

**MIONTUAIRISCÍ CRUINNITHE BHUISÉID COMHAIRLE CHONTAE CHIARRAÍ,
A THIONÓLADH I SEOMRA NA COMHAIRLE, ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, TRÁ
LÍ, AR AN LUAN, 8 NOLLAIG 2008 A CUIREADH AR ATHLÓ.**

**MINUTES OF THE ADJOURNED BUDGET MEETING OF KERRY COUNTY
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, ÁRAS AN CHONTAE,
TRALEE ON MONDAY 8TH DECEMBER, 2008.**

PRESENT/I LÁTHAIR

Councillors/Comhairleoirí

R. Beasley	J. Brassil	T. Buckley
M Cahill	M. Connor-Scarteen	B. Cronin
T. Ferris	S. Fitzgerald	T. Fitzgerald
T. Fleming	N. Foley	M. Gleeson
D. Healy-Rae	M. Healy-Rae	D. Kiely
P. Leahy	B. MacGearailt	P. McCarthy
A. McEllistrim	C. Miller	T. O'Brien
B. O'Connell	J. O'Connor	P. O'Donoghue
M. O'Shea	L. Purtill	J. Sheahan

IN ATTENDANCE/I LÁTHAIR

Mr. T. Curran, County Manager	Mr. J. O'Connor, Head of Finance
Mr. J.D. Flynn, Dir. Of Corp. Services	Mr. M. McMahon, Dir. of Planning
Mr. C. O'Sullivan, Dir. of Roads	Mr. M. Boyce, A/Dir. of Environment
Mr. J. Breen, Dir. of Hsg., Comm&Ent.	Mr. O. Ring, Dir. of Water Services
Ms. A. McAllen, Fin. Mgmt Acc.	Ms. K. Moriarty, A/SEO Finance
Mr. K. Caffrey, Chief Fire Officer	Mr. B. Sweeney, SE Water Serv.
Mr. G. MacNamara, SE Roads	Mr. C. Mangan, SEE Water Services
Mr. G. O'Brien, A/SEO Corp. Aff.	Mr. T. O'Connor, County Librarian
Mr. K. Caffrey, Chief Fire Officer	Mr. F. Dillon, SE Water Services
Mr. G. O'Brien, A/SEO Corp. Affairs	Mr. L. Brosnan, AO Environment
Mr. P. Corkery, Press Officer	Ms. J. Brosnan, AO Water Services
Mr. P. O'Shea, A/SEO Finance	Ms. K. Curtin, AO Finance
Mr. B. O'Connor AO Comm. & Ent.	Mr. C. O'Leary, EE Water Services
Ms. S. Sheridan, SSO Finance	Ms. M. Moriarty, SSO Corp. Affairs
Mr. P. O'Connor, SSO Finance	Mr. P. Fention, Veterinary Inspector
Mr. M. Ó Coileáin, Env. Aware Off	Ms. B. Reidy, SSO Corp. Affairs
Ms. N. Wade, SO Finance	Mr. R. Tangney, A.S.O. Finance
Ms. C. O'Connor, S.O. Water Serv.	Mr. P. O'Sullivan, ASO Corp. Affairs
Ms. L. McElligott, ASO Finance	Ms. B. Lynch, C.O. Finance
Ms. O. O'Shea, CO Corp. Affairs	Ms. M. Galvin, CO Corp. Affairs

The meeting commenced at 10:45 a.m.

Mayor Cllr T. Fleming took the Chair.

Replacement of Spa Bridge

Cllr. M. Gleeson said that he lives close to Spa Bridge in Killarney and the parapet has disappeared. He requested that priority be given in 2009 to the provision of a new bridge at this location as it is very dangerous.

Mr. C. O'Sullivan, Director of Roads and Transportation undertook to have Spa Bridge inspected.

Cllr. P. McCarthy said there is a bridge in Brosna and part of the parapet is broken for the past 10 years. This is very dangerous and he requested that this bridge would be assessed immediately.

Mr. C. O'Sullivan undertook to have this bridge inspected.

Post Office at Fenit

Cllr. T. Fitzgerald supported calls from the general public to ensure that the Post Office at Fenit is not closed. He added that there would be a public meeting in Fenit at 8:30p.m that evening and he called on all members to support the retention of this Post Office.

Contamination of pig meat

Cllr. M. Healy-Rae referred to the contamination of pig meat and the resulting difficulties being encountered by the industry in Ireland and said he felt the Food Safety Authority has left this industry down by not detecting the problem sooner. This will have major consequences for consumers, producers and retailers. He was very concerned for those involved in pig production in the county and said their jobs were in danger.

Cllr. M. Gleeson PROPOSED that the Veterinary Officer would attend the meeting later and report to members on this crisis.

Cllr. T. Fitzgerald SECONDED this proposal and it was agreed.

08.12.08.01 Consideration of the Budget for the Financial Year ended 31st December 2009 (cont'd)

Mr. J. O'Connor, Head of Finance informed the meeting that Division C – Water Services and Division D – Development Management would be taken together. He referred members to Pages 56 to 82 of the Manager's Report and Pages 16 & 17 of the Budget Tables where details of the Water Services Division are set out. The Revenue Budget for this Division is €24.8m which is almost 18% of the projected revenue expenditure for 2009. This is an increase of €2 million on the 2008 figure and the estimated income for this Division is €15.5m. The income will be generated through water/waste water charges and the income from the supply of water to Town Councils. Details of capital expenditure on this Division can be found in Pages 9 to 14 of Schedule 1 at the back of the Manager's Report and the total capital Budget for this Division is €37.98m or almost 38% of the entire capital Budget. Details of the capital programme are summarised on Page 56 of the Manager's Report and Mr. Ring, Director of Water Services would brief members in detail on this.

Various capital projects are at different stages of planning and there are 11 Water Supply Projects being advanced at present together with 24 village Sewerage Schemes, 7 Waste Water Projects, the Kerry Sludge Management Plan and 3 projects under Lough Leane Catchment Sewerage Schemes. There is an exceptionally large volume of work ongoing in this area. Details of the Capital Programme are set out on Pages 56 to 62 of the Manager's Report. Mr. O'Connor then referred members to Page 63 of the Manager's Report and in particular the heading "Prioritization 2009 – 2016". He informed the meeting that it is considered timely and opportune that a measured reassessment of the priority projects for development in the period 2009 – 2016 now needs to be undertaken. Several major factors will influence decisions to be taken in such an assessment.

- The review of the County Development Plan currently under way
- The implications of the Wastewater Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations 2007 (S.I. No. 684 of 2007) and the European Communities (Drinking Water)(No. 2) Regulations 2007 (S.I. No. 278 of 2007)
- Availability of funding both from the Water Services Investment Programme and local contributions
- Recommendations of County Kerry Wastewater and Sludge Strategy and
- River Basin District Plans

Of all the issues facing the Council the most critical is the financing of projects. To advance this programme an in-house Design Team is funded at a cost of €1.2m from the Development Contribution Fund. Mr. O'Connor then referred to the EPA Remedial Action List and informed members that in July 2008 the Department approved works to the value of €9.860m to be carried out over a two year period. Works costing €0.956m were approved for 2008 with the remainder to be carried out in 2009. Works consists mainly of the following:-

➤ Upgrade Disinfection Facilities	€1.610m
➤ Monitoring and Alarms	€0.250m
➤ Treatment Facilities	<u>€8m</u>
Total	€9.86m.

Good progress has been made in getting the works underway and Chlorine Dosing Pumps, Chlorine Analysers, Turbidity Meters and Flow Meters are currently being fitted. The works will be 75% funded by the Department but the remaining 25% has to be provided by Kerry County Council from its own resources. The local contribution of €2.465m is being funded from the Development Contribution receipts in accordance of the Planning and Development Acts.

Mr. O'Connor referred members to Page 65 of the Manager's Report where details of the Revenue Budget are set out. A sum of €10.580m is provided for the Operation, Maintenance and Repair of Water Plants and Networks. This is an increase of 12% on the 2008 provision and it excludes loan charges. The main driver in this increase is the cost for energy and chemicals and also

the need to meet National and European standards. Kerry County Council produces approximately 32.5 million cubic metres of potable water per annum. This equates to approximately 89,000 cubic metres per day, for a population of almost 120,000 consumers, which is served by some 52,000 water connections (domestic, agricultural, industrial and commercial) and includes the supply to Tralee, Listowel and Killarney Town Councils. Mr. O'Connor then referred members to Page 66 of the Manager's Report where the chart sets out the break down of expenditure. The four main areas of expenditure are Maintenance Crews Payroll Costs, Material/Chemicals, Caretakers Wages and Energy (Electricity, Fuel etc.) Details of the main drivers of our costs are set out on Page 67 of the Manager's Report. In 2008 pump upgrading works were carried out in Coolcorcoran Pump House and Bouleenshere Pump House. It is envisaged that this will result in energy savings of €30,000 approximately in 2009. It is anticipated further savings will become evident over time following the review of electricity tariffs. As well, the Council's Hydro Electric Plant at Lough Guittane provided 63% of the electricity requirements for the adjacent Central Regional Water Supply Scheme Pumping Station in 2008 and since its installation in 2001 has achieved savings to-date of approximately €670,000. Further details of energy conservation measures are given in the Environmental Services chapter. These measures are in response to members' requests to ensure cost effectiveness. It is anticipated that the Hydro Electric Plant at Lough Guittane resulted in savings of €130,000 in 2008.

For the past number of years, the Council has carried out a number of minor improvement works. There is a need to continually improve both the network and the physical assets required to maintain the level and quality of services expected by the general public. Both EPA annual reports on water quality and the Council's own assessments continue to identify the need to improve infrastructure within the water supply schemes to enable the provision of a sustained high quality water service, and for those reasons a contribution of €500,000 is made to the Water Services Draft Budget from Development Contribution receipts to facilitate infrastructural improvements. The 2008 contribution from Developing Contributions enabled the following works to be carried out:

- Water mains were replaced in Emlaghpeaste, Cahersiveen, Knightstown, An Clochán, Baile na Cnocáin, Baile na hAbha, Gleann Fán
- The replacement of chemical dosing pumps at the water treatment plant in Dromin.
- Valves and Meters were replaced/installed at Baile na Buaille, Valentia, Cahersiveen and Mweelin.
- Reservoir ball valves were replaced at Valentia, Cill Chúile and Bréanann.
- Fire Hydrants were installed in Cahersiveen and Inch.

€500,000 was provided each year for the past two years for these works and a similar provision is made in 2009. A sum of 1.59m is provided for loan charges – Water Supply Schemes. Of the overall allocation €922,000

refers to the loan charges in respect of the Caherciveen, Furies/Scartaglin, Listowel Stage 4, Waterville and Kenmare Water Schemes. These loan charges are funded from Development Contribution Receipts in accordance with the Planning and Development Acts. A further €598,000 arises from the loan raised for the metering project and is charged to the expenditure for the non-domestic sector and a proportionate contribution is recovered from the Town Councils. The repayments on this loan are funded by water charges. Loan charges for the Hydro Electric Plant at Lough Guittane amount to €68,000 and the loan will be fully paid off in 2009. €2,000 of the overall allocation refers to old loans on water schemes taken out many years ago. Mr. O'Connor informed the members that details of further works carried out under the Development Contribution Programme are set out on Page 69 of the Manager's Report. Much has been achieved under this programme over the last number of years but because of the Remedial Action Works Programme there will be very little progress in this area in the near future.

Under the Water Conservation/Water Demand Management heading two projects have been progressing. These are the Water Conservation Project and the Metering Project for Non-Domestic Supplies. Between them, these projects have led to an 11% drop in demand since 2006. Very severe leaks on customer properties have been identified and most customers have rectified these leaks. Both these initiatives should help in part to satisfy supply demands where shortages are experienced at critical times and facilitate new customers connecting to the supply. Experience to-date clearly indicates that the projects are having a positive impact. €1.935m is provided for Service Support Costs. This relates to the payment of salaries, wages and the share out of accommodation costs etc. €5.723m is provided for Waste Water Plants and Networks. The Draft Budget provides for the operation and maintenance of 34 Waste Water Schemes countywide. 9 Waste Water Treatment Plants at Caherciveen, Castleisland, An Daingean, Kenmare, Killorglin, Rathmore, Farranfore and Ballybunion and the associated networks of all schemes. In the 2009 Draft Budget, provision of €40,000 has been made for the plant operating contracts of new waste water treatment plants in Miltown, Barraduff, Furies and Sneem which will become operational at the end of 2009. In the immediately coming years substantial costs will arise as we complete new and refurbished waste water schemes under the Investment Programme. The Miltown Plant is a Design Build and Operate contract and the annual operating costs are estimated at €250,000. This includes maintenance, operation and energy costs. The plant at Furies is expected to cost between €125,000 and €130,000 per annum while Barraduff new treatment plant will cost between €140,000 and €150,000 per annum. Commercial users will carry some of the costs of the maintenance of these plants and the balance will be funded from the Revenue Budget.

