

Comhairle Contae Chiarraí Kerry County Council



Tuarascáil Bhliantúil

Annual Report

2015

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Foreword by An Cathaoirleach

Cllr Pat McCarthy



As Cathaoirleach of Kerry County Council, I am delighted to welcome and introduce the Annual Report for 2015.

The past year has been another demanding but exciting one for Kerry County Council following a period of significant structural reforms in local government. The various elements of the Local Government Act of 2014 continue to come into effect and council management and the elected members have worked hard to make sure that those changes have been as smooth as possible.

Management and councillors worked hard during 2015 to ensure that financial support for various services and projects in the county was maintained and increased in many cases. We must continue to work together to ensure that a peripheral county like Kerry gets its fair share as the economic situation improves.

The range of facilities and services provided by Kerry County Council is considerable and we continue, as a council, to strive to ensure that our citizens receive a cost-effective, trustworthy and reliable service.

As Cathaoirleach of the council, I wish to pay a warm tribute to the staff of the organisation – those based in Áras an Chontae, our Municipal District offices, other offices and our ground staff in every part of the county – who show a tireless commitment and dedication to serving the people of Kerry on a daily basis.

I thank them and our Chief Executive, Moira Murrell, for working throughout 2015 in pursuit of a common goal – the betterment of the county and the quality of life of its residents.

Cllr Pat McCarthy
Cathaoirleach

Chief Executive's Statement

Moira Murrell



As Chief Executive of Kerry County Council, I am delighted to present the local authority's annual report for 2015.

The past year represented the first full year in which the new structures and reforms in local government were in effect. While 2014 ushered in a major restructuring of local authorities, 2015 represented the bedding down of those new structures and a successful adjustment to, for example, the new Municipal Districts alignments which replaced the old Electoral Areas.

The past year saw the adoption of a new County Development Plan for the period 2015 to 2021. The plan is the core policy document which guides all of what the council does and sets out the aims and objectives of councillors and management in terms of improving the quality of life for all the citizens of Kerry.

Local government legislation in 2014 gave councils key new roles in two areas – tourism and economic development. There have been exciting developments such as the establishment of the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) which will drive community development. 2015 also saw the establishment of a new dedicated Tourism Unit within the council to spearhead tourism promotion. Work on a new Local Economic and Community Plan which will set out key economic objectives for the council in the coming years advanced significantly in 2015.

Funding for the many services and facilities provided by Kerry County Council in 2015 remained challenging given the wider economic situation. However the Council strove to protect and, in many cases, enhance the quality of the services and facilities we provide on a daily basis.

Within this report you will read about the activities and progress of the different directorates within Kerry County Council. During 2015, those directorates have delivered significant infrastructural improvements, maintained and enhanced key services and led the way in public service delivery.

I wish to acknowledge the support of my colleagues across the organisation, the Directors of Services and their support staff and the elected members for their support, dedication and co-operation during the past year.

Moira Murrell
Chief Executive

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE



Kerry County Council Senior Management Team*

*(as at 31 December 2015)

Chief Executive
Moira Murrell

**Director of Job
Creation /
Sustainable
Economic
Development**

Michael Scannell
(Acting)

**Director of
Sustainable
Communities /
Quality of Life**

John Breen

**Director of
Operations, Health &
Safety**

Charlie O'Sullivan

*Tralee Municipal
District Manager*

**Director of Water
Services**

Oliver Ring

**Director of Corporate
Services**

Martin O'Donoghue
(Acting)

*South & West Kerry
Municipal District
Manager*

Head of Finance

Angela McAllen

*Killarney Municipal
District Manager*

ACTIVITIES OF KERRY COUNTY COUNCIL 2015

Membership of Kerry County Council 2015

There are 33 councillors representing the four Municipal Districts of Killarney, Listowel, South & West Kerry and Tralee. The cathaoirligh and leas cathaoirligh in 2015 were:

Cathaoirleach	(to June 2015):	Cllr John Brassil
	(from June 2015):	Cllr Pat McCarthy
Leas Chathaoirleach	(to June 2015):	Cllr Thomas McEllistrim
	(from June 2015):	Cllr Jim Finucane

In accordance with the Local Government Act 2001 as amended local elections are held every five years. The last local elections were held on the 23rd May 2014.

Elected Members 2015

Municipal District of Tralee

Cllr Pa Daly, 23 Rock Street, Tralee, (Sinn Féin)
Cllr Toiréasa Ferris, Cnocáin, Barrow, Ardfert (Sinn Féin)
Cllr Jim Finucane, 13/14 Denny Street, Tralee (Fine Gael)
Cllr Norma Foley, 2 Staughton's Row, Tralee (Fianna Fáil)
Cllr Sam Locke, 81 Spa Road, Tralee, Co. Kerry (Non-Party)
Cllr Pat McCarthy, Maglass, Ballymacelligott, Tralee (Fine Gael)
Cllr Thomas McEllistrim, Ahane, Ballymacelligott, Tralee (Fianna Fáil)
Cllr Terry O'Brien, Tonevane, Tralee (Labour)
Cllr Graham Spring, 31 Sunday's Well, Lisloose, Tralee (Labour)

Municipal District of Killarney

Cllr Brendan Cronin, Rathcommene, Ballyhar, Killarney (Non-Party)
Cllr John Joe Culloty, Knocknaskeha, Killarney (Fianna Fáil)
Cllr Donal Grady, 2 Maple Drive, Killarney (Non-Party)
Cllr Michael Gleeson, Clasheen, Killarney (South Kerry Independent Alliance)
Cllr Danny Healy-Rae, Main Street, Kilgarvan (Non-Party)
Cllr Niall Kelleher, Fairhill Business Centre, The Courtyard, Fairhill, Killarney (Fianna Fáil)
Cllr Bobby O'Connell, 15 Main Street, Castleisland (Fine Gael)
Cllr John Sheahan, Coolgarraive, Tralee Road, Killarney (Fine Gael)

Municipal District of Listowel

Cllr Robert Beasley, 'Puicín', Doon Road, Ballybunion (Sinn Féin)
Cllr John Brassil, The Pharmacy, Ballyheigue. (Fianna Fáil)
Cllr Mike Kennelly, Coolaclarig, Listowel (Fine Gael)
Cllr Jimmy Moloney, 11 Cherrytree Drive, Listowel (Fianna Fáil)
Cllr Dianne Nolan, 47 Dromin Green, Listowel (Sinn Féin)
Cllr Liam Purtill, Main Street, Ballylongford. (Fine Gael)
Cllr Aoife Thornton, 47 The Meadows, Bridge Road, Listowel (Fine Gael).

Municipal District of South and West Kerry

Cllr Michael Cahill, Rossbeigh, Glenbeigh (Non-Party)
Cllr Patrick Connor-Scarteen, 5 Main Street, Kenmare (Fine Gael)
Cllr Séamus Cosaí Fitzgerald, Droichead Bán, Glens, Daingean Uí Chúis (Fine Gael)
Cllr John Francis Flynn, Upper Tullig, Caragh Lake, Killorglin (Fianna Fáil)
Cllr Johnny Healy-Rae, Main Street, Kilgarvan (Non-Party)
Cllr Dan McCarthy, Kilcurrane East, Kenmare (Non-Party)
Cllr Norma Moriarty, Main Street, Waterville (Fianna Fáil)
Cllr Michael O'Shea, Chapel Lane, Milltown (Fianna Fáil)
Cllr Damien Quigg, Tulligmore, Killorglin (Sinn Féin)



Kerry County Councillors and Management 2015

Membership of Boards/Committees 2015

Audit Committee	Chairs Strategic Policy Committees
Cllr. Niall Kelleher Cllr. Bobby O'Connell	Economic Development & Enterprise Cllr. Jim Finucane Operations Cllr. Mike Kennelly Tourism, Culture, Arts & Recreation Cllr. Robert Beasley Quality of Life Cllr. Jimmy Moloney
Rural Water Committee	Local Community Development Committee
Cllr. Dan McCarthy Cllr. Aoife Thornton Cllr. Mike Kennelly Cllr. John F. Flynn	Cllr. Pa Daly – Tralee Cllr. Aoife Thornton – Listowel Cllr. Norma Moriarty – South & West Cllr. Niall Kelleher - Killarney
Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee	Association of Irish Local Government
Cllr. Sam Locke Cllr. Norma Moriarty Cllr. Jim Finucane Cllr. Mike Kennelly Cllr. Jimmy Moloney Cllr. Toireasa Ferris	Cllr. Donal Grady – Killarney Cllr. Jimmy Moloney – Listowel Cllr. Patrick Connor Scarteen– South&West Cllr. Norma Foley - Tralee
Destination Kerry Tourism Forum	AILG – Standing Policy Council
Cllr. Seamus Fitzgerald	Cllr. Donal Grady Cllr. Patrick Connor Scarteen Cllr. Jimmy Moloney
Kerry Education & Training Board	Regional Health Forum South
Cllr. Toireasa Ferris Cllr. Norma Foley Cllr. Norma Moriarty Cllr. Diane Nolan Cllr. Aoife Thornton Cllr. Damian Quigg Cllr. Michael Cahill Cllr. Seamus Fitzgerald Cllr. Terry O'Brien	Cllr. Damian Quigg Cllr. Danny Healy-Rae Cllr. John Joe Culloty Cllr. Mike Kennelly Cllr. Bobby O'Connell

Cllr. Jim Finucane Cllr. John Brassil Cllr. John Francis Flynn	
Killarney National Park Liaison Committee	Local Authority Members Association
Cllr. John Joe Culloty	Cllr. Bobby O'Connell
MacGillycuddy Reeks Mountain Forum	Southern Regional Drugs Task Force
Cllr. John Sheahan	Cllr. Aoife Thornton
Tralee Regional Sports & Leisure Co. Ltd.	Irish Public Bodies
Cllr. Thomas McEllistrim Cllr. Graham Spring	Cllr. Niall Kelleher
Kerry Life Skills Ltd.	Governing Body of NUI Cork
Cllr. Sam Locke - Tralee MD Cllr. Aoife Thornton - Listowel MD Cllr. Michael O'Shea-South & West Kerry MD Cllr. Donal Grady - Killarney MD	Cllr Jim. Finucane
Southern & Eastern Regional Assembly	Tralee Chamber Alliance
Cllr. Dianne Nolan Cllr. Michael O'Shea Cllr. Seamus Fitzgerald	Cllr. Graham Spring Cllr. Norma Foley
Mitchels Boherbee Community Regeneration Steering Group	Kerry Recreation and Sports Partnership
Cllr. Pa Daly Cllr. Toiréasa Ferris Cllr. Jim Finucane Cllr. Norma Foley Cllr. Sam Locke Cllr. Pat McCarthy Cll. Thomas McEllistrim Cllr. Terry O'Brien Cllr. Graham Spring	Cllr. Pa Daly – Tralee MD Cllr. J.J. Culloty – Killarney MD Cllr. Damain Quigg – South & West Kerry MD Cllr. Jimmy Moloney – Listowel MD
IRD Duhallow	Kerry Community Transport
Cllr. J.J. Culloty	Cllr. Niall Kelleher
Kerry Airport	South Kerry Development Partnership
Cllr. Terry O'Brien	Cllr. Michael O'Shea Cllr. Damian Quigg Cllr Johnny Healy-Rae Cllr. John F. Flynn
Joint Policing Committee	Killarney Municipal District Strategic Twinning Committee
Tralee MD Cllr. Thomas McEllistrim Cllr. Pat McCarthy	Cllr. J.J. Culloty Cllr. Danny Healy-Rae Cllr. Bobby O'Connell

<p>Cllr. Pa Daly Cllr. Graham Spring Cllr. Sam Locke</p> <p><u>Killarney MD</u> Cllr. Niall Kelleher Cllr. J.J. Culloty Cllr. John Sheahan Cllr. Donal Grady Cllr. Brendan Cronin</p> <p><u>Listowel MD</u> Cllr. Jimmy Moloney Cllr. Mike Kennelly Cllr. Dianne Nolan</p> <p><u>South & West Kerry MD</u> Cllr John F Flynn Cllr Patrick Connor-Scarteen Cllr Damian Quigg Cllr Michael Cahill</p>	<p>Cllr. Niall Kelleher</p> <hr/> <p>Tralee Tidy Towns</p> <hr/> <p>Cllr. Sam Locke</p> <hr/> <p>Governing Body of NUI Cork</p> <hr/> <p>Cllr. Jim Finucane</p>
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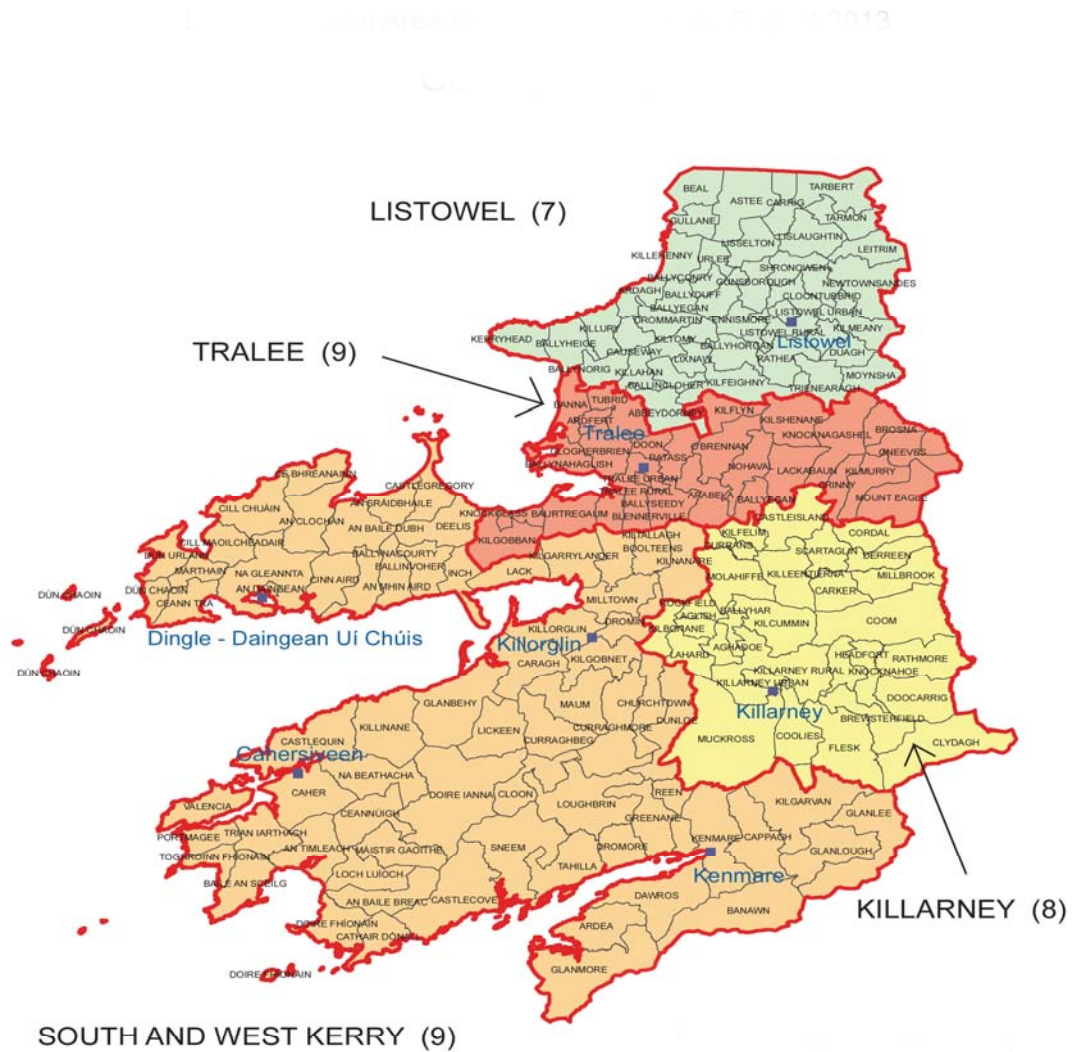
Municipal Districts

Listowel Municipal District (7)

Tralee Municipal District (9)

Killarney Municipal District (8)

South and West Kerry Municipal District (9)



Report on Council Meetings

Council Meetings are held on the third Monday of each month with the exception of August when no Ordinary Meeting is held. Meetings are held in the Council Chamber at Áras an Chontae, Rathass, Tralee. The Council met on 16 occasions during 2015.

