



TO: THE CATHAOIRLEACH AND EACH COUNCIL MEMBER

RE: DRAFT 2023-2025 CAPITAL BUDGET- KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL

Section 135 of the Local Government Act 2001 requires a report on capital projects to be prepared by the Chief Executive and presented to the elected council annually. Accordingly, this report gives details of the Council’s proposed capital projects for the next three years.

The details of the draft Capital Budget for the period 2023-2025 are set out in the attached report.

Delivering on Social Housing targets and driving economic development through the delivery of the Capital Programme continues to be a key strategic objective for this Council. Whilst the last three years have been challenging we have continued to deliver significant projects and we plan to deliver further important strategic projects across the City and County.

1. Social & Affordable Housing

Kilkenny County Council published a Housing Delivery Action Plan in January 2022. This plan is a requirement of Housing For All for each County and sets out proposals for social and affordable housing delivery for the period 2022 - 2026.

Kilkenny County Council’s targets for delivery are:

Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Total
Social Build Units	170	149	153	164	167	803

Co Kilkenny Dept of Housing Social Housing Targets under Housing for All

Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Total
Affordable Housing Units	5	14	21	18	18	76

Co Kilkenny – Kilkenny Co Co proposed affordable housing targets under Housing for All –

Social Housing

Provision of social housing solutions will be via a range of delivery streams e.g. Local Authority Direct Build, Turnkey arrangements with Developers, Part V, AHB projects, Buy and Renew. These projects include developing greenfield and brown field sites, regeneration projects and the repurposing of vacant units where possible. Social Housing provision is generally 100% funded by the Department of Housing under 'Housing for All'

There are more than 26 active Approved Housing Bodies operating in Kilkenny with an additional 116 housing units to be delivered by AHBs in the period 2022 - 2026.

Housing Delivery represents a significant capital investment by the Department of Housing in County Kilkenny in the period 2022 to 2026.

Affordable Housing

The introduction of new measures to provide affordable and mixed tenure housing under the "Housing For All Programme" brings additional opportunities for the Local Authority to provide a wider range of supported housing options. Kilkenny County Council will be working to provide affordable and mixed tenure housing projects over the next five years supported by the Affordable Housing Fund.

Housing Demand

At the time of preparing this Capital Programme there are 1,588 approved applicants on the Council's housing list. 52% of these applicants have expressed a preference for accommodation in Kilkenny City. 80% of the assessed housing need is for 1 or 2 bed accommodation units and the delivery pipeline will reflect this requirement.

Of the 1,588 approved housing applicants on our housing list more than 694 are in receipt of social housing support under the Housing Assistance Programme (HAP), having secured suitable private rented accommodation to meet their housing need. The net assessed housing need in Kilkenny, including transfer applicants is therefore 894.

There are challenges in delivering the Capital Programme countywide due to a lack of available and suitable landbanks for construction. In addition, water and wastewater services are limited in some areas of the County. There is now a need to source and acquire suitable lands for future construction around the County and accordingly land acquisition will form a critical element of the housing capital delivery programme in the next three years.

Kilkenny County Council has an ambitious Capital Programme to construct approximately 600 units of social housing over the 3 year period, 2023 - 2025 at an estimated contract value of €150m. An estimated 70 - 100 homes will be delivered by Approved Housing Bodies in collaboration with Kilkenny County Council, subject to viability. Plans to provide additional homes through Repair to Lease, Vacant Homes, acquisition, leasing and Buy and Renew Schemes will also continue under the Housing Capital Delivery Programme.

Additionally, over the period of this Capital Programme, Kilkenny County Council has a duty to provide accommodation for and to oversee the community integration of additional families under the Irish Refugee Protection Programme as well as an expanded Energy Retrofit Programme to achieve improved BER ratings in existing housing stock in line with government policy on Climate Action.

Traveller Accommodation Programme

The current Traveller Accommodation Programme (TAP) was adopted in 2019 for the period 2019 to 2024 and has assessed a requirement to provide 66 units of accommodation over the five year period to 2024. While the majority of these units will be delivered by way of acquisitions and allocation of existing housing stock, the Council will also be required to develop and deliver Traveller Specific projects to meet existing and emerging housing need in specific areas.

2. Roads

2.1 Western Environs Phase 1 Infrastructure Scheme

The scheme provided a 1.3km Western Environs distributor road from the N76 Callan Road to the R695 Kilmanagh Road (*via the Circular Road*), along with a 1.1km upgrade of the Kilmanagh Road, which will facilitate residential development, as well as the development of new schools and other community and recreational amenities in this important neighbourhood.

In October 2016, the Council submitted an application for funding to the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government under the Rebuilding Ireland Programme via the Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF) to deliver this scheme. The Council ultimately secured grant aid of €6.545m from the Department. The remaining costs estimated at €9.8m are to be funded by Kilkenny County Council.

