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**MIONTUAIRISCÍ CRUINNITHE BHUISÉID DE COMHAIRLE CHONTAE
CHIARRAÍ, A THIONÓLADH I SEOMRA NA COMHAIRLE, ÁRAS AN CHONTAE,
TRÁ LÍ, DÉ LUAN, 18 SAMHAIN 2019**

**MINUTES OF THE BUDGET MEETING OF KERRY COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN
THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, TRALEE ON MONDAY,
18 NOVEMBER 2019**

Councillors/Comhairleoirí

Tom Barry	Robert Beasley	Michael Cahill
Patrick Connor-Scarteen	Brendan Cronin	Pa Daly
	Jim Finucane	Breandán Fitzgerald
Fionnán Fitzgerald	Seamus Fitzgerald	John Francis Flynn
Cathal Foley	Michael Foley	Norma Foley
Michael Gleeson	Donal Grady	Jackie Healy-Rae
Johnny Healy-Rae	Maura Healy-Rae	Niall Kelleher
	Sam Locke	Dan McCarthy
Jimmy Moloney	Marie Moloney	Norma Moriarty
Terry O'Brien	Niall O'Callaghan	Bobby O'Connell
Michael O'Shea	Mikey Sheehy	Aoife Thornton

IN ATTENDANCE/I LÁTHAIR

Ms. M. Murrell, Chief Executive	Mr. C. O'Sullivan, Dir of Rds, Transp'n & Marine
Mr. J. Breen, Director Water Services	Mr. M. O'Donoghue, Director Housing
Mr. C. O'Connor, Director Corp. Servs.	Ms. A. McAllen, Head of Finance
Mr. M. Scannell, Dir. Job Cr/Sust. ED	Ms. J. McCarthy, Meetings Administr.
Ms. D. Griffin, SO Corporate Support	Mr. O. O'Shea, Press Officer
Mr. P. Neary, SE Water Services	Ms. K. Moriarty, A/SEO Finance
Mr. G. O'Brien, A/SEO Environment	Mr. J. Kennelly, SE Rds, Trans. & Marine
Mr. J. McCarthy, AO Finance	Ms. M. West, AO Roads, Trans. & Marine
Ms. M. Moriarty, AO Finance	Mr. P. O'Connor, AO Finance
Ms. S. Sheridan, SSO Finance	Mr. R. Tangney, SO Finance
Ms. L. Breen, SO Finance	Mr. B. Doolan, ASO Finance

The meeting commenced at 10.30 a.m.
Cllr. Niall Kelleher, Cathaoirleach, took the Chair.

Emergency Motion

Cllr. Michael O'Shea moved the following Emergency Motion.

To ask that Kerry County Council address this Emergency Motion and to pass a resolution demanding that the Minister for Health Minister, Mr. Simon Harris, immediately engage with HSE South in view of securing a full time General Practitioner for the Milltown area and the wider community.

- Milltown and its wider community have a population of 12,000 people.
- 2,500 children attend schools within this catchment area daily.
- A 60-bed Nursing Home/Day Care Centre is situated in Milltown.
- A vast rural population with a combination of the very young, the elderly and those with disabilities.

- As Milltown is one of the fastest growing villages/town in the country and centrally located as part of the county's economic triangle resulting that the population growth Milltown and its hinterlands will obviously enlarge over the next few years.

An area without a GP Practice is totally dysfunctional and I am calling on the Minister for Health, the HSE, Kerry County Council and all public Representatives do their part in ensuring that Milltown and its hinterland is going to develop as the state and our Local Authority endorses this enlargement. We need a General Practice/Primary Care Centre in this community.

Cllr. Michael O'Shea said our community in Milltown and its hinterland was in shock last week when the news broke that the GP service in Milltown was to be lost. Milltown is a location in the economic triangle of the county. The population is growing since the early 90s as the largest growing town. There are 2,500 children in the schools of the catchment area, there is a nursing home and day care centres. Milltown cannot afford to lose its GP service. The GPs in the surrounding areas, e.g. Killorglin and Farranfore, cannot take more patients. The HSE advised 380 medical card holders, who are patients of the Milltown GP service, that the service would close on 15 December 2019. The HSE did not advise private patients or GPs in Killorglin or Farranfore of the proposed closure of the service. A meeting was arranged in Milltown last night, which was attended by over 300 people, people who are angry and disappointed with the decision to close their GP service. An area without a GP service is dysfunctional. He called on Elected Members and the executive of Kerry County Council to ensure Milltown keeps its GP service. On Friday last the HSE advised that the Locum Service in Milltown will cease on 16 January 2020. The HSE has asked the community to come together and source a Doctor ourselves. A Doctor is required immediately for this GP service. He asked that this motion be referred to the Minister for Health.

Cllr. John Francis Flynn **SECONDED** this motion and said this issue is arising throughout the country, not just in Milltown. It was made quite clear at the public meeting that this is arising because of lack of funding. It is a shame on the HSE that they are asking the community to find its own Doctor. People are worried about where they will go if there is no GP service in Milltown. Doctors in Killorglin have been forced to take on extra patients, which is a problem in itself as Killorglin is also a growing town. Instead of cutting services in Milltown, a Primary Health Care Centre and expanded services should be provided in the area. Everything possible must be done to make sure the people of Milltown get the proper health care they deserve.

Cathaoirleach Niall Kelleher said a meeting has been scheduled on the matter and he will take this resolution from Kerry County Council to that meeting.

18.11.19.01 Cathaoirleach's Report on the Budget CPG Meeting 17 Sept 2019

The Cathaoirleach read the following report into the record of the meeting:

Consultation on Budget 2020, Budget Policy/Strategy and financial consequences of any variation in the Basic Rate of Local Property Tax, General Municipal Allocation, Rates Vacancy Refunds and Base Year Adjustment

Ms. A. McAllen, Head of Finance, referred members to the draft Budget 2020 Strategy Report and the draft Chief Executive's Report on the Setting of a Local Adjustment Factor for LPT for 2020 which were circulated. She briefed the members on the Budget process and the legal requirements. She briefed members on the Budget 2020 Strategy Report under the following headings:

- Financial support for County Economic Drivers
- Support for Operations
- Infrastructure Projects per Municipal District
- Housing Construction Programme
- Income
- Proposed Local Property Tax rate for 2020

The Chief Executive highlighted to members the significant gap in funding that needs to be addressed and which will require scaling back expenditure across the organisation.

A discussion took place on Budget 2020, Budget Policy/Strategy, proposed variation of LPT and General Municipal Allocation during which members acknowledged in particular the importance of supporting the greenway projects in providing matching funding for grants that have been received.

18.11.19.02 Consideration of the Local Authority Budget for the Local Financial Year ending 31 December 2020

The Chief Executive advised members on the Draft Budget prepared for Kerry County Council for the financial year ending 31st December 2020 in accordance with the Local Government Act 2001 and the Local Government Reform Act 2014, together with regulations, circulars and guidance issued under the auspices of both Acts for consideration by the Members at the Budget Meeting fixed for Monday, 18th November 2019. She briefed the members on the contents of her report, previously circulated, which outlines the provisions of the Draft Budget.

Presentation of the Statutory Budget for adoption by Members concludes the three stage Budget process for 2020. The first stage required Members, following public consultation, to consider adoption of the local adjustment factor for the 2020 rate of Local Property Tax (LPT) at the Budget Strategy meeting of the 23rd September 2019. The second stage of the Budget process required consideration of the Municipal District Allocation for 2020 at the Municipal District Budgetary Plan meetings held on 25th October 2019. The third and final stage of the Budget process commences during the prescribed Budget period at the Annual Statutory Budget Meeting of 18th November 2019.

Draft Budget 2020 as presented to Members provides for income and expenditure of €158.28m. This is an increase of 10% on Budget 2019 €143.96m reflecting the increased level of activity across the programme groups for 2020. The balancing of this Draft Budget has been challenging given increased service demands and budgetary requirements across the Council.

At the Budget Strategy meeting in September, a shortfall in Budget requirements was outlined. The additional income from the adjustment to the Local Property Tax for 2020 results in an additional income of €1,412,755 to the Council. This will alleviate funding pressures of the own resource element of recent Greenway grant funding and will also provide for five Municipal District Enforcement Officers across the County.

In order to present a balanced Budget, it was necessary to review and examine all income streams. Commercial Rates of €42.98m contribute a significant portion of income amounting to 27% of Kerry County Council's overall income. As notified to Members, the Valuation Office has recently commenced the process of revaluation of the County's commercial properties. In this context and as part of this, the Valuation Office has advanced work on the significant Kerry County Council valuation backlog. This has resulted for Draft Budget 2020, given the timing and profile of the properties

that were valued, in a once off increase to the rateable valuation of properties to the County.

All locally sourced income streams including housing loans, rents, car parking, landfill income have been critically examined and revised to reflect increased debt management and collection. It should be noted however, that a number of income streams have ceased or are in decline; library charges, NPPR, and IPB dividend income. Grant income from all sources has been provided for based on projected programmes and recoupment of any expenditure is maximised to benefit both the revenue and the capital budget.

The continued reliance by this Council on once off compensation payments funded by Central Government to the value of €3.74m for payroll related costs for 2020 is unsustainable. This funding is confirmed by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government for the coming year only. In addition, the funding of the Voids programme from Internal Capital Receipts (ICRs) requires a revised approach in Draft Budget 2020 and beyond.

Kerry County Council has been successful in recent years in attracting Grants from a number of National Grant Schemes co-funding grants - Town and Village Renewal Scheme, CLÁR, Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme, Enterprise Ireland Grants, URDF, RRDF and LEADER. While we welcome the opportunities available from these schemes, co-funding is required. For Draft Budget 2020, the Strategic Fund element of the Community Support Fund will support co-funding for grant applications made recently. In addition to this allocation, it has been necessary to set aside a specific allocation from operational budgets to meet these co-funding requirements during 2020.

A number of minor capital works and programmes in Draft Budget 2020 have been supported through the Capital Account, for example, housing, public conveniences, minor civic amenity site enhancements, IT infrastructural improvements, cyber resilience enhancements and pension provisions. This is not sustainable given the increased demands on expenditure requirements and long-term financial planning.

In addition to the above, expenditure headings across all operational budgets have been analysed and reviewed. In many cases projects and requests for additional staff have been delayed or cannot be accommodated in 2020 as part of the critical analysis of expenditure headings. Savings have been extracted and cost increases absorbed into existing budgets.

Current Financial Update

It is anticipated at this stage of the year that this Council will achieve a balanced Budget for 2019. The estimated expenditure outturn for 2019 is expected to exceed the 2019 Adopted Budget by 4.43% largely attributable to increases in Road and Transportation Grant Funding and expenditure on Housing.

The Draft Budget 2020 provides for expenditure of €158.28m. The proposed budget expenditure is funded as follows:-

• Grants and Subsidies	€ 49.97m
• Rates	€ 42.98m
• Local Property Tax Allocation	€ 15.19m
• Rents & Loans (inc. RAS)	€ 13.19m
• Irish Water recoupment	€ 12.56m
• Parking Charges and Fines	€ 3.16m
• Transfer Station and Refuse Charges	€ 2.55m
• Other Recoupable Income	€ 5.03m
• Other Misc Income	€ 13.65m
Total	€158.28m

Revenue Budget 2020 – Main Service Features

Reflecting the overall Budget Strategy, she said she has endeavoured to reflect the key requirements in the Draft Budget Allocations across all divisions. The identification of expenditure cuts, cost absorption, procurement savings and the maximising of income by each division has been vital to the overall balancing of this budget.

Commercial Rates

Commercial Rates of €42.98m contributes 27% to Kerry County Council's overall income. Advancement by the Valuation Office on the outstanding backlog of commercial properties awaiting revaluation has resulted, given the timing and profile of properties, in a once off increase to the County of €1.6m. Overall rates income reflects the significant reduction of global valuations experienced in 2016 which has impacted negatively on any buoyancy in recent years.

The Council, while making all efforts to optimise collections, will continue to review the position of businesses on a case-by-case basis, particularly those experiencing difficulties due to the current economic climate, subject to the submission of required documentation. A distinction, however, needs to be made between those businesses that have genuine trading difficulties and those apparently unwilling to pay. The latter businesses will be pursued through the appropriate channels.

The rates collection for 2018 has shown an improvement of 2.07% on 2017 figures and an increase of 7% since 2014 and continues to represent a critical funding stream to fund the overall Budget. 2020 represents the 6th year of the 8-year harmonisation period agreed with Members for Budget 2015. The 8-year harmonisation period will gradually result in a single Annual Rate on Valuation of €79.25 at the end of the harmonisation period by using the base year adjustment factor.

Local Authority Financing – Local Property Tax Allocation 2020

Kerry County Council received confirmation from DHPLG on 10th October 2019 of the Provisional Local Property Tax Allocation for 2020. Following the decision by Members to vary the basic rate of Local Property Tax, the allocation for Kerry County Council for 2020 is €15,189,516.

Economic and Community Development

Kerry County Council has primary responsibility for economic and community development in the County. The Council is a major advocate, provider and enabler of the provision of infrastructure both in and serving the County. Through both its Capital and Revenue programmes it is a major economic driver, supporting all aspects of the local economy including in particular the construction, tourism and retail sectors and all aspects of urban and rural development.

Significant investment into the road network across the County will progress over 2020 and include further development of plans for the Tralee-Killarney inter urban link, delivery of the Listowel Bypass and continued investment in the N86 Tralee-Dingle and N70 Ring of Kerry Route. This coupled with recent announcements of major capital investment to primary roads access to the County including the Macroom and Adare by-passes signals a major boost to the economic development of the County, through improved connectivity with designated cities in the region.

Kerry County Council, through its Housing Programme has a major impact on the construction industry, being a significant driver of activity in this sector at present in Kerry. The current capital programme will see in excess of 650 new build units delivered in the 2019-2021 period through the various capital streams. This programme forms a key and significant part of overall activity in this sector of the economy. In addition, the improvement grant schemes, maintenance programmes and other schemes generate construction and construction related activities with additional works in the refurbishment and improvement of housing stock (both public and private) across the County.

Economic & Community Strategy Development

The development and implementation of economic and spatial strategy for the County, in line with the key national and regional policy drivers, is key to securing the long-term sustainable development of the County and in securing both public and private investment for Kerry.

The publication of the Draft Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy by the Southern Regional Assembly has been significantly influenced by submissions approved by the Elected Council, following significant policy development workshops with the Forward Planning Unit. The Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy provides further detail to the implementation of the National Planning Framework and National Development Plan at Regional Level.

The adoption of the Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy for the Southern Region will signal the commencement of the review of the Kerry County Development Plan in the first quarter of 2020. This review, which is a two-year process, will once again be delivered by in-house expertise, and will set out a vision for the future of this County in a sustainable manner, for the benefit of all the people of Kerry and those visiting the County. The review will consider all the major planning policies for the County including both the Renewable Energy Policy, the Rural Settlement Policy amongst others and set a platform for the major economic and community infrastructure requirements of the County for the medium term.

The coming year will also see the preparation of a Kerry 2040 plan to target the strategic growth of the County over the coming 20 years. This will deliver an opportunity for the Council and its strategic partners in both the public and private sector to provide a blueprint to guide the economic, social and physical development of the County over an extended period. This Plan will also offer strategic direction to the funding opportunities available under the Urban and Rural Regeneration & Development Funds and related schemes under the National Development Plan, Ireland 2040.

