



Kerry County Council Scrutiny Report

NOAC Report No. 74



Chair's Opening remarks

The National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC) is the national independent oversight body for the local government sector in Ireland and was established over a decade ago under the Local Government Reform Act 2014.

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NOAC's functions are wide ranging, involving the scrutiny of performance generally and financial performance specifically, supporting best practice, overseeing implementation of national local government policy and monitoring and evaluating implementation of corporate plans, adherence to service level agreements and public service reform by local government bodies.

I began my tenure as Chair of NOAC in September 2018 and have continued the important work commenced by the previous NOAC Chair in reviewing the performance of the individual local authorities in Ireland.

These individual reviews, which are called the Scrutiny Process, allows NOAC to provide a comprehensive overview of the functioning of local authorities to the public, both positive and negative, and allows for exemplars of best practice to be identified and used to share with other local authorities.

The first cycle of the Scrutiny Process was completed in September 2024 with 32 reports being published over that period, which are freely available on the NOAC website.

Following the completion of the first round of the Scrutiny Process, the NOAC board and I decided to conduct a review of the system in place and build on the excellent and valuable work already undertaken.

This has resulted in a new Scrutiny Process, which I feel, allows for a more detailed analysis of the performance of local authorities, along with a more structured format akin to the Oireachtas Committees.

As part of laying the groundwork on the new process, NOAC prepared a protocol document of the new Scrutiny Process, which lays out how meetings and engagement with local authorities would function and this was agreed to by the County and City Management Association. NOAC also conducted a data protection impact assessment of the new process to ensure that GDPR and personal data rights are respected.

With that in mind, NOAC has decided to record the meetings that are uploaded to the NOAC website, along with a transcript. This allows meetings to be as open as possible and gives the public an even greater insight into the performance of their local authorities.

In terms of those meetings, I have been very impressed with the engagement we have received from local authorities. The Scrutiny Process is an excellent arena for the public to see how the local government sector works for them, highlighting the excellent work being carried out, as well as the challenges being faced.

Further, the process allows local authorities to see how they are performing on a national level, as well as providing the opportunity to view areas of good practice that they might adopt in their own localities, allowing for a virtuous cycle of improvement.

I look forward to continuing to work closely and collaboratively with all the local authorities and want to use this opportunity to thank all the Chief Executives and their teams for the time and courtesy and the welcome extended to NOAC in this process.

Michael McCarthy
NOAC Chair
21st July 2025

Background

A core function of NOAC is to review the individual performance of local authorities in accordance with its statutory functions under the Local Government Reform Act 2014. This key NOAC process began in February 2017 and NOAC completed its first cycle of this process with the publication of the last of its 32 reports in September 2024. This ended the first cycle of this process with all local authorities having been reviewed and those findings being published.

The first cycle involved a number of stages, which included a face-to-face meeting with the Chief Executive and some of the Management team of the local authority with the Chair of NOAC and the Secretariat, a meeting between the Chief Executive and some/all of the Management team of the local authority with the full NOAC board and the publication of a report (Scrutiny Report) on the NOAC website.

In preparation for the meetings and as part of these reports, NOAC drew up a comprehensive profile of that particular local authority. This profile presented an analysis of data obtained from the various reports that NOAC has undertaken and other available information. The data collected is used to look at trends as well as to compare how local authorities are doing nationally.

This process allowed NOAC to provide a comprehensive overview of the functioning of local authorities to the public, both positive and negative. It allowed for exemplars of best practice to be identified and shared with other local authorities, as well as possibly being highlighted in the NOAC Annual Good Practice in Local Government Seminar.

Following the completion of the first round of the Scrutiny Process, the NOAC board decided to review the process in place and build on the excellent work carried out thus far.

The result of this work is the new NOAC Scrutiny Process, which includes an even more detailed analysis of the performance of each local authority and a more structured format akin to the Joint Oireachtas Committees.

Further, the NOAC board decided to allow for an even more open platform to enable greater access to the meetings between the NOAC board and the local authorities. This includes the recording of all meetings in the Scrutiny Process that are uploaded to the NOAC website, along with a transcript of the meetings.

The board also decided that it would provide further information on the process via the preparation of a report on each individual review, which is provided herein.

Recording and Transcript

The NOAC board met with the Chief Executive of Kerry County Council, Fearghal Reidy, along with a number of the Kerry County Council Management Team on 26th June 2025 in the Custom House, Dublin.

A recording of the meeting, as well as a copy of the transcript, can be freely viewed by the public on the NOAC website at www.noac.ie with a copy of this report.



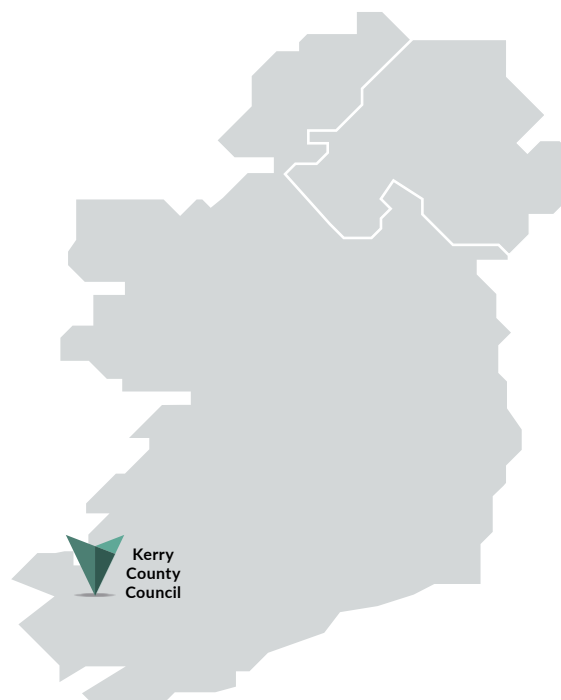
(L-R Back Row): Declan Breathnach (NOAC), Claire Gavin (Head of NOAC Secretariat), Noel Harrington, Ciarán Hayes, John Byrne, Miriam McDonald and Margaret Lane (NOAC). (L-R Front Row): James Nolan, Kathleen Moriarty and Niamh O'Sullivan (Kerry County Council), Fearghal Reidy (Chief Executive, Kerry County Council), Angela McAllen, Frank Hartnett, John Kennelly and Christy O'Connor (Kerry County Council).

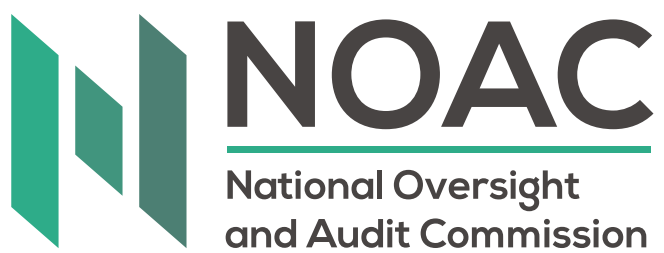
Other information

As part of the Scrutiny Process, NOAC has provided the below information regarding the meeting between Kerry County Council and the NOAC board.

This includes:

- ▲ A profile document prepared by NOAC for the meeting with Kerry County Council that contains information from NOAC reports and further information provided by Kerry County Council,
- ▲ A copy of the invitation letter sent to Kerry County Council, and
- ▲ A copy of the Chief Executive's opening statement provided to NOAC as part of the meeting.





Kerry County Council Profile Report

Background

The National Oversight and Audit Commission invited Kerry County Council to attend a meeting in the Custom House, Dublin 1 on the 26 June 2025.

The purpose of the meeting is to review the individual performance Kerry County Council in accordance with NOAC's statutory functions.

As part of this process and as agreed with the NOAC board, the Secretariat has prepared this profile report using data collected from the NOAC Performance Indicator Reports and the past Scrutiny report of Kerry County Council. It will use other sources of information such as NOAC's own reports including its Internal Audit report, Corporate Plan report and any other relevant available data.

The meeting is an opportunity to undertake a comprehensive review of the performance of Kerry County Council. It also allows NOAC to compare Kerry County Council's performance to that of other similar local authorities, as well as historical trends.

The meeting with NOAC will provide a picture to the public of where the local authority is performing well and where it may wish to improve its performance. By highlighting such issues, NOAC can encourage local authorities to strive to improve their performance or highlight to other local authorities where it is doing well, which in turn, can allow for collaboration on good practices.

Summary Performance Indicator Data

Below is a list of Performance Indicator data, which highlights key national indicators and standout items from the NOAC Performance Indicator Report 2023, as well as comparing national and historical trends.

- ▲ **Housing.** Kerry County Council owned 4,536 social housing dwellings (H1) at the end of 2023 with 4.32% vacant, compared to a national average of 2.81% (H2). Kerry's vacancy rate in 2023 was one of ten local authorities above the national average, and was actually the third highest amongst all local authorities. In 2022 the Council owned 4,491 social housing dwellings with 4.41% vacant, compared to a national average of 3.03%.
- ▲ **Homelessness.** Kerry's long term homeless adult's figures (H6) dropped significantly, from 69.49% in 2022 to 57.14% in 2023. The national average figure for 2023 is 57.61%.
- ▲ **A new indicator, H7 Social Housing Retrofit,** was introduced in 2024 for the 2023 Report. This ensures that the social housing stock is upgraded and will assist in meeting the carbon target for 2030. Kerry had 11 completions, the second lowest amongst all local authorities, whereas the national average figure stood at 78.87. Kerry outlined that it had issues with the grants being offered and the availability of contractors.
- ▲ **Vacancies.** In 2023, the average time for rehousing in vacant properties in Kerry (H3) was 65.45 weeks, which compares unfavourably to the national average of 33.72 weeks, and indeed is the longest turnaround time amongst all local authorities. At its June 2024 validation meeting with NOAC, Kerry outlined that one reason for increased re-letting times was due to the fact that 33% of vacancies arise out of the death of tenants, with a deep retrofitting of units then required.
- ▲ **New house building inspections** were 28.91% in 2023 (P1) as opposed to 25.58% in 2022. The national average figure in 2023 was 25.87%.

The maintenance cost per unit was €656.30 (H4) in 2023 compared to €556.11 in 2022. For 2023, the national average maintenance cost amounted to €1,493.19.

- ▲ **Rented dwelling inspections.** The number of private rental inspections carried out in Kerry increased from 902 in 2022 to 920

in 2023 (H5). The national mean rose from 1,299.42 in 2022 to 1,626.97 in 2023. Kerry was not one of nine local authorities to meet its 25% inspection target in 2023.

- ▲ Roads. In terms of road condition, Kerry had 36.30% of its local primary roads (R1b) having no defects, compared to a national average of 27.93%. Regarding its local secondary roads (R1c), 26.50% had no defects, which compares to the national average of 23.14%. 25.48% of its tertiary roads (R1d) had no defects, in comparison to 19.38% nationally.
- ▲ Fire service. In 2023 it took an average of 6:29 minutes to mobilise the Kerry part time fire brigades for calls to fires, (F2) an increase on the 6:01 minutes of 2022. In 2023, the average mobilisation times for the part time fire service across local authorities stood at 5:56 minutes. In its June 2024 validation meeting with NOAC, Kerry stated that its fire service mobilisation times were due in part to the IR issues in 2023 and also because of gorse fires, while measures have been taken to address both matters.

Kerry had a cost per capita for providing the fire service (F1) in 2023 of €56.71 (€51.69 in 2022). This compares to a national average of €65.76 in 2023.

In the case of Kerry, the percentage where the first fire tender attendance took longer than 20 minutes for fire incidents (F3) was 25.79% for 2023, slightly higher than the figure of 22.37% in 2022.

For all other emergency incidents, the percentage where first attendance took longer than 20 minutes was 25.25%.

- ▲ Libraries. Kerry had the 2.53 library visits per head of population in 2023 (L1a), (in line with the national average of 2.70). This was a significant increase over the 2022 figure, which stood at 1.89 visits. In 2022, the average number of visits stood at 2.09, while it increased to 2.70 in 2023. Kerry also recorded 568,494 items (L1b) issued to library borrowers in 2023, a 1.4% decline on the items borrowed in 2022. Kerry also mentioned work being done to catalogue some valuable book collections. Kerry highlighted that renaming the library

website address to kerrylibrary.ie has been important in engaging the public in relation to the services it provides.

