

These Minutes are edited for Data Protection purposes because in effect putting them on the Internet is publishing them. An unedited paper copy is available on request.

MIONTUAIRISCÍ CRUINNITHE BHUISÉID DE COMHAIRLE CHONTAE CHIARRAÍ, A THIONÓLADH I SEOMRA NA COMHAIRLE, ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, TRÁ LÍ, DÉ LUAN, 13 SAMHAIN 2017.

MINUTES OF THE BUDGET MEETING OF KERRY COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, TRALEE ON MONDAY 13TH NOVEMBER 2017.

PRESENT/I LÁTHAIR

Councillors/Comhairleoirí

T. Barry	R. Beasley	M. Cahill
P. Connor-Scarteen	B. Cronin	J.J. Culloty
P. Daly	T. Ferris	J. Finucane
S. Fitzgerald	J.F. Flynn	N. Foley
M. Gleeson	D. Grady	J. Healy-Rae
M. Healy-Rae	N. Kelleher	M. Kennelly
S. Locke	J. Lucid	D. McCarthy
P. McCarthy	T. McEllistrim	J. Moloney
N. Moriarty	T. O'Brien	B. O'Connell
M. O'Shea	L. Purtill	D. Quigg
J. Sheahan	G. Spring	A. Thornton

IN ATTENDANCE/I LÁTHAIR

Ms. M. Murrell, Chief Executive	Ms. A. McAllen, Head of Finance
Mr. M. O'Donoghue, Dir.Hsg&Corp.S.	Mr. C. O'Sullivan, Dir. Op., H&S
Mr. J. Breen, Dir. Water Services	Mr. L. Quinlan, Meetings Admin.
Ms. J. Maher, Fin./ Mgmt. Account.	Ms. K. Lynch, SEO Finance
Mr. D. Ginty, A/SE Planning	Ms. B. Fitzgerald, Economic Officer
Mr. P. Neary, SE Operations	Mr. G. O'Brien, A/SEO Environment
Ms. J. McCarthy, SEO Tourism	Mr. J. McCarthy, AO Finance
Ms. M. West, AO Operations	Mr. T. Brosnan, AO Housing
Mr. S. O'Keefe, Tech. Tralee MD	Mr. P. O'Shea, AO Finance
Ms. T. Browne, AO Revenue	Ms. K. Moriarty, AO Org.Dev., Per. & Eff.
Ms. M. Moriarty, AO Finance	Ms. C. Carmody, Proj. Manager, Finance
Ms. J. Foley, MD Officer	Ms. B. Riordan, AO Housing
Ms. B. Reidy, SSO Corporate Affairs	Mr. T. O'Connor, SO Housing
Ms. C. O'Connor-Galvin, SO Finance	Ms. N. McCarthy, SO Finance
Mr. R. Tangney, SO Finance	Ms. G. Cotter, CO Finance
Mr. J.J. Canty, ASO Finance	Ms. L. Cleary, CO Finance
Ms. K. McCarthy, CO Finance	

The meeting commenced at 10.40 am.

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. J. Sheahan took the Chair.

Vote of Sympathy

The Cathaoirleach extended a vote of sympathy to Cllr. J. Finucane on the death of his mother Mary Ellen Finucane.

On behalf of the Fine Gael Party Cllr. L. Purtill also extended his sympathy to Cllr. Finucane on the death of his mother.

Cllr. M. Gleeson extended his sympathy to Cllr. Finucane and to the family of the late Brendan Keogh who died recently. Brendan was a former Area Engineer in Killorglin.

On behalf of the Sinn Féin Party Cllr. Beasley extended his sincere condolence to Cllr. Finucane.

On behalf of the Labour Party Cllr. T. O'Brien extended his sympathy to Cllr. Finucane.

On behalf of the Fianna Fáil Party Cllr. N. Foley extended her sincere condolences to Cllr. Finucane.

Cllrs. D. Grady, J. Healy-Rae and S. Locke stated they would also be like to be associated with the expression of sympathy to Cllr. Finucane.

On behalf of management and staff the Chief Executive also extended her sincere sympathy to Cllr. Finucane.

17.11.13.01 Cathaoirleach's Report on the Budget CPG Meeting held on the 19th September 2017

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

"Consultation on Budget 2018, 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 Budget 2018 Strategy Report and the Chief Executive's Report on the Setting of a Local Adjustment Factor for LPT for 2018 which were circulated. She briefed them on the Budget process and the legal requirements.

The Chief Executive briefed members on the Budget 2018 Strategy Report under the following headings:

- Payroll
- Financial support for County Economic Drivers
- Support for Operations
- OPW Flooding and Coastal Schemes
- Burial Ground Provision and Development
- Infrastructure Projects per MD
- Housing Construction Programme
- Income
- Rates on Vacant premises – Financial Impact
- General Municipal District Allocation
- Proposed % increase in Local Property Tax
- Support for the South West Regional Action Plan for Jobs – Economic Projects and proposals – Enterprise Ireland applications

A discussion took place on Budget 2018, Budget Policy/Strategy, variation of LPT and General Municipal Allocation during which members acknowledged in particular the importance of supporting the economic initiatives.”

17.11.13.02 Consideration of the Local Authority Budget for the Local Financial Year ending 31st December 2018

The Chief Executive advised members the Draft Budget prepared for Kerry County Council for the financial year ending 31st December 2018 in accordance with the Local Government Act 2001 and the Local Government Reform Act 2014, together with regulations and guidance issued under the auspices of both Acts for consideration by the Members at the Budget Meeting fixed for Monday, 13th November 2017. This report outlines the provisions of the Draft Budget. Presentation of the Statutory Budget for adoption by Members concludes the three stage Budget process for 2018. The first stage required Members to consider adoption of the Local Adjustment factor for the 2018 rate of LPT at the Budget Strategy meeting of the 25th September 2017. The second stage of the Budget process required consideration of the Municipal District Allocation for 2018 at the Municipal District Budgetary Plan meetings held on 23rd October 2017. The third and final stage of the Budget process commences during the prescribed Budget period at the Annual Statutory Budget Meeting of 13th November 2017.

Draft Budget 2018 as presented to members provides for income and expenditure of €136.71m. The balancing of this Draft Budget has presented many difficulties given increased service demands across the Council, increased budgetary requirements and a growing dependence on locally sourced income and once off departmental compensatory payments.

At the Budget Strategy meeting in September, she outlined a shortfall in Budget requirements – this is now bridged – but not without having a very significant impact on the Budget as presented.

The Chief Executive highlighted that the following were key factors in bridging this shortfall for 2018: -

- The decision by Members to increase the rate of Local Property Tax for 2018 by 5% has increased the Local Property Tax allocation to the County by €704,096. This additional funding will be used to leverage funding for economic projects submitted to Enterprise Ireland aligned with our objectives under the South West Action Plan for Jobs, the LECP and specifically those projects that promote the prioritised regional strengths of Agri-Tech and Fin-Tech.

The remaining funds will be used to co-fund successful submissions to the OPW Minor Flood Mitigation Works and Coastal Protection Schemes and provide increased technical design resources as support to each Municipal District Engineer to accelerate the design of priority projects at Municipal District level.

- In relation to payroll increases, confirmation has now been received that 80% of the additional costs associated with the various National Pay Agreements will be met centrally for 2018.
- As it has not been possible to bridge the shortfall through revenue funding, the use of capital provisions to support revenue where possible is required, for example; support to housing grants, use of internal capital receipts to support vacant house refurbishments, IT security infrastructure provision, and bring bank replacement programme.
- In order to balance Draft Budget 2018, Kerry County Council has again, across all divisions, maximised and increased where possible all sources of locally sourced income.
- In addition, following negotiation with Irish Public Bodies Insurance Ltd, the Council has minimised the increased premium for public liability for 2018. This will be subject to further review and negotiation during 2018.
- Many requests for additional funding in budgets have not been included this year. However, it will be necessary to re-examine expenditure requirements into 2019.
- Additional budget requirements by services will be absorbed within existing budgets – this effectively is building in a cost saving/diversion on the existing budget.

Despite the bridging of the shortfall for Draft Budget 2018, a number of significant challenges remain in relation to the ongoing financing of this Council.

It is of concern that the Draft Budget 2018 is supported by once off compensation payments to the value of €2.117m. This includes Payroll compensation and Irish Water rates compensation. An IPB projected dividend is included for 2018 (€0.50m). The Draft Budget includes an income from the NPPR charge of €0.875m, which includes income from agreements by those with a liability to discharge the amount due, over an agreed period of time. Reliance on these income streams to balance Budgets in the coming years is not sustainable and Kerry County Council must put in place a financial plan to increase income over the next three years.