During 2015 the following major decisions were made by Council:

- Making of the Kerry County Development Plan 2015 – 2021
- Adoption of the 2015 Community Support Fund Guidelines
- Adoption of the Policy on 2016 Commemorations
- Adoption of Variation No. 2 to the Tralee Town Development Plan 2009 – 2015
- Adoption of Variation No. 3 to the Killarney Town Development Plan 2009 – 2015
- Adoption of the Annual Budget for 2015
- Adoption of the Student Grant Scheme 2015
- Establishment of the Joint Policing Committee
- Adoption of Variation No. 1 of the Kerry County Development Plan 2015 – 2021.
- Adoption of the Kerry Library Development Plan 2015 – 2020.
- Adoption of the Arts Strategy 2016 – 2021.



Civic / Mayoral / Municipal District Receptions 2015

Civic Receptions 2015

- Castleisland Desmonds Ladies Football Team on winning the All Ireland Intermediate Football Championship 2014.
- Brosna Football Team on winning the AIB All-Ireland Club Junior Football Championship 2014.
- Ardfert Football Team on winning the AIB All-Ireland Club Intermediate Football Championship 2014.
- Kerry Senior Hurling Team who won the Christy Ring Cup and promotion to Division 1B of the Allianz Hurling League.
- Kerry U14 Soccer Team who won the 2015 Kennedy Cup.
- Kerry Athletes who took part in the International Children's Games 2015 at Alkmaar, The Netherlands
- Brendan O'Connell who won a Gold Medal at the Special Olympic World Games 2015 in Los Angeles.

Rose of Tralee Receptions 2015

- Welcoming the 2015 International Roses to Tralee at the Tralee Bay Wetlands Centre
- 2015 Rose of Tralee Centres
- Opening of Rose Walk in the Town Park, Tralee.

Municipal District Receptions 2015

- Mr. John Paul & Kathleen O'Connor, Sásta Sausages to honour their achievement in getting awards for their sausages.
- Naiolann Solais Chidcare Centre, Milltown on receiving the HighScope Ireland Institute Accreditation Award.
- Killarney Unit of the Order of Malta Ambulance Corp to honour their 75 years caring for the community.
- Mick Finucane to honour his outstanding contribution to sport and public life in the County of Kerry
- John Mitchel's U14 Football Team on winning the All-Ireland Féile Competition 2014.
- Kenmare Chamber of Commerce in recognition of Kenmare's success in the Pride of Place Awards.
- Welcome Reception for the Mayor of Pleinfeld
- Visiting French Delegation from Saint Avertin
- Austin Stacks GAA – Hurling and Football Club on winning the 2014 County Championship and the Munster GAA Club Senior Football Championship in 2015.

- Killarney Athletic Football Club in acknowledgement of their 50 years commitment to and promotion of sport.
- Bernie O’Sullivan School of Irish Dancing, Kenmare on their achievements at the WIDA European and World Championships.
- Junior and Intermediate Teams from Intermediate School, Killorglin on winning awards at the National Finals of the Student Local Enterprise Offices Awards.
- Listowel Tidy Towns Committee on winning the Best Small Town Award at the Tidy Town Awards 2015.
- Rathmore Social Action Group on celebrating 40 years serving the Community.
- Dooks Golf Club on winning the Irish Mixed Foursome All Ireland 2015.

Report on Municipal District Meetings 2015

Municipal District	Cathaoirleach	Manager	No. of Meetings
Killarney	Cllr. J.J. Culloty/ Cllr. B. O’Connell	John Breen/ Angela McAllen	11
Listowel	Cllr. M. Kennelly/ Cllr. J. Moloney	John D. Flynn/ Joan McCarthy	9
South & West Kerry	Cllr. M. O’Shea/ Cllr. P. Connor-Scarteen	John D. Flynn/ Martin O’Donoghue	10
Tralee	Cllr. J. Finucane/ Cllr. T. McEllistrim (Mayor of Tralee)	Charlie O’Sullivan	10

Conferences attended by Elected Members in 2015

Conference/Event	Location	No. Attended
Positive Farmers Dairy Conference 2015	Clonmel, Co. Tipperary	1
Governments Construction 2020 Strategy Seminar	Wexford	2
AILG In Service Training on Governance of Local Authorities - Killarney	Killarney	8
Meeting with Minister for Communications re Shannon LNG	Dublin	6
Sustainable Tourism Development Seminar	Galway	6
Meeting at Brú Columbanus	Cork	1
AILG Briefing on National Programme of Events to mark the Centenary of Easter Rising 2016	Dublin	1
Community Planning Seminar	Dublin	1
Oiche Chiarrai	Dublin	1
AILG Second Annual Conference 2015	Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan	11
LAMA Spring Seminar 2015	Tuam, Co. Galway	19
National Planning Conference 2015	Cork City	7
AILG In Service Training on Local Economic Development - Limerick	Radisson Hotel, Limerick	11
Irish Tourism Industry Awards 2015 Ceremony	Dublin	1
89th Annual General Meeting of Irish Public Bodies	Dublin	1
Tourism Forum	Dublin	1
AILG In-Service Training on Local Community Development & LCDC's - Kilkenny	Kilkenny	10
Crime Prevention and Community Safety Seminar	Galway	3
2015 Annual Daniel O'Connell Wreath Laying Ceremony	Glasnevin Cemetery, Dublin	1
AILG In Service Training - Portlaoise	Portlaoise, Co. Laois	1

EU Support Programmes for Irish Regions Conference	Clonakilty, Cork	2
Meeting with the NRA	Dublin	8
AILG In Service Training on Local Authority Finance & Housing - Waterford	Dungarvan, Co. Waterford	14
AILG In Service Training on Local Authority Finance & Housing- Roscommon	Athlone, Co. Roscommon	5
Local Economic and Community Plans Conference	Clonakilty, Cork	1
National Day of Commemoration Ceremony	Dublin	1
Ireland 2016 Centenary Programme Meeting with Local Authorities	Dublin	1
LCDC Information Sessions – July 2015 Limerick	Limerick	2
LCDC Information Sessions - July 2015	Dublin	1
Pobal Regional Support Event for the LCDC	Limerick	1
Changes to Community Development Seminar	Galway	2
Ceremony of Funeral of Jeremiah O Donovan Rossa	Glasnevin Cemetery, Dublin	1
Tidy Towns Awards Ceremony	Dublin	2
Enterprise and Broadband - LEADER Capacity Building Information Session	Tullamore, Co. Offaly	1
The Housing Debate Building our Communities through Integrated Working with Local Government	Maynooth, Co. Kildare	1
Function to mark the 66th Anniversary of the Founding of the People's Republic of China	Dublin	1
AILG Autumn Seminar	Clonakilty, Cork	18
LAMA Autumn Seminar 2015	Kilkenny	21
Ireland 2016 County Plans Launch	Dublin	1

Southern Regional Drug and Alcohol Taskforce Conference	Charleville, Co. Cork	1
AILG In Service Training on Roads, Transportation & Safety - Cork	Cork	8
Meeting with Minister of State Mr Simon Harris	Dublin	7
A Practical Guide to Budget 2016	Clonakilty, Co. Cork	1
AILG In Service Training on Septic Tanks, Ground Water, Water Pollution & Registration of Lobbying Act 2014 - Ballinasloe	Ballinasloe, Co. Galway	1
Engineers Ireland Excellence Awards	Dublin	1
AILG In Service Training on Septic Tanks, Ground Water, Water Pollution & Registration of Lobbying Act 2014 - Ennis	Ennis, Co. Clare	9
AILG In Service Training on Septic Tanks, Ground Water, Water Pollution & Registration of Lobbying Act 2014- Dublin	Dublin	3
Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 Seminar	Galway	5
Local Government Environment Policy - Opportunities for Local Communities Seminar	Carlow	3

Overseas Events attended by Councillors in 2015

Event	Location	Number Attended
Killarney-London Reunion	London	1
Kerry Association London Annual Dinner Dance and St Josephs Home Charity Dance	London	1
Twinning Killarney - Kendal UK	Kendal, Cumbria, United Kingdom	1
London Rose Selection Night 2015	London	1
Visit to the US 2015	New York	1
Twinning Panissieres France	Panissieres, France	1

Payments made to Councillors in 2015

The total payments made to Councillors by Kerry County Council in respect of attendance, authorised by the authority, at a meeting of a prescribed association of local authorities of which the authority is a member, and attendance, authorised by the authority, at a Conference, Seminar, Training event or other meeting or event was €69,978 in 2015. The breakdown of this figure is as follows:

Travel and Subsistence expenses within the State	Travel and Subsistence outside the State
€66,687	€3,291

The amount of registration fees which was paid to organisers for the authorised attendance of elected members at conferences, seminars, training events or other meetings, in 2015 was €26,595.

Other payments made to Councillors in 2015:

Allowance Type	Total amount paid
Cathaoirleach's Allowance	€30,000
Leas Cathaoirleach's Allowance	€5,869
Mayor of Tralee & the Cathaoirligh of Killarney, Listowel and South & West Kerry Municipal Districts	€30,000
Strategic Policy Committee Chair Allowance	€24,000
Mobile Phone Allowance	€1,996
Annual Allowance	€215,980
Representational Payments	€546,645
Gratuities/Ex-gratia payments	€15,505

Zhejiang Cultural Festival 2015

For a number of years, Kerry County Council has been developing links with the Zhejiang Province in China. As part of the ongoing development of this relationship, a Cultural Festival was organised in July 2015.

The Vice-Governor of the Province, Mr Jiwei Zheng and the Chinese Ambassador to Ireland, Mr Jianguo Xu visited Tralee on Saturday, 25th July 2015 to officially open the Festival.

An exhibition titled the 'Zhejiang Re-Design Exhibition' took place in Kerry County Museum and a traditional Chinese music concert by the Butterfly Troupe took place in Siamsa Tíre. The Butterfly Troupe is a traditional Chinese orchestra affiliated with the Zhejiang Opera and Dance Drama Theatre.



Director's Report on Job Creation & Sustainable Economic Development

Director of Services: Michael McMahon/ Michael Scannell (Acting)

Senior Staff:

Kerry Local Enterprise Office:

Tomás Hayes (Head of LEO)

Tourism Development & Built Infrastructure Unit

Joan McCarthy (Senior Executive Officer)

Capital Infrastructure Unit

Tom Sheehy (Senior Engineer)

Planning & Sustainable Development Unit

Paul Stack (Senior Engineer)

Kerry National Road Design Office

Paul Curry (Senior Engineer)

Kerry Local Enterprise Office

The Kerry Local Enterprise Office demonstrated a good performance in 2015. The transition of systems and integration with the Local Authority was well advanced at year's end. Office refurbishment within the main County Building had commenced in December.

Key Achievements 2015

- The Approvals & Evaluation Committee met on five occasions in 2015.
- 39 projects have been approved funding of €536,125. A further 3 projects had been approved funding in principle to a value of €42,500. This support has the potential to create 73 full time and 17 part time jobs within 2 years and additional further employment.
- A total of €279,394 was paid to approved projects over the course of the year and at year end, the Local Enterprise Office had €351,380 committed to new projects.
- A total of €274,380 was spent on training supports and mentoring with over 1,087 persons attending training programmes and seminars.
- A further €71,867 was spent on Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur Competition with over 70 entries
- 75 businesses were approved Trading Online Vouchers (TOVs) and €78,636 was spent on this initiative..
- Microfinance Loans - 20 client businesses were assisted in making loan applications to Microfinance Ireland.
- Student Enterprise Awards – 21 schools participated in the Student Enterprise Awards with over 60 minibusinesses being established by students.
- The 2015 Kerry Enterprise Month was delivered in March with sister agencies including the ITT, EI and local Development Companies.
- The LEO was closely involved in the 2015 Cork Kerry Food Forum and National Women's Enterprise Day
- Ongoing support was provided to the Kingdom Food Network, Original Kerry Craft Network and the Kerry Business Women's Network
- CEDRA Agritourism Funding - The LEO and the Tourism Department in conjunction with "Taste Kerry" submitted a joint funding proposal to the Department of Agriculture and additional funding of €54,900 was secured for a range of activities.
- The LEO continues to work closely with the Innovation Centre Network including Killarney Technology Innovation, Tom Crean Business Centre and the Kerry Food Hub.

Tourism Unit

Project Development:

Destination Kerry

The Council continued to play a lead role in the Destination Kerry Tourism Forum throughout 2015. The Forum is the umbrella group of all the major community, private and public tourism stakeholders in the county and is chaired by Mr. Brendan Tuohy. The work undertaken by the Forum during the year included work on the preparation of the Kerry County Tourism Strategy 2016 to 2021.