Mr. O'Connor referred members to the top of Page 72 of the Manager's Report and said that Waste Water Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations require Kerry County Council to license Waste Water Treatment Plants. In 2008 Kerry County Council applied to the EPA for authorisation for all

discharges from 8 waste water treatment plants at a cost of €25,000 per application. In 2009 Kerry County Council will apply for a further 23 licences at a cost of €260,000 and 15 certificates at a cost of €45,000. These new EPA licensing requirements will have significant cost implications, for both capital and revenue. The cost of these licences will be spread over a ten year period and, in 2009, €35,000 has been included as a contribution towards the licence costs. There are significant additional costs associated with making these licence applications which are currently being funded from the revenue allocation. €940,000 has been provided under the heading General Waste Water Schemes and details of the achievements under the Minor Improvement Programme are set out at the end of Page 72 and the top of Page 73. A sum of €2.038m will be recouped from the Town Councils for their contribution to the operation and maintenance of the waste water treatment plants and sludge plants in the various towns. The County Council's contribution for the town Council's waste water treatment plants is estimated at €152,000 for 2009. A sum of €822,567 is provided under the heading Service Support Costs. This covers salaries and a share out of the general management charges. €925,000 is provided for Debt Management for Water and Wastewater. This is the entire cost of managing the metering project. Considerable effort has been put into this project and we will continue to liaise with clients to eliminate wastage.

Mr. O'Connor informed the meeting that €460,000 is provided for the Operation and Maintenance of Public Conveniences. Details of the Rural Water Programme are set out on Pages 76 to 79 of the Manager's Report. There has been substantial funding from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government for this programme and progress is set out on Page 78 of the Manager's Report. In 2008 the Department allocated €800,000 to Kerry County Council under the Small Public Water and Sewerage Schemes. The Council must provide matching funding of €266,667 to avail of this funding. This is provided by Development Contributions in accordance with the Planning and Development Acts. Details of works carried out under this scheme are set out on Page 79 of the Manager's Report. Mr. O'Connor referred members to Pages 80 to 82 of the Manager's Report for details of the Support to Water Capital Programme. He then referred to water supply connections and said that the Council intends to review its work practices to ensure that this service is delivered economically and efficiently. It is intended to revise the charge for making a standard size connection from €900 to €1,035 from the date of the adoption of the Budget. Water connections are made by Council staff and there has been a reduction in the number of applications for connections over the past few years as can be seen from the graph on the top of Page 81 of the Manager's Report. Mr. O'Connor then referred to Sewer Connections and said that the proposed standard costs for 2009 is €2,150. This includes all machine costs, skilled labour costs, materials for the connection, as well as temporary and permanent restoration costs. Larger sewer connections, which require a greater extent of work, will continue to be costed separately.

Division D – Development Management

Mr. J. O'Connor referred members to Pages 83 to 98 of the Manager's Report for details of this Division and Pages 19 and 20 of the Budget Tables. The Revenue Budget for this Division is €8.4m with a projected income of €2.12m. Details of the work of the Planning SPC are set out on Page 83 of the Manager's Report. €600,000 is provided for Forward Planning and details of progress by Forward Planning in 2008 are set out at the top of Page 84. €2.16m is provided for Development Management and Planning Control. This is a substantial reduction on the allocation for 2008. He informed members that activity levels in Planning Control experienced a sharp decline in 2008 particularly in the latter part of the year. Applications for large scale housing developments and commercial developments have reduced significantly. Applications for Single Rural Houses, however, have remained at existing levels. Approximately 2,800 applications have been received to-date in 2008. The projected out-turn to the end of December 2008 is 3,000 applications which represents a 37% decrease on 2007 figures. The decline is expected to continue for 2009, given the national and global economic environment. This major change in activity is in line with the experience of other local authorities and reflects the over all National economic environment. Mr. O'Connor referred members to the top of Page 85 of the Manager's Report where details of the number of planning applications received from 1997 to 2008 are set out. The preparation of the Rural Design Guidelines is at an advance stage and will be finalised before the end of the year.

Mr. O'Connor then referred to the Taking in Charge of Estates and said that in June 2008 the Council adopted a policy on this. As well as taking estates in charge, it is also an essential part of our policy to ensure that residential developments are completed in accordance with planning permissions, and to pursue early and effective enforcement action where necessary. The Council is setting aside a specialised multi-disciplinary project team from within existing resources for a period of 12 months to survey, assess and log onto a database details of all relevant residential developments. Parts of that assessment will be to review compliance with planning permission and the taking of any necessary follow-up action. This will be aimed at ensuring that developers complete estates properly in accordance with planning permission and the Council is not left with any unnecessary financial burdens in relation to taking over unfinished estates. As the benefits of the work of this team will stretch into the medium term, the costs are being funded over a five year period and accordingly €60,000 is included in the Draft Budget. It is now proposed to initiate the public notice procedure, pursuant to the relevant legislation for the taking in charge of 6 housing estates. Details of these estates will then come before the Council along with any submissions made by the public for ratification early in 2009. No provision has been included in the Draft Budget for any works on estates as they are being taken over. If any significant expenditure is to be incurred on any such estate, then the funding stream will have to be considered at that time and before being incurred.

Mr. O'Connor then referred members to Page 86 of the Manager's Report for details of the Site Assessment Team. As previously discussed at Council meetings, a specialist team from existing resources is being set up to provide expert assessment of the reports from approved personnel on site drainage for the purposes of waste water discharges. This team will be functional very shortly.

Mr. O'Connor then referred to Grants for the conservation for a Protected Structures and said that in the past consultants were employed to inspect and report on applications received. From 2009 a member of the planning technical staff, who has completed the required courses in building conservation, will be taking over responsibility for this scheme resulting in significant savings for the Planning Department. €622,000 has been provided for Enforcement and there is a need for a lot of action in that regard. Details of the activities of this section are set out on Page 87 of the Manager's Report. €300,000 is provided for Tourism Development and Promotion. This is a substantial reduction on last year and covers the contributions made to various local organisations which promote and support the economic, social and tourism interest of the county overall. A sum of €40,000 is intended as a contribution to the South West Regional Tourism Authority. That payment will be dependent on the delivery of an acceptable initiatives programme for the entire County of Kerry. A contribution of €23,000 is included for Kerry Life Education Ltd towards its health education and substance/alcohol abuse awareness programmes, across the entire county. Funding is also provided for a contribution to Tralee Town Council towards the salary of the County Museum Curator, Outreach Officer and street management costs arising from the Festival of Kerry.

Cllr. T. Ferris asked if the list contained in the Manager's Report on Page 88 of the groups to receive support is indicative or exhaustive.

In response Mr. J. O'Connor said that the groups listed on Page 88 are those traditionally supported by the Council. However, in relation to any other group who provide sufficient information on their activities and are considered to be meritorious, consideration will be given to supporting them also. Under the Community and Enterprise Function heading, a sum of €654,000 is provided for General Community and Enterprise Expenses. This relates to salary and other expenses in support of the work programme. Details of the activities of this section are set out on Pages 88 to 94 of the Manager's Report and it gives members a greater understanding of their work. Under the Building Control heading €310,000 is provided and this is a very important function. Under the Economic Development and Promotion heading a sum of €229,000 is provided for Urban and Village Renewal. This will allow for the local contribution to support grants received from CLÁR or the Department. The Budget includes €40,000 which is the annual contribution to the running of the EU Liaison Office based in Brussels and any associated costs. €260,000 is provided for Economic Development and Promotion and this includes a

statutory contribution to the Southern and Eastern Assembly and the South West Regional Authority. A special effort has been made to retain an allocation of €20,000 to support exceptionally worthwhile Tidy Town initiatives by local Tidy Town Committees. This is in recognition of the excellent work done by these Committees. €168,000 is provided for Property Management Costs and this covers part of the loan charges for an element of the Killorglin Area Service Centre. The remainder of the costs are charged out to the developer occupying the premises. €310,000 is provided for Heritage Services and a good deal has been achieved in this area with limited funds. Mr. O'Connor then called on Mr. Ring to address the meeting.

Mr. O. Ring, Director of Water Services referred in particular to the Capital Programme and said that historically there has been an under investment in village and town schemes. There have been many drivers in the need to provide new schemes and to upgrade existing schemes including the scale of development which has been greater than our capacity to absorb with the existing infrastructure and also regulation from the EU and National level. This is one of the few Capital Budgets which have been increased at National level by up to 19%. The County Kerry Water Services Assessment of Needs was adopted by the Council in 2006. In July 2007 the Council revised this assessment and adopted a reprioritised list of Village Sewerage Schemes for advancement in two phases. Contract Documents are close to completion for 12 of the Phase 1 Priority Schemes. However, it is not possible to proceed to tender with all 12 schemes simultaneously due to the current financial situation nationally and locally. The most urgent scheme is the Ardfert Project, which had been planned to go to tender in 2008. The timescale has however, been delayed resulting from the need to apply to An Bord Pleanála for a Compulsory Purchase Order for a site and the subsequent requirement of the Board requesting the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement. This will result in the tender date being rescheduled to the latter half of 2009. It has been decided to proceed to tender as soon as possible with the Tarbert and Lixnaw Projects and, pending the availability of funding, to follow with other schemes on a priority bases. With regards to many of these schemes loan approval is an issue. Details of progress made on capital schemes are set out on Page 58 of the Manager's Report. Two schemes have just commenced, Kenmare Water Scheme which is expected to be completed in 2009, and we have just commissioned a Chlorine Dioxide Treatment Plant for the Central Regional Water Supply Scheme at a total cost of €0.5m. 60% to 70% of funding for capital schemes are provided by the Department and the balance must be met locally. At present the Council has a €120m programme which will require a huge commitment both nationally and locally. Under the EPA Remedial Action Programme almost €10m worth of works will be funded in 2008 and 2009 and this relates to smaller schemes. This is a substantial investment.

The Water Services Department is aware that a lot of work needs to be carried out, in particular, in relation to drinking water standards. As Mr. O'Connor pointed out Kerry County Council applied for licences for waste water treatment plants and this is an ongoing process. To-date none of these licences have been issued, therefore the cost of complying with the conditions of the licences is not yet known. It is estimated that the minimum cost will be €50m. There is a huge need for investment in water and sewerage schemes in the long term and good progress is being made. The Budget provided for the operation and maintenance of schemes has increased by 12% on the 2008 provision and this is driven by increased standards and new schemes coming into operation. In relation to the capital programme and the Strategy for Delivery this pilot programme will be completed in 6 months and the results will inform how plants will be managed into the future. In 2009 the Council must prepare Strategic Water Plans and this is a huge move forward for the Council. However Kerry County Council has a head start on this by having the Strategy for Delivery in place. A lot of activity has also taken place in other areas including Group Water Schemes. Under Development Management the level of activity in the provision of water connections has reduced and demand peaked in 2006. It is anticipated that in 2009 the number of sewer connections will be 1/8 of the 2006 number. The challenge now facing the Council is how the works required can be funded as quickly as possible. It is important to ensure that when the economy recovers we will be in a position to avail of any funding that becomes available.

Mr. M. McMahon, Director of Planning said that the review of the County Development Plan had been on going in 2008. 268 submissions were received and a series of Area Meetings took place last week to discuss the Manager's Report on submissions. A Special Planning Meeting will be held to discuss the Manager's Report on the 19th December and these Special Planning Meetings will continue into January. There will then be a further round of Public Consultation on the amendments proposed and the Plan will finally be adopted in March or early April 09. The Forward Planning Unit has finalised Local Area Plans for the last 39 settlements in 2008 and we now have a full suit of Local Area Plans for the settlements identified in the County Development Plan.

Mr. McMahon then referred to Planning Control and said the chart at the top of Page 85 of the Manager's Report highlights the substantial reduction in the number of planning applications received in 2008. 3,000 applications were processed in 2008 and this reflects the down turn in the economy. The proposed Rural Planning Guidelines are almost complete and it is intended that they will be presented to members early in 2009. A Special Unit is being established in relation to the taking in charge of estates and they will survey all estates in the county. It is important to ensure that all private estates are completed to the highest standards prior to taking them in charge. He added that there will be a number of older estates which must be taken in charge and it is intended to commence the taking in charge of the first 6 estates in February 09 at which time a report will be brought to Council. There is no provision in the Budget for the

carrying out of any works on these estates. If any works are identified which are required a suitable funding stream will have to be identified. The Site Assessment Unit has been established and will be under the remit of the Planning Department but will be located in the Environment Section. All planning applications with on site effluent treatment will be referred to them. A panel of suitable assessors has been established and these are qualified to undertake site percolation tests etc. and all planning applications with on site treatment must be accompanied by a site assessment carried out by one of these approved assessors. 86 applications were received for inclusion on this list and 50 of these were deemed qualified. Officials from his Department would be meeting with the qualified assessors and they will be advised of the standard expected of them. The activities of the Enforcement Unit are set out on Page 87 of the Manager's Report and there is no down turn in this area. It has been necessary to initiate legal proceedings in 30 cases. This is a very expensive, long drawn out, process. He added that a number of buildings have been demolished as a result of the activities of this Unit. In conclusion he thanked all the staff in the Planning Department, in particular Mr. Sheehy, Mr. Stack and Ms. McCarthy who have been operating under extreme pressure over the last number of years. He also paid tribute to Cllr. O'Brien, Chair of the Planning SPC and also all the other members of the SPC for their work on the Planning SPC.