Work on the Local Area Plans continued in 2019 with the adoption of the West Iveragh Plan and the recent publication of the draft Listowel Local Area Plan and the associated draft variation of the Listowel Town Plan. The draft Dingle Local Area Plan will be finalised before the end of the year. These Draft Plans, following the statutory period of public consultation will revert for final adoption by the Council in 2020, as will the remaining Local Area Plan for East Iveragh. In the context of the Revenue Budget under Development Management, significant cost savings are achieved by the in-house review of these plans.

Tourism continues to be a key economic driver for the County. The Council will continue to work with Fáilte Ireland in the development, implementation and delivery of the Visitor Experience Development Plans (VEDP) in the coming year including the finalisation of the Dingle VEDP, the development of the North Kerry VEDP, Killarney Gateway Town Project, Tralee Destination Town and the existing VEDP for the Skellig Region and Kenmare Beara Peninsula areas.

Economic & Community Strategy Implementation

Provision is made, funded in part by the Strategic Development Fund, to fund a Capital Unit tasked to manage the development of the County's opportunity sites. Specific focus in 2020 will be the further development of the Island of Geese and the Áras Padraig/ Lewis Road sites. The potential of the Sara Lee and Fels Point sites will also be advanced in 2020.

The identification of funding opportunities both nationally and through the various European Programmes is key to the delivery of the major projects identified in the County Development Plan, Local Economic and Community Plan and Tourism Strategy. The ability of Kerry County Council to co-fund these projects from its own

resources is essential. The Community Support Fund offers both strategic funding to access additional significant funding at national level as well as continuing to directly assist communities in day to day activities.

Kerry County Council has also created strategic partnerships and linkages with private enterprise, the education sector and retail sector to expand opportunities for investment, growth and collaboration within the County and Region.

The success of the Council in attracting further investment for the County is evidenced in the delivery of 334 projects of varying scale and complexity through both the Urban and Rural Regeneration Schemes, Town and Village Renewal, Clár, Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Programme, Community Enhancement Schemes and other Community grants. This investment has made a positive contribution throughout the County.

During 2019, grant funding of €6.5m has been allocated for both the Tralee Fenit and Listowel-Kilmorna Greenways and the construction of these projects will be a priority for 2020. There has been pro-active engagement with affected adjoining landowners on accommodation works and provision of access and storage areas, with works scheduled to commence this month. An Bord Pleanála is currently holding an oral hearing on the Council's planning application and CPO for the South Kerry Greenway, with the decision of the board anticipated in early 2020.

The Community Development Unit through the LCDC in partnership with the Local Development Sector has excelled in the delivery of the €10m LEADER programme for the County. Kerry has been ranked amongst the best performing authorities across all measures of delivery and as a result has recently received an additional allocation of €0.5m. The delivery of both the LEADER and SICAP funding under the administration of the Community Development Unit ensures greater visibility over the funding streams and greater value for money. Newer projects such as the Healthy Ireland & Age Friendly initiatives will positively impact young and old, while the continued support of the PPN Networks is a crucial linkage between this Council and community groups around Kerry.

Kerry County Council will continue to develop projects for the various funding streams, as the Council looks to deliver key strategic sites in Tralee and Killarney and other centres in the County, develop infrastructure along the Wild Atlantic Way, and other key economic drivers in the County. These are all projects which have been identified in both the Local Economic & Community Plan, County Development Plan and Tourism Strategy.

Promotion of the County

Kerry County Council has a key role in marketing the County for both inward investment, job creation, attraction and retention of skills as well as the promotion of the County as a visitor destination.

In 2020 the Council will continue to work with our strategic partners at both national and local level. The Council together with the national agencies including the IDA and Enterprise Ireland, local industrial and commercial interests through Kerry Sci-tech and other influential groupings will partner to develop a marketing campaign for the County, focusing initially on the Dublin and British markets and the opportunities that these regions offer for Kerry.

Housing and Building

Overall activity levels in the Housing area continue at a very high level. The operating environment continues to be difficult given the current property markets and overall construction activity generally. The Housing Department has an extensive Capital Programme under the Rebuilding Ireland 2017-2021 National Housing Strategy. The Council works in partnership with Approved Housing Bodies to deliver units as part of

the overall capital Programme. In addition, the Council's Housing Capital Unit provides support and services to smaller approved Housing Bodies in delivering smaller scale projects. Members will be aware of the details of the Projects planned to be delivered following the regular reports considered at full Council and at Municipal District Meetings. The Council is on target to deliver the 2019 construction targets and meet delivery targets across all other headings.

The delivery of Housing services to persons requiring emergency accommodation and to those who are homeless continues to be very challenging. The current private market conditions are proving difficult in attempting to secure short term solutions. Significant staff and financial resources are deployed in this area. While the position continues to be challenging we currently have sufficient emergency accommodation capacity to deal with the situation. A significant portion of expenditure in this area is recouped under established arrangements, however the Council does support this service area with staff resources and the use of some Council properties for emergency accommodation interventions. This service remains under constant review.

This Council has an extensive portfolio of land for the construction of housing. The Council is obliged to service the loans on these lands from the Revenue Budget. The Council consulted directly with the HFA during 2019 and negotiated a further 1-year interest-only payment arrangement for matured land loans. This is further extended for one year, it is not envisaged that this arrangement will continue. The impact on the revenue Budget 2020 is €0.757m expenditure taking account of all factors in relation to this issue.

In 2020, this Council is liable for approximately €410,000 for Local Property Tax liabilities in respect of liable Council stock and properties.

Road Transport and Safety

The Draft Budget 2020 figures for the Roads Grant Schemes are prepared on the original 2019 National and Non-National road allocations from the Department of Transport Tourism & Sport (DTTAS) and Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII).

In 2019, the grant allocation from the Department for the non-national roads was €22.58m, an increase of €3.15m on the previous year. The allocation included €955,000 for drainage works, which was targeted for works on the local secondary and tertiary road network, and €1.065m under the Community Involvement Scheme, which allowed for the improvement of 21 local roads. The Department of Rural and Community Development also provided a grant allocation of €669,370 for Local Improvement Schemes in Kerry in 2019. The Council recruited additional outdoor staff in 2019, across the Municipal Districts, for the delivery of the increased work programme.

Kerry County Council also secured funding under the Specific Improvement Grant scheme to complete the construction of the Dingle/Daingean Uí Chúis Inner Relief Road, and to advance improvements on the Tralee- Fenit route; Tralee Northern Relief Road; Dale Road and Listry Bridge. Further funding is being sought to progress these schemes in 2020, as well as construction of the Clash to Ballymullen Road in Tralee and the design of future relief roads in Dingle/Daingean Uí Chúis, Killarney and Kenmare.

Unfinished Housing Estates

The Housing Estates Unit will continue to pursue the non-payment or resolution of bond claims still outstanding and in this regard has lodged 52 claims with financial institutions and insurance companies seeking payment of the proceeds of bonds to complete outstanding works in unfinished estates. Good progress is being made in resolving outstanding bond claims with our larger bond holders. A substantial number

of AIB bond claims have been paid over the last number of months, having agreed a resolution process with them. All outstanding IBRC Claims have also been resolved. Kerry County Council will continue to work with all financial institutions and bond companies in pursuit of outstanding bond claims.

Taking in Charge of Estates

The Housing Estates Unit manage a very active taking in charge programme. A total of 7 estates have been formally taken in charge to date in 2019. A further 6 have recently been advertised and they will be taken in charge once the statutory process has been completed. In addition to the above, the Council currently has 44 "Taking in Charge" applications on hand. Many of the remaining estates to be taken in charge are historic estates where there is no bond in place. We also require the formal approval of Irish Water before proceeding to commence the taking in charge process in accordance with the MOU agreed in 2015. Site Resolution Plans may also be required in order to progress a number of these applications.

Water Services

Kerry County Council continues to provide Water Services in Kerry, operating as an agent of Irish Water under a Service Level Agreement. The services provided in the Service Level Agreement include operation and maintenance of water supply, drinking water compliance, non-domestic meter maintenance, water conservation and leakage reduction, operation and maintenance of wastewater plants and networks, new water and sewer connections and non-domestic meter reading.

This division also reflects areas retained by Kerry County Council and includes the operation of public conveniences and the administration of the Rural Water Programme.

Environmental Services

The Budget Allocation for 2020 provides for the costs of operating the five Transfer Stations/Civic Amenity Sites in the County at Killarney, Milltown, Kenmare, Caherciveen and Ionad Athchúrsála agus Dramhaíola Chorca Dhuibhne. This includes the costs associated with the operation and maintenance of the facilities, the costs of the transport and disposal of the waste deposited and the cost of operating the recycling facilities at the Transfer Stations.

Significant improvements have been carried out in recent years by Kerry County Council at our landfill site at Muingnaminnane in accordance with our responsibilities under our waste licence. The impact of aftercare costs associated with our waste infrastructure and necessary upgrading works in our civic amenity sites and bring banks will require further investment during 2020.

Provision of €0.94m is retained towards the maintenance of 157 Burial Grounds Countywide and includes provision for additional expenditure in respect of the costs associated with the Burial Ground Development Program. This includes €0.55m as an allocation to community organisations in recognition of their ongoing involvement and valuable assistance, and also includes increased loan charges provision to support Burial Ground Development Countywide.

Fire Services

The Kerry Fire Service, during 2019, continues to be extremely busy with attendance at incidents for the period January-September 2019 showing a 14.1% increase on the same period in 2018.

The delivery of the safety message in relation to gorse fires through community, farming and other groups is an ongoing task. However, the ongoing management of same in 2019 continues to be a challenge. The number of gorse fires attended in the

period January to September 2019 represents an increase of 33.3% when compared to the same period in 2018.

The retained and whole-time firefighters stationed in the 10 fire stations around Kerry, receive continuous training to the highest standards. In addition, there are significant fire safety programmes rolled out to communities and schools around the County, which link with Fire Safety week and other national fire safety programmes.

Library Services

Kerry Libraries provide an invaluable and evolving service to the County through its nine libraries and two mobile units. The usage of the network continues to go from strength to strength bringing its own challenges. In addition, record numbers of customers are using Kerry library services with increasing usage of online and e-learning resources. In recognition of their role in supporting communities, maintenance of the book fund allocation is provided for in Draft Budget 2020. One of the key targets of the National Strategy for Libraries 2018-2022 is universal access for all and to this effect library fines were removed nationally during 2019.

In July 2018, the Department of Rural & Community Development also announced national funding of €5.2m to support the establishment of public libraries as digital learning centres and enablers of digital services. Kerry County Council was approved for funding of €102,541 to provide a range of equipment at all its libraries including public computers, iPads, digital microfilm units, interactive LCD screens and a 3D printer. This equipment was installed during the year and aims to add to the library user experience in each of our libraries.

Miscellaneous Services

The amount provided in this Draft Budget 2020 for the General Municipal Allocation is €1.707m. This is comprised of the €0.75m for Municipal District allocation and is for the purpose of supporting Community Support/Community Initiatives, Town Development Projects and provides for an allocation for Strategic element which seeks to maximise the opportunities provided by alternative sources of funding. In addition, the Councillor Specific Municipal Operations District allocation of €0.957m is maintained. This amount presented to members during the Budgetary Plan meetings was adopted by all Municipal Districts. This is a significant discretionary allocation for each Municipal District.

Also included is the cost of Local Representation and Civic Leadership, Agency and Recoupable Services and the costs associated with the Procurement Office, which is fully recoupable from other local authorities.

Costs associated with ensuring the Council's Information Technology systems are resilient to cyber threats are included in the Budget. This requires a continuing investment in hardware and software to ensure that the integrity of the Council's systems are protected and secure. There will be a continuing focus on cyber security and data protection obligations during 2020 with a targeted programme of security and privacy related projects advanced during the year.

Draft Budget 2020 includes loan charges provision for the repayment of the loan due for the Killorglin Area Services Centre. This project represents a large urban town renewal project and is an example of the continued investment required in projects of this nature.

The Local Government Operational Procurement Office, Killarney

This Council is established as the National Procurement Office to host procurement initiatives on a shared service basis on behalf of all local authorities and other state agencies for 2020. Draft Budget 2020 reflects the income and expenditure arising from this initiative. The cost for this office is fully recouped from the Local Government Sector in 2020.

Capital Investment Plan

The Council will continue to invest in the infrastructure of the County aiming to maximise grant funding. The Capital Programme for the three-year period 2020-2022 prepared in accordance with Section 135 of the Local Government Act, 2001, is set out in Schedule 1 at the end of the Chief Executive's Report on Draft Budget 2020 and commented upon in the course of the details of each of the Division Budgets. The Capital Programme must have regard to the General Government Balance (GGB) requirement and the available resources, which have diminished in recent years due to limited borrowing capacity, and development contributions. The Housing Capital Programme will lead to significant capital activity over the period. The Council will continue to ensure that all sources of capital funding, including government and EU grants, are fully explored and maximised.

Development Contributions

A statement regarding the amount of Development Contributions on hands, the estimated income expected for 2020 and an indicative statement of the proposed application of the funding available is included in Schedule 2 at the end of the Chief Executive's Report on Draft Budget 2020.

In conclusion, the Chief Executive said that in order to balance this Budget, all budgetary requirements have been critically reviewed, reassessed and the necessary changes made to both income and expenditure. She said on balance she is satisfied within the resources available and the increasingly limited discretionary budget available, that the Draft Budget presented fairly represents the key priorities in supporting the economy of the County, Community Development, Roads infrastructure and the Housing programme.

The Chief Executive expressed her appreciation to the Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Niall Kelleher, to Cllr. Norma Foley, the previous Cathaoirleach, the Members of the Council, the Corporate Policy Group and the Strategic Policy Committees for their support, co-operation and application during the year.

She paid tribute to the hard work and dedication of all Council staff to the County over the 2019 period. She thanked Ms. Angela McAllen, Head of Finance, and all the staff of the Finance Department for both their professionalism and work ethic in preparing Budget 2020. The Chief Executive recommended the Budget for adoption.

The Cathaoirleach called on Ms. A. McAllen, Head of Finance, to present her overview on the Budget.

Ms. A. McAllen, Head of Finance, referred members to pages 14-40 of the Chief Executive's Report which outlines an overview of Directorate Service Priorities, Performance Indicators and Service Delivery Plan 2020, linked to the Budget as presented today. She stated that the Chief Executive had outlined the financing issues that faced the Council in achieving an overall balanced position. Since the presentation of the Budget Strategy Report in September and the Draft Budgetary Plans to the Municipal District meetings in October, income and expenditure projections in most areas are now known and the balanced Budget as presented to Members today reflects a realistic pragmatic Budget which provides for ongoing service delivery as outlined by the Chief Executive, provides for our financial liabilities and obligations and also provides a budget that reflects the key priorities of the Council. The 2020 Budget was a very difficult Budget to balance, compiling it required the usual reviewing, assessing and examination of all expenditure and income headings:

- Targeted collections and increased targets across all local income streams.
- Reviewed and examined forensically each expenditure line of each directorate.
- Reviewed and looked again at income projections for grants and subsidies to reflect realistic amounts.