- ▲ WTEs. In 2023 Kerry had 1,272.02 staff members (C1), marginally more than the 1,270.21 in 2022. The national increase was 3.61% over this timeframe.
- ▲ Job creation. 2,131 jobs (J1) were created nationally in 2023 with the assistance of the Local Enterprise Offices, which is a 38.17% decrease on the 2022 figures, which stood at 3,447. Kerry created 41.54 jobs in 2023, with the assistance of the Local Enterprise Office, a significant drop from the 59.90 jobs it created in 2022.
- ▲ Sick leave. Kerry's medically certified sick leave rate is 4.33% (C2) (compared to 4.17% in 2022), making it one of the local authorities which did not meet the public sector sick leave target of 3.5%. The national average for 2023 was 3.77%. Kerry's self-certified sick leave rate was 0.28% in 2023, the highest among all local authorities. The national average was 0.32%.
- ▲ Technology & Social media. The per capita total page views of Kerry's websites (C3a) in 2023 was 30.76, which compares to an average of 13.36 across all local authorities. The per capita total page views of Kerry's websites in 2022 was 37.98, which compares to an average of 13.65 across all local authorities. Kerry's results over the last four years have been the highest among all local authorities.
- ▲ The per capita total number of followers at the end of 2023 for Kerry's social media accounts (C3b) was 0.64 as opposed to an average of 1.05 across all local authorities. This compares to the per capita total number of followers at the end of 2022 of its social media accounts of 0.60, as opposed to an average of 0.94 across all local authorities.
- ▲ Environment. 28% of Kerry is unpolluted or litter-free (E3) (29% in 2022). 69% of the area is slightly polluted (71% in 2022) and 4% is moderately polluted (0% in 2022). The national average figure for being unpolluted or litter-free in 2023 was 16%, was 59%

for being slightly polluted and was 12% for being moderately polluted.

- ▲ Public liability. In 2023 Kerry had a cost of settled claims per capita of €28.40 (M3), while the national average is €10.16. This is a large increase from the €18.58 cost in 2022, with the 2023 cost being the second highest amongst all local authorities.
- ▲ The percentage of households availing of the 3 bin service (E1) was deemed to be in excess of 100% in 2023, (due to the method of measurement), as indeed it was in 2022. The national average figure was 94.13% in 2023.
- ▲ Public lighting. Kerry recorded an increase under this heading, (E6) with 43.82% of its system having LED lights, an increase from 40.66% in 2022.
- ▲ Planning. The number of planning appeals to An Bord Pleanála (P2) increased from 1,047 in 2022 to 1,713 in 2023. Kerry had 69.09% of its decisions confirmed by local authorities, with or without modifications.
- ▲ W2 reflects the number of registered schemes monitored by each local authority, as a percentage of total registered schemes. Many local authorities had 100% of registered schemes monitored. Kerry was similar, in having 99.17% of such schemes monitored. This indicator was chosen for validation for 2023 and during the visits, general concerns were raised about the future of these schemes. Kerry expressed concern that some expertise would be lost with the transfer of staff to Uisce Éireann.

- ▲ C4 demonstrates the overall cost of ICT provision per WTE. Kerry had a cost of €3,823.55 per WTE, which compares to an average cost of € 3,948.63 across all local authorities. Many local authorities have also increased their investment in cyber security. NOAC was very impressed by the work being undertaken on this topic, which was outlined by Kerry at a meeting with NOAC. Kerry has also made a substantial investment in cyber security and outlined the full disaster recovery and business continuity process in which it has invested. Kerry outlined that despite the capital and revenue investment that the capital costs are only really reflected in the fixed asset register.
- ▲ M4 outlines the total payroll costs as a percentage of revenue expenditure. Kerry had a cost of 43.43%, the highest among all local authorities. The national mean cost was 33.30%.

From records, it is clear that commercial rate collections have climbed steadily over the years. While there was a large temporary dip in 2020, rates again began to climb, reaching 88% in 2023, the same as the national collection rate.

Rent collections have increased since 2017, moving from 85% that year to 92.7% in 2023. This is above the national average, which stands at 88% for 2023.

Housing loans have improved over the years, climbing from 92.6% in 2017 to 96.5% in 2023, which is well above the national average of 87% in 2023.

Collection Rates

	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Commercial Rate collection rates	88%	86.2%	80.5%	65.4%	86.2%	84.6%	82.5%
Rent collection rates	92.7%	91.9%	92.5%	91.7%	93%	88%	85%
Housing loan collection rates	96.5%	95.3%	94.2%	95%	94.2%	93.1%	92.6%

Kerry County Council General Information

Below is general information provided by Kerry County Council covering a list of relevant topics and issues.

1. Kerry County Council General Information	
Local Authority	Kerry County Council
Population	156,458 (CSO Census 2022)
Area	4,807 sq km (5th largest county)
Municipal Districts	Five Municipal Districts – Tralee, Killarney, Castleisland/Corca Dhuibhne, Listowel and Kenmare
2025 Budget	Total revenue budget is €226.57mn. The 2025 – 2027 Capital Investment Programme of the Council is €690.3mn which will see investment in housing, transport, amenity, community, environmental and cultural infrastructure.

2. Staffing	
Number employed @ 31/12/2024	1,302 WTE
WTE Staff per 1,000 population	8.32 (based on pop of 156,458)
% of paid working days lost to medically certified sick leave	4.22%

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
C1	1,153.03	1,216.12	1,237.60	1,270.21	1,272.02	1,301.94
C2 A	4.18	3.24	3.26	4.17	4.33	4.22

The figures for 2020 and 2021, in particular, were impacted by the Covid pandemic with significantly different approaches to the certification, taking off and management of sick leave absences. In addition, there were significant impacts from required and enforced absences from the workplace on a more widespread basis due to Government approaches to 'lockdowns' etc. The cumulative effect of this exceptional period was a reduction in 'traditional sick leave' absences. The certified sick leave figure for 2024 represents a slight decrease on the 2023 figure. 94% of sick leave during 2024 was certified by a medical practitioner.

HR continue to closely monitor and manage all long-term absences under our current absence management policy approaches, including referrals to the Council's Occupational Health Physician as required.

3. Housing Information @ 31/12/24

Local Authority Stock number	4,526
% Number of dwellings vacant	2.76%
Number currently on waiting list	2,333
HAP Tenancies	1,551
Homeless presentations	
Total number classified as homeless and in emergency accommodation as of 31/12/2024	42
Total number in emergency accommodation for 6 months continuously or 6 months cumulatively in 2024	22

Update from Kerry County Council – May 2025	<p>There continues to be a challenging environment to deliver housing in Kerry. The target set for Kerry County Council to deliver social houses over the period 2022 to 2026 is 1,536 Units to be delivered through a combination of direct build (including Turnkey and Part V acquisitions), approved housing body delivery and leasing. While there remains a significant gap to target, current approved housing will deliver 1,159 units. Projects are being initiated to address that gap before the end of 2026. Activity by Approved Housing Bodies is strong in Kerry with this sector projected to deliver 612 units out of the 1,159 total delivery by the end of 2026. The total projected delivery for 2025 direct build is 215 units.</p>
Social Supports Housing waiting list	<p>The net need as per summary of Social Housing Assessment 2024 is 2,333. Kerry County Council introduced Choice Based Letting in November 2023, customer engagement with the new system is in the region of 80%. Since its introduction, the Council has seen a significant reduction in the number of housing refusals by applicants.</p>
HAP Tenancies	<p>There were 1,551 active HAP tenancies at the end of 2024, 246 new HAP tenancies were set up in 2024.</p> <p>The number of new HAP tenancies are reducing due to the lack of available properties to rent along with increased cost of rents. Global HAP rent review ongoing during 2025.</p>

Homelessness	<p>The number of individuals classified as homeless and in emergency accommodation at the end of 2024 is 42.</p> <p>Homeless Presentations – 2024 - 726</p> <p>2023 - 639</p> <p>2022 - 664</p> <p>The figures reflect multiple presentations by some clients/individuals throughout the year. Children are not counted.</p> <p>There has been a significant reduction in the numbers in emergency accommodation from a high of 172 in late 2019 to the current numbers which have remained reasonably static over the past 18/24 months. There were 22 adults cumulatively in emergency accommodation for a 6-month period over 2024, and 18 adults in emergency accommodation consecutively for 6 months.</p> <p>The Council recently signed a contract for the provision of an emergency accommodation facility in Killarney, with capacity for up to 20 people. It will cater for both individuals and families and will service the Killarney and South Kerry area. Critical emergency accommodation provision with associated wraparound services will continue to be provided from Tralee. It is anticipated that the opening of this facility may see a temporary but short-term increase in overall homeless presentations.</p>
Housing Adaptation Grants for Older People and Disabled People	<p>Significant activity in this area following revisions to the scheme in late 2024 which has resulted in increased grant/income thresholds along with an increased capital allocation for 2025. We have seen a 17% increase in grant applications received to the 30/04/2025 in comparison to 2024. Total funding of €4.14m is available for these grants in 2025.</p>

Housing Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H1 – the number of dwellings in the ownership of Kerry County Council at the 31/12/2024 was 4,526. • H2 Vacant Stock – the % of total number of local authority owned dwellings vacant at the 31/12/24 has reduced significantly from 4.32% in 2023 to 2.76% in 2024. (Local Authority stock number (also include % vacants) stock at 31/12/2024 – 4,526. Vacant at 31/12/2024 – 125 = 2.76%) Efforts were made in 2024 to clear the legacy void properties, and this has significantly impacted the vacancy percentage figure. Continued efforts are ongoing to clear the remaining backlog in 2025 and deal with properties as they arise. Challenges in this area include the ongoing inflation of materials and labour costs in addition to the limited availability of suitable contractors. • H3 Average reletting times – the average reletting time has decreased from 65.45 weeks in 2023 to 61.55 weeks at 31/12/2024 The clearing of the backlog of legacy voids that have detrimentally affected this indicator has started to take effect. As the Voids Refurbishment Programme continues in 2025 and a greater number of long-term voids are returned to the Kerry County Council social housing stock, it is expected that this figure will continue to reduce. This figure has previously been adversely impacted by vacant properties that were not refurbished due to the magnitude of the works involved and the associated high cost. • H3 – the number of dwellings re-tenanted in 2024 at 157 and 122 in 2023 are the highest in recent years and highlight the significant works being undertaken to address the voids turnaround in Kerry. • H4 – Kerry County Council maintenance expenditure figure was €563.51 in 2024
Residential Tenancy Board Inspections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H5 – in 2024 additional staff were recruited which will result in a significant increase in inspections in 2025. A total of 1,172 Private Rental Inspections were undertaken in 2024. The Department has set a target of 1,857 inspections for 2025, and as of May 12th, a total of 979 Private Rental Inspections have been completed to date.
Energy Efficiency Retrofit Programme (EERP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H7 - 35 no. EERP units were completed by the Council in 2024, which exceeded the Department allocation of 30 for the year. However, only 13 of these were processed by the Department before the end of 2024, the Council agreed with the Department that the balance of 22 units not processed in 2024, were added to the Council allocation for 2025, these were successfully claimed in Q1 2025. Kerry has received an allocation of 80 EERP units for 2025, a significant increase on the 2024 allocation.

Vacant Homes Office	<p>In 2022 Kerry County Council established a Vacant Homes Office (VHO), following Circular 04/2022 Vacant Homes Officers.</p> <p>The VHO is tasked with tackling the vacancy rate of properties across the county. The office collects and collates vacancy data, manages, and implements the schemes available to re-activate vacant and derelict properties, namely the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant, the Repair and Lease Scheme, the Ready to Build Scheme – Serviced Sites and the Property Activation Programme.</p> <p>The most active area in the VHO is the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant. The scheme was launched in July 2022. The grant provides support of up to €50,000 to refurbish vacant properties and support of up to €70,000 for a derelict property, subject to the scheme conditions. By mid-May 2025, Kerry County Council received 637 applications, which are at various stages in the approval/validation process. The Council has paid grants of €3.6m to date under this scheme.</p> <p>Under the grant the works must be completed within 13 months of approval, and as the scheme will be in place approximately 3 years in July, there is now a steady number of applicants returning with the works completed to their properties and wishing to draw down the grant. Therefore, additional resources are required to ensure the effective and efficient administration and processing of the grant. The grant was also confirmed until 2030, as part of the new Programme for Government, and there does not appear to be a reduction in new applications per month, 14 to 16 per month, similar to that since the beginning of the scheme.</p> <p>The grant is having a positive impact in bringing vacant properties back into use.</p>
Derelict Sites / Activation Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New approach to the treatment of Derelict Sites and the Property Activation Programme led to a full review of the Derelict Sites Register and associated levies in 2024. • Currently 39 properties on the Derelict Sites Register and Derelict Sites Levy demand totalling €264,600 issued in March 2025. • Interest on derelict sites levies will accrue from June 2025, unpaid levels will be referred to Law Agents for the application of a charge on the property. • Compulsory Acquisition (CPA) of six properties commenced in 2024 under the Derelict Sites Act. Vesting Orders for three of the six properties became effective 23/04/2025. Objections were received on the other three of the six properties and applications for consent to proceed with the CPA have been lodged with An Bord Pleanála. • Kerry County Council have a target of five CPA to commence in 2025. It is expected to commence CPA process on three properties in early Q2 2025, and a further three in late Q3 2025.