Commercial Rates of €41.22m contributes 30% to Kerry County Council's overall income. This income is reflective of significant previous and current year reductions of over €0.700m in global valuations. In addition, the current rates harmonisation process limits income generation from this income stream.

In balancing Draft Budget 2018, taking all these factors into consideration, it is clear that there is very little discretionary funding available to the organisation. In addition, the extent of ongoing liabilities such as pensions, landfill obligations, servicing of land loans, funding of debit capital balances, ageing corporate buildings and increased information technology requirements require a phased financial plan, funded over the next three to five years, at minimum.

Staffing

There is increasing difficulty in providing for the revenue payroll budget particularly given the current level of capital grant allocations both general and specific. Priority will continue to be given in 2018 to maximise projects that will attract capital funding. The 2018 Payroll Budget maximises recoupment of costs associated with development of the Capital Programme. At the Budget Strategy meeting, a commitment was given to increase outdoor staff in the areas. Assuming a 10% increase for Road Grants for 2018, it is proposed to give a limited targeted increase in outdoor staffing.

Commercial Rates

2018 represents the 4th 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.

Vacant Properties

Section 31 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 provides for a change to rating law in relation to the refund of rates on vacant/to let properties; it gives the power to the Members of Local Authorities to vary the level of rates refunds that apply in individual local electoral areas/Municipal District Areas within the authority's overall administrative area. Regulations provide that the decision to alter the rate of refund should be taken at the annual budget meeting and that the rate of refund be decided in respect of local electoral areas/Municipal Districts. 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. the existing rate of refund at 100% continues to apply.

The current rate of refund in Kerry County Council is 100%. An analysis would indicate that this source of revenue would provide a very low collection rate, particularly in areas outside of the main County Towns. The existing legislation does not provide for varying the rate of refund in particular towns within Municipal Districts. It is accepted that some potential income may exist in the larger towns in the County, however, Members do not have the option to vary the rate in particular locations within the Municipal Districts. In light of these difficulties and given the many unknowns in this area, it would be considered that any financial provision in this area would not be prudent.

General Municipal Allocation

The amount provided in this Draft Budget 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 to Rural and Village Development 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.

Local Authority Financing – Local Property Tax Allocation 2018

The Council received confirmation from DHPLG on 6th October 2017 of the Provisional Local Property Tax Allocation for 2018. Following the decision by Members, to vary the basic rate of Local Property Tax upwards by 5% for 2018, the allocation for Kerry County Council for 2018 is €14.48m.

Housing and Building

This Council has an extensive portfolio of land for the construction of housing. The Council is obliged to service the loans on these lands out of our revenue budget. The Council consulted directly with the HFA in 2014 and negotiated a 5-year interest only payment option for matured land loans. The impact on the revenue Budget 2018 is €0.803m expenditure taking account of all factors in relation to this issue. In addition, budgetary provision of €0.450m is made towards addressing this significant financial liability.

Road Transport and Safety

The Draft Budget 2018 figures for the Roads Grants Schemes are prepared on the original National and Non-National road allocations from the Transport Infrastructure Ireland (T.I.I.) as advised in 2017. Draft Budget 2018 reflects a

10% increase on the Road Restoration Improvement Grant, similar to last year. In 2017, the Department allowed discretion for the transfer of a portion of the funding, under this programme, to other works, which was used to fund a limited footpath programme and specific bridge repairs.

It is proposed that, in line with this increase, a Footpath and an enhanced Drainage Programme will be delivered across the four Municipal Districts. The extent of these particular programmes and funding models will be discussed with Members as part of the Municipal District Service Plan.

Budget 2018 includes the ongoing operation of the Machinery Yard. Significant investment in our plant allied to efficiencies in the operation of the service is required. Funding provision for the required upgrade of plant is identified, which will be self-financed from sustainable efficiency benefits achieved in the Machinery Yard. The accounts for this service are reflected on this basis in Budget 2018.

Taking in Charge of Estates

Substantial progress has been made over the last number of years in addressing issues identified in Unfinished Housing Estates across the County. Since 2009, 127 housing estates have been formally taken in charge. 14 new taking in charge applications have been received in 2017 and the Council currently has 48 taking in charge applications on hand. Significant resources have been allocated to this area of activity over the past number of years and this ongoing cost is provided for in the 2018 allocation across various Budget areas. Works have been completed in many of the more problematic estates, which has greatly improved the quality of life for the residents living in these estates.

Development Management

The key projects in relation to Planning and Sustainable Development for 2018 are the preparation of Local Area Plans for the four Municipal Districts, and forward planning in a number of key strategic areas. Also included in this programme are the operational costs of the Tourism Promotion and Development Unit, the Community Development Unit and the Economic Development Unit.

Provision is made, funded by development levies, to fund a Capital Unit tasked to manage the development of the County's opportunity sites. Specific focus in 2018 will be the Island of Geese site and the Áras Padraig/ Lewis Road masterplan.

Environmental Services

The Budget Allocation for 2018 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.

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. Draft Budget 2018 reflects the income and expenditure arising from this initiative. The cost of €2.09m for this office is fully recouped from the Local Government Sector in 2018.

In conclusion the Chief Executive expressed her appreciation to the Cathaoirleach, Cllr. John Sheahan, to Cllr. Michael O'Shea, 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 also paid tribute to the hard work and dedication of all Council staff to the county over the 2017 period. She thanked Angela McAllen, Head of Finance, and all the staff of the Finance Department for both their professionalism and work ethic in preparing Budget 2018. The Chief Executive recommended the Budget for adoption.

The Cathaoirleach then called on Ms. McAllen to present her overview on the Budget.

Ms. A. McAllen informed the meeting that the Chief Executive had outlined the financing issues that faced the Council in achieving an overall balanced position. Since the Budget Strategy Report in September and the Municipal Budget Plan meetings in October, income and expenditure projections in most areas have crystallised and the balanced Budget as presented to Member reflects a realistic pragmatic Budget which provides for the corporate priorities as outlined by the Chief Executive, provides for our financial liabilities and obligations and also provides for a provision of services across all Divisions.

The 2018 Budget was an extremely difficult Budget to balance, compiling it required the usual forensic examination of all expenditure and income headings. Of the €4.1m shortfall presented to members in September overall balancing has been broadly achieved by reducing overall expenditure requirements identified at the time by €642,000 and increasing income projections by €3.58m which includes the €700,000 from the LPT decision agreed by Member at the strategy meeting. In relation to the expenditure requirements it has been necessary for divisions to absorb additional cost requirements in existing Budgets. For Budget 2018, each income stream was closely examined to ensure that cash collections are maximised, many of our locally sourced income streams reflect an increased target for next year. Certainty in relation to once off compensation payments to the value of over €2.117m has been received since our Budget Strategy meeting and is reflected in the Budget as presented as well as a significant amount

transferred from Capital. Ms. McAllen reiterated the Chief Executive's comments in relation to these income streams, Kerry County Council in balancing the Budget is reliant on unsustainable sources of income.

Across the expenditure headings members will see continuation of the allocation of resources which reflect the financing of areas to enable the organisation to respond effectively to meet the very many challenges and targets of adopted plans by this Council.

Ms. McAllen then referred members to the diagram on Page 26 of the Chief Executive's Report which gives an overview on expenditure for 2018. The expenditure proposed amounts to €136,708,419. This represents a 3.9% increase on the projected out-turn for 2017. It 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 2018 to date.

The diagram on Page 26 shows the distribution of the proposed expenditure amongst the divisions for 2018. The combined expenditure of the Divisions titled Housing and Building, Road Transport and Environmental Services accounts for 58% of the Council's overall Revenue Budget in 2018.

The graph on Page 27 reflects the breakdown of expenditure, payroll continues to be the largest element of revenue expenditure. She advised that the impact of National Pay Agreements between Government and Unions has resulted in an increase in payroll costs for Budget 2018. These centrally negotiated agreements affect pay rates for all public sector workers including Local Government Employees. Budget 2018 provides for pay increase under the Public Service Stability Agreement 2018 - 2020 and the restoration of temporary pay reductions under the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest (FEMPI) Act 2015.

Provision is included in the Draft Budget 2018 for the pay costs in so far as the Revenue Budget is concerned for 2018. The costs arising on the Capital Budget will be charged to the relevant Capital Projects and funded as a project cost. As previously mentioned, confirmation has been received that 80% of the additional costs associated with the above pay agreements will be met centrally for 2018. Draft Budget 2018 includes income of €1.862m (80% of the estimated cost of pay agreements in 2018 of €2.327m).