The certainty in relation to a once off compensation payment for payroll has been received, but it highlights our reliance on this as a source of income. She referred Elected Members to page 43 of the Chief Executive's report. The expenditure proposed amounts to €158,278,893. This represents a 5.3% increase on the projected outturn for 2019. As usual, the 2020 expenditure reflects an estimated provision for Road Grant related works as the Council has not received any notification of Road Grants from the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport and Transport Infrastructure Ireland for 2020, to date. The actual expenditure on the Road Works Grants Programmes will be based on the allocations to be notified later.

The accompanying diagram shows the distribution of the proposed expenditure amongst the divisions for 2020. The combined expenditure of the Divisions titled Housing and Building, Roads, Transportation & Marine, Water Services and Environmental Services accounts for 70% of the Council's overall Revenue Budget in 2020.

The graph on page 44 reflects the breakdown on expenditure, payroll continues to be the largest element of revenue consideration at 45% of overall expenditure, taking the recouped payroll costs into consideration this percentage drops to 36%. The graph also clearly indicates the proportion of spend on non-discretionary spend such as payroll, loan charges, insurance and energy cost and large elements of operational costs.

She referred members to page 45 for income by source. The graph reflects the largest source of own resources income being rates at 27%, exceeded by State Grants of 31.6%, LPT forms 9.6% income for 2020 and other local income 24%, our reliance on this income has increased on 2019 level targets, are pragmatic but challenging and reflect our rent outturn based on increased focus on debt management areas.

The Head of Finance then referred members to page 47 of the Chief Executive's Report for details of State Sector Grants for Specified Purposes.

STATE SECTOR GRANTS FOR SPECIFIED PURPOSES **€49,967,068**

The total income under this heading represents 31.6% of the total income of this Council.

LOCAL PROPERTY TAX **€15,189,516**

Confirmation has been received from the DHPLG, in Circular 08/2019 of 10 October 2019, that the revised LPT allocation for 2020 has been calculated, taking into consideration the increase in the basic rate of LPT as approved by the members in the LPT Budget Meeting on September 23rd, 2019. The revised allocation is €15,189,516.

RATES ON COMMERCIAL PROPERTY **€42,979,443**

This provides for the harmonisation of commercial rates, with an adopted annual rate of valuation of €79.25, leading to a single county rate when the harmonisation period is complete in 2022.

Rates are accounting for 27% of the funds required to deliver the Council's Revenue Services in 2020. The Council, while making all efforts to optimise collections, will continue to review the position of businesses experiencing difficulties, where supporting documentation indicates a serious downturn in activities and turnover for a period of time, on an individual case by case basis.

After the once off buoyancy for 2020 reflected in the Budget, any additional buoyancy in this area is limited for the foreseeable future due to the unavailability of new properties for rateable purposes in Kerry, together with the rates 8-year harmonisation process, which limits any increase, locally, in the Annual Rate on Valuation. In addition, the revaluation process for the County of Kerry, currently being carried out by the Valuation Office, creates uncertainty in relation to the rates income

stream. The Council will also have to be cognisant of items in the new Local Government Rates and Other Matters Bill 2018, which was passed by the Dáil in September and may impact upon future Council budgets, Circular Letter at Appendix B of the Chief Executive Report refers.

Notwithstanding the above, the Council has increased collections and achieved targets set by the Local Government sector.

C0701 - IRISH WATER RECOUPMENT **€12,556,668**

A0101 - HOUSING RENTS **€12,823,634**

This sum represents income expected from housing tenants, inclusive of rents paid in respect of RAS and Social Leasing rents.

A0801 - HOUSING LOAN REPAYMENTS **€366,484**

At 30th September 2019, there are 267 active loan accounts with Kerry County Council. The Council has issued 16 new loans under the Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan scheme to date.

B0903 - PARKING FINES AND CHARGES **€3,164,800**

Draft Budget 2020 reflects additional carparking income generated from targeted carparking enforcement across the county, aligned with the implementation of a countywide Carparking Strategy. This additional income is also required to meet increased loan charges associated with the car parking development programme. This strategy is currently being finalised; it will be brought to the Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) for discussion and it is expected that the strategy will be presented to the full Council in early 2020.

D0201 - PLANNING APPLICATION FEES/CHARGES **€745,000**

**D0801 - FIRE SAFETY CERTIFICATES, DISABILITY ACCESS
CERTIFICATES & INSPECTION FEES** **€296,000**

E0101 - USE OF WASTE DISPOSAL SITES **€1,801,974**

It is not proposed to increase waste disposal charges in framing Budget 2020. The increased income related to increased activity. The cost to dispose of a single bag of waste will remain at €5 and the disposal of 6 bags will remain at €27.50. Continued provision of waste disposal services means that costs must be kept under constant review, in line with the Polluter Pays principle.

E0201 & E0202 - RECYCLING FACILITIES **€566,789**

While acknowledging the significant importance of these facilities countywide, there is a substantial cost in running and operating them. Like our waste disposal charges, there are no proposed increases in charges for 2020 but these costs are also kept under constant review.

E0901 - BURIAL FEES **€300,000**

E1101 - CHARGES FOR ATTENDING AT FIRES **€302,000**

G0404 & G0405 - DOG LICENCE, HORSE & POUND FEES **€337,100**

H1102 - CHARGES ON NON-PRINCIPAL PRIVATE RESIDENCES (NPPR) €800,000

This is a reduced amount on Budget 2019 and, as stated earlier, an unsustainable source of income.

Ms. McAllen said that concluded her overview of the Budget, and estimated income for 2020. The Summary of Directorate Service Priorities for 2020, pages 14-40 of the Chief Executive's Report, sets out the principal services and their objectives and priorities for delivery in 2020. The Directorate reports identify the principal services to be provided, priorities for the delivery of these services and the performance standards to be met in the delivery of these services, including those performance indicators prescribed by NOAC. These are consistent with the overall objectives of the Corporate Plan.

She referred Elected Members to page 52 of the Chief Executive's Report, Directorate Draft Budget Details. She proceeded to brief members on the Division A Housing and Building.

Division A - Housing Services

Ms. McAllen referred members to Pages 11-13 of the Budget Tables and Pages 53-69 of the Chief Executive's Report for details on this Division. Pages 53-58 outline the extensive Capital Programme underway within this Division. She referred members to Page 58 of the Chief Executive's Report for details of the revenue budget for this Division.

Maintenance of LA Units (A0101)

€ 3,252,000

Ms. McAllen said, as this programme is one of the Council's main priority areas, a special effort has been made to maintain and increase the budget allocation in this area in 2020. The combined housing stock of Kerry County Council totals 4,300 units approximately. This is a very sizeable stock, requiring significant resources to maintain. This allocation will provide for the cost of maintaining these assets, labour costs for maintenance and repair crews, purchase of materials, hire of plant and payments to contractors for specialist services.

In the period January-September 2019, a total of 2,800 individual repairs were carried out. A sum of €1.25m is included in the 2020 Budget for the purpose of carrying out pre-letting works to vacant properties. This provision is subject to funding being made available by DHPLG and the availability of Internal Capital Receipts (ICRs). In 2018, 50% approximately of these works were funded by the Department under the Voids Programme, with the balance being funded from the Council's ICRs. Recent indications from the Department suggest that funding under this programme is being reviewed nationally. It is likely that a fundamental policy change will occur with the emphasis moving from the current Voids approach to a planned maintenance programme approach.

Given the level of expenditure in this area, the need to achieve value for money in repairs to both occupied and vacant stock is essential. Given the scale of many of the projects being carried out, the external procurement of contractors is necessary. National Frameworks are in place for electrical and plumbing services. A new Minor Building Works Residential Public Service Bodies Framework went live in June 2019.

In 2019, a specific housing improvement programme of €200,000 was put in place, allowing for upgrading works.

Maintenance & Management of Traveller Accommodation

€318,000

A new Traveller Accommodation Programme (TAP) 2019-2024, pursuant to Section 8 of the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998, was adopted by Council in September 2019.

Estate Maintenance (A0104)**€122,000**

This funding helps to actively encourage residents' associations to participate in the maintenance of estates, which generates a sense of ownership and allows tenants, as part of residents' associations, to decide on the frequency and standard of service provided. This approach has proven to be very successful with residents in our estates.

The availability of this funding and the work of the Tenancy Management Officers has contributed to proactive tenant participation in most Local Authority estates in the county. Currently, the Council is actively involved with 49 residents' associations. This includes two new residents' associations set up in 2019.

Assessment of Housing Needs, Allocations and Transfer (A0201)**€850,000**

This allocation is in respect of the administrative cost of employing investigation officers and administrative support staff engaged in offering housing advice, liaising with the Department of Social Protection, the HSE, other relevant statutory and non-statutory agencies, assessing housing need and making recommendations on the allocation of individual tenancies.

Inspection of Private Rented Dwellings

The Council has a target of 15% inspection of registered tenancies for 2019, with the main focus on HAP, RAS and Leased properties. To date in 2019, 1,060 RTB inspections have been carried out in the county.

Debt Management and Rent Assessment (A0301)**€1,038,000**

This allocation covers costs associated with the collection of rent and tenant purchase annuities and the implementation of the differential rent assessment scheme. The Council continues to work with tenants to assist them in the management of their rent payments and offer a variety of payment methods including Household Budget, Bill Pay, Standing Order, Direct Debit, Cash, or directly to the Revenue Collector. Approximately 82% of tenants regularly use electronic or 'non-cash' payment methods. A significant number of rent customers, particularly in the larger towns of Tralee, Killarney and Listowel, continue to make cash payments at Municipal District Offices. The Council continues to encourage customers who are not utilising electronic options, to do so where feasible.

The Council has a very pro-active approach to assisting tenants who are experiencing trouble in paying their weekly rent. A dedicated office administration team is in place to support Revenue Collectors, to enable them to perform their duties as debt managers in a pro-active manner. The Council continues to work very closely with the Kerry Money Advice and Budgeting Service (KMABS) in this area.

Housing Estate Management & Tenancy Management**€348,000****Homeless Grants, Other Bodies & Homeless Service****€2,910,000**

The Budget for Homeless Services for 2020 is the same as 2019 anticipated outturn of €2,910,000 and has seen an increase in the past number of years. A significant proportion of the cost (90%) is recouped from the DHPLG Homeless allocation to the Southwest Region, of which Kerry County Council is a member.

Technical and Administrative Support (A0601)**€835,000**

This allocation is in respect of the technical, administrative and legal costs involved in the delivery of social housing in the county. Additional resources have been assigned to this area to deal with the increased activity in Turnkey developments and Part V delivery targets.

Loan Charges (A0602)**€422,500**

RAS Operations (A0701)

€7,915,000

The following is a summary of activity in this area:

- Total Active Tenancies - 901 (incl. 109 Approved Housing Body tenancies)
- New tenancies to date in 2019 - 55 (incl. 21 Approved Housing Body tenancies)

Social Housing Leasing Initiative

Long-Term Leasing / Availability Agreements (A0702)

€5,199,000

It is anticipated that the RAS & Leasing Programme will continue to be cost neutral in the 2020 Budget.

Loan Interest and Other Charges (A0801)

€1,785,000

Mortgage Loans

Activity on mortgage loans has increased substantially due to the introduction of the Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan. Since its introduction in February 2018, the Council has received 185 applications. 16 loans of a value €2,087,420 have been drawn down and it is expected that activity in this area will continue to grow in 2020, with an increased volume of applications.

Land Purchase Service

In relation to land loans, the impact on Revenue Budget 2020 amounts to €0.743m expenditure. The Council has reviewed all current land holdings and sites, that are developable, appropriately zoned and with the necessary infrastructure for house building. These are currently included in the Housing Capital Programme out to 2021.

Housing Support Grants (A0901, A0903 & A0905)

€2,397,000

The provision for Housing Support Grants increased to €2,397,000 based on 2019 wherein the Department notified an allocation of €2.397m, of which 20% must be provided by the Council from its own resources. In the year to date, the Council approved 570 new grant applications which, together with the committed grants brought forward from 2018, will fully account for the 2019 funding allocation. To date, the Council has paid out €2.2m under the 3 schemes in 2019. However, as Kerry County Council recognises the immense benefit to be gained from these schemes as living conditions of eligible elderly and disabled household members in the county are improved. The schemes also continue to provide a welcome stimulus package for construction, plumbing and electrical trades in Kerry.

Housing Assistance Payment Programme (HAP) (A12)

The Housing Assistance Payment is provided for on the basis of recoupment.

Efficiencies Achieved During 2019

Ms. McAllen referred Elected Members to page 69 which sets out details of efficiencies achieved during 2019 in the Housing Division. She highlighted that efficiencies achieved during 2019 feed into budget balancing, NOAC and local service indicators, better value for money and use of resources.

Division B - Road Transport & Safety

Ms. McAllen referred Elected Members to Pages 14-16 of the Budget Tables and to pages 70-86 which set out the Revenue work programme for this division. The amount of Roads own resources allocation has increased for 2020 to €18.97m and is outlined in more detail on page 86, it represents a significant portion of the Budget and includes the Councillors allocation of €957,000 maintained at previous years and as agreed at the Municipal District meetings.

These amounts combined with the provision for street cleaning shown under Division E of €2.2m is a considerable Budget allocation.

The own resources allocation in Roads enables Kerry County Council to continue to attract grant funding throughout the year. As previously advised to Members the plant and machinery account is reflected in the Revenue Budget again for 2020 and is reflected as self-financing for Budget 2020, page 85 outlines a number of efficiencies and value for money initiatives taken by the Operations Department in 2019 continuing into 2020 to maximize this budget allocation.

Division C - Water Services

Ms. McAllen referred members to Pages 17-18 of the Budget Tables and Pages 87-89 of the Chief Executive's Report for details on this Division.

Irish Water Operations

Kerry County Council continues to provide Water Services in the county as agents of Irish Water operating under a Service Level Agreement. For 2020, the following service areas are covered under the Service Level Agreement:

C01	Water Supply	€8,192,911
C02	Waste Water Treatment	€3,333,678
C03	Collection of Water/Waste Water Charges/Meter Readers	€244,168
C06	Support to Water Capital Programme	€1,108,127
C07	Agency and Recoupable Services	€301,989

The amounts shown in the tables reflect monies recoupable – Payroll, Central Management Charge (net of Superannuation Income) and, to a lesser extent, Goods and Services as more of this water services expenditure moves over to Irish Water's Financial Procurement system.

Operation & Maintenance of Public Conveniences (C0401) €779,000

Kerry County Council owns and operates public conveniences at 33 locations throughout the county. The continued cooperation and maintenance of these public conveniences is critical in terms of the visitor experience offered to those visiting our county and sampling our beaches and scenery. Budget 2020 includes funding of the caretaking, maintenance and repair of these public conveniences.

The operational arrangements for these facilities are varied. Seven facilities, located at Ballybunion, Portmagee, Sneem, Waterville, Cromane, Kells and Knightstown, are operated by local community groups on behalf of the Council. The Council is most appreciative of the outstanding works of these local groups and provision is made in Budget 2020 to continue with this cooperative approach. This partnership represents good value for money as the service is provided to a high standard at a relatively low cost.

Minor improvements will be carried out as required during 2020 as part of the public convenience upgrade programme

Rural Water Programme (C05)

Provision made for the Rural Water Programme is covered on pages 88 and 89 of the Chief Executive's Report.

Division D - Development Management

Ms. McAllen referred members to Pages 19-21 of the Budget Tables and Pages 90-114 of the Chief Executive's Report for details on this Division.