Mr. J. Breen, Director of Housing, Community and Enterprise said that Community and Enterprise covers broad areas and the Manager's Report outlines these. With the present funding constraints we must consider how these activities can be continued into the future. He referred members to Page 89 of the Manger's Report and said that under the Kerry Interagency Traveller Strategy the Star Pupil Programme targeted 5th Year Traveller Students and this was deemed to be very successful in 2008 and arrangements are being made to continue this initiative in 2009. Ongoing work is also progressing on the Tralee Horse Project, to provide stabling for horses at the Basin, Tralee. He then referred to the Kerry County Community and Voluntary Forum and said that this was established in early 2000 to provide a meaningful way for community and voluntary representatives to participate in the County Development Board and other Local Authority structures. The 2008 work programme of the Forum included continuing the facilitation of the Community and Voluntary Forum Insurance Scheme. 118 groups had taken up this scheme by September 2008. This is the highest single Forum area take-up in the country, with an average saving of 46% per group. Other areas covered by Community and Enterprise include the Smoke Alarm Scheme, Playgrounds etc.

All members thanked Mr. O'Connor and the Directors for their presentations.

Cllr. M. Healy-Rae said that the harnessing of water and the safe delivery of water to homes is critical. While he welcomed the work commenced in Kenmare he expressed concern regarding the proposed abstraction of water from the Sheen River. He did not know where the additional water

supply to supplement the existing supply would be sourced even though the water pipes are presently being laid. He was given a commitment on this on a number of occasions and he asked that action would be taken to identify a water source immediately. He complemented the Water Caretaker in Kenmare, who is doing a fantastic job. He added that there is a proposal from a private individual to provide a sewerage treatment plant in Kenmare similar to that provided in Sneem and he asked that this proposal would be supported. He called on the Water Services Department to be proactive in the taking-over of Group Water Supply Schemes. Cllr. Healy-Rae referred to the Water Metering Project and said that it did not make sense to impose a meter charge on people who are not using the Council water supply. He was informed that it was Council policy that if a person has a water connection serving land they are charged €105 per year meter charge. He PROPOSED that this policy would no longer apply. He welcomed Mr. McMahon's report in relation to Planning Enforcement and asked if the Planning Department spends too much time going to court with developers. This is very expensive and he would like to see all types of mediation exhausted before initiating court proceedings. He welcomed the funding for Kerry Life Education and he requested clarification on whether funding was provided in the Budget for Tech Amergin in Waterville. Cllr. Healy-Rae referred to unfinished private housing estates, and in particular, to Lodge Wood, Kenmare. This has been on going for some time and he asked why proceedings had not been taken against this developer. He complemented the Housing Department on the progress made on derelict sites in villages and towns and said that this is very important for the appearance of our towns and villages. He complemented Mr. Sheehy, Mr. Stack, Ms. McCarthy and the staff of the Planning Department, in particular, the Forward Planning Section on the preparation of Local Area Plans. In Kenmare the Forward Planning Unit proposed that 50 or 60 properties would be included as protected structures but they were subsequently removed. He asked what it cost to survey these properties to include them in the first instance and he added that Kenmare has 3 or 4 buildings only that should be included as protected structures while all other buildings have modern façades.

Cllr. M. Gleeson said he was delighted that the Hydro Electric Plant is prospering at Lough Guittane and he would like to see this replicated in other parts of the county. He added that the most frequent complaint he receives relates to confusion about the metering project. Some customers received letters saying that they will be cut off and brought to Court for non payment. He added that these issues should be resolved at the Local Area Office. The quality of drinking water is of enormous importance and he welcomed the intention to proceed with the provision of a treatment plant at Lough Guittane to ensure that there will be no cryptosporidium from that water source. He asked that priority would be given to this work in 2009. He referred to the Lough Leane Working Group and said that he worked on that Committee and they had done excellent work to safeguard the well being of Killarney Lakes. It is critical that Barraduff Sewerage Scheme is in operation as soon as possible. At every Area Meeting he asked the Water Services Department to do everything they could to

ensure that there is an extension of the public sewer to the environs of Killarney and this must be pursued. There has been mention of a possible danger of infestation of our waters with invasive plants such as Pond Weed and Nuttall Weed. If these weeds are allowed into our water sources it would be detrimental. Any crafts introduced to the Lakes of Killarney need to be certified that they have not been in lakes that have been polluted by the Zebra Mussel. He submitted a Notice of Motion for the December meeting asking the Council to actively promote water harvesting for non consumption purposes. This would help to reduce flooding and also reduce the demand for public water supply. He referred to the programme for Village Sewerage Schemes and asked what can realistically be done in the next 5 years given the present economic climate. Cllr. Gleeson referred to the taking in charge of estates and asked that the taking in charge of Birchfield Estate would be given priority when this process commences. He asked if the Council was satisfied that we are getting an adequate return from the €40,000 contribution to South West Regional Tourism Authority. He referred to the application to be completed by a person wishing to be included on the Register of Electors and said the term 'non national' is used. This should be removed as there is no such thing as a non national.

Cllr. Gleeson welcomed the allocation for the Tidy Towns Committees and added that villages should be encouraged to become more active in this area. He asked if members could allocate funds from Councillors' Allocations for these works. He highlighted the poor condition of Killaha Cemetery. Cllr. Gleeson referred to the Older Persons Task Force and said there is a need for the provision of recreational facilities for older people. He said that that he was Kerry County Council's representative on the Kerry Local Sports Partnership and it is making great progress with young people. He asked the Council to give this group every support.

Cllr. D. Healy-Rae complimented the staff of the Water Services Department who works very hard to ensure that all members of the public have an adequate supply of water. He expressed concern regarding Kilcummin Sewerage Scheme and the proposal to pipe the sewage to Killarney from this scheme. Work on this scheme has been ongoing for some time and it has been necessary to re-tender. With the reduction in the number of applications for connections to water and sewer, could Kerry County Council not carry out the design work on new schemes as it would be more cost effective and it would not be necessary to employ consultants? He expressed concern at the number of village sewage schemes to be progressed as members were asked to increase charges under the guise that village schemes would have to be brought up to an acceptable standard. With the reduction in the number of planning applications, there will be less funding available for these schemes and it will not be possible to bring them up to an acceptable standard. He expressed concern that Kilgarvan is not one of the schemes mentioned as being progressed. The treatment plant for this scheme is on the banks of the Roughty River and the local community has been informed that the river is not safe for bathing in. He was concerned that this was as a result

of the treatment plant. He asked that the provision of new public toilets in Kilgarvan would be progressed in 2009. Cllr. Healy-Rae referred to the provision of Burial Grounds and said that in the Killarney Electoral Area, land is required for burial grounds in Scartaglin, Gneeveguilla and Killarney. There are just six spaces left in Scartaglin and he asked that urgent action would be taken with a view to acquiring additional land. He referred to the identification of an additional water source for the Kenmare Water Supply and said that the report commissioned by Bonane Community Council contradicts the Kerry County Council report with regard to the volumes of water that can be abstracted. He asked that this situation be resolved as soon as possible. He referred to Faha and said that he believed that a Public Private Partnership is being proposed for the provision of a new sewage scheme at this location and this should be supported. He thanked the Manager and the staff of the Planning Department for their assistance with planning applications for family members in the Killarney Electoral Area and said that this position has improved substantially. Traditionally, farmers only sell a site when they are under financial pressure to educate a child or to meet commitments. He asked that some flexibility would be allowed to allow farmers to sell sites where serious cases arise. He also asked that where it is intended to refuse planning permission to a family member, that the Planning Department would request Further Information with a view to resolving any outstanding issues as this would save the applicant the cost of a further application. He welcomed the proposal to take over the two estates in the Killarney area, i.e. Birchfield Estate and Gortnacarriga and said that funding, to bring estates up to a satisfactory standard, will be a big issue.

Cllr. M. O'Shea referred to the Water Services Capital Investment Programme and said that while there is an increase of 19% in the Budget Nationally, there is a reduction in the number of treatment plants being constructed. Treatment plants are urgently required in Castlegregory and Castlemaine. He referred to the operational cost of €270,000 per annum for Milltown and said that this is very expensive.

In response, Mr. J. O'Connor, Head of Finance said that was a public procurement cost and not a cost estimated by Kerry County Council. This plant will not be maintained by Council staff.

Cllr. M. O'Shea referred to the energy costs of €2.2m in the Budget and welcomed the new approach to the Hydro Electric Plant in Killarney and said that he hoped that this system could be used across the county. He requested that the public convenience at Inch would remain open all year round. The General Operatives in the area could be given responsibility for opening and closing the public convenience each day. Cllr. O'Shea referred to the proposed increase in the cost of a water connection of €135 and said this is not prudent at a time when the number of applications is reducing. He suggested that the existing charge of €900 is sufficient. He welcomed the proposals to take in charge some housing estates and asked what happens where the Bond is no longer in place and public lighting etc. is inadequate. Playgrounds are very important, especially in

the villages, where there has been enormous development in recent years. He added that funding should be provided for additional playgrounds in 2009 and not just the four proposed. It should be a condition of planning that developers would provide a playground for children when new developments are provided. Development control should never allow 10 - 14 houses to the acre and this practice has created chaos with over-development in many of our villages. The density of housing permitted should be reduced substantially.

Cllr. J. O'Connor said that he would like to see farmers being permitted to sell sites. He referred to private housing estates which are not completed in accordance with planning conditions by private developers and said that a system should be in place whereby a developer would not be granted planning permission again when he had not completed previous developments to the satisfaction of the Local Authority. He was concerned that the Council was not pursuing developers to complete estates and that appropriate action is not being taken. Knocklyne Estate in Killorglin is an example of this. Cllr. O'Connor welcomed the establishment of a panel of assessors who will carry out site inspection tests. He referred to the Small Schemes Programme and said that much work could be carried out by Council staff but the Department insist on a consultant being employed on water and sewage schemes. He asked if the Kerry Hub Strategy was being implemented as he felt it was not getting the backing of Government. He asked when the Mid-Kerry Scheme would be completed as it has been on the priority list for a number of years. He also asked when the Beaufort Scheme would be operational. Cromane is in an SAC and he asked, for this reason, if it could be prioritised. Cllr. O'Connor asked, if new sewerage schemes are provided will existing households be permitted to connect to the public sewer and at what cost. He asked how many schemes will have tertiary treatment facilities in the county.

Cllr. T. Fitzgerald said that the Water Services Programme is the second largest and a lot of excellent work is carried out by that Department. The delay in the provision of the new sewerage scheme in Ardfert is resulting in a delay for development in that area and it is important to ensure that this scheme is advanced as soon as possible. It is also important that An Bord Pleanála make decisions speedily. The Government has imposed a number of Guidelines for water and sewerage schemes and this is making them more costly yet additional funding is not being provided for them. He asked how many waste water treatment plants were in the county and how many require licences. He referred to the Budget Tables and said that under the heading "Village Renewal", in 2008 a sum of €930,000 was provided but the outturn was €350,000. He requested clarification on these figures and he asked if we were carrying forward any money from 2008 for these works. He asked how much is currently in the Development Levy Fund and what is the current percentage of water losses. The cost of energy to the Council is very substantial and every effort should be made to achieve a reduction in these costs. He welcomed the funding provided in the Budget for the Tidy Towns Committees and said that he was involved with the RAPID Programme and a lot of good

work is being done in the Mitchels and Shanakill areas in Tralee under this Programme.

Cllr. M. Connor-Scarteen referred to the Water Metering Project and said that he was aware of private houses with just one acre that have had water meters installed and are being charged for the meter. He asked when public toilets would be provided in Kenmare. He asked if a site was acquired for a public toilet in Killorglin and if not, he requested that priority be given in 2009 to securing a suitable site for this purpose. He referred to the review of the County Development Plan and in particular, the proposed Record of Protected Structures. Cllr. Connor-Scarteen pointed out that 56 people made submissions in Kenmare who did not want their buildings protected. In relation to the buildings that will be included on the Record of Protected Structures, he hoped that the Council would agree that if the property owner retained the façade of the building, there would be no restrictions on alterations to the inside of the building. He referred to Lodgewood in Kenmare and said that the Council should draw down the Bond as drainage works need to be carried out and some footpaths are below road level. This Bond is in the sum of €26,000 and these works could be carried out by the Council. He asked that these works would be carried out as soon as possible. He asked if funding would be provided for improvements to the sewerage scheme in Caherdaniel and Kilgarvan.