2.2 Loughmacask Link Road

Kilkenny County Council proposes to undertake the construction of the Loughmacask Link Road from the existing R693 Kilkenny to Freshford Road at Talbotsinch, to west of the existing Dunningstown Road at Lousybush, approximately 400m in length to include a new roundabout at the junction between the new road and the Freshford Road. It is planned that this proposed road will connect directly to the proposed Kilkenny CBS school access road. The construction of the school and both sections of road are planned to run concurrently. The works are due to start in 2023. This scheme is expected to cost Kilkenny County Council €2.4m with the balance being funded by Department of Education.

2.3 Circular Road\LIHAF to Tullaroan & Freshford Road

Previous Development Plans supported the development of this Inner Relief Road in Kilkenny City. Phase One of this transportation link from the Castlecomer Road to Waterbarrack Roundabout has been delivered under the LIHAF programme, as outlined above. Significant road infrastructure in the western Environs is now in place.

The proposed Loughmacask Master Plan now affords the opportunity to revisit the Road Objective options extending from the Western Environs to Loughmacask and extending to the Freshford Road, the Outer Ring Road including the Northern Ring Road Extension and in particular Phases 2 & 3 of the Inner Relief Road.

Road Objective R7 provides Kilkenny County Council with the option to review the direct arterial route identified under the Inner Relief Road and to re-envisage the development of the area with alternative or additional transport infrastructure links of interconnecting arterial, link and local streets from the Kilmanagh Road to the Freshford Road to enhancing traffic permeability and connectivity of the wider area with such streets focusing on the provision of Active Travel Objectives and the promotion of a modal shift away from vehicle use to walking and cycling. Works will start at procuring consultants in Q1/Q2 2023 to prepare an options strategy for Road Objective R7 in the Development Plan.

2.4 Breagagh Valley Link Road

This road is approximately 850m in length and is designed to connect the existing Waterbarrack roundabout at the western end of Dean Street to the new roundabout at the junction of the Circular Road and the Kilmanagh Road. The estimated cost of this road is €5.2m.

2.5 Kilkenny Northern Ring Road Extension

This Scheme provides for the construction of approximately 1.5km of new road which will link the N77 Ring Road at the Castlecomer Road Roundabout with the R693 Freshford Road and the northwest of the City to the existing Ring Road. The Scheme will include a new crossing of the River Nore.

Kilkenny County Council has submitted a SAR (*Strategic Assessment Report*) to the Department of Transport for consideration to secure funding to proceed to design/planning of this essential project for the City.

2.6 National Road Schemes:

Schemes on the National Road Network are funded 100% by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII). Schemes currently at design stage under Transport Infrastructure Ireland's Programme include:-

2.6.1 N24 Waterford to Cahir Scheme

The N24 Waterford to Cahir Project forms part of the N24 national primary route, a strategic transport corridor between the cities of Limerick and Waterford. The route connects major ports as well as a number of urban centres between Limerick and Waterford dispersed along the N24 corridor. The section of the N24 being considered by this project is approximately 60km in length. It extends from the M8 Junction 10 Cahir North Roundabout, north of Cahir in Co. Tipperary to the southern terminal of the M9 Dublin to Waterford motorway at the Quarry Roundabout, north of Waterford City in Co. Kilkenny.

Phase 1: Concept and Feasibility, of the project was completed in February 2021

Phase 2: Options Selection is ongoing. Phase 2 is scheduled to be complete by Q3 2023.

2.6.2. N25 Glenmore to Waterford Scheme

The N25 Waterford to Glenmore Road Scheme is located between two major By-Pass schemes at Waterford City and New Ross. This proposed scheme will link the upgraded N25 New Ross By-Pass and the N25 Waterford By-Pass and is likely to consist of approximately 6.5km of dual carriageway national primary route linking these two existing upgraded sections of the N25. A route corridor has now been selected for the scheme. The scheme is currently suspended due to lack of funding from TII.

2.6.3. N24 Tower Road Junction Improvement Scheme

Planning Approval and Compulsory Purchase Order Confirmation have both been secured for this scheme. The scheme entails works to a 1.8km section of the existing N24 near Piltown. When constructed it will provide a compact junction at the Tower Road, the closure of the Ink Bottle junction and the provision of a link road between both junctions.

The tender in respect of construction of the scheme was awarded on the 1st December 2022. Construction is scheduled to commence on the 16th January 2023 with a 12-month time period envisaged. The overall outturn cost for the project is estimated to be in excess of €10m.

2.6.4. N24 Carrick Road Improvement Scheme

The proposed N24 Carrick Road Improvement Scheme located near Mooncoin, County Kilkenny is approximately 2.2km (*Northwest - Southeast*) in length. The scheme involves both offline and online works, approximately 950m of the road scheme will run along the existing N24 and the remaining 1.25km of the scheme requires realignment.

