,515,440	33,554,599	34,704,845



**DIVISION
E**

Summary

Division E includes the operation of civic management, street cleaning, monitoring and enforcement of waste regulations, the operation of cemeteries, the cost of the fire service, lifeguards and climate change.

The 2025 work programme for the Environment Section will again be driven by an extensive regulatory framework contained in the annual Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspection (RMCEI) Plan which involves 9,795 inspections and the National Enforcement Priorities 2025-2027.

As a member of the Southern Waste Region, Clare County Council will be guided by the waste policy and objectives set out in Ireland's National Waste Policy 2020–2025 'A Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy'.

E01 - Recycling Operation and Aftercare

The 2025 budget will allow for the continued operations of the Civic Amenity Site at the Central Waste Management Facility (CWMF) in Ballyduffbeg, Inagh. In addition, the budget will also fund the green waste composting facility and the newly created wetland which will increase biodiversity at the site.

The 2025 budget will continue to support environmental monitoring and maintenance to meet licence requirements at Ballyduffbeg and the other closed landfill sites at Doora and Lisdeen.

Further efforts will continue in 2025 in applying for Certificates of Authorisation for historic closed landfills. Funding for these certificate applications, including remediation works identified, is through central government funding under the Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy 2020-2025.

E02 - Recovery and Recycling Facilities Operations

Clare County Council operates 5 Civic Amenity Sites at Scarriff, Ennis, Shannon, Lisdeen and Ballyduffbeg.

The 2025 allocation is provided to also cover the cost of servicing Clare County Council's network of 50 full-time and 4 seasonal bring banks which are situated throughout the County.

To ensure the best possible value is achieved in awarding collection contracts, all waste stream collections have been re-tendered in Q4 2023. This mini competition was run through the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) Multi Supplier Framework for the Provision of Waste Management Services.

In addition, the Recycling Service is part-funded by a combination of income which includes a Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) subvention, subsidies under the Packaging Regulations (REPAK), fees from collection of clothes, metals and batteries as well as income generated from recycling charges collected at the various amenity sites. This income will form part of the overall income review in 2025 for this Council.

E05 - Litter Management

(Education and Awareness/Anti-Litter Grant Scheme)

The Environmental and Community Wardens enforce the Litter Pollution and Waste Management Acts and other litter control measures in the County. Their duties include investigating illegal dumping, fly posting, abandoned vehicles, assisting local resident associations with clean ups and issuing fines for littering offences.

The Environmental Awareness Officer works closely with schools, community groups, residents' associations and businesses to promote environmental awareness, recycling, climate action and mitigation programmes. Across Clare, 111 schools participate in the An Taisce Green Schools Programme. Green flags were awarded to 24 schools in 2024.

The total projected fund for the Anti-Litter Grant Scheme in Clare for 2024 was €28k. This scheme is 70% grant-funded through the

Department of Communications, Climate Action and the Environment. It is anticipated a similar allocation will be received in 2025.

Clare County Council received an additional €90k in Department funding under the Anti-Dumping Initiative (ADI) which facilitates, among other projects, amnesty days at Civic Amenity Sites.

E06 - Street Cleaning

The Street Cleaning Section assists in the corporate goal of providing and maintaining a high-quality public realm by maintaining the streets of County Clare to a safe and high standard. Budget 2025 provides €2.05m for the provision of these services an increase of €100k.

E07 - Waste Regulations, Monitoring and Enforcement

The Enforcement Unit monitors and enforces compliance with waste legislation along with regulations governing air and noise pollution. Complaints in respect of illegal dumping, air pollution and noise pollution are investigated and environmental inspections are carried out. The Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications' Annual Waste Enforcement Grant to Clare County Council is €222k.

The 2025 budget reflects Community Warden resourcing which means that each Municipal District (MD) has a specific resource to address complaints. In addition, as required annually by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Clare County Council will develop and submit an Environmental Inspection Plan for 2025 (Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections - RMCEI). The 2025 budget provides for the resources considered necessary to deliver on the targets set out in this annual inspection plan as well as unplanned inspections arising from complaints received or incidents of environmental pollution.

E08 - Waste Management Planning

The first National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy was recently launched which replaced the South-Western Region Waste Management Plan. This National Plan sets out a framework for the prevention and management of waste in Ireland for the period 2024-2030. In addition, the Circular Economy and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2022 will also provide the legislative basis around waste planning. Clare County Council contribute €33k towards the operation of the Southern Region Waste Management Office annually.

E09 - Maintenance of Burial Grounds

Burial Grounds is an essential service and Clare County Council remains committed to providing an efficient and professional service.

A Burial Ground Workshop was facilitated by the Rural Development SPC recently which considered the policy, services, needs and resources required to support this function into the future. Notwithstanding the consideration of policy development around key aspects of the service, there was agreement that continued support through Burial Ground Grants was needed to support community groups in this invaluable work.

Budget 2025 provides for 2 new crews for ongoing burial grounds maintenance in East Clare and West Clare.

E1001 - Operation Costs Civil Defence

Budget 2025 provides for a contribution to the provision of this service.

Recruitment and training of volunteers continues with extensive training regimes in place to ensure that Civil Defence continues to provide support to communities throughout County Clare, and the Principal Response Agencies when tasked by An Garda Síochána, Clare County Council and the National Ambulance Service. The Civil Defence Search

and Rescue Unit took delivery of an all-weather drone in Oct 2024.

E1002 - Dangerous Structures

Dangerous structures complaints increased significantly in 2024 compared to the same period in 2023 – the complaints increased by a multiple of 3.4. This function continues to be dealt with by the Building Control Section under the Local Government (Sanitary Services) Act 1964.

Budget 2025 provides for the same budget level as previous years.

E1003 - Emergency Planning

Clare County Council maintains the essential elements of preparedness, ie. the people, plans and facilities to be ready to respond to major emergencies throughout County Clare. Budget allocation to facilitate this continues in 2025.

Senior personnel participate in Regional Steering and Working Groups on Major Emergency Management. These groups comprise of colleagues from Tipperary County Council, Limerick City & County Council, Health Service Executive, National Ambulance Service, An Garda Síochána, Irish Coastguard and the Defence Forces.

Clare County Council prepare for major emergencies by participating in large-scale multi-agency exercises. In 2024, these exercises took place in Shannon Airport and the Limerick Tunnel.

E1004 - Derelict Sites

The Property Management Unit is responsible for acting on derelict sites and significant progress has been made in this area. Currently there are 270 active files and of those, there are 67 on the Derelict Sites Register, 22 of which we have commenced Compulsory Purchase Orders. Since 2022, there are 5 properties for which the CPO process has been completed – 3 have transferred to the Housing Department and 2 have been sold.

Budget 2025 provides for the continuation of the work in this area with a particular focus on the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) Activation Programme which is a key pillar of Government Policy. In this regard, the budget provides for an additional staff member in this area of activity.

The billing of the Derelict Sites Levy which is 7% of the value of the property per annum commenced in 2024 and further properties will be valued and billed in 2025. In 2024 to date, the sum of €120k has been billed on the levy.

Engagement with property owners will continue and we will advise them of various grant options, including the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant.

E1005 - Water Safety Operation

In total, Clare County Council has 14 bathing locations which are tested in accordance with the EU Bathing Water Regulations.

It is intended to continue to direct resources towards the monitoring and management necessary to maintain the quality of our bathing waters, in addition to retaining lifeguard services to the appropriate levels for 2025.

In 2024, 47 lifeguards were employed during the summer months. Lifeguard cover was provided full-time at the 4 large beaches of Lahinch, Spanish Point, Fanore and Kilkee from 1st June 2024 through to the end of August and for weekends until the 15th Sept 2024. The service also provided weekend lifeguard cover at the remaining blue flag beaches in June, full-time cover for July and August and weekends in September.

The Lifeguard Digitisation Project, which was funded under the Public Service Innovation Fund from the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform, was developed to convert the old paper-based log-book system to digital. The ICT Department designed an android-based app and created a dashboard for supervisors of all beaches to

record and monitor data in a more efficient and co-ordinated way. Lifeguards can now report incidents in real-time allowing for faster response times and more efficient management of beach safety

E11 - Operation of Fire Service

2024 has seen a 19% increase in emergency callouts throughout the County on the same period last year. Clare County Council will continue to implement the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) proposals for the Retained Fire Service, which will involve the recruitment and training of personnel across the County.

In late 2024, Clare County Council will take delivery of a new Class B Fire Appliance which will be based at Ennis Fire Station. A 2-bay facility at Kilrush Fire Station including climate action measures such as PV panels and rainwater harvesting along with refurbishment works to the station has been completed. Two new vans for Killaloe and Kilrush Fire Stations have been delivered to each station. Funding was provided for all of the above via Capital Grant Aid by the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management.

Funding has also been approved to carry out significant update works to the Emergency Tender at Ennis Fire Station.

Payments to other fire authorities is included in this service. Limerick City and County Council call out charges have increase by circa €50k for Budget 2025.

E12 - Fire Prevention

Fire Safety Certificate applications for new construction works to date have increased by 3% on the same period in 2023.

The Fire Service received 72 notifications for licence applications, eg. public dance licences, transfer licences, etc to date in 2024.

Fire Service personnel continued to roll out the Community Fire Safety Programme. This involves carrying out home fire safety checks

and installing smoke detectors where required in the homes of elderly people and those living in isolation throughout the County.

E13 - Water Quality, Air and Noise Pollution

The Environment Department makes provision in its' budget for costs related to water and air quality and strategic noise mapping plans for the County as part of regional and national plans.

The Water Pollution Control Section monitors water quality in the County's streams, carries out domestic wastewater treatment inspections, farm inspections and inspections of domestic and commercial properties for wrongly connected foul sewer pipes to surface waters. Pollution events are also investigated.

One of the key goals is the River Basin Management Plan 3rd cycle 2022-2027 which prioritises the management of water as a resource. The Environment Section operates a Water Scientific Services Team and Laboratory and Technical Support Team working on drinking water, bathing water, shellfish waters plus river and lake management.

In addition, a membership fee is paid annually to the Shannon Estuary Anti-Pollution Team (SEAPT) of €14k. Membership of SEAPT is extremely important to prevent and mitigate pollution incidences in the Shannon Estuary and adjoining coastal counties.

E15 - Climate Change Support

The Climate Action Section within the Physical Directorate is engaged in all aspects of climate action across the organisation. This includes supporting each Directorate to achieve their climate targets but also creating awareness and building capacity within our communities across County Clare.

The Climate Action Plan was adopted by the Council in February 2024. Whilst its' focus is towards the 2030 timeline, its' ultimate aim is to work towards the National Strategic Objective which is "to achieve a competitive, low-carbon, climate-resilient and

environmentally sustainable economy by 2050”.

Externally, the Council is committed to working with the Climate Action Regional Office (CARO), Atlantic Seaboard South who will provide guidance and support on how climate change adaptation and mitigation measures can be implemented in County Clare.

The Community Climate Action Programme will begin implementation in 2024. A fully funded scheme, the Climate Action Team will support communities by implementing place-based climate action focusing on diverse themes from energy, biodiversity to circular economy.

The Climate Action Team currently consists of a Climate Action Co-Ordinator, Energy Manager, Climate Action Officer, Community Climate Action Officer & Graduate Climate Action Officer. This budget provides for support to the Climate Action Team. However, mainstreaming climate action across all Directorates is key going forward. Therefore, all budgets have climate change responsibility embedded.

Agency & Recoupable Services

The Limerick Clare Energy Agency is a shared resource between Clare County Council and Limerick City and County Council to play a major role in the areas of:

- Energy Management
- Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation
- Renewable Energy
- Sustainable Communities

The agency continues to develop the ISO 50001 Energy Management System, energy awareness initiatives, energy target reductions and efficiency operating procedures.

In addition, the agency aids the Planning Department and other sections in the areas of energy efficient design, strategic energy and emissions analysis and rural and community energy awareness.