The Kerry International Dark-Sky Reserve

The Kerry International Dark-Sky Reserve measures approximately 700 sqkm and includes Kells/Foilmore, Caherciveen, Portmagee, Valentia Island, Dromid, The Glen, Ballinskelligs, Waterville and Derrynane/Caherdaniel. During the year, the Council continued to work with the local communities, together with ACARD, Fáilte Ireland, Udaras na Gaeltachta, South Kerry Development Partnership, Kerry Education Training Board, University College Cork, Cork Institute of Technology and the Institute of Technology Tralee to develop an Astro tourism strategy for the Region. Specifically, signage was erected and a sky monitor provided to the local second level school, Coláiste na Sceilge. The Council is working closely with ACARD on their proposal to develop a planetarium in Caherciveen.

Wild Atlantic Way (WAW)

The Council continued to progress plans with Fáilte Ireland to develop signature viewing points for the Skelligs and Blasket Islands and the completion of works on a number of Discovery Points along the Kerry section, which is the longest section of the Wild Atlantic Way. During 2015, the Council, partnered with other State Agencies and Netfeasa (a Kerry based IT Company), worked on a pilot project to provide contextualised tourist information via wifi at selected locations throughout the county.



Events supported by the Tourism Unit:

The Connect Aviation Conference

This conference in Killarney in June 2015 was attended by over 400 delegates representing international airlines. The objective was to showcase Kerry Airport for the purpose of attracting new scheduled and chartered services to Kerry.

Community Tourism, Festivals and Events

Kerry County Council supported approximately 50 festivals and events including events such as the Rose of Tralee, Listowel Writers' Week, Women in Media, Christmas in Killarney and a myriad of local small and large community based activity and sporting events, e.g. marathons, cycle challenges and triathlons.

Community Tourism Initiative for the Diaspora

2015 was the second year of the Community Tourism Initiative for the Diaspora. Kerry County Council adjudicated on the 55 applications received. Within the terms of the Scheme, the Council was in a position to approve 40 events for funding and to award funding totalling at €36,000. These events attracted over 2,500 visitors to the county from overseas.

Original Kerry

The Tourism Unit continues to support Original Kerry, the umbrella marketing group for crafters in the county. In particular, a sign-posted craft trail has been developed with pilot signage being erected in early November 2015.

Taste Kerry

The Tourism Unit worked closely with LEO to secure CEDRA funding to develop food tourism in the county. Just one of the projects included is signage and information brochures for a pilot 'Taste Kerry Food Trail' for South Kerry.

Walkways

In 2015 the Tourism Unit administered grants and provided insurance to the following walking routes: Beara Way, North Kerry Way, Dingle Way and Kerry Way.

Media and Marketing:

During 2015, the Tourism Unit set up and developed social media sites, i.e. Facebook, Twitter (with 2,059 followers) and Instagram using the tagline #Enjoy Kerry. These sites are updated daily and our likes and followers exceed 2,000. 'The Kingdom of Kerry Booklet' was produced by the Destination Kerry Forum Marketing Sub Committee.

The Tourism Unit produces an Events Calendar on a monthly basis giving details of all high profile community, sporting, entertainment and educational up-coming events in the county. The information is sourced and collated within the Unit and the calendar is available on line and as a hard copy publication.

Support was provided to Kerry Trade in participating in the Holiday World Travel Fair and also to the Kerry Tourism Tent at the National Ploughing Championships. Attendance at the

Ploughing Championships facilitated the Tourism Unit in collating tourist information survey material specific to County Kerry from over 390 participants.

Achievements:

Kerry County Council won the Best Local Authority Innovation Award at the inaugural Irish Tourism Industry Awards 2015 which were announced in Dublin in April. The award was presented to the local authority that demonstrated excellence in tourism planning and execution, the provision of tourism facilities and services, marketing, event development and management – including cross county border initiatives and festivals, and the overall contribution made to the local tourism industry.

Built Infrastructure

Tralee Bay Wetlands:

The Wetlands Winter Wonderland experience enjoyed a significant increase in bookings in 2015. In addition, secondary schools in the county were specifically targeted in 2015 having regard to the environmental focus of the Transition Year Programme. A state of the art climbing wall, climbing boulders and a new innovative toddler playground were constructed during 2015 and have been a major attraction. This development was grant aided to the tune of €58,000 and the balance funded by Kerry County Council.

Tralee Bay Wetlands won a silver award for ‘Best in a Marine or Environmental’ category at the inaugural Irish Responsible Tourism Awards in March 2015. The Centre also achieved a second award in October, 2015. This award formed part of the Green Hospitality Programme (GHP) National Responsible Tourism & Travel Awards which are designed to identify and celebrate Travel & Tourism Businesses that are committed to implementing responsible business practices and minimising and reducing their environmental impacts.



Tralee Bay Wetlands Centre

Blennerville Windmill

The restoration and painting of Blennerville Windmill was completed during 2015.

Kerry County Museum

The Museum received the Trip Advisor Certificate of Excellence and has maintained a consistent five-star standard of review.

Killarney Sports and Leisure Centre

Membership numbers indicated an increase on 2014. This increase is attributed to the revised Membership Pricing Scheme introduced during the year. This was the first review undertaken since the centre first opened. The Centre achieved gold standard in the National White Flag Quality Awards in November 2014. The White Flag National Quality Standard grades facilities' operational standards, similar to the Blue Flag award, and it is the most sought after accolade in the leisure industry.

Fenit Harbour Port and Marina

Development at Fenit Harbour Port and Marina during the year may be summarised as follows:

- The demolition of the Old Sea World building and the commencement of a new Assembly Unit for Liebherr Container Cranes Ltd.
- 99 year lease entered into with Tralee Oyster Fisheries Society Ltd. and the subsequent commencement of their new storage and processing unit.
- A Dumping at Sea and a Foreshore licence were granted to enable dredging to take place on the approach channels and alongside where the ships berth.
- Commencement of reparation works to the Lighthouse damaged by the storms of February 2014.

Planning and Development

Planning Control

The improving economic climate was reflected in a continuing increase in activity levels in planning control with 1,176 planning applications received during 2015, an 18% increase on the 2014 figure. This further increase in activity was in line with other rural local authorities around the country and may be an indication that the decline in applications during the past number of years has bottomed out. Changes introduced by Section 28 of the Planning & Development (Amendment) Act 2010, has resulted in a considerable number of applications for extensions of duration of planning permissions with 73 such applications received in 2015.

Forward Planning

During 2015, the following areas were progressed:

- Work commenced on a new Development Contribution Scheme in compliance with National Guidelines
- Design Briefs have been prepared for a number of Opportunity Sites identified in the adopted Local Area Plans and this will continue in 2016.
- The preparation of Variations to the County Development Plan 2015-21 and the Tralee, Killarney and Listowel Town Development Plans 2009-15.
- The Environmental Unit has reviewed all plans and projects undertaken by the Council and other agencies ,including SEA (Strategic Environmental Assessment), HDA (Habitats Directive Assessment), EIA Screenings and SFRA (Strategic Flood Risk Assessment) along with assessing planning applications.
- The Economic Development Unit has identified and assessed a number of opportunity/industrial sites throughout the county for their developmental potential. The EDU has engaged with the LEO and LCDC on various projects. The EDU successfully sourced funding for the development of the Denny Site under the Designated Urban Centre Grant Scheme.

Conservation Office

The Conservation Officer is responsible for the delivery of technical advice and guidance in relation to the protection of the built heritage. The key role is to conserve Kerry's rich architectural heritage while ensuring its sustainability into the future. The County has 1,255 protected structures along with a wealth of vernacular heritage which plays a vital role in terms of tourism, landscape character, the local economy and sense of place.

Key achievements in 2015:

- Successful administration of the Structures at Risk Fund with a total allocation of €35,000 which prevented serious deterioration of protected structure in Portmagee
- Publication and launch of The Home Place: An Inventory of Traditional Rural Architecture in North and East Kerry

- Eleven Section 57 Declarations (relating to protected structures) were completed during 2015, almost a threefold increase on the 2014 figure.
- Conservation advice delivered for planning applications to inform development of protected structures, development within Architectural Conservation Areas and assessment of proposed demolitions in terms of impact on the County's built heritage
- Recommendations made in relation to protected structures to safeguard against dereliction
- Conservation input into Local Authority development for Part 8 planning proposals
- Assistance to local community groups including role in the publication of the Kenmare Main Street Architectural Conservation Toolkit, launched in December 2015
- Pre planning advice to developers of built heritage structures and traditional vernacular architecture on development potential and design guidance

Heritage Office

Kerry County Council's Heritage Office works to promote an awareness, interest, and pride in the abundant heritage assets to be found in our county. The office plays an important role in advising on the potential impact that development proposals may have and works closely with various partners to ensure that the vast heritage found in County Kerry is being protected, promoted and enhanced, at a local and national level.

Technical Assistance has been given to the following in 2015

- Historic Towns Initiative in association with Failte Ireland, the Heritage Council and the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
- Failte Ireland: Wild Atlantic Way Initiative.
- Heritage Trail Development – urban and rural.
- Heritage Tourism initiatives with NEKD, SKDP.
- Béaloideas Chiarraí and various other local Folklore Groups.
- Various Tidy Towns Group Initiatives.
- Heritage in Schools Scheme.
- Decade of Commemoration Policy Formation and Event Planning.
- National Monuments Service Audit of Storm Damage.
- Irish Wildlife Trust
- Birdwatch Ireland
- Killorglin Archive Project
- Killorglin Folklore & History Society Events
- Abbeydorney Ploughing Society Agricultural Heritage Project
- Tarbert Development Association
- Tralee Bay Heritage Association
- Dingle/Corca Dhuibhne Timeline
- Kenmare Bay Project Community Group
- Kerry Japanese knotweed survey and awareness project
- Kerry County Museum
- Comhchoiste Gaeltacht Uíbh Rathaigh
- Kerry Earth Education Project
- Planning Applications

The County Archaeology Department has responsibilities in the following areas:

- Archaeological Impact Assessment/Monitoring/Test Excavation
- Historic Graveyards
- Planning and Policy
- Recording and preservation of the archaeology of the county



Recently excavated portal tomb at Killaclohane, Milltown

Key Performances 2015

- Archaeological Impact Assessment completed for nine projects
- Archaeological monitoring undertaken in relation to three projects
- Archaeological testing undertaken for one project
- Archaeological excavation in relation to one project
- Ministerial Consent applications for two projects
- Recommendations made in relation to 336 planning applications with subsequent assessment of submitted reports and secondary comment where necessary
- Assisted local community groups: erection of graveyard plan and information at Abbeydorney; carrying out clearance and survey work at Cill Buaine early ecclesiastical complex; carrying out geophysical survey with a view to longer term reconstruction of Caher Saidbhin fort
- Conservation and excavation undertaken at Killaclohane portal tomb, Milltown the oldest surviving structure in the county (oldest burial monument) and evidence of early settlement in the Milltown area around 4,000BC.
- Creation of innovative educational website detailing the process of excavation at Killaclohane aimed a primary and secondary schools including text, photography, audio and video elements
- Lecture at Eigse na Brideoige, Ballinskelligs
- Presentation at Star Power Seminar, Cahersiveen
- Involved in meetings and committees in relation to archaeology and heritage as part of the Tourism Strategy

Capital Infrastructure Unit

The Capital Infrastructure Unit is responsible for the design, planning and development of Kerry County Council infrastructure projects in cooperation with and on behalf of other sections of the Council. The section includes the Housing Capital Design Office, Mitchel's Regeneration Design Office and the Energy Management Section. The section also assists in the completion of the Piers and Harbours Programme as well as the development of tourism projects including the Greenways and cycle facilities throughout the county.

During 2015, the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) and planning process for the **South Kerry Greenway** were advanced. The project was brought to the route selection stage and work will continue during 2016 on the completion of this project.



South Kerry Greenway

The **Tralee Active Travel Project** was also progressed through the preliminary design stage in preparation for the commencement of the work during 2016. This project has three core elements including the introduction of two-way traffic flows on Denny Street and the introduction of cycleways, the enhancement of the public realm in the Mall and the development of a cycleway from the Institute of Technology to Blennerville.

The **Rock Street to Edward Street Walkway** was completed and opened to the public in December 2015. This project is another element of the broader strategy of reducing the reliance on motorised vehicles through the development of an integrated cycle friendly network linking population centres to the town centre.

Energy Section

The Energy Section of the Capital Infrastructure Unit completes energy efficiency improvement projects, ensures value for money where energy consuming equipment is installed (e.g. lighting and heating systems, pumps and electric motors) and progresses the utilisation of renewable energy technologies. The Energy Section also tenders for the supply of electricity to the Local Authority (LA) and reports on LA energy consumption to the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) as required by SI 426 of 2014.

Overview of Energy Use

The total expenditure on energy in Kerry County Council in 2015 was €3,088,356. Renewable energy sources utilized by the Council in 2015 include solar thermal and solar PV, wood pellet and wood chip. Heat pump and CHP technology is also utilised at various Council properties to minimize primary energy consumption. Every year Kerry County Council compiles the annual energy consumption data for the preceding year; the total primary energy consumption in 2015 was 42.6 GWh divided between electricity (26,871 MWh) and thermal (4,015 MWh) and transport (11,757 MWh).

Actions Undertaken in 2015

Kerry County Council has made much progress in the area of energy conservation in recent years by utilising renewable energy in the form of wood pellet, wood chip, solar thermal, photovoltaic, heat pumps, high efficiency boilers and lighting and energy management practices to reduce expenditure and improve energy efficiency. The achievements in this area in 2015 include:

- As part of the Department of Environment Community and Local Government (DOECLG) energy improvement scheme, some 400 LA houses received energy upgrade improvements in the form of cavity wall insulation and attic insulation.
- Construction has commenced and is ongoing on seven new LA houses, all to a BER A3 rating. Five of these new houses are located in the Mitchel's regeneration area and will be connected to the existing woodchip fired district heating plant located at Tobar Naofa.
- All new houses in the Mitchel's regeneration area will be connected to the wood chip district heating system. Kerry County Council are participating in an Intelligent Energy Europe project called Smart Reflex which focuses on the use of renewable energy in district heating systems in European cities and towns. This project is providing the Council with access to expert district heating specialist from Denmark. Through this link the Council are assessing the efficiency of the Biomass boiler and making appropriate adjustments and corrections to the system to improve its efficiency.
- Kerry County Council Senior Management Team approved an updated Energy Management Plan that reflects the new Local Authority Structure and commitment has been received from management to support the implementation of an ISO 50001 certified Energy Management System for the organisation.
- The Energy Section collated and submitted energy consumption data for 2014 for all KCC operations to SEAI in line with SI 426 of 2014.
- 2.18 GWh of electricity with a value of €45,709 was generated from Land Fill Gas at North Kerry Land Fill in 2015. This project also serves to remove the financial burden of flare and collection infrastructure maintenance from the Local Authority
- Tendering for supply of electricity to unmetered sites was completed through the National Procurement Service in October 2015

Kerry National Road Design Office

Scheme Closeouts

The closing out of the final accounts for the N21 Castleisland Bypass and N22 N69 Tralee Bypass schemes were completed after arbitration and conciliation processes yielded settlements with the contractor.