It extends westward from the speed limits in Mooncoin Village to the start of the N24 Piltown 2+1 Scheme at Clonmore. Applications for approval to An Bord Pleanála for 177AE Planning application and Compulsory Purchase Order Approval was made on the 25th November 2022. A decision is not expected until Q3 2023.

2.6.5. N77 Ballyragget to Ballynaslee Improvement Scheme

This development will consist of the realignment of a 2.44km section of the N77 to remove a bend immediately to the north of the Glanbia Plant at Ballyragget, County Kilkenny. The proposed development will commence c. 250m south of the Glanbia Plant at Ballyragget and extend northwards to tie in to the recently completed N77 Ballynaslee Realignment Scheme.

The works will consist of 1.740m of online realignment and 700m of offline realignment works, with associated drainage, including attenuation pond and swales, fencing, safety barriers, kerb line, signage, and all site development and landscaping works. The preparation of contract documents is ongoing for this scheme.

2.7 Ferrybank (*North Quays SDZ Projects – co-funded under the URDF*)

2.7.1 Belmont Link Road

A link road is proposed to connect the Abbey Road to the Belmont Road. The construction of this road will assist in developing the potential of the area for future housing and the growth of the City north of the Suir in accordance with the National Development Plan 2040.

2.7.2 Port Road (N29)

It is envisaged that there will be significant levels of growth at Belview Port in the Ro-Ro (*roll on roll off*) and Lo-Lo (*Lift on / Lift off*) sectors in the future. It is considered that the growth of warehousing and logistics service providers will also play a key role in growth of the port.

In recent years, a number of permissions have been secured by the Port of Waterford for wharf expansion and associated port services. However, road access to zoned lands at the present is extremely limited. The upgrade works of the N29 Port Road is an Objective of the Ferrybank-Belview LAP, namely: *Objective 5D To revise the speed limits on the N29 to allow for access to the zoned land south of the L3412; and 5E To provide a roundabout at the Rathculiheen/L3412 junction to enable the development of the land in the vicinity, and north of this junction.*

The delivery of the proposed roundabout at the junction of the N29 and L3412 will remove access restrictions to zoned lands, thus open the way for inward investment. The delivery of this proposal is considered critical if Belview Port is to grow to its full potential into the future.

2.7.3. Greenway Connectivity

The Kilkenny Greenway (*from Waterford to New Ross*) received Part 8 planning approval in March 2018. The provision of additional connection points to provide for greater access and to facilitate usage of the Greenway (*within the environs of Waterford City*) as a smarter travel option for those living in the suburban residential developments is an Objective of the Ferrybank-Belview LAP, namely: *Objective 8C: To complete the Greenway and investigate and encourage the creation of access points in any significant future development proposal adjoining the Greenway.*

The development of dedicated access points to the proposed Greenway will create a viable and safe smarter travel option for commuters and school students within the SDZ /Ferrybank area. This in turn will make for a more attractive area to live and work in and one that promotes a sense of community and place.

This will attract private sector inward investment in terms of residential and service sectors opportunities given the availability of lands, infrastructure investment and the pro-active plan led approach. Furthermore, connection to the Greenway in an urban setting will also create opportunities for small

business enterprises, targeted at both domestic and overseas visitors, in terms of bike hire, cafes, shuttle bus, accommodation and parking.

2.7.4. Abbey Road and Belmont road Sustainable Transport Improvements

The proposed improvement works on the Abbey Road & Belmont Road will enhance these approaches to the North Quays SDZ and will fulfil an objective of the Ferrybank-Belview LAP, namely: *Objective 10C: Provide cycle lanes on the following routes (in accordance with the National Cycle Manual (www.cyclemanual.ie): Abbey Road; and R711/Urban Village.*

Abbey Road & Belmont Road Improvement Works will visually improve two of the key approach roads servicing the North Quays SDZ. The works will provide enhanced smarter travel facilities to link residential, commercial, educational and services areas. This will demonstrate that smarter travel is a key priority in the area's urban design, and will deliver an attractive, lived in, active and vibrant urban setting.

2.8 Kilkeny City Road Schemes

2.8.1 Kilkeny City - Active Travel

Kilkenny County Council has recently received funding for a number of active travel projects to increase the use of walking and cycling as a mode of transport within the City. Projects under consideration include improved and segregated cycle lanes on all approach roads, new bridge crossings of the River Nore for the use of pedestrians and cyclists, an inner orbital cycling route and improved connectivity of cycling routes. Ancillary works such as safe school zones, bicycle parking and wayfinding signage will also be provided.