Sub-Service Description – Division E

Service / Sub-Service		Description of Activities
E01	Recycling Operation & Aftercare	
E0101	Recycling Operations	Costs associated with operation of countywide Recycling sites
E0103	Recycling Aftercare Costs	Remediation of retired Recycling sites.
E02	Recovery & Recycling Facilities Operations	
E0201	Recycling Facilities Operations	Costs & income associated recycling center's including operation of the facility.
E0202	Bring Centre's Operations	Costs associated with Bring Banks. Provision of CCTV to prevent illegal dumping and waste recycling costs.
E05	Litter Management	
E0501	Litter Warden Service	Litter Warden Service & litter enforcement costs.
E0502	Litter Control Initiatives	Litter Warden service control initiatives.
E0503	Environmental Awareness Services	Costs including Green Schools, Tidy Districts, Environmental Awareness Programmes, Green Business & Environment Grants.
E06	Street Cleaning	
E0601	Operation of Street Cleaning Service	Costs of operating a road sweeping, litter bin emptying, gully cleaning, weed control service, collection of illegally dumped material and laneway cleaning.
E07	Waste Regulations, Monitoring & Enforcement	
E0702	Enforcement of Waste Regulations	Enforcement of Environmental Regulations
E08	Waste Management Planning	
E0801	Waste Management Plan	Supports for Regional Waste Office.
E09	Maintenance of Burial Grounds	
E0901	Maintenance of Burial Grounds	Maintenance of burial grounds.
E10	Safety of Structures & Places	
E1001	Operation Costs Civil Defence	Operation of the Civil Defence.
E1002	Dangerous Buildings	Making dangerous structures safe.
E1003	Emergency Planning	Preparation & implementation of Major Emergency Plan.
E1004	Derelict Sites	Costs associated with management of derelict sites.
E1005	Water Safety Operation	Provision of lifeguards & equipment at beaches & water safety initiatives.
Service / Sub-Service		Description of Activities
E11	Operation of Fire Service	
E1101	Operation of Fire Brigade Service	Operation of the Fire Service.
E1103	Fire Services Training	Costs associated with training to Fire Services
E12	Fire Prevention	
E1201	Fire Safety Control Cert Costs	Fire Safety Certs income and expenditure.
E1202	Fire Prevention and Education	Costs for prevention and education initiatives
E1203	Inspection/Monitoring of Commercial Facilities	Cost associated with inspection, security, and monitoring of commercial facilities
E13	Water Quality, Air & Noise Pollution	
E1301	Water Quality Management	Costs associated with water quality including testing.

E15	Climate Change & Flooding	
E1501	Climate Change Support	Implementation of Climate Change Strategy Agency & Recoupable Services

Table F - Expenditure

Division E - Environmental Services

Expenditure by Service and Sub-Service	2025		2024	
	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €
E0101 Landfill Operations	717,995	717,995	922,434	922,434
E0103 Landfill Aftercare Costs.	188,189	188,189	169,170	169,170
E0199 Service Support Costs	215,634	215,634	202,431	202,431
E01 Landfill Operation and Aftercare	1,121,818	1,121,818	1,294,035	1,294,035
E0201 Recycling Facilities Operations	1,807,833	1,807,833	1,753,527	1,753,527
E0202 Bring Centres Operations	231,800	231,800	231,800	231,800
E0204 Other Recycling Services	-	-	-	-
E0299 Service Support Costs	588,848	588,848	570,496	570,496
E02 Recovery & Recycling Facilities Operations	2,628,481	2,628,481	2,555,823	2,555,823
E0501 Litter Warden Service	64,613	64,613	65,804	65,804
E0502 Litter Control Initiatives	320,086	320,086	247,256	247,256
E0503 Environmental Awareness Services	326,883	326,883	287,393	287,393
E0599 Service Support Costs	554,360	554,360	482,048	482,048
E05 Litter Management	1,265,942	1,265,942	1,082,501	1,082,501
E0601 Operation of Street Cleaning Service	2,048,946	2,048,946	1,962,138	1,962,138
E0699 Service Support Costs	464,671	464,671	435,285	435,285
E06 Street Cleaning	2,513,617	2,513,617	2,397,423	2,397,423
E0701 Monitoring of Waste Regs (incl Private Landfills)	-	-	-	-
E0702 Enforcement of Waste Regulations	430,186	430,186	415,056	415,056
E0799 Service Support Costs	267,349	267,349	256,336	256,336
E07 Waste Regulations, Monitoring and Enforcement	697,535	697,535	671,392	671,392
E0801 Waste Management Plan	147,538	147,538	148,076	148,076
E0899 Service Support Costs	90,253	90,253	80,518	80,518
E08 Waste Management Planning	237,791	237,791	228,594	228,594
E0901 Maintenance of Burial Grounds	334,614	334,614	312,751	322,751
E0999 Service Support Costs	346,107	346,107	231,246	231,246
E09 Maintenance of Burial Grounds	680,721	680,721	543,997	553,997
E1001 Operation Costs Civil Defence	305,459	305,459	306,246	306,246
E1002 Dangerous Buildings	34,967	34,967	44,835	34,835
E1003 Emergency Planning	117,691	117,691	114,491	114,491
E1004 Derelict Sites	371,854	371,854	257,377	257,377
E1005 Water Safety Operation	484,671	484,671	484,877	484,877
E1099 Service Support Costs	382,183	382,183	371,628	371,628
E10 Safety of Structures and Places	1,696,825	1,696,825	1,579,454	1,569,454

Table F - Expenditure

Division E - Environmental Services

Expenditure by Service and Sub-Service	2025		2024	
	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €
E1101 Operation of Fire Brigade Service	6,509,666	6,509,666	5,728,011	5,767,011
E1103 Fire Services Training	333,000	333,000	333,000	333,000
E1199 Service Support Costs	1,356,368	1,356,368	1,334,865	1,334,865
E11 Operation of Fire Service	8,199,034	8,199,034	7,395,876	7,434,876
E1201 Fire Safety Control Cert Costs	7,500	7,500	7,500	7,500
E1202 Fire Prevention and Education	564,864	564,864	508,435	508,435
E1203 Inspection & Monitoring of Commercial Facilities	18,000	18,000	18,000	18,000
E1299 Service Support Costs	175,164	175,164	162,463	162,463
E12 Fire Prevention	765,528	765,528	696,398	696,398
E1301 Water Quality Management	796,883	796,883	721,174	721,174
E1399 Service Support Costs	276,572	276,572	264,103	264,103
E13 Water Quality, Air and Noise Pollution	1,073,455	1,073,455	985,277	985,277
E1501 Climate Change and Flooding	395,166	395,166	287,718	287,718
E1599 Service Support Costs	93,423	93,423	87,844	87,844
E15 Climate Change and Flooding	488,589	488,589	375,562	375,562
Division E Total	21,369,336	21,369,336	19,806,332	19,845,332

Table F - Income

Division E - Environmental Services

Income by Source	2025		2024	
	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €
Government Grants & Subsidies				
Housing, Local Government & Heritage	2,206,580	2,206,580	1,501,584	1,501,584
Defence	118,677	118,677	118,677	118,677
Environment, Climate & Communications	219,360	219,360	183,887	183,887
Other	97,000	97,000	97,000	97,000
Total Government Grants & Subsidies	2,641,617	2,641,617	1,901,148	1,901,148
Goods & Services				
Recycling Charges	518,000	518,000	493,000	506,000
Fire Charges	445,000	445,000	405,000	445,000
Superannuation	167,644	167,644	167,644	167,644
Local Authority Contributions	84,000	84,000	84,000	84,000
Other income	752,000	752,000	717,000	727,000
Total Goods & Services	1,966,644	1,966,644	1,866,644	1,929,644
Division E Total	4,608,261	4,608,261	3,767,792	3,830,792

DIVISION

F



Summary

This Division incorporates a wide range of services designed to provide and maintain high quality amenities, sporting and cultural activities. Included in this division is libraries, parks, beaches, sports, community development and arts.

F01 – Leisure Facilities Operation

The budget for leisure facilities operation is used to support the Active Ennis Leisure Complex - a complete indoor health and fitness arena providing a 25m pool, children's pool and gym-based activities for all individuals and clubs in Ennis and across the County.

Activities in the pool area include the following:

- Primary schools lessons
- Secondary schools swim program
- Weekend and weekday Swimming Lesson Program with more than 1100 participants
- Aqua Aerobics
- Swim club (11 sessions per week)
- Masters Swim Club (2 sessions per week)
- Group hire (Clare Water Safety, Clare Pony Club, Ennis Sub-Aqua Club, Underwater Hockey, etc)
- Facilitating Clare Sport Partnership Swim Programs
- Hosting Lifeguard Instructor and Swim Teacher National Training Courses
- Hosting National Community Games and Swim Galas.

Weekly classes in our studio include Tai Chi, Pilates, Yoga and chair exercise.

Budgets in this area also includes contributions to external bodies leisure facilities. Clare County Council makes a provision annually in its revenue budget to assist:

- Shannon Swimming and Leisure Centre
- Lahinch Leisure Centre
- Kilkee Waterworld

F02 Operation of Library and Archival Service

The budget supports the maintenance and upkeep of 15 libraries throughout the County (9 full-time and 6 part-time). The branches are strategically placed across the County. The strong physical presence of a network of branches within each Municipal District (MD) with extensive opening hours catering for all age groups allows for the provision a wide range of services that are a valuable resource in terms of culture, heritage, literacy and education.

The National Library Strategy 2023-2027 “The Library is the Place: Information, Recreation, Inspiration” and the Clare Library Development Plan (Charting the Future – the hybrid library 2023-2027) both influence the programming and development of the library service on an annual basis. The 3 broad themes of Reading and Learning, Spaces and Buildings and Culture and Community adopted in the local plan set the guidelines for development of the service moving forward.

Additional to this, the ALL Literacy Strategy and the Creative Ireland Strategy both advance the co-ordination of programmes locally in line with national standards and will continue into 2025.

Key to library development in 2025 is the opening of the much-anticipated new library for Ennis. This heralds a new era for library provision in the County. The branch which will operate over 2 floors and consists of distinct areas for children/teenagers and adult members of the community. The Local Studies Centre which is a reference library will be housed in the new building and will showcase the historic Clare collection, genealogical resources and all aspects of Clare history. Budget 2025 has provided an additional €700k, including loan charges, for the operation and maintenance of this new development.

The library is technologically advanced and will operate as both a “MOL” (My Open library) offering opening times outside of traditional

hours and as a “gigabit” library offering access to high-speed broadband, digital equipment and ample study, meeting and research spaces. It is anticipated that there will be a surge in new library members and a re-discovery of glór as a co-located building on the site.

The library will also procure a new mobile library in 2025. Grant aid of €200k has been made available for this purchase and this will provide the basis for expansion of the service into rural and remote communities in keeping with commitments to the LECF (2024-2030) Plan.

Archives: The digitisation programme is continuing into 2025 and membership of the Digital Repository of Ireland secures the future preservation of digitised files going forward. The section continues to work on acquired collections and encourage new deposits.

F03 - Outdoor Leisure Operations

Budgets in this area are used to manage parks and maintain circa 64 hectares of public open space throughout the County. These include:

- Active Ennis John O’Sullivan Park, Lees Road - 3 grass playing fields, floodlit all-weather pitch, floodlit 400m synthetic running track, playground, skatepark, 130 acres of woodland, 3 car parks with approximately 350 spaces, 8 dressing rooms and public toilets.
- Active Ennis Tim Smythe Park - 2 grass playing fields, 400m grit running track, 2 playgrounds, multi-use game area, outdoor gym, 2 dressing rooms, public toilets and meeting room.
- Active Ennis Pitch, Coote Park - 1 grass playing field, 2 dressing rooms, toilets and store and 1 playground.
- Active Ennis Pitch, Glenina - 1 grass playing field.
- Active Ennis Gordon Drive - floodlit all-weather pitch, 2 dressing rooms and store.
- Active Kilrush Sports Complex - 2 grass playing fields, floodlit all-weather pitch,

floodlit 400m grit running track, 2 tennis courts, 2 dressing rooms and toilets, 1 playground at Cappa.

Currently there are:

- 238 clubs/organisations registered with Lee’s Road
- 64 registered in Cloughleigh Astro turf
- 25 clubs/organisations registered in Active Ennis Tim Smythe Park
- 4 clubs registered in Active Ennis Coote Park
- 58 clubs/organisation registered in Active Kilrush Sports Complex.

F0302 – Playgrounds

The health and wellbeing agenda remains a core priority for the Rural Directorate with increasing demand for more accessible and extended facilities for physical recreation and sports.

Community playgrounds which are owned, managed and operated by Community Playground Committees remain a focus for Budget 2025. While serving the local community, these recreational facilities provide a further opportunity to support integration, youth and age-friendly, tourism and other initiatives within the community. Clare County Council will continue to support the sustainability of community operated facilities of this nature.

2025 Playground Grants will be used to continue predictive and preventative maintenance while also supporting substantial repairs and equipment replacement in playgrounds across the County. In supporting community playgrounds, Clare County Council will seek to ensure that community groups promote inclusivity in playgrounds as age-friendly, neuro-diverse recreational spaces for all.

F0303 – Beaches

The International Blue Flag Awards in 2024 saw the retention and award of 8 blue flags for Clare beaches and 5 Green Coast Awards.

In total, Clare County Council has 14 bathing waters which are tested in accordance with the EU Bathing Water Regulations. Clare County Council is responsible for managing and maintaining all our water amenity locations county-wide.

F0309 – Gardening

The Gardening Section in this service will continue to develop ways of supporting and empowering local communities in their efforts to enhance their local areas in 2025.