1. Planning and Sustainable Development

The Development Management/Planning Function Programme of the Council Budget includes:

Forward Planning (D0101)

A key policy, in which Planning staff will be involved in 2020, is the finalisation of the Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy (RSES) by the Southern Regional Assembly.

Once completed, the regional policies and strategies in the plan will inform Kerry County Council's review of the Kerry County Development Plan, which will commence in early 2020 and set out a vision for the future of this county in a sustainable manner for the benefit of all the people of Kerry and those visiting the county. The Council is committed to ensuring that the vision, goals and objectives of the plans are achieved.

Statutory Plans and Policy including Local Area Plans (D0101) €741,000

This allocation covers the salaries and other costs associated with the preparation of Local Area Plans and other Statutory Plans and Policy. A sum of €80,000 is to be transferred from Capital to assist with planning studies, principally the Listowel, Daingean Uí Chúis and East Iveragh Local Area Plans and Masterplans for Kilcummin and John Joe Sheehy Road, Tralee.

All these works will be carried out in-house by the Council's highly-trained Planning staff, leading to significant cost savings.

Other work carried out by the Forward Planning Unit include:

- Completion of the Masterplan for Fenit.
- Project Team to develop the Masterplan for Áras Pádraig/Lewis Road Opportunity Site and progress the Smarter Travel project for Killarney Town.
- Further development of the Island of Geese site development

Significant SEA and Appropriate Assessment (AA) support is now provided by the Forward Planning Unit to all sections of the Local Authority in relation to Plans and Projects requiring EIA preliminary examinations and screening, AA screening and subsequent Stage 2 reports, where relevant.

Also, all SEAs and HDAs required in relation to Plans, Strategies and Variations, etc., are carried out in-house by existing staff.

Planning Control (D0201) €1,976,000

There has been a further increase in activity levels in planning control. Approximately 1,370 planning applications were received countywide during 2019.

Enforcement Costs (D0301) €942,000

Activity in this area remains constant with the table on page 92 outlining activity.

Housing Estates Unit

Unfinished Housing Estates / Taking in Charge of Estates

The Housing Estates Unit manage a very active "Taking in Charge" programme. A total of 7 estates have been formally taken in charge to date in 2019. A further 6 have recently been advertised and they will be taken in charge once the statutory process has been completed. In addition to the above, Kerry County Council currently has 44 "Taking in Charge" applications on hand.

2. Tourism Development (D05)

General Economic Promotion (D0501) €1,051,000

This allocation includes the salaries, operational and associated costs of the Council's Tourism Unit.

County Kerry Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2016-2022

Of the 273 Actions included in *the County Kerry Tourism Strategy & Action Plan 2016-2022*, a total of 65% have been completed and progressed. The various groups who were engaged in the preparation of the Strategy are helping to lead its implementation. Pages 94-96 outline the activities and extensive work programme of this unit.

Accessible Tourism

Page 97 provides an update on Accessible Tourism.

3. Community Development incorporating Built Infrastructure

Tourist Facilities Operations (D0502)

€193,500

Built Infrastructure

This allocation relates to the staff costs for the Blennerville Windmill in Tralee together with a contribution of €96,000 in respect of the operation of the Tralee Bay Wetlands Centre and Valentia Lighthouse.

Tralee Bay Wetlands

During the current year, work has progressed to upgrade facilities at the Centre. An upgraded accounts software package has been installed and new logo and signs designed. Work is ongoing at both executive and board level to strengthen the management of the Centre in relation to further marketing and business development.

Blennerville Windmill, Tralee Steam Railway Train & Valentia Lighthouse

Grant approval in the sum of €100,000 has been received, under the Town & Village Renewal 2018 Scheme, to replace the sails on the windmill. The procurement process is currently under-way and work will be completed in Spring 2020, in time for the 2020 season.

Community & Enterprise Function (D06)

General Community & Enterprise Expenses (D0601)

€5,526,000

This allocation reflects a contra item in relation to grants.

Building Control (D08)

Building Control Inspection & Enforcement Costs

€366,000

This allocation reflects increased activity on last year.

Economic Development and Promotion (D09)

Economic Development and Promotion (D0905)

€2,831,000

The role of the Economic Development Unit (EDU) is to promote economic development and create a positive environment for job creation. It welcomes approaches from external sources, responding to queries and providing services as required, and focuses on longer term strategic economic goals.

- Developing a long term strategic economic plan for the county – Kerry 2040.
- Working with other Directorates and outside partners in identifying opportunities for funding applications under the Town and Village Renewal, Urban Regeneration and Development Fund, Rural Regeneration and Development Fund, Enterprise Ireland Regional Development Fund and European Programmes.
- County/Regional working group of State Agencies including Kerry County Council, IDA, Enterprise Ireland and the Institute of Technology Tralee to coordinate economic development in the county.
- The Council continues to support the Industry Cluster Kerry Sci-tech.

- Oversight of the implementation of the Economic Actions in the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP).
- Working with the local development companies in supporting the delivery of LEADER in the Council's role as financial partner.
- Business Development Planning.
- Implementation of key economic actions highlighted in the Regional Action Plan for Jobs.
- Identifying funding opportunities, both nationally and through the various European Programmes, for the delivery of projects directly by the Council and also through partner agencies including the Local Development Companies, Údarás na Gaeltachta and other bodies.
- The Council continues to actively support a number of Enterprise Hubs within the county including the Daingean Uí Chúis Hub, Sneem Digital Hub, Kerry Food Hub, development of the Listowel Food Hub project and Castleisland Carnegie co-working space.
- Land use planning and prioritisation.
- Skellig Centre for Research and Innovation (Skellig CRI).

Greenway Programmes

Included in this service division is the €1.2m own-resource funding provision. It is planned that works to construct both Greenways will commence in November 2019.

Urban and Rural Regeneration Development Funds

Local Enterprise Office (D0906)

€1,274,000

This allocation is to provide grant and training support for micro business in the county. Objectives and the priorities for 2020 are outlined on page 109 and include:

- Mitigating the possible impact of Brexit for client businesses will be a key focus for 2020. The budget for 2020 was prepared on the assumption of continued financial support from Enterprise Ireland at current levels.
- Enhanced Brexit related supports to businesses e.g. Customs training, supply chain advice, regulatory advice.
- Loan provision to 14 businesses through Microfinance Ireland loan schemes.
- Delivery of Online Trading Voucher Scheme to 44 businesses.
- Training.
- Client referral and protocol development with sister agencies e.g. Enterprise Ireland, Skillnets, Connect Ireland, LEADER, Department of Social Protection, BIM, Fáilte Ireland, etc.

Property Management Costs (D1001)

€136,000

This allocation covers part of the loan charges amounting to €102,386 in respect of the Killorglin Area Services Centre.

Heritage & Conservation Services & Archaeology

€348,000

Heritage & Conservation Services

The Council's Heritage Office works to promote awareness, interest, and pride in the abundant heritage assets to be found in the county. The office works closely with various partners to ensure that the county's vast heritage is being protected, enhanced and promoted at a local and national level.

Key Projects for 2020

Historic Shopfronts of Kerry

This project will highlight the historic shopfronts throughout the county's towns and villages and will showcase these hidden gems in a Kerry Historic Shopfront Trail booklet.

Conservation Workshops (One per MD)

Archaeology Department – Projects/Achievements 2019

- Mid-Kerry Portal Tombs Project (Killaclohane).
- This office was also involved in the preparation of an application for grant funding to ORIS 2019 to enhance access to the Killaclohane II tomb in Killaclohane Wood. The proposal would also see the reconstruction of this collapsed Early Neolithic burial monument.
- ADAPT Northern Heritage EU INTERREG Project: The second series of workshops and site assessments were carried out at Ballinskelligs Castle, Priory and Graveyard in early August and are being reviewed and assessed.

Division E - Environmental Services

Ms. McAllen referred members to Pages 22-24 of the Budget Tables and Pages 115-137 of the Chief Executive's Report for details on this Division.

The operations of this section are diverse and specialised, ranging from technical laboratory analysis to management of bring-centres to the clean-up of illegal dumping sites and educational campaigns. All elements contribute to ensuring our county's environment is maintained to the highest standards. The provision of veterinary services, including the operation of the dog pound, and the management of the county's burial grounds are also coordinated through the Environment Section.

Operation, Maintenance of Civic Amenity Sites and Aftercare of Landfill (E01)

The cost summary for Budget 2020 is outlined in the table on page 117.

Civic Amenity Sites Operations (E0101)

€2,489,000

This budget allocation provides for the North Kerry Landfill and five transfer stations, including operation and maintenance of the facilities, transport of waste and the disposal cost of waste to a private waste operator and treatment of effluent off-site, as well as administration costs.

Along with the ongoing maintenance costs, EPA and Health & Safety compliance at our civic amenity and bring bank sites requires an ongoing programme of upgrade works at these facilities. Provision is made in the 2020 Revenue Budget to cover these costs.

The budget provision also provides for the aftercare cost of North Kerry Landfill; this includes the maintenance of the site, wages, leachate management/collection and disposal, landfill gas management, building maintenance, site management, security and ongoing EPA licence requirements.

Significant expenditure has been incurred during 2019 in complying with our EPA waste licence requirements, including the completion of necessary electrical upgrade works. This has included insurance costs for Environmental Liabilities along with works such as gas and leachate management.

Leachate management continues to be an expensive cost element for the North Kerry Landfill. Leachate continues to be transported by tanker from the site to the Tralee Wastewater Treatment Plant for treatment and disposal. Works carried out between 2016 and 2019 have reduced the volume of leachate on site and we will

continue to look at options, such as on-site treatment, to reduce our costs in this area going forward.

A grant to facilitate the carrying out of Environmental Risk Assessments at Historic Landfills in Kerry has been received from the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCA) and will be completed by the end of the year.

Recycling Facilities Operations (E0201) **€615,000**

The Council operates recycling facilities at 5 Civic Amenity Sites - Killarney, Milltown, Kenmare, Caherciveen and Ionad Athchúrsála agus Dramhaíola Chorca Dhuibhne. Usage of these recycling facilities resulted in an approximate 2,020 tonnes of recyclables being accepted in 2018, which is a slight increase on 2017 figures. The facilities are very well used by residents and visitors alike.

Bring Centres Operations (E0202) **€398,000**

The Environment Section maintains around 100 Bring Banks located at various locations around the county. The usage of these recycling facilities resulted in over 3,674 tonnes of recyclables being accepted in 2018, which represents an increase of 140 tonnes over the previous year's figures.

As a measure to counteract illegal and indiscriminate dumping of non-recyclable materials at these sites, the Council has the cooperation of 41 community groups to participate in our "Adopt a Bring Bank" scheme. This involves the local community helping to police the Bring Bank sites in their community, to limit illegal dumping and help enhance the site. The Environment Section pays an annual contribution to the local community, provides a 240L wheelie bin and gives collection credit for their disposal.

Provision of Waste Collection Service (E04)

Provision is made in relation to the provision of the refuse service in the former Killarney Town Council area.

Litter Management (E05)

Litter Warden Service (E0501) **€228,000**

The Council employs 3 full-time Litter Wardens, county-wide, on a permanent basis. Assistance is also provided on a part-time basis by the Traffic/Litter Wardens in the towns of Daingean Uí Chúis, Cahersiveen, Castleisland, Killorglin, Killarney, Kenmare and Listowel. This will be further complemented by the appointment of Municipal District Enforcement Officers in 2020.

Known dumping and littering black spots around the county are monitored on a regular basis (including by means of covert camera surveillance where possible) in an effort to identify offenders and to act as a deterrent against unauthorised dumping.

Litter Control Initiatives (E0502) **€121,000**

This figure provides for Litter Control Initiatives, incorporating the Council's Awareness Programmes which are promoted through local media, schools, Tidy Towns Committees and community groups.

The following are some examples of the many environmental awareness raising activities undertaken in 2019 in this area: -

- The Spring Clean-Up of the county in 2019 was a great success, in particular the County Clean Up Day on April 13th.

- During 2019, the Council had an input in promoting environmental initiatives at a number of festivals in Kerry, such as the Rose of Tralee and Daingean Uí Chúis Food Festival.
- Provision of signage and dog foul bag dispensers in public areas for dog owners who walk their dogs and various campaigns during the year, to ensure dog owners are aware of their responsibilities to licence and control their dogs and pick up after them.
- In 2019, 37 schools renewed their flags on Water Conservation, Energy Conservation, Travel and Biodiversity and Global Citizenship. The Council currently has 165 Green Flag Awards presented to both Primary and Secondary Schools and hope to increase this number during 2020.
- The Council has 13 Blue Flags for its beaches and a Blue Flag for Fenit Marina. There were 5 Green Coast awards in 2019.
- Maintaining our 'Adopt a Road' programme.
- The Council continued to work closely with Tidy Towns groups during 2019.

Street Cleaning (E06)

Contribution to Street Cleaning Service (E0601)

€2,211,000

The work programme associated with the level of service to be provided was considered and adopted in the Schedule of Municipal District Work Plans by each Municipal District in early 2019.

This amount is a significant provision from our own resources each year. However, as a tourist county, it is acknowledged that factors such as exceptional weather conditions or local festivals can result in increased numbers of visitors to the county and some flexibility is provided in the allocation for such contingencies.

This is a valuable support service to the many volunteers involved in local Tidy Towns groups and reflects the continuing improvement in the marks being achieved in the National Tidy Towns Competition.

Monitoring of Waste Regulations (inc. Private Landfills) (E0701)

€284,000

The County of Kerry (Segregation, Storage and Presentation of Household and Commercial Waste) Bye Laws 2019 were adopted earlier this year. Provision is included in this area for additional resources to deal with compliance and enforcement of these Bye Laws.

Service and Maintenance of Burial Grounds (E09)

Operation and Maintenance of Burial Grounds (E0901)

€943,000

There are currently 157 burial grounds in the county. Kerry County Council continues to work closely with community organisations who undertake excellent maintenance works in an increasing number of graveyards throughout the county and the Council is highly appreciative of their support and assistance.

The Council is currently working with approximately 60 community groups. In 2019, the Council made financial contributions to 43 of these organisations in recognition of their voluntary work in over 50 burial grounds.

Operation Costs Civil Defence (E1001)

€275,000

The key activities of the Civil Defence in 2019 are outlined on page 126.

Derelict Sites (E1004)

€139,900

We have an active and ongoing programme with a view to addressing dereliction in our towns and villages.

Water Safety Operation (E1005)**€496,600**

The allocation includes salaries, travel, equipment, refurbishment of lifeguard stations and other costs associated with this programme. The Council will continue to provide a Lifeguard Service in 2020 at all our Blue Flag beaches where the Blue Flag Criteria or a Water Safety Risk Assessment requires us to do so.

Voluntary Rescue Services at Ballybunion, Ballinskelligs, Ballyheigue, Banna, The Cashen, Derrynane and Killarney, together with Irish Water Safety and R.N.L.I., will again receive financial support in 2020.

Operation of Fire Service (E11)

The estimated cost of providing an efficient and effective Fire and Emergency Service for the county for the year 2020 amounts to an increased provision of €6,044,403 and includes the operational, training and service support costs. The Council operates 10 fully equipped Fire Stations.

The Fire Service has responded to 858 incidents up to the end of September 2019. This represents an 14.1% increase on the 752 incidents during the same period in 2018. Road Traffic Collisions, Gorse Fires and Chimney Fires are the major incident types requiring fire brigade mobilisation.