2.8.2 Kilkeny City - URDF

Two tranches of funding have been received under the URDF. Schemes outstanding from the first tranche includes;

Vicar Street

A one-way inbound traffic flow system will be provided to facilitate widening of footpaths and a contra-flow cycle lane. The proposed works will include undergrounding of overhead services, provision of new public lighting and improved pedestrian crossing facilities.

Feature Lighting

As part of the Kilkenny City Sustainable Lighting Strategy, Kilkenny County Council will install external architectural lighting to highlight key historic buildings, attractive structures and natural features in our City and encourage evening exploration for the visitor. This project is almost complete.

Off-Street Connectivity

Provision of improved pedestrian and cycling infrastructure to link the Eastern Environs to the City centre via Lady Desart Bridge.

City Demarcation & Gateways

Provision of gateways entering the City centre area to act as a transition zones to drivers so that they reduce speed and pay greater attention to the needs of vulnerable road users.

The second tranche of funding relates to enlivening the City centre and includes:

Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan

Provision of a sustainable urban mobility plan to reduce unnecessary through traffic while maintaining access critical to the economic viability of the City. Increased priority for pedestrians and cyclists to include enhanced crossing facilities. Such a plan may consist of one-way streets and either part time or full time pedestrianisation.

Improved Public Realm

Public Realm Enhancement of St. Mary's Lane, St. Kieran's Street, Market Yard, Watergate, Barrack Lane and the area around Carnegie Library. Enhancement works to include pavement renewal, public lighting upgrade and improved outdoor amenity.

Ormonde Street

Works proposed will consist of improvements to the street and integration into the public realm bringing the area to a standard with existing infrastructure. A one-way system from Patrick Street to the multi-storey car-park and two-way from the car park to New Street is now in place.

2.9 Water Sports Hub Kilkenny City

Under the Platform for Growth funding for Water Based Activity Centres, Fáilte Ireland has a fund of €19m available nationally to assist Local Authorities to develop Water Sports Hubs and further enhance the Tourism offer in Counties. Kilkenny was successful in progressing to Stage 2 of the application process and are proposing to develop a facility on the grounds of County Hall that will also facilitate the large contingent of water-based clubs using the River Nore in the City. The overall project cost is estimated to be in the region of €1m and with Fáilte Ireland funding and the previously committed Sports Capital grant there should be limited requirement for any funds from the Council's own resources. The Contract for Architectural and Project Management Services has been awarded to Hennessey Architects and they have commenced the Stage 1 preliminary design process

3. Public Lighting Retrofit

Kilkenny County Council are the lead Local Authority for the Public Lighting Energy Enhancement Project (PLEEP) for the Eastern Region comprising of 9 Local Authorities. Substantial financial savings will accrue in addition to environmental improvements, significantly better lighting and safety for all road users and pedestrians. The energy saving target for the project is a minimum of 55% reduction in energy consumption and associated CO² emissions

The Works Contractor and Consultants were appointed in August 2022 for the Construction Phase of the project which includes the installation of the 83,500 lanterns. Works commenced in September 2022 with a scheduled completion date of March 2025 (30-month duration) for the installation of the lanterns. Approximately 50% of the lanterns in Kilkenny have been changed to LED Lanterns and the remaining approximately 5,500 lanterns will be upgraded as part of the PLEEP project.

4. Flood Relief - KCC Contribution to Minor Works Scheme

The OPW published the Flood Risk Management Plans for Kilkenny for both the Nore and Barrow Rivers in 2018. A National €1 Billion Investment Programme for 118 Flood Relief Schemes was announced in May 2018. Six Flood Relief Schemes were announced for Kilkenny with a total of €29.8 million approved by the OPW. No Council funding is required from Kilkenny County Council. In 2019, an in-house Flood Relief Capital Office was established by Kilkenny County Council to deliver the schemes funded by the OPW.

The OPW fully funded flood relief schemes are as follows - Graiguenamanagh, Ballyhale, Thomastown, Inistioge, Freshford and Piltown. The Council commenced in 2020 with planning for the two schemes at Graiguenamanagh and Ballyhale. It is anticipated that Planning will be lodged for the Ballyhale Scheme in Q1 2023 and the preferred option will be identified for the Graiguenamanagh Scheme before year-end 2023. The Council continue to liaise with the OPW with a view to commencing planning for the four remaining schemes.

5. Abbey Quarter

Work on Phase 1 of Abbey Quarter is nearing completion.

The renovation of the Brewhouse Building has been completed by Kilkenny Abbey Quarter Development Partnership, with the office building now fully let. In tandem with the building works, the adjoining areas of public realm along Horse Barrack Lane and in the Brewhouse Square have been constructed on behalf of Kilkenny County Council, with these areas opened to the public in the summer of 2022.