F04 Community Sport and Recreational Development

Clare Local Area Grants Scheme 2025

Budget 2025 provides for the same level of investment support to our communities recognising the invaluable work and contribution they provide to their local areas. This scheme has proven very popular with community and voluntary groups with 460 groups across the County benefiting under the scheme in 2024. It is an all-encompassing scheme which provides for economic, social, environmental and cultural initiatives to support communities, particularly in their continued efforts to manage, operate and maintain community facilities. Beyond supporting community-driven projects, the scheme also offers financial support to artists and organisations that inspire public interest, promote knowledge, appreciation and practice of the Arts, or aim to elevate artistic standards.

The 2024 Scheme provided grant support across 11 grant categories including:

- Public Realm Initiatives and Amenity Projects

- Maintenance of Open Spaces in Private Housing Developments
- Burial Ground Maintenance
- Irish Language
- Christmas Lighting
- Best Kept Local Authority Estate
- Tourism Promotion
- Sustainable Tourism
- Community Playground
- Support for the Arts
- Community Project Development

It is envisaged that the new Local Area Grants Scheme for 2025 will be brought to Members in late December 2024/early January 2025 for their consideration and approval.

Public Participation Network

The Council continues to work closely with the Clare Public Participation Network (PPN). The PPN is a collective of environmental, social inclusion, community and voluntary organisations in County Clare. The network is jointly funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development and Clare County Council, recognising the benefit that PPNs bring to communities and Local Government, ensuring that the voices and concerns of our residents are heard and addressed and to support communities to input into the decision-making functions of the Council.

F05 Operation of Arts Programme

The Council's Arts Office leads the development of the arts locally to provide open and accessible opportunities for all, offer strategic supports to artists and to foster a continued appreciation and development of the arts.

2025 will see the adoption of a new County Arts Development Plan which will lay the groundwork for arts development countywide from 2025–2029.

Súil Gallery in Ennis will programme exhibitions throughout the year and will develop an outreach and education programme in the

community to accompany the exhibitions. This will be in addition to over 30 other exhibitions scheduled in Ennis, Scarriff and Kilkee.

Partnerships with Music Generation Clare will continue as well as with regional and national stakeholders in film to continue to promote Clare as a destination for film production.

With support from the Arts Council, a dynamic programme of countywide arts events and projects will continue such as the Artist in Schools Scheme, Arts and Disability Programme, Riches of Clare concert series and Clare Youth Theatre. The research and development phase of the Creative Places Shannon Project will conclude. The PRISM Street Art Programme will continue countywide with the support of Creative Ireland. Support will continue for the Ennistymon Courthouse Gallery and Studios and the Burren Annual Exhibition at the Burren College of Art. We will continue with the provision of artist studios in Tulla and Ennis and propose developing new studio facilities in Sixmilebridge. The programming and management of the Cultúrlann Sweeney Theatre facility in Kilkee will continue.

As ever, the Arts Office will continue to strive to include marginalised individuals and communities as far as possible through these activities. We will continue to support individual artists across all art forms to reach their full potential for the benefit of local communities and to generate economic activity in the County.

A contribution to University of Limerick, Concert Hall is also provided for within the Arts budget.

glór is a leading multi-disciplinary arts centre of excellence that enhances Clare's cultural landscape, champions artists and enriches a wide circle of lives through shared creative experiences. 2025 budget allows for continued subsidy of operational costs at this site.

F0503 Museum Operations

Clare Museum has restarted its event programme with lectures contributing to the night-time economy and children's events. The appointment of an Education Officer has enhanced the activities on offer and in 2025, it is anticipated operations will continue to improve with an increase in those visiting. The maintenance of the Museum Standards Programme for Ireland (MSPI) continues as does promotion and marketing as the Museum maintains its status as one of few tourist attractions in Ennis.

Sub-Service Description – Division F

Service / Sub-Service		Description of Activities
F01	Leisure Facilities Operations	
F0101	Leisure Facilities Operations	Costs associated Leisure facilities operated by Clare Co Council.
F0103	Contribution to External Bodies Leisure Facilities	Contribution to External Bodies Leisure Facilities
F02	Operation of Library & Archival Service	
F0201	Library Service Operations	Delivery of Library services including events programme & IT; maintenance & administration of Library buildings.
F0202	Archive Service	Costs associated with archive maintenance and management.
F0204	Purchase of Books, CD's etc.	Book stock for all branches includes books, multimedia material, periodicals & E-books.
F0205	Contributions to Library Organisations	Contributions to Organisations – Local Government Management Agency
F03	Outdoor Leisure Areas Operations	
F0301	Parks, Pitches & Open Spaces	Maintenance & management of the county's parks & grass cutting including parks, pitches. road verges & housing estates.
F0302	Playgrounds	Maintenance & provision of playgrounds.
F0303	Beaches	Maintenance of the county's beaches.
F04	Community Sport & Recreational Development	
F0401	Community Grants	Includes Clare Local Area Grants Scheme Contribution to Public Participation Network.
F05	Operation of Arts Programme	
F0501	Administration of the Arts Programme	Administration of Arts Programme .
F0502	Contributions to other Bodies Arts Programmes	Contributions to other Bodies Arts Programmes
F0503	Museum Operations	Costs associated with Museum operations.

Table F - Expenditure

Division F - Recreation and Amenity

Expenditure by Service and Sub-Service	2025		2024	
	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €
F0101 Leisure Facilities Operations	1,366,650	1,366,650	1,326,739	1,326,739
F0103 Contribution to External Bodies Leisure Facilities	576,500	576,500	510,500	510,500
F0199 Service Support Costs	363,098	363,098	332,813	332,813
F01 Leisure Facilities Operations	2,306,248	2,306,248	2,170,052	2,170,052
F0201 Library Service Operations	4,225,905	4,225,905	4,085,952	4,085,952
F0202 Archive Service	316,423	316,423	289,256	289,256
F0204 Purchase of Books, CD's etc.	312,000	312,000	312,000	312,000
F0205 Contributions to Library Organisations	17,000	17,000	17,000	17,000
F0299 Service Support Costs	1,498,120	1,498,120	1,404,783	1,404,783
F02 Operation of Library and Archival Service	6,369,448	6,369,448	6,108,991	6,108,991
F0301 Parks, Pitches & Open Spaces	1,759,541	1,759,541	1,793,573	1,796,773
F0302 Playgrounds	127,000	127,000	127,000	127,000
F0303 Beaches	635,689	635,689	605,474	605,474
F0399 Service Support Costs	813,060	813,060	781,330	781,330
F03 Outdoor Leisure Areas Operations	3,335,290	3,335,290	3,307,377	3,310,577
F0401 Community Grants	436,000	436,000	426,000	426,000
F0499 Service Support Costs	22,259	22,259	21,145	21,145
F04 Community Sport and Recreational Development	458,259	458,259	447,145	447,145
F0501 Administration of the Arts Programme	1,117,695	1,117,695	981,448	1,107,448
F0502 Contributions to other Bodies Arts Programme	148,000	148,000	126,000	126,000
F0503 Museums Operations	427,841	427,841	403,418	403,418
F0599 Service Support Costs	178,425	178,425	171,183	171,183
F05 Operation of Arts Programme	1,871,961	1,871,961	1,682,049	1,808,049
Division F Total	14,341,206	14,341,206	13,715,614	13,844,814

Table F - Income

Division F - Recreation and Amenity

	2025		2024	
	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €
Income by Source				
Government Grants & Subsidies				
Media, Tourism, Art, Culture, Sport & the Gaeltacht	206,000	206,000	206,000	206,000
Arts Council	76,800	76,800	100,000	100,000
Total Government Grants & Subsidies	282,800	282,800	306,000	306,000
Goods & Services				
Recreation/Amenity/Culture	956,000	956,000	856,000	956,000
Superannuation	147,540	147,540	147,540	147,540
Other income	189,704	189,704	123,704	123,704
Total Goods & Services	1,293,244	1,293,244	1,127,244	1,227,244
Division F Total	1,576,044	1,576,044	1,433,244	1,533,244

An aerial photograph of a coastal town and harbor, featuring a marina with numerous sailboats, residential buildings, and a large open area. The scene is framed by a circular graphic composed of multiple overlapping white lines. The background of the entire page is a solid red color with several other similar circular line graphics scattered around.

DIVISION G

Summary

Division G includes the operation of harbours and piers, control of dogs and horses.

G02 - Operation and Maintenance of Piers and Harbours

The Council is responsible for the maintenance and management of Kilrush and Doolin piers and adjacent car parks. This involves working with an extensive array of internal and external stakeholders.

Doolin remains as the primary departure point for visitors to the Aran Islands. Activities at the harbour are supervised by 2 seasonal Harbour Controllers.

G04 - Veterinary Service

Midland Animal Care Ltd are the service providers for the Dog Warden Service and management of the dog shelter in Ennis. The contractor carries out the Council's statutory functions in this area and works with charitable organisations in the rehoming of dogs. The Dog Warden is also engaged in a programme of dog license checks on an ongoing basis throughout the county.

A regional based tender competition for the Horse Control Service has commenced. The successful contractor will be responsible for seizing, detaining and rehoming horses that have been stray or causing a nuisance on public lands.

New ownership rules have been introduced to protect public safety following a number of attacks by XL Bully type dogs. From October 1st 2024, new regulations are in place prohibiting the importing, breeding, selling and re-homing of XL Bully dogs. From February 1st 2025, it will be illegal to own an XL Bully without a Certificate of Exemption. Certificates of Exemption issued by the Council authorise the owner of an XL Bully-type dog to keep that dog at a particular premises until the natural end of the dog's life.

Under the Dog Control Support Initiative, funding has been provided for necessary repairs, equipment and upgrades to Clare Dog Shelter. These works are currently ongoing.

Sub-Service Description – Division G

Service / Sub-Service		Description of Activities
G04	Veterinary Service	
G0401	Provision of Veterinary Service	Cost associated with veterinary services
G0402	Inspection of Abattoirs etc	Cost associated with inspection services
G0404	Operation of Dog Warden Service	Income from Dog Licences and fines and provision of Dog Warden Service which is operated on a contract basis.
G0405	Other Animal Welfare Services (incl. Horse Control)	Costs associated with removal of horses.
G05	Educational Support Services	
G0506	Other Educational Services	Statutory contribution.

Table F - Expenditure

Division G - Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare

Expenditure by Service and Sub-Service	2025		2024	
	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €
G0203 Operation of Harbours	-	-	-	-
G0299 Service Support Costs	108,683	108,683	107,211	107,211
G02 Operation and Maintenance of Piers and Harbours	108,683	108,683	107,211	107,211
G0401 Provision of Veterinary Service	-	-	174,664	174,664
G0402 Inspection of Abattoirs etc	-	-	120,802	120,802
G0404 Operation of Dog Warden Service	233,023	233,023	232,889	232,889
G0405 Other Animal Welfare Services (incl Horse Control)	50,000	50,000	17,000	17,000
G0499 Service Support Costs	136,773	136,773	127,018	127,018
G04 Veterinary Service	419,796	419,796	672,373	672,373
G0506 Other Educational Services	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
G0599 Service Support Costs	25,878	25,878	22,649	22,649
G05 Educational Support Services	29,878	29,878	26,649	26,649
Division G Total	558,357	558,357	806,233	806,233

Table F - Income

Division G - Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare

Income by Source	2025		2024	
	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €
Government Grants & Subsidies				
Food Safety Authority of Ireland	-	-	245,000	245,000
Agriculture, Food, & Marine	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Total Government Grants & Subsidies	10,000	10,000	255,000	255,000
Goods & Services				
Superannuation	10,278	10,278	10,278	10,278
Other income	112,000	112,000	129,000	129,000
Total Goods & Services	122,278	122,278	139,278	139,278
Division G Total	132,278	132,278	394,278	394,278

DIVISION H



Summary

This Division includes provision for the administration of commercial rates, the Council fleet, Electoral Register and local elections, casual trading and local representation costs.

H01 - Profit/Loss Machinery Account

A Fleet Management Plan for the Machinery Yard has now been completed and is currently being progressed. The objective of this plan is to provide a modern, cost effective, clean and energy efficient fleet of vehicles to meet Council's operational requirements.

The projected costs associated will be financed over several years from a contribution of loan finance and internally generated income from the Machinery Yard.

H03 - Administration of Rates

H0301 and H0302 contains the budget for the operation of the Rates Department.

2025 will be the second year, post commercial rates revaluation, for our customers. This has modernised the rate book, but the profile of the commercial rates has changed significantly across the county.