Scheme Planning Consents

In early 2015, An Taisce sought a Judicial Review of the An Bord Pleanála decision in 2014 to approve the N86 Dingle to Annascaul and Gortbreagogue to Camp EIS and confirm the CPO. This led to further delays to the scheme development. In December 2015, the Commercial Court dismissed the An Taisce appeal thereby enabling the scheme to be progressed.



N86 road

Scheme Planning and Development

The CPO / EIS documentation for the N69 Listowel Bypass was prepared and the scheme Business Case was submitted to Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and the Department of Transportation, Tourism and Sport (DTTAS) for approval.

Note: DTTAS have since referred the documentation to the Dept. of Public Expenditure and Reform for their approval.

Further design and investigation work advanced on the N70 Kilderry Bends scheme (3.5km long) between Milltown and Killorglin. The CPO documentation was prepared in 2015 and published in early 2016.

The planning of further proposed realignments was advanced on sections of the N70 between Castlemaine to Milltown, at Glanbehy Bridge, between Waterville Bridge and Ballybrack and between Sneem and Blackwater Bridge.

On the N72 the planning and development of a realignment at Stagmount (between Barradubh and Rathmore) advanced.

In the case of the N86 Dingle to Annascaul and Gortbreagogue to Camp scheme, the planning of the first phase (between Ballynasare Lower and Lispole and between Ballygarret and Camp) advanced with the commencement of the preparation of the Tender documents as well as the associated site investigations with a view to commencing construction in mid 2016.

Schemes at Construction

The final design for realignment works to 1.6km of the N71 between Releagh and Letterdunane was completed. The land was secured and NRA approval was granted which enabled construction to commence in 2015. The scheme is expected to open in Q3 2016.

Key Achievements 2015

National Primary and Secondary:

- Final Account resolution on the N21 Castleisland Bypass and N22 N69 Tralee Bypasses.
- Successful outcome to the Judicial Review on the N86 sought by An Taisce
- CPO documentation prepared and ready to publish for the N70 Kilderry Bends Scheme.
- Kerry NRDO received CPD reaccreditation by Engineers Ireland until 2018.

Director's Report on Sustainable Communities / Quality of Life

Director of Services: John Breen

Senior Staff:

Housing & Social Support

Kathleen Moriarty (A/Senior Executive Officer)

Community Services & Engagement

Michael Scannell (Senior Executive Officer)

Environmental Protection

Liam Quinlan (Senior Executive Officer)

Kerry Fire Service

Michael Hession (Chief Fire Officer)

Housing and Social Support

Housing Overview

2015 saw increased demands and increased delivery activity in the area of Housing and Social Support. The Council currently has a rented housing stock of 3,957 units as detailed in the table below. This is a substantial Housing stock to manage and maintain. A total of 4,317 housing maintenance requests were received in 2015, 96% of these requests were completed by year end. The breakdown of requests received across the four Municipal Districts is as follows:

Municipal District	% of Overall Housing Stock	% of Housing Maintenance Requests Received
South & West	25%	24%
Killarney	17%	22%
Listowel	23%	18%
Tralelee	35%	36%
Total	100%	100%

The number of qualified applicants on the housing list at year end was 5,073 households. Single person households make up the largest household type (50%) followed by single adult with a child or children (22%) with the remaining 30% being made up of two or more adults with or without children.

- 29% of the applicants have an Area of Choice in the Killarney MD
- 18% of the applicants have an Area of Choice in the South & West MD
- 44% of the applicants have an Area of Choice in the Tralee MD
- 9% of the applicants have an Area of Choice in the Listowel MD

The age profile of our qualified housing main applicants shows that the majority are in the 25-40 year old age group (50%) and that 7% of the main applicants are over the age of 60 years. This trend remains consistent with recent years

In terms of activity levels, a total of 688 new housing applications were received in 2015. 2015 was the first full year in which a consolidated county-wide housing service was provided in Kerry.

Social housing need is now increasingly met through various leasing arrangements between Kerry County Council and private landlords due to the continued curtailment of Exchequer capital funding. These options have become the main housing delivery mechanism for households who are unable to meet their housing needs from their own resources.

The Housing Section also provides community and development supports and tenancy management services to help tenants within their communities. We also continue to actively engage with tenants and local authority borrowers in relation to debt resolution and apply the Mortgage Arrears Resolution Process.

Housing Allocations

The Council made a total of 146 Council housing allocations from its own stock in 2015.

Housing Programme 2015 - 2017

In early 2015, a €62m Housing Investment package for the provision of Social Housing in Kerry for the period to the end of 2017 was approved. This package of capital and current funding includes provision for development of capital schemes by the local authority itself, the purchase of houses, the continued acquisition of properties through the RAS and leasing schemes and provision for supply by the Approved Housing Bodies. In total there are 1,058 units of accommodation included in the programme to be provided through the above various methods over the coming three years.

House Purchase Programme

The Council completed the purchase of 35 houses by the end of December 2015 as part of the Housing Construction and Acquisition Programme 2015 – 2017, which was in excess of our house purchase target for 2015 of 30 houses. The breakdown by Municipal District is as follows: 10 houses in Tralee, 9 in Killarney, 6 in South and West and 10 in Listowel. The target for purchase for 2016 is 40 houses and we continue to seek suitable houses for purchase in the County.

Voids Programme

In 2015, works on a total of 126 houses were funded through the Voids Programme and the RAS Reserve in 2015. The aim of this programme was to return vacant properties to productive use in order to meet the needs of qualified housing applicants. This facilitated the return of 126 vacant properties in an energy efficient condition in order to re-let to qualified housing applicants.

Energy Efficiency Measures

In 2015 Kerry County Council again focused on the retrofitting of insulation and other energy efficiency measures to older local authority stock using available Department of Environment, Community & Local Government funding. The main beneficiaries of these retro-fitting works are our tenants who will have warmer and more energy efficient homes.

The Council carried out energy efficiency improvement works under this Programme in 2015 to 351 houses across the four Municipal Districts, thus improving roof, wall and cavity insulation and the overall energy efficiency and fabric of Council houses. Total expenditure was €457,892 claimed from DOECLG. The breakdown of houses across the four Municipal Districts is as follows:

- South & West - 96 houses
- Killarney - 121 houses
- Listowel - 65 houses
- Tralee - 69 houses



Housing Grants

In 2015, the Council issued 396 grant allocations under the Housing Adaptation Grants for Older People and People with a Disability Grant Schemes totaling €2.09m. A total of 436 grant applications were made to the Council in 2015, reflecting an approval rate of 90%. The 396 Grants allocated are broken down across the three types of grants as follows:

- Mobility Aids Grants - 161 issued - €0.660m
- Housing Aid for Older People - 142 issued – €0.389m
- Housing Adaptation Grants - 93 issued - €1.042m

Demand for the scheme continues to exceed funding available and a prioritisation system is in place. Overall, this programme continues to offer immense benefits for the living conditions of eligible elderly and disabled household members in our community as well as a welcome stimulus package to local trades and businesses.

Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS)/Social Leasing

The RAS Scheme continued to operate very successfully in 2015 and targets qualified applicants who are in long term-receipt of rent supplement. The target for delivery of units under the RAS and Leasing schemes was 260 units and 261 were delivered. We now have over 900 active RAS contracts providing a much needed social housing option to those in need of housing. We continue to seek suitable properties for leasing on a continuous basis.



National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability 2011-2016

A Housing and Disability Steering Group for Kerry was established in 2014 in accordance with the National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability 2011-2016. The purpose of this group is to facilitate integrated and timely responses to the housing needs of people with physical, intellectual, mental and sensory disabilities by the various statutory and voluntary organisations working with the disability sector in Kerry. During 2015 a Strategic Workplan was prepared with a timeframe for delivery of targets. This workplan for housing persons with a disability will be advanced further with the various stakeholders in 2016.

Traveller Accommodation Programme

During 2015 the focus of our Traveller accommodation programme was on the continued enhancement and improvement of facilities on our halting sites. During the latter part of the year work was commenced on enhancing the fire safety aspects of our traveller halting sites in light of the tragic loss of life in the halting site fire at Carrickmines in Dublin. Applications were made to the Department during the year for additional accommodation units for some of our halting sites.

Refugee Resettlement Programme

During 2015 Kerry County Council was requested by the Department of Justice to engage with the Refugee Resettlement Programme wherein programme refugees are invited into the country and resettled in communities. The council established an interagency working group to manage this request, chaired by the Director of Services for Housing. Resettlement is a complex area requiring significant contributions from all stakeholders. At year end, 10 families had been successfully settled in Kerry, two in Killarney and eight families in Tralee. All school going children have been registered and started in school.

Voluntary Housing

During the past year we continued to work closely with Voluntary Housing Bodies and a total of 40 housing units throughout the county were secured in 2015 for accommodating qualified housing applicants through the Voluntary Bodies. Six units were secured in Killarney, seven in Kenmare, six in Dingle, 15 in Tralee and six in Killorglin. Allocations to some of these houses are currently in train.

Adaptation Works to Council Houses

Work was carried out to 35 properties such as bathroom adaptations, stairlifts, ramps etc during 2015 with a total expenditure of €152,014. Funding under this Scheme is welcome as it allows tenants to remain in their homes with minor adaptations.

Homeless Services

The Council continues to assist in the housing needs of homeless persons through our Homeless Information Centre and through the provision of a range of homeless accommodation. In 2015, a total of 691 persons presented at the service seeking assistance and advice. Following assessment 149 persons were accommodated through the Homeless Information Centre.

Community Services and Engagement

Key Achievements 2015:

The Kerry Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) held nine meetings during 2015. It is responsible for delivering the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) and the Rural Development (LEADER 2014-2020) Programme within the county. Significant progress was made during the year in progressing these programmes. In addition there was a major focus on building relationships with both the internal membership of the LCDC and other agencies and particularly with the local development companies.

- Work continued on the preparation of the community elements of a 6 year **Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP)** including preparing a Socio-Economic Profile of the County, agreeing the Socio-Economic Statement and High Level Goals and developing specific objectives and actions to be achieved over the life of the plan.
- The PPN - Public Participation Network (which replaced the Community & Voluntary Forum) was established in 2015. Re-registration of community groups commenced in May 2015 and the PPN is organised as follows:
- At Municipal level - a Municipal District PPN has been established in each of the four municipal areas
- At County level - a County Plenary has been established, which is ruling body of the PPN.

The Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 (LEADER) is a major area of work for the LCDC. Significant progress was made during the year in agreeing the structures for LEADER, preparing the Expressions of Interest for the LCDC to act as the Local Action Group for the county and developing a Local Development Strategy (LDS). Delivery of this programme is expected to commence in 2016.

The **Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP)**, the primary social inclusion programme of government for 2015-2017, was rolled out in Kerry in April. Following a tendering process, contracts were awarded to Programme Implementers for the delivery of services in each of the three Kerry Lots (overall budget for programme is €1.22m). The LCDC as the contracting authority is required to monitor and review the implementation of the programme on the ground.

Pride of Place:

Kerry County Council in conjunction with the Secretariat of the PPN nominated three projects to represent Kerry in the National Awards for 2015:

- Young People in the Community Initiative Category - KDYS (Kerry Diocesan Youth Service)
- Community Health Initiative Category - Kerry Traveller Health & Community Development project
- Populations over 2,000 Category - Listowel Town

Kerry groups took two top prizes. Listowel Town took runner up place in the main competition in the category for neighbourhoods with populations more than 2,000 people. Kerry Traveller Health and Community Development Project Health Action Zone Project took one of the Special Awards announced at the ceremony.



Pride of Place 2015

Kerry Joint Policing Committee

The purpose of the Kerry JPC is to provide a forum where the local authority, the Garda Síochána, Oireachtas members and community interests can consult, discuss and make recommendations on matters affecting the policing of the area. A six year strategic plan was developed during the year to give focus the work of the JCP in addressing the issues affecting the County.

Comhairle na nÓg

Comhairle na nÓg is a forum for structured input into decision-making by children and young people in the development of local services and policies to be supported and resourced appropriately by relevant statutory and voluntary organisations in the county/city. Members of the Comhairle were elected at a county Comhairle na nÓg AGM in October 2015. An additional 65 young people were accepted and they will be accommodated through the establishment of four sub committees which will meet in each of the four Municipal Districts.

Community Support Fund

Introduced in 2015, through the decision of the Elected Council, the Community Support Fund is a flexible mechanism to allow funding reach deserving communities. A total of €750,000 funded 316 projects divided among the four Municipal Districts as follows:

Killarney	€259,000	(60 projects funded)
Listowel	€118,000	(64 projects funded)
South & West	€120,000	(123 projects funded)
Tralee	€253,000	(69 projects funded)

Kerry Recreation and Sports Partnership (KRSP)

Key achievements during 2015:

- Safeguarding Workshops: This training enables sports leaders to implement best practice in protecting the welfare of participants; Safeguarding 2 – Club Children’s Officer Workshops - This training enables the Club Children’s Officers to create a child centred focus within club setting.
- Sports First Aid training: Two workshops delivered - 40 participants
- Physical Activity Leaders (PALS) Training: One course delivered - 25 older adults
- Kerry’s Safer Cycling Programme: 11 schools - 348 students’ county wide participated in programme.

Physical Activity Programmes

- Swim for All, an eight week swim programme catering for children and young adults with a disability – 45 participants in 2015.
- Xcessible Tag Rugby: An eight week programme aimed at children with an intellectual disability – 34 participants in 2015

Mass Participation Events

- Operation Transformation National Walk had over 1,000 walkers
- National Bike Week – two Pedal in the Park events with over 300 participants and two bike maintenance workshops with 42 participants
- Parkrun: an international programme offering free 5k runs every Saturday morning in local parks. During 2015, 2 parkruns were established – Tralee Parkrun & Killarney Parkrun with participant numbers growing weekly.

Arts Office

In 2015 the Arts Office awarded grants countywide under the Arts Act 2003 towards:

- Stimulating public interest in the arts
- Promoting knowledge and appreciation of the arts
- Improving standards in the arts

Over €27,540 was awarded across 53 applications countywide. Support to individual artists and groups:

- €7,000 was awarded via the Artist in schools schemes;
- €7,000 was awarded in individual artist bursaries.
- €68,800 was awarded between six groups across the county under Contributions to voluntary organisations to support artistic program and development, to encourage engagement with target audiences and to promote platforms for arts practitioners.