Rents and Loans	<p>Housing Loans</p> <p>At 31st December 2024, Kerry County Council had 210 active housing loan accounts. A collection rate of 96% was achieved in 2024.</p> <p>Kerry County Council received 26 applications in 2024 for the Local Authority Home Loan. 8 loans were approved in 2024 with a total value of €975,600. 8 loans under the Local Authority Home Loan were drawn down in 2024, totalling €964,800.</p> <p>Housing Rents</p> <p>In 2024, Kerry County Council completed a countywide rent review on Kerry County Council Tenancies (4241).</p> <p>Kerry County Council had 4,499 active tenancies at 31st December 2024. A collection rate of 92% was achieved in 2024.</p>
Tenant Purchase Scheme	<p>221 sales have been completed since the initiation of the scheme to year end 2024, 41 of which were completed during 2024. 151 applications were at various stages of the tenant purchase process at the end of 2024. Activity in this scheme has increased with amendments to eligibility criteria in January 2024.</p>

4. Council Mission Statement

The Corporate Plan sets out the Council's strategic framework and activities for future action for the term of the Council to 2029. It is the central component of the Council's business architecture, linking key elements such as policy, organisation, operational activity, governance, and performance management designed to act as the driver for economic development, social inclusion and environmental sustainability of County Kerry. It sets out the vision, mission and values of Kerry County Council.

Vision	Kerry County Council will lead and support the sustainable development of the county in an inclusive manner positioning Kerry as a place of choice to live, work, visit and invest in and as a prime location to enjoy, innovate, learn and conduct business.
Mission	To proudly and effectively deliver excellent services and infrastructure for our residents, communities, businesses and visitors, while nurturing, protecting and celebrating the County's unique urban and rural environment, diverse communities, rich cultural, artistic, educational and language heritage.

5. Economic Forum (CEF)

There are a number of economic forums within the county:

- ▲ Economic and Community Strategic Policy Committee
- ▲ The Southwest Regional Enterprise Plan follows on from the Southwest Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020 and the Action Plan for Jobs. The current plan was launched in April 2022. To ensure oversight and implementation, a new steering committee chaired by a private sector representative was appointed by government. The current Chair is Ms Patricia Quane, retired VP and General Manager of Astellas, Killorglin. The steering committee meets twice yearly and includes key stakeholders, including the Chief Executive of Kerry County Council as well as senior management from Enterprise Ireland, IDA, ETB, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, UCC, MTU, Enterprise Champions, Local Authorities, LEOs, SRA, the Regional Skills Forum, and Chambers of Commerce.
- ▲ The Cork and Kerry Hub Networks have been successfully established and are working collaboratively on events and projects. The Chairs of these Hubs Networks (based in MTU) collaborate on new projects through the mechanism of Working Group 2 under the SWREP.
- ▲ Discover Kerry – Multi stakeholder group led by Kerry County Council in relation to the marketing and promotion of Kerry as a destination to visit, work, live and invest in.
- ▲ Tech Industry Alliance (TIA) – A collaboration between It@Cork and KerrySciTech. Kerry County Council supports this industry led cluster whose ambition is to scale the South-West's technology and business ecosystem through connection, collaboration, advocacy and talent.
- ▲ Local Economic & Community Plan Kerry County Council is responsible for the implementation of the Local Economic and Community Plan incorporating the Tourism Strategy for County Kerry, through the LECP Advisory Group, Economic SPC and LCDC.
- ▲ Kerry Tourism Industry Federation, a representative body for the tourism sector.

6. The Local Enterprise Office

The Local Enterprise Office (LEO) acts as a one stop shop for small businesses in the county. The LEO provides advice, information, training and support to those trying to start or grow their businesses. In addition, the LEO provides core financial assistance in the form of Feasibility grants, Business Priming grants, Business expansion grants and Market Explorer Grants. These core supports are targeted at viable small enterprises in the manufacturing and internationally traded services sector. The LEO operates under a Service Level Agreement with Enterprise Ireland which provides funding.

Kerry	Metric 2024	Outturn 2024	% Of Annual Target achieved 2024	Metric 2025	Outturn Q1	% Of Annual Target achieved 2025
Training numbers	1200	1,529	127%	1050	590	56%
Start Your Own Business Programmes	120	128	107%	105	82	78%
Management Development Programmes	60	155	258%	105	44	42%
General	1020	1,246	122%	840	464	55%
Mentoring	390	349	89%	345	59	17%
RD&I (Agile Programme)	1	1	100%	1	0	0%
Lean	15	8	53%	15	3	20%
Green for Business	17	28	165%	18	6	33%
Energy Efficiency Grant	12	11	92%	18	10	56%
Export (3 businesses nominated)	3	3	100%	3	0	0%
Digital for Business	6	3	50%	15	0	0%
Trading Online Voucher	38	71	187%			
Grow Digital Voucher				6	0	0%
Microfinance Ireland Loans	11	12	109%	13	4	31%
Client Transfers to Enterprise Ireland	5	2	40%	5	0	0%
Job Creation associated with grant aid	50	67	134%	50	12	24%
Net Jobs	105	-81				

Commentary on out turns:

Start Ups	<p>Metrics are generally strong, but an area of concern is the decline, particularly in traditional manufacturing. In addition, the rising costs of doing business, labour shortages and the general economic uncertainty are impacting on businesses.</p> <p>The 2024 job creation figure of 156 new jobs within the portfolio is on par with other years. 2024 job losses across the portfolio amount to 237 jobs leading to a net job loss of 81 jobs. The bulk of businesses on the portfolio are small businesses and a number of these have had a difficult 2024.</p> <p>The job creation projections associated with actual grant aid are positive with a project increase in employment of 67 jobs across core grant aided businesses in 2024.</p> <p>Specific issues encountered by businesses include retirements, bereavements, business succession issues, transfers to other agencies and owner/manager limitations in adapting to changing business environment.</p>
Changing nature of business	<p>Businesses are focused on increasing efficiency and the high cost of labour is an issue. Many businesses sub-contract primary production and the traditional manufacturing companies are in decline as manufacturing work is outsourced. This does allow the business cost production more accurately, but it does affect direct employment in the county. The employment survey has identified over 40 vacancies.</p>
Range of business supports	<p>There is a broad range of business supports available in Kerry.</p> <p>The Gaeltacht area is served by Údarás na Gaeltachta and excluded from core LEO supports.</p> <p>2024 saw the introduction of Increased Cost of Business Grants, Power Up Grants, LEADER and FLAG funding. The network of Enterprise Hubs also provides support and the National Enterprise Hub https://www.neh.gov.ie/business-supports is also online outlining over 100 supports for small business.</p>
New Supports	<p>A range of additional new supports have been introduced in recent years extending the remit of the LEO to provide a range of supports in the Green Economy and Digital Adaptation areas.</p> <p>Green for Business Audits – a free audit of the business energy usage with improvement report specifying changes</p> <p>Energy Efficiency Grants – a grant of 75% of funding to a maximum of €10,000 to replace high energy usage equipment</p> <p>Digital for Business – a free business audit which recommends digital solutions and efficiencies. Digital for Business helps in a variety of ways, whether eliminating paperwork, reducing time spent on administrative tasks, or allowing businesses to efficiently meet their regulatory requirements.</p> <p>Grow Digital Voucher – supports business in their digital transformation by providing funding for their digital transformation e.g. software, training and IT configuration. The voucher is a grant of up to €5,000 covering 50% of eligible costs.</p> <p>These new schemes are open to the retail and hospitality sectors and have extended the remit of the LEO.</p>

External Engagement	<p>The LEO has also worked closely on a regional and national level in delivery of profile events such as Student Enterprise Awards, Student Inc. (MTU), National Ploughing Exhibition, Showcase (Craft), National Enterprise Awards, Food Academy Programme, National Women’s Enterprise Day and Blás na hÉireann.</p> <p>At a regional policy level, the LEO is engaged on a number of committees supporting the Regional Enterprise Plans and Regional Skills Forum.</p> <p>At a local level, the LEO supports Local Development Company Evaluation Committees, LCDC and LAG, Fisheries Local Area Group (FLAG), Innovation Centre Boards and the local business networks.</p>
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7. Retail Incentives

Kerry County Council continues to work with and provide support to the Chamber Alliances throughout the county. New structures have been strengthened in Listowel, Castleisland, Killorglin and Milltown in recent years which have contributed to significant advancement of projects within these towns.

The Council contributes financially to projects led out by the chamber alliances through allocations from the Council’s community support fund, in addition to the significant support to major festivals in towns in the county including the Rose of Tralee International Festival, Listowel Writers Week, Other Voices Dingle etc. Film and Festival development are an integral part of our economic and tourism offering and afford local people an opportunity to promote their areas and attract increased visitors and revenue into their communities. Kerry County Council continues to support the county’s wide range of festivals and events with mentoring and workshops for festival providers and marketing, and promotion supports as well as financial assistance through the Community Support Fund and via the Festival and Participative Events Programme supported through Failte Ireland.

Significant Regeneration Programmes have been initiated in town centres and these will be further developed in the coming years. Town Centre Health checks have been carried out in Tralee, Listowel and Castleisland. The Town Centre First Programme and Policy is being led and implemented across the county by the Council’s Town Regeneration Unit. Town Centre First Masterplans are being advanced with Town Teams, these masterplans chart a strategic path for revitalising and enhancing towns through a series of targeted initiatives concentrated on town centres and capital investment projects. Grant funding was secured in 2024 by the Council for both Tralee and Killarney towns to develop Integrated Urban Strategies under the Town Centre First Heritage Revival Scheme (THRIVE) targeting projects that promote conservation and adaptive reuse of publicly owned built heritage stock while reducing vacancy and dereliction in town centres. Projects are currently being advanced for both towns under this scheme.

In the 2024 Tidy Towns competition, both Killarney and Tralee achieved Gold Medal status. Killarney secured the Kerry County Award. Tralee achieved its 12th consecutive Gold Medal and finishing second in the Large Urban Centre category. These efforts by the local Tidy Towns committees in association with Kerry County Council promote additional footfall and retail spend in attractive town centres.

Kerry County Council delivered on the Increased Cost of Business and Power Up grants across the hospitality and retail sectors with an injection of over €15M to over 5,500 registrations for the schemes. These schemes supported businesses challenged by the higher costs of business. The engagement of the Council with these businesses was positive.

As part of the continued support for the Retail Sector, Kerry LEO continues to run a series of programmes targeting and supporting the retail sector such as the Retail Development Programme and clinics in areas such as Shop Layouts & Visual Merchandising. These clinics are delivered on a one-to-one basis and support necessary changes to support increased business through better shop layout and access. These have proved to be popular. Recent programmes such the Green for Business and Energy Efficiency grants are also promoted and delivered. Businesses are also encouraged to engage with the Digital initiatives to streamline sales and stock control.

The Council continues to work with Kerry Tourism Industry Federation and support its marketing programme for the promotion of County Kerry as a visitor destination.

Commercial Rates Waiver Scheme – addressing town centre vacancy	<p>Kerry’s town and village streetscapes are uniquely charming and reflect the county’s rich cultural heritage which plays a crucial role in fostering a sense of community. It is essential to preserve the character of Kerry’s urban and rural streetscapes for future generations. As is the case with other towns and villages across the country and internationally, town centre vacancy is an issue that can lead to negative economic and community impacts.</p> <p>As part of the Council’s efforts to address this, Kerry County Council plans to offer financial relief in the form of a waiver of commercial rates. The scheme aims to encourage economic growth and bring vacant properties back into use. It is targeted at attracting businesses to the core centres of towns and villages across the county, particularly those that are newly established or expanding, and incentivises the use of vacant properties, where properties have been vacant for a continuous period of two years. The overall aim of the scheme is to reinvigorate town and village centres, promote the use of vacant buildings, enable new commercial uses and promote retail diversity. It is expected the Rates Waiver Scheme will be in place for 2026.</p>
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8. The Corporate Plan

Guided by our Vision and Mission and underpinned by our Values, the following five Strategic Themes have been identified within Kerry County Council’s Corporate Plan 2024 – 2029 which will form the basis by which the Council will deliver our services and infrastructure over the period to 2029.

Theme 1. Creative, Connected, Safe and Healthy Communities

Theme 2. Strategic Infrastructure, Housing and Regeneration

Theme 3. Economic, Enterprise and Tourism

Theme 4. Environment and Climate

Theme 5. Organisation and People

Corporate Goals, Priority Objectives and Supporting Programmes and Strategies have been identified which underpin these five themes. These will guide the Annual Service Delivery Plan (ASDP) for the Council, the Operational Plans for each Directorate and the Personal Development Plan for each member of staff. In addition to the existing National Performance Indicators, and through the relevant Directorate Operational Plans, the Council will also identify other key indicators, to measure and track performance and progress on the Corporate Plan goals and priority objectives, which will be reviewed on an ongoing basis through the Operational Plan and PMDS process.

9. Shared Services

Local Government Operational Procurement Centre

The Local Government shared service for procurement is a public sector wide shared service led by Kerry County Council working in partnership with the LGMA and the Office of Government Procurement. The Local Government Procurement Programme Board provides the overall governance and strategic overview of the Procurement Shared Service. Its focus relates to quality assurance, compliance structures, review of work programmes, and training. The Board meets on a quarterly basis and has representation from across the Local Government Sector and the relevant Department. This approach to the Local Government shared service model has been critical in promoting procurement reform across the sector and outputs and progress has been significant since 2014.