H0303 includes the budget for the following:

- Vacancy Refunds - in line with Section 9 of the Local Government Rates and Other Matters Act (LGROMA) legalisation, it is proposed to continue the tiered approach to vacancy abatement. Further details are set out in the attached report.
- Irrecoverable Rates – This budget has been reduced by €400k in balancing Budget 2025 which may increase risks associated with non-complaint commercial rate customers in future budgets.
- Provision for revaluation appeals for loss of commercial rates income due to the outcome of appeals made to the Valuation Tribunal following 2023 Revaluation. This budget was increased in 2025 due to Uisce

Éireann and ESB networks 2025 global revaluations which may also be subject to appeal.

H04 - Franchise Costs - Register of Electors and Local Elections

Clare County Council has responsibility for preparing and maintaining the Register of Electors. Those eligible to vote can register or update their details online at www.checktheregister.ie. The Electoral Act 2022 provides for the modernisation of the electoral registration process. Provisions include having a rolling register, simplified forms and processes, use of PPSNs in the process, pre-registration for 16 and 17-year-olds, arrangements for people with no fixed abode and inclusion of anonymous electors.

The Franchise Section is continually updating the rolling Register of Electors with both electronic and paper-based applications.

H05 - Operation of Morgue and Coroner Expenses

The Council has made provision in the budget for the cost of the coroner's service as required by the Coroners Act, 1962. Costs such as salaries of the coroner, fees and expenses incurred from holding postmortems and inquests are included and funded by the Council.

H07 - Operation of Markets and Casual Trading

The Council will continue to administer and manage the operation of markets in designated casual trading areas throughout the County during 2025.

H09 - Local Representation/Civic Leadership

Provision has been made in this area for representative payments to our 28 members for allowances and administration of member associations together with the General Municipal Allocations for 2025.

The Local Government Reform Act 2014 and its related regulations set out various matters in relation to Municipal Districts. This includes the General Municipal Allocation (GMA) which is defined as the discretionary funding available to the Municipal District Members for allocation in the budgetary plan. The General Municipal Allocation in Budget 2025 is €1.37m.

H10 - Motor Taxation

The provision within H10 is comprised of salaries, office management and administration associated with the operation of the Motor Tax Department for Clare County Council.

To Sept 2024, excluding online payment which accounted for 83% of transactions, Clare County Council processed approximately 24,117 transactions with an estimated value of €3.85m. The total cost of operating this service is borne by Clare County Council where the total from Motor Tax receipts is receipted to central exchequer funding.

Sub-Service Description – Division H

Service / Sub-Service	Description of Activities	
H01	Profit & Loss Machinery Account	
H0199	Service Support Costs	Operation of the corporate fleet including payroll, vehicle hire & repair, fuel costs & insurance.
H03	Administration of Rates	
H0301	Administration of Rates Office	Admin costs relating to preparation & issue of commercial rates demands.
H0302	Debt Management Service Rates	Costs associated with collection of rate accounts.
H0303	Refunds & Irrecoverable Rates	Refund of rates on vacant properties and provision for irrecoverables.
H04	Franchise Costs	
H0401	Register of Elector Costs	Costs associated with the preparation of the Register of Electors.
H0402	Local Election Costs	Local Election costs, money is capitalised over 5 years.
H05	Operation of Morgue & Coroner Expenses	
H0501	Coroner Fees & Expenses	Agency fees For Coroners Service.
H07	Operation of Markets & Casual Trading	
H0702	Casual Trading Areas	Provision for costs associated with management of casual trading areas.
H09	Local Representation & Civic Leadership	
H0901	Representational Payments	Councillors' representational payments.
H0902	Cathaoirleach/Leas Cathaoirleach Allowances	Cathaoirleach/Leas Cathaoirleach Allowances & Cathaoirleach's expenses.
H0903	Annual Allowances LA Members	Payment of Councillors' annual allowances
H0904	Expenses LA Members	Payment of Councillors' conference costs.
H0905	Other Expenses	Payment of statutory committees expenses and communication expenses.
H0907	Retirement Gratuities	Provision of gratuities to retired members.
H0908	Contribution to Members Associations	Contribution to Association of Irish Local Government (AILG) & Local Authorities Members Association (LAMA)
H0909	General Municipal Allocation	General Municipal Allocation to each Municipal District.
H10	Motor Taxation	
H1001	Motor Taxation Operation	Costs associated with motor tax operations
H11	Agency & Recoupable Services	
H1101	Agency & Recoupable Service	Miscellaneous income.
H1102	NPPR	Costs and income for Non Principal Private Residence Charge.

Table F - Expenditure

Division H - Miscellaneous Services

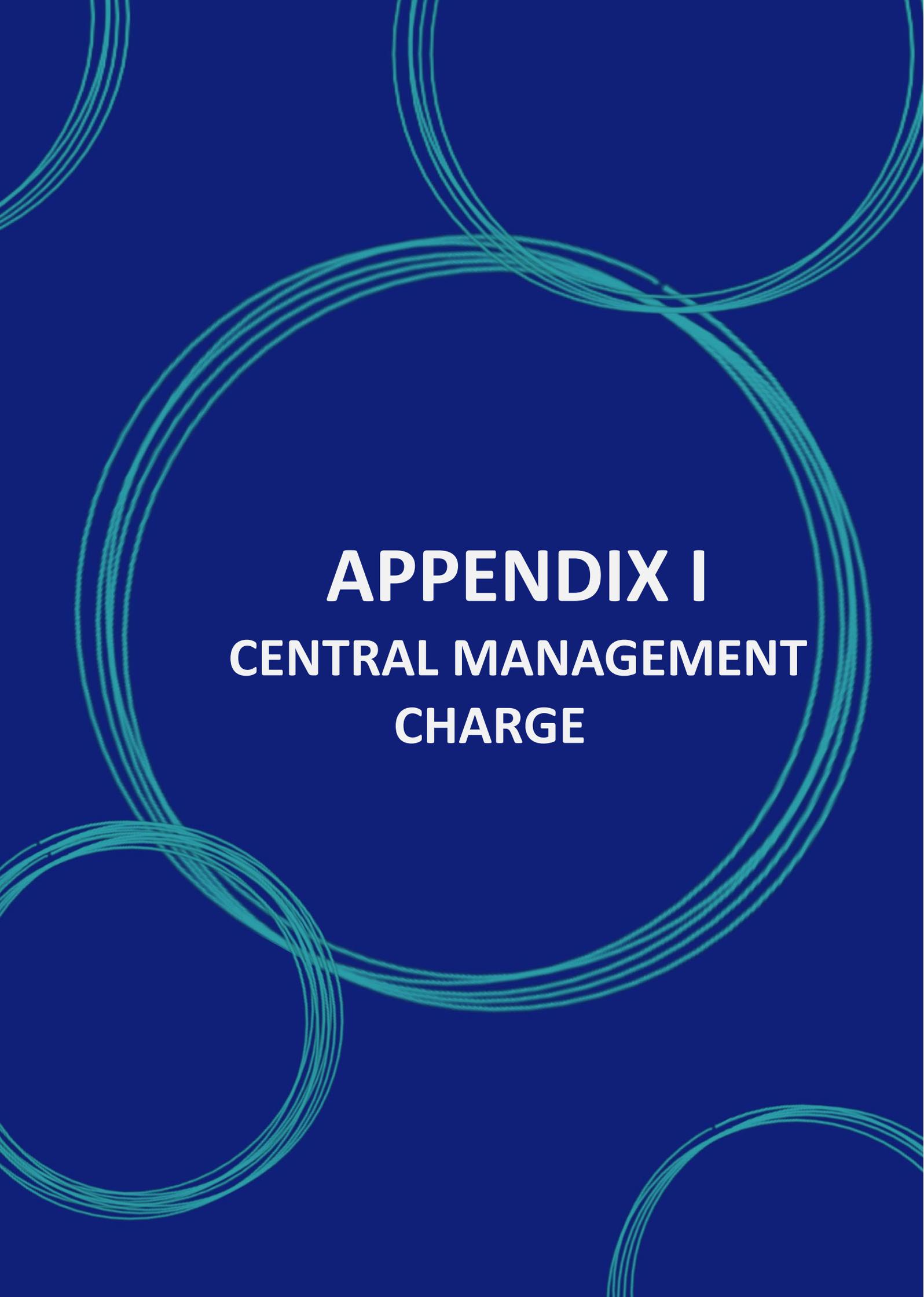
Expenditure by Service and Sub-Service	2025		2024	
	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €
H0199 Service Support Costs	637,392	637,392	513,249	513,249
H01 Profit & Loss Machinery Account	637,392	637,392	513,249	513,249
H0301 Administration of Rates Office	254,929	254,929	221,075	221,075
H0302 Debt Management Service Rates	607,553	607,553	591,646	591,646
H0303 Refunds and Irrecoverable Rates	6,061,925	6,061,925	6,341,297	6,191,297
H0399 Service Support Costs	677,831	677,831	646,709	646,709
H03 Administration of Rates	7,602,238	7,602,238	7,800,727	7,650,727
H0401 Register of Elector Costs	38,305	38,305	87,022	47,022
H0402 Local Election Costs	20,000	20,000	20,000	190,000
H0499 Service Support Costs	243,161	243,161	215,090	215,090
H04 Franchise Costs	301,466	301,466	322,112	452,112
H0501 Coroner Fees and Expenses	238,926	238,926	194,390	234,390
H0599 Service Support Costs	56,764	56,764	55,153	55,153
H05 Operation of Morgue and Coroner Expenses	295,690	295,690	249,543	289,543
H0702 Casual Trading Areas	40,549	40,549	38,648	38,648
H0799 Service Support Costs	36,270	36,270	34,641	34,641
H07 Operation of Markets and Casual Trading	76,819	76,819	73,289	73,289
H0901 Representational Payments	865,134	865,134	826,337	826,337
H0902 Chair/Vice Chair Allowances	54,000	54,000	54,000	54,000
H0903 Annual Allowances LA Members	263,562	263,562	263,562	263,562
H0904 Expenses LA Members	140,000	140,000	140,000	140,000
H0905 Other Expenses	74,000	74,000	74,000	74,000
H0907 Retirement Gratuities	80,000	80,000	80,000	613,000
H0908 Contribution to Members Associations	24,250	24,250	24,250	24,250
H0909 General Municipal Allocation	1,372,000	1,372,000	1,373,000	1,372,000
H0999 Service Support Costs	779,681	779,681	735,704	735,704
H09 Local Representation & Civic Leadership	3,652,627	3,652,627	3,570,853	4,102,853
H1001 Motor Taxation Operation	511,139	511,139	505,777	505,777
H1099 Service Support Costs	671,467	671,467	639,668	639,668
H10 Motor Taxation	1,182,606	1,182,606	1,145,445	1,145,445
H1101 Agency & Recoupable Service	116,000	116,000	96,000	96,000
H1102 NPPR	37,188	37,188	53,161	37,161
H1199 Service Support Costs	54,797	54,797	55,383	55,383
H11 Agency & Recoupable Services	207,985	207,985	204,544	188,544
Division H Total	13,956,823	13,956,823	13,879,762	14,415,762

Table F - Expenditure**Division H - Miscellaneous Services**

Expenditure by Service and Sub-Service	2025		2024	
	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €
OVERALL TOTAL	191,927,542	191,927,542	186,409,503	189,924,693

Table F - Income

Division H - Miscellaneous Services				
Income by Source	2025		2024	
	Adopted by Council €	Estimated by Chief Executive €	Adopted by Council €	Estimated Outturn €
Government Grants & Subsidies				
Housing, Local Government & Heritage	16,135,302	16,135,302	13,492,592	14,103,195
Total Government Grants & Subsidies	16,135,302	16,135,302	13,492,592	14,103,195
Goods & Services				
Superannuation	113,638	113,638	113,638	113,638
NPPR	-	-	70,000	70,000
Other income	526,905	526,905	405,806	455,806
Total Goods & Services	640,543	640,543	589,444	639,444
Division H Total	16,775,845	16,775,845	14,082,036	14,742,639
OVERALL TOTAL	133,922,730	133,922,730	129,218,891	133,038,961



APPENDIX I
CENTRAL MANAGEMENT
CHARGE

Appendix 1 – Central Management Charges

Service support costs are included within each Division. These are the central management charges that are spread across each service. These costs include Corporate Services, Corporate Facilities, Information Communication Technology (ICT), Human Resources, Finance and Other.

Corporate Services

The functions of the Corporate Services Department include:

- Secretariat to Chief Executive
- Ethics & Governance
- Meetings Administration
- Civic Events
- Communications
- Business Innovation
- Records Management
- Freedom of Information Requests
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Customer Services

Corporate Services includes the costs of civic events, communications and public relations, record management, data protection, freedom of information, Irish language promotion and compliance. It is a central area of support across all Directorates.