Cllr. T. Ferris referred to the allocation for the NASC office in Brussels and asked what benefit Kerry County Council was getting from this investment. She asked what the cost of mobile public conveniences was. There are numerous festivals held throughout the county and she asked that the Shindig Festival in Tralee would be funded by the Council. In relation to the Water Metering Project, meters were installed where landowners had less than 5 acres of land and she was concerned that they were being charged the annual meter charge despite the fact that they have so little land. She supported the Budget in 2008 on the basis that all rate payers would be treated the same. She understood that a water softener was to be provided for the Ardfert/Fenit area but this has not materialised. The Council are now proposing an increase in rates and she could not justify this. A new sewerage scheme has not been provided for Ardfert and this has been ongoing for a long time and it is delaying the development of Ardfert. She expressed her disappointment in the Planning Department in relation to the ongoing saga relating to a public right-of-way in Fenit and also the works carried out on the caravan park in Banna. Members have still not been informed if these works were legal. She asked that private developers would be pursued where they have reneged on their planning conditions. In conclusion, she asked that consideration be given to making the Design Guidelines available on-line at no cost to the Planning Authority.

Cllr. B. Cronin commended the Water Services Department on the progress made on the schemes, in particular, in the refurbishment of schemes. He was deeply concerned regarding the ongoing delay in relation to the Kilcummin Sewerage Scheme. There were delays last year

with the contractor in relation to health and safety issues and the contractor was taken off the scheme. As a result of the Barraduff Sewerage Scheme, the condition of the road network is a disgrace and this compounds concerns he raised last August. Cllr. Cronin then referred to the Metering Project and acknowledged the way problems are being addressed by the Revenue Department and also the way major leaks were identified. The Council has worked exceptionally well in helping farmers identify leaks. As a result of the Metering Project, he asked can the Council quantify the savings in water losses achieved to-date. Bearing in mind that the Local Elections will be held in 2009 he asked members to proceed cautiously on the €105 meter charge as no price can be put on good quality water. If customers are being advised not to pay this charge, he asked what the cost of reconnection is. He understood that 5 acres or less can be deemed on inspection to be domestic. If this landholding is not viewed as domestic only, for the €105 annual charge the customer gets an allowance of 50,000 gallons of water for the use by the household. He also reminded members that prior to the metering of properties, water charge were based on rateable valuation and he was aware of cases where the charge has in fact reduced. He requested advice from Management on this issue. The costs for a person who wants a water connection are €1,545 plus €1,035 giving a total of €2,575. He said that he had hoped that the figure of €1,545 would in fact decrease and not increase. Cllr. Cronin then referred to the non-compliance with planning conditions by private developers and said 9 years later, four estates in Firies still do not have public lighting. This is shameful and unacceptable. He referred to the Enforcement Section and said that he was not satisfied with the level of prosecutions taken. Kerry County Council has adopted a policy on the Taking in Charge of Housing Estates while developers are writing to home owners in their estates saying that a Management Company has been formed and they must make an annual contribution of, for example, €200. He asked should the householders pay this charge or should the developer apply to have the estate taken in charge. Last month in Firies, the sewer was leaking into a stream and the Council wrote to the developer advising him that he must rectify this problem. All he had to do was to fit a pipe properly. To-date, this has not been rectified and he wanted action taken on this immediately. This demonstrates an appalling disregard for the environment and Kerry County Council. The Enforcement Section should be concentrating more on enforcement where there is non-compliance with planning legislation. He added that he wanted to disassociate himself from this type of behaviour. He referred to the Kilgarvan Local Area Plan and said that when that Plan was being considered, there was an alleged forged signature in relation to a submission and he asked what happened with regard to that signature. He emphasised the importance of smoke alarms which he said can save lives and the scheme operated is invaluable. He also welcomed the funding provided for playgrounds and said the lack of playgrounds is a major issue in many growing towns and villages. The provision of a playground should be a compulsory part of any development. He welcomed proposals to take in charge Birchfield Estate and Gortnacarriga Estate in Killarney and also Lake View Park in Currow.

Cllr. M. Cahill said that a new sewerage scheme is urgently required in Beaufort and Glenbeigh Sewerage Scheme is at capacity while there is no sewerage scheme in Cromane. The replacement of the old cast iron pipes from the Post Office at Caragh Lake to Árd na Sidhe was to have taken place and he asked that funding for these works would be restored in 2009. He requested a statement from the Director of Water Services on the incidence of cryptosporidium in the water supply at Tulligmore. He asked if the "Boil Water Notice" has been lifted. He requested that the toilets at the entrance to Rossbeigh would be upgraded and that the mobile public toilet at the Back Beach in Glenbeigh would either be replaced or repaired. Cllr. Cahill requested clarification on the cost of a sewer and water connection including development levies. He referred to the taking in charge of housing estates and said that any private estate should be to the highest standard before it is taken in charge to ensure that there will be no cost to the Local Authority. Cllr. Cahill acknowledged the work of Kerry County Council in the provision of playgrounds throughout the County and also acknowledged the funding for the new playground in Rossbeigh which is well used and respected. As a Local Authority, Kerry County Council should invest more funding in the provision of Broadband. In 2007, a list of areas, where Broadband was to be provided, was published and it included Caragh Lake and Glenbeigh but this never materialised. Many people like to work from home and priority should be given to the provision of broadband throughout the county.

Cllr. D. Kiely said that the biggest task facing any local authority is the provision of an adequate water and wastewater infrastructure and he was concerned with the level of funding being provided. Six months ago, the Director of Water Services advised members that if water and wastewater schemes were not up to a certain standard, they would be closed down. At the present time, planning permission is not being granted in towns and villages because of the lack of water and wastewater infrastructure. Members were advised that there would be substantial fines if treatment plants were not up to EU and National standards. 48 schemes have been identified and 14 of these need to be provided immediately. He asked if funding is secure for these. All Directives are coming from the EU and it is pointless telling local authorities that they must carry out certain works if the funding is not provided. These works should be funded by the Government. There is a slowdown in the number of planning applications being submitted and he welcomed the new County Development Plan and the changes in it. He said it is very difficult for family members to secure planning permission in North Kerry. He welcomed the establishment of the new Site Assessment Team and said this will be very beneficial. He requested that the Planning Department would be more lenient and helpful towards local applicants.

Cllr. P. McCarthy commended the staff of the Council, including the outdoor staff which often has to work in very difficult conditions. He referred to the Water Metering charge and acknowledged that the Council

must establish if there is a connection to the public scheme from any landholding, regardless how small. However, a small number of people feel that all their neighbours have free water and some older people find it difficult to pay the €105 charge. He PROPOSED that the Council would have a serious look at this to establish if a small number of people can be accommodated. He asked that various schemes would be advanced to ensure we are in a position to avail of funding when it becomes available. He asked that serious consideration would be given to the retention of temporary staff that have built up a level of expertise and said it would not be easy to replace them. Cllr. P. McCarthy referred to the funding for various community groups and said that the Air Ambulance Service is a very deserving cause and Kerry County Council should provide some funding for them. He PROPOSED that they would receive funding from Kerry County Council in 2009.

Cllr. J. O'Connor SECONDED this proposal.

Suspension of Standing Orders

Mayor T. Fleming informed the meeting that it was 1.30pm and it would be necessary to suspend Standing Orders.

On the PROPOSAL of Cllr. P. McCarthy, SECONDED by Cllr. D. Kiely, it was agreed to suspend Standing Orders to allow the meeting to continue.

Cllr. L. Purtill welcomed proposals to provide sewerage treatment plants in Lixnaw and Tarbert but said that he was extremely disappointed that a new sewerage treatment plant for Ballylongford would not commence in 2009. He had pointed out in the Chambers that Ballylongford Village is in demise. It has lost all its main businesses over the past 20 years - the Creamery, Hanrahan's Bakery and O'Sullivan's Mill & Hardware. Apart from a small Local Authority housing scheme, there has been very little housing development there. A significant housing development could not proceed recently because of the lack of proper sewage treatment. In the recent Local Area Plan for Ballylongford, approximately 30 acres was zoned for housing. This zoning is worthless without the upgrading of the sewerage system. When Shannon LNG announced their plans to build a plant on the Tarbert/Ballylongford Landbank, Kerry County Council said they would facilitate this project in every way possible. When work commences on the LNG, Ballylongford would be expected to provide accommodation for some of the several hundred workers who will be employed during the construction stage. However, no houses can be built to provide this accommodation. Planning was granted approximately 2 years ago for a major development in Quay Street. He asked the Council to look at the urgent necessity for a sewerage scheme for Ballylongford to help to restore the vibrancy of the village. Cllr. Purtill asked the Council to take some measures to help with the water problem in Lenamore which is impacting on a number of families.

Cllr. N. Foley supported the comments made by the previous speakers in relation to the need to provide sewerage schemes in Ardfert, Abbeydorney etc and said that the lack of these facilities is stifling development. She welcomed the establishment of the Site Assessment Unit and said that this will be very beneficial. She acknowledged the funding provided in the Budget for Kerry Life Education and the Kerry Appraisal Scheme who are doing very worthwhile work. In relation to tourism she acknowledged the work done by Kerry County Council, especially in relation to signage. She referred to the allocation of €40,000 for the South West Regional Authority and asked was there any return from this investment. She requested that a statement be sought from this Authority giving a breakdown of where this money would be spent and the benefits accruing to the county. She said that she believed that it would be to the benefit of the entire county if Kerry was promoted as a unit from a tourism point of view. She believed that if this funding was given to groups within the county, tourism would be advanced in a more positive way. She asked if funding was provided in the Budget for the appointment of a Tourism Officer. Cllr. Foley acknowledged the work of KEAT and said they should take a role in promoting the county for tourism purposes.

Cllr. R. Beasley called on the Planning Department to be more sympathetic to a planning applicant who purchases a site in a rural area. The granting of planning permission for one-off houses will boost the local economy and give employment to builders. He referred to protected structures and said that a number of older structures were built with material from the foreshore and mortar only. Many of these should be demolished and should not be protected. He welcomed the funding for playgrounds and said that the playground in Ballybunion is a great asset to the town. He added that developers should provide playgrounds to facilitate children from a number of villages. Cllr. Beasley referred to the allocation under the "Tourism" heading and said that both he and Cllr. Brassil had suggested in the past that a Tourism Officer would be appointed and he asked that serious consideration would be given to this suggestion.

Cllr. A. McEllistrim commended the Water Services Department on advancing the various sewerage schemes throughout the county and she welcomed the fact that Fenit and Abbeydorney are included on the priority list. She expressed her disappointment with the delay in advancing the Ardfert Sewerage Scheme. She acknowledged the work done by the Water Services Department in detecting water leaks and ensuring that they were rectified. She asked that consideration would be given to encouraging the recycling of rainwater. Cllr. McEllistrim complimented the Council on the study undertaken to alleviate flooding in Kilmoyley Graveyard and asked that if Option 1 was not satisfactory that funding would be provided for Option 2. She requested that a playground would be provided in Castleisland which serves a huge hinterland including Lyreacrompane, Ballymacelligott, Brosna, Knocknagoshel etc. She complimented the Planning Department on the establishment of the Site

Assessment Unit and she welcomed the fact that priority would be given to family members.

Cllr. P. Leahy said that the importance of good quality water cannot be over emphasised. Many customers are sinking wells and this will result in a loss of revenue for the Council. He commended the excellent work on Group Water Schemes. Cllr. Leahy complimented the staff of the Planning Department and said there were great improvements in recent times but there are still many problems in North Kerry. He welcomed the allocation for Tidy Towns and he concurred with the sentiments expressed by Cllr. Purtill in relation to the need to provide a new sewerage scheme in Ballylongford.

Cllr. B. MacGearailt referred to small sewerage schemes, in particular in coastal areas and said that he noted they are not on the list. He acknowledged that these are small but said that the Council could be fined if they are not provided. The levels of E-Coli in harbours in Gaeltacht areas were monitored some time ago as funding for this project was provided by LEADER. The results confirmed that in many of these areas, the level of pollution is a danger to health. The Minister for the Gaeltacht has decided to fund some of these schemes over the next few years. He expressed his disappointment that Broadband was not provided in many parts of the county and he said that the provision of Broadband should have been handled like the Rural Electrification Scheme. The Feothnach area does not even have mobile phone coverage and if one mast was provided, it could facilitate a number of organisations.