Payroll costs for 2018 as a % of the Budget amount to 48%, however, this figure reduces to 40.5% taking recouped payroll costs into account.

The graph on Page 28 reflects sources of income, all of which have increased on 2017 levels with commercial rates being the largest source of income at 30%, followed by State Grants at 26%, Local Property Tax with the inclusion now of PRD forms 11% of overall income. Our reliance on Local Income has increased

on 2017 levels. These targets are pragmatic but challenging and reflect current outturn based on increased focus on debt management areas.

The Head of Finance then referred members to Page 30 of the Chief Executive's Report for details of State Sector Grants for Specified Purposes. State Grants for specific purposes amount to €35,109,252 for 2018.

Local Property Tax **€14,480,857**

The DHPLG have confirmed in Circular 08/2017 that following the decision to locally vary the basic rate by the Local Authority, the final allocation will be €14,480,857 (an increase of €704,096 from the pre-variation allocation of €13,776,761).

The decision by Members to increase the rate of Local Property Tax for 2018 by 5% has increased the Local Property Tax allocation to the County by €704,096. This additional funding will be used to leverage funding for economic projects submitted to Enterprise Ireland aligned with our objectives under the South West Action Plan for Jobs, the LECF and specifically those projects that promote the prioritised regional strengths of Agri-Tech and Fin-Tech.

The remaining funds will be used to co-fund successful submissions to the OPW Minor Flood Mitigation Works and Coastal Protection Schemes and provide increased technical design resources as support to each Municipal District Engineer to accelerate design of priority projects at Municipal District level.

Ms. McAllen advised that as requested she had included a table which illustrates Local Government Funding / Local Property Funding for Periods 2014 – 2018 and this is set out on Page 31 of the Report.

3. RATES ON COMMERCIAL PROPERTY **€41,224,293**

Rates on commercial property form 30% of income and the impact of the reduction in global valuations in 2016 continues to impact income generation in this area. The Elected Members decided at the Budget Meeting for 2015 to adopt an annual rate of valuation of €79.25, which would apply over an eight year period of harmonisation. This Council is in Year 4 of the harmonisation process. The Council, while making all efforts to optimise collections, will continue to work with customers 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. The Council has achieved targets set locally by the Local Government sector for increased collections, annually over the last number of years.

4. IRISH WATER **€12,068,243**

Ms. McAllen advised that income reflected here represents the recoupment of Water Services related expenditure.

5.1 HOUSING RENTS - A0101	<u>€9,430,000</u>
5.2 HOUSING LOAN REPAYMENTS - A0801	<u>€431,937</u>
5.3 CHARGES ON NON-PRINCIPAL PRIVATE RESIDENCES (N.P.P.R.) - H1102	<u>€875,000</u>
5.4 PLANNING APPLICATION FEES/CHARGES - D0201	<u>€703,900</u>
5.5 BURIAL FEES - E0901	<u>€275,000</u>
5.6 FIRE SAFETY CERTIFICATES, DISABILITY ACCESS CERTIFICATES AND INSPECTION FEES - D0801	<u>€269,000</u>
5.7 CHARGES FOR ATTENDING AT FIRES - E1101	<u>€301,000</u>
5.10 USE OF WASTE DISPOSAL SITES – E0101	<u>€1,922,372</u>
5.11 RECYCLING FACILITIES – E0201 & E0202	<u>€556,095</u>
The Council acknowledges the significant importance of these recycling facilities around the county for 2018; these revised operating arrangements and charges were introduced to safe guard their future.	
5.12 PARKING FINES AND CHARGES – B0903	<u>€2,934,000</u>

Parking revenue is a critical source of local income for the Council.

Ms. McAllen stated that concluded her overview of the Budget, and proposed income for 2018 and she would proceed to brief members on Division 1 Housing and Building.

HOUSING AND BUILDING

Ms. A. McAllen referred members to Pages 11 - 13 of the Budget Tables and Pages 35 – 50 of the Chief Executive’s Report for details on this Division. She also referred members to Schedule 1 for details on the Capital Programme and Schedule 2 for details of Development Contributions, Appendix A and B, Circulars relevant to the preparation of Budget 2018. She advised that details of the Capital Programme for this Division are set out on Pages 35 – 38 of the Chief Executive’s Report. Ms. McAllen then referred members to Page 39 of the Chief Executive’s Report for details of the revenue budget for this Division.

Maintenance of LA units (A0101) €3,423,000

Ms. McAllen stated that €3.423 million is provided for Housing Maintenance of over 4,200 dwellings (including demountable units) countywide. €1.545 million is

provided for both planned and regular maintenance. Ongoing procurement efficiencies will maximise use of resources in this area.

€1.5 million is repeated for the purpose of carrying out pre-letting repairs to vacants/voids. Budget 2018 includes an own resource contribution of €343,000 to support an estimated Department contribution of €1,157,000.

Maintenance of Traveller Accommodation Units (A0102) **€171,000**

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

The availability of this funding and the work of the Tenancy Management Officers have contributed to proactive tenant participation in the vast majority of the local authority estates in the County. Currently the Council is actively involved with 137 resident associations. It is hoped that the Council will forge strong links by working with the identified estates and work closely with the residents to promote social inclusion, combat anti-social behaviour and promote a sense of pride and togetherness of tenants living in those estates.

Assessment of Housing Needs, Allocations & Transfer (A0201) **€1,030,000**

This allocation reflects increased activities in this area and Page 41 outlines the extensive work programme in this area.

Debt Management and Rent Assessment (A0301) **€1,063,000**

The Council continues to work with tenants to assist them in paying their rent and offer a variety of payment methods including Household Budget, Bill Pay, Standing Order, Direct Debit, Cash, or directly to the Revenue Collector. It is estimated that approximately 77% of our customers regularly use electronic or 'non-cash' payments methods.

The Council has implemented a Rent Arrears Strategy, which is a very pro-active approach to assist tenants who may be experiencing difficulty in paying their weekly rent by identifying arrears at an early stage and working with tenants to manage same.

Housing Estate Management & Tenancy Management (A0401 & A402) **€346,000**

A sum of €45,000 is included in Budget 2018 to progress the roll out of an estate enhancement programme across the 4 Municipal Districts.

Homeless Grants/Other Bodies (A0501) **€688,000**

RAS Operations (A0701) **€6,879,000**

There has been increased activity in this area and it is anticipated that the scheme will continue to be cost neutral in the 2018 Budget. Page 46 outlines key statistics in this area.

Ms. McAllen advised that other initiatives for social housing supply have increased also.

Long Term Leasing / Availability Agreements (A0702) **€2,503,000**

Long-Term Leasing

The Council currently has 29 Long Term Leased Properties, 7 of which were secured in 2017.

Availability Agreements

The Council currently has 224 Leased Properties with Availability Agreements, 37 of which were secured in 2017.

Loan Interest and Other Charges (A0801) **€1,810,500**

Mortgage Loans and Land Purchase Service Costs

This sum covers the repayment of the interest only on loans raised by the Council to fund various housing loan schemes. The impact on the revenue Budget for 2018 of interest only payments to the HFA is €803,345. In addition, budgetary provision of €450,000 is made towards the servicing of housing land loans. A sum of €300,000 is being brought in from Capital to support this cost.

Housing Support Grants (A0901, A0903 & A0905) **€2,221,000**

The provision for housing support grants is increased on last year, reflecting the 2017 outturn.

Ms. McAllen referred members to Page 49 of the Chief Executive's Report for details of efficiencies achieved during 2017.

ROAD TRANSPORT & SAFETY

Ms. A. McAllen referred members to Pages 14 – 16 of the Budget Tables and Pages 51 – 67 of the Chief Executive's Report for details of this Division.

Ms. McAllen stated the amount of own resources allocation has increased for 2018 to €17.6m and is outlined in more detail on Page 63 of the Chief Executive's Report. It represents a significant portion of the Budget and includes the Councillors Allocation of €957,000 maintained at previous years levels. This

amount combined with the provision for street cleaning shown under Division E of €2.2m is a considerable Budget allocation. This own resource allocation in Roads enable 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 for 2018 and reflected as self-financing for Budget 2018.

Ms. McAllen referred members to Pages 64 to 66 which outline a number of efficiencies and VFM initiatives taken by the Operations Department in 2017 and continuing in 2018 to maximise this Budget allocation.