The Local Government Operational Procurement Centre (LGOPC) is responsible for managing, developing and promoting procurement best practice under the Local Government sector-led categories of Plant Hire and Minor Building Works & Civils. It acts as a central purchasing body under the auspices of Kerry County Council, co-ordinating the establishment of National Framework Agreements and Dynamic Purchasing Systems for the procurement of works, goods and services under these categories to meet the needs of the local government sector and other public service bodies.

The LGOPC maintains a dedicated public procurement portal at www.Supplygov.ie that provides an electronic platform for contracting authorities to operate and manage the procurement of works, goods and services from suitably qualified suppliers in a professional self-serve environment. The continued development of the Supplygov platform ensures that the procurement process is on-line, streamlined and supports the delivery of compliance effectiveness and savings in an electronic medium across the public service. This is complemented by strong leadership, information and on-going training resources provided to the Contracting Authorities, that support these activities.

The LGOPC maintains seven (7) Live Framework Agreements and seven (7) Live Dynamic Purchasing Systems for Local Government and public service bodies under these categories, representing an estimated total annual spend in the order of €600M by Public Service Bodies. These arrangements engage approximately 2,500 different suppliers, the majority of whom are micro and small local enterprises. Dynamic Purchasing Systems provide a reliable pathway for Micro and SMEs to participate in public procurement and greatly promote the tendering skills of such smaller entities.

Since 2018, the LGOPC has been operating in a wholly electronic environment, after developing a fully online electronic application process on etenders and the continued development and enhancement of the Supplygov platform. This has greatly reduced the tendering burden on Suppliers and continues to de-mystify and simplify the public procurement process for the large number of Micro and SME enterprises engaging on these arrangements, as well as strengthening useability, performance and cyber security resilience.

As well as participating in multiple external Working/Strategic Groups and public procurement events, significant support and resources have been developed by the LGOPC that are readily available to Public Service Buyers such as the Supplygov Training website (Sandbox), On-demand Training Tutorials, User Guides, FAQs, SRFT Templates, and cross sector & one-to-one training events. In addition, the LGOPC provide day to day operational support to Live procurement activities via IT staff, Customer Service Helpdesk, Category Management and Engineering staff resulting in the exchange of c. 9,800 telephone calls and emails in 2024. New contracting authorities can register on Supplygov to use the LGOPC arrangements at any stage – to date 62 other bodies are registered while a number of others are in process.

Since 2020, all new centralised arrangements established by the LGOPC provide discretion to the contracting authority to include multiple qualitative criteria, including environmental and social considerations in the contract award process when publishing Requests For Tender on Supplygov. This provides a key mechanism for incentivising supply market transition to sustainable solutions that will progress the 'greening' of the public procurement process. Greater advances in this area will be enabled through planned consultation with contracting authorities and supply markets for the purpose of identifying consistent award criteria for use with the LGOPC arrangements.

The LGOPC Pipeline of Work that establishes these arrangements is developed through identification of significant categories of expenditure and public body demand, supplemented by consultation with Working Groups formed from experienced purchasers of such categories. These arrangements include primary solutions for procurement of the following works, goods and services -:

- ▲ Plant Hire
- ▲ Civil Engineering Materials
- ▲ Roads and Civil Works
- ▲ Rehabilitation of Residential Properties
- ▲ Energy Efficiency Retrofitting of Social Housing
- ▲ Management of Invasive Plant Species
- ▲ Road Markings
- ▲ Supply of Road Signs
- ▲ Asbestos Removal & Disposal
- ▲ Building Works Tradespersons
- ▲ Bitumen Supplies & Services (On behalf of TII)
- ▲ Local Authority Training Providers (On behalf of Tipperary Co Co)
- ▲ Local Authority Climate Action Training (On behalf of Tipperary Co Co)
- ▲ Road Network Machine Survey Services (On behalf of Donegal Co Co NRO)

A further Dynamic Purchasing System for the provision of Minor Building Works on Non-Residential properties is presently being established and will be available for use in 2025.

Annually, a total of c. 4,500 RFTs are issued through Supplygov under the Live arrangements. This process supports the creation of on-going competitive tension in the RFT process, which continues to deliver value for money solutions for the public service bodies. For the Local Government sector alone, it is estimated that savings in the order of €46M have been achieved between 2015 and 2024.

The Procurement Programme Board, through its shared service approach, continues to promote initiatives that strengthen compliance and engagement in the use of centralised arrangements through the issuing of best practice guidelines, professionalising the procurement function, facilitating training and enabling engagement with SMEs while simultaneously supporting the expertise and continued expansion of the LGOPC in the development of fit for purpose procurement solutions to meet public service body needs under a well-embedded local Governance structure.

A key area and focus for the Procurement Shared Service on behalf of the Local Government Sector has been on Procurement Compliance. While it is important to note that responsibility for compliance and engagement with the procurement model ultimately lies with each Chief Executive, the Procurement Programme Board, through its shared service approach, continues to promote compliance and engagement, which is enhanced through the following measures:

- ▲ Appointment of a full time Sectoral Procurement Policy Support Officer based in the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA), who reports directly to the Local Government Strategic Procurement Centre (LGSPC) Project Manager. The role of the Officer is to promote engagement with central purchasing arrangements, share best practice and update the sector on Government procurement policy and initiatives.
- ▲ Overseeing the Annual work programme of the LGSPC, which includes the following high-level objectives :-
 - Acting as a conduit between the Local Government Sector, the OGP and DHLGH in embedding the Procurement Reform Programme
 - Participating meaningfully in the OGP structures
 - Overseeing the professionalisation and development of the procurement function
 - Engaging with the SME sector to promote engagement with public procurement
- ▲ Establishment of the Procurement Officer role in each Local Authority
- ▲ Development and adoption of Corporate Procurement Plans
- ▲ Professionalisation of the Procurement Function through the provision of procurement focussed training and the provision of bursaries for procurement qualifications
- ▲ Advancing the development of Quality Assurance Standard (ISO 9001 Certification) for the LGOPC
- ▲ Reporting from 4 regional Procurement Officer Network Groups established to share best practice, legal updates, presentations, training and other matters of relevance

A key recommendation to Local Authorities by the Procurement Programme Board has been the inclusion of Procurement in annual Internal Audit Plans, while on foot of engagement by the LGSPC, the Local Government Audit Service (LGAS) has for some time highlighted procurement in annual Local Authority Plans both from a legal and policy perspective.

10. Regional issues including new developments and initiatives

The Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) adopted in May 2025 sets out the ambition and core values of County Kerry for the period 2025 to 2030 and through its actions will provide for economic growth and social development across our communities.

Extensive stakeholder and community engagement in preparation of the new LECP has ensured a high quality, coherent, and inclusive strategy. The central themes resulting from consultation: Economic Development and Job Creation, Rural Infrastructure and Social Inclusion and Development of the Rural Environment, and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation are reflected in the high-level goals and objectives of the Plan. These high-level goals promoted in Kerry's LECP are aligned with the ambition and objectives established in the Kerry County Development Plan 2022–2028 and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region.

The plan has been prepared during a changing global environment. The global landscape is resulting in emerging trends that are reshaping business models such as remote working and the creation of innovation hubs, as well as other rapid technological advancements. The population and demographics of Kerry are also changing, resulting in additional demands on social and community resources. Cost of living pressures and capacity constraints continue to pose challenges to communities and businesses across the county.

The LECP outlines a framework that will leverage continued investment and growth across the public and private sectors. A key priority in this plan is to grow investment in Kerry by ensuring the availability of quality services, land, and infrastructure, which will be key in maintaining and attracting skills and talent and winning investment in a highly competitive global environment. The aspiration is for Kerry to continue to develop as a sustainable and socially inclusive county that cherishes its diverse communities and protects and celebrates its unique environment and rich culture, while championing innovation, growth, and development.

The Southwest Regional Enterprise Plan (SWREP) follows on from the Southwest Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020 and the Action Plan for Jobs. The SWREP plan deliberately places strong emphasis on the economic opportunities and potential of climate action and digitalisation, which are the heart of the region's economic growth, competitiveness and future sustainability. The plan takes into account both national and EU policy and the core themes of Resilience and Recovery, Transition (Climate/Digital), Enterprise Innovation and Regional Competitiveness are embedded in the Strategic Objectives.

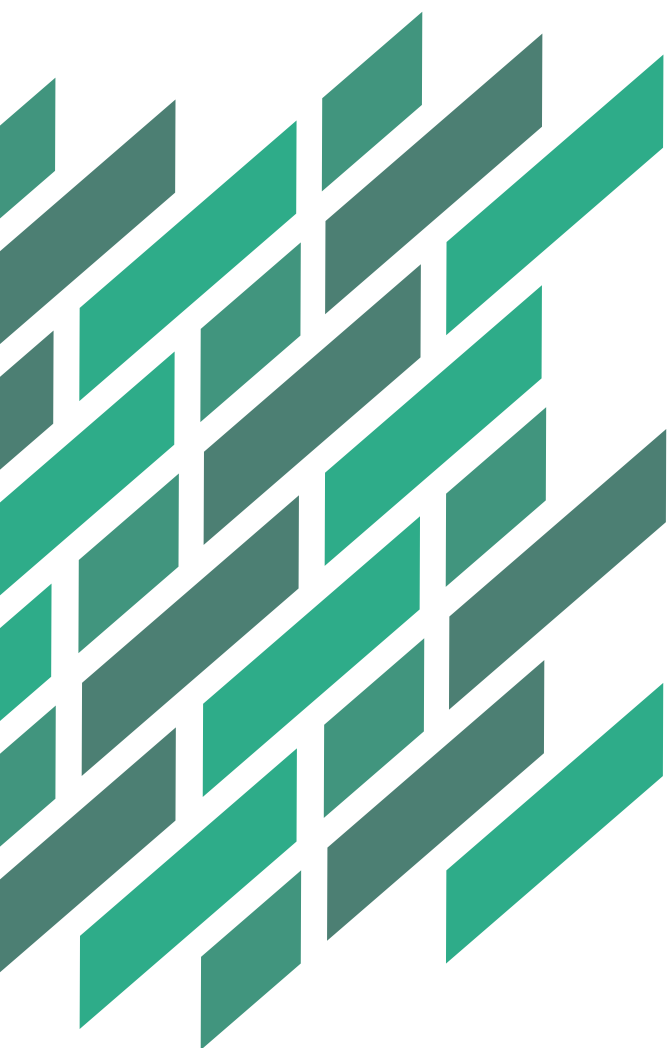
This Regional Enterprise Plan for the South-West has 48 actions under six Strategic Objectives as follows:

- ▲ Strategic Objective 1: Enhance the enterprise eco-system across the region through innovation, entrepreneurship, and digitalisation
- ▲ Strategic Objective 2: Maximise the potential of digital enterprise and innovation hubs to support digitalisation, business growth, climate action, and smart working
- ▲ Strategic Objective 3: Support cluster organisations in driving the development and growth of enterprises
- ▲ Strategic Objective 4: Bolster the South-West as a leader in sustainable food production and agri-tech through education, technology, and innovation
- ▲ Strategic Objective 5: Embrace the opportunities of climate action in the marine, circular bioeconomy, tourism, and energy sectors
- ▲ Strategic Objective 6: Ensure a strong pipeline of talent in the region, focusing on sustainable high-quality jobs

Kerry County Council is committed with all stakeholders as part of the **Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce** to progress actions and recommendations. The independent Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce was established in response to a Programme for Government commitment to support the region in devising an economic development plan based on the Shannon Estuary's comparative strategic advantages. In line with these recommendations the Shannon Integrated Framework Plan Steering Group has been reconvened (comprising of Estuary Local Authorities and State Agencies) with a view towards the development of a successor Land Use Plan to guide the future planning and development of the Estuary and adjacent coastal lands. The Council is actively working with the other partners of the Steering Group to advance this work.

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region provides a long-term, strategic development framework for the future physical, economic, and social development of the Southern Region. The RSES seeks to achieve balanced regional development and full implementation of Project Ireland 2040 – the National Planning Framework. The RSES came into effect on 31st January 2020 and its vision for the Southern Region includes nurturing all places to realise their full potential, protect, and enhance the environment, successfully combat climate change, achieve economic prosperity and improved quality of life for all our citizens and accommodate expanded growth and development in suitable locations. It will be implemented in partnership with local authorities and state agencies to deliver on this vision and build a cohesive and sustainable region.

The Council is working with Fáilte Ireland to facilitate and support projects identified in the relevant **Visitor Experience Development Plans** including the Cliff Coast, Dingle Peninsula, Skellig Coast, Killarney, Three Peninsulas - West Cork & Kerry etc. Some of these projects while located outside the administrative area of the local authority will have a wider regional economic benefit including Kerry.