Cllr. J. Sheahan said that the new sewerage scheme in Barraduff is almost complete and he hoped the Council would resurface the street when the works are finalised. He expressed concern at the lack of progress on the Kilcummin Sewerage Scheme and said that the local community have been asking when works would commence on this project. Cllr. Sheahan added that he received a number of complaints in relation to the non-completion of estates by developers and regarding flooding in estates. He welcomed the proposal to take in charge a number of estates in the Killarney area. Cllr. Sheahan expressed his disappointment at the level of littering on roadsides and said that Litter Wardens should be on commission. While Broadband was provided in Killarney Town, and this is an excellent tool, many commercial businesses including B&B operators in the Muckross area cannot access Broadband and therefore cannot advertise on-line. In conclusion, Cllr. Sheahan said that he hoped that the outdoor employees would be retained by the Council to complete the Road Works Programme.

Cllr. T. Fleming said that there is a huge programme of works for Water and Wastewater Schemes and good progress has been made. However, many smaller villages have not progressed as they are low priority. The cost of many of these schemes is prohibitive and he called on the Water Services Department to consider the possibility of using Reed Bed technology. He understood a number of local authorities are using these,

in particular in Waterford and the cost of operating these plants is much reduced in comparison with mechanical plant. He asked that staff from the Water Services Department would visit other local authorities where this system is in operation. In these times it is important to be innovative if we are to achieve any progress in a reasonable timeframe. He asked that the Barraduff Sewerage Scheme would be finalised and that the road would be reinstated as soon as possible. The electrical contract has not yet been signed and he asked that this would be finalised before the end of the year. He also asked that the Kilcummin Sewerage Scheme would be finalised as soon as possible. Cllr. Fleming referred to the recent bog slide at Kielduff and asked that measures would be taken in Planning Control in relation to this incident and that the Roads and Environment Departments would co-ordinate their efforts in this regard. No community should have to be put through a landslide of this proportion again. Cllr. Fleming complimented the Community & Enterprise Department and in particular, KEAT on its achievements. It is important that Kerry County Council would be vigorously involved in promoting our county. He complimented and paid tribute to the County Manager and the former Mayor, Cllr. Michael Healy-Rae on the campaign they were involved in to save Valentia Station. He also complimented Cllr. A. McEllistrim, Chair of the Joint Policing Committee and said that this is a very important Committee where the Gardaí liaise with local community and he complimented them on their work.

In response to queries, Mr. J. O'Connor, Head of Finance said that it is intended to spend €5.6m. of the Development Levy Fund in 2009 and this sum is included in the Revenue Budget. The breakdown of this is:

Design Office	€1.2m
Remedial Action List	€2.465m
Water/Wastewater Schemes	€1.7m

It is necessary to balance this against the projected income. If the construction downturn persists for more than a couple of years, it will be necessary to re-visit how development levies are spent. Mr. O'Connor informed the meeting that as soon as the income from development levies improves, the minor improvement works will be resumed and the provision of a water softener for Ardfert/Fenit area and works at Ard na Sí will be carried out under this programme. Mr. O'Connor thanked Cllr. Cronin for giving a very succinct summary of the position in relation to the Water Metering Project. Unless a water connection is used solely and exclusively for domestic purposes, charges will apply. During the course of the water metering project, Council staff have encountered unorthodox extensions of our network. He added that there are many connections with meters where the owners cannot be identified. These are gradually being identified and they are being disconnected. The payment of the €105 annual meter charge, for non-domestic customers, is correctly due and they must decide if they want a connection or not. He referred to the query regarding a small number of customers who are elderly or in difficult financial circumstances and who own very small landholdings and he

advised members that the Revenue Department would deal with these as sympathetically as possible and a profile on this group is being built up. He anticipated that by the end of 2009, the Council will have built up a reliable profile of all its customers. In 2008 it was anticipated that a substantial grant would be received both under the CLÁR Programme and from the Department under the Urban and Village Renewal Programme. However, this did not materialise. Provision was made in the Budget for a total expenditure of €930,000 with a projected income of €700,000. A sum of €150,000 is provided in the Budget for this purpose for 2009 and he was hopeful that some grant aid would be forthcoming.

Mr. O. Ring, Director of Water Services said that the Village Sewerage Scheme is progressing and it is intended to commence the Tarbert and Lixnaw Sewerage Schemes early in 2009. Other schemes are also being progressed but how quickly they will advance is very much dependent on the funding available. Wastewater licences are required for 33 schemes, with a further 15 schemes requiring certificates. Applications have been submitted for the larger schemes and additional applications will be submitted by June 2009. No licences have yet been granted.

Cllr. T. Fitzgerald asked what the implications for the Council were when the licences are issued.

In response, Mr. O. Ring said that in relation to the larger sewerage schemes, the Council is aware of the works that need to be carried out and we are very well positioned in relation to these schemes. He welcomed funding from Roinn na Gaeltachta. He referred to the Wetlands Scheme and said that it is proposed to use reed beds in the schemes for Brandon and Rossbeigh. He informed members that the temporary restoration is being carried out in Barraduff at present and that was a particularly difficult scheme. Members asked that Council staff would carry out the works in Kilcummin but he said that this is a very complex scheme with very deep works and he felt it was beyond our capability. He said that it is hoped to go to tender for the Kilcummin Scheme by the end of January 2009. It is intended to apply for planning permission for a Hydro Electric Scheme for Mid-Kerry Gerah Scheme shortly. Every opportunity will be taken to build in energy savings where possible. Mr. Ring stated that there is a decrease in the operating Budget for public conveniences and he advised members that the mobile public convenience at the Back Strand in Rossbeigh would be removed. He also advised members that the "Boil Water Notice" has been lifted at Tulligmore on the basis of clear results for some time. He added that the imposition of the "Boil Water Notice" was purely precautionary.

Cllr. M. Cahill thanked Mr. Ring for the update on the Tulligmore Water Supply Scheme and also for maintaining contact with the local community on this issue.

Mr. Ring stated that tertiary treatment would be provided where the discharge is to sensitive waters and this would apply to three schemes.

Cllr. J. O'Connor said that the Nitrates Directive is now imposing higher standards.

Mr. O. Ring said that it is necessary to provide tertiary treatment only where the discharge is to sensitive waters. Tertiary treatment is being installed for discharges to Tralee Bay and The Cashen even though it is not warranted.

Cllr. D. Healy-Rae said that while it may not be appropriate that Council staff would undertake the works on the Kilcummin Sewerage Scheme, this should be possible for Tarbert etc. and he believed it would be more cost-effective.

Mr. O. Ring stated that a lot of work has already been lined up for staff for 2009.

Cllr. M. O'Shea said that in relation to Inch public toilet, it should be left open all year round.

Mr. O. Ring said that this would be considered if it was possible within the constraints of the Budget. He referred to the Small Schemes and said that these designs were being done in-house but it was taking too long. A number of consultants were employed to do the design work for 28 schemes and this has not been done in any other local authority.

Cllr. R. Beasley expressed his disappointment that Ballylongford Sewerage Scheme was not progressing.

Mr. O. Ring said that the Council is in a position to move ahead with Ballylongford Sewerage Scheme once funding becomes available.

Cllr. B. Cronin asked that a commitment would be given that the leakage into the stream from the Sewerage Scheme in Firies would be resolved as a matter of urgency.

Mr. O. Ring undertook to follow up on this with a view to ensuring that the works are carried out.

Cllr. B. Cronin again asked what is the cost of a re-connection to the public water supply.

In response, Mr. J. O'Connor said that it would be €900 which is roughly the same cost as the original connection.

Mr. M. McMahon said that in relation to enforcement he agreed that too much time is spent in Court but this would not be necessary if people complied with the conditions of their planning. The emphasis in 2009 will be on the non-compliance in relation to housing estates. If these estates are to be taken in charge by the Council, it will be necessary to ensure that

they are completed to a certain standard. He informed members that the Site Assessment Panel would be in place by 1st January 2009. 36 people were not deemed to be qualified for inclusion in this panel as they failed to satisfy the Council that they were competent. It is now up to them to do the necessary courses and they can be added to the list at a later date. He referred to the works carried out at the Caravan Park in Banna as raised by Cllr. Ferris and said that these works constituted an unauthorised development and the Planning Authority took appropriate action. He referred to the query relating to management companies and said that if a householder gets a bill from a management company, they should ask what services they are getting for this fee. Some estates are totally independent with their own sewerage treatment facilities and they also arrange the cutting of the grass. The issue of the forged signature in relation to a submission on the Kilgarvan Local Area Plan was referred to the Garda Liaison Officer and this is being investigated. He acknowledged the comments from councillors that the position in relation to the securing of planning permission for family members has improved.

The Meeting adjourned for lunch at 2.30pm.

The Meeting resumed at 3.10pm.

Mr. J. O'Connor, Head of Finance informed Members that all the remaining Divisions would be taken together.

Environmental Services

Mr. J. O'Connor, Head of Finance referred members to Pages 99 - 121 of the Manager's Report and Pages 22 - 24 of the Budget Tables where details of this Division are set out. This is a very expensive Division which covers waste disposal, refuse collection, burial grounds, fire services etc. The proposed revenue expenditure is €22m or 16% of the total Revenue Budget with a projected income of over €11.6m. This income will be mainly from refuse and waste charges. The proposed Capital expenditure is €7.16m and €6m of this must come from a local contribution. Details of Energy Conservation are set out on Page 100 of the Manager's Report and that has already been dealt with. Kerry County Council's commitment to energy conservation was recognised with the award given at the Chamber of Commerce Awards in Dublin recently. A sum of €5.827m is provided for the Operation, Maintenance and Aftercare of Landfill including the Government's Environmental Levy of €20 per tonne. There is a lot of activity at the landfill site at Muingnaminnane and it is proposed to improve the gas collection system there. Additional capacity is being provided at the landfill site on a phased basis. The projected cost of this work is €8.1m, of which €2.5m relates to the infrastructure development of access roads, leachate storage, surface water lagoons, new offices and weighbridge etc. This expenditure must be funded as part of the ongoing operational costs and a term loan has been raised for the infrastructure costs of €2.5m. This is in addition to a loan of €2.6m raised earlier to cover land purchase costs, preliminary design and licensing requirements.

The projected tonnage intake for 2008 is 63,000 tonnes and it is expected that the tonnage will decrease to approximately 57,000 tonnes in 2009. This is based on all Kerry-based contractors bringing their waste to North Kerry Landfill.

Mr. O'Connor informed members that €324,000 is provided for Landfill Aftercare Costs. Mr. O'Connor referred members to the Table on Page 104 of the Manager's Report for details of Recovery and Recycling Facilities Costs. There will be a total expenditure of €1.1m on recovery and recycling facilities and greater attention must be paid to this area during 2009 with a view to seeing how our practices and procedures etc can be streamlined. Bottle banks are provided at 99 centres throughout the county. A new facility was opened at An Daingean recently and there are additional costs arising from this. The new electronic pre-paid system for the Refuse Collection System is working well and we have an increased customer base. Details of the number of customers over the last number of years are set out on a Table at the top of Page 106 of the Manager's Report. The cost of this service is €2.3m and if the service is to be maintained, we must build on our customer base. €200,000 is provided for Litter Management and this includes the salary cost for the Litter Warden and litter control initiatives. A sum of €116,000 is provided for Environmental Awareness Services and this funding is from own resources. €100,000 is provided as a contribution to street cleaning services which are carried out by the Roads & Transportation Department. €140,000 is provided as a contribution to the running of the Limerick Waste Management Office and €341,000 is provided for the Monitoring of Waste Regulations. A sum of €105,000 is provided for the Enforcement of Waste Regulations.

Mr. O'Connor referred members to Page 111 of the Manager's Report where details of the allocation for Service and Maintenance of Burial Grounds are set out. €784,000 is provided and this is more or less in line with the 2008 allocation. €40,000 is provided as a contribution to community organisations which is slightly increased on the 2008 provision and is an acknowledgement of the excellent work done by community groups on burial grounds. Details of the Works Programme carried out in 2008 are set out on Page 112 of the Manager's Report. In 2008, the Council has been allocated €40,000 of National Disability Funding for the following 6 Burial Grounds - Ballyheigue, Ballybunion, Duagh, Kenmare, Aghadoe and Milltown, An Daingean and these works are ongoing. The Civil Defence do very good work and €244,000 is provided for this service in 2009 and a list of their activities in 2008 is set out on Page 113 of the Manager's Report. Approximately 50% of this sum is recovered by way of grant aid. €114,000 is provided under the heading Emergency Planning. The costs in this area are shared between Kerry County Council, Cork County Council and Cork City Council. This allocation represents the Council's contribution to salary and running costs of the area which includes the cost of exercises and the purchase of equipment. This arises from the new Framework and ensures that the Council is prepared for major emergencies. €80,000 is provided for Derelict Sites. The Council is

examining various ways in which unpaid Derelict Sites Levies can be pursued and utilised towards the enhancement of local towns and villages. We also intend to explore additional areas where serious dereliction exists with a view to making a further application to the Department for these areas to be categorised as 'designated urban area' within the meaning of the relevant legislation. This will allow for the imposing of derelict sites levies where appropriate. €333,000 is provided for Water Safety Operation for 2009.