WATER SERVICES

Ms. McAllen referred members to Pages 17 – 18 of the Budget Tables and Pages 68 – 73 of the Chief Executive's Report for details on this Division. The areas in the Water Services division which have been retained by Kerry County Council include:

Operation & Maintenance of Public Conveniences (C0401) €769,000

The Council owns and operates Public Conveniences at 33 locations throughout the County. The operational arrangements for these facilities are varied. Seven of the facilities, located at Ballybunion, Portmagee, Sneem, Waterville, Cromane, Kells and Knightstown, are operated by local community groups on behalf of the Council. The Council is most appreciative of the outstanding works of these local groups and provision is again made in 2018 to continue with this co-operative approach. This partnership represents good value for money as the service is provided to a high standard at a relatively low cost.

Significant refurbishment and upgrades to the structures in Ventry, Dingle, Inch and Maharees took place in 2017. In 2018 it is intended to fully refurbish Ballyheigue Public Convenience.

RURAL WATER PROGRAMME (C05)

Increased provision is also made in this area.

IRISH WATER PROGRAMME

Irish Water Operations

For 2018, the following service areas are covered under the Service Level Agreement with Irish Water:

C01	Water Supply	€7,965,719
C02	Waste Water Treatment	€3,145,284
C03	Collection of Water / Waste Water Charges	€270,416
C06	Support to Water Capital Programme	€1,037,249
C07	Agency and Recoupable Services	€275,946

Irish Water Capital Programme

Under the SLA the Council's Capital Project Office will carry out specific projects on behalf of Irish Water and the costs of this office are fully recouped. Details of the Work programme are set out on Pages 72 and 73 of the Chief Executive's Report.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

Ms. McAllen referred members to Pages 19 – 21 of the Budget Tables and Pages 74 – 97 of the Chief Executive's Report for details on this Division.

The Planning Function/Development Management Programme of the Council is divided into four specific business units:

- Forward Planning
- Planning Control
- Planning Enforcement
- Housing Estates Unit

Forward Planning (D01)

Statutory Plans and Policy including Local Area Plans (D0101) €715,000

This allocation covers the salaries and other costs associated with the preparation of Local Area Plans and other Statutory Plans and Policy.

The allocation for Forward Planning covers the costs associated with the preparation of Local Area Plans and other Statutory Plans and Policy.

During 2018, work will be progressed in the following areas:

- The new Planning Policy framework for the Tralee and Killarney Municipal Districts will be completed including the required statutory documents.
- The commencement of a revised planning policy framework for the Listowel and South and West Municipal Districts.
- Complete the review of the Landscape Character Assessment.
- The commencement of a review of the Renewable Energy Strategy (upon finalisation of Wind Energy Guidelines by DHPLG). This will be informed by the Landscape Character Assessment, once completed.
- The commencement of a submission to the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region seeking the designation of Tralee/Killarney/Killorglin as a targeted regional centre for growth.
- Finalisation of the Master Plan for the Island of Geese, Tralee together with public consultation and statutory variation of the Tralee Town Development Plan which will incorporate this Plan.
- Finalisation and publication of the Shopfront Design Guidelines.
- Preparation of site appraisals and guidelines for sites identified as Opportunity Sites in the new planning policy frameworks for Tralee and Killarney, following adoption of the MD plans.

Planning Control (D0201)

€1,787,000

This allocation covers the salaries and travelling expenses of the technical and administrative staff engaged in planning control, together with the associated office and legal costs. This allocation also includes salaries in relation to the survey, design and costing of schemes for submission to the OPW for Minor Works Schemes outside the CFRAM Programme.

Enforcement Costs (D0301)

Provision of €893,000 is made for Enforcement Costs and the Table on Page 77 outlines activity in this area.

Housing Estates Unit

The allocation for Unfinished Housing Estates and the Quarries Unit are provided under this heading.

Tourism Development and Promotion (D05)

General Economic Promotion (D0501)

€951,000

Ms. McAllen stated this allocation includes the salaries, operational and associated costs for the Council's Tourism Unit. A provision has been made in the Draft Budget 2018 to assist with the implementation of the County Kerry Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2016 – 2022 and some of the 273 aims and

actions. These have been identified through the consultation process, both locally and nationally, from market trends both home and abroad and from engagement with communities and local development companies, as well as, Fáilte Ireland and Tourism Ireland. Pages 80 and 81 of the Chief Executive's Report outline the extensive work programme in 2017 throughout the county. This will continue into 2018 and include provision to advance key strategic actions of the Tourism Strategy including administration of the Outdoor Recreation Scheme and in 2018 (outlined on Page 82) and the Fáilte Ireland Festival funding scheme.

Tourist Facilities Operations (D0502)

€217,500

Provision of €217,500 is made for Tourist Facilities Operations. This allocation relates to the staff costs for the Windmill in Tralee, together with a contribution of €131,000 in respect of the operation of the Tralee Bay Wetlands Centre.

Tralee Bay Wetlands

In 2017, the Wetlands enjoyed an increase in bookings and achieved GOLD accreditation from EcoTourism Ireland. The Centre is now being operated under the terms of a 5 year business and marketing plan. It is envisaged that the subsidy to the Centre will reduce significantly over the term of the business plan. In addition to targeting the domestic tourism market, the marketing plan for 2018 is designed to attract international visitors and tour operators.

General Community and Enterprise Expenses (D0601)

€2,680,000

This allocation has increased due to Contra SICAP funding of €1.6m.

Community Department priorities for 2018 include:

- Strengthening the LCDC structure by providing Quality and Capacity Development training through the DHPLG.
- Supporting the LCDC in its role as the Local Action Group in the delivery of LEADER RDP Programme 2014 – 2020
- Administration and Management of the Community Support Fund (CSF)
- Co-ordination of funding applications under Government Grant Schemes such as Town and Village Renewal, CLÁR and the Sports Capital Programme to maximise funding opportunities and to leverage state funding to support local community initiatives.
- Support Kerry's Comhairle na nÓg
- Manage the administration of the Mitchels Regeneration Project.
- Manage the administration and co-ordination of the County Community Awards and applications to the National Pride of Place competition.
- Support the Public Participation Network and in particular promote community participation and information sharing.

A provision is included in Budget 2018 for an LECP Fund to implement key actions in the Plan for which the Council has responsibility for delivering.

Ms. McAllen advised that the Community Department also supports the Joint Policing Committee.

Building Control Inspection and Enforcement Costs (D0801 and D0802) **€311,000**

In the Building Control service, the enforcement of building standards and inspection of buildings are the primary ongoing functions. An increase in the number of Commencement Notices processed to date in 2017 points to increased activity and moderate recovery in the construction sector.

The Building Control Section continues to monitor and offer advice and assistance to the public in obtaining the best possible energy rating on Building Energy Rating (BER) certificates for new buildings and all buildings offered for sale or letting.

Ms. McAllen stated that Page 90 outlines activity for 2017 up to September.

Economic Development & Promotion (D0905) **€2,396,000**

Provision has been made to give effect to the economic and the community aspects of the Local Economic and Development Plan (LECP) including the initial funding of key economic projects identified in the plan such as the Island of Geese Project, Sara Lee in Killarney, the Greenways, Áras Padraig/Lewis Road Masterplan. Provision is also made, through the 5% increase to the Local Property Tax, to leverage funding for economic projects submitted to Enterprise Ireland, in particular projects that promote the prioritised regional strengths of Agri-Tech and Fin-Tech. The allocation also includes salaries and support costs in this area and a provision for a Unit to manage the development of the Island of Geese site, the Áras Padraig/Lewis Road masterplan and the Economic Development Unit in 2018.

The finalisation of a number of strategic documents in 2017 including the LECP, The Kerry Tourism Strategy and the Kerry Leader Strategy as well as the South West region Action Plan for Jobs provide a blueprint for economic development for the county. The delivery of the actions within these strategies will result in a significant financial commitment from the council to leverage the external resources required for the major investment required.

The Council faces significant challenges in relation to urban revitalisation projects in the county, both in the large urban centres of Tralee and Killarney and in the district and regional towns and villages throughout the county. Development contributions which provided a valuable source of funding for such projects have greatly diminished and other sources of funding supported by local contributions

must be identified to advance this work. The Council has been successful through the Urban Designated Grant Scheme in securing funding for Tralee and has made detailed submissions under the Town and Village Renewal Grant Scheme. It is expected that further calls for proposals under these schemes and others such as the Smarter Travel scheme will provide opportunity for investments in urban areas within the county.