Local and Regional Challenges

Housing	<p>The national housing crisis is putting pressure on all Local Authorities. This has an impact on growing the region economically, attracting people and investment to the county and maintaining the balance between the provision of tourism accommodation and longer-term housing requirements.</p> <p>Kerry County Council, through its Housing Programmes and in conjunction with its Approved Housing Body partners is a significant contributor to construction industry activity level in the County. This includes new construction, refurbishment/ maintenance programmes, improvement grant schemes and energy retrofitting programmes. This programme forms a key and significant part of overall activity in this sector of the economy.</p> <p>The Government Policy and associated initiatives is committed to the increase of housing supply. The Government's Housing for All plan sets out ambitious targets for new residential social housing development by Local Authorities to meet current and future social housing need. The Council works in partnership with Approved Housing Bodies to deliver units as part of the overall Capital Programme outlined in the Kerry County Council Action Plan.</p> <p>The Council has a portfolio of land originally purchased for the construction of housing and is committed to the further purchase of strategic lands for this programme. The launch and roll out of further initiatives by Government in areas such as the reuse of vacant housing stock has seen very significant activity level in this area and in the expanded Vacant Homes grant scheme in particular. This will continue to be a major contributor to economic activity in the area of the construction sector.</p> <p>The Council also participates in the Government's Energy Efficiency Retrofit Programme which provides funding to apply energy efficient measures to social housing stock and which ultimately leads to lower fuel costs for individual tenants. This initiative, along with the policy of delivering 'A' rated housing for all new builds, plays a significant role in achieving the targets in the Housing Department's Climate Action Plan.</p> <p>Housing remains a significant priority and activity levels in the housing area continue at very high levels. In 2024 Kerry County Council was finalising the acquisition of significant land in Tralee and preparing a masterplan to advance this, to stimulate delivery of social, affordable and private housing.</p>
Diverse Communities	<p>A socio-economic analysis was undertaken as part of the development of the new Local Economic and Community Plan. From this, opportunities as well as challenges for Kerry were identified. County Kerry has a growing population and an increasingly vibrant and diverse community and economy. The challenge is to ensure that growth results in a balanced and resilient economy, and in inclusive and connected communities and that opportunities exist to retain young people, skills, and talent.</p> <p>Kerry has the 3rd highest number of Ukrainian residents of all counties, outside of Dublin and Cork with over 9,450 residents.</p>

Climate Action & Adaptation	<p>The Council's Climate Action Plan 2024 – 2029 was adopted in January 2024, an implementation plan is underway across the council services to meet our targets as set out through to 2030. The Council is committed to achieving further energy and emissions savings through the upgrade in its lighting network, buildings and fleet stock to achieve our targets to achieve the targets of 50% energy efficiency savings and 51% greenhouse gas emissions reduction by 2030 as set out in legislation.</p> <p>The Council continues to plan and deliver projects under the Office of Public Works Catchment based Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Programme for flood relief schemes across the county and minor coastal and flooding protection works.</p>
Economic Development	<p>Economic development is linked to developing a strong sense of place and urban design. Upgrading and maintaining infrastructure such as housing, roads, water infrastructure, and public buildings is all part of the development of place; therefore, the rising costs associated with these core activities is a challenge for the Council.</p> <p>Kerry's entrepreneurial activity is largely dependent on agriculture, tourism and the public service. The number of businesses in the professional, scientific and technical CSO category has improved, but it remains a challenge to diversify the economic base. There is ongoing competition within and outside Ireland for Foreign Direct Investment and increased development of exporting businesses. More broadly, ensuring that the right skills are available to companies in Kerry, or interested in investing in Kerry, is vital. Challenges to secure and retain skills and talent for certain sectors and the development and uptake of trades and apprenticeships do exist. However, as Kerry is a university county located in a region with access to 4 universities and over 24,000 graduates annually, it is ideally positioned to maximise opportunities to address this.</p> <p>Impacts on businesses due to inflation and increased operational costs, such as energy, labour and skills shortage and supply chain management is an ongoing concern, particularly given the fact that 90% of companies in Kerry employ less than 10 people and 1 in 5 work in tourism and related services. National statistics suggest that the sectors most impacted in 2023/2024 include Trade and Retail which highlights the pressures on retail businesses.</p> <p>However, Kerry County Council has delivered a broad suite of business supports in the past number of years based on national policy such as rate waiver schemes, Restart scheme, Small Business Assistance Scheme, Business Continuity support and other supports available through the Local Enterprise Office.</p> <p>Kerry's economic profile and its growth potential especially in Tourism, Agri-food, and Large-Scale Manufacturing are shaped and determined by accessibility and connectivity to large external population bases. Improved access to international airports, through Kerry International Airport, will stimulate further growth and employment opportunities in these areas.</p>

Building Tourism	<p>Kerry County Council strives to retain, promote, and drive Kerry's position as a premier domestic and international tourism destination. The Council continues to support and strengthen tourism throughout the county, and to continue investment in public realm enhancements which support both the tourism sector and local communities. Traditionally, there has been strong demand from the North American market, however, the Council continues to promote international marketing, domestic promotion, the creation of sustainability initiatives, season extension initiatives and the development of new experiences and the enhancement of existing ones.</p> <p>A new Tourism Strategy and Action Plan is in development, which will focus on the sustainable development of the sector, and which will be based on wide engagement with the tourism, community, and state stakeholders. Kerry County Council, in association with Kerry Tourism Industry Federation and Tech Industry Alliance, launched a new collective brand for marketing Kerry in 2024, accompanied by a web-portal – DiscoverKerry.com This multi-stakeholder marketing communication initiative aims to promote Kerry as a leading destination for business, investment, and education, as well as continued promotion of the county as a tourism destination.</p> <p>An overall brand with guidelines has been developed for the county. The rollout of this brand is underway, through engagement with the enterprise and community sector, and supported by a cohesive branding and communications plan designed to give the brand substance and boost the county's economic and tourism reputation. Sustainability will be at the forefront the new Tourism Strategy as well as being central to the Discover Kerry web platform and Kerry brand.</p> <p>The Council continues to work with Tourism Ireland, Fáilte Ireland, the Department of Foreign Affairs, IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland and key stakeholders such as the Kerry Tourism Industry Federation and the Kerry Convention Bureau to promote Kerry as a location partner and a business tourism destination for meetings, conferences and events. Marketing and promotion of the Greenways in Kerry, expansion of facilities and interpretation of the greenways continue to be prioritized by the Council.</p> <p>Kerry County Council is also committed to delivering high level actions in the Destination Experience Development Plans (DEDP's) and the progression of the UNESCO application for the Valentia Island Transatlantic Cable Station and the identification of suitable funding sources to fund the requirements of the application and the refurbishment of the Cable Station. The focus of these plans is to deliver regenerative tourism in a sustainable manner with an emphasis on emission reductions.</p>
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Connectivity	<p>Kerry International Airport is an important strategic asset in strengthening transportation links both nationally and internationally. It not only drives tourism but is also a catalyst for economic growth and employment. It facilitates national and international business interactions, boosts competition and encourages foreign investment. The proximity to an airport is one of the factors attracting new companies and foreign investment. It also enables a greater proportion of the population in the Southwest region to have access to air transport, particularly those living in rural communities, which not only extends the opportunity for people to visit other countries it also contributes to people's quality of life.</p> <p>The expansion of regional airports such as Kerry International Airport is important as it would help reduce congestion at major hub airports such as Dublin, which will widen consumer choice and stimulate growth across regions.</p> <p>The location of Kerry International Airport within the Kerry Hub & Knowledge Triangle and its proximity to the Shannon Estuary also has huge potential for securing future investment and high-quality job creation in the county. The Shannon Estuary and its potential as an Energy Hub for industrial development is an immensely important asset and one of the most valuable natural resources not only in the South and Mid-West Regions but also nationally with potential to service international energy demands also. The ability for these businesses to have ready access to an airport will be essential for their effective operation and growth.</p> <p>Connectivity to urban locations and main international airports will also require additional strengthening of N21 & N22 and increased connectivity through public transport. The National Primary Routes in Kerry are the main connective corridors into and within the county of Kerry.</p> <p>The N21 connects Tralee to Limerick/Dublin. It has a total length of 34.2kms in Kerry, all of which are at an appropriate and acceptable standard. Major realignment schemes between Tralee and Castleisland were constructed in the late 90's early 2000's along with the realigned section at Headleys Bridge to the county bounds completed in 2006 and the final section, the Castleisland Bypass completed in 2010. The connectivity issues begin at the county bounds with County Limerick, but we acknowledge that the by-passes of Abbeyfeale, Newcastlewest and Adare are at various stages of design/construction, and this would complete our linkage to the National Motorway M7.</p> <p>The N22 connects Tralee to Cork City via Macroom. It has a total length of 54.3kms in Kerry, all of which have been realigned since 1993 except the section between Farranfore and Killarney. This 16km section is completely substandard in terms of cross section and alignment and the current TII funded N22 Farranfore to Killarney scheme will address this deficiency by bypassing both Farranfore and Killarney. The recently opened Macroom/Ballyvourney bypass highlights this deficient section of road in Kerry and has led to further congestion into Killarney from the East.</p>
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Connectivity	<p>The N23 connects the N21 and N22 and is a 9.6km link road that is totally deficient in terms of cross section and alignment and has seen little or no investment in the last 30 years. Kerry International Airport is located on the N23 outside Farranfore. Farranfore has a mainline train station on the Tralee to Mallow/Dublin/Cork line but is 1.5kms from the airport and there is no connectivity between both hubs.</p> <p>The development of the railway network in Kerry is also important in the economic and social development of the county and is recognised in the County Development Plan (2022-2028), where the overall aim is to integrate land use and transport policies to achieve the delivery of a high quality, climate resilient and sustainable transport network for the county.</p> <p>Sustainable mobility however is a challenge for the county, which has one of the highest usage rates of private cars in journeys to work (71.1%), compared to the national average (65.6%). Less than 1.2% of commuters in Kerry use public transport to travel to work compared to the national average of 9.3%. The need for greater public transport and investment in the rail network is supported by the fact that compared to other counties, Kerry has the lowest level of external commuter flows of residents going to work. Some 92.4% of the resident workforce is employed within the county, making the county relatively isolated in employment terms and therefore, more in need of localised transport solutions.</p> <p>It is recognised that interventions in the transport sector must be based on a long-term strategic vision for the sustainable mobility of people and goods. To enable more sustainable end-to-end journeys by rail, additional capacity, higher frequency of service and improved journey times across all rail services in Kerry is needed. Kerry County Council is engaging with Irish Rail to enhance rail services to Kerry in the medium term.</p>
Water Services	<p>In line with the Government Framework for the Future Delivery of Water Services, Kerry County Council continues to operate a Master Cooperation Agreement with Uisce Éireann. The Master Cooperation Agreement provides for Uisce Éireann to take full responsibility for all public water and wastewater services in Kerry. A large number of Kerry County Council staff to continue to work in Water Services under the management and direction of Uisce Éireann and this arrangement will continue until the end of 2026 after which time Kerry County Council will cease to have any role in the provision of public water services in Kerry. The Council is actively managing the numbers of staff who elect to remain as local authority employees and is working to provide reassignments that are reflective of their current roles and responsibilities and to do so well in advance of 2027. There are some residual services that Kerry County Council will continue to provide in support of water services in Kerry which are included in a separate Support Services Agreement which was signed in 2024.</p> <p>The support services will continue up to 31 December 2026 after which time Uisce Éireann will assume full responsibility for all public water services in the county. The Council continues to work with the Local Government Sector to manage this significant change. The Council retains responsibility for the Rural Water Sector including as Supervisory Authority for any group water schemes which come under the Drinking Water Regulations.</p>

11. Supporting Strategies

In addition to National, EU and Regional Strategies the following Local Strategies are of relevance:

- ▲ Kerry County Development Plan 2022 - 2028
- ▲ Local Area Plans (Tralee, Killarney, Listowel, Corca Dhuibhne, Kenmare)
- ▲ Kerry County Council Local Authority Climate Action Plan 2024 - 2029
- ▲ Kerry Local Economic and Community Plan 2025 - 2030
- ▲ Kerry LEADER Local Development Strategy 2023 - 2027
- ▲ Kerry Arts Development Strategy 2024 - 2034
- ▲ Kerry Culture and Creativity Strategy 2023 - 2027
- ▲ Healthy Kerry Framework 2021 - 2027
- ▲ Kerry Play and Recreation Strategy for Children and Young People 2025
- ▲ Kerry County Council Housing For All - Delivery Action Plan
- ▲ Kerry Local Transport and Mobility Plans
- ▲ Roads Safety Action Plan for Kerry 2024
- ▲ Kerry Library Development Plan 2024 - 2028
- ▲ County Kerry Tourism Strategy
- ▲ Kerry Age Friendly Strategy
- ▲ Corporate Procurement Plan 2024 - 2027



12. Other relevant information

Performance Indicator Review & Compilation Process

Kerry County Council has a robust data compilation and verification process in place for the return of the annual performance indicators to NOAC. Senior Managers across the organisation are responsible for the collection and verification of the data and ensuring back-up and documentation is in place to verify the indicator returns.