The Fire Service has responded to 252 Gorse Fire incidents up to the end of September 2019. This represents an 33.33% increase over the 189 Gorse Fire incidents during the same period in 2018.

The Fire Service will continue to upgrade its fleet during 2020.

Fire Services Training (E1103)**€705,000**

This allocation is an increase on the 2019 Budget.

Fire Prevention and Education (E1202)**€207,500**

The Kerry Fire Service continues to implement the Fire Service Change Programme which incorporates an education programme for Fire Prevention and Education of the public.

As part of this programme, the Fire Services Department, in cooperation with the Community Services Department, arranges for the procurement, distribution and installation of smoke alarms in the homes of vulnerable members of the community throughout the county, free of charge. The purchase of these alarms is funded by the DHPLG under the Community Smoke Alarm Schemes.

The Primary Schools Fire Safety Programme, targeted at children between the ages of 8 and 9 years of age, continues to be rolled out by Kerry Fire Service personnel. Kerry County Fire Service also facilitates the organisation and delivery of fire safety in hotels by means of periodic seminars.

Water Quality, Air and Noise Pollution (E13)**Water Quality Management (E1301)****€708,000**

The Council carries out a broad range of activities in this area.

Operation of the Council Laboratory

The Draft Budget allocation for Laboratory costs is included in E0701 and E1301. The portion applicable to Water Services is reflected in Division C and recouped under the Service Level Agreement (SLA). In 2019, the laboratory will process at least 4,600 samples, involving approximately 56,000 tests.

Laboratory Accreditation

Attainment of Laboratory accreditation by INAB (Irish National Accreditation Board) was maintained, and the scope was extended to cover at least two extra parameters

in 2019. It is hoped to have a further two parameters formally added in December by the accreditation board.

Climate Change & Flooding (E1501)

€396,000

This is a new budget heading which captures Energy/Climate Change Unit.

Energy

The Council has made significant progress in the area of energy conservation in recent years. It utilises renewable energy in the form of wood pellet, wood chip, solar thermal, photovoltaic, heat pumps, high efficiency boilers and lighting and energy management practices to reduce expenditure and improve energy efficiency.

Achievements and highlights in 2018 and 2019 are outlined on page 135. Page 136 outlines targets for 2020 across all directorates in the organisation.

Flooding – Catchment-based Flood Risk Assessment & Management (CFRAM)

Catchment-based Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) programme schemes will be progressed to design and planning stages in 2020 by the Council, through the establishment of a dedicated project team in conjunction with the OPW, for these programmes.

Division F - Recreation and Amenity

Ms. McAllen referred members to Pages 25-26 of the Budget Tables and Pages 138-148 of the Chief Executive's Report for details on this Division.

Leisure Facilities Operations (F0101)

€359,000

The costs in this area relate to the Killarney Swimming Pool and Sports & Leisure Centre and include a reduced amount for the repayment of loan charges.

Contribution to External Bodies Leisure Facilities (F0103)

€60,000

This allocation includes the provision of financial support from the Council to Ballybunion Swimming Pool. This is in recognition of the importance of this facility in supporting the area and its business community and the need for an indoor leisure facility for those visiting this seaside destination. It also includes a contribution for financial support to Tralee Sports and Leisure Centre.

Operation of Library and Archival Service (F02)

Library Service Operations (F0201)

€2,650,300

This allocation provides for staff and administration costs of the Kerry Library service. Kerry Library operates 9 full time branch libraries throughout the county. The Mobile Library service visits 93 communities throughout rural and urban Kerry and a dedicated Local History and Archives section operates from Library Headquarters.

The service is underpinned by the Libraries National Strategy 2018-2022 and the Kerry Library Development Plan 2016-2021.

Kerry Library works at many levels with communities countywide.

Details of all services are available on the library website www.kerrylibrary.ie.

Pages 139-140 outline details on the Reading Programme, Healthy Ireland and the Work Assistance Programme.

Online Services

The provision of online services continues to grow, reaching 97,674 in 2018, up 66% on the previous year. All are available free of charge with access through the website www.kerrylibrary.ie.

Purchase of Books, CD's etc. (F0204) **€280,000**

The Book Fund has been maintained at €280,000.

Outdoor Leisure Areas Operations (F03)
Parks, Pitches and Open Spaces (F0301) **€1,470,900**

Amenity Areas

The maintenance of amenity areas throughout the county, though funded under this programme, is carried out by the Municipal District Area staff.

Playgrounds (F0302) **€141,000**

This allocation provides for 35 playgrounds located throughout the county.

Beaches (F0303) **€516,000**

This includes an allocation of €436,433 towards beach cleaning. Support will be given to active community groups who assist in beach cleaning. This allocation also includes a provision of €48,528 to support our Blue Flag Beaches initiative.

Community, Sport and Recreational Development (F04)

Community Grants (F0401) **€37,000**

This allocation is in respect of a contribution towards Kerry ETB to support Kerry Life Education, a health education and substance/alcohol abuse awareness programme across the entire County.

Recreation Development (F0404) **€207,850**

Kerry Recreation and Sports Partnership (KRSP)

The overall aim of KRSP is to increase participation levels in sport and physical activity in the county and to ensure that local resources are used to best effect across the county by all ages and all levels and abilities.

Operation of Arts Programme (F05)

Administration of Arts Programme (F0501 & F0502) **€568,600**

Our work programme is supported by the Arts Council, the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and Creative Ireland. Budgets are maximised through leveraging national funding, where possible, to support the Arts sector. Details of the extensive work programme is outlined on page 146.

Administration of Creative Ireland Kerry Programme

The draft budget allocation includes a provision in respect of contributions to voluntary groups such as Siamsa Tire, Kerry Film Festival, St Johns Theatre and Arts Centre, Tech Amergin, Cill Rialaig, Kenmare Carnegie Arts Centre, Kerry Writers Museum and Listowel Writer's Week.

Museums Operations (F0503) **€469,000**

There is a strong and varied collection of approximately 4,000 objects. Kerry County Museum is a designated repository under the National Monuments Act, enabling it to retain archaeological objects on behalf of the State and operate to the highest standards of collections care by participating in the Heritage Council's Museum Standards Programme for Ireland.

In 2020, a revamped Tom Crean Room telling the story of one of Kerry's most famous explorers will open and preparations will continue for a new exhibition in 2021/2022 to mark the next phase of centenary commemorations.

Over the course of the past 10 years, the museum has developed a year-round education and events programme. Its Easter, Summer, Halloween, Science Week and

Christmas programmes for schools and families have contributed to an increase of visitor figures of over 65% since 2015.

Division G - Agriculture, Education, Health and Welfare

Ms. McAllen referred members to Pages 27-28 of the Budget Tables and Pages 149-152 of the Chief Executive's Report for details on this Division.

Maintenance of Land Drainage Areas (G0101) **€100,000**

This allocation is required to ensure continued drainage of the 3 key tidal areas maintained by the Council – Akeragh, Banna and Lough Gill.

Operation and Maintenance of Piers/Harbours (G0201) **€306,000**

The Council has responsibility for the operation of 59 piers and slipways located around the county. The allocation covers the cost of routine maintenance works and energy costs associated with the operation of the piers, provision of tourist moorings and aids to navigation. It also includes pontoon maintenance, pay costs for the Harbour Constables and communication costs associated with this programme.

Operation & Maintenance of Piers/Harbours, Fenit (G0203) **€939,000**

This allocation relates to Fenit Harbour and the maintenance of Fenit Marina and Fenit Lighthouse. The continuing development of Fenit Harbour is of strategic importance to the economic growth in the county. A licence application has been submitted to the EPA for a multi-annual dredging licence. This is necessary to ensure an adequate channel depth leading into the harbour for the safe berthing of large ships required by the largest user of the port. Subject to EPA licencing, it is proposed to carry out targeted dredging works to the main pier in Fenit Harbour in 2020.

Coastal Protection (G03)

Planned Protection of Coastal Regions (G0302) **€228,000**

This funding is provided to cover the requirements that arise for coastal protection works around the Kerry coastline. The Council is required to cover a percentage of the costs of any scheme co-funded by the State, which has an impact on Council finances.

Continual study of the Kerry coastline, and the potential impact of erosion on the coast and infrastructure, has seen a sum provided for in 2020 to fund existing commitments and to leverage grant aid for coastal protection works and further studies.

Provision of Veterinary Service (G0401) **€208,000**

Operation of Dog Warden Service (G0404) **€180,000**

The allocation provides for 4 Dog Wardens and 1 Pound Keeper.

Other Animal Welfare Services (incl. Horse Control) (G0405) **€71,900**

The allocation for Horse Control provides for the control of horses in Kerry under the Control of Horses Act 1996.

Division H - Miscellaneous Services

Ms. McAllen referred members to Pages 29-31 of the Budget Tables and Pages 153-160 of the Chief Executive's Report for details on this Division.

Administration of Rates Office (H0301) **€591,000**

Debt Management Service Rates (H0302) **€250,000**

Refunds and Irrecoverable Rates (H0303) **€7,000,000**

The allocation provided by the Finance Directorate is in respect of irrecoverable rates, in cases of vacant/disused properties, or in relation to settlements negotiated with ratepayers. Many rated vacant properties are currently with the Valuation Office pending a revision of valuation, to reflect their current status, or pending a decision to de-rate the property. It is expected that, as part of the countywide rates revaluation process, which has recently begun by the Valuation Office, these outstanding properties will be finalised.

Rates on Vacant Properties

Section 31 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 allowed for Members of Local Authorities to vary the level of rates refunds that apply in individual Local Electoral Areas within the authority's overall administrative area. Regulations provide that any decision to alter the rate of refund be taken at the annual budget meeting and that the rate of refund decided be in respect of Local Electoral Areas. It is necessary for the Council to take such a decision at each relevant budget meeting. The absence of a decision to vary the refund means that the existing legislative provisions regarding the rate of refund applies i.e. providing a full rates credit or refund in respect of properties where the bona-fide ability of the landlords to obtain a suitable tenant, at a reasonable rent, is proven or the property is vacant due to the execution of repairs/alterations. All landlords must fully satisfy the Council regarding these requirements, prior to any credit/refund.

The Members will be aware that this Council has carried out analysis that outlines that this source of revenue would provide a very low collection rate and would disproportionately impact areas outside of the main County Towns. The legislation refers only to Local Electoral Areas and does not provide the ability to vary the rate of refund within Local Electoral Areas in order to apply only to the larger towns. Considering this and the potential impact outside of the larger towns, it would be considered that any financial provision in this area would not be prudent and, given that the matter is being examined at national level, it is recommended that the position remains the same. The Local Government Rates and Other Matters Act 2019, which was passed by the Oireachtas in July, aims to modernise the collection of commercial rates, and is referred to in the circular in Appendix B of the Chief Executive's Report.

Franchise Costs (H04)

Register of Electors Costs (H0401) **€170,100**

Local Election Costs (H0402) **€40,000**

Operation of Morgue and Coroner Expenses (H05)

Coroner Fees and Expenses (H0501) **€308,000**

The Draft Budget includes the costs associated with the administration of the Council's obligations under the Coroners Act.

Local Representation/Civic Leadership (H09)

Representational Payments (H0901) **€576,000**

Cathaoirleach/Leas Cathaoirleach/Mayor/Cathaoirleach MD Allowances (H0902) **€72,000**

Annual Allowances - Local Authority Members (H0903) **€331,600**

**General Municipal Allocation (GMA) /
Community Support Fund (H0909)**

€1,707,000

The Councillor allocation for Specific Operations of €957,000 has been maintained at €29,000 per Councillor. This is provided from the Council's own resources for discretionary works.

Administration & Management of the Community Support Fund

The Community Support Fund which provides an annual allocation of €750,000 from the General Municipal Allocation to support community groups active across the county. Since 2017, a total over €13.8 million has been targeted in Kerry through National and EU Grant Schemes on 576 projects.

Motor Taxation Operation (H1001)

€789,400

Agency and Recoupable Services (H11)

Agency and Recoupable Services (H1101)

€3,314,997

The Local Government Operational Procurement Centre (LGOPC)

Presently, the LGOPC maintains 13 Live Frameworks and one Live Dynamic Purchasing System for Local Government and public service bodies under these categories, representing an estimated total annual spend in the order of €530m. These arrangements engage in excess of 2,400 different suppliers, the majority of whom are small to medium enterprises, with a significant amount of those being from the Micro Enterprise sector.

Central Management Charges

Ms. McAllen referred members to Page 33 of the Budget Tables and Pages 161-170 of the Chief Executive's Report for details on this Division.

Maintenance & Upkeep of Corporate Buildings (J0101)

€2,095,836

This budget includes caretaking, security and maintenance costs for the Áras an Chontae Campus and other corporate offices around the county, including Castleisland Area Services Centre, Castleisland Library, the Area Office and the Water Services Department, Area Services Centre in Killorglin, the Town Hall at Princes Quay, the Town Hall, in Killarney, the Local Government Operational Procurement Centre, Áras an Phiarsaigh Listowel and the Ashe Memorial Hall, Tralee.

The Council has approximately 9,000 sq. ft. of rented office accommodation under its control. Existing rents are kept under regular review and more preferential rates are negotiated where possible.

The FMU works with the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) and utilises National Contracts and Frameworks to achieve savings in the purchase of stationery, paper, office supplies and janitorial consumables, as well as procuring services relating to the operation and maintenance of the Council's corporate facilities.

The FMU continues to identify areas where the running and operational cost of corporate facilities can be reduced, by carrying out upgrade works and renovations. During 2019, the Killarney Cultural Centre was refurbished to provide a modern, contemporary Arts Performance Centre in Killarney and the former Eir building in Daingean Uí Chúis was refurbished to provide a new Area Office. New offices were also provided at 24 Denny Street for the Homeless Information Centre. The roof and windows of the Castleisland Carnegie Building, a protected structure, were replaced.

All works to Corporate Facilities continue to be designed, managed and constructed in-house by the FMU.

General Corporate Services (J02)

Corporate General Policy (J0201)

€1,852,041

This allocation includes a Contribution to Local Government Management Agency, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) costs, costs associated with the administration of the Freedom of Information Act and Media, Communications and Customer Relations, Insurances/Risk Management and Oifig na Gaeilge.

Insurances / Risk Management

This unit proactively administers and manages litigant risk to the Local Authority in respect of its various insurance policies, particularly in relation to Public Liability risk.

Audit Services (J0202)

€323,472

This allocation provides for the Internal Audit function.

Communication Costs (J0203)

€629,829

Information and Communication Technology (J03)

As with all business sectors, the Council has increasingly invested in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and Information Systems (IS) to provide and manage Council services throughout the organisation.

In 2020, the Council will continue to develop its information security resilience and recovery capabilities in light of growing cyber security risks.

Maintenance of Networks and PC's (J0301)

€1,454,369

Provision has been made to supporting over 900 computers and users across the organisation in over 50 locations, and over 200 printers, as well as the server and storage infrastructure which is critical for Council services and data storage. The cost of providing Internet services is also included in this sub-service.

Applications (J0305)

€551,655

Provision has been made for the support, implementation and development of systems across the range of Local Authority activities, including key systems in Planning, Housing, Roads, Fire, Finance, Library Services and Environment.