The 2015 work programme (€52,000) included the following initiatives led by the Arts Office, co-funded by the Arts Council:

- Writer in Residence programme
- Art for the Young at Heart
- Dancer in Residence programme
- Community dancer in residence
- Film-Maker in residence programme



Dancer in Residence



CD Launch

Culture Night 2015

34 events across the county were supported by Kerry County Council and the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. The programme aims to support artists, to develop arts practitioners and audiences as well as art form development. www.culturekerry.com

Kerry Music Education Partnership

Partnership development remains on-going with lead partner Kerry Education and Training Board and support partners Institute of Technology, Technology and Ealaíon na Gaeltachta. There is also a Singer Songwriter Mentoring Initiative, co-funded by the Arts Councils on behalf of Kerry Music Education Partnership.

Sliabh Luachra Music Trail

An Arts Tourism partnership project with Cork County Council - www.sliabhluchra.ie The Sliabh Luachra Young Musician of the Year Award 2015 was presented to Brian O'Leary by the Cathaoirleach of Kerry County Council, Cllr Pat McCarthy in March.

Kerry Screen Commission

The Arts Office is home to the Kerry Screen Commission working closely with the Irish Film Board. We dealt with numerous location queries for film, TV, commercial and documentaries in 2015. The highest profile film to partly locate in Kerry in 2015 was Star Wars: The Force Awakens. The Kerry Screen Commission website is www.kerryfilm.ie

1916 Commemorations

Since November 2014, the Arts Office has been the official Kerry 2016 Office, developing policy and programming for the Kerry 1916 Commemorations. The office organised nine public meetings around the county and oversaw Kerry County Council's 2016 Commemoration Fund, supported by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. Awards were made to over 66 organisations across the county who planned events to mark 1916.



Launch of Kerry 1916/2016 Commemorative Programme

Kerry Libraries

Kerry County Council operates nine full time branch libraries at Ballybunion, Caherciveen, Castleisland, An Daingean, Kenmare, Killarney, Listowel and Tralee. Two Mobile Libraries and a local history and archives service operate from Library Headquarters.

The number of items borrowed at Kerry's libraries during 2015 was 645,273. While the final figure was down slightly (just 2,260 books or 0.3% less than 2014), library usage county wide is quite strong. Tralee continues to be the busiest library with 155,573 items borrowed while it is great to note a 6% increase in usage at Ballybunion Library.

The number of individual visits to libraries was 464,450, an increase of 6.64% on 2014. During 2015, a wide consultation process was undertaken to help inform the new Library Development Plan 2016 – 2021 and it was adopted by Kerry County Council in November 2015. This will guide the service over the next six years and will help focus on both continuing core existing library services and the implementation of new and more tailored services for all members of the public.

A revised Kerry Library website **www.kerrylibrary.ie** was launched in March. The website was developed in house by Library staff and the IT Department of Kerry County Council. Its main features include 24 hour access to the library catalogue, a facility for members of the

public to request and renew books online, access for library members to a range of online sources including national and international newspapers, languages and music online, World Book and Encyclopaedia Britannica.

During 2015, there were 93,485 usages of the library online resources, a 41% increase on 2014. The implementation of a computerised service was initiated to facilitate usage by the numerous Book Clubs throughout the county. Additional stock was purchased and a dedicated catalogue was printed. The library advanced its programme of digitisation of the Kerry local newspaper holdings. All of the 19th century and some 20th century newspapers are now viewable online and searchable at each library throughout the county.

Other services

Burial Grounds

Kerry County Council operates and maintains 153 burial grounds, 92 of which are classified as archaeologically protected sites under the National Monuments Acts including Burial Grounds previously operated by the Town Councils. The Council currently works with more than 50 community groups and provides funding to many of them for the upkeep and maintenance of the cemeteries. The provision of this funding is based on the submission by the community groups of programmes of work which are subject to the approval of the Community Department. This co-operation has contributed to substantial improvements in many burial grounds across the county and the Council is highly appreciative of this assistance.

Key Achievements in 2015:

- Construction of an extension to the Burial Ground at Abbey Island, Derrynane was completed in 2015 and is now fully operational.
- The part 8 planning process for extensions to Causeway and old Kilcummin Burial Grounds and a new Burial Ground for Lixnaw were completed in 2015 and it is anticipated that these burial grounds will be constructed during 2016.
- The Council has carried out significant works at a number of burial grounds as part of an ongoing Improvement Programme. This includes the provision of paths and headstone plinths, and improvements to entrances, gates, walls, drainage etc. Capital improvements were carried out in 2015 at Killaha, Kilmoyley, Kenmare, St. John's Castleisland and New Cemetery Killarney and Ardmoneel Killorglin Burial Grounds. Works of a similar nature will continue in 2016.

Public Conveniences

Kerry County Council owns and operates public conveniences at 33 locations throughout the County which includes the public conveniences previously operated by Town Councils. This programme involves caretaking, maintenance and repairs and refurbishment works.

The operational arrangements for these facilities are varied. Seven of the facilities, located at Ballybunion, Portmagee, Sneem, Waterville, Cromane, Kells and Knightstown, are operated by local community groups on behalf of the Council. The Council is most appreciative of the outstanding works of these local groups.

Environmental Protection

The Environmental Protection Section continued to play a crucial role in maintaining our reputation as being a pristine place and clean environment in which to live and to visit given the significant role which tourism plays in the economy of the county.



Waste Recycling

Recycling facilities were provided in 2015 at the four Transfer Stations in Killarney, Milltown, Kenmare and Caherciveen, and the Civic Amenity site at Ionad Athchúrsála agus Dramhaíola Chorca Dhuibhne in Lispole as well as an extensive bring bank network for glass, steel and aluminium cans throughout the county:

- 5,319 tonnes of recyclables were accepted at the above waste facilities and bring bank network in 2015.
- There are 98 Bring Banks locations throughout the county. These were maintained by Kerry County Council staff and there was also 32 Community Groups involved in the Adopt a Bring Bank Scheme.

Waste Disposal

5,028 tonnes of residual waste was deposited at our waste facilities in 2015 which is collected by a third party selected under a competitive procurement process for recovery and disposal.

Kerry County Council ceased accepting waste at the North Kerry Landfill site in July 2014 with the EPA waste licence remaining operational for a period of three years following its closure in accordance with Section 49 of the Waste Management Act with further extension of the licence possible. Having regard to the need to explore the potential to develop alternative activities which optimise the land use and provide a revenue supply to the authority to help with ongoing management costs, a market sounding exercise was undertaken in 2015 in respect of the entire site including the undeveloped area consisting of 26 acres and an assessment panel was formed to consider the submissions received.

Environmental Regulation

Litter, Water Quality, Air, and Noise Pollution Monitoring and Enforcement

141 complaints of alleged water pollution were received in 2015. Enforcement and implementation of both the Shannon and South Western River Basin Management Plans (adopted in accordance with the EU Water Framework Directive) continued throughout the year based on priorities set out in the plans

There were no major oil pollution incidents in 2015.

44 reports were investigated in 2015 under the Air Pollution Acts. The breakdown of reported pollution during 2015 is as follows:

Type of reported pollution	Number
Litter Pollution	787
Noise Pollution	17
Water Pollution	141
Air Pollution	44
Total	989

Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems National Inspection Plan Kerry County Council is responsible for carrying out inspections of Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems in County Kerry under the EPA's National Inspection Plan. A total of 67 such inspections were carried out in 2015 in accordance with selection criteria as set out by the DECLG.

Southern Regional Waste Management Plan 2015-2021

The Southern Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2021 was launched in May 2015 and adopted by Kerry County Council and the nine other local authorities which make up the southern region and sets out how as a region we intend to manage our wastes in a safe and compliant manner, with a clear strategy, with policies and actions required. All local authorities will have a significant role in its implementation supported by the Southern Region Waste Management Planning Office.

Waste Enforcement Regional Authorities

Towards the end of 2015 the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government advised of the establishment of Waste Enforcement Regional Authorities for each of the three Waste Management Planning Regions in the country. Cork County Council

is the new Waste Enforcement Regional Lead Authority for the Southern Waste Management Region which includes Kerry. Each of these new Waste Enforcement Regional Lead Authorities (WERLAs) will have responsibility for coordinating waste enforcement actions within regions, setting priorities and common objectives for waste enforcement, ensuring consistent enforcement of waste legislation across the three existing waste management planning regions while still leaving local authority personnel as first responders on the ground to specific breaches of waste legislation.

The establishment of these regional authorities is intended to facilitate a transformation from process driven enforcement, structured around separate implementation of individual regulations, to one that focuses greatest effort on the waste problems and issues that impact most on our environment and to take swift, proportionate and effective action

Environmental Awareness in the Area of Litter and Waste Management

In the area of environmental awareness we continued to operate a comprehensive programme of activities informing all sectors of the community on good environmental practises that will have an impact on issues such as waste collection, litter, water conservation and food waste.

- Adopt a Road Scheme – nine volunteer groups involved
- Adopt a Bottle Bank – 32 volunteer groups involved
- Spring Clean Campaign - 298 volunteer groups took part in the spring clean campaign in 2015 with 81.82 tonnes of waste collected during the Spring Clean period
- Green Schools Programme 2015- 159 Schools participated in the Green School Programme in 2015 and 130 successful schools in Kerry were flying the Green Flag for environmental excellence at the end of 2015.



Blue Flag Beaches

The 2015 season proved a successful one with the county awarded 13 Blue Flags. The following beaches retained their Blue flag status: Baile an Sceilge (Ballinskelligs), Fenit, Ballybunnion South and North, Inch, Kells, Ballyheigue, Maharabeg, Banna, Doire Fhionáin (Derrynane), Ceann Trá (Ventry), White Strand (Caherciveen). Rossbeigh beach regained its

Blue Flag having lost it the previous year due to severe damage caused to the beach in the 2014 storms. Final restoration works to the beach were completed ahead of the 2015 bathing water season.

Bathing Water Results 2015

All 15 bathing areas in the County which includes the blue flag beaches were classified as “excellent” by the Environmental Protection Agency. It is worth noting that while new standards introduced in 2014 are almost twice as strict as those previously applied we continue to achieve excellent results. The category of "Excellent" quality was introduced in respect of the 2014 results and all 15 bathing areas in Kerry achieved this classification. The EPA in its 2015 report noted that all of Kerry County Council identified bathing waters continue to be of excellent quality. During the 2015 bathing season (which is designated as being from 1st June to 15th September), as part of this classification, 252 samples were taken and assessed for microbiological and physico-chemical parameters by Kerry County Council’s Laboratory and reported to the EPA.

Laboratory

The role of Kerry County Council’s laboratory is to monitor the quality of drinking water, rivers, lakes, bathing waters, wastewater discharges and industrial licensed discharges in the county. The Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB) awarded ISO 17025 accreditation to the Laboratory in December 2015, for chemical and microbiological analysis. Achieving this accreditation is formal recognition that the Kerry County Council laboratory delivers a high quality service and is compliant with regulatory requirements and industry best practice. In 2015 the Laboratory sampled approximately 5,500 samples and analysed almost 75,000 tests the breakdown of which is highlighted in the chart below.

Veterinary Service

The veterinary services continues to implement a service level agreement with the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, approving and supervising 15 abattoirs and 16 small meat manufacturing plants throughout the county. All animals slaughtered undergo ante and post mortem veterinary inspection and are consistently of a very high standard. Many of these artisan food producers contribute to the economic social and tourist fabric of the region by providing employment and adding value to locally sourced product. These abattoirs provide a valuable outlet to farmers for a specific type of heavy butchers lamb and traditional heifer that bigger export plants don’t provide. We therefore wish to acknowledge the important role abattoirs play in farming.

Dog Control

The Dog Warden service continues to be one of the most effective services in the country. Kerry County Council maintains a proactive approach, through the Council’s website and in co-operation with a local animal welfare organisation to re-homing unwanted or stray dogs. The total number of dog licences at the end of 2015 was 16,815.

Kerry Fire Service

Key Operational Activity 2015

Operational volumes of work during 2015 showed an overall increase on 2014. The total number of incidents attended increased from 1,016 in 2014 to 1,109 in 2015 and the number of mobilisations had increased from 1,136 in 2014 to 1,255 in 2015. During 2015:

- The number of fire incidents increased by 28%, from 464 in 2014 to 595 in 2015
- The number of Chimney fires decreased by 2%, from 144 in 2014 to 141 in 2015
- The number of Gorse Fires increased by 114%, from 104 in 2014 to 223 in 2015
- There number of RTA incidents decreased by 25%, from 160 in 2014 to 120 in 2015

Our public awareness campaign continues to assist in our efforts at keeping the number of gorse fires at manageable levels. This is also enabled through interagency co-operation and regular engagement with the relevant stakeholders such as Teagasc, IFA, Department of Agriculture, Coillte and the National Parks and Wildlife Service

Community Fire Safety Programme

Under the Smoke Alarm Scheme 2015, a further 100 smoke alarms funded by the DECLG were procured for distribution to vulnerable members of the community in association with the Community Services & Engagement Section. The primary schools programme is also ongoing with basic Fire Safety instruction and Fire Safety packs being provided by Fire Service personnel to third class primary school students.

Fleet Upgrade

The Kerry Fire Service Fleet continued to be upgraded during 2015. A further two Ford Ranger 4x4 Jeeps went into active service during 2015 as part of our programme to provide all stations with 4 x 4 capabilities and to provide on/off road capabilities during severe weather conditions and over harsh mountainous terrain.

Two used Class B Fire Appliances were purchased in the UK during 2015 to ensure that the average fleet age profile is maintained below nine years and that the working life of our frontline appliances is below 15 years.

Building Control Activity 2015

Operational volumes of work during 2015 showed an overall increase on 2014.