The Fire Services Budget is sizeable at almost €6.6m in total. In recent years, the Fire Service has been called to many road traffic accidents. There is need for additional training for the staff in this service under health and safety and for this reason there is a sizeable increase in this Budget. He referred members to the top of Page 117 of the Manager's Report where the major items of expenditure are set out. This service also deals with the issuing of Fire Safety Certificates etc. €734,000 is provided for Water Quality Management. Kerry County Council carries out a broad range of activities in this area including the following:

1. Extensive water quality monitoring
2. Enforcement and implementation of a range of water quality legislation
3. Provision of oil pollution response
4. Enforcement and implementation of the Air Pollution Act

The allocation for 2009 will provide for continued activity in a range of areas in the coming year and these are set out on Page 119 of the Manager's Report. Mr. O'Connor then referred to the Operation of the Council Laboratory and informed the meeting that during 2008, the Laboratory will process approximately 7,000 samples involving a total of 75,000 tests on these samples. The breakdown in activity is shown on Page 120 of the Manager's Report. This activity reflects the topography of the county with a significant emphasis on tourism. Thus the high number of drinking water samples (45%) is due to the high number of individual water supplies in the county. A total of 160 supplies serving populations greater than 50 persons are regularly analysed. The EPA report on national drinking water confirms that Kerry had the second highest number of samples in the country submitted for assessment in 2007. The high number of river and lake tests (39%) also reflects the abundance of rivers and lakes in the county. Conversely, the low level of activity for Licensed discharges (industrial premises), i.e. 2% reflects the relatively low level of industrial activity. It is estimated that overall, the Laboratory saves the Local Authority at least €300,000 annually in monitoring costs alone. The costs of running the Council's Laboratory are apportioned to the services for which the work is carried out.

Recreation and Amenity

Mr. O'Connor referred members to Pages 122 - 129 of the Manager's Report for details on this Division and Pages 25 and 26 of the Budget Tables. The proposed expenditure for this Division is €5.88m which is a

reduction of €400,000 on the 2008 provision but he was satisfied that there is a reasonable Budget provision for 2009. He referred members to Page 122 of the Manager's Report where details of the work of the Community and Cultural SPC are set out. The Library Service are also included in this Division. Kerry Library operates 9 full time branch libraries throughout the County at Ballybunion, Caherciveen, Castleisland, An Daingean, Kenmare, Killarney, Killorglin, Listowel and Tralee. In addition, there are two mobile libraries, a primary schools library service, a local history and archives service operating from Library Headquarters. The book stock in Kerry Library currently stands at 278,955 with over 400,000 items issued annually. In order to monitor activity and help with better management of the service, we have commenced to record visits to libraries. Between January and October 2008, 303,015 members of the public used Kerry Libraries. €2.809m is provided for the Library Service Operations and these are mainly staff costs. During 2008, the new library at Castleisland was opened and 2 years prior to this the new library in Killorglin came into operation. Both these libraries attract larger numbers of readers. The general Book Fund for 2009 is €410,000 which, unfortunately, is a reduction on the 2008 figure owing to the present economic climate. Over the last number of years, there were substantial increases in the Book Fund. The reduction of €20,000 in this sum in 2009 can hopefully be restored when the economy recovers. Kerry County Council receives an annual per capita grant from the Department of Education towards the provision of a Library service to the 144 Primary Schools throughout the county. This amounted to €70,854 in 2008. Provision has been included for a grant of €69,000 for 2009.

Details of the Outdoor Leisure Areas Operations are set out on Pages 125 and 126 of the Report and a sum of €380,000 is provided for Parks, Pitches and Open Spaces while a sum of €85,000 is provided for Playgrounds. This allocation from own resources towards the cost of maintenance and inspection of the County's playgrounds which have been developed in 12 locations, namely An Daingean, Ballybunion, Ballyheigue, Caherciveen, Cloghane/Brandon, Fenit, Kenmare, Killorglin, Rossbeigh, Sneem and Waterville, in accordance with Kerry County Council's Play Policy - "Developing Play in Kerry". The provision also provides for the new Ardfert playground. €485,000 is provided for Beaches and there is substantial expenditure on beach clean-up, the Blue Flag Programme and testing of waters. €90,000 is provided for Community Grants and this is a reduction on the 2008 provision. €150,000 is provided for the Local Sports Partnership.

Details of the Arts Programme are set out on Page 128 of the Manager's Report and €325,000 is provided for the administration of the Arts Programme. This allocation includes the sum of €170,000 in respect of administration costs in this area and the sum of €155,000 in respect of contributions to other Arts Bodies. Details of the Art Grant allocations for 2009 are set out on Pages 128 and 129 of the Manager's Report and he advised members that Tech Amergin in Waterville is included.

Agriculture, Education, Health and Welfare

Mr. O'Connor informed members that details of this Division are set out on Pages 130 - 134 of the Manager's Report and Pages 27 and 28 of the Budget Tables. The two main areas in this Division are VEC Pensions and Higher Education Grants; both of which are substantially recouped. All pensions are recouped from the Department of Education and Science while most of the cost of the Higher Education Grants is also recouped by the Department but a sum of €20,000 must be carried by the Council. €74,000 is provided for the maintenance of land drainage areas and this is required to ensure continued drainage of the three areas of Ardkeragh, Banna and Lough Gill. €197,000 is provided for the Operation of Piers and Harbours. This allocation covers the pay costs of salaries and energy costs associated with all piers, routine maintenance works, provision of tourist moorings and aids to navigation, communication costs, insurance and rates. This allocation also provides pay costs for the Harbour Constables. The Council is in the process of preparing Harbour Bye-Laws for the County and the Council will need to address the issue of enforcement and funding in considering the adoption of these Bye-Laws. Under the heading of Coastal Protection €250,000 is provided for Planned Protection of Coastal Regions. The largest project carried out in recent times by Kerry County Council was at Inch in 2007 costing approximately €4m. These works had to be undertaken on an emergency basis and for which no grant aid was approved at the time. To-date, grant aid of €2m has been received. Further submissions will be made in 2009 to help Kerry County Council to recoup its full expenditure in this area. A decision in relation to further coastal works in the future will be dependent on prior Central Government grant funding. €282,000 is provided for the Inspection of Abattoirs. Provision is made for the temporary Veterinary Inspectors who provide ante and post mortem inspections of all animals slaughtered in the 19 Council supervised abattoirs. €245,000 is provided for the Operation of the Dog Warden Service which is a worthwhile activity. The fee paid to An Post has increased from €1.53 to €3.50 since 02/03/2008. This will result in a reduction in income of approximately €30,000 to Kerry County Council. It is anticipated that the licence fee will be increased during 2009 to compensate for this but details must be confirmed. €103,000 is provided for Other Animal Welfare Services including Horse Control. Substantial progress has been made in advancing the Tralee Horse Project and a scaled down proposal has been submitted to the Department of Agriculture for funding.

Miscellaneous Services

Mr. O'Connor referred members to Pages 135 to 139 of the Manager's Report for details of this Division and Pages 29 and 30 of the Budget Tables. This Division includes the Administration of the Rates Office where a provision of €338,000 is provided for 2009. This is the biggest source of local income with a projected income in 2009 of €18m.

€261,000 is provided for the Register of Elector Costs. A number of audits were carried out in 2008 and these will continue in 2009 to ensure we maintain the accuracy of the Register, particularly with the Local Elections schedule for next June. €30,000 is provided for Local Election costs. Provision for the cost of the election has been made over the last number of years and further provision is being made this year. €269,000 is provided for Coroner's Fees and Expenses. This is a substantial cost but we have no control over them.

Mr. O'Connor referred members to Page 137 of the Manager's Report where details of the allocations under the "Local Representation/Civic Leadership" heading are set out. This includes statutory payments for Members and provision is made for €30,000 towards Retirement Gratuities for councillors who cease to be members in accordance with the Local Authority Members (Gratuities) (Amendment) Regulations 2006. Any retirement gratuities will be funded over the 5 year life term of the new Council. €1.211m is provided for the operation of the Motor Taxation Office. This is an exceptionally busy office. The number of transactions dealt with in 2008 was 152,000 with a value of €23.8m. Approximately 66% of these transactions were dealt with over the counter, with 34% processed by post. During 2009, it is hoped to be able to offer an on-line motor tax service in Killarney Area Services Centre and in the Dingle Area Office and to continue to promote the on-line service generally. He referred members to the chart at the top of Page 139 which sets out the number of Motor Tax Transactions for 2007 and 2008 and the method of service delivery. Details of Agency and Recoupable Services are set out on Page 139. This includes certain services which are charged out to the Town Councils.

Central Management Charges

Mr. O'Connor referred members to Pages 140 - 146 of the Manager's Report for details of this Division. €1.831m is provided for the Maintenance, Upkeep, Improvement and Provision of Corporate Buildings. This Budget includes the Cost for Maintenance and Caretaking of Áras an Chontae and other corporate offices in Tralee. It includes payroll and maintenance costs associated with Caretaking and General Maintenance of Áras an Chontae, the grounds and car parks. It caters for minor improvements and remedial works as required. Provision is made for rental costs for Corporate Buildings such as Maine Street, Manor West Building and Ashe Memorial Hall. It also provides for office accommodation and other costs for Áras an Chontae and the rented accommodation. The most significant other costs relate to Rates, Insurance, Cleaning, other Local Authority Charges, Energy, Printing and Office Consumables for the supply/stationery store. No provision is included for 2009 in respect of the extension of the County Buildings complex given the current economic climate. It is intended, however, to proceed to apply for planning permission to Tralee Town Council so that the necessary steps are in place to commence construction when the financial position improves. €118,000 is also included in relation to old

loans on the Motor Tax Office Complex and Area Offices. €1.416m is provided for General Corporate Services. This covers Freedom of Information, Press and Communications, Oifig na Gaeilge and salaries to support that entire structure together with Internal Audit. Information and Communication Technology is also included in this Division and a sum of €1.032m is provided for the Maintenance of Networks and PCs. €1.279m is provided for Computer Applications. This includes the support, implementation and development of systems across the range of Local Authority activities, including Finance, Planning, Housing, Roads, HR and Payroll, Fire, Environment etc. €1.236m is provided for Human Resources Administration and this includes all costs associated with training for Health and Safety. €1.917m is provided for the cost of operating the financial management accounting system and associated staff costs. €472,000 is provided for Area Offices. All the costs involved in Central Management charges are shared out to the services based on office accommodation usage etc. Likewise, the cost of the Finance Function is also charged back to the sections based on the number of transactions per Department.

Mayor T. Fleming informed the meeting that the Veterinary Officer, Mr. Fenton was present and he would deal with the concerns raised by Cllr. M. Healy-Rae relating to the contamination of pork products.

Mr. P. Fenton, Veterinary Officer informed the meeting that Irish pork and bacon products have been recalled because they have tested positive for the presence of dioxins. All pork producers and retailers were asked to do an inventory of all pork and bacon products on their premises and all these products must be returned. The Department of Agriculture and Food and the Food Safety Authority are monitoring the situation and only they can authorise the release of any pig meat products. As the certification is processed, he was confident that a lot of pork and bacon would be released for sale.

Cllr. M. Healy-Rae said that a person in the media had said that pork or bacon products should be returned or dumped. If these products are dumped, they will end up in the landfill site at Muingnaminnane and this is not right.

Mr. M. Boyce, SEE Environment said that the landfill site at Muingnaminnane is licensed by the EPA and in accordance with the current practice we do not accept raw meat from commercial premises at landfill. However, small quantities will not be harmful and they will not present a risk to the environment. He pointed out that just 10% of pig meat is affected by these dioxins and any possible risk to consumers is low. His Department had been in touch with the EPA and they are satisfied there was no specific issue arising in relation to this.

Cllr. M. Healy-Rae expressed concern that the general public were being told to bin any pig meat that they had in their fridge and he wanted to send

out a clear message that all pork and bacon should be returned to the retailers.

Mr. M. Boyce said that householders could return meat to their suppliers and he accepted that small quantities would end up in landfill. In accordance with the advice given by the Food Safety Authority, all these products should be returned to the suppliers. Additional information is available on the Food Safety Authority and Department of Agriculture and Food websites.

Cllr. M. Healy-Rae requested that Radio Kerry would advise householders that they should return all pork products to retailers.

Cllr. J. O'Connor asked Mr. Fenton to confirm that pork produced in Kerry has not been contaminated by these dioxins.

In response, Mr. P. Fenton said he could not confirm this at present but he did not think so.