Work on the redevelopment of the Mayfair Building as the new City Library is currently underway and is expected to be completed in early summer 2023. This project will also include the completion of the public realm works to Horse Barrack Lane.

The Riverside Garden, including the Skate Park was completed in 2021 and is open to the public. The two Tea Houses at the southern entrance to the Riverside Garden have also been renovated and expressions of interest for the re-use of these buildings has been sought.

The development of the public realm areas included in Phase 1 of the Abbey Quarter, has been advanced by Kilkenny County Council with part funding

from the Urban Regeneration & Development Fund (URDF) and the European Regional development Fund (ERDF), with the Riverside Garden project also part funded by Failte Ireland.

Phase 2 of the public realm in the Abbey Quarter will involve the development of the central street through the site and the development of the two and a half acre park centred around St. Francis Abbey. Planning consent is in place for the project, following a Part 10 planning application to An Bord Pleanála. Part funding for the project has been approved in principle under URDF call 2, with final approval awaited to allow the project to proceed to tender in 2023.

The development of the urban street will facilitate the development of new buildings provided for in the Abbey Quarter Masterplan. Kilkenny Abbey Quarter Development Partnership has submitted a planning application for the first of these new buildings, with a planning decision expected in Spring 2023.

Funding has also been secured through URDF call 2 for the development of a boardwalk connection from the Riverside Garden at Greens Bridge to the existing Riverside walk at Bishops Meadows. This will complete the last missing link in the riverside walks through the City Centre. A design team has been appointed to the project and the project is currently being progressed to planning stage.

6. Project Office & Parks

6.1 South East Greenway

We will continue to work with the lead authority, Wexford County Council through the Greenway Project Office to deliver the 24km South East Greenway linking New Ross to Waterford City. It is anticipated that this scheme will be fully opened to the public in 2025. To date, two separate sections of the Greenway are substantially completed, a 1.2km section in Ferrybank and an 8km section from New Ross to Glenmore. The tender for a 5km section from Ferrybank to Curraghmore will be advertised in early 2023 with works to commence following the tendering process. The option to open sections of the Greenway as they are completed is also being explored. In this regard the focus for 2023 will be the opening of the section from New Ross to Glenmore in early Quarter 2. We will continue to work with the Greenway Project Office to support the local communities to prepare for the opportunities that the Greenway will present. We will progress to planning stage proposals to provide connectivity from the Greenway to both Glenmore and Slieverue. Works will also progress to determine the feasibility and optimum route selection to develop a Link between the South East Greenway and Woodstock Estate in Inistioge.

6.2 Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS)

Throughout the course of 2022 the following projects were delivered across the County under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme:

- Castlecomer Discovery Park -Rehabilitation of the Ardra Looped Walk & Arboretum Walk;

- Community Loop Walk Network in Stoneyford, Johnstown and Skeoughvasteen;
- Kells – King’s River Walk Enhancement Scheme;
- Tory Hill Looped Walk Enhancement Works;
- Outdoor Kilkenny - Promotion & Marketing;
- Woodstock Estate - Promotion & Marketing;
- Silaire Wood Trail Extension Scheme.

Other schemes progressed during last year that will be completed in 2023 include:

- Kilkenny Countryside Park at Dunmore – Phase 1
- Woodstock Gardens – Accessibility improvement measures including trail & walk upgrades, installation of Age Friendly and Disabled Parking, provision of accessible play equipment and the enhancement of the Toilet-block;
- Preparation of a Masterplan for the Castlecomer Discovery Park along with the progression of the design and planning of a proposed Mountain Bike Trail;
- Moat Field Trail – Phase 2, Westcourt, Callan – subject to lease agreement;
- The Bishops Meadows – Enhancements to River Nore Swimming Area.

The investment value of the above projects across the County is c.€1.572 million.

Funding was also secured for the following projects last year which will be progressed during 2023:

ORIS Measure 1

- Dock Road to Barrow Valley Outdoor Activity Hub - Pedestrian/Cyclist Connectivity Link Upgrade – Graiguenamanagh;
- Windgap Village Loop - Repair & Enhancement of Walking Trail;
- Pollrone Quay Community Walk – Mooncoin;
- Woodstock Estate Marketing and Communications Plan;
- Outdoor Kilkenny Digital/Social Media, Marketing and PR Campaign;
- Castlemorris Woodland Trail Repair & Enhancement Scheme.
- The Wood Road to the River Barrow Amenity Area - Pedestrian Connectivity Link- Graiguenamanagh;

ORIS Measure 2

- Millennium Forest - Trail Enhancement and Accessibility Scheme;
- Jenkinstown Wood – Walking Trail Rehabilitation Scheme.

ORIS Measure 3

- River Nore Linear Park - Lacken Walk Timber Boardwalk Replacement Scheme.