Print/Post Room Services (J0401)

€39,925

Human Resources Administration (J0501)

€1,962,429

Health & Safety and Staff Welfare (J0502)

€296,481

Payroll Administration (J0503)

€351,036

Financial & Management Accounting (J0601, J0602 & J0603)

€2,274,825

This provision relates to the administration of the finance function, including salaries and office administration costs. Functions covered by this budget include Budgetary, Financial and Treasury Management, Financial Control and Management, Payroll and Accounts Payable. This provision also includes a sum of €50,000 as part of the contribution to the annual fees to the LGMA. Page 169 covers the extensive work programme.

Pensions & Lump Sums (J0701)

€8,593,634

This provision is an increase on the previous year and is projected to increase into the future.

Area Offices Costs (J0801)

€415,985

Ms. McAllen said that concluded her presentation of the Revenue Budget for 2020.

The Cathaoirleach and all members complimented the Chief Executive and Head of Finance on their presentations, and staff for compiling the Budget Report.

Cathaoirleach Niall Kelleher acknowledged that there has been a body of work done, from agreeing the LPT in September and agreeing the Municipal District budgets, to get a balanced budget presented today to the Elected Members for consideration today. It is important to be in a position to utilise national funding as it arises. There are serious issues facing the Council regarding housing and homelessness, with Elected Members dealing with people in a rental market where landlords are issuing notices to quit and leaving the rental sector, as well as serious issues with HAP thresholds. He asked how many HAP applications assessed by Kerry County Council are above the percentage norm in relation to emergency needs. In 2019 we have adopted €2.1m and we have overrun by €1.3m; the adopted amount itself was a large increase on the previous year on the amount of homelessness this Local Authority has to deal with. The Department is refusing to address homelessness. He expressed concern that the Housing Capital Programme shows approval to acquire 10 houses in 2020. Many properties on the market require further financial investment to bring them up to standard, which is not a viable option for people trying to buy their home. This leads to problems with more families presenting at the Homeless Unit as they are unable to source properties. A national scheme is required to support the return of derelict houses to the market, especially in towns and villages, including over and beside commercial premises, where there are high vacancy rates. He said he called for the Councillors Allocation to be increased at Municipal District level and it was not supported. This increase was sought because the cost of works are increasing and, as a result, less work is being done. There are increases in the Roads Budget. The discretionary part of the Councillors Allocations, when Members are being strategic in how they are using it, leaves little of the allocation for the Member to use. With regard to energy, he said he hopes that where there are community energy generation projects being developed, e.g. in Dingle, that this Local Authority, as a major consumer of electricity, will support such developments when communities want to deliver them. In relation to community water schemes maintenance and repairs, he said there was a commitment regarding the public water use points being rolled out to other towns, especially on the Wild Atlantic Way, yet there appears to be no provision for this in the draft budget. There is a reference only to a sum for maintenance for these group schemes. He said he would like to see provision within the Water Services Budget for this roll out.

Cllr. Michael O'Shea referred to the Rates Revaluation process being undertaken by the Valuation Office, Dublin, and asked if an increase in rates is foreseen following the revaluation process. Any increase in rates could result in businesses in small villages being forced to close. He complimented the Housing team for their tremendous work. He asked for an update regarding a turnkey housing development in West Kerry, for which social housing applicants are waiting for allocations to same for many years. He said in the Dingle area adults are living with their parents due to lack of housing availability. There is a focus on building houses in areas where property is at a high premium. He asked why housing developments are not being built in surrounding areas. He welcomed that housing units will be delivered in 2019 by way of Approved Housing Body schemes. He asked if people outside the threshold for social housing could be facilitated with affordable sites on lands where Approved Housing Bodies are now purchasing houses for social need. He asked for a mix of tenure in new housing developments. In relation to Roads, he asked how many General Operatives were

employed following the recent interviews. He said the Councillors Allocation has not been increased and supported the call for an increase in this allocation. He said if the allocation cannot be increased, could the Councillors Allocation be payable only on the product required for a job and not on the labour. Kerry County Council does have provision for the labour costs. He asked for an update on the assessment of Local Improvement Scheme applications. He asked why lighting has not been provided at the roundabout provided in Milltown. He asked how an excess of expenditure is arising in relation to Irish Water. He complimented Kerry County Council on assisting the Fleadh Cheoil in Milltown and said it will be held in Milltown again in 2020 which is of great benefit to the community. He welcomed the provision for the Civic Amenity Sites and asked if an additional staff member could be assigned to the Dingle Transfer Station from May to September when it is particularly busy. In relation to Parks and Open Spaces, he asked if signage warning patrons regarding Lyme disease have been erected in the National Park in Killarney. He said the litter bins at Inch Beach should be in place all year round and asked that they would be put back in place immediately. In relation to Kerry County Council's €4.8m insurance premium, he said he has asked why the names of claimants are not provided to the Elected Members; Kerry County Council is listed as the 4th highest in the country for claims. He said all claims against Kerry County Council are in open court and should be available to Elected Members. He said he also sought information regarding legal costs for defending this Local Authority in legal cases.

Cllr. Bobby O'Connell asked how close the expenditure presented in the draft budget today is to that which was presented at the LPT meeting in September. He asked if concerns raised by the Local Government Auditor have been addressed in the draft budget. He referred to the provision of €128,000 for waste regulations and said greater enforcement is required to ensure householders are required to account for how they are disposing of their refuse.

Cllr. Jimmy Moloney referred to the Listowel Municipal District road maintenance budget and said this is the second year in a row that the budget has been expended before the year end. The roads in the Listowel Municipal District are in a terrible condition and the budget is spent. It is also affecting street cleaning in Listowel, Ireland's Tidiest Town. In relation to the provision of €1.2m for greenways is important to note that this came from the Local Property Tax increase agreed by Elected Members. He welcomed that a start date for works on the greenway will be announced shortly. He commended the allocation of Kerry County Council contributions to festivals which is of great benefit. He said it is important that provision is made for match funding of projects. He welcomed the increase in the provision for the Arts Programme and commitment to supporting events across the county. International events should be supported from the central budget. With regard to the provision of €4,898,000 for the Fire Service, he said he believes of the 105 retained fire fighters, not all of them would be available when required. He asked how much has been provided for the necessary training for new entrants to the fire service. He expressed concern that the street cleaning budget in Listowel is being curtailed because of the lack for funding for maintenance works.

Cllr. Michael Gleeson said the draft budget does not have a provision for a programme to provide water fountains in town centres and playgrounds. This should be a priority. While acknowledging the recent progress regarding the provision of cycling facilities in Killarney, the county is lagging behind in the provision of cycling lanes and covered cycle parking bays. He said Government must take action and introduce necessary legislation to allow access to the many archaeological and historic sites on farming

lands across the county, which are not accessible due to insurance problems. The Skellig CRI project is a great example of what this Local Authority can do. He referred to St. Finan's Hospital, Killarney, and said this building must be developed to have a use that can enrich the community. He welcomed the progress being made on the Áras Phádraig project. He referred to the N22 route, a primary road into the county, and said the road is disintegrating and must be addressed. He said he is waiting for a report on a roundabout and understands that the engineer that was working on it has left the Council. He said Elected Members should be kept informed of staff changes when it may delay the progress of projects. He referred to a scheme whereby Kerry County Council bulk purchased composting bins and sold them to the public and said consideration should be given to running this scheme again. He said it was his understanding that retirement gratuities were for those leaving politics entirely and sought clarity on this. He asked that focus would be placed on the Register of Electors and ensuring its accuracy. He said coroners costs should be borne by the state, not the Local Authority. He said there is a spate of forestry plantations taking place, which will obstruct tourism views and affect streams. He said there is no reduction in the amount of rubbish being dumped on the roadside and asked that the charge for a single bag of waste would not increase any further; the current €5 charge is enough. Clarity must be brought to this county regarding rising sea levels and the protection of flood plains is most urgent.

Cllr. Niall O'Callaghan referred to the Rates Revaluation process and asked if the new rates valuations will be billed retrospectively. He acknowledged that the LPT has provided match funding for the greenways to progress. He said he will hold the Council to task to deliver on the commitment made at the LPT meeting regarding hedgecutting. He asked if investigations can be carried out to get a better rate on insurance costs. He said it is disappointing that roads which were recently surfaced now have potholes on them. In relation to the homeless budget provision he said it is a disgrace that this country has citizens experiencing homelessness. The system has failed these people. With regard to tourism, the promotion of this county needs to be further enhanced and a modern approach must be taken with our marketing style. For example, start promoting the county now in relation to the Ryder Cup 2026 and Kerry County Council should have a presence at the Golf Show in Florida over the next few years. In relation to the roll out of Broadband he asked why it cannot start on the extremities of the country and roll in to the towns. He said there should be no further delays with the Kilcummin Sewerage Scheme, it must get started and done. He said he is in favour of what he has seen in the Budget and he will support it.

Cllr. Aoife Thornton referred to page 21 of the Chief Executive's Report which sets out the PSCI ratings for the 2018 Performance Indicators. She sought clarification on Kerry's rating of 28% under "% of Regional Secondary Roads receiving PSCI rating in 24mth period to 31/12/2018." She said in 2019, the grant allocation from the Department for the non-national roads had an increase of €3.15m on the previous year and further increases are necessary. The maintenance budget for North Kerry is at a critical stage, as it was at this time last year, which has a serious effect on maintenance required during November and December. She asked if the maintenance budgets for the other Municipal Districts are also in crisis. This budget must be reviewed and we cannot be in the same situation at this time next year. She asked if there are any emergency mechanisms to provide a maintenance budget for North Kerry. She welcomed funding for the Dale Road, however, there are serious conduct problems on that road at present. People are using this road despite it being closed. A decision on its continued closure must be made urgently. In relation to the greenway, she acknowledged the positive feedback and asked for a schedule of works to ensure that

the greenway is opened in 2021. She welcomed the commitment that the connector line will be designed in 2020, as that line is hugely important to Listowel Municipal District. She said she is concerned regarding water services funding as there were some significant breaks in Listowel during 2019. She asked why the Housing Capital Programme is reducing over the next number of years. She referred to page 17 of the Chief Executive's report and the number of dwellings not tenanted reported as 128 for 2017 and 211 for 2018 and asked for clarification on the increase. She complimented the work of the Development Management directorate and the great support provided to the LCDC. She said a Rural Recreation Officer is needed for North Kerry and asked if there is any way for this role to be supported by the Community Department of Kerry County Council, and if not, through the partnership group.

Cllr. Pa Daly complimented the work of the staff in the housing grants section and said there is a difficulty in that Kerry County Council does not have staff to carry out the works for grant applicants. There can be an 18 month delay between grant approval and the job being carried out. Kerry County Council should be employing more people to do these works. In relation to the number of people in emergency accommodation and the increases experienced over the last number of years, he said the housing crisis is putting a strain on increasing homelessness. This is a result of not building and not providing adequate accommodation over the last few years. He asked how it is right that there are no levies on vacant commercial premises and a 10% increase is applied to LPT for private householders. The services provided by Kerry County Council would still be delivered without that 10% increase. With regard to the cost of insurance, he said €4.8m is too much to pay. €16m is being paid to landlords, which is money that the Local Authority could use to provide accommodation itself. He said the Dale Road has not been a priority of the Council and is now too little, too late. He said he could not support this budget.

Cllr. John Francis Flynn said a Traffic Management Plan has been sought for Killorglin time and time again and is still awaited. Killorglin is the entrance to the Iveragh Peninsula and is a bottleneck to get through. He asked for a commitment that a Traffic Management Plan for Killorglin would be put in place as soon as possible. He asked how many Traffic Wardens are employed in the county. He supported Cllr. O'Shea's request for the Councillors Allocation to be payable only on the product required for a job and not on the labour. He referred to the recoupment of €12m from Irish Water and expressed concern that this is not sufficient to cover the work being done by Kerry County Council. He said the cost of insurance is massive and asked for a breakdown of the prices paid for insurance over the last five years. In relation to roads grants, he said funding is not available to do small jobs such as dips on roads. He said he had previously called for a discretionary fund to be put in place for use by the Municipal District Engineers to fund such works, but this has not been put in place. He asked if the Municipal District Enforcement Officer positions which were committed to at the LPT meeting and which were to be filled internally, have been filled. He asked if Kerry County Council has plans to acquire lands in Killorglin to build houses to address the housing list for that area. He asked how Kerry County Council plans to proceed with the lands at Cahirdown, Listowel and if discussions have taken place with the Department. He referred to his previous request regarding the setting of wild flowers, adding that the roundabout in Milltown has weeds growing on it and could be set with wild flowers. He asked that this request be addressed. He welcomed the increased provision for beaches, which must be maintained at the highest standards throughout the year as our tourist season is now starting in March and running until November. Refuse bins should be in place at beaches year round. Coastal protection and flooding are important issues and he asked that the survey for Cromane be progressed as soon

as possible. Following completion of the survey, it will take up to two years to secure funding. Japanese Knotweed must be addressed; it is spreading from private land holdings on to public roads. He supported the call for information regarding legal costs. When people are claiming against this Council this information should be published and available to Elected Members.

Cllr. Sam Locke said the monies Kerry County Council is paying to landlords could be used to build housing or to maintain its own housing stock. He asked how rates on vacant commercial properties are being dealt with. He welcomed the number of loans that have received approval and asked how many loan applicants are waiting for a decision on their application and how many have been refused and why they have been refused. He asked why social welfare recipients cannot make a loan application. He welcomed the provision of funding for Estate Maintenance and said these monies help to enhance and develop communities as residents take ownership of their estates. He welcomed the provision of €193,500 for Tourist Facilities Operations. He asked if there is funding available to repair roads in older housing estates. He supported the call for the protection of flood plains and said draining and dredging of rivers should be taking place. He acknowledged the budget provision for street cleaning. He said there remains a serious problem with illegal dumping and the penalties for offenders are inadequate. In relation to Recreation and Amenity funding, he asked for clarification regarding the amount provided for Tralee Sports Complex. He welcomed the provision of €568,600 for the Arts Programme which is vital in promoting our county.

Cllr. Michael Cahill said the Ring of Kerry road, which is the premier tourist route in the county, has many sections which are in a terrible condition. Additional funding should be sought from Transport Infrastructure Ireland for this route. He said many discrepancies have arisen following the Speed Limit Review which need to be addressed. He asked that works be done at the viewing areas between Glenbeigh and Kells where tourists are stopping. He said a footpath must be provided on the Killorglin-Killarney road as the new Fexco building will be opening shortly. There is an urgent need for a footpath on the new Milltown road. Parking in Killorglin town must be addressed, there are prime sites for sale in the town which Kerry County Council could acquire. He said the Kerry County Council depot site in Caherciveen is unsightly and should be relocated, with a much needed dedicated bus parking area provided at the depot site. He said the road to Ballycarberry Castle is in terrible condition and should be addressed. The OPW should also extend the car park area. There is a need for public lighting on the Caherciveen road exiting Glenbeigh and also on the road from Killorglin towards Ballykissane. He referred to tourism development and the importance of the county's beaches, adding that the public toilets at Rossbeigh beach should be open all year round as this beach is well used. He said beaches should have Caretakers all year round. There is a huge need for an Affordable Housing Scheme to be provided and for the many vacant and unfinished properties around the county to be addressed. He referred to €550,000 announced for insulating Kerry County Council stock in August 2019 and asked for clarification on why this money will not be spent in 2019. The low threshold for HAP is forcing people into poverty and homelessness. Health issues are arising because of the lack of a sewerage scheme in areas across the county, e.g. Beaufort, Cromane and Boolteens. Glenbeigh and Kenmare sewerage schemes are at capacity and planning applications are being refused because of this. Water harvesting should be considered as a means of providing a water supply at burial grounds, and consideration should be given to co-funding these schemes. Additional lands are also required for burial grounds. Anti-social behaviour in playgrounds must be tackled. The Painting Scheme that is underway in Upper Bridge Street, Killorglin, should be rolled out to other towns in the

county. Kerry County Council must work with the remaining land owners in relation to the South Kerry Greenway, it is the single biggest tourism project for our county. He said a national reverse vending machine should be rolled out to eliminate plastic bottles being dumped. Kerry County Council should engage with the business sector in promoting such machines. He said we should be advising the public regarding the dangers of setting malicious fires and problems that are created with serious issues happening as a result of these fires. He complimented the library service. He said Kerry County Council should provide assistance for communities that do not have a site for a playground. He said flooding is a serious issue for the county and the study for Castlemaine Harbour must be made available as soon as possible.