Cllr. J. O'Connor asked with such traceability in the pig industry, how could this incident happen.

Mr. P. Fenton said that the Gardaí are currently investigating this.

Cllr. M. O'Shea referred to the Draft Cemetery Bye-Laws and expressed concern with proposals contained in it. He said he was totally opposed to the proposed depth of graves which will pose a serious health and safety risk for gravediggers and family members. He asked that the standard size grave would continue to apply. He referred to the Transfer Stations at Milltown, Kenmare and Caherciveen and said that he understood there may be a possibility that the opening times of the Transfer Stations would be reduced by one day per week. These facilities are used extensively by the public and this should not happen. He asked that there would be greater emphasis on the promotion of the Green Schools in 2009 and that more street bins would be provided near schools. He referred to the funding provided for Burial Grounds and asked that funding would be made available for Kilshannig Burial Ground. He commended the Housing Department on the excellent progress on Derelict Sites but said there are many streets that are still a disgrace and he asked that the owners of the properties would be pursued with a view to improving their properties. He referred to the allocation for the Inspection of Abattoirs and said there is no abattoir in West Kerry. He called on Kerry County Council and Údarás na Gaeltacht to encourage a Public Private Partnership in the provision of an abattoir for this area.

Cllr. M. Gleeson welcomed the new compaction taking place at Muingnaminnane and said that a larger cardboard compactor is required at Coolcashlagh. He requested clarification on the possibility of introducing charges at recycling centres and said that this would be a retrograde step. He was concerned it would lead to a massive increase in

illegal dumping. He called on the Head of Finance not to proceed with these charges. The installation of noise monitoring equipment in places of entertainment should be mandatory. He thanked the staff of the Laboratory for their efficiency and the annual release of information on water quality. He stated that he regretted the withdrawal of €100,000 for Playgrounds by the Government and he hoped that this would be reinstated. He complimented the Council on the work carried out on the capping of the old landfill site at Coolcashlagh. Cllr. Gleeson asked that the Annual Spring Clean would be carried out earlier before the grass starts to grow. There should be a special emphasis on road cleaning, especially near quarries. He called on Kerry County Council and Killarney Town Council to unite their efforts to acquire land for a new burial ground for Killarney. Cllr. Gleeson complimented the Library Service for the excellent service provided to the general public and also for the many exhibitions they facilitate. He hoped that the new Killarney Area Office would be in operation in the near future. There is a greater need for sports and he fully supported the work being carried out by the Kerry Local Sports Partnership and he called on all members to support this work. He said they did an excellent job in instructing teachers on how to deliver a sports programme. In conclusion, Cllr. Gleeson requested that additional parking would be provided at County Buildings.

Cllr. P. O'Donoghue said that the new 'Pay Per Use' refuse system is working well and the black bin usage has been reduced by householders. He referred to the allocation of €140,000 which is a contribution towards the running cost of the Regional Waste Management Office in Limerick and said that the Regional Waste Management Plan was adopted some time ago but he understood it was not implemented. He asked what the benefit of the Plan to the county was. He requested that the Derrynane Burial Ground would be extended. He understood that the land has been acquired and he called on the Council to be more pro-active in ensuring that this extension is opened as soon as possible. The people of South West Kerry feel very let down that the new Library/Arts Centre will not proceed in Caherciveen at the present time. Grants were available but Kerry County Council did not draw up the plans in time. He was concerned that this funding is now lost and he asked how was this allowed to happen. He referred to Piers and Harbours and said that he was awaiting the appointment of a Harbour Master in his area and there is very hazardous parking of boats, lobster pots etc because no-one is in charge of these Harbours. He called on the Council to appoint a Harbour Master as soon as possible. He expressed concern that Kerry County Council must pay Coroners' expenses of €269,000 for 2009 and said that this service has nothing to do with the local authority. He asked that a letter be forwarded to the Department immediately requesting them to transfer responsibility for this service to a more appropriate Department. Cllr. O'Donoghue referred to the allocation of €1.831m for the Maintenance of Corporate Buildings including rental costs and he asked if there was any spare capacity in the new offices in Castleisland or Killorglin. It would be more realistic to use these offices rather than renting offices from private individuals. He referred to the sum of €568,000 which is included under

"Miscellaneous Services" and relates to direct costs which relate to the service and indirect cost which represent the share out of the Central Management charge and he requested clarification on this item.

Cllr. T. Fitzgerald complimented the Council, and in particular, the Environment Department on being awarded the Energy Conservation Award in Dublin recently and he added that a lot of good work has been done in this area over the last few years. He complimented the Fire Service on the excellent service they provide. He asked if any savings would be achieved as a result of the reduction in tonnage at the landfill site in Muingnaminnane. Would this extend the lifetime of the cells and could the loan for the extension of this landfill site be extended over a longer period. He asked if it would be cheaper to send the waste from Transfer Stations somewhere else other than to landfill. He referred to the allocation for the Limerick Waste Management Office and asked if there was any other way of dealing with this business as we have the staff who have the relevant expertise to carry out this work. He asked if any savings could be achieved in the overall Management Costs. He complimented the Civil Defence and the Library Service and he acknowledged the funding provided for walkways, in particular, for Ballyseedy and he hoped that this walk would be completed eventually. He also welcomed the allocation for Community Grants and said that these were very important.

Cllr. T. Ferris asked if consideration was given to the suggestion she made at the previous Budget meeting that some form of Risk Equalisation would be applied for those private operators using the landfill site. Kerry County Council operates a Waiver Scheme and the private operators do not. Private operators should be charged a levy to make up for this. She believed it was possible to do this under competition law. She would have difficulty with the proposed increase of €10 in the annual refuse charge. At the present time, private operators are €30 - €40 cheaper than Kerry County Council and if this equalisation principle applied, it would make it fairer. She PROPOSED that funding for the Fire Service would not be restricted in 2009.

Cllr. M. Cahill referred to suggestions that the Transfer Station at Milltown may be closed a day or two a week. He asked for a guarantee that this service would be maintained and extended if possible. This Transfer Station is always very busy and is well used by the general public. He suggested that the cost of a car boot full of rubbish could be increased from €13 to €15. He understood that some private operators were considering using landfill sites in Limerick and he suggested that the Environment Section should bargain with them with a view to retaining their business, if possible. He asked that priority would be given to the acquisition of land for a new Burial Ground in Cromane in 2009. He has been asking for this for a number of years and the people of the area are entitled to it. He acknowledged the work done by the Civil Defence and he also complimented the Fire Service and the Library Service. He suggested that the cost of a call-out by the Fire Service for a chimney fire could be increased from €100 to €150. Cllr. Cahill requested an update on

progress on the proposed new pier for Cromane. He referred to the allocation of €250,000 for coastal erosion and asked if funding was not made available from Central Government in 2009, could this money be spent on Rossbeigh. He said that the Spit at Rossbeigh is on the verge of being cut in two and this will have drastic consequences for large areas. He referred to the Tower at Rossbeigh Point which, he understood, is the responsibility of the Commissioner of Irish Lights. They offered it to Kerry County Council and said that it was of no navigational importance. He called on the Council to contact the Commission of Irish Lights with a view to ensuring that this landmark is retained. If a new pier is constructed at Cromane, this tower may be needed again. Houses at Incheree and Glenbeigh have been flooded in recent times and they now have difficulty in getting insurance. He called on the Council to make a once-off contribution to these people following the recent flooding as the onus is on Kerry County Council to protect its citizens.

Cllr. T. Ferris referred to Page 126 of the Manager's Report and in particular, to the allocation for Playgrounds. She asked if there was a specific allocation of €31,000 included for Ardferf Playground.

Cllr. J. O'Connor asked if Kerry County Council must pay An Taisce for the service they provide for Blue Flag beaches. He then referred to the Motor Taxation Department and asked that a pilot would be established in Killorglin whereby the public could tax their cars there. A computer could be provided and a staff member could advise members of the public how to tax their cars on-line. He asked what was the total sum of rent being paid by Kerry County Council for various properties around the county and also what rent is Kerry County Council receiving for their properties. He concurred with the sentiments expressed by Cllr. Cahill in relation to the need to provide a burial ground in Cromane as land in Killorglin is much more expensive. There are a number of dangerous structures in some old burial grounds and the OPW has indicated that they are of vital importance. If Kerry County Council does not have adequate funding to restore these structures, he asked that the RSS or FÁS Schemes would be used to ensure that some of these older structures are protected. He expressed concern that the CPO decision on Cromane will not issue until the 15th January. In conclusion, Cllr. O'Connor suggested that as members have been provided with laptops, more correspondence should be forwarded to them via e-mail.

Cllr. B. Cronin complimented the Fire Service and said that there can be no reduction in staff in this area. He also acknowledged the very valuable work done by the Civil Defence. He acknowledged the funding provided for the Killarney Inshore Rescue Service and said this is a vital service and it is important that it is funded and maintained. He complimented all involved in the improvement works carried out at Aghadoe Burial Ground and said that an excellent job was done there. He requested that land would be acquired in Aghadoe for a new Burial Ground and said that this matter must be addressed in the near future. He acknowledged the work done by the various local committees who maintain Burial Grounds and in

particular, the Committee at Aglish. They have sought funding and he hoped that it can be delivered in 2009. There is a requirement for footpaths at Kilbannivane, Castleisland together with other improvement works. He emphasised the need to provide playgrounds and said that there is a great need for a playground in his area. Every major development should have its own playground. He suggested that Kerry County Council should consider freezing rates as Kilkenny County Council already did. He asked if this was to happen, what would be the cost involved. He complimented the work done by the Litter Enforcement Section who has responded to 270 complaints. He referred to Page 102 of the Manager's Report which reads as follows: *"The viability of power generation from landfill gas is currently being investigated and will be progressed by means of a Public Private Partnership if it is deemed viable."* He asked what kind of discussions had taken place regarding this project and was consideration given to incineration.

Cllr. R. Beasley congratulated Kate Kennelly, Arts Officer on the birth of her twin daughters. He expressed disappointment that when Kate went off on Maternity Leave she was not replaced. This is a very important part of our heritage and it is important that this service would continue in her absence. He complimented the County Librarian on extending the book stock and the improvements in all other aspects of the Library Service. He said he hoped there would be no cutbacks in this service in 2009. There are two part-time Litter Wardens in the county and he felt this was not adequate. He concurred with the sentiments expressed by Cllr. Gleeson in relation to the holding of the Spring Clean-up before the growth season commences. Cllr. Beasley then referred to beaches and said they must be protected to ensure that Blue Flags are retained. Beach material was being removed from The Cashen but a Council Engineer was very involved. At the June weekend the person responsible was approached and it has stopped since then. He referred to a number of dangerous buildings in the county and called on the Council to initiate the CPO procedure in relation to a number of them. If these buildings were acquired, they could be upgraded for housing purposes.

Cllr. J. Sheahan referred to the recycling services and said that this is a major step forward and must be continued. The Bring Banks are an excellent service. He asked that a Freefone number would be provided at Bring Banks so that members of the public could phone the Environment Department to let them know when the Bottle Banks are full and also to report illegal dumping at these sites. Cllr. Sheahan said that there is growing concern in the Killarney area that a new Burial Ground has not been provided. He complimented the Lifeguards and the Fire Service on the excellent service they provide. He supported the sentiments expressed by Cllr. Cahill in relation to coastal erosion in Glenbeigh and said that large amounts of sand are shifting every day. The area at the back of Rossbeigh is particularly badly affected and for this reason, it is imperative that the dunes are protected.

Cllr. B. MacGearailt asked that funding would be made available for Féile an Fharraige. He asked were there private developers who, as a condition of their planning permission, were to provide a play area and had not done so. If there are any such developers what is the position relating to them. He commended the Civil Defence and the Library Service and he thanked the County Manager for his assistance with planning applications for local people. Members are simply trying to retain people in rural areas and they were not asking that any application would be granted that would create an environmental problem.

Cllr. C. Miller referred to the rental of offices and said that a lot of rate payers had contacted him as they are under severe financial pressure. He called on the Council to be prudent and if there is any spare capacity in our existing accommodation, to ensure that this is used. He suggested that the Council should renegotiate prices with suppliers with a view to reducing costs. Cllr. Miller concurred with the sentiments expressed by Cllr. O'Shea in relation to the new Cemetery Bye-Laws.