In the LECP, the Council has given commitment to implementing rejuvenation measures to two areas in the county. These measures could include town enhancement projects, application of development contribution schemes and a rates incentive scheme. During budget preparations, the variation of rates on vacant properties was considered as part of the stimulus to regenerate towns and villages across the county as raised by Members in previous meetings. This matter was analysed in full and while such a measure may present an opportunity to the Council into the future, it is unlikely to contribute to economic stimulus given its application at Municipal District level.

Included in this area is a provision towards projects being developed by the Capital Infrastructure Unit, planning and design of greenways, smaller scale projects and other critical infrastructure.

Local Enterprise Office (D0906)

€1,174,700

This allocation covers the Council's expenditure in staffing, administration and miscellaneous office supports to the Local Enterprise Office (LEO). This includes estimated expenditure supporting businesses, which is recoupable from Enterprise Ireland; however, this allocation will not be confirmed until the first quarter of 2018. Ms. McAllen advised that Page 92 outlines the specific areas of activity of the LEO with key objectives for 2018 outlined on Page 93 including:

- Grant provision to over 35 businesses.
- Loan provision to 8 businesses through Microfinance Ireland loan schemes.
- Delivery of On Line Trading Voucher Scheme to 30 businesses (if scheme is continued in 2018).
- Delivery of County Enterprise Awards.
- Work with secondary schools on Student Enterprise Awards.
- Liaise and support Food, Craft and Business Networks.
- Deliver 8 Business Start Up Programmes.
- Deliver 4 Business Growth programmes.
- Client referral and protocol development with sister agencies e.g. Enterprise Ireland, Skillnets, Connect Ireland, LEADER, Department of Social Protection, BIM, Fáilte Ireland, etc.

Heritage Services (D1101)

€233,000

The Council's Heritage Office works to promote awareness, interest, and pride in the abundant heritage assets to be found in our county. Ms. McAllen stated that details of the 2017 work programme are set out on Page 94 of the Report and the Heritage Office proposed projects for 2018 include:

- Creative Ireland Project.
- Derelict Sites Initiatives.
- Listowel Heritage and Community Led Regeneration Strategy Implementation.
- Production of Architectural Conservation Toolkits.
- Heritage Week Event Management and Promotion.
- County Heritage Plan Review.

The County Archaeology Department

During 2018 the County Archaeology Department propose to:

- Undertake further excavation and analysis of the portal tomb at Killaclohane II. Initiate discussions with Coillte on the possible conservation and development of the site as a tourism and educational resource.
- Seek funding for remedial works to church ruins/structures around the county should funding streams become available.
- Initiate information gathering phase of the case study sites in Ballinskelligs Bay as part of the ADAPT Northern Heritage INTERREG Project.

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Ms. McAllen referred members to Pages 22 – 24 of the Budget Tables and Pages 98 – 120 of the Chief Executive's Report for details of this Division.

From an operational perspective, the section is managed as four distinct business units: -

- Waste Management
- Environmental Regulation and Environmental Awareness
- Laboratory
- Veterinary Services

Even though North Kerry Landfill closed in 2014 the waste licence remains operational and ongoing compliance with this licence will pose significant financial challenges for the Council into the future. Having regard to the need to explore the potential to develop alternative activities which optimise the land use and provide a revenue stream to the council to help with ongoing management costs, during 2017 the Council will have appointed environmental consultants to provide expert advice and recommendations on the optimal use(s) of the site.

Civic Amenity Sites Operations (E0101)

€2,650,000

The budget allocation is for the operation of the North Kerry Landfill and the 5 Transfer Stations and the maintenance of facilities, transport of waste and disposal cost of waste to a private waste operator and treatment of effluent off-site as well as administration costs.

The cost of operating the recycling facilities at each location is not included in this allocation as it is shown separately (E02).

Ms. McAllen stated that the budget provision also provides for the aftercare cost of North Kerry Landfill, which includes the maintenance of the site, wages, leachate management/collection and disposal, landfill gas management, building maintenance, site management, Electrical Upgrade Works, security and EPA licence requirements.

The contract for the generation of electricity into the National Grid from landfill gas at North Kerry Landfill will generate approximately €60,000 in income for the Council for 2018. As well as reducing greenhouse gas emissions, this project also helps to further alleviate any landfill odours, which may arise as well as generating an income stream for the facility.

Significant expenditure has been incurred during 2017 in complying with our EPA waste licence requirements. Further works to be carried out in 2018 include the appointment of an electrical contractor to upgrade the electrical infrastructure on site to meet current standards along with implementing the recommendations in the landfill gas assessment report.

The DHPLG have initiated a process for the Certification of Historic Landfills (Old landfills which operated between 1977 and 1997) which requires that all Historic Landfills be certified by the EPA by the end of 2016. As part of this certification process remedial works may need to be carried out on any sites identified as posing environmental risks.

Recycling Facilities Operations (E0201)

€513,000

The Council operates extensive recycling facilities at each of our five Civic Amenity Sites at Killarney, Milltown, Kenmare, Caherciveen and Dingle Civic Amenity Site/ Ionad Athchúrsála.

The Council fully acknowledges the importance of these facilities around the county and revised operating arrangements and charges were introduced to safeguard their future.

Bring Centres Operations (E0202)

€350,000

The Environment Section maintains 100 Bring Banks located at various locations around the county. The usage of these recycling facilities has resulted in

approximately 3,517 tonnes of recyclables being accepted in 2016, which is an increase of approximately 2.5% over the previous year.

As a measure to counteract illegal and indiscriminate dumping at these sites, the Council has the co-operation of 40 Community Groups to participate in our "adopt a bring bank" scheme. This involves the local community helping to police the Bring Bank site to limit the illegal dumping and help enhance the site. The Environment Section pays an annual contribution to the local community and provides a 240L wheelie bin and gives collection credit for their disposal.

In addition, a provision has been made to enhance and provide permanent security cameras to prevent illegal dumping. The Council has also rolled out a covert roaming camera, which is monitoring known dumping areas associated with our Bring Bank Network.

In 2016, the Southern Regional Waste Management Office provided funds to standardise the signage and appearance of a number of bottle banks around the county. It is planned that all remaining Bring Sites will be upgraded over the next number of months.

Provision of Waste Collection Service (E04)

Ms. McAllen stated that provision is made to continue the refuse service in the former Killarney Town Council area.

Litter Warden Service (E0501) €228,650

The Council employs three full-time Litter Wardens county-wide on a permanent basis and 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.

Ms. McAllen advised that 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. The Table on Page 104 outlines the statistics relating to Enforcement Activity.

Environmental Awareness Services (E0503) €142,898

Examples of the many environmental awareness raising activities undertaken in 2017 in this area include: -

- The Spring Clean Up of the county in 2017 was a great success in particular the County Clean Up day on April 8th which saw over 3000 volunteers countywide working with the private sector and staff to clean up our roadsides.

- 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 2017, 77 schools renewed their flags on Water Conservation, Energy Conservation, Travel and Biodiversity and Global citizenship with the assistance of our Environmental Awareness Officer. The Council currently have 158 Green Flag Awards for both Primary and Secondary Schools and hope to increase this number during 2018.
- Blue Flag Beaches and Green Coast Award Schemes. The Council has 13 Blue Flags for its beaches along with a Blue Flag for Fenit Marina. Kerry increased the number of Green Coast awards in 2017 to five - Béal Bán, Littor, Ballinskelligs, Castlegregory and Waterville. It is hoped that this number can be increased in 2018. The Council organised various environmental activities on each of the Blue Flag Beaches each year. These range from clean ups to marine workshops to beach walks.
- Maintaining our 'Adopt a Road' programme. Each community group receives an annual grant of €500 along with bags, gloves, pickers etc and an arrangement is made to have the bagged litter collected.
- The Council continued to work closely with Tidy Town groups during 2017 through seminars and site visits by a number of experts dealing with various aspects of the national competition.

Contribution to Street Cleaning Service (E0601)

€2,211,000

This provision is for the operation of the street cleaning service in various towns throughout the county. This amount is a significant provision from our own resources each year.

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

Monitoring of Waste Regs (including Private Landfills) (E0701)

€195,000

The allocation provides for continued activity in this work area. The Council currently has responsibility for monitoring 29 waste facility permits and 10 certificates of registration operated by a variety of waste management operators in the county.