Corporate Buildings

The maintenance of the corporate buildings in Ennis is organised by the Facilities Management Team in Property Management. Budget 2025 provides for the caretaking, cleaning and maintenance of our 2 main corporate buildings - Waterpark house and Clare County Council HQ.

Information Communication Technology (ICT)

Initiatives include the expansion of digital services to the public including re-development of www.clarecoco.ie and upskilling Clare County Council staff to equip them with the necessary digital systems to enhance service delivery. Ensuring the safety

and privacy of users remains a top priority. Additionally, ICT is committed to sustainability by implementing digital solutions that reduce paper usage and travel needs, thus lowering our carbon footprint.

The ICT Department helps provide digital services to citizens, Elected Members, Directorates, Departments and business units of Clare County Council. Working with business units and the Innovation Team, the Department ensures that digital services are easy to use, accessible, reliable, efficient and secure through the delivery of national IT projects and local system transformation programmes.

In recent years, ICT has made great progress in digitising both public and internal services. In 2025, the Department aims to build on these successes by expanding digital services to the public and automating internal processes. These efforts are aligned with the National Local Government Digital Strategy's goal to digitise 90% of services by 2030.

Major initiatives include redeveloping www.clarecoco.ie, expand on the digital services available to the public, training Clare County Council staff with the necessary digital skills to enhance service delivery, prioritising user safety and privacy and implementing sustainable digital solutions to reduce paper usage and travel needs, thereby lowering our carbon footprint

Human Resources

The Human Resources Section supports all Departments in planning and delivering the Council's workforce requirements in a manner that is appropriate for the delivery of corporate strategic goals and objectives.

Human Resources is involved in the general administration of statutory employment provisions and supporting the strategies adopted by management. It also has responsibility for creating a culture of continuous learning and development,

building leadership competencies and developing a framework of policy, procedures and practices that underpin and support effective people management.

The Human Resources Section works to maintain a fair, supportive and healthy work environment through its staff wellbeing service and employee assistance programme.

Finance Department

The Finance Department provides a wide range of financial services to the Elected Members, suppliers, management and staff across all Divisions of the Council including:

- Preparation of the annual revenue budget
- Preparation of Report on the 3-year Capital Programme
- Tax Compliance
- Preparation of Annual Financial Statements
- Administration of Commercial Rates
- Financial control, cash flow and treasury management
- Administration of Agresso (financial management system)
- Processing of payments to suppliers
- Co-ordination of payroll administration with national payroll shared service centre
- Procurement
- Administration of Department directed grants, eg. Increased Cost of Business Grant (ICOB) and Power Up Grant (PUG)

Pensions and Gratuities

A provision has been made in the 2025 budget for €10.7m to cover both pension payments and lump sum payments payable on retirement.

Area Offices

Budget 2025 provides for the costs of area office staff and administration at 5 locations in the County.

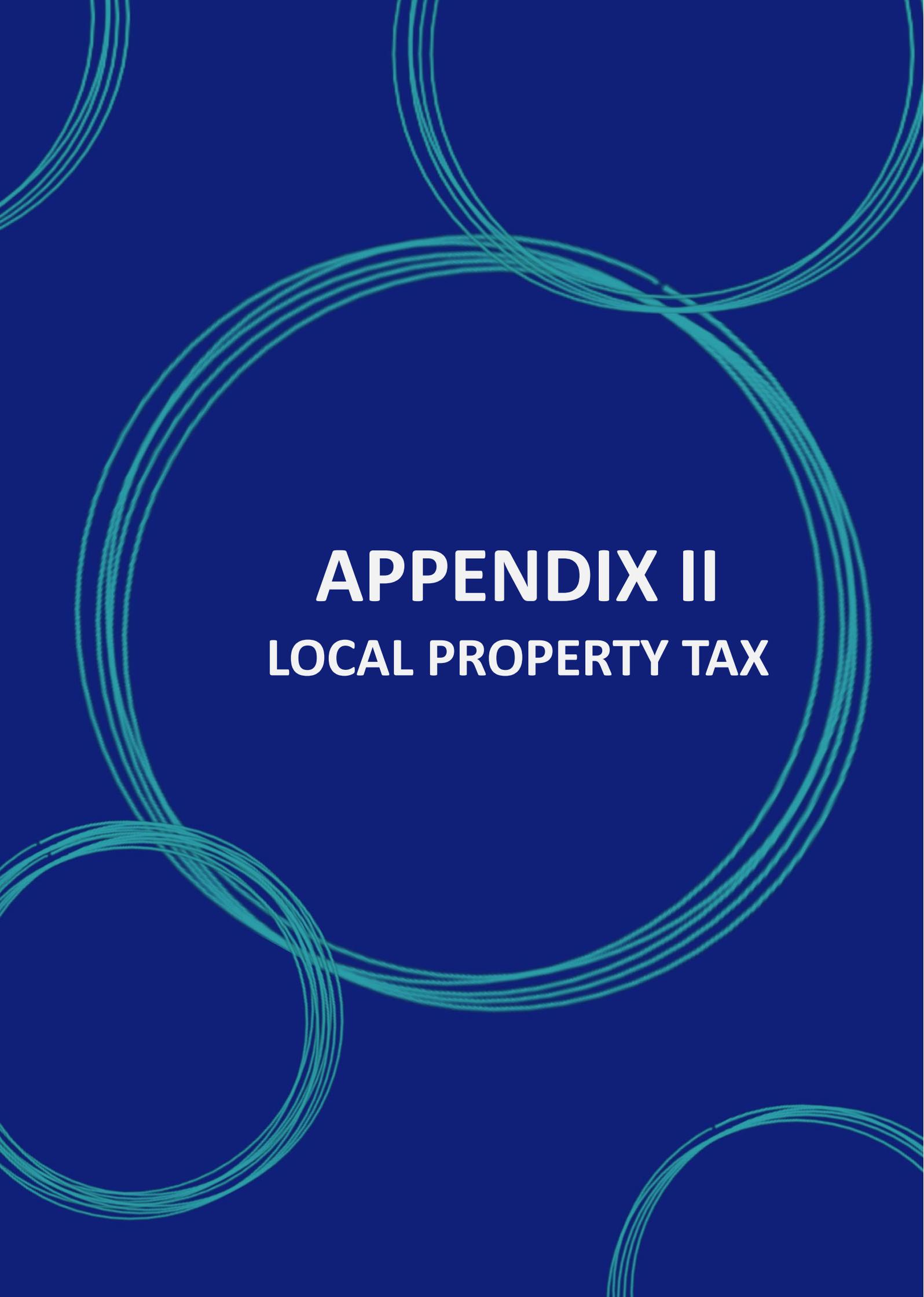
Print Room

The budget in this area provides for the ongoing operation of the print room to meet corporate needs. It also includes a printing operating budget for each Directorate.

APPENDIX 1

SUMMARY OF CENTRAL MANAGEMENT CHARGES FOR YEAR 2025

Description	2025 €
Area Office Overhead	2,969,756
Corporate Affairs Overhead	3,366,608
Corporate Buildings Overhead	3,092,977
Finance Function Overhead	1,194,942
Human Resource Function Overhead	2,957,706
IT Services	3,000,251
Print/Post Room Service Overhead Allocation	757,571
Pension & Lump Sum Overhead	10,709,521
Total Expenditure Allocated to Services	28,049,332



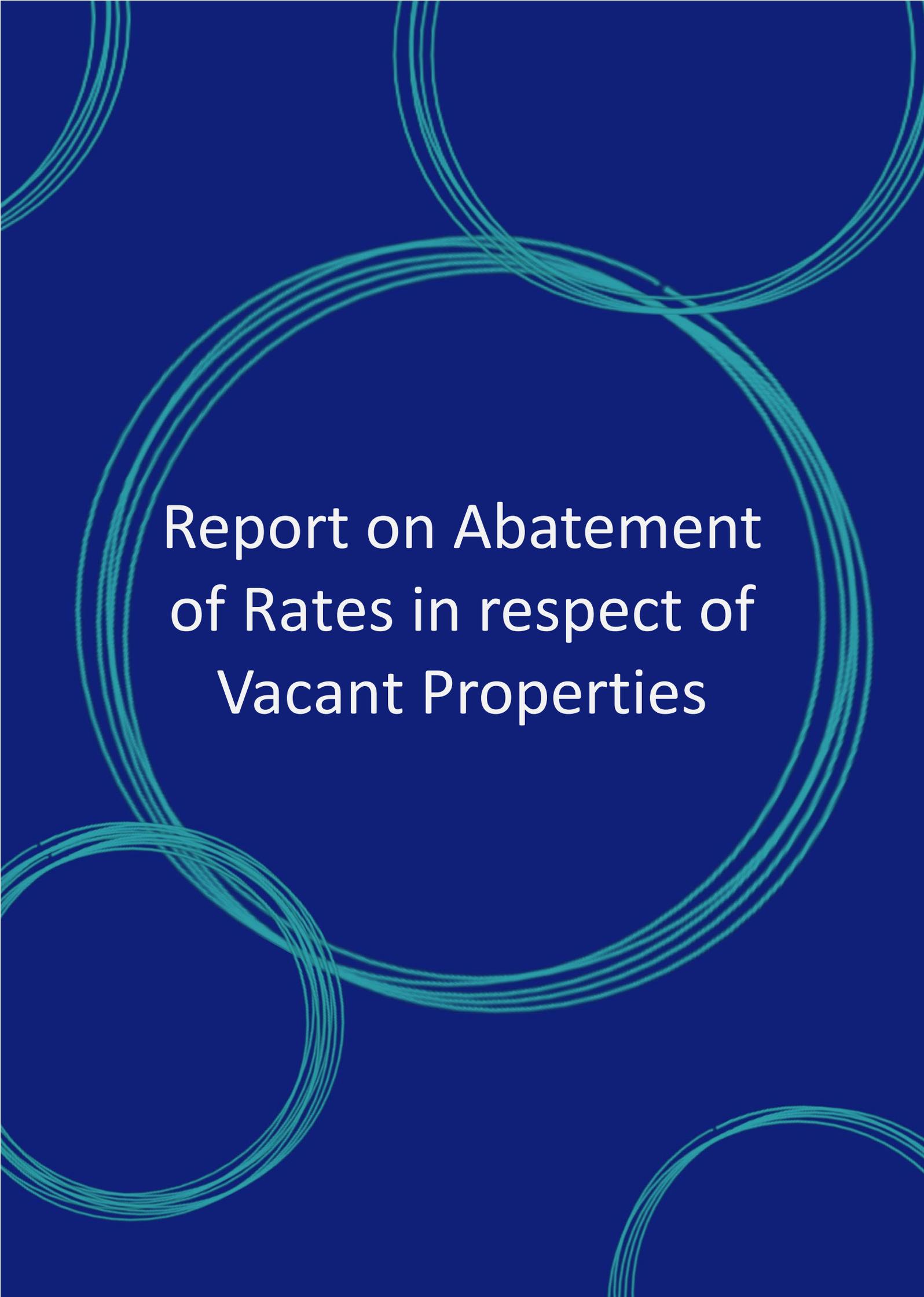
APPENDIX II
LOCAL PROPERTY TAX

APPENDIX 2

SUMMARY OF LOCAL PROPERTY TAX ALLOCATION FOR YEAR 2025

Description	2025	2025
	€	€
Discretionary		
** Discretionary Local Property Tax (Table A)	<u>11,673,909</u>	11,673,909
Self Funding - Revenue Budget		
Housing & Building	-	
Roads, Transport & Safety	<u>-</u>	-
Total Local Property Tax - Revenue Budget		<u>11,673,909</u>
Self Funding - Capital Budget		
Housing & Building	-	
Roads, Transport & Safety	<u>-</u>	-
Total Local Property Tax - Capital Budget		<u>-</u>
Total Local Property Tax Allocation (Post Variation)		11,673,909

**This amount includes an equalisation contribution of €0 from the Exchequer/Local Government Fund.



Report on Abatement of Rates in respect of Vacant Properties

Local Government Abatement of Rates in respect of Vacant Properties

Section 9 of the Local Government Rates & Other Matters Act 2019, as amended by the Historic and Archaeological Heritage & Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2023, provides for the abatement of rates in respect of vacant properties. The approval of a scheme under this legislation is a reserved function of the Elected Members.

The enactment of the Local Government Rates and Other Matters Act 2019 provided for new rates vacancy abatement (Section 9) on vacant commercial premises, to be decided by Local Authority Members in order to promote national and/or local policy objectives. New regulations in relation to this section came into operation from 10th July 2024. These new provisions will add to the suite of options already available to Local Authorities to support local businesses and ratepayers. It is important to note that legal provision to provide refunds of rates for commercial properties has existed since 1946. Clare County Council had historically a 100% refund rate or vacancy credit on vacant properties subject to satisfying the criteria each year until 2020. For Budgets 2021-2024, this Council adopted a 25% vacancy credit with a corresponding Vacancy Grant Relief based on a tiered structure on vacant commercial properties to promote re-occupation or conversion to domestic of these units.