Cllr. D. Healy-Rae said that the Fire Service deserves great credit as they are ready to respond to any call-out immediately. He added that he looked forward to the new Fire Station for Kenmare being progressed. He expressed his disappointment that a new Burial Ground was not acquired for the Killarney area and he was particularly disappointed that the Council was not successful in purchasing land at Aghadoe. He added that he understood that Killarney Town Council owns land in the National Park. He referred to the Control of Air Pollution and Water Quality and said that these are very important issues. He asked what role did the Council have in noise control and air pollution. He referred to the allocation of €140,000 for the Regional Waste Management Office in Limerick and said that he understood that hauliers may have to pay for this through their licence fee of €1,200 per truck. This fee is paid directly to Limerick County Council. Hauliers who live on the borders of counties and operate in two counties must have two licences. He was very concerned at this charge of €140,000 on Kerry County Council and said that the licence fees should be paid to Kerry County Council. He asked if there was any way that the cost of recycling could be reduced as the sum of €1m appears excessive. He hoped that this figure could be reduced without reducing the service provided. Cllr. Healy-Rae referred to Poulgorm Bridge and said that there is a lot of rubbish dumped near it and he asked that it would be removed as soon as possible. In conclusion, he complimented the Library Service and the Dog Warden Service also.

Cllr. T. Buckley complimented the Fire Service and the Library Service for the tremendous service they provide. Illegal dumping at roadsides is on the increase and must be addressed. There is a network of roads at the bog at Tullamore and there is a lot of illegal dumping there. He commended the local Graveyard Committees on their excellent work in maintaining Burial Grounds. He added that there was a difficulty with flooding at a number of cemeteries and he called on the Council to ensure that the drainage at these locations is adequate.

Cllr. L. Purtill said that there are ruins at the Burial Ground at Lisselton and some stones are falling out onto the pathways. He understood that improvements would be carried out to the footpaths at Kilconley Burial Ground and he hoped that this work would be completed before Christmas. In conclusion, he said that there is illegal dumping on the Listowel Road and he asked that this would be addressed.

Cllr. M. Connor-Scarteen referred to the proposed new Fire Station for Kenmare and said that he was informed in the past that this would go to tender last May and that works would commence in September. However, this did not happen. He said it was a sad day when Kerry County Council is asking small shopkeepers and B & B operators to pay a 2.5% increase in rates when there is no Cork/Swansea Ferry.

Cllr. T. Fleming complimented the Fire Service and the Library Service and said that both these Departments provide an excellent service. He referred to the need to acquire additional land for Burial Grounds and asked if it would be possible to negotiate the purchase of land and as part of the deal, the income from graves could be used to pay the landowner over a number of years. He asked the Head of Finance to consider this option.

Mr. J. O'Connor, Head of Finance referred to queries relating to the proposed increase in the refuse charge and said the proposed increase will result in an increase for the average customer of €0.20 per week. Records show that there is a steady increase in our customer base. He referred to the query by Cllr. D. Healy-Rae relating to the charge on waste contractors and said that as the law exists, we cannot collect the licence fee due from them. Offices rented by the Council are mostly in Tralee. It would be preferable if we did not have any rented accommodation but County Buildings cannot accommodate all staff. In relation to the new offices in Castleisland, the Water Services Design Team are located there and also a file repository which is used by both Planning and Finance. The new premises in Killorglin are substantially occupied also. A sum of €190,000 is paid annually for rent and Kerry County Council no longer owns the Ashe Memorial Hall. A substantial area is rented from Tralee Town Council in the Ashe Memorial Hall. Offices are also rented at Maine Street in the Radio Kerry building and at Manor West where offices are shared with the County Enterprise Board at a cost of €26,000 per annum. It is the intention to keep any properties rented under constant review. He acknowledged that there are inefficiencies attached to having offices spread out over a number of locations and he has experienced this at first hand as a number of the Finance staff are located in the Ashe Memorial Hall. All staff will be relocated to County Buildings as soon as circumstances permit. The Council has very little space rented to others and the rental income from properties would be less than €100,000. He referred to the allocation for the Regional Waste Management Office and said that many years ago Kerry County Council bought into this concept and agreed to share the costs. In view of the comments made by

members, he would undertake to examine this allocation again. Mr. O'Connor said that it would have been easy for him to bring forward a Budget that did not propose a rate increase but that would not serve the members or the county well. Every Directorate examined all aspects of their Budget closely. He referred to cell development at the Muingnaminnane Landfill Site and said that this is constantly monitored and the funding required has been reduced as much as possible. He would revert to members in 2009 with the provision for cell development which will be the minimum that will be required. A 1% increase in rates yields approximately €176,000 but unfortunately, €176,000 does not go far in balancing a Budget of €140m. He referred to the comments from Cllr. O'Donoghue in relation to the allocation for Coroners' Expenses and said that the Council can make representations to the Department of Justice requesting that this would be removed from local authorities.

Cllr. P. O'Donoghue informed the meeting that the Fianna Fáil Group had met at lunchtime and considered the Budget in detail. It was the unanimous view of his Group that it was not the time to impose a 2.6% increase in commercial rates as rate payers cannot afford it in the current recession. The Council must send out a signal that we would try to relieve their burden. The Fianna Fáil Group were particularly unhappy regarding the Council's ability to renegotiate for services and he called on the Council to make a serious effort to renegotiate prices with suppliers as this should be possible. Other savings should also be possible. Kerry County Council sold the Ashe Memorial Hall in the past but they are now renting it. He said there must be some spare accommodation which could be utilised. He also expressed his dissatisfaction with the allocation for the Regional Waste Management Office and said that he could not see the benefits to the county from this expenditure and he called on Management to reconsider this allocation.

Mr. J. O'Connor, Head of Finance said that the Council is now in a formal legal situation. A balanced Budget was presented but members have decided that they cannot adopt it. Members have 21 days from the first Budget Meeting, held on Friday, 5th December, to adopt a sufficient Budget. Cllr. O'Donoghue set out the views of his Party but he did not clearly identify how the Budget can be balanced. He asked members if they wanted to have a further Adjourned Budget Meeting to consider the issues raised by Cllr. O'Donoghue.

Cllr. O'Donoghue said that it was not the function of members to make changes to the Budget. It is up to Management to come back to members with suggestions on how savings can be achieved.

Mr. T. Curran, County Manager, said that he presented a balanced Budget to members in line with his statutory duty. Members demand more services and there is an obligation on members to adopt the Budget. He said that members need to give him clearer direction on where they wanted savings to be achieved. Mr. Curran stated that Management work in accordance with Government Policy. He acknowledged that this is a

very difficult decision for members but said that it was disingenuous of members to say they would not agree with the Budget presented.

Cllr. T. Ferris said that she had not got a response to her proposal that a Risk Equalisation System could be introduced for private refuse operators.

In response, Mr. J. O'Connor said that in accordance with the law, as it exists, Kerry County Council cannot do what Cllr. Ferris was requesting. The Council must have the legal power to impose charges.

Cllr. T. Ferris suggested that the Council could request the Minister to empower them to do this.

Mr. J. O'Connor, Head of Finance said that Cllr. Ferris had requested the Council to impose these charges. He has indicated that Kerry County Council has no legal powers to do so. If Members wish, they can pass a resolution asking the Minister to authorise and impose this charge. At present, the Council is charging contractors who deposit waste at Muingnaminnane as much as the market will allow.

Cllr. D. Healy-Rae again referred to the €140,000 allocated for the Limerick Regional Waste Management Office and asked if Kerry Hauliers are paying a licence fee to Limerick County Council, why they could not pay this fee to Kerry County Council.

Mr. J. O'Connor, Head of Finance said that this allocation is the net share out of the cost of running this office. It was the elected Council who approved the entering into an agreement to establish the Regional Waste Management Office as this was thought to be most cost effective way forward.

Cllr. D. Healy-Rae referred to the €20,000 which Kerry County Council must pay towards the Higher Education Grants Scheme and he asked if this could be recouped from the Department of Education.

In response, Mr. J. O'Connor said the Council is also down the cost of administering the Higher Education Grants Scheme. The Council would be better off if this function was removed from them as the administration costs are approximately €150,000 per annum.

Cllr. D. Healy-Rae asked if recycling could be streamlined as the figure of €1m. is excessive.

In response, Mr. J. O'Connor said that this allocation is based on costings for recycling.

Cllr. T. O'Brien asked the Head of Finance if rates were not increased for 2009, what savings would have to be achieved.

In response, Mr. J. O'Connor said that savings of €468,000 would have to be identified.

Cllr. T. Fitzgerald said that he had studied the Budget but he could not vote for the proposed increase in rates. However, he would be willing to accept an increase of 1.5%. He was satisfied that Management could identify savings that would allow for this. However, if any member could identify how savings could be achieved to ensure that there would be no increase in rates, he would be satisfied to support that proposal. He said that he was elected to carry out his duties and he was willing to consider any savings proposed by other members.

Cllr. P. McCarthy said that he understood that Management have indicated that they presented a balanced Budget and it is now a matter for members to identify where savings can be achieved.

Mr. T. Curran informed members that if they gave a clear indication of where savings could be achieved, Management would be willing to work with them. A lot of time and effort has gone into preparing a balanced Budget and he believed that this Budget was reasonable and would provide our core services.

Cllr. D. Healy-Rae said that he fully respected Management but members must face the general public in the run up to the Local Elections. He added that he was prepared to work with Management to achieve a reduction in the proposed rate increase.

Cllr. P. O'Donoghue said that last Friday at the Budget Meeting, he asked Management to renegotiate the cost of services as he believed substantial savings could be achieved in this area. He also referred to the Regional Waste Management Office where he felt that additional savings could be achieved. His Party wanted to be reasonable with the hard-pressed rate payers.

Mr. T. Curran, County Manager informed the meeting that he had fulfilled his statutory duty. When the local authority tenders they must do so through e-tenders which is a national process and we are tied into it. This allows very little discretion to the local authority and he had to accept a public tender. If the lowest tender is approved, he must accept that. He informed members that he could achieve a reduction in the Own Resource Allocation for roads but it is up to members to give him a broad guideline on how they wish him to achieve the savings required.

Cllr. J. Brassil said that Local Elections would be held in 2009 and the adoption of the Budget and agreeing a rate increase is a very serious issue for many members. He said that he would be willing to live with a rate increase of 2% or less which would require savings of €100,000. A 1.5% increase would require savings of €200,000 in the Budget of €140m which is less than 1%. He was willing to propose such a reduction and

vote for it if it was possible for Management to advise him where savings of between €100,000 and €200,000 could be achieved.

Cllr. J. O'Connor said that the EU issues Directives and local authorities must implement them. At present it is unclear if the income from the €200 levy will be allowed to remain in the county. Many small businesses are closing down at present and customers cannot afford the proposed increase in water charges. He emphasised the need to protect commercial customers.

Cllr. M. Connor-Scarteen referred to the €200 levy which he understood would have to be paid into the Local Government Fund. Kerry County Council does not know how much of this will be returned to the County and he asked what this charge would be likely to be in 2009 and subsequent years,

Mr. J. O'Connor, Head of Finance said that if members wanted him to identify €100,000 savings in the Budget at that meeting, without fundamentally undermining the Budget, then he could do so. However, in doing this, he wanted to get a feel from members the extent of the savings which they wished to achieve.

Cllr. T. Ferris said that she had a serious difficulty with the increase proposed in rates without an increase in services. If the Manager states that the increase in rates will allow the Council to retain staff, and to take on seasonal staff, that may be acceptable. She also had a difficulty with the €10 increase proposed in Refuse Charges and said that many private operators operate profitable routes only.

Mr. J. O'Connor said that Management, down through the years, made every effort to keep labour intensive services to ensure as much employment as possible. It would be easy to achieve the savings in the Budget by reducing the Own Resources provision for Local Roads but that is not what members want. He referred to the hire of plant and machinery and said that the local authority LAQuotes system is a highly competitive system and Kerry County Council must rely on responses to that system for all our small works. Much of the bigger works go out to tender. The Council has always done its best to retain employment. Members must now decide if they want to continue to consider the Budget or to adjourn to another day.

Cllr. R. Beasley PROPOSED that an Adjourned Budget Meeting would be held.

Cllr. J. O'Connor SECONDED this proposal.

Cllr. T. Fleming said that Management need practical suggestions and solutions from councillors on how the Budget can be balanced with a reduction in the proposed increase in rates. However, members could not agree to affect the Roads Programme.

Minutes Adjourned Budget Meeting

Cllr. P. O'Donoghue suggested that the meeting should be adjourned to the start of the December Meeting.

Mr. J. O'Connor said that this would be acceptable provided it is an Adjourned Budget Meeting.

Following discussions, it was agreed that the Adjourned Budget Meeting would be held on Monday, 15th December from 10.30am to 12.00 noon.

Mr. T. Curran, County Manager asked members what was expected of Management at that meeting.

In response, Cllr. T. Fitzgerald said that Management should present options for rate increases of between 1.5% and 2% at that meeting.

Mr. T. Curran, County Manager asked if members want to achieve savings of €100,000 or €180,000.

The Mayor informed members that the December Ordinary Meeting would be held at the Cultural Centre in Scartaglin and tea and scones would be provided at 9.45am with lunch at 1.30pm.

The Meeting concluded at 6.15pm.

Gerard O'Brien
A/SEO Corporate Affairs

Mayor of Kerry