Enforcement of Waste Regulations (E0702) **€103,000**

In 2017, the Council received funding from The Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment, under Anti-litter Initiative phase 1 and phase 2. The allocation provides for €27,000 for 2018. These funds were delivered through the Waste Enforcement Regional Lead Authorities (WERLAs). The aim of the initiatives was to work in partnership with local community organisations in identifying high risk or problem areas. CCTV cameras have been installed in the problem areas identified and clean up operations are being carried out.

Waste Management Plan (E0801) **€42,000**

This allocation is a contribution to the management and administration of the Southern Region Waste Management Office who launched Southern Waste Management Plan 2015 – 2021 that was launched in May 2015 and sets out how as a region we intend to manage our wastes in a safe and compliant manner, with a clear strategy, with policies and actions required. In all there are 53 separate policies set out, the majority of which the Environment Section has a role in implementing.

Operation and Maintenance of Burial Grounds (E0901) **€816,000**

Community Organisations continue to undertake excellent maintenance works in an increasing number of graveyards throughout the county and the Council is highly appreciative of their support and assistance. This co-operation, together with close working arrangements with such groups, builds and strengthens the Council's relationships with local communities.

The Council is currently working with 60 community groups. In 2017, the Council made financial contributions to 42 of these organisations in recognition of their voluntary work in 52 burial grounds. Such contributions are based on the submission of programmes of work and are subject to the approval of the Operations, Health and Safety Directorate. A provision is made in the 2018 Budget for continued support to community groups, in recognition of their ongoing involvement and valuable assistance.

There are currently 153 burial grounds in the county.

Burial Grounds Capital Works

A review of funding requirements over the next 5 years for Burial Ground Development was recently carried out and the Council is seeking approval for a new Loan for the provision and development of Burial Grounds throughout the county.

Operation Costs Civil Defence (E1001) **€256,967**

Ms. McAllen advised that a summary of the key activities of 2017 is set out on Page 110 of the Chief Executive's Report.

Derelict Sites (E1004)

€142,025

The economic climate over the last number of years has posed challenges for the management of derelict sites across the county. The continuing assistance of community based and voluntary groups will play an increasingly essential part in the management of dereliction at a local level. This is an area that will have a renewed focus during 2018 and it is intended to progress with the acquisition of a number of sites in our towns and villages.

Water Safety Operation (E1005)

€428,563

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 2018 at all of our Blue Flag beaches where the Blue Flag Criteria or a water safety Risk Assessment requires us to do so. Additional provision was made in 2017 to increase the number of lifeguards on some beaches to meet the Blue Flag criteria this will continue in 2018.

Voluntary Rescue Services at Ballybunion, Ballinskelligs, Ballyheigue, Banna, Cashen, Derrynane and Killarney, together with Irish Water Safety and R.N.L.I., will again receive financial support in 2018.

Operation of Fire Service (E11)

The Fire Service continues to remain extremely active with attendance at incidents. The delivery of the safety message with regard to gorse fires through community, farming and other groups is an ongoing priority. However, the management of same continues to be a challenge.

The success of fire safety awareness measures rests in community involvement and the Council endeavours to deliver this message by means of focused publicity such as advertising campaigns around Carbon Monoxide Awareness Week and National Fire Safety Week.

Ms. McAllen stated that the number of incidences has slightly decreased this year versus last year and this is illustrated on Pages 113 and 114.

Fire Services Investment Programme/ Upgrading Existing Fleet

It is the Council's policy to provide modern quality Fire Station Accommodation throughout the county. All new stations are being equipped with modern facilities incorporating up-to-date equipment and facilities for fire-fighters and state of the art communication systems.

In August 2017, the DHPLG, under the Fire Appliance Joint Procurement Programme 2018 – 2020, a provision has been made for the procurement of one Class B fire appliance for the Council.

The Council continues to endeavour to upgrade the existing Fire Service vehicles through the purchase of Used Appliances from the UK to replace our older vehicles.

Fire Prevention and Education (E1202) **€202,000**

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 co-operation 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 continues to be rolled out by Kerry Fire Service personnel.

Inspection/Monitoring of Commercial Facilities (E1203) **€72,000**

Water Quality Management (E1301) **709,831**

Inspection and monitoring activities in this area in 2018 will be undertaken in keeping with the current River Basin Management Plans, which were introduced under the first cycle of the Water Framework Directive implementation process. Work on the second cycle of the process has also now commenced at national level and there is likely to be significant progress in this area over the course of 2018.

Operation of the Council Laboratory

The Draft Budget allocation for Laboratory costs is included in E0701 and E1301 above and the portion applicable to Water Services is reflected in Division C and recouped under the SLA.

In 2017, the laboratory will process at least 5,000 samples involving approximately 54,000 tests.

The new Laboratory Information Management System (L.I.M.S.) has attained Laboratory Accreditation. Due to endeavours of laboratory staff Kerry Co Council is now formally accredited to analyse 27 routine chemical parameters. Indeed, the Council laboratory is only one of six such Local Authority labs in the country to be so. The laboratory is ranked second in having greatest number of drinking water parameters, which we report as accredited (84%). Extension of the laboratory accreditation is underway currently.

The development of LIMS system and attainment of accreditation will put the laboratory on a firm commercial footing, which will allow for the generation of additional income in this area.

RECREATION AND AMENITY

Ms. McAllen referred members to Pages 25 – 26 of the Budget Tables and Pages 121 – 131 of the Chief Executive's Report for details of this Division.

Leisure Facilities Operations (F0101) **€470,000**

The costs in this area relate to the Killarney Swimming Pool and Sports and Leisure Centre. The proposed allocation includes Leisure Centre loan repayment charges of €265,962.

Contribution to External Bodies Leisure Facilities (F0103) **€60,000**

This allocation is provided in respect of financial support from the Council to Ballybunion Swimming Pool, and also to Tralee Sports and Leisure Centre.

Library Service Operations (F0201) **€2,471,000**

This budget is in respect of 9 full time branch libraries throughout the county. The Mobile Library service visits 96 communities throughout rural and urban Kerry and a dedicated Local History and Archives section operates from Library Headquarters.

The current National Strategy for Libraries: Opportunities for All (2013 – 2017) has delivered on a range of services to the public, including a national catalogue of library holdings, free membership, a user friendly book request and distribution service.

Ms. McAllen advised that there has been significant I.T. investment across the library network and the extensive work programme is outlined on Page 123.

Local History & Archives Service (F0202) **€90,000**

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

Ms. McAllen informed members that the Book Fund has increased for 2018.

Outdoor Leisure Areas Operations (F03)

Ms. McAllen again reiterated that the results achieved and awards received by Kerry towns and villages in the 2017 Tidy Towns Competition is testament to the commitment of council staff, community groups and residents associations in helping Kerry consistently achieve high results in this national competition.

Parks, Pitches and Open Spaces (F0301) **€1,493,000**

The response of various organisations, community groups and residents associations in 2017 in the maintenance of amenity areas were very positive and it is important that this level of commitment is fostered in the maintenance of amenity areas.

Playgrounds (F0302) **€115,000**

Beaches (F0303) **€465,000**

The cleaning and collection of litter on Blue Flag Beaches is a function that is carried out in each area by Operations Area staff.

Support will be given to active community groups who assist in beach cleaning. There is an increased provision for wages in this area, which reflects activity and the employment of a beach warden on a seasonal basis.

Community Grants (F0401) **€42,000**

This allocation is in respect of a contribution towards Kerry Life Education Programme towards health education and substance / alcohol abuse awareness programme across the entire county.

Recreational Development (F0404) **€151,500**

In 2018, provision of €10,000 has been provided by the Council as part of the funding requirement by the Irish Sports Council.

Administration of Arts Programme (F0501 & F0502) **€414,000**

The work programme is supported by the Arts Council – the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and Creative Ireland.

Income is maximised through leveraging national funding, where possible to support the Arts sector and priorities action under the Council's Arts Strategy 2016 – 2021.

The extensive work programme is outlined on Page 129.

In 2018:

- A sum of €90,000 representing an increase in allocation is included in respect of Arts activities including Artists in Residence programmes across the county, Arts Bealtaine programme, Sliabh Luachra Music Trail, Listowel Writers' Week, etc. The Arts Council has indicated an increase in funds, on a co-funding basis, to the Council based on the delivery of strategic

- shared vision. Individual allocations in this area are subject to this funding.
- A sum of €73,800 in respect of contributions to voluntary groups such as Siamsa Tire, Kerry Film Festival, St Johns Theatre and Arts Centre, Teach Amergin, Cill Rialig, Kenmare Carnegie Arts Centre etc.
 - Provision of €26,200 in respect of Bursaries to schools and other miscellaneous grants.