Senior Managers and Directors of Service approve the return of the annual indicator data to NOAC. The indicator outcomes are reviewed by the Senior Management Team as part of approval of the annual return, which includes a comparative review with prior years' performance, median/mean value for the sector and factors impacting on the return. In addition, the Council's Internal Audit Section carries out an independent quality assurance review of a number of the indicators and their accuracy prior to the annual deadline for the return.

Following publication of the NOAC Local Authority Performance Indicator Report each year, a detailed report is presented to the Elected Members outlining performance outcomes, prior years comparison, comparison with sectoral values and factors impacting on performance. This report is also discussed with the Council's Senior Management Team and Audit Committee.

Performance indicators provide council management with an important tool to continue to tailor the delivery of services and work programmes. Buy-in from staff, along with management oversight of the Council's work programmes are key to the strong performances demonstrated by indicator outcomes. Management's embedding of performance indicators into their work programmes outlines the Council's desire to take on board results and adapt work programmes according to the indicator outcomes.

In June 2023, NOAC visited Kerry County Council and carried out a quality assurance review on a selected number of Indicators and this was a very positive engagement.

Summary of past Scrutiny Report(s)

Kerry County Council did not have a Stage 1 meeting as a comprehensive validation meeting for the Performance Indicators was deemed sufficient in this case. A stage two meeting took place in December 2018.

The information contained below is taken from the Scrutiny Report published following the abovementioned meetings and are a summary of the issues discussed, from that time.

- ▲ Challenges – Kerry listed its challenges as the Local Economic Plan, air and road connectivity, digital hubs, tourism, regeneration, establishment of municipal districts, emergency planning, finances (including legacy land loans of circa €36m) and the effect that a change in Airbnb rules may have on housing.
- ▲ Housing – The Council offers incentives to develop brown field sites within town lands, as well as reductions if public amenities such as car parking are provided within the scheme being developed.

Regarding difficult mortgages, the Council advised that the HFA allowed them to offer interest only and the mortgage to rent scheme as a means to help residents in mortgage arrears. The Council also confirmed the shared ownership scheme was not a success and there are a small number of loans with high arrears.

The impact of Airbnb rentals on available housing stock was such that on one night between five towns there would be around 850 Airbnb units.

The Council stated that finance for small to medium builders remains challenging and based on market conditions it is cheaper to buy than to build.

- ▲ Commercial Rates - following the amalgamation of the four local authorities in 2014, Kerry County Council assumed the commercial rate accounts of the three former town councils. A centralised approach was introduced in order to streamline rates collection and debt management in 2014.
- ▲ LEOs - The Council outlined the range of supports provided by the Local Enterprise Office, such as training, advice, information and support to those starting or grow a business.

The turnover of the Online Trading Vouchers has doubled. The Council advised that it works with other LEOs in the midlands to encourage small to mid-sized engineering firms and that it supports the Irish Manufacturing Initiative.
- ▲ Procurement - Kerry had shown best practice in this area. Kerry operates the national procurement shared service working in partnership with the LGMA and the Office of Government Procurement.
- ▲ Airport - The Council confirmed it advocates for the importance for the airport and gave an example that showed one route, from Berlin, provides additional income in the year of approximately €4m. The Council emphasised the link between Kerry and Shannon Airport for air access and impact on connectivity.
- ▲ Economic Development - The Council appointed an Economic Development Officer leading the implementation of various economic initiatives and strategies and working in collaboration with key stakeholders and State Agencies.

Data from other NOAC Reports

The below information highlights other sources of data from NOAC reports and any other reports.

NOAC Reports No 46 & 67- Local Authority and Regional Assembly Corporate Plan Cycle: 2019-2024

Review of Local Authority and Regional Assembly Corporate Plans 2019-2024 (46)

In November 2021, NOAC published its review of the corporate plans of local authorities and regional assemblies for the period 2019 - 2024. The purpose of the report is to review the adequacy of the plans and to assist with the further development of good practice in corporate planning. In the report, examples of good practice in relation to both the process of developing the plans, and the content of the plans are highlighted.

Under the process, areas considered for review included:

- ▲ The pre-plan consultation, which looks at how local authorities formulated the Corporate Plan, consulted with stakeholders and engaged with elected members.
- ▲ Review of the Corporate Plans. This investigated how local authorities proposed to review the progress of their Corporate Plans.
- ▲ Integration of the Corporate Plan with other policies and strategies, which examined the extent to which local authorities consulted other policy reports and strategies when devising their Corporate Plans.
- ▲ Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty. Under this heading, it was examined as to how local authorities engaged with the issue of human rights.

Examining the contents of the Corporate Plans, the following were among the areas reviewed:

- ▲ Vision and Mission: Strategies and Objectives. This detailed local authorities' visions, mission statements and broad goals during the life of the plan. It focused on the setting of actions and goals to deliver these broad objectives and visions.
- ▲ Financial resourcing of the Corporate Plan and how risks to the delivery of the Corporate Plan can be examined, taking into account how Councils are dependent on voted capital funds from central government.
- ▲ Measuring and mitigating risk. This examines where local authorities depend on other external providers and other public bodies to successfully deliver certain services. This involves risk which can be mitigated through appropriate oversight, including service level agreements.

Section 1: Process, under the section of "Review of corporate plans", The Kerry County Council corporate plan (which was adopted on 15 June 2020), notes the potential impact of the virus on the council's ability to deliver its plan. In the foreword, the plan notes: "At this time, it is important to recognise that the way we work as a local authority and as part of the local government sector has been significantly altered due to the impact of COVID-19. This has led to many changes in the way we operate on a temporary basis in accordance with public health advice and Government guidelines."

As a result, Covid-19 is listed as a specific strategic objective of the council, noting: "Ensure that Kerry County Council works in cooperation with other sectors and the public to protect public health while leading the county throughout the current period of the pandemic and the aftermath of COVID-19." The pandemic is also referenced in sections of the plan dealing with Planning, Economic Development, Enterprise, Tourism and Community, noting that Covid-19 has the potential to undermine the tourism sector and therefore the capacity of the local authority to deliver the plan.

Section 2: Content, under Service Level Agreements Kerry County Council states: “We will continue to work collaboratively and to seek opportunities for further collaboration with the Local Government sector and other Government bodies on shared approaches to services, application delivery, infrastructure, security, support and procurement. This will enhance the ability of the Council and other bodies and communities to interact with greater efficiency thereby improving overall performance and governance in relation to the use and application of technology generally. In particular, in our response to COVID-19, Kerry County Council will partner with and lead collaborations to re-energise the county’s economy.” Kerry went on to list specific service level agreements in this regard.

Review of Implementation of Local Authority and Regional Assembly Corporate Plans 2019-2024 (67)

Following on from the above-mentioned review, NOAC’s next step was to examine the implementation of those 2019-2024 corporate plans produced by the 31 local authorities and three regional assemblies. NOAC wished to evaluate how well local authorities and regional assemblies monitor the implementation of their corporate plans and how the process of monitoring and managing the implementation can be improved upon. The report was published in May 2024, with advance copies having issued to local authorities and regional assemblies.

The report is structured in three parts:

Part 1: Describes the methodologies used by the local authorities and regional assemblies to monitor implementation of the corporate plan.

Part 2: Assesses the progress reported on implementation of the measures contained in the plan.

Part 3: Considers two areas that were selected for more detailed analysis, namely social housing and human rights.

Case Study 2: Human Rights Duty, under Assessment of Human Rights and Equality

Issues, the report explains that “Work is, however, ongoing in local authorities such as Kerry where, a formal assessment was undertaken separately but not included as part of its 2019-2024 Corporate Plan. In this case, the local authority is reviewing this area of activity and will be updating the formal assessment of the human rights and equality issues relevant to the functions of the council for inclusion as part of its next Corporate Plan 2024-2029.”

NOAC Report 65 – Internal Audit in Local Authorities Report 2023

This report reviewed the general governance of the internal audit function in local authorities, which included an in-depth survey as well as a review of the recommendations of NOAC's 2018 Report and how those recommendations were implemented. NOAC made 17 recommendations in this report to address the issues identified.

In terms of Kerry County Council, the following are the relevant details:

- ▲ Kerry County Council is one of 10 identified in the category of medium local authorities.
- ▲ Internal Audit is conducted in-house.
- ▲ Kerry County Council is one of five local authorities where the head of Internal Audit holds additional responsibilities. Kerry County Council reported that its Head of Internal Audit held a management role that may give rise to a potential conflict of interest for the management part of the role.
- ▲ With respect to Internal Audit Planning, Kerry County Council has a Strategic Audit Plan which lasted the term of each of their Audit Committees.
- ▲ Kerry County Council is one of eighteen local authorities which produced an annual formal written report.

Relevant Recommendations

Recommendation 8 Applies to Kerry County Council and 20 other local authorities

All local authorities must encourage existing staff to obtain appropriate professional qualifications and assign new staff to these functions who are either qualified or seeking to achieve qualification. It is critical that this recommendation be implemented as soon as possible in those local authorities who's Head of Internal Audit is not qualified or seeking to achieve qualification.

Recommendation 15 Applies to Kerry County Council and seven other local authorities

While the majority of local authorities, used trackers in their operations, it is recommended that all local authorities use this system to ensure a clear audit trail is available. (Kerry is one of eight local authorities not using trackers for internal audit and/or LGAS items).

Recommendation 17 Applies to Kerry County Council and all other local authorities except Cavan, Clare, South Dublin, Meath and Wexford

All local authorities should conduct compliance tests to ensure that the operation of the internal audit function against its stated function.

It should be noted that the information for the Internal Audit report was compiled from Information provided by the local authority from a survey conducted by NOAC in 2023.

NOAC Report 24 - Customer Satisfaction Survey 2018-2020

In 2018, Ipsos MRBI was commissioned by NOAC to conduct a survey among the general public to establish their satisfaction with their Local Authority. A face-to-face in-home CAPI (Computer Aided Personal Interviewing) methodology is utilised and quota controls ensured that participants are representative of the local authority population by age, gender and social class.

The second survey, completed in 2019, was conducted with what were considered the 11 medium sized local authorities. Kerry County Council was included in this survey.

61% of respondents were satisfied with Kerry County Council, above the average level of satisfaction with Councils, which was 57%.

Kerry County Council performed well across all the areas reviewed in the survey with above average scores for the below:

- ▲ Overall satisfaction: Kerry County Council – 61% v National Average – 57%
- ▲ Value for Money: Kerry County Council – 35% v National Average – 28%
- ▲ Informed by local authority: Kerry County Council – 60% v National Average – 43%
- ▲ Open and Transparent: Kerry County Council – 49% v National Average – 36%
- ▲ Doing a good job: Kerry County Council – 57% v National Average – 52%

NOAC Report No 70 – Public Spending Code 2023

The Public Spending Code (PSC) was developed by the Department of Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform (DPENDPDR). The Code applies to both current and capital expenditure and to all public bodies in receipt of public funds. According to DPENDPDR, the Code brings together, in one place, details of the obligations of those responsible for spending public money. As local authority funding derives from a number of sources, including grants from several Government Departments, it was decided that the Chief Executives of individual local authorities should be responsible for carrying out the quality assurance requirements and that their reports should be submitted to NOAC for incorporation in a composite report for the local government sector.

The Quality Assurance reporting requirements consists of the following five steps:

1. Local authorities should draw up an inventory of projects/programmes at the different stages of the Project Life Cycle, in respect of all capital and current expenditure projects to a value greater than €0.5m.
2. Confirm publication on the local authority's website of summary information on all procurements in excess of €10m related to projects in progress or completed in the year under review and provide a link to the relevant website location.

3. Complete the seven specified checklists. Only one of each type of checklist per local authority is required and not one per each project/programme. The completion of the checklists is to be based on an appropriate sample of the projects/areas of expenditure relevant to that checklist.
4. Carry out a more in-depth review of selected projects/programmes such that, over a 3-5 year period, every stage of the project life-cycle and every scale of project will be subject to a closer examination. Revenue projects selected for in-depth review must represent a minimum of 1% of the total value of all revenue projects in the inventory, while the requirement in respect of capital projects is 5% of the total value of all capital projects in the inventory.
5. Complete a short summary report consisting of the inventory, procurement reference and checklists referenced in steps 1 to 3 and the local authority's judgment as to the adequacy of the appraisal/planning, implementation or review work that it examined as part of step 4, the reasons why it formed that judgment and its proposals to remedy any inadequacies found during the entire quality assurance process.

In the case of Kerry County Council it complied with all five steps as highlighted above including providing links to the online Publication of Summary Information of all Procurements in Excess of €10 million.