- 339 Commencement Notices/7 Day Notices received in 2015 comprising of 396 building notifications
- 200 or 50.5% of the buildings notified were inspected by Officers
- 134 Fire Safety Certificates granted
- 82 Disability Access Certificates granted

Civil Defence

Key Achievements 2015:

- Responded to the severe weather for December 2015 in Tralee, Killarney and Killorglin by supplying sandbags, pumping flood water, patrolling/monitoring the risk areas with 4WD Jeeps for local communities. Set up communications for the emergency response using Tetra radios.
- Responded to the Cliff Road, Glenbeigh emergency response in September to October 2015 in providing emergency services to the local community by constructing an emergency route for 4wd vehicles with Dublin Civil Defence who provided specialist equipment.
- The refurbishment of two Warehouses to garage the Civil Defence Fleet of vehicles at Monavalley Industrial Estate, Tralee
- Replacement of the 1996 Mobile Kitchen with a new 2011 modern vehicle and a 2008 Crew Cab for transporting Welfare Tents. Also a 2007 Hilux jeep has been supplied by the Department.
- Kerry Civil Defence provided two ambulances and crews for the two weeks for Cycle Against Suicide around Ireland.
- Kerry Civil Defence co-ordinated the Medical Plan for the Ring of Kerry Charity Cycle Event for 2015. Over eleven thousand cyclists participated in this event with 140 medical staff including 18 ambulances, three Medical Centres and 24 Doctors. The Tetra Satellite Communication system was used by Civil Defence and was a huge success in its operation.
- Providing medical cover at the national Rowing Coastal Championships at Waterville in 2015.
- Kerry Civil Defence provided training and Certification for Community First Responder groups, GAA Clubs and Department of Social Welfare.
- Requisition the Extraction Demonstration car from University of Limerick to train local volunteers and fire service personnel around the county.
- Provision of medical cover at the Bank of Ireland Charity Cycle around the county for a week from town to town.
- Civil Defence Officer qualified as a Manager of Water & Flood Incidents with rescue 3 from Wales.
- Provided the Welfare unit to assist in Dublin with the Homeless crisis.
- Trained Kerry County Council staff in first aid including Fire Service and Water Services in First Aid Awareness.
- Provided transport for Fire Service personnel to travel to Sligo for BA Training

Director's Report on Operations & Safety

Director of Services: Charlie O'Sullivan

Senior Staff:

Senior Engineer:

Gerry Riordan

A/Senior Engineer:

David Doyle

A/Senior Engineer:

Paul Curry

The **Operations and Safety Directorate** is primarily responsible for:

- the improvement, maintenance and upkeep of the 4,881km county road network
- maintenance and repair of the social housing stock as well as ensuring that vacant properties are brought up to an appropriate standard for re-letting
- the maintenance of public spaces and public facilities
- managing corporate health and safety and road safety
- implementing regulatory functions such as planning enforcement, resolving unfinished housing estates, managing derelict sites and dangerous structures, traffic management, speed limits)
- issuing of licences and permits, taking in charge of estates, public lighting
- the provision and implementation of emergency responses

Strategic Policy Committee:

The inaugural meeting of the Operations Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) was held in January where the work programme for the committee the coming year was agreed. During the year the members considered draft policies on *“Traffic Calming in Residential Estates and Local Roads”* and on the *“Allocation by Members of the Councillor Specific Municipal District Operations Fund”*. The Committee also reviewed the existing hedge-cutting policy and made key recommendations on implementing to ensure greater effectiveness. A discussion document was presented on a draft policy for Public Lighting, given the obligations on the Council to reduce energy consumption and costs, whilst endeavouring to meet the needs of communities for a safe secure environment.

Work Programme:

In accordance with the new statutory provisions, the work programme for the directorate in each Municipal District was set out in our schedule of Municipal District Works Plans agreed by the Municipal District Members in March and in a Service Delivery Plan presented to Council in April. These plans outlined the proposed works to be undertaken with the adopted budget and the grants received.

Quarterly progress reports on the Schedule of Municipal District Work Plans were presented to each of the Municipal District members, allowing for greater accountability at local level on the effective use of resources. 2015 has seen greater engagement with local communities, tidy towns, local voluntary festivals, and businesses in the delivery of our services, with a single point of contact in each municipal district.

The substantive element of the Operations Directorate was the maintenance of the county’s 4,881km of National, Regional and Local Roads. In 2015 €35.19m was invested in the planning, design, development and maintenance of our road network, with €31.59m being provided in state grant aid.

Whilst funding for major capital infrastructure has been limited in the past year, significant progress was made on a number of key infrastructural projects, as follows:-

- The CPO / EIS documentation for the N69 Listowel Bypass was prepared and a scheme Business Case was submitted to Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and the Dept. of Transportation, Tourism and Sport (DTTAS) for approval.

- Detailed design and investigation works were advanced on the N70 Kilderry Bends scheme (3.5km long) between Milltown and Killorglin, with the CPO documentation was prepared in 2015.
- Planning of further proposed realignments were advanced on sections of the N70 between Castlemaine to Milltown, at Glanbehy Bridge, between Waterville Bridge and Ballybrack and between Sneem and Blackwater Bridge.
- Construction commenced on the realignment of the N71 between Releagh and Letterdunane, with grant aid of €2m from Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), which is a strategic tourism route linking South Kerry to West Cork
- The Kenmare Eastern Relief Road, dedicated to Mr. Pat O'Connor-Scarteen, was officially opened by Minister Paschal Donohoe, T.D., Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport on the 26th March.

Most significantly, following over two years of legal challenges in the High Court, approval was granted for the CPO and EIS on the N86 Dingle to Annascaul and Gortbreagogue to Camp scheme. This key access to the Dingle peninsula, attracting a growing number of tourism cyclists, is critical to the future economic development of the county and the decision of the courts was widely welcomed throughout the county. With the financial support from the TII, the planning of the first phase (between Ballynasare Lower and Lispole and between Ballygarret and Camp) was speedily advance to tender stage, with the objective of commencing construction in mid 2016.



N86 scheme

In addition to the above capital projects significant pavement improvement works were carried out in 5.6km of the national secondary road network, 150 km of the Regional and Local road network and on 5 bridges. A number of contracts were awarded for Pavement Improvement Works at N70 Glensk: Killorglin South Approach; Loher / Ballybrack to Loher; Sneem to Drimnabeg Phase 2; Tarbert to County Boundary; Releagh to Letterduane. These schemes are under construction and will be completed in 2016.

A detailed condition survey of the entire non-national road network was commenced, with almost 88% of routes surveyed by year end, with the results being digitally logged in map format, for the first time. This will allow for a more strategic targeting of investment and support the Council in making a strong case on the need for state investment in our road network, which is critically important to the socio-economic development of the county and in supporting rural communities. A detailed breakdown of the results of the survey for the various road classifications and the investment needs will be brought to Council in 2016.

The ability of the Council's workforce to deliver the road works programme effectively and efficiently each year was fundamental in securing an additional grant allocation of €1,125,450 from the Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport for the Restoration Improvement Programme which allowed an additional 14km of roads to be improved.

In early September, the county experienced extreme rainfall, causing localised flooding in a number of areas. In particular, a section of the coastline was eroded, resulting in serious undermining of the local road network in Rossbeigh and isolating vehicular access for a number of families. The resilience of the local community in responding to the immediate challenge of maintaining access to key services was strongly supported by a co-ordinated effort from a cross range of Directorates staff. An innovative design for an alternative access route has been developed, at an estimated cost of €1.1m, with state funding being sought for its construction.

Again in December the county experienced extreme severe weather conditions, which caused significant damage to public infrastructure and individual properties. The Council's Flooding Emergency Plan was activated on three occasions during this period, which highlighted the strengths of the combined efforts of our emergency services (Fire Service, Gardaí H.S.E. and Army) working in partnership with our dedicated outdoor work force and a large number of volunteers, particularly the local Civil Defence and Red Cross, in responding to the needs of the community.

The intensity of the storm and the damage inflicted was substantial throughout the county. The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine provided funding of €4.685m for clean-up costs and emergency repair works on essential infrastructure.

Key Achievements 2015

National Roads

- Successful outcome to the Judicial Review on the N86 sought by An Taisce
- CPO documentation prepared and ready to publish for the N70 Kilderry Bends Scheme
- Final Account resolution on the N21 Castleisland By-Pass and N22 N69 Tralee By-Passes
- Kerry National Road Design Office received CPD reaccreditation by Engineers Ireland until 2018
- 5.6km of National Secondary roads improved with an investment of €1.66m

Non-National Roads

- Condition of 88% of the non-national road network surveyed and mapped
- 150km of regional and local roads improved under the Restoration Improvement and Restoration Maintenance Programme
- €1.95m spent on energy and maintenance of 12,737 public lights
- Safety improvement works carried out at five locations
- €77,925 of an allocation received towards the provision of speed limit signage
- Five Community Involvement Schemes completed with an allocation of €135,000
- Six Local Improvement Schemes completed with an allocation of €100,000
- Speed Limit Review commenced for the county

Road Enforcement and Road Safety

- Roads Enforcement Officer investigated 381 complaints e.g. overloaded vehicles, drainage, road openings, road damage, overgrown hedges, obstruction of signs
- 112 health and safety audits carried out on both local authority and contractor works
- 960 material tests carried out
- Launch of the Road Safety Calendar Competition undertaken in national schools countywide

Piers and Harbours

- Improvement works were carried out at Brandon, Scraggane, Kay Rock, Renard, Tarbert and Caherciveen.
- Demolition works on the Old Sea World building in Fenit and the commencement of a new assembly unit for Liebherr Container Cranes Ltd.

Derelict Sites

- 99 sites on the Derelict Sites Register

Taking Estates in Charge

A Memorandum of Understanding and Taking in Charge Protocol was agreed between Irish Water and the local authority sector in March 2015 under the guidance of the Water Service Transition Office to assist with the rollout of the Taking In Charge/transfer programme nationally.

The completion of this documentation which had been awaited for some time has facilitated the taking of the necessary steps for the taking in charge by Kerry County Council of those estates considered to be satisfactorily completed. 11 estates were originally submitted to Irish Water in accordance with this Memorandum & Protocol. Of these, eight estates were taken in charge in 2015 following resolution by the relevant Municipal Districts.

Director's Report on Corporate Services

Director of Services: Mr. John D. Flynn / Martin O'Donoghue (Acting)

Senior Staff:

Corporate Affairs

Gerard O'Brien (A/Senior Executive Officer)

Human Resources

Martin O'Donoghue (Senior Executive Officer)

ICT

Brian Looney (Head of ICT)

Corporate Support

Key Statistics for 2015

- 16 meetings of the Full Council organised and serviced
- 40 Municipal District Meetings held and serviced
- A total of 110 requests were dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act during 2015

Facilities Management Unit

The Facilities Management Unit operates, manages and maintains a portfolio in excess of 40 Corporate Facilities (Corporate Buildings, Municipal District Offices, Area Offices, Libraries, Courthouses, leased properties) throughout the county. The Facilities Management Unit carried out the following projects

- Relocation of all housing staff to the former Water Services / Motor Tax Building.
- Relocation of Community Section and Local Enterprise Office (LEO) to Áras an Chontae
- The provision of a Disability Access to Killarney Library from Rock Road

The Facilities Management Unit continues to utilise the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) Contracts and Frameworks system to achieve savings in the purchasing of stationery, paper, office supplies and janitorial supplies and continue to identify areas where the running and operational costs of Corporate Facilities can be reduced. Kerry County Council continues to maintain existing levels of service to our internal and external customers with reduced staffing and financial resources.

Protected Disclosures

The Protected Disclosures Act 2014 offers legal protections for employees who report concerns about wrongdoing in the public, private and non-profit sectors. The legislation aims to protect workers who disclose information that, in their reasonable belief, shows wrongdoing.

Under the Protected Disclosures Act 2014, local authorities are obliged to prepare and publish a report detailing the number of protected disclosures made to the Council in the previous year and any action taken in response to these protected disclosures. Kerry County Council received no protected disclosures during 2015

Human Resources

Key Achievements in 2015:

- Continued development of the Attendance Management Programme to ensure efficiencies in relation to staff attendance at work.
- Continued development and implementation of the Organisational Support Programme to enhance the welfare of our staff and to comply with statutory legislation.

- Continued development of the staff Performance Management and Development Systems (PMDS), both locally and as one of the lead authorities nationally.
- Continued development of Child Protection Policies and Procedures to ensure compliance with Child Protection Legislation and National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children.
- Continued participation in Government and sector led work experience schemes including Job Bridge Internships, the Gateway Labour Activation Scheme and the Local Authority Graduate Recruitment Programme.

Training and Development

The Training Section provides a wide range of training programmes to enable staff and management carry out their duties in a confident, competent manner and in a safe environment. The training delivered is divided into the following categories:

- Health and Safety (Mandatory) training
- Business/Management Skills
- Job specific knowledge, skill and competence training
- Personal Development

Training delivered during the year:

- I.T Skills training
- Procurement training
- Child Protection
- Conflict training
- Construction Regulations
- CPC Driver/Plant Operators training
- First Aid
- Irish Water training
- Safepass
- Manual Handling
- Pesticides
- Chainsaw
- Winter Service Operators
- Fire Services training
- Surface Dressing

Number of Employees at 31 December 2015

Managerial/Administrative	462
Engineering/Technical	204
Operational/Outdoor	712
TOTAL	1378

Gender Breakdown of employees at 31 December 2015

	Male	Female	Total
Managerial/Administrative	101	361	462
Engineering/Technical	169	35	204
Operational/Outdoor	641	71	712
TOTAL	911	467	1378

Competitions

Number of competitions held: 43

Total no. applications received: 1,412

Male: 963

Female: 449

Third Level Placements

The Council continued its association with Third Level placement programmes and 6 no. placements were facilitated.

Local Authority Graduate Recruitment Programme

Kerry County Council is currently providing four placements under this national programme. Graduates in specialised fields are employed on two-year contracts to provide them with practical experience in their area of speciality. The graduates employed by Kerry County Council are currently working in the fields of Economic Enterprise & Business Development, Innovation Strategy & Change Management, and Human Resources Management.

Government-led labour activation initiatives

Kerry County Council continues to implement Government led initiatives to assist long-term unemployed persons to re-enter the workforce.

JobBridge Internships

Number of competitions held: 9

Applications received: 126

Male: 71

Female: 55

Placements facilitated: 10

Gateway Local Authority Labour Activation Scheme

Working in conjunction with the Department of Social Protection, a total of 35 further placements were facilitated in 2015 bringing Kerry County Council's total number of participants to 70. Kerry County Council acknowledges the support of the Dormant Accounts Fund in relation to the operation of the Gateway Scheme.

Information and Communications Technology

Business Information Systems:

Our online registration system for the payments of new and renewed dog licensing went live during 2015. This provides citizen customers with an easy to use method to purchase/renew dog licenses and provides a back-office system for the efficient processing of licensing.

Ceadúnú Madraí, Comhairle Contae Chiarraí **Kerry County Council Dog Licensing**



Laboratory:

A significant project to implement a new Laboratory Information Management system took place during 2014 and 2015. The Laboratory achieved ISO17025 accreditation at the end of 2015 and the LIMS system was enhanced to provide support to the Laboratory primarily through reporting functionality. IT also provided some project management assistance towards this end.