Museums Operations (F0503)

€453,000

The County Museum operates to the highest standards of collections care by participating in the Heritage Council's Museum Standards Programme for Ireland, and it achieved Full Accreditation in 2013 and Maintenance of Accreditation in 2017. The Museum has an education and outreach programme that runs throughout the year and involves both Kerry and Munster schools.

AGRICULTURE, EDUCATION, HEALTH AND WELFARE

Ms. McAllen referred members to Pages 27 – 28 of the Budget Tables and Pages 132 – 135 of the Chief Executive's Report for details of this Division.

Operation and Maintenance of Piers/Harbours (G0201)

€300,000

The Council has responsibility for the operation of 59 piers and slipways located around the county. The allocation covers the routine maintenance works and energy costs associated with all the piers, provision of tourist moorings and aids to navigation, pontoon maintenance, pay costs for the Harbour Constables, as well as communication costs associated with this programme. A sum of €50,000 is being brought into Revenue from Capital to support this area.

This allocation also part funds projects approved by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine for repairs and improvement works under the Fishery Harbours and Coastal Infrastructure Development Programme. In 2017, the Department co-funded repair works in the following pier locations: Ballinskelligs, Renard and Fenit.

Operation and Maintenance of Piers/Harbours, Fenit (G0203)

€960,000

The Council has responsibility for the operation and promotion of Fenit Harbour. The allocation in this area is in respect of wages and salaries of the port staff and day-to-day maintenance associated with Fenit Pier. This budget also accounts for 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. Dredging of the harbour was completed in 2016. The Council is currently preparing licence applications for further dredging requirements over a 10 year period. This is necessary to ensure the safe berthing of large ships required by the largest user of the port.

Planned Protection of Coastal Regions (G0302) **€200,000**

This funding is provided to cover the requirements that may arise for coastal protection works around the coastline. It is used to cover a percentage of the costs of any scheme co-funded by the State.

An application is currently with the OPW for coastal protection measures at Rossbeigh as well as for the appointment of consultants to carry out Coastal Zone Studies, which are required for extensive coastal protection works.

A dedicated unit has been established to examine areas of increased risk of flooding and coastal erosion and to identify areas for priority funding, including the optimum leverage of state aid for such works.

Provision of Veterinary Service (G0401) **€211,000**

Ms. McAllen advised that this allocation is increased to provide for the recruitment of a second Veterinary Officer.

Operation of Dog Warden Service (G0404) **€149,000**

This provides for the implementation of the Control of Dogs Act, 1986 and associated Regulations. The allocation provides for 4 Dog Wardens including 1 Pound Keeper together with the operation of the dog pound and shelter. Under Dog Control, the Council is constantly involved in the monitoring of Dog Licences and also dealing with complaints from members of the public in relation to Control of Dogs.

School Meals – Tralee/Killarney (G0507) **€10,000**

MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES

Ms. McAllen referred members to Pages 29 – 31 of the Budget Tables and Pages 136 – 142 of the Chief Executive's Report for details of this Division.

Refunds and Irrecoverable Rates (H0303) **€7,425,000**

The allocation provided is in respect of irrecoverable rates in cases of vacant/disused properties or settlements negotiated with ratepayers. Many of these rated vacant properties are currently with the Valuation Office pending a revision of valuation to reflect their current status or to de-rate. The provision in this area also includes settlements agreed by the Council in respect of part-occupied premises and write-off of rates in respect of disused/derelict buildings. It must be noted that the Council has no option but to continue to assess rates on these properties as the valuation will continue to remain effective pending a decision by the Commissioner of Valuation.

The Council, will continue to make every effort to pursue all collectable rates and outstanding arrears in 2018. The overall provision in this area for 2018 has again been substantially reduced, following previous reductions in the last number of years in this area, to take account of reducing settlements, the continuing emphasis on the management and collection of outstanding arrears and the revision of valuations on these properties as outlined above.

Rates on Vacant Properties

Section 31 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 provided for a change to rating law in relation to the refund of rates on properties which are Vacant/To Let or vacant due to refurbishment. It gives the power to the Members of Local Authorities to vary the level of rates refunds that apply in individual Local Electoral Areas/Municipal District Areas within the authority's overall administrative area. The new reserved function commenced with effect from June 1st 2014. 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/Municipal Districts. 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-fida 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 with regard to these requirements prior to any credit/refund.

Coroner Fees and Expenses (H0501)

€308,000

The enactment of legislation transferring this service from Local Authorities is long overdue has been highlighted on several occasions in the past.

Local Representation/Civic Leadership (H09)

Costs associated with the Local Representation/Civic Leadership Budget are set out on Pages 138 and 139 of the Chief Executive's Report.

General Municipal Allocation (GMA) (H0909)

€1,707,000

Ms. McAllen informed the meeting that the GMA was adopted at each Municipal District meeting in October.

Motor Taxation Operation (H1001)

€835,300

Excluding online payments, which account for 72% of all transactions, the Kerry Motor Taxation Office will process over 55,000 transactions in 2017 with an estimated value in excess of €10 million.

The Local Government Operational Procurement Centre (LGOPC)

The recoupable cost of the Local Government Operational Procurement Centre (LGOPC) of €2.09m is included in this allocation.

CENTRAL MANAGEMENT CHARGES

Ms. McAllen referred members to Page 33 of the Budget Tables and Pages 143 – 152 of the Chief Executive's Report for details of this Division.

Maintenance and Upkeep of Corporate Buildings (J0101) €2,008,540

This Budget includes caretaking, security and maintenance costs for the Áras an Chontae Campus and other corporate offices including the Area Services Centre in Castleisland, the file storage facility located at Monavalley, the Area Services Centre in Killorglin, the Town Hall at Princes Quay, the Town Hall Building in Killarney, the Town Hall Building in Listowel and the Ashe Memorial Hall, Tralee.

The Council has approximately 11,000 sq. ft. of rented office accommodation. The locations include Manor West, Maine Street, 24 Denny Street and Farranakilla House in Dingle - Daingean Uí Chúis. The renting of office accommodation for staff is a necessary requirement due to the unavailability of any spare accommodation in our existing buildings. Our main headquarters at Rathass has been at capacity for some time. Existing rents are kept under regular review and more preferential rates are negotiated where possible.

This allocation provides for rental costs, rates, other Local Authority charges, energy (ESB and oil/gas), printing and office consumables for the supply/stationery stores and insurance costs.

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 2017, the Town Hall in Killarney was renovated; the Carnegie Building in Castleisland was refurbished and now operates as an innovation centre and Aras an Chontae was painted externally. All works to Corporate Facilities continue to be designed, managed and constructed in-house.

Corporate General Policy (J0201) €1,633,190

Ms. McAllen advised that this allocation provides for the annual fees payable to the LGMA.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

At the centre of the new law is the requirement for organisations and businesses to be fully transparent about how they are using and safeguarding personal data, and to be able to demonstrate accountability for their data processing activities. This allocation also covers Freedom of Information, Press and Communications,

Insurances / Risk Management. The rising cost of insurance is a significant cost driver for Budget 2018. The Council is in discussion and negotiation to examine the most cost effective way insurance premiums can be assessed.

Audit Services (J0202) **€329,037**

Communication Costs (J0203) **€438,357**

A provision of €328,467 is required to pay for the data communications links and related services, which the Council is heavily reliant on.

Information and Communication Technology (J03)

Maintenance of Networks and PC's (J0301) **€946,764**

Human Resources Administration (J0501) **€1,944,816**

The provision includes a contribution of €240,000 towards a portion of the cost of the annual fees payable to the LGMA. The Council continues to operate in an environment of changing priorities and increasing need to demonstrate administrative and operational effectiveness and value for money.

Health & Safety and Staff Welfare (J0502) **€268,078**

Financial and Management Accounting (J0601, J0602, J0603) **€2,141,148**

Pensions and Lump Sums (J0701) **€7,868,998**

This sum covers the pensions of former staff of all departments, which are now shared out across all Services in accordance with a National Unit share-out parameter.

Ms. McAllen stated that concluded her presentation of the Revenue Budget for 2018 and while she acknowledged the Report was extensive she encouraged all members to read it.

The Cathaoirleach and all members complimented the Chief Executive and Ms. McAllen on their presentations and staff for compiling the Report.