Particular points of note were:

- ▲ Kerry County Council had one procurement in excess of €10m in 2023, totalling €10,747,222 (ex VAT).
- ▲ This procurement was related to Housing Construction – Lohercannon Phase 1

Expenditure being Considered - Greater than €0.5m (Capital and Current)				
Local Authority	Current Expenditure Amount in Reference Year	Capital Expenditure Amount in Reference Year (Non Grant)	Capital Expenditure Amount in Reference Year (Grant)	Projected Lifetime Expenditure
Kerry County Council	€15,505,343	€ -	€ -	€402,717,162

Expenditure being Incurred - Greater than €0.5m (Capital and Current)					
Local Authority	Current Expenditure Amount in Reference Year	Capital Expenditure Amount in Reference Year (Non Grant)	Capital Expenditure Amount in Reference Year (Grant)	Cumulative Expenditure to-date	Projected Lifetime Expenditure (Capital Only)
Kerry County Council	€193,461,038	€92,021,934	€ -	€363,205,623	€1,371,028,417

Projects/Programmes Completed or discontinued in the reference year - Greater than €0.5m (Capital and Current)				
Local Authority	Current Expenditure Amount in Reference Year	Capital Expenditure Amount in Reference Year (Non Grant)	Capital Expenditure Amount in Reference Year (Grant)	Final Outturn Expenditure
Kerry County Council	€ -	€5,049,391	€ -	€37,210,980

		2023		2022		2021		2020		2019		2018		2017		2016		2015		2014	
		Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average
H1	Social Housing provided in year per 1,000 population	0.54	0.85	0.91	0.75	0.60	0.59	0.31	0.64	0.83	1.15	1.03	0.81	0.43	0.53	N/A	N/A	1.58	1.90	0.97	0.80
H2	% of directly provided dwellings vacant at 31/12	4.32	2.81	4.41	3.03	3.51	3.16	4.07	3.18	4.31	3.15	5.02	2.77	3.14	2.73	3.58	3.02	3.94	3.50	3.44	3.45
H3a	Average time from vacation date to PI year re-letting date (weeks)	65.45	33.72	54.3	35.22	49.77	34.44	34.92	32.69	34.89	28.17	28.23	27.75	28.45	28.90	38.89	20.90	42.27	22.56	48.84	31.78
H3b	Average cost expended on getting re-tenanted units ready for re-letting	€21,832.34	€28,347.05	€14,876.23	€21,886.04	€19,511.14	€19,653.39	€13,562.3	€19,065.30	€15,992.49	€18,336.85	€14,551.94	€18,590.28	€16,320.33	€17,160.60	€10,474.25	€12,551.65	€10,521.94	€10,521.94	€17,888.28	€9,931.70
H4	Average repair and maintenance cost per unit	€656.30	€1,493.19	€556.11	€1,297.48	€577.58	€1,150.13	€743.39	€1,119.82	€486.96	€1,168.99	€489.03	€1,147.45	€698.17	€1,311.82	€569.69	€969.12	€577.20	€732	€529.91	€930.54
H5	Inspections (Dwellings inspected) carried out in year as % of registrations	14.15	17.34	No data available	No data available	No data available	No data available	11.35	6.73	15.85	9.93	11.08	7.39	8.66	4.96	10.64	4.36	27.52	5.64	9.98	6.51
H6	Number of adults in emergency accommodation that are long-term homeless as a percentage of the total number of homeless adults in emergency accommodation at end of year	57.14	57.61	69.49	55.58	67.86	55.55	64.95	27.62	56.43	61.59	44.35	61.58	20.59	54.38	14.29	58.46	14.71	45.27	35.48	30.34
H7 A (1)	Total number of houses retrofitted in the year	11	78.87	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
H7 A (2)	The number of houses that achieved a BER rating of B2 or above in the year	11	74.68	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
H7 A (3)	The number of heat pumps installed in those houses in the year.	11	70.97	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
H7 B	Total annual energy savings in MWH from houses retrofitted in the year	222.2	1,150.43	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

		2023		2022		2021		2020		2019		2018		2017		2016		2015		2014	
		Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average
H7 C	Total carbon emission reduction tCo2 from houses retrofitted in the year	64.5	334.72	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
R1a	% Regional Road KM that ever received a PSCI rating	97.96	98	94	88.48	97	91	94.1	77	99.23	98	100	99	95	83	97	98	94	68	75.69	53.83
R1b	% Total Regional Road KM with a PSCI rating of 9-10	35.66	37.41	40.61	36.13	42.35	30.90	34.9	31.19	45.02	38.28	39	37.58	45	28	41	31	36.0	20	4.3	24
R1b	% Total Primary Road KM with a PSCI rating of 9-10	36.30	27.93	32.05	29.63	36.06	26.05	28	24	36.14	23.08	30	23.39	26	20	22	18	20.0	11	3.1	14.52
R1c	% Total Secondary Road KM with a PSCI rating of 9-10	26.50	23.14	26.39	23.65	23.76	21.40	16.6	17.66	24.67	17.67	23	15.19	21	14	18	12	12.0	8	1.7	11.18
R1d	% Total Tertiary Road KM with a PSCI rating of 9-10	25.48	19.38	21.07	18.85	17.34	15.38	12.1	13.93	16.02	14.23	14	12.42	12	8	10	13	7.0	5	0.4	10.21
R2a	KM Regional Road strengthened using road improvement grants	11.5	13.5	10.2	11.15	15.9	13.4	16.6	14.7	31.99	13.17	11.8	13.4	14.50	10.6	13.5	9.9	24.2	10.2	N/A	N/A
R2b	KM Regional road resealed using road maintenance grants	12.2	19.3	13.5	14.4	14.1	19.9	15.9	19.4	4.61	14.27	24.8	15.3	19.70	12.2	20.9	11.3	12.5	8.32	N/A	N/A
R3	% Motor tax transactions performed online	86.19	81.38	85.57	81.1	91.99	86.18	84.64	81.52	77.70	77.10	75.87	69.15	73.82	65.95	72.26	63.87	66.11	56.6	59.88	50.86
W1	% private schemes with water quality in compliance	96.75	98.63	No data available	No data available	No data available	No data available	No data available	No data available	95.88	97.50	96.19	97.06	96.58	97.70	97.28	97.77	96.53	97.97	93.8	97.90
W2	% of registered schemes monitored	99.17	83.45	98.32	83.05	87.70	79.87	74.64	71.01	97.92	73.43	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
E1	% households availing of a 3-bin service	183.24	94.13	180.22	87.91	124.13	89.36	122.27	89.73	46.96	48.36	53.69	43.91	43.66	39.43	41.95	37.71	44.24	22.50	27.65	28.65
E2	Pollution cases on hand at year end as % of the cases that arose that year	23.73	10.34	34.92	10.81	27.96	10.82	26.93	10.38	31.30	9.28	24.96	9.10	14.40	9.79	2.28	9.91	1.50	7.98	N/A	N/A
E3	% area unpolluted or litter free	28	16	29	20	28	22	32	22	22	15	24	19	25	10	20	13	19	14	19	10.93
E4	Percentage of schools that have been awarded/ renewed green flag status	42	35.09	39.75	29.46	40	34.80	50	41.83	57.14	47.96	55.9	51.41	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

		2023		2022		2021		2020		2019		2018		2017		2016		2015		2014	
		Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average
E5	Cumulative percentage energy savings achieved by year end	-48.00	-38.79	-44.64	-35.94	No data available	No data available	No data available	No data available	37.89	27.81	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
E6	Total billable wattage of the public lighting system	5,127	5,332	4,748	5,740	4,732	5,942	5,426	6,209	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
E71a	Does the local authority have designated (FTE) climate action Coordinator	yes	97%	Yes	61%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
E71b	Does the local authority have designated (FTE) Climate Action Officer	yes	81%	No	29%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
E7 2	Does the local authority have a climate action team	yes	77%	Yes	87%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
P1	New buildings inspected as % of new buildings notified	28.91	22.39	25.58	18.30	14.32	16.97	5.59	15.28	30.85	23.90	18.61	16.75	23.43	17.20	13.81	19.42	50.00	24	57.88	21.81
P2	% of determinations that confirmed the decision made by LA	69.09	75.72	70.59	73.16	68.92	71.17	67.35	73.13	63.08	73.07	59.02	76.94	74.14	77.72	58.33	77.60	63.64	74.34	46.51	66.63
P3	Ratio of planning cases being investigated at year end as to cases closed	2.04	3.27	2.12	3.13	1.72	3.60	2.54	3.74	1.80	2.74	1.34	3.03	1.99	2.41	2.02	2.87	2.19	2.61	2.78	2.88
P4	Cost per capita of the Planning Service	€33.89	€35.97	€34.11	€33.54	€33.38	€33.37	€33.07	€31.47	€29.90	€30.27	€30.25	€29.24	€30.40	€28.31	€30.52	€26.96	€31.34	€26.78	€19.67	€28.04
P5 A	The percentage of applications for fire safety certificates received in the year that were decided (granted or refused) within two months of their receipt	44.95	52.11	€49.35	46.95	40.38	51.54	45	55.44	63.64	52.52	71.43	56.37	55.07	55.94	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
P5 B	The percentage of applications for fire safety certificates received in the year that were decided (granted or refused) within an extended period agreed with the applicant	38.53	36.28	42.86	42.25	46.15	37.16	50	34.33	31.82	40.08	23.81	35.70	34.78	37.71	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

		2023		2022		2021		2020		2019		2018		2017		2016		2015		2014	
		Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average
F1	Cost per capita of Fire Service	€56.71	€45.96	€51.69	€42.48	€51.62	€44.65	€51.34	€44.81	€45.19	€44.65	€46.42	€45.39	€45.73	€43.04	€44.79	€42.10	€45.32	€45.57	€46.90	€44.56
F2	Average time to mobilise Brigade re Fire (Minutes) (FT/PT)	06:29	05:56	06:01	05:31	06:08	05:19	06:03	5:24	06:16	5:30	06:19	05:34	06:83	5:49	6:32	5:64	6:13	5:65	6:2	5.62
F3	% of Fire Cases in which first attendance is within 10 minutes	13.26	52.83	25.81	52.65	22.29	56.17	30.44	55.30	26.05	55.14	26.82	52.92	26.35	40.45	32.03	40.65	28.13	39.32	31.6	45.02
L1a	No. of Library visits per head of population	2.53	2.70	1.89	2.09	0.87	0.86	1.05	1.05	3.28	3.57	3.05	3.58	3.1	3.56	3.24	3.61	3.46	3.68	3.62	3.82
L1b	No. of Items borrowed per head of population	3.63	3.15	4.79	2.70	2.82	2.07	1.62	2.19	4.21	3.14	3.42	2.88	3.39	2.90	4.81	3.8275	4.37	3.82	N/A	N/A
L2	Cost of Library Service per capita	€26.74	38.87	€25.86	36.68	€27.12	€36.92	€24.73	35.95	€24.31	€34.94	€23.02	€33.98	€24.59	€31.00	€25.28	€30.05	€23.03	€30.04	€25.47	€29.60
Y1	% of local schools involved in Comhairle na nÓg	84.62	68.16	73.08	64.70	73.08	63.25	73.08	63.29	80.77	68.30	88.00	80	88.00	69.04	88.00	68.07	88.46	88.46	67.74	62.01
Y2	Number of organisations included in the County Register at year end and the proportion of those organisations that opted to be part of the Social Inclusion College within the PPN	11.23	16.21	11.10	16.64	11.48	15.97	10.98	16.33	10.61	16.82	10.17	17.90	10.86	20	19.14	19	19.14	19.78	N/A	N/A
C1	WTE staff per 1,000 population	8.13	6.16	8.12	5.94	7.91	5.89	8.23	6.06	7.81	5.95	7.50	5.82	7.30	5.70	7.32	5.64	7.20	5.58	7.11	5.63
C2a	% of paid working days lost to medically certified sick leave in year	4.33	3.77	4.17	3.58	3.26	2.89	3.24	3.01	4.18	3.71	4.58	3.74	4.33	3.74	3.84	3.69	3.30	3.48	2.92	3.37
C2b	% of paid working days lost to self-certified sick leave in year	0.28	0.32	0.25	0.32	0.14	0.19	0.18	0.20	0.33	0.36	0.35	0.33	0.28	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.29	0.33	0.29	0.35
C3	LA website page views per 1,000 population (per capita from 2021)	30.76	13.36	37.98	13.65	41.12	13.60	40.32	15.56	44,995.37	16,572	39,819.51	15,520.46	9,788.89	14,495.46	8,938.81	12,422	7,708.90	11,666	2,872.61	9,651
C4	Overall cost of ICT Provision per WTE	€3,823.55	€3,948.63	€3,813.52	€3,729.33	€3,187.95	€3,521.62	€3082.73	€3,457.02	€2,495.14	€3,060.84	€2,539.64	€2,894.57	€2633.64	€3,048.41	€2,436.63	€2,680.80	€2,380.50	€2,925	€2,274.00	€2,932
C5	Overall cost of ICT as a proportion of Revenue expenditure	2.63	1.86	2.75	1.71	2.21	1.71	1.90	1.52	2.01	1.78	2.08	1.75	N/A	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a