ORIS Project Development

- Kilkenny to Ballyragget & Castlecomer Greenway Link - Phase 1 - Kilkenny City to The Kilkenny Countryside Park - Feasibility Study, Route Selection Report & Planning.

The delivery of the above projects will see a further investment of c.€1.513 million under this scheme. It is noted under the ORIS funding agreement, the local authority is required to provide a minimum of 10% match funding for each successful application.

The combined value of the above projects, when completed will realise an investment of over €3 million across the County.

The ORIS funding stream is considered critical in aiding us develop and grow the outdoor recreational offering within County Kilkenny that has a particular focus on rural areas and settlements.

6.3 Kilkenny County Council/Leader - Partnership Projects

In recent years the Council has worked in collaboration with Kilkenny LEADER Partnership and communities to deliver a wide range of community projects across the County. Under the initial tranche of projects the following schemes were progressed:

- Silaire Wood Carpark and Trail Enhancement - completed;
- Abbey Hall Recreational Amenity Area Enhancement Scheme - completed;
- Retro-fitting of disused toilet block to accommodate Graiguenamanagh Men's Shed - completed;
- Barrow Valley Outdoor Activity Hub - Design and construction of access road and serviced campervan pitches- completed;
- South East Greenway - Connectivity Links to Glenmore and Slieverue - Route Selection Report - ongoing;
- Two Pedestrian Bridges over the River Barrow at Graiguenamanagh - Feasibility Study -ongoing.

The combined value of the above projects is c.€900,000

The second tranche of partnership projects, currently being progressed for various locations across the County include the following:

- Nore Valley Walk Linkage Project (*Bennettsbridge - Thomastown*) - Feasibility Study & Route Selection Report;
- Bennettsbridge Riverside Amenity Area & Pedestrian/Cyclist Bridge- Feasibility Study & Design Options Report;
- Woodstock - Recreational Connectivity Link between Woodstock Estate and the South East Greenway (*New Ross to Waterford*)
- Goresbridge Riverside Amenity Area - Feasibility Study & Design Options ;Report.
- Slieverue Recreational Linear Park - Construction;
- Callan Heritage Trail - Design and Implementation.

The value of the above projects is c.€460,000,

The combined value of the above projects agreed under this initiative to-date will see an investment of c.€1.36 million. These projects were identified to develop and grow the amenity and tourism offering outside of Kilkenny City and to build on the Outdoor Kilkenny Brand.

6.4 Sports Capital & Equipment Programme

The funding secured under this scheme will allow for the delivery of the following projects in 2023:

- Kilkenny Countryside Park – Hurling wall and outdoor gym equipment;
- Ferrybank Neighbourhood Park – Provision of new Multi Use Games Area;
- Newpark Fen – Refurbishment of existing Multi Use Games Area.
- Watershed – Refurbishment of all-weather pitches and sports hall.

The combined value of the above projects will see an investment of over €730,000 across the City and County in recreational amenities.

7. Rural Development

Under Kilkenny County Council's Capital Programme financial provision is made annually to meet match funding requirements under a number of national delivery programmes implementing rural development projects. These funding programmes include Town and Village Renewal (T&VR), the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF).

Under the T&VR Programme for the period 2020 to 2022 funding in the amount of €3.7m has been secured to deliver projects in our rural towns and villages. Kilkenny County Council is required to provide 20% to 25% match funding under this programme which represents an amount of €854,000 over the period to 2022. The Council work with Town Teams developing Town Plans to identify projects for further works to be delivered in our towns and villages over the next three to five years. This process is done in conjunction with Town Teams, Elected Representatives and community and voluntary groups and represents essential investment in the rural areas of our County. Kilkenny County Council has been very successful in delivery under this programme and it is hoped to sustain the recent levels of activity under this programme. As a result, an annual provision in the amount of approximately €165,000 is required for match funding to meet the requirements of this programme and to deliver community infrastructure across the County.

Larger projects incorporating rural regeneration are also being delivered in our County under the RRDF. Since this fund was launched in 2019, Kilkenny County Council has secured support for projects in Thomastown, Callan and Piltown including car parking, public realm works, walkways, playgrounds, libraries and cultural buildings. The Council received further RRDF funding in 2022 for Callan for design and planning of the Callan Friary Complex and 2 buildings in Bridge Street. Development of these projects will be a further boost to Callan, building on works completed and funded under RRDF at the Fair Green and the Moat Field. In addition, in 2022 Kilkenny was awarded €1,340,000 for Piltown town centre regeneration which will further reinvigorate the centre of Piltown following on from the recently developed playground park and current redevelopment of the Garda Station. The overall programme cost relating to projects already approved, complete or currently underway is €8.9m of which €7.1m is funded by grants under the RRDF with the balance of just over €1.8m requiring match funding from Kilkenny County Council and

partner organisations. The delivery of works already approved and of future project development and delivery under this programme will continue over the next three to five years with a financial provision required to meet match funding requirements in the region of €500,000 per annum.