The purpose of the updated legislation is so that existing policy objectives can continue within the legal structure of the newly commenced Section 9 and these associated Regulations. For example, some Local Authorities (particularly in urban areas) have in recent years incrementally decreased the rates refund on vacant property in order to encourage re-use/dis-incentivise vacancy. Local Authorities in other areas such as the western seaboard, have continued to offer 100% refunds on vacant property in recognition of difficulty in some instances of finding suitable tenants for those properties.

Qualifying conditions for commercial properties

To qualify for vacancy abatement, the premises must be unoccupied and vacant for one of the following reasons:

- (a) for the purpose of the execution of additions, alterations (including demolition or redevelopment) or repairs thereon, or
- (b) because the liable person is *bona fide* unable to obtain a suitable tenant at a reasonable rent therefor.

The ratepayer is required to complete the application form and forward proof that they meet the criteria including a signed and witnessed Statutory Declaration.

Public Consultation

S.I. No. 349 of 2024 dated 10th July 2024 gave effect to the Local Government Abatement of Rates in respect of Vacant Properties Regulation 2024. Included in these Regulations is a requirement that a Local Authority must consult with the public in its administrative area in relation to its consideration of making or amending an existing abatement scheme. An advert in the prescribed format was published on 4th October 2024, inviting submissions from the public. The latest date for receiving submissions was 18th October. **No submissions were received in relation to this public consultation.**

Levels of vacancy:

It is estimated that approximately 14% (585) of commercial properties are vacant across the county with a commercial rates valuation in 2024 of €2.05m. Two-thirds of the vacant properties annual commercial rates liability is €2,500.

To continue the policy to incentivise the occupancy of vacant properties for either commercial or residential use, it is recommended that the Vacancy Abatement Rate is aligned and adopted in line with the existing tiered scheme as outlined in the table below:

Rates Liability	Adopted Scheme		Proposed Scheme
	2021 -2024		2025
	<i>Rates Refund Credit %</i>	<i>Vacancy Grant %</i>	Vacancy Abatement/Relief
Properties less than €20k	25%	75%	100%
Properties €20k to €50k	25%	50%	75%
Properties €50k - 100k	25%	25%	50%
Properties greater than €100k	25%	0%	25%

It is estimated that such a recommendation will not generate any additional income or cost to this Council. It is also recommended that the use of this legislation and the adoption of a scheme specific to our towns or areas within our town and villages to achieve the purpose of this legislation requires further analysis and consideration. It is recommended that this policy objective forms part of the 2025 work program of the Economic SPC.

Approval of Members to this scheme for Budget 2025 is hereby requested under Section 9 of the Local Government Rates & Other Matters Act 2019, as amended by the Historic and Archaeological Heritage & Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2023.

The image features a central circular inset showing an aerial view of a modern bridge with a white deck and blue arches spanning a river. The bridge is supported by concrete piers. In the background, there are green banks with some buildings and a small boat on the water. The entire scene is framed by several overlapping, glowing green circular lines on a dark blue background.

Report on
Capital Expenditure
2025-2027

Section 135 Local Government Act – 3 year Capital Programme

This report outlines Clare County Council’s proposed capital programme and long-term strategic objectives in capital expenditure for the period 2025-2027. The proposed projects outlined in this report would see planned investment of €630m across the 5 Directorates of the Council in the 2025-2027 period. It is important to note that consideration of the capital programme by the Members does not confer Council approval on any individual project. This can only be done through the normal statutory processes and compliance with the Infrastructure Guidelines (formerly Public Spending Code). Funding arrangements also need to be clearly identified and secured in advance of committing to any project. The capital programme is a rolling programme which is revised annually; time and other constraints may vary the progress of projects within a given period. The table below outlines the planned projected expenditure by Directorate during the period 2025-2027. **Note that funding to be identified for projects to progress is €122m.**

Capital Programme 2025-2027					
Directorate	Forecasted Capital Expenditure				
	2025	2026	2027	Total	Funding to be identified
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Economic Development	€24,792	€53,218	€41,033	€119,044	€83,515
Physical Development	€47,597	€34,900	€27,100	€109,597	€16,225
Rural Development	€9,069	€7,625	€8,752	€25,446	€11,564
Social Development	€164,145	€125,190	€46,005	€335,340	€7,378
Tourism Development	€17,220	€8,018	€15,450	€40,688	€3,762
	€262,823	€228,951	€138,340	€630,115	€122,444
Forecasted Income					
Grant Income				(€'000)	
Development Contributions				€425,073	
Loan Funding as approved by Members				€6,009	
Other Income (incl. sale of affordable housing)				€28,610	
				<u>€47,980</u>	
				€507,672	
Funding to be identified for projects to progress					€122,444

Social Development Directorate (€335m 2025-2027 - €7.3m funding to be identified)

The Social Development Directorate has planned capital expenditure of €335m in the three-year period 2025-2027. €224m of this projected spend is on house purchase and construction across 22 schemes. A primary focus of the Directorate for 2025-2027 will be progressing a wide number of capital projects, subject to funding. Under “Housing for All” as launched by the Government on 2nd of September 2021, Clare County Council has been set annual targets totaling 833 new social housing units over the period 2022-2026. In 2024 alone, Clare County Council and the AHB sector projects delivery of 183 new social housing units across the various streams of delivery. The SHCEP (Social Housing Current Expenditure Programme) and CAS (Capital Assistance Scheme) funding for delivery of social housing by local authorities and Approved Housing Bodies respectively is fully recouped from the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage (DHLGH).

Land Purchase

Land availability continues to be a critical factor in ensuring a healthy pipeline for delivery is maintained so to that end, a provision of €4.5m is included in the projected spend over the next 3 years. The land cost for social housing delivery is fully recoupable from the DHLGH.

House Acquisitions

The Department have advised of limited scope for house acquisitions for the foreseeable future due to the commitment to deliver homes through build programmes under ‘Housing for All’. The result of this cap is that there will be limited activity during 2025 confined to purchasing one-bedroom units to deliver on Housing First requirements, acquiring properties to facilitate persons to prevent or exit homelessness and purchase of specific housing for the elderly and people with a disability. Limited funding is also available under the Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS) for Approved Housing Bodies to purchase properties for vulnerable housing applicants. The anticipated spend for house acquisition is €5m in 2025 for delivery by the Council and the Approved Housing Bodies sector.

Affordable Housing

Initially, Clare was not identified by the DHLGH as having an affordability constraint on a full County approach. However, work undertaken by the Housing Department of Clare County Council early in 2023 to conduct a housing market analysis for the two large urban centres of Ennis and Shannon made a convincing case for the extension of the Affordable Purchase Scheme to eligible schemes in these towns. With an approval in principle now in place, the Housing Department have and continue to submit individual affordable applications to the DHLGH regarding various developments from around the County.

Turnkey Construction

Turnkey acquisition continues to be an important delivery stream under the new programme “Housing for All”. For 2025, the overall budgeted spend on direct turnkey projects is €20.65m relating to 59 proposed social housing units. The funding of turnkey construction projects is fully recouped from the DHLGH.

Housing Construction

2025 will be another year of significant delivery of social housing by Clare County Council with 248 units (including 7 no. Buy & Renew Construction Units) currently planned for delivery with a number of other projects planned to be at various stages of design. The projected capital spend for 2025 regarding these units is €103m. Currently, Clare County Council continues to progress with Department approved direct build housing construction projects which will provide for a proposed delivery of 273 units beyond 2025 with an overall projected capital spend of €106m.

Table 1: 174 units fully approved of the 248 units planned for 2025

Clare County Council Deliverable	No. approved
Doonbeg	8
Shallee/Cloughleigh	5
Leadmore, Kilrush	14
Clarecastle	3
Buy & Renew – various locations	3
Main St., Clarecastle	1
Beal an Inbhir, Kilrush	28
Approved Housing Body Projects	
Loughville, Ennis	34
Westbury	22
Market Place, Ennis	14
Millbank, Ennis	25
Shannon Heights, Kilrush	1
Shannon – Part V	6
Crusheen – Part V	4
Sixmilebridge – Part V	6
TOTAL	174

Returning Vacant Stock to Productive Use (Void Funding)

It is anticipated that the spend on returning vacant stock to use in 2025 will be circa €2.4m on 80 no. properties with approximately a third of this cost recouped from the DHLGH. The Council continues to address circa. 80 vacant/void properties annually and a dedicated funding mechanism to provide for the timely return of these vacant units is an annual challenge for this Council, with an approx. €1.5m shortfall on an annual basis. This shortfall is funded from the annual revenue budget.

Planned Maintenance

Drawdown on the approved loan of €10m to deliver a planned maintenance programme for Clare County Council is currently at €6.1m. During 2025, it is anticipated that a further €1.9m will be drawn down as the project continues.

Energy Efficiency

Expenditure under this programme in 2025 is anticipated to be in the region of €1.6m which is largely recouped from the DHLGH.

Defective Concrete Blocks Grant

Clare County Council gained access to the Enhanced Defective Concrete Blocks Scheme for private dwellings in July 2023 with the finalised Act and Regulations published. Clare County Council's main role is the administration of the scheme. The Council have received 114 applications since the commencement of the scheme and have issued 25 remediation grant amounts to various homeowners as directed by the Housing Agency. The projected spend for the private scheme for 2025 is €30m. Clare County Council await details from the DHLGH for the launch of the Local Authority Defective Concrete Block Scheme which will then allow Local Authority housing stock affected by deleterious materials to be remediated.

Ballyvaughan Footpaths Upgrade

Footpath upgrade works are required to be carried out adjacent to the pier in Ballyvaughan and will include the provision of car parking spaces adjacent to the road to complement proposed upgrade works to the R477 at this location in 2025. It is also proposed to improve sea defences at this location. It is envisaged that these works will cost approx. €300k with €200k to be invested in 2025 and €100k in 2026. Funding for this project has yet to be identified.

Monastery Lane Car Park, Ennistymon

In order to facilitate the proposed progression of the Ennistymon Streetscape & Public Realm Project at The Square and Parliament Street, it is proposed that the new car park with up to 48 spaces will firstly be provided at Monastery Lane, Ennistymon. Clare County Council have acquired this site and have Part VIII planning approval to develop the car park. It is envisaged that the cost to complete the demolition of the buildings on site and to construct the car park will be approx. €350k with all works to be completed in 2025.

Physical Development Directorate (€109m 2025-2027 - €16.2m funding to be identified)

There is significant capital expenditure planned for 2025-2027 in the Physical Development Directorate. A significant portion of the planned €109m expenditure is recouped from the relevant Government Departments. €57m of this expenditure or 52% is being managed by the Project Management Office (PMO). A primary focus of the Directorate for 2025-2027 will be progressing a wide number of capital projects, subject to funding. Key projects include:

Roads and Transportation

Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project (PLEEP)

The key priorities in relation to public lighting include complete changeover to LED technology and replacement of supporting infrastructure where required. This project is continuing with the survey of public lights in Clare nearing completion. Works on the replacement of the light heads will continue during 2025. It is clear that the initial regional business case for this project which relied on a self-financing model due to energy savings has now been undermined by the continued increase in energy costs.

Beechpark Machinery Yard works

The facility at Beechpark requires a capital investment of approx. €4.3m to address long-term maintenance and identified defects at the facility. This investment and necessary upgrade works will preserve our investment in the Machinery Yard going forward. Budget 2025 provides for loan funding for Phase 1 of this project.

Climate Change

Clare County Council has produced their Climate Action Plan which sets out the objective and actions to achieve our emission reduction and energy efficiency targets by 2030. The principal capital projects to support the attainment of these objectives during 2025-2027 are:

Buildings Retrofit Project

A 51% emissions reduction target is mandated to all Local Authorities. Clare County Council emissions are divided into 3 specific areas – electricity, thermal and transport. The reduction of emissions across the thermal section will involve the retrofitting of buildings with new green technologies as well as improving our assets fabric thermal performance. This will be a multi-year objective. The Council, through the proposed Mid-West Energy Unit will seek to develop out PATHFINDER projects in 2025 working towards decarbonisation actions in buildings such as Ennis Leisure Centre, Áras Contae an Chláir and across the smaller buildings in our register. Participation in the PATHFINDER programme will enable Local Authorities to draw down 50% fundings towards the implementation of these projects. The balance of funding (50%) will be subject to Members' approval of a loan and corresponding revenue budget provision.

Electric Vehicles (EVs)

Clare County Council's emissions profile across transport includes for diesel consumed in internal combustion engines. An objective of the Council in 2025 will be to identify further service areas where light goods vehicles can be utilised in lieu of existing diesel vans. A number of electric vehicles have been purchased by the Council in 2024 – 6 EV pick-up trucks are under order and 2 EV vans are going through the procurement process currently. Procurement of EVs will continue into 2025-2027 as we continue to move more toward electrification.