Cllr. Jim Finucane said Kerry County Council's budget is a huge investment in the county and it is important that the Local Authority take the lead on projects. The cap on the Local Enterprise Office which prevents them from dealing with enterprises that have more than 10 employees must be removed. The Local Enterprise Office should be allowed build on the relationships they have established. In relation to homelessness, he said leasing of properties is not value for money for the tax payer. It is not what tenants want and it is not good for the Local Authority. The leasing scheme should be scrapped. Built units will alleviate the housing crisis. The Housing Agency should accept housing developments of five units, rather than accepting only developments of 10+ units. The employment of apprenticeships should be used for housing maintenance works. He referred to the budget provision for Pensions and Lump Sums and said it is not sustainable that every Local Authority in the country is expected to meet the pension obligations of the sector. He said he has called previously for a fully funded state pension to be put in place for state employees.

Cllr. Sam Locke supported the call for the introduction of a state pension fund for state employees.

Cllr. Robert Beasley said the road maintenance budget is an issue in the Listowel Municipal District. He welcomed that works will commence in early 2020 on the Rathscannell Road. He said the housing crisis continues, exasperated by the lack of social housing construction in the last 12/13 years. He welcomed the commencement of works on 20 houses in Ballybunion. He asked if there has been any progress in relation to providing sites for playgrounds in the Listowel Municipal District. He asked for an update regarding the provision of small sewerage schemes throughout the county. In relation to the lands at Cahirdown, Listowel, he asked how much it is costing the Local Authority to keep those lands which will never be built on. He asked why works to be funded by Councillors Allocations have a labour cost included when Kerry County Council staff costs are included in the payroll of the Local Authority. He asked for the issues at Causeway Burial Ground to be addressed, i.e. a wall to be provided and extra land to be acquired.

Cllr. Johnny Healy-Rae said Kerry County Council has sites in Kenmare and asked why funding has not been allocated for the provision of parking in the town. He welcomed progress in relation to the provision of parking in Dingle. He asked for clarification regarding funding available for repairs to Kerry County Council housing stock, adding that minor works such as windows and doors should be done throughout the year. He welcomed that two durapatchers have been purchased and said the Local Authority should strive to provide a durapatcher in each Municipal District. He said planning permission is not being granted in Glenbeigh, Kenmare and Beaufort because of the sewerage schemes are at capacity; this situation cannot continue. Sewerage scheme projects are not being prioritised. In relation to housing, he said there is no

substitute for the Local Authority building its own stock and it being available to tenants under the Tenant Purchase Scheme. He welcomed the provision of funding for the acquisition of lands for burial grounds and asked that this would be progressed, and particularly in Kenmare that Kerry County Council would work with the landowner. In relation to the South Kerry Greenway he said everyone can see the benefit of this project for the future. Kerry County Council tried to sort some issues and they did in some cases. He asked that Kerry County Council would continue along that line and consider the issues raised by land owners seriously. He said it is unfortunate that this may become a matter for a judicial review. He said the budget for coastal erosion is not sufficient. There are 59 piers and harbours across the county which require continued maintenance and there are many people depending on this infrastructure for their livelihood.

Cllr. Norma Foley said there is trepidation regarding the rates revaluation process. She said the 15% target of inspections of private rented dwellings is very low. There are many properties, particularly in HAP, where people are living in conditions which are not acceptable. She asked if the target could be increased. She asked if there has been any update on making the Tenant Purchase Scheme more accessible. She acknowledged the work of the HAP place finder unit which is doing important work with families to protect them from homelessness. She commended the work being done by the housing grants section in progressing grant applications. It is of concern that there is a long waiting list for works to be done for tenants of Local Authority housing stock. These are very needy cases and these works should be prioritised. She acknowledged the work done on the construction of Local Authority houses, and asked if there is any update on the provision of an Affordable Housing Scheme. She asked that the assessment and prioritisation of the Local Improvement Scheme applications would be prioritised. She said the parking strategy is very important and asked when it will be in place. The upgrading of public lighting is welcome, however, the provision of new lighting is also required. She asked if Kerry County Council has its full complement of outdoor staff. She asked if funding has been provided for the maintenance of trees and if a maintenance plan has been put in place. She said funding for footpaths is being provided by Councillors Allocations; towns are being done a disservice because central government funding is not being provided. She welcomed the taking in charge of estates. She said there is concern regarding Irish Water. The Tourism Unit is doing great work. She asked that a shorter target plan would be built into Kerry 2040, e.g. 5-10 year targets. She welcomed the Historical Shopfronts Trail and said funding is required to preserve shop fronts. She complimented the work of the Arts Office, County Museum and Library service; over 600 free events are held in the libraries, with huge community engagement.

Cllr. Jackie Healy-Rae said he would like to see the Local Authority providing an incentive for owners of vacant properties in towns and villages, to refurbish those properties and make them available for social housing. The Local Authority could also acquire some of these properties and bring them back into use for social housing. In relation to Councillors Allocations, 41% of the cost of works is allocated towards wage costs, therefore Elected Members do not have €29,000 available. Many of the jobs done by way of Councillors Allocations are things Kerry County Council should be doing anyway. In relation to tourism and job creation, improved infrastructure into the county will help develop these areas. Every effort must be made to show the commercial value of providing flights between Kerry Airport and Amsterdam and to regional airports in Britain. He acknowledged the work done on work hubs across the county. Kerry could become a leader in this area but issues with broadband are stifling this.

Cllr. Marie Moloney asked if Kerry County Council has staff available to carry out maintenance works on its housing stock, or if outside contractors are always contracted to do this work. She asked if given the cost of contractors, would it warrant having staff available to do this work. She asked for clarification on the policy regarding returning a property from void, whereby the house is cleared of floor coverings, etc. She welcomed the provision made for Estate Maintenance which is of great benefit to Residents Associations. She asked if additional funding will be made available as new Residents Associations come on stream. She welcomed funding for housing grants and housing aid for the elderly, which provide for works that help to keep people in their own homes. She asked how many grant applications were refused in 2019 and how many housing applications are outstanding for 2019. She asked for clarification regarding a budget provision for house extensions. She asked for an update on septic tank inspections and the recruitment of Municipal District Enforcement Officers. She asked that the Cleeny Roundabout in Killarney would be reviewed as severe traffic congestion is being experienced there. She said progress must be made with the development of Kilcummin sewerage scheme. She asked for clarification on the budget provision of €89,000 for broadband rollout and if the provision for the winter grading programme is sufficient to include salting of non-national roads.

Suspension of Standing Orders

The Cathaoirleach indicated it was 1.30pm and it would be necessary to suspend Standing Orders.

On the PROPOSAL of Cllr. B. Cronin, SECONDED by Cllr. Michael Gleeson it was agreed to suspend Standing Orders to allow the meeting to continue.

Cllr. Maura Healy-Rae referred to page 3 of the Chief Executive's report and asked for clarification on the proposed expenditure figure of €13.65m on 'Other Miscellaneous Income'. She referred to the inspections of private rented properties and asked if the target of 15% could be increased and what level of income has been received in respect of these inspections. She welcomed the provision for housing grants which assist the most vulnerable people and asked that Kerry County Council strive to process those applications expediently. She said the HAP thresholds are not adequate and are adding to the housing crisis. She said in relation to roads, the Killarney Municipal District is understaffed and said there is a delay in getting Councillors Allocation jobs from 2018 finished.

Cllr. Patrick Connor-Scarteen welcomed that the increase in the LPT has allowed budget provision for match funding for the greenways and provision of Enforcement Officers in each Municipal District. He asked for an update on the recruitment of the Municipal District Enforcement Officers. He welcomed the significant footpath programme in each town and village. He asked for more detail in relation to the Roads Programme, in particular investment in the Ring of Kerry route. He said the review of the County Development Plan is to commence in early 2020; this must include a focus on rural decline and incentivising refurbishment of derelict buildings. There must also be a focus on environmental and energy areas. He asked for clarity on the timeframe for Local Area Plans. He welcomed the development of Visitor Experience Development Plans. He asked how Kerry County Council can capitalise on the many funding opportunities that are available through EU programmes. He said the Community Support Fund provides great assistance in terms of co-funding. He welcomed the additional €500,000 secured in LEADER 2014-2020 funding and asked for clarification on the process and timeframe for making an application for that funding. In relation to the diaspora, he said the Elected Members have great connections which

must be used. He said he would like to see more 1/2 beds built to reflect changing family circumstances. He asked for the commencement date for the construction of 14 houses in Kenmare. The provision of public lighting to the Ardbhearna estate, Kenmare, is also important. He said a meeting date is awaited from Transport Infrastructure Ireland regarding the speed limits review, which many Elected Members have issues with. He said Kenmare waste water scheme is in need of an urgent upgrade. He said there must be greater focus within the Departments of Kerry County Council in responding to queries from Elected Members.

Cllr. Brendan Cronin said this budget represents serious investment in the county. He complimented the great work done in promoting the county abroad. He said the redevelopment of Áras Padraig is progressing, but it is slow, as is the work on the Sara Lee site. He appealed for funding from Irish Water to address the lack of water facilities in the county and the many schemes that must be delivered. A Columbarium Wall must be provided in Killarney burial ground. He complimented the work of the staff in the housing grants department as the work done with the assistance of these grants helps to transform the lives of many people. In relation to roads, there is a need for a roundabout at Madam's Hill, Killarney, as well as work at Coolcaslagh and Ballycasheen. He said when arrangements are being made for an Elected Member to meet a Senior Engineer at a site, which is relevant to all Elected Members, all Elected Members should be notified of this meeting so they are all informed. In relation to Listry Bridge he asked what was the outcome from the consultant's report. He said he supports the continuation of the provision of the transfer stations and recycling facilities they provide; they provide an important service to the localities they serve. He referred to grant aid for renewing/upgrading a septic tank/percolation area, which is only available following an inspection and that there was two inspections in 2019 and seven inspections in 2018. He said this scheme should be scrapped or open up the criteria to make it more accessible. He referred to the Rebuilding Ireland loans and said there are very little approvals, with only 61 loans approved, adding that the criteria on this scheme are restrictive and should be reviewed. He noted the provision of €942,000 for Enforcement Costs and the activity in that area; 218 new complaint files opened in 2019 and six legal proceedings initiated. In relation to Building Control Inspection and Enforcement Costs, €366,000, he noted the level of activity in this area and asked how much more funding must be provided for enforcement, e.g. the Municipal District Enforcement Officers. He thanked all landowners that maintain and cut their road side hedges, which is necessary for road safety. He said the Local Authority is not making progress with this matter.

Lunch break

The meeting adjourned for lunch at 1.50 p.m. The meeting resumed at 2.05 p.m.

Cllr. Breandán Fitzgerald welcomed the provision of funding for roads in the Gaeltacht area. He said it is very important to have a presence at The Big E exposition in the U.S. He welcomed the provision of funding for festivals and off season events, e.g. Other Voices. He said an Affordable Housing Scheme is required for the county. A lot of the housing crisis is due to many properties moving from availability for long term rental to short term rental. He asked if changing from long term rental to short term rental is in breach of planning.

Cllr. Donal Grady said he had questioned the cost of insurance for Kerry County Council previously and asked if Kerry County Council could fund its own insurance. He asked if every Department within Kerry County Council is responsible for their own figures within the Budget. In relation to payroll costs, he asked if the savings that have

been made, by way Kerry County Council not employing staff over the last five years, has been taken into account. He said Killarney does not have the outdoor staff workforce that it needs. In relation to housing he said we have no housing available and we cannot go on like this, it is not good enough that people are on the housing waiting list for ten years. He said Kerry County Council's building programme must be progressed and he is not happy with housing leasing options. He welcomed that the homeless unit is in place and making progress. He asked for clarification regarding fire service charges and for an update on the extension of the fire service in Killarney. He said progress on enforcement issues is very slow within the county.

Cllr. Mikey Sheehy said the Tralee-Fenit greenway will have a huge economic impact from a tourism point of view on the community of Tralee and across Kerry. In relation to the provision of €1m for promotion of the county he said there must be great focus on marketing the county ahead of the Ryder Cup in Adare in 2026. He asked if there has been an alleviation of costs on Kerry County Council since the inception of Irish Water. In relation to rates he said start up businesses employing 5-10 people must be supported. He asked for a breakdown of expenditure on housing maintenance. He said an EPA licence has been applied for the dredging of Fenit Harbour and asked if dredging will take place in the inner marina. He supported the call for the introduction of a state pension fund for state employees.

Cllr. Michael Foley asked for a breakdown of what projects the LPT will be used to finance. He expressed concern that the roads maintenance budget for Listowel Municipal District has been expended at this point of the year when the roads will deteriorate with bad weather. He asked if Listowel Municipal District will be allocated additional funding to the end of 2019.

Cllr. Tom Barry said he is opposed to the HAP scheme and there are too many situations where landlords are being paid for unsuitable accommodation. Kerry County Council must build houses. He said he would like to see a quicker turn over on voids as the longer a house is unoccupied the more it will cost to repair it for reallocation. He welcomed the provision of €13,000 for Social and Community Housing Service which is very important as it finances insurance costs associated with housing estate community centres. He said a review of community buildings which are not being used should be undertaken as they have a role to play in enhancing communities. He complimented the work of the Tenancy Liaison Officers and said they are restricted by legislation in place in relation to anti-social behaviour. This must be addressed by central Government. He said there should be a JPC in each town where issues could be dealt with locally. He complimented the work of the three full-time Litter Wardens and said they are also restricted by legislation. He acknowledged the tremendous work done by schools and volunteers in tidy towns groups. Each person cleaning their own area must be acknowledged and encouraged. Stronger penalties are required for those who are responsible for illegal dumping.

Cllr. Fionnán Fitzgerald welcomed progress on the greenways and said they will be of benefit to the county as a whole. He welcomed the introduction of an Enforcement Officer for each Municipal District, particularly in addressing hedgecutting. He said it is disappointing that the application for funding for the Glounsharoon viewing area was not successful and asked if it could be funded from own resources. He said as a tourist county street cleaning is very important and sufficient funding must be provided for this service. In relation to the North Kerry Landfill he said he would like to see that facility reopened and available for recycling. He said there are issues in burial grounds across the county, including the provision of parking. He said the taking in charge of estates

is a slow process. He said communities should be supported and assisted in providing playgrounds. Recreation and Amenity is essential for mental health which is a huge issue in this county and country wide.