Other information systems projects

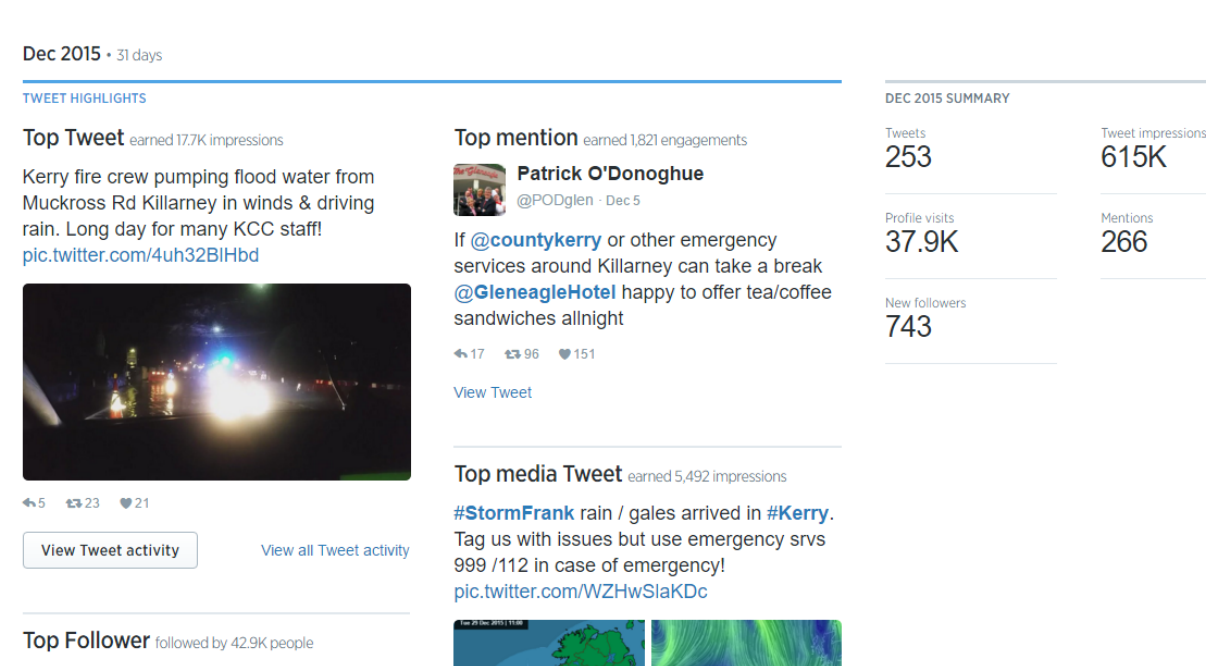
Significant projects were also undertaken in the areas of Fire, Water Services, Waste Management, Housing & Corporate services to upgrade business systems.

Websites

A number of new websites were launched during the period but the most significant was the new Library site, developed in-house. Enabling work on our 1916 commemorative site also commenced. As well as the above, there are almost 20 websites that are currently maintained and regularly updated by Kerry Council. These include the main kerrycoco.ie site as well as Alerts, Cultural Diversity, Culture Kerry, Fire Services, LEO, Kerryfilm etc.

Online and Social Media

The value of social media in crisis situations was evident during the severe weather events of Dec 2015. IT provided social media services and a beta mapping service to show where road closures arose following flooding.



The number of tweet impressions rose from 14,000 in November to over 615,000 in December. The number of followers of Kerry County Council's Twitter account which tweets regularly about weather warnings, road conditions, water outages, road closures, and important business notifications, rose to over 7,000 during the year. Kerry County Council also has over 5,000 Facebook site followers. Council meeting proceedings were streamed for the first time in May 2015 when a Civic Reception event taking place in the Council Chambers was streamed using the Ustream service. Other council briefings and receptions have also been streamed as we consider the merits of this form of engagement.

ICT Operations

There were a large number of initiatives in this area in our 2015 programme. A significant project to upgrade our email system from Exchange 2003 to Exchange 2013 took place with minimal disruption. Our server virtualisation environment was also upgraded and work on upgrading our Windows Server stock from 2003 to 2010 versions commenced.

A number of network links were upgraded or replaced. The most significant of these were high speed fibre links between County Buildings and Castleisland Area Services offices which were completed during 2015 with service to Castleisland (Water Services) expected to transition in early 2015.

Technical Management & Service Desk Departments

The process of replacing the legacy computer stock running Windows XP operating system commenced in 2014 and continued through 2015 when over 150 PCs were replaced. A significant programme of work also commenced to replace our Citrix Farm, which will be completed in 2015

ICT Service Desk Support

ICT support is provided to over 900 desktops, laptop, tablet and smart-phone users in over 60 Locations Countrywide. In 2015, over 5,000 support calls were actioned via our centralized Service Desk System.

Broadband

In response to the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources *Calls for Consultation* under the National Broadband Plan, a number of submissions were made including the development of a Council Policy on prioritising broadband development in the county.

Report of Head of Finance

Head of Finance: Angela McAllen

Senior Staff:

Finance

Michael O'Leary (Senior Executive Officer)

Pat O'Shea (A/Senior Executive Officer)

Local Government Operational Procurement Centre

Catherine Carmody (Project Manager)

Financial Report for 2015

The Finance Section is responsible for the overall control and management of the Council's finances, both revenue and capital. It develops and implements effective financial policies, procedures and structures for Kerry County Council and provides support services to the organisation. The Section produces the statutory reports including Budget and Annual Financial Statement and adheres to EU/IMF and Department of Finance Quarterly reporting requirements.

In managing the Budget during the year, the Council aims to maintain financial stability and probity throughout the organisation through sound budgetary processes, treasury and income management, procurement and good governance.

Over the course of 2015, Kerry County Council has managed the resource base effectively despite the many challenges faced. The Council has prudent expenditure controls in both Revenue and Capital and strengthened debt management measures to maximise income where possible. This effective resource management has facilitated continued delivery of local services by the Council.

The Revenue Surplus for 2015 is €87,758; as a result the accumulated revenue reserve as at the end of 2015 is €6,271,768. The retention of a cumulative revenue reserve is a very positive reflection on both the elected members and the continuous efforts of staff of Kerry County Council in maximising resources, achieving better value for money, maximising revenue and increasing overall efficiencies over the past number of years.

The ongoing financing of the Council is not without its challenges both in the short and long term. The Council has responsibilities in relation to financial liabilities which are significant. Investment required for successful delivery of the Action Plan for Jobs, the Local and Economic Community Plan, and Tourism Strategy will require substantial own resource funding to match any grant aid available. This investment is set against a backdrop of challenging revenue collection and reducing income streams.

Kerry County Council took actions during 2015 and continues into 2016 and the future, to adjust and match both operational day-to-day spend and its long-term capital investment programme with available funding and resources. Central to all of Kerry County Council's services is the objective to maintain and support business and households through provision of quality driven services within the current financial constraints.

The main units within Finance are:

Insurance Unit: The main areas of activity are Public Liability, Employers Liability, Fire and Motor Insurance. The unit ensures that Kerry County Council has the appropriate level of cover and through monitoring and reporting on accidents advises on best practice in Risk Management.

FMS Project Team: This unit is responsible for the implementation, including training and support, of Local and National Financial Systems and Enhancements.

Internal Audit: Internal Audit is an independent appraisal function which reviews the internal control system in operation within Kerry County Council. During 2015 the Internal Audit unit undertook a number of audits and the findings and recommendations from each audit were reported to management and the Audit Committee. The unit also undertook follow up audits to assess the implementation of the recommendations from previous audits.

Revenue Unit: This unit mainly deals with the recovery of commercial rates, non domestic charges on behalf of Irish Water, NPPR, development levies and other charges due to Kerry County Council. Income from development contributions not due to be paid within the current year is deferred and shown under long term creditors in the balance sheet.

Payroll Unit: As part of the Shared Services initiatives across the Local Government sector, the Shared Superannuation and Payroll Service Centre has been established in Laois County Council (MYPAY). From 1st October 2015 the centre processes all payroll payments for Kerry County Council employees, pensioners and councillors in conjunction with the Payroll unit of Kerry County Council.

Accounts Payable Unit: All invoices are certified for payment by the relevant sections and forwarded to the Accounts Payable unit for processing. Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with the Prompt Payment of Accounts Act 1997 and the European Communities (Late Payment in Commercial Transactions Regulations, 2012). Kerry County Council complied fully with the legislation in respect of late payments during 2015.

FMS Support Unit: This unit manages the use of the Financial Management System (Agresso) which is used extensively across the Council. Support and training is provided to staff and controls are implemented to maintain system security.

Financial Management Unit: Treasury management, bank reconciliation, debtor management, monitoring of the Capital account, maintaining the Asset Register and ensuring draw down of grants, are some of the principal activities of this unit. The unit also produces management information and reports for effective budgetary management.

Motor Tax Unit: The Council administers motor taxation within its functional area on behalf of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

LGOPC: The Local Government Operational Procurement Centre which is based in Killarney, has responsibility in procuring Plant Hire and Minor Works on behalf of the entire public service. It acts as a central purchasing body under the auspices of Kerry County Council, coordinating the establishment of frameworks of supplies/services/works for Minor Works and Plant hire categories of expenditure with the responsibility for the development of these categories and relevant procurement software.

The accompanying tables and pie charts give an overview of the financial position of the Council and analysis of expenditure and income for the year. The current overall financial standing of the Council may be described as satisfactory as at 31 December, 2015.

Financial Statement

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME (INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT STATEMENT) FOR YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2015

The Income and Expenditure Account Statement brings together all the revenue related income and expenditure.

It shows the surplus/ (deficit) for the year.

Note 16 allocates transfers by service division in the same format as Table A of the adopted Local Authority budget.

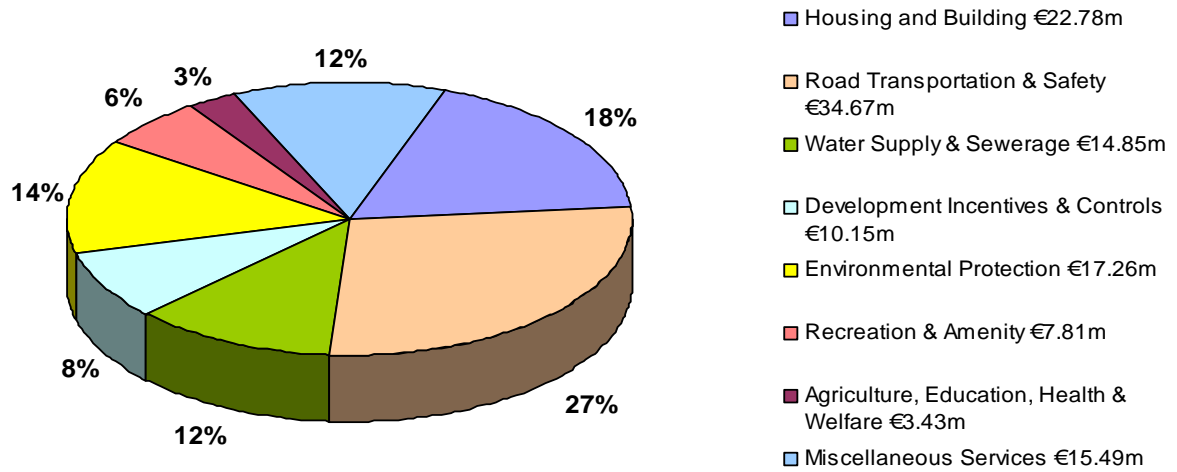
	Gross Expenditure	Income	Net Expenditure	Net Expenditure
	2015	2015	2015	2014
Expenditure by Division	€	€	€	€
Housing and Building	21,200,044	21,325,409	(125,365)	(300,085)
Roads, Transportation & Safety	33,092,413	21,747,882	11,344,531	12,747,369
Water Services	14,647,852	13,893,520	754,332	(1,063,956)
Development Management	9,661,131	2,667,850	6,993,281	6,673,431
Environmental Services	16,065,893	3,204,657	12,861,236	11,358,735
Recreation & Amenity	6,968,241	650,589	6,317,652	6,497,420
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	2,784,675	2,399,688	384,987	731,456
Miscellaneous Services	15,242,694	3,942,916	11,299,778	12,214,430
Total Expenditure/Income	119,662,943	69,832,511		
Net Cost of Division to be funded from Rates and Local Property Tax			49,830,432	48,858,800
Rates			41,264,285	41,169,215
Local Property Tax			11,659,186	11,043,837
Pension Related Deduction			2,553,300	2,670,557
Surplus/ (Deficit) for Year before Transfer			5,646,339	6,024,809
Transfers from/ (to) Reserves			(5,558,580)	(5,933,879)
Overall Surplus/ (Deficit) for Year			87,758	90,930
General Reserve at 1st January 2015			6,184,008	6,093,078
General Reserve at 31st December 2015			6,271,768	6,184,008

Financial Statement

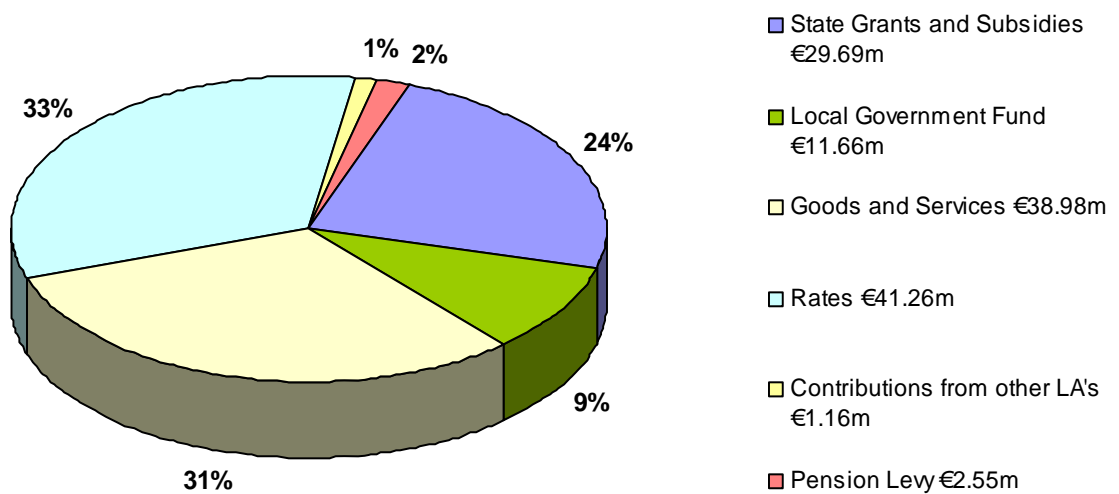
Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2015