Between the T&VR and RRDF programmes more than €12m of investment has been secured in our rural areas since 2017. It is our objective to work closely with communities and partner organisations to ensure the successful delivery of ongoing projects including the Sessions House in Thomastown, working with the Design and Craft Council of Ireland, the adaptive reuse of the Thomastown Community building as a new Public Library, design and planning for the Friary Complex in Callan and a new public realm and further development around the Garda Station and recreation area in Piltown. These projects all provide valuable public infrastructure in our County towns and we will continue to provide projects for consideration under these programmes to develop and support the vibrancy of our towns and villages.

8. Libraries

Building on the developments arising from Our Public Libraries 2022: Inspiring, Connecting and Empowering Communities, the new forthcoming national library strategy will emphasise the importance of library spaces and capital development of libraries in urban and rural regeneration planning and community development.

Much progress has already been made in Kilkenny in terms of expanding and developing modern library spaces and services in Kilkenny to provide modern buildings and services meeting highest standards of energy efficiency, accessibility and service delivery.

The delivery of a new, modern purpose-built modern library in the City in 2023 will provide for the needs of the communities of Kilkenny City and County for future generations.

The progression of Thomastown Library in 2023 to detailed design and construction stage will provide a vital civic and cultural space with modern library facilities opening in 2024. This project is 90% funded under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund.

Funding secured under Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) towards the pre-design/pre-planning of the Callan Friary Complex will include a public library as the centre of this development together with community, theatre and arts spaces. The current library is not fit for purpose and the development of a state-of-the-art library as part of this development will strengthen the County library network and provide for the needs of individuals and communities in Callan. Progress will be made to prepare for a Call 1 capital funding application for this development.

The Carnegie Library opened in 1910, is a protected structure and is listed on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) as being of regional importance. This building will be retained in library use with the relocation of

the administrative library headquarters and a public facing local studies service. The current local studies service is housed in John's Green House and the location is not suitable and largely inaccessible to the public. The Carnegie building requires a full assessment to identify what structural repair and improvement works are needed as well as a conservation assessment to bring the process to a preliminary design and structural assessment stage.

The above investment will transform library spaces and services ensuring our libraries continue to be central to our towns, villages and communities.

9 Tholsel Upgrade

The aim of the project is to upgrade the Tholsel or Town Hall Building as part of a new tourist attraction, while at the same time making the building compliant with the requirements of Part M (*Accessibility*) and Part F (*Fire*) of the building regulations. This will include the provision of a new lift and stairs to provide universal access to all levels of the building. The redevelopment of the building will protect and enhance the civic function of the building and will also include the development of a visitor exhibition within the building opening this historic building to visitors. The project will include visitor access to the basement of the building (*currently inaccessible*) and the clock tower (*current limited access only*), along with access to the Council Chamber. The area of the Mayor's Parlour is to be significantly enhanced with the reintroduction of a double height space, with the former windows to the parlour reintroduced.

The project will include the further development of the Medieval Mile Museum into a combined visitor attraction with the Town Hall. The combined visitor attraction will create a new visitor attraction of scale to draw more domestic and international visitors to the retail heart of Kilkenny, increasing footfall, visitor spend and the number of jobs sustained by the tourism sector in the centre of Kilkenny. The project is being part funded by Fáilte Ireland with funding in the value of € 3.05M.

10. Fire Services

Kilkenny County Council's Fire and Rescue Services' Fire and Emergency Operations Plan 2022-2026 and the National Fire Services Capital Programme 2021 - 2025 has committed to the provision of two new fire stations in Kilkenny over the period 2021 to 2025.

Funding has been provided for the delivery of a new station at Urlingford that commenced in 2022 at a projected cost of €1.7m

A further allocation of €6m has been made to Kilkenny for the provision of a new fire station to service Kilkenny City and Environs. Kilkenny County Council is advancing plans for the delivery of this significant project for the City.

Cost inflation on other capital projects have seen a significant increase in project costs to delivery. Based on other comparable projects it is expected that the

overall project cost will exceed the amount allocated under the national Fire Services' Capital Programme.

An additional fire appliance will be provided for the County under the current investment programme in line with the multi-annual replacement of fire engines around the County representing ongoing investment in our emergency services.

The previous Capital Programme saw the provision of a new station at Graiguenamanagh and two additional fire appliances.

The National Fire Services Capital Programme 2021 – 2025 will support 18 new fire station projects and the provision of 35 fire appliances. Kilkenny will benefit from more than 13% of this national investment in the fire service with the provision of two fire stations and a fire engine.