Cllr. Cathal Foley said the budget provision for recycling shows the serious need for retailers to address packaging. He acknowledged that while it is very difficult to identify those who are illegally dumping, there should be more focus on catching offenders. He welcomed the climate change remediation measures and funding provided, adding that Kerry must lead the way in this area.

Cllr. Norma Moriarty said there is not a lot of manoeuvrability with today's budget, any movement will see funding being taken from another area. We must try and work in an incremental way through the issues presenting. She said efforts must be increased in seeking central funding for the taking in charge of group water schemes. Investment must continue in roads and the provision of parking areas. It is important that the heavy volumes of traffic on the Ring of Kerry route are facilitated with viewing areas. Every town and village requires parking which must be functional and inviting, provide electric vehicle charging points and space for picnic areas. Bus and car parking must be separated. She acknowledged the success of securing grants. As much as possible must be done to facilitate cyclists and walkers. She acknowledged the dependence on the LPT increase in order to fund expenditure in this area. She complimented the work of the staff in the Housing Department and said they are exceptionally good at dealing with difficult situations. The availability of properties and the speed with which properties can be refurbished for allocation is important. There must be a tax incentive for property owners to make their property available for long term rental. She said it is very important our Fire Stations are equipped and up to specification for training and with updated equipment.

Cllr. Seamus Fitzgerald said Kerry is a great county to live, work and retire in, and this is a strong message that must be conveyed. He thanked management and staff for their dedication to improving the county.

Cllr. Dan McCarthy thanked management and staff for their work in presenting the budget book.

The Chief Executive responded to queries from Elected Members as follows:

- In relation to the homeless service, resources have been allocated to this area and the Homeless HAP Placefinder, who has been in place since June 2019, has already made a positive impact. Additional resources have been allocated to the Homeless Unit and homeless figures have seen a decline, albeit still high. Working with charities would bring additional supports to ensure people are not re-entering homelessness. There is a significant increase in the homeless budget which shows the priority we are putting on this area.
- With regard to the rates valuation, the Valuation Office will meet with Elected Members on Friday, 22 November 2019 and it is important that Members be fully engaged with the review process which generally takes two years to complete.
- A rates harmonisation process was agreed unanimously for a 7-year period. At that time there was harmonisation to a high point and at this stage the level of difference is quite small.
- In relation to Councillors Allocations, they were agreed at Municipal District Budget meetings. It is not a matter for this budget meeting. The approach in relation to the

Councillors Allocations was agreed at SPC level and recommendations adopted by Council as to what approach would be taken and what the Councillors Allocations would cover. A big part, and fundamental principle, is that it would cover the wage element of works being done. If not covering that, that is a loss to the overall staffing budget in the allocation. That has always been a base principle in what is part of the Roads Budget.

- The street cleaning budget, generally at this time of the year, the own resources budget is reviewed at Municipal District level. Municipal Districts that are prudent with their budgets are rewarded. That is a base principle we apply. Those reviews are continuing at present. In any Municipal District budget, the level of street cleaning that has been agreed with Elected Members in the Municipal District Plan will be the level of street cleaning that is delivered. Any issues should be notified to the Senior Engineer and Municipal District Manager.
- The sod-turning for the Tralee-Fenit and North Kerry Greenway projects will be held on Friday, 29 November 2019.
- In relation to what should be prioritised for roads, that will be discussed with Elected Members as part of the Municipal District Work Plans when issues can be identified for prioritisation.
- With regard to the Enforcement Officers, a role for Municipal District Enforcement Officers was agreed at the LPT meeting. When engaging staff for outdoor works, we first look at internal appointments and they are subsequently back filled. This interview process has taken place. Some positions have been filled and we are now interviewing outside the organisation to fill the remaining positions. In the interim, and until those positions are filled, the technicians in those areas are following up any issues in relation to hedgecutting. Any issues with regard to hedgecutting should be notified to Mr. J. Kennelly, Senior Engineer of the Roads Department.
- Provision has been made in the budget for parking development. Many strides have been made in Kenmare and if a site becomes available, capital funds are available for a parking development in the town. A Business Plan is also being prepared on how to fund the parking development plan.
- An application was made under the Affordable Housing Scheme, however, Kerry County Council's sites did not fit the criteria of the national model. We will revert to the Department on this matter.
- In relation to Kerry 2040, the NECP is a five year plan which will have short-term and long term action plans per Municipal District.
- Kerry does not have designated Rent Pressure Zones at present.
- Every single figure of the budget has been gone through with Department heads and their staff. All filled and non-filled staffing positions are reviewed annually.
- Multi-annual licences for Fenit.
- In relation to insurance claims, a response was provided at the November Ordinary meeting of Kerry County Council. Under GDPR we are not in a position to release the names of claimants. Similarly with the cost of cases, this information cannot be released.
- With regard to coastal erosion, Kells is an area that is monitored continuously. The coastal erosion allocation is the Council's 10% of the full allocation.

- North Kerry Landfill has gone out for expressions of interest for proposals for that site.
- Included in the original LPT proposal for the year was a programme for Japanese Knotweed. When annual plans for Municipal Districts are being prepared, Elected Members may decide to put together funding in a programmed way to provide for this matter.

Cllr. Jim Finucane PROPOSED the adoption of the Budget as presented.

Ms. A. McAllen, Head of Finance, responded to queries from Elected Members as follows:

- The budget presented today is within 1% of the figures presented at the LPT meeting. Figures are presented at the very best estimates based on outturns and working with the Departments of Kerry County Council.
- In relation to the rates revaluation, rates will not be applied retrospectively, they will apply from 2022 onward.
- Kerry County Council staff do carry out housing maintenance works.
- The funding provided for a Broadband Officer is to support the rollout of broadband and prepare a Digital Plan for the county.
- Miscellaneous Income is detailed in Table D and Table E on pages 8 and 9 of the Budget and Explanatory Tables.
- The Housing Maintenance headings have a lot of information behind them, such as wages, minor contracts, energy, materials, etc.
- The provision of staffing for the summer months in the transfer station is factored into the Budget.
- The insurance costs are as follows: 2020 €4.77m, 2019 €4.785m, 2018 €4.85m and 2017 €4.211m, and are on a downward trend. Any claims are investigated firstly by Kerry County Council before being passed to IPB to deal with.
- The pensions fund is being reviewed nationally by the Department and Local Government Audit Service.
- The budget for Water Services of €16.3m is set out on page 17 of the Budget and Explanatory Tables and includes provision for public conveniences and administration of group and private water schemes.
- The Irish Water budget is not agreed at this stage of the year, it is based on our best estimate.

Cllr. Jimmy Moloney said favouring prudent expenditure by Municipal Districts is not right. This is the second year that Listowel Municipal District maintenance funding has been expended at this stage of the year; street cleaning and road maintenance has suffered because of this.

Cllr. Michael O'Shea said it is very hard to pass a budget that has not been explained in terms of legal cost to this Local Authority. He said he cannot support this Budget on this basis. Elected Members must be provided with the claimants names and costs.

Cllr. John Francis Flynn said there are some unanswered questions, e.g. the position regarding lands at Cahirdown, Listowel and if there has been contact with the

Department. He expressed his disappointment with the €200,000 sought for the Municipal District Enforcement Officers. Elected Members were told their role would include hedgecutting enforcement. Those staff are already being paid by Kerry County Council. These positions have not yet been filled, despite the commitment given for these positions two months ago.

Cllr. Michael Cahill asked for clarification on the funding for insulation that was announced in August 2019 and has not yet been spent.

Cllr. Aoife Thornton said the rollout of the Service Delivery Plan for Listowel Municipal District maintenance must be guaranteed, along with a commitment for the tertiary roads that are not included in the Service Delivery Plan.

The Chief Executive responded to queries from Elected Members as follows:

- There was no implication that Listowel Municipal District was not being prudent in its expenditure. The message across all Municipal Districts is that any re-evaluation of budgets must be fair and appropriate.
- In relation to the Service Delivery Plan which is adopted, it will be delivered across each of the Municipal Districts; the maintenance budgets are allocated fairly across the county.
- In relation to personal injury cases, the cost of the Legal Department is €700,000 which did extend for the operation of the procurement shared services offices, judicial reviews, house purchases and acquisitions. The cost in relation to insurances is paid out as part of our premium. Built into that are the legal costs for IPB to carry out that work on behalf of the Local Authority. She undertook to revert to the Elected Members with as much information on legal costs that can be released.
- Lands at Cahirdown, Listowel, are legacy lands. The Listowel Plan is being developed. There are no immediate plans for these lands which cannot be developed due to flooding zonings on this area.

In reply to Cllr. Cahill's query regarding funding provided for insulation, Mr. M. O'Donoghue, Director of Service, said there is a rolling energy retrofitting programme going on for a number of years. This funding relates to a tranche of Phase 2 which is in progress at the moment. This funding will be drawn down as part of the ongoing expansive programme of energy retrofitting.

18.11.19.03 Adoption of the Council's Budget for the Local Financial Year ending 31 December 2020

Cllr. Jim Finucane PROPOSED that we the members of Kerry County Council hereby resolve that pursuant to the provisions of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended by the Local Government Reform Act 2014, the Local Government (Financial and Audit Procedures) Regulations 2014 and the Local Authority Accounting Code of Practice and Accounting Regulations, the Draft Budget for the financial year ending 31st December 2020 as presented by the Chief Executive and as set out in Tables A, B and C be and is hereby adopted.

Cllr. Donal Grady SECONDED this proposal.

A vote was taken which resulted as follows:

For: Cllrs. Tom Barry, Michael Cahill, Patrick Connor-Scarteen, Brendan Cronin, Jim Finucane, Breandán Fitzgerald, Fionnán Fitzgerald, Seamus Fitzgerald, John Francis Flynn, Cathal Foley, Michael Foley, Norma Foley, Michael Gleeson, Donal Grady, Jackie Healy-Rae, Johnny Healy-Rae, Maura Healy-Rae, Sam Locke, Dan McCarthy, Jimmy Moloney, Marie Moloney, Norma Moriarty, Bobby O'Connell, Mikey Sheehy, Aoife Thornton and Cathaoirleach Niall Kelleher **(26)**

Against: Cllrs. Michael O'Shea **(1)**

Not Voting: None **(0)**

Absent: Cllrs. Robert Beasley, Pa Daly, Charlie Farrelly, Mike Kennelly, Terry O'Brien and Niall O'Callaghan **(6)**

The Cathaoirleach declared the proposal CARRIED and the Council so resolving.

18.11.19.04 Determination of the Annual Rate on Valuation for the Local Financial Year ending 31 December 2020

Cllr. Bobby O'Connell PROPOSED that we the members of Kerry County Council hereby resolve that pursuant to the provisions of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended by the Local Government Reform Act 2014, the Local Government (Financial and Audit Procedures) Regulations 2014 and the Local Authority Accounting Code of Practice and Accounting Regulations, and in accordance with the Local Authority Budget for the Financial Year ending 31st December 2020, as adopted, the annual rate on valuation as set out in Table A hereunder be the annual rate on valuation to be levied for the said Financial Year having regard to the Base Year Adjustment determined in accordance with Section 29 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014. The Annual Rate to be levied shall be €79.25.

Cllr. Jim Finucane SECONDED this proposal.

TABLE A - CALCULATION OF ANNUAL RATE ON VALUATION

Summary by Service Division		Expenditure	Income	Budget Net Expenditure 2020		Estimated Net Expenditure Outturn 2019			
				€	€	€	%	€	%
				Gross Revenue Expenditure & Income					
Housing and Building		33,366,128	32,359,845	1,006,283	1.7%	668,894	1.2%		
Road Transport & Safety		41,787,930	28,302,256	13,485,674	23.2%	13,303,799	24.2%		
Water Services		16,322,341	15,186,654	1,135,687	2.0%	1,063,189	1.9%		
Development Management		17,965,345	7,763,384	10,201,961	17.5%	8,124,095	14.8%		
Environmental Services		19,295,630	4,942,482	14,353,148	24.7%	13,869,327	25.1%		
Recreation and Amenity		8,790,321	797,997	7,992,324	13.7%	7,645,597	13.9%		
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare		2,825,967	1,744,019	1,081,948	1.9%	908,667	1.7%		
Miscellaneous Services		17,925,231	9,013,297	8,911,934	15.3%	9,486,078	17.2%		
		158,278,893	100,109,934	58,168,959	100%	55,069,646	100%		
Provision for Debit Balance									
Adjusted Gross Expenditure & Income	(A)	158,278,893	100,109,934	58,168,959		55,069,646			
Financed by Other Income/Credit Balances									
Provision for Credit Balance									
Local Property Tax			15,189,516	15,189,516					
Sub - Total	(B)			15,189,516		55,069,646			
Net Amount of Rates to be Levied	(A-B)			42,979,443					
Value of Base Year Adjustment				177,217					
Amount of Rates to be Levied (Gross of BYA)	(D)			43,156,660					
Net Effective Valuation	(E)			544,563.53					
General Annual Rate on Valuation	D/E			79.25					

A vote was taken which resulted as follows:

For: Cllrs. Tom Barry, Michael Cahill, Patrick Connor-Scarteen, Brendan Cronin, Jim Finucane, Breandán Fitzgerald, Fionnán Fitzgerald, Seamus Fitzgerald, John Francis Flynn, Cathal Foley, Michael Foley, Norma Foley, Michael Gleeson, Donal Grady, Jackie Healy-Rae, Johnny Healy-Rae, Maura Healy-Rae, Sam Locke, Dan McCarthy, Jimmy Moloney, Marie Moloney, Norma Moriarty, Bobby O’Connell, Mikey Sheehy, Aoife Thornton and Cathaoirleach Niall Kelleher **(26)**

Against: Cllrs. Michael O’Shea **(1)**

Not Voting: None **(0)**

Absent: Cllrs. Robert Beasley, Pa Daly, Charlie Farrelly, Mike Kennelly, Terry O’Brien and Niall O’Callaghan **(6)**

The Cathaoirleach declared the proposal CARRIED and the Council so resolving.

18.11.19.05 Report on the Capital Programme 2020–2022

Cllr. Jimmy Moloney PROPOSED that the Chief Executive’s Report on the Capital Programme 2020-2022 as incorporated into the Report on the Budget be noted.

Cllr. Brendan Cronin SECONDED this proposal and it was unanimously agreed.

18.11.19.06 Approval of additional Expenditure for 2019

Cllr. Michael Gleeson PROPOSED that we the members of Kerry County Council resolve that the additional expenditure for 2019 as set out in the Column titled “Estimated Outturn 2019” on Table F in the Local Authority Budget, as circulated, be and is hereby approved.

Cllr. Brendan Cronin SECONDED this proposal and it was unanimously agreed.

The Chief Executive thanked the Elected Members for their input to the budget. She thanked staff right across the organisation on whom the budget impacts. She thanked the Head of Finance, Directors and all members of the Finance team for their time and input into the preparation of the budget.

Any Other Business

Cllr. Donal Grady asked that a letter issue to the Government about restoring the Air Ambulance Services.

Cathaoirleach Niall Kelleher seconded this request.

The meeting concluded at 3.55pm.

Joan McCarthy
Meetings Administrator

Cathaoirleach of Kerry County Council