Project Management Office (PMO)

The PMO manages an extensive portfolio of projects with projects such as the Killaloe Bypass/Shannon Bridge Crossing, Ennis Public Realm, N19 Shannon Airport Access Road, the West Clare Railway Greenway Project, Kilkee Flood Relief Scheme, Shannon Town & Environs Flood Relief

Scheme, and Ennistymon Inner Relief Road and Bridge Crossing (Blake's Corner) progressing during 2025-2027. In the main, the projects listed hereunder are funded by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), National Transportation Authority (NTA) and/or DHLGH.

Doolin Pier

Further to a cross-Directorate review in 2024, the immediate priorities are access and parking, with a visitor services building development viewed as a longer-term strategy. Footpath access from Fisher Street to the pier is being progressed by the West Clare Municipal District for completion by mid-2025. Car parking options are being reviewed for implementation in the medium term.

Ennis Public Realm Regeneration (Phase B)

Following the approval of €8.6m in funding under the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) in July 2023, the Ennis Public Realm Regeneration Project will serve to transform the streetscapes of High Street, Bank Place, O'Connell Street and Old Barrack Street. O'Connell Square and Barrack Square will also be greatly enhanced to improve their amenity value and to facilitate their use as civic spaces. Loan funding has been provided in the 2025 revenue budget for the match-funding requirement of this project.

This project will improve accessibility for pedestrians and will deliver expanded, high-quality spaces with the overall aim of making the town centre experience more appealing and conducive to both retail and social purposes. Since commencement onsite in Oct 2023, significant progress has been achieved and long stretches of the streets have now been completed in alignment with the Shared Surface Model.

It is also welcomed that Uisce Éireann have contributed a further €2.5m for the refurbishment of water mains and foul sewers in the town centre, representing a significant investment in these assets and ensuring their reliability for the long-term future. The Uisce Éireann works were largely completed as advanced works, thus enabling progression of the public realm enhancement works throughout the town centre.

Ennistymon Inner Relief Road and Bridge Crossing (Blake's Corner)

Subject to conclusion of the third-party challenge to An Bord Pleanála's decision to confirm the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO), Clare County Council will determine the next course of action in regard to this project. If the Boards decision is upheld, Clare County Council will move at pace to complete the detailed design, tender the works and appoint a contractor to carry out this critical and much awaited infrastructure.

Killaloe By-pass/Shannon Bridge Crossing

The Killaloe Bypass/Shannon Bridge Crossing and R494 Improvement Scheme will provide a western bypass of Killaloe, a new bridge crossing of the River Shannon and an upgrade of the existing R494 regional road from Ballina to the N7 at Birdhill. The entire scheme is 6.2km and will cross the River Shannon approximately 1km to the south of the existing Killaloe Bridge. Works are progressing well on site with the full scheme expected to be substantially complete by mid-2025.

Kilkee Flood Relief Scheme

The Project Team led by the PMO submitted a planning application to An Bord Pleanála on 2nd Oct 2024. Works are continuing on the various land acquisitions required as part of the scheme. The scheme is 100% funded by the Office of Public Works (OPW).

N19 Shannon Airport Access Road

Development Consent Application will be made to An Bord Pleanála for this critical infrastructural project in Q1 2025 with an oral hearing likely to follow. Further information and associated literature on the project can be accessed via the scheme website www.shannonaccess.ie.

Remediation of sites containing Asbestos Containing Material (ACM)

The Project Team will be submitting a planning application in the coming months in respect of the remediation of the subject sites with a view to approval in 2025. This will be followed by a tender process and implementation on a phased basis. The sites continue to be routinely monitored /maintained as required by the Council in accordance with the approach as agreed with the Environmental Protection Agency.

Shannon Town & Environs Flood Relief Scheme

The Emerging Preferred Options for Fluvial (River) and coastal defences have been identified. Once the final options and defences are agreed, the scheme will progress to planning which is anticipated to be in 2025. The scheme is 100% funded.

West Clare Railway Greenway (Section 1: Kilrush to Kilkee)

The West Clare Railway Greenway Section 1: Kilrush to Kilkee is the most advanced of Clare County Councils Greenway projects and, subject to agreeing the Preferred Route Alignment, the project will progress during 2025.

West Clare Railway Greenway (Section 2: Ennis to Ennistymon)

The West Clare Railway Greenway Section 2: Ennis to Ennistymon, Phase 2 (Route Options Selection) is being progressed. Clare County Council plan to publish the Emerging Preferred Route Corridor in 2025.

West Clare Railway Greenway (Section 3 & 4: Ennistymon to Miltown Malbay and Miltown Malbay to Moyasta)

Phase 2 (Route Options Selection) of the West Clare Greenway (Sections 3 & 4: Ennistymon to Miltown Malbay and Miltown Malbay to Moyasta) will be progressed in 2025.

Other Greenway Proposals

Works are continuing on the greenway proposals between Ennis, Shannon and Limerick. Clare County Council is also involved in the University of Limerick to Scariff Greenway, being led by Waterways Ireland. This project, funded by TII, runs through much of Clare and a significant part of the greenway will utilize the cycling and pedestrian elements of the Shannon Bridge Crossing/Killaloe Bypass Project.

Emergency Management, Fire & Building Control

The Fire Service remain proactive in ensuring a state of the art, efficient emergency service in Clare and to that end, during 2025 the following projects will be completed:

Emergency Tender Fire Appliance

The Fire Service received approval from the Department for Capital Grant Aid to fund the costs of re-chassis and upgrade works to the Emergency Tender Fire Appliance at Ennis Fire Station. This vehicle will replace the existing 2003 vehicle in Ennis Fire Station. It is anticipated the vehicle will be delivered in late 2025.

Class B High Reach Aerial Fire Appliance

Feasibility studies are being carried out on the suitability of procuring a Class B High Reach Aerial Fire Appliance for the County Fire & Rescue Service. If appropriate, approval for Grant Aid from the Department will be submitted. If successful, it is anticipated that the vehicle will be delivered in 2026.

Fire Service Headquarters & Ennis Fire Station Redevelopment Works

A request was made in late 2023 for Capital Grant Aid to engage professional consultants to prepare a detailed submission for a new Fire Service Headquarters and Fire Station in Ennis. The

Departments' current Capital Programme for the Fire Service will expire in 2024 and it is expected that a new Capital Programme will be announced in late 2024/early 2025. If the funding request is successful, it is anticipated that the project should take approximately 3 years to complete.

Water Services & Environment

Clare County Council does not have responsibility for the delivery of municipal water and wastewater services in Clare but does retain responsibility for the Rural Water Programme and during 2025 the Council is tasked to deliver:

Projects (residential estates) under the Developer Provided Water Services Infrastructure under the Multi-Annual Developer Provided Water Services Infrastructure Resolution Programme

- Works to the Waste Water Treatment Plant at Glen Abhainn - grant funded with the balance of 25% to be provided by Clare County Council.
- Works to improve the effluent treatment in the Ardnacrusha agglomeration for the following estates: Ballyglass, Castlebank, Lackyle, Lackyle Heights, Parkroe and Keelgrove – grant funded with the remaining 25% to be provided by Clare County Council.

These projects will be delivered in conjunction with Uisce Éireann, with the Clare County Council funding provision being subject to Members' approval of loan finance.

Waste Water Collection and Treatment Systems

Clare County Council has two projects underway under *Measure A8 - Waste Water Collection and Treatment needs for Villages and Settlements without access to Public Waste Water Services* for the villages of Broadford and Cooraclare. These applications are for the delivery of a Wastewater Treatment Collection and Treatment system for both agglomerations and are 85% grant funded up to the grant allocation. The works will also be progressed in conjunction with Uisce Éireann, with the Clare County Council funding provision being subject to Members' approval of loan finance.

Rural Water Programme

Clare County Council is responsible for the management of projects involving new or upgrading of Group Water and Sewerage Schemes and for the provision of grants for domestic bored wells under a devolved programme. Clare County Council also facilitates and compiles the submissions for taking in charge applications to Irish Water for Group Water and Sewerage Schemes. Funding for these continues to be provided by the DHLGH.

Rural Development Directorate (€25m 2025-2027 - €11.5m funding to be identified)

The Rural Development Directorate has planned capital expenditure of €25m in the three-year period 2025-2027. A key focus of the Rural Development Directorate is on leading projects and processes that improve the socio-economic and quality of life for citizens in rural communities throughout all of County Clare. Accordingly, the Rural Development Directorate will be progressing a number of capital projects in the 2025-2027 period, subject to funding. Key projects include:

Scariff Rural Regeneration Project

In May 2024, funding under Category 1 Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) was announced for the Scariff Regeneration Project which comprises the redevelopment of a derelict building to an enterprise and community hub, the development of a new town centre car park and Market Square public realm/redevelopment. The overall project of €11.1m will comprise of Department RRDF of €8.9m with a Local Authority match-funding requirement of €2.2m subject to Members' approval of loan finance.

Killaloe-Ballina Town Enhancement & Mobility Plan

The Killaloe-Ballina Town Enhancement & Mobility Plan 2022 identified several projects to significantly enhance the public realm and socio-economic & tourism development of Killaloe and Ballina post operation of the bypass and new budget. Whilst a number of priority projects are being advanced in the short term, eg. Courthouse feasibility and Tobermurragh/Bane's Field Enhancements made up of funding under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme and development contributions, the focus for large scale funding is RRDF. In that regard, Killaloe Municipal District will co-ordinate and lead a joint application for €2m (50/50 split with Tipperary County Council - €1m each) of RRDF funding under Category 2 – RRDF (feasibility) to be made in conjunction with Tipperary County Council in advance of March 2025. In the event of a successful Cat 2 application, detailed design and planning will commence in 2026/2027, subject to match-funding being identified.

Crusheen Railway Station/Burial Ground/Public Realm

In 2024, a study for the re-opening of Crusheen Railway Station, an objective of the Local Authority, identified significant socio-economic benefits to the community and wider hinterland of re-opening the station. Lands were acquired by the Municipal District to facilitate its re-opening and provide car parking whilst also enabling the extension of a burial ground by the community to be facilitated. Work is ongoing with Irish Rail and adjoining stakeholders to facilitate the re-opening of the station and pedestrian linkages into the village via a RRDF Application under Cat 2 in March 2025. In addition, the Mobility Plan for Crusheen is near completion and will set out the detail of much needed public realm, footpaths and road infrastructure to be improved, and the corresponding level of funding required by this Council.

Burial Grounds

A proposed extension of the County Burial Ground at Drumcliff seeks to improve the existing operational section of the burial ground and extend the existing burial ground to ensure sufficient capacity for the next decade. In addition, the design proposal aims to make improvements to Section E having regard to ground conditions and drainage, whilst creating a sense of tranquility and reflection through considered landscaping and pause spaces throughout the proposal. The proposed extension to the County Burial Ground was approved on 18th Apr 2024 by An Bord Pleanála.

CLÁR (Ceantair Laga Árd-Riachtanais) programme

The CLÁR programme provides funding for small scale projects in rural areas that have experienced significant levels of population decline. The Rural Development Directorate will continue to administer Measure 1: 'Developing Community Facilities & Amenities' with funding for the enhancement of existing, and/or the development of new, accessible Community Recreation Facilities. The maximum level of funding for any individual project is €50k and grant-funding is at a

rate of 90% of project costs.

Town and Village Renewal Scheme

The Town and Village Renewal Scheme is an initiative under the Government's Action Plan for Rural Development 'Realising our Rural Potential'. The scheme supports small to medium capital projects which enhance the environment of town or village centres.

Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme

The Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme is funded under Project Ireland 2040 and is a key initiative of Our Rural Future – Ireland's Rural Development Policy 2021-2025. The Scheme will facilitate the development of outdoor recreation infrastructure that is, in the main, freely available to the public in the countryside (not within the environs of towns and villages) and that contributes to healthy active lifestyles and the economic and tourism potential of the area for both local communities and tourist visitors alike. In particular, the scheme provides funding for trails, cycleways, blueways, bridleways, as well as outdoor amenities located near rivers, lakes and beaches.

Economic Development Directorate (€119m 2025-2027 - €83.5m funding to be identified)

The Economic Development Directorate has planned capital expenditure of €119m in the three- year period 2025-2027. A primary focus of the Economic Development Directorate for 2025-2027 will be progressing a number of capital projects, subject to funding. Key projects include:

Clare Maritime Economic Zone

The Kilrush Maritime Training Centre project under Clare MEZ (Maritime Economic Zone) includes for the renovation of a property to industry standards together with the development of the section of the boatyard to the rear of the property to allow for the construction of a pool building and fire training ground. We are currently working with Enterprise Ireland with regards to making an application under the recently launched Smart Regions Fund Scheme. RRDF funding has already been allocated for a portion of this scheme. No provision has been made in the 2025 revenue budget for the match funding requirement for this project. The advancement of this project is still under review.