11. Other Projects

The following contracts are included in the other category on Table 1.

11.1 Shee Alms House Conservation Works

Costing €528k with a balance of €128k of match funding required. This will be completed in early 2023 and will be used temporarily as office space until The Tholsel project is completed.

11.2 Watergate

Upgrade the fabric of the building to improve the thermal efficiency and presentation from Horse Barrack Lane.

The estimated cost is €600k with a match funding requirement of €345k.

11.3 Civil Defence

Facility required to provide permanent home for the Civil Defence. The estimated cost is €2m. The funding source has yet to be identified.

11.4 IT Infrastructure

Ongoing investment in IT equipment and software. The estimated cost is €1m and will be funded through a leasing facility.

11.5 Planning

Investment of €1.1m required to fund various development planning initiatives. This investment will have to be funded from the Income and Expenditure Account.

11.6 Waterford Airport

As part of the investment required to upgrade Waterford Airport, the three Local Authorities - Waterford, Wexford and Kilkenny have previously agreed to invest €2m, (*Waterford - €1.2m, Wexford - €400k and Kilkenny €400k*) as part of an overall investment package of €20m involving Government and private investment. We are awaiting further contact from Waterford City and County Council on this initiative.

12. Summary

The estimated expenditure on Social Housing, Road and Fire Services projects which are 100% grant funded is as follows:

	€m
Social Housing.....	150
Roads	835
Fire Services.....	7.7
Total Estimated Expenditure.....	992.7m

While all of these projects are 100% grant funded significant working capital facilities will be required to enable delivery of same.

The total estimated expenditure on other projects is €163.9mm as set out in Table 1 below. The balance of funding to be provided for these projects is €43.5m. This figure is estimated based on the current estimated completion costs of the projects. We are currently seeing substantial cost inflation in construction contracts being tendered. Extra grant funding will have to be sought where the tender prices exceed the estimates as the funding from Council own sources is limited.

Table 1 - All Projects Excl Housing/Fire/Roads(100%).	Total Expenditure	Total Income	Balance to be funded
	€'000's	€'000's	€'000's
LIHAF	16,300	(12,082)	4,218
AQ General	7,487	(7,006)	481
URDF 2019	10,193	(8,737)	1,455
URDF 2020 - App 1	17,427	(13,073)	4,354
URDF 2020 - App 2	8,854	(7,073)	1,781
URDF Ferrybank	17,974	(10,370)	7,605
Library	7,401	(6,607)	794
Tholsel	5,702	(3,827)	1,875
Public Lighting	3,600	(69)	3,531
Greenway	22,000	(22,000)	0
RRDF	13,171	(10,232)	2,939
City Other	3,760	(3,500)	260
ORIS	5,822	(4,684)	1,138
Clar	1,911	(1,782)	129
KLP Funded	1,154	(882)	272
Sports Capital	731	(459)	272
Town & Village	6,943	(6,327)	616
Other	13,538	(1,780)	11,758
Total	163,969	(120,491)	43,478

Total match funding of €26.9m has been identified as set out in Table 2 below

Table 2	€m
IPB Capital Distribution	4.7
Asset Sales/Other Provision	3.0
Development Contributions	9.7
Term Loan approved by Council not drawn down	5.0
Term Loan approved by Council for public lighting upgrade not drawn down	3.5
Leasing for IT Infrastructure	1.0
Total Match Funding	26.9

The income from development contributions of €9.7m is based on receiving income of €2.4m per annum over the next three years less an allocation of €250k per annum for the Community Capital Facilities Cultural Scheme and also includes contributions collected in 2022. The average annual income over the last six years from Development Contributions was €2.37m.

Term loans of €8.5m have been approved by Council but not drawn down. The loan approval of €5m has not been drawn down due to Covid related delays on capital projects. The approval of €3.5m specifically relates to the public lighting upgrade and will be drawn down during 2023

When these two loans are drawn down the total non-mortgage loan finance being serviced will amount to €27m.

We will focus on investments that are essential to generate and drive economic activity while protecting and promoting our social and cultural objectives and protecting our heritage. In delivering the Capital Programme, a balance is required between borrowings (*mindful that every €1m borrowed requires a provision of €70,000 in the Revenue Budget*), development contributions and provision in the Revenue Budget.

Once the Capital Programme is agreed, this will determine the Council's capital spending plans for the next three years. Any project proposal not contained within the approved Capital Programme can only proceed if alternative funding source is identified and is available or alternatively projects already approved will need to be reviewed.

This Three Year Capital Budget will be reviewed on an annual basis having regard to changing circumstances. Should the budgeted funding not meet projections the Capital Budget will need to be adjusted accordingly and Members will be advised.



Sean McKeown
A/Chief Executive
11th January, 2023