		2023		2022		2021		2020		2019		2018		2017		2016		2015		2014	
		Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average	Data	Median/ Average
M1	Revenue Expenditure per Capita in year	€1181.31	€1,305.56	€1,135.25	€1,205.89	€1,206.44	€1,308.21	€1,333.13	€1,419.01	€970.23	€1,059.50	€914.62	€978.91	€841.52	€897.89	€860.10	€842.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
M2a	% Commercial Rates Collected in year	88.0	88.8	86.2	88.1	80.50	83.4	65.4	76	86.20	87.00	84.6	86	82.5	83.6	81.3	84.4	79.6	80.19	78	73.06
M2b	% Rent & Annuities Collected in year	92.7	87.2	91.9	88.1	92.50	88.8	91.7	88.3	93.00	89.80	93.1	89	92.6	89	93.6	88.0	94.1	88	94	86.55
M2c	% Housing Loans Collected in year	96.5	85.5	95.3	82.6	94.20	81.6	95.0	79.4	94.20	78.00	84.8	75	82.1	74	81.0	70.0	80.3	73	83	67.23
M3	Per capita total cost of settled claims	28.40	12.21	10.16	11.31	14.43	11.05	18.52	12.21	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
M4	Total payroll costs as a % of revenue expenditure	€43.43	€33.30	€44.09	€32.35	€39.97	€31.83	€35.55	26.75	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
J1	LEO jobs output per 1,000 population	0.26	0.41	0.32	0.67	0.63	0.59	-0.58	-0.30	0.48	0.64	0.70	0.75	0.47	0.68	0.62	0.70	0.83	0.66	0.41	0.73
J2A	The number of trading online voucher applications approved by the Local Enterprise Office in the year per 100,000 of population	0.29	0.33	0.27	0.36	0.80	0.87	2.21	2.64	0.38	0.25	0.38	0.23	0.40	0.25	0.43	0.24	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
J2B	The number of those trading online vouchers that were drawn down in the year per 100,000 of population	0.13	0.14	0.08	0.17	0.45	0.52	0.51	0.93	0.12	0.10	0.16	0.11	0.13	0.11	0.29	0.14	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
J3	The number of participants who received mentoring during the year per 100,000 of population	1.40	2.76	1.63	2.37	1.18	2.76	0.70	3.30	1.59	2.19	0.88	1.98	1.03	1.74	0.93	1.59	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
J4A	Does the local authority have a current tourism strategy	yes	28	Yes	28	Yes	29	Yes	28	Yes	28	Yes	28	Yes	29	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
J4B	Does the local authority have a designated Tourism Officer?	yes	30	Yes	29	Yes	29	Yes	30	Yes	30	Yes	28	Yes	27	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
J5	The spend on local economic development by the local authority per head of population	€159.18	€163.41	€180.35	€141.21	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A



Mr. Fearghal Reidy,
Chief Executive,
Kerry County Council,
Rathass,
Tralee,
Co. Kerry,
V92 H7VT.

8th May 2025

Dear Mr. Reidy,

The National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC) invites you to participate in a meeting to discuss the performance of your local authority as part of NOAC's individual review of each local authority, or Scrutiny Process.

The meeting will take place on Thursday, 26 June 2025 at 10.30 a.m. in the Custom House, North Wall Quay, Dublin 1, D01 W6X0.

At the meeting, you will be invited to make an opening statement of no more than five minutes in duration, and the opening statement will be followed by questions from the members of the NOAC board. You may bring your management team to the meeting, if you so wish.

Information and Material Requested:

Please –

- ▲ Forward the following, not later than 5.30 p.m. on 18 June 2025, by email to info@noac.ie:
 - The name(s), title(s), email and mobile number contact details, of those attending at the Custom House, or virtually.
 - A copy of the opening statement (in MS word format)
- ▲ Confirm receipt of this letter and your availability to attend, by end of day 4 June 2025, by email to info@noac.ie.

Meeting proceedings

The below information provides an outline of the procedures of the Scrutiny Meetings as agreed with the County and City Managers Association (CCMA).

- ▲ The Chair will begin a formal introduction process of each NOAC member and local authority attendee.
- ▲ The Chair will provide a short background on NOAC, the Scrutiny Process and the order of the meeting.
- ▲ The Chief Executive will be asked by the Chair to give their opening statement as provided in advance of the meeting. A time limit for the delivery of the opening statement of five minutes will be strictly adhered to.
- ▲ The Chair will ask the Chief Executive if the local authority considers there are any issues NOAC should be made aware of.

- ▲ The Chair will direct each NOAC board member in attendance to ask questions and the Chief Executive and/or their team will be given time to respond.
- ▲ The Chair will open the floor to the NOAC board to ask any follow up or general questions they may have.
- ▲ If a local authority is unable to provide a complete response to a question, it will be noted and the local authority will subsequently be contacted via email to provide the response. The local authority will provide the response(s) within ten working days of the email from the Secretariat in a word document format.
- ▲ In the case that a meeting runs beyond two hours, the Chair will offer the local authority the option to take a short break of 15 minutes.
- ▲ The Chair will close the meeting.

Information on NOAC and other arrangements

The National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC) is the national independent oversight body for the local government sector in Ireland. It was established in July 2014 under the Local Government Reform Act 2014 to provide independent oversight of the local government sector.

NOAC's functions are wide ranging, covering all local authority activities and involving the scrutiny of performance generally and financial performance specifically. NOAC also has a role in supporting best practice, overseeing implementation of national local government policy and monitoring and evaluating implementation of corporate plans, adherence to service level agreements and public service reform by local government bodies.

A core function of NOAC is to review the individual performance of local authorities in accordance with its statutory functions. This key process allows NOAC to provide a comprehensive overview of the functioning of local authorities to the public, both positive and negative, and can allow for exemplars of good practice to be identified and used to share with other local authorities.

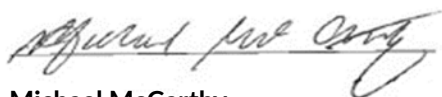
It should be noted that NOAC reserves the right to record and/or livestream Scrutiny Meetings and a record of the meeting may also be kept via a transcript and/or summary report.

Such information may be uploaded to the NOAC website, which is freely accessible to the public, and that attendance by local authority staff at the meeting will be deemed as consent for that content to be used by NOAC.

For further details on the process of the Scrutiny Meeting, a Protocol document, which was agreed between NOAC and the CCMA, is provided with this letter of invite.

For any further details on NOAC, please see the NOAC website (www.noac.ie) or contact the NOAC Secretariat at info@noac.ie.

Yours sincerely,



Michael McCarthy
Chair of the National Oversight and Audit Commission

Chief Executive Kerry County Council – Opening Statement

Chair and members of NOAC, Kerry County Council is glad of the opportunity to participate in this Scrutiny Process. I am Fearghal Reidy, Chief Executive of Kerry County Council and I am joined by members of the Management Team:

- ▲ Ms Angela McAllen, Director of Finance
- ▲ Mr Christy O'Connor, Director of Corporate Services
- ▲ Ms Niamh O'Sullivan, Director of Economic and Community Development
- ▲ Mr Frank Hartnett, Director of Roads, Transportation, Smarter Travel and Public Realm
- ▲ Mr John Kennelly, A/Director of Housing
- ▲ Mr James Nolan, Director of Planning, Environment and Emergency Management

Kerry County Council welcomes the engagement with NOAC. Good governance not just supports the transparent and accountable nature by which we undertake our functions but also provides supports and confidence to deliver a broad range of services and investment in County Kerry.

As the Commission is aware from the profile submitted, Kerry County Council is effectively delivering a broad range of services to residents, businesses and visitors to a county that is characterised by strong urban areas, rural areas and remote areas. This has a bearing on the priorities for the local authority, but also our operating model. I want to now introduce some key priorities for Kerry County Council that we can discuss further during this meeting. These priorities are:

1. Housing
2. Environment and Climate Action
3. Connectivity
4. Community and Economic Development
5. Effective operation of the Local Government Operational Procurement Centre
6. Ensuring that the organisation is fit for purpose

1. Housing

Kerry County Council manages a housing stock of 4,526 units. While the vacancy rate of 2.76% is relatively low, the turnaround time for reletting voids in 2024 was 61.55 weeks. We accept that Kerry remains an outlier in relation to this and are implementing a programme to clear the backlog of voids, which should see a reduction of these turnaround times. In parallel, we are building the retrofit programme and conducting a full review of our rents.

Kerry County Council has a target to deliver 1,536 units in the period 2022 to 2026. The current approval for housing will deliver 1,159 units. Kerry County Council is actively identifying methods to bridge this gap, and achieve the targets, in anticipation of an increase in the targets by the Minister for Housing. We continue to engage with AHBs, have purchased significant lands, advertised for turnkeys and are exploring the competitive dialog mechanism of delivering housing.

Kerry County Council is also playing a role in the delivery of private housing. We are in the process of varying our development plans to provide an increase in land for housing and employment uses in a sustainable way. We are actively working with landowners and utility and service providers to identify solutions providing infrastructure and opening landbanks for development, with a focus on building communities.

2. Environment and Climate Action

With a coastline of 886km and settlements throughout the county that have experienced flooding and other impacts of extreme weather events, Kerry County Council is actively working with the OPW to bring forward flood protection schemes in key vulnerable areas under the Catchment based Flood Risk Assessment and Management Programme (CFRAMs). In addition, we are undertaking minor works in coastal areas. Kerry County Council is taking a lead in supporting businesses and communities to address climate change. The response by local communities during the severe weather events so far in 2025 is a testament to the strength of the communities in County Kerry.

There is significant progress made by the local community in Dingle in advancing the objectives of the Decarbonizing Zone.

3. Connectivity

The location and geography of the county reiterates the importance of enhanced connectivity, through investment in road, rail, sea and air infrastructure, but also by supporting investment in transport services and active travel.

In terms of national connectivity, Kerry County Council, working with TII, is advancing plans to develop the N22 Cork – Tralee corridor in particular the Farranfore to Killarney scheme. There is a need to continue to invest in the national road network within the county, in particular the N23 and the N21. These routes are key corridors that link Tralee, Listowel, Killarney and Castleisland, with Cork, Limerick and on to other metropolitan areas. This needs to be conducted in parallel with the National Secondary Routes, in particular the N86, N70 and N71 that links the key centres of the county. In parallel we are implementing a programme of active travel and road safety measures that support cycling, walking and safer road usage.

While Kerry County Council is responsible for a number of quays, piers and harbours across the county, the main harbour from an economic connectivity perspective is Fenit Harbour, which acts as a port for international shipping. It is important that the marine infrastructure is maintained to a high standard by Kerry County Council to ensure that economic activity in the area can be sustained.

In addition, we are working with our partners in Kerry Airport, Irish Rail, Bus Éireann, and Kerry Local Link to improve access to and mobility within County Kerry.

4. Community and Economic Development

Kerry is characterised by strong and diverse communities, which is reflected in the welcome the residents gave to the large number of Ukrainian population in the county. We will continue to build the community sector in the county.

Concentrating on economic development, Kerry is known as a tourist county. Fáilte Ireland, working with Kerry County Council have prepared 5 destination plans for the county. These concentrate on the development of sustainable tourism, and Kerry County Council is committed to working with Fáilte Ireland and other partners to deliver the actions in relation to this.

There is a need to diversify the local economic base and to provide more opportunities in a broader range of sectors. As previously highlighted Kerry County Council is currently undertaking a variation of the development plan to expand the level of employment and housing land available. In addition, we are working with partners to enhance the enterprise and investment ecosystem of the county.

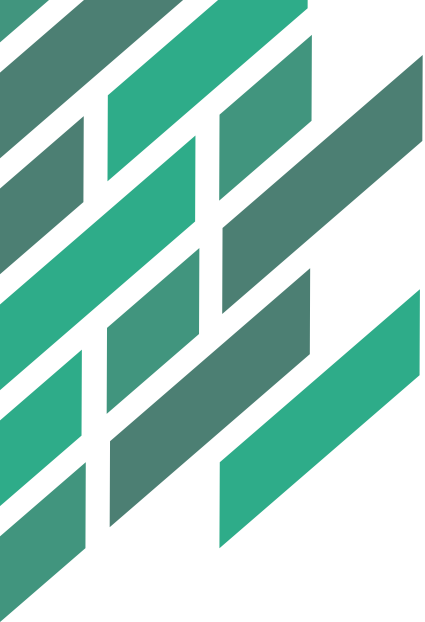
5. Shared Services – effective operation of the LGOPC

Since 2014 the Local Government Operational Procurement Centre has been providing services for all public bodies for the categories of Plant Hire and Minor Building Works and Civils. It is estimated that public bodies use the LGOPC to procure c.€600million worth of plant hire and minor works and civils, with c.2,500 suppliers engaging with the system.

6. The Organisation

In March 2025 Kerry County Council adopted its 5-year Corporate Plan. This will be underpinned by a workforce plan and a system of governance, directorate reviews and PMDS and PDPs to ensure that the teams are supported in delivering their Operational Plans. These systems are currently being refined to ensure that they are aligned with the Corporate Plan.

We look forward to discussing these and other items in more detail with the members of the Commission.



National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC)
An Coimisiún Náisiúnta Maoirseachta & Iniúchóireachta

Postal Address: Custom House, Dublin 1, D01 W6X0.

Website: www.noac.ie

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