One Shannon Hub

The One Shannon Hub is being planned as a Business and Civic Centre of Regional Importance in the heart of Shannon Town in line with the Shannon Town Masterplan. The final draft concept design has been completed and the Council will be making an application for funding under the next URDF call to progress this important development. No provision has been made in the revenue budget for this project.

Ennis Town Centre Development

Development on Council-owned strategic sites is ongoing at Abbey Riverside (Retail & Corporate HQ Design being finalised following public consultation), Harveys Quay (concept design under discussion with the Department), Post Office Field and Boardwalk (design being finalised following public consultation/aiming to make an application under the next URDF Call) and Francis Street (affordable housing application under consideration by the Department). As previously committed, alternative car parking will be provided in the town centre before any construction would commence on the riverside car parks. Given its importance in terms of supporting and facilitating business, both town centre and within the Municipal District, the availability of suitable and adequate parking is continually being monitored and reviewed. Further surveys have been carried out in recent months and the Municipal District are working on developing a real-time interactive system which would better inform the public in terms of number and location of available spaces. In addition, the Council, in a joint venture with Clare GAA, is constructing a 200-space car park at the back of The Cloister for which planning permission is already secured by Clare GAA, with full cost recovery over the next number of years. Moreover, to assist business and visitors in the Gort Road Industrial Estate, a Part VIII planning application for additional car parking is due for decision in the coming weeks and, subject to approval by the Elected Members, construction could commence in early 2025. The need for Park & Stride Facilities has also been identified. While development contributions will part-fund the overall project, funding remains to be identified for the remainder of the project.

The Ennis Area Based Transport Assessment Traffic Studies and the evaluation of census data may identify the priority location for this provision. Engagement continues with the NTA (National Transport Authority) regarding the implementation of a town bus service for Ennis to be rolled out in 2025. Government commitment for funding same was referenced in the recent budget and the intention is to provide for a fully electrified service subject to acquisition of a suitable depot site. Plans are at an advanced stage in terms of the proposed routes and the location of bus stops. While the overall works will be fully funded by the NTA, there may be an element of own resources required for some ancillary works in the town centre as a consequence of the bus service.

Town Centre First (TCF) Plans and Suite of Supports

Sixmilebridge was identified in 2022 as a PATHFINDER town under the Town Centre First Initiative, which involved the development of a Town Centre First Masterplan. This plan was published in June 2023 and was the first of its kind for County Clare. A Town Team and support structures have been put in place to help drive the implementation of this plan, which includes significant interventions within the town which will greatly enhance its attractiveness as a location to live, work and visit. The Sixmilebridge Town Team, in partnership with Clare County Council, has been successful in being awarded funding €50k under the Project Development Measure - Town Centre First Suite of Supports. This will advance the top priority project in the Sixmilebridge TCF Plan to planning stage so that it is shovel-ready to avail of appropriate funding opportunities. A second Town Centre First Plan has commenced for Kilrush town along with the formation of a new Town Team who will help drive the implementation of this second Town Centre First Plan. In addition, three further Town Teams are being set up in Tulla, Lisdoonvarna and Clarecastle under the Town Centre First process. There may be further opportunities to develop additional Town Centre First Plans in 2025/26.

Roche Site, Clarecastle - Masterplan

Clare County Council is committed to attracting economic investment, delivering sustainable jobs and future proofing this very significant site following the Roche Senior Management undertaking in July 2023 to offer Clare County Council the right of first refusal on the site upon completion of remediation works. The first two phases of remediation at the 88 acre site have been completed by Roche and the final stage of the decommissioning process is in progress. Discussions are ongoing with Roche Senior Management as well as Enterprise Ireland and the IDA.

Property Management Investment Projects

Much work is being done in assessing the economic uses of various properties in the ownership of Clare County Council. Following initial surveys, options for use are considered, plans for design and refurbishment of properties are then carried out. As projects are identified, the funding and value for money aspects of the individual proposals are examined and will be brought before the Elected Members during the year. We are currently examining re-use options for the buildings previously occupied by Library Services in Ennis.

Improvement Works to Corporate Buildings

Essential upgrades to Aras Contae an Chláir and Waterpark Campus, comprising both internal and external works are being planned and implemented each year. We will work closely with the Climate Change Team on the various projects.

Derelict Sites

The Council will continue the significant work programme of dealing with derelict sites, and in particular, the advancement of the compulsory acquisition process, where there is no engagement with owners. For properties that may be acquired by Clare County Council, the option of refurbishment and re-use by the Council as housing units and the option of sale on the open market will be considered. There will be a multi-strand approach including working closely with other Departments within the Council. We will continue to have regular meetings with the Department of Housing Heritage and Local Government under the URDF Cat 3 Fund for this programme in relation to Ennis.

Taking in Charge

During 2025 the substantial programme of remediation works on private housing estates will continue where bond monies have been claimed and where works are required in order to bring the services within the developments up to an acceptable standard. These works will significantly improve the residential amenities for the people living in these estates. It is planned to spend €1m over the next three years in these estates.

Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF)

Delivery of the infrastructure to facilitate lands for housing development in Clareen remains a clear objective of the Council. Ennis MD, along with our colleagues in the PMO and the Housing Section, continue to liaise with the LIHAF Section of the DHLGH to secure support on the mechanisms that are currently in place to assist in the delivery of housing for the site. Given that LIHAF only funds 75% of costs of the road excluding land, there will be a significant additional funding requirement from the Council's own resources for the Council's 25% match funding element and the land acquisition costs.

THRIVE Ennis (Strand 1) Town Centre First Heritage Revival Scheme

Clare County Council is participating in a brand-new scheme entitled THRIVE Town Centre First Heritage Revival. THRIVE is funded by the Government of Ireland and the ERDF Regional Programmes through the Southern Regional Assembly and Ennis was listed as the Clare town eligible for funding. As part of the process, an Integrated Urban Strategy focusing on heritage properties is being developed which will identify and prioritise projects that encourage the conservation and adaptive reuse of Ennis' extensive building heritage, and address vacancy and dereliction in the town centre. This is also an action of the Ennis 2040 Strategy.

The initiative aims to revitalise one vacant or under-utilised heritage/historic building in Ennis town centre that is in public ownership/control, transforming it for community or other town centre use. Following a successful application under THRIVE Funding to the Southern Regional Assembly, Clare County Council was successful in being awarded €194k under Strand 1. A series of citizen and stakeholder engagement sessions commenced in September and is continuing. This project will be advanced to planning stage and will enable Clare County Council to apply for significant THRIVE Strand 2 funding (grant amounts of between €2m and €7m) on a competitive basis with other Local Authorities. The building acquisition cost is not funded and will require to be funded from the Council's own resources.

Ballyallia Enhancement Plan

Ennis MD are close to finalising proposals that will greatly enhance our offering to the public at Ballyallia and we would hope to be in a position to submit for planning in the coming months. As well as an element of own resources that will be required, key funding sources will have to be identified and prioritised for application. These will include Outdoor Recreation and URDF among others.

Tourism Development Directorate (€40m 2025-2027 - €3.7m funding to be identified)

The Tourism Development Directorate has planned capital expenditure of €40m in the three-year period 2025-2027. Shannon Heritage DAC transferred to Clare County Council as a subsidiary company on 1st May 2023. Bunratty Castle & Folk Park, Craggaunowen Bronze Age Park, Knappogue Castle & Gardens and the retail unit at the Cliffs of Moher Experience are now being managed, developed and promoted by Clare County Council. The Clare Tourism Strategy 2030 commits to sustainable tourism investment and, during the period 2025-2027, the Tourism Department will be focused on marketing and product development. This additional investment in tourism resources is based on the Council's commitment to this industry and potential for job growth linked to two key pillars of the Renewed Clare Rural Development Strategy 2030. A primary focus of the Tourism Development Directorate for 2025-2027 will be progressing a wide number of capital projects, subject to funding. Key projects include:

Inis Cealtra (Holy Island)

A contract has been signed for the development of the Inis Cealtra (Holy Island) Visitor Centre in the heart of Mountshannon village. This is a significant step forward in building up the tourism product within East Clare. Overlooking Mountshannon Harbour and Lough Derg, the 'Old Rectory' is an historic period house dating from 1905 which will be repurposed and extended into a visitor and interpretative centre for Inis Cealtra (Holy Island). The successful funding awarded for this project which also includes waste-water optimisation works and public realm works at Mountshannon is being received from the Department of Rural and Community Development as part of RRDF Cat 1 funding, with a matched funding requirement from Clare County Council. Provision has been made in the 2025 revenue budget for loan charges for this phase of the project.

Vandeleur Walled Garden and Visitor Centre

Works have been ongoing since 2021 to extensively restore and renovate the site as part of an overall Visitor Development Strategy that also includes the improved use of the 420 acres of surrounding native woodland (not Council-owned property). A contract has been signed for the development of a 140-seater indoor and outdoor café and restaurant which will allow for Vandeleur Walled Garden and Visitor Centre to cater for visitors and corporate/festive events. It is anticipated that the new facility will open in June 2025.

Cliffs of Moher Experience/Clare Tourism Northwest

A draft Cliffs of Moher Experience Strategy 2040 and associated masterplan supported by Failte Ireland has been prepared following extensive public and stakeholder consultation. Statutory environmental processes will be completed before finalisation of this sustainable tourism plan. Central to the strategy is enhancing the economic benefits for the surrounding towns and villages providing sustainable access to the Cliffs of Moher, optimising the visitor experience and conservation of the landscape including the Special Protection Area. A masterplan design package will be progressed to bring detailed designs to planning to include site developments. Plans to develop park-and-ride facilities for visitors to the Cliffs of Moher Experience and a new office building adjacent to the Ennistymon Digital Hub on Monastery Lane will be developed subject to obtaining planning permission. A management plan for the Cliffs of Moher Coastal Walk will be put in place in consultation with landowners and stakeholders and urgent upgrades projects to sections of the walk will be completed. In line with climate action goals, energy upgrades will take place to reduce carbon emissions.

Shannon Heritage Sites/East Clare Tourism

Shannon Heritage DAC transferred to Clare County Council as a subsidiary company on 1st May 2023. Bunratty Castle & Folk Park, Craggaunowen Bronze Age Park, Knappogue Castle & Gardens and the retail unit at the Cliffs of Moher Experience are now owned and operated by Clare County Council. Several programmes are under way to review, grow and enhance the sites in 2025 including additional services and product offerings, maintenance and upgrade programmes and the development of IT and digital systems. In 2025, Craggaunowen Bronze Age Park will celebrate its 60 year anniversary with Clare County Council and the Hunt Museum Trust planning a series of events to celebrate. During 2025 Knappogue Castle will reopen for overnight accommodation with plans to refurbish the accommodation at an advanced stage. The 2025 revenue budget does not provide for any capital loan funding.

Active Kilrush Master Plan – Implementation

Active Kilrush and Clare County Council engaged the services of a design team in 2024 to prepare a masterplan for the development of the Active Kilrush site. The overall masterplan includes upgrades to the tennis courts, new 4G soccer pitch, site works, entrances, pedestrian access, car parking and onsite facilities. The priority infrastructure proposed for the site is a large sports hall that will accommodate indoor basketball and other indoor sports. An application for funding under the first tranche of Large Scale Sport Infrastructure Fund (LSSIF) funding for the construction of the indoor sports facility was submitted in 2024 but unfortunately was not successful. However, there will be scope to develop the project at a future date under alternative funding streams.

Platforms for Growth Water based Activity Centre (Ballycuggeran and Kilkee)

Facility Centres for Water Sports Activities in Ballycuggeran and Kilkee, under the Failte Ireland Platforms for Growth Investment Scheme 2019-2025, received planning permission from An Bord Pleanála in 2023. The County Clare Tourism Strategy 2030, the Lough Derg Visitor Experience Development Plan (VEDP) and the Shannon Tourism Masterplan all set out strategic priorities & objectives that underpin sustainable tourism. Both innovation and critical infrastructure are needed to deliver these bold plans. Permanent water sports facilities that are committed to responsible tourism and sustainability very much fit into this critical infrastructure. Compelling and high-quality activity infrastructure is an important element of this critical infrastructure. The facility in Ballycuggeran commenced construction on site in October 2024 with an expected completion date of August 2025. The facility will provide new public toilets, changing areas, hot showers, secure storage, induction spaces and equipment washdown and will be open for an extended period of time to cover the demands at the location. Further surveys are required in relation to the Kilkee facility. It is hoped that construction will commence in 2025.