	2015 €	2014 €
Fixed Assets 1		
Operational	702,162,746	695,969,956
Infrastructural	2,788,355,810	2,776,246,759
Community	13,098,554	13,254,424
Non-Operational	5,188,467	5,078,468
	3,508,805,577	3,490,549,607
Work-in-Progress and Preliminary Expenses	5,122,710	11,785,832
Long Term Debtors	43,640,445	45,471,274
Current Assets		
Stock	986,651	1,007,071
Trade Debtors & Prepayments	8,608,535	28,850,118
Bank Investments	80,815,938	74,371,546
Cash at Bank	-	-
Cash in Transit	869,037	619,285
	91,280,161	104,848,020
Current Liabilities		
Bank Overdraft	395,229	445,526
Creditors & Accruals	34,539,162	47,216,351
Finance Leases	30,660	29,343
	34,965,051	47,691,220
Net Current Assets / (Liabilities)	56,315,110	57,156,800
Creditors (Amounts greater than one year)		
Loans Payable	81,833,380	85,054,499
Finance Leases	16,710	48,686
Refundable Deposits	3,003,598	2,591,146
Other	801,961	348,005
	85,655,649	88,042,336
Net Assets / (Liabilities)	3,528,228,193	3,516,921,177
Represented By		
Capitalisation	3,508,805,577	3,490,549,607
Income WIP	4,833,125	11,093,257
Specific Revenue Reserve	7,478,134	7,478,134
General Revenue Reserve	6,271,768	6,184,008
Other Balances	839,589	1,616,171
Total Reserves	3,528,228,193	3,516,921,177

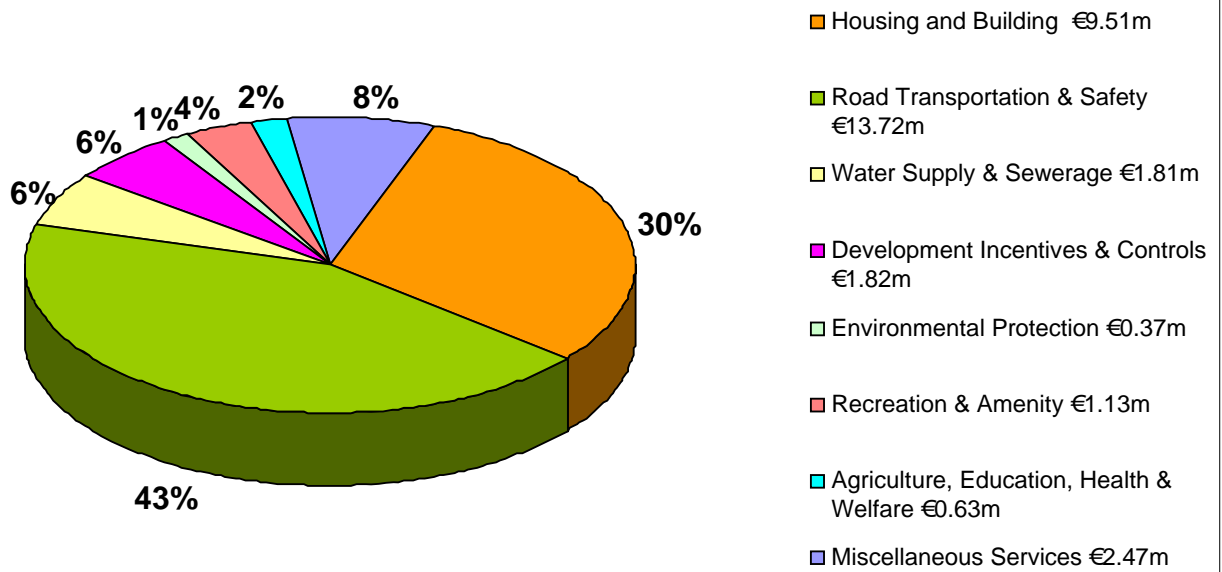
Kerry County Council - Revenue Expenditure 2015



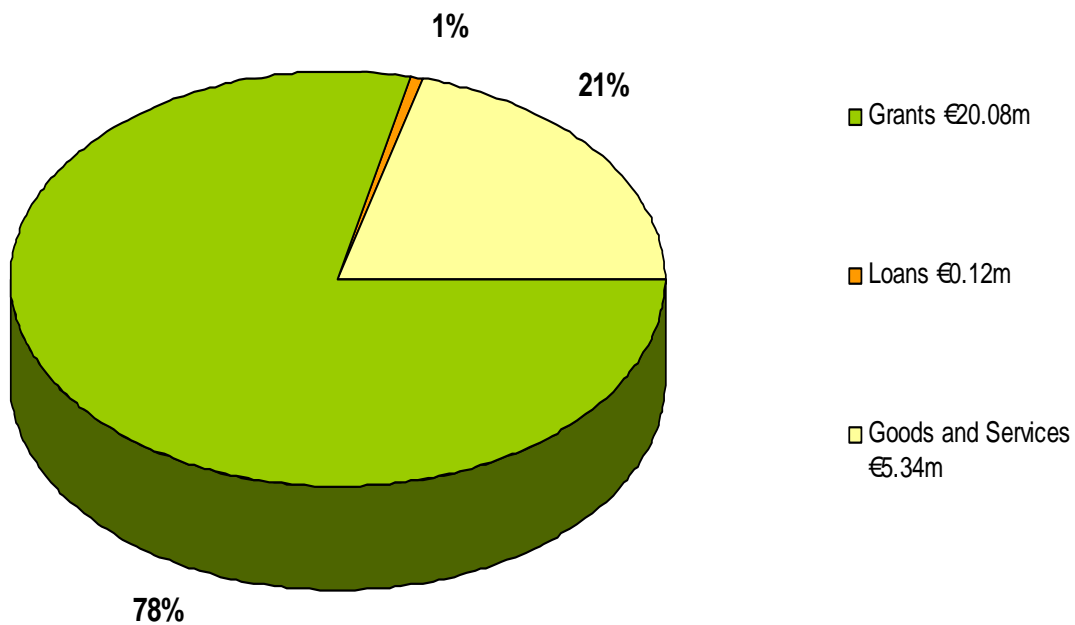
Kerry County Council - Revenue Income 2015



Kerry County Council - Capital Expenditure 2015 as per Appendix 6



Kerry County Council - Sources of Capital Funding 2015 per Appendix 6



Director's Report on Water Services

Director of Services: Oliver Ring

A/Senior Engineer: John Kennelly

The enactment of the Water Services Act (No. 2) 2013, effective from 1st January 2014, means that Irish Water is Ireland's new national water utility, bringing the water services of Local Authorities together under one National Service Provider. Kerry County Council continues to provide water services to the people of Kerry, as an Agent of Irish Water, under a Service Level Agreement.

The Water Services Directorate is responsible for the delivery of all public Water Services in the county as provided for in the Service Level Agreement between the Council and Irish Water. It is also responsible for delivering the Rural Water Programme of the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government.



Public Water Supply

In 2015, Kerry County Council produced approximately 27.0 million cubic metres (27.0 billion litres) of drinking water for 122,000 consumers served by some 68,000 water connections. The water was produced from 71 public water supply zones, which are supplied from more than 90 separate water sources throughout the county.

Some key improvements to the water supply network were carried out during 2015. These were funded by Irish Water and included laying almost 24km of new watermains at a cost of €4.5m:

Replacing old and deficient watermains:

- 3.5 km of 90mm diameter watermains at Ard Na Caithne, Baile Uachtarach, Cé Bhréanainn, Baile Na Buaile and Baile Uí Shé in Gaeltacht Corcha Dhuibhne.
- 7.25 km of 200 and 300mm diameter watermains from Gearha to Kilgobnet to Meanus, Killorglin.
- 450 m of 200mm watermains at Muckcross Road, Killarney
- 80 m of 200mm watermains at Ballyspillane, Killarney

- 2.2 km of 150mm watermains with a 200mm pipe at Droum, Glenbeigh.
- 1.3 km of 100mm watermains at Drimna Beg, Sneem
- 450 m of 3" watermains with 110mm pipes at Rusheen, Ballylongford
- 380 m of 3" watermains with 110mm pipes at St. Patrick's Terrace, Tarbert
- 250 m of 3" watermains with 90mm pipes at Tieraclea Park, Tarbert
- 3.15 km of 310mm watermains at Ahalahana and Clontibret, Listowel
- 230 m of cast iron watermains at Castle Demesne and Prince's St. in Tralee
- 2.5km of C.I./Lead watermains at St Brendan's Park, Connolly Park, Kerin's Park, Lohercannon, Riverside and Marian Park in Tralee
- Laying 2.3 km of new 160mm watermains from Muckcross Church to Dromickbane

New Connections

There were 106 new water connections and ten new waste water connections completed in 2015.

Public Waste Water

There are 48 public Waste Water Treatment Plants in the county, 16 with full treatment infrastructure and 32 with primary treatment only. Key upgrades made to the waste water infrastructure in 2015 included completion of four new Waste Water Treatment Plants at Ballylongford, Tarbert, Knightstown and Kilgarvan.

Rural Water

Kerry County Council administers the Rural Water Programme, which is funded by the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government. The Rural Water Section provides administrative and engineering assistance to Group Schemes. A total of 508 Group Water Schemes have been developed in Kerry and 234 have been taken over and are now maintained by Kerry County Council on behalf of Irish Water.

Key developments in 2015:

- €191,560 was spent in advancing Group Water Supply Schemes
- "Upgrade Works Prior to Takeover" resulted in over 1 km of replacement pipework being laid in Clanmaurice GWSS.
- 58 Group Schemes received subsidy payments.
- 36 applications for Well Grants was received.
- One new Group Waste Water Scheme (Killeen, Tralee) was substantially completed.
- 5 applications for funding under the Septic Tank Improvement Grant Scheme were received and processed.

Water Conservation

The national Water Conservation Programme, which was initiated in 2005, has evolved in Kerry County Council into the Water Conservation Unit which now operates as a core Business Unit within the Water Services (Operations) Directorate.

Water conservation continues to be a focus for proactive management, with emphasis on leakage control and reduction of water wastage, which reduces water demand and leads directly to cost savings on water production. Water conservation also protects the capital investment that has taken place in Water Services.

In 2006, the average quantity of water produced per day was 99,980 cubic metres, while in 2015 it has been reduced by 26% to 74,027 cubic metres per day. This represents an annual reduction of 9.5 million cubic metres of water.

Dedicated leak detection crews who specialise in leakage management procedures are actively working on the ground. Since mid-2006, over 6,100 leaks have been located and repaired in the County.

In October 2014, an additional three staff were assigned to the Water Conservation Unit which in effect meant that Kerry County Council was in a position to operate a Leak Detection and Repair/'Find & Fix' policy. This 'Find & Fix' operation commenced in the general Castleisland area and, by February 2015, approximately 160 issues had been identified and rectified which resulted in a 62% reduction in 'Unaccounted For Water' from 995 m³/day to 377 m³/day which equates to an annual reduction of 300,000 cubic metres of water.

In addition, approximately 20 existing unmetered connections (domestic and non-domestic) were identified and metered which means that their consumption will no longer be classified as 'Unaccounted For Water.'

Water Services Capital Schemes

A significant amount of work was carried out in 2015 in advancing new major water and wastewater capital schemes through the Irish Water Capital Investment Programme 2014-2016. The Kerry Capital Projects Office is also responsible for the delivery of the Irish Water Minor Capital Programme. Elements of this funding programme provide a great opportunity to upgrade and modernize existing installations. The Capital Works in 2015 included:

Major Schemes:

- Work completed on the Tralee Estates Mains Rehabilitation Contract which involved the replacement of approximately 6km old and deficient cast-iron and lead watermain at six separate housing estates in Tralee (Value: €2.6 million)
- Works commenced on the replacement of 7.8 km of Trunk Watermain on the Mid Kerry Water Supply Scheme (Value: € 1.8 million)
- Upgrade works commenced on Rising Main Facilitation Works as part of overall CRWSS Lough Guitane WTP project (Value: €0.9 million)
- Tender process completed for the new Water Treatment Plant on the Central Regional Water Supply Scheme at Lough Guitane progressed to tender stage (Value: €30 million)
- Contract documents prepared for a new Water Treatment Plant for Kenmare. (Value: €1.7 million)
- Contract documents prepared for Mountain Stage Water Treatment Plant. (Value: €1 million)
- Work completed on and flows diverted to new Waste Water Treatment Plants at Ballylongford and Tarbert (Value: €2.7 million).
- Upgrade works completed on Kilgarvan & Knightstown Wastewater Treatment Plants

- Ardferf Sewerage Scheme progressed to completion of contract documents stage (Value: €3.0 million)
- Irish Water approval to progress Kilcummin Sewerage Scheme to completion of Contract Document Stage (Value: €2.5 million)
- Irish Water approval to progress Castlemaine Sewerage Scheme to completion of Contract Document Stage (Value: €1.2 million)
- Irish Water approval to progress Fenit Sewerage Scheme to completion of Contract Document Stage (Value: €2.8 million)

Minor Schemes:

In 2015, Kerry County Council submitted 104 business cases (Asset Needs Briefs) to Irish Water for minor capital upgrades to water assets and facilities and secured over €10.15 million in funding from the Irish Water Minor Improvement Works Programme.

Kerry County Council secured a further €1.85 million in funding for the replacement of ‘failed or failing’ assets through the Irish Water Suppressed Capital Maintenance Programme.

Remedial Action List (RAL) Schemes

In 2008, the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government made funds available for a Remedial Action List for Public Drinking Water Supplies where there was a risk to the quality of the supply. Major upgrade works, involving the provision of disinfection, alarms and monitoring equipment, have now been completed for all public water supply schemes in the county.

At the beginning of 2015, a total of 43 new Water Treatment Plants had been commissioned under the RAL Programme and, during the year:

- Upgrades to two more Water Treatment Plants were completed at An Mhín Aird Puc and Málainn.
- Upgrades to six Water Treatment Plants commenced at An Gleann, Baile an Sceilg, Templenoe, Caherdaniel, Castlecove and Caragh Lake
- Designs were progressed for upgrades to Water Treatment Plants at Mountainstage, Kenmare, Kilgarvan and Lauragh.

During 2015, five schemes were removed by the EPA from the RAL List: Mid-Kerry; Knockavota (Milltown Poulgorm); Maulin, Cahersiveen; An Mhín Aird Puc No. 1 and An Mhuiríoch/Baile Breac.

Corporate Plan

An Interim Corporate Plan covering the period 2014 - 2019 was adopted by Kerry County Council in March 2015.

The Interim Corporate Plan will be formally reviewed in 2016 following the adoption of the Local Economic and Community Plan.

The new Corporate Plan sets out the vision and key Corporate Priorities for Kerry County Council over the period 2014 - 2019.

Our Strategic Objectives are derived from our Mission Statement and outline our highest priority areas.

In delivering on the Mission Statement, we will focus our activities in two strategic areas:

- Job Creation and Sustainable Economic Development
- Building Sustainable Communities and Quality of Life