Cllr. Gleeson read the following into the record of the meeting:

"This Book is a cumulative of many individual plans, many of them relatively small in nature but each with the potential to enhance and enrich lives and communities. I wish to refer to only a few. To other aspects I will over the coming months be returning through Notices of Motion to full Council and Municipal Area meetings. I wish to express my concern at the suggestion that the 8 year rates harmonisation process would be reviewed. I know Chief Executive that you had a preference for a 5 year period but you accepted my then proposal for 8 years. Fairness to our then discussion and to Killarney's rate

payers, demands, I believe, that our then decision remains in place. Our apparent failure as a country to secure the 2023 Rugby World Cup must not be allowed to permit Government and the TII to forego development of (a) the Macroom to Baile Mhuirne and (b) the Adare By-Pass roads. Too long we have waited for their development and too long we have been deprived.

I believe that I was the first to draw attention to the invasive presence of Japanese Knotweed. I acknowledge the progress being made towards control and elimination. But there is quite a way to go. There are other invasive species proliferating and being spread by Council. I instance but one: Winter Heliotrope which abounds on roadsides. I PROPOSE that we need the advice of a Botanist prior to any road works commencing where it is located.

Uaireanta is féidir le an dea-thoradh don gcontae a theacht de bharr iarracht beag airgid. Le déanaí bhí Oireachtas na Samhna I gCill Áirne agus i gCiarraí. B'fhiú breis is €6m don gcontae é. Is ionann san agus 120 jab lán-aimsearach ar feadh bhliain amháin don gcontae é. Is ar éigin a thuig na mean áitiúil go raibh sé ar siúl. Molaim thú Ms. McAllen as an urraíocht agus de thoradh ar san beigh an ceiliúradh san ar ais sa chontae an bhliain seo chugainn. Molaim freisin Radio na Gaeltachta as na craoladhacháin go léir a dhein said ón Ródaí.

Our is a county much dependant on Tourism. We must constantly enhance that product by:

- (1) The undergrounding of electric cables should urgently be prioritised*
- (2) The development of proper footpaths is an absolute necessity including Park road, Killarney.*
- (3) The provision of cycle lanes is being urgently sought more and more each year.*
- (4) Road signage must be of an internationally acceptable standard – proper directional signage well in advance of important tourist junctions must be prioritised.*
- (5) We must proceed with the provision and where necessary the planting of wild flower nature habitats. Humans and creatures benefit and in a special way the honey bee and bumble bee that are central to all life.*
- (6) As the nation pretends to prioritise the prevention of the flooding of homes (some built where they never should have been) we need to make sure that Flood Plains are protected and allowed to function as nature intended and not be manipulated and constricted in ways that cause great devastation to innocent parties.*
- (7) I believe and propose that water harvesting should be prioritised in all schools and it should be a condition of planning for all large commercial and agricultural holdings.*

- (8) *I ask that there would be due urgency about the development of an outer By-Pass road for Killarney as per Page 51 of the Chief Executive's Report.*
- (9) *Coming as I do from the heartland of sand and gravel quarrying in Kerry I ask the Council to ensure that air, water and decibel quality are properly respected. Local residents and the overall environment have inalienable rights.*
- (10) *The plague of dog excrement continues to degrade locations and demean people particularly people with a disability. I ask the Council to do all that it can to prosecute offending dog owners.*
- (11) *Walking/Cycleway from Ross Road to Muckross Road.*
- (12) *Coroners Fees and Expenses of €308,000 is inherently wrong and the Government should assume responsibility.*
- (13) *The fascia board on Killarney Courthouse is disintegrating and needs to be replaced.*
- (14) *I wish to congratulate and thanked his co-Trustees of Muckross House and Traditional Farm for facilitating the County's Artists in Residence. In the context of the Budget available to the Arts Department of €414,000 that facilitation is gladly given and he was aware it was much appreciated.*
- (15) *I wish to acknowledge the role and importance of the Transfer Station. I suggest that we would view best practice in other countries in relation to charging. I refer as I did previously to the difficulty for the public and the Station staff in moving bags of recyclable paper. In conclusion I ask that the units at Armagh House for the homeless would be developed."*

Cllr. J. Finucane welcomed the Budget with expenditure of €136.7m and stated that Kerry County Council is the lead agency and economic driver in the county. He welcomed the report on the Machinery Yard and he recommended that a unit would be established to deal with Japanese Knotweed. Jobs are critical for the development of the county and it is vital that there is investment in marketing the county. Kerry needs a full time IDA official located in Kerry. Cllr. Fincane welcomed continued progress on the Shannon LNG project and he added that its success is critical for the county. He also recommended that a Finance Committee would be established to plan for the future. The lack of a national Pension Scheme is unacceptable and such a Scheme should be managed by the Treasury Management Agency. Cllr. Finucane PROPOSED the adoption of the Budget for 2018 as presented.

Cllr. M. Cahill welcomed the following (1) the IRD Hub and the Flooding and Coastal Protection Project. He further welcomed works at Incharee and added that residents are delighted with these works. Cllr. Cahill expressed concern for

low lying areas in light of the effects of climate change as residents in these areas are facing tough decisions regarding relocation. He added that he was opposed to the levying of rates on vacant properties and he would like to see an incentive offered to new businesses. Housing is the number one priority and it is important that vacant houses are repaired and re-let in the shortest possible time. The funding available for the Repair to Lease Scheme should be increased to €80,000 to €100,000 to facilitate the release of properties. A property was acquired in Glenbeigh 4 years ago and it was intended that it would facilitate a number of units but no work has commenced to-date. Cllr. Cahill acknowledged the work of the Housing Grants section which is a great success and these grants allow the elderly and disabled to remain in their own homes. He welcomed the funding for Kilderry Bends and the Tralee/Killorglin road. Cllr. Cahill referred to the Killarney Killorglin road and emphasised the need to acquire the land quickly. He expressed his disappointment that CLAR funding has not been restored. Issues with public lighting, hedge cutting and deer on the roads are very topical and need to be addressed. Cllr. Cahill asked that a Traffic Management Plan for Killorglin would be given priority. Japanese Knotweed is a huge problem that should be addressed. Customers in Mid Kerry have had to endure numerous interruptions to the water supply long term and there is a need for additional funding to replace the inadequate pipe network. He reiterated his call for the location of a Grants Office in Killorglin to deal with local, national and EU Grants. Cllr. Cahill asked that water would be provided in all burial grounds and that disabled access would be provided to all buildings and beaches. He asked that priority would also be given to the provision of a new pier at Cromane.

Cllr. D. Grady complimented the Fire Service on their work. Housing is a priority and while progress has been made delays in procedures by the Department mean that housing construction projects are being delayed. He expressed concern at the plight of homeless families in the county. He added that flooding problems from Foiladuane to the Ross Road have not been addressed. There is a shortage of staff and he asked that 4 or 5 additional staff would be employed in the Killarney MD. In conclusion Cllr. Grady expressed concern at level of illegal dumping in the county.

Cllr. J. Healy-Rae asked how much would be spent on the acquisition of burial grounds over the next 5 years. He was opposed to the closure of the landfill and it is still very expensive to maintain it. Class 111 roads were not included in the last two Roads programmes and discretionary funding was not provided for these roads. This is unfair on the people living on these roads. Cllr. Healy-Rae asked if the next Roads Programme would be based on the condition of roads and would Class 111 or cul de sac roads be included. The funding for footpaths has not been adequate and there is no footpath from the Ard Bhearna housing estate to the Centra shop. A tender was recently advertised for the construction of additional houses in this estate but it does not include the provision of a footpath. Commercial rates account for in excess of 30% of the Council's income and he urged caution not to put businesses in jeopardy. The charges at Transfer Stations, especially for plastics, is exorbitant and in his opinion it has resulted in

an increase in littering. In the past he requested that carbon monoxide alarms would be fitted in all local authority houses when smoke alarms are installed but that is not happening. Cllr. Healy-Rae welcomed the acknowledgement by the NPWS that deer are causing accidents and added that existing signage to warn motorists of this danger is inadequate. In relation to the Machinery Yard Cllr. Healy-Rae asked would there now be a durapatcher in each engineering area. At present cold tar is used to fill potholes and it is a waste of time and costs four times more than the durapatcher. Additional staff must also be taken on in each MD. The Kenmare area had 29 staff but now there is just 16 and some staff are temporary for up to 18 years. He asked that staff who have been temporary for 3 years would be employed full time.

Cllr. R. Beasley thanked the Head of Finance for the subvention for Ballybunion Leisure Centre. The biggest problem for tourism is the state of the road network and the lack of By-Passes in Adare and Macroom is having a negative impact on the economy of the county. Phase 1 of the Dale Road was completed in 2007/2008 but funding has not been provided for Phase 2 which is a major impediment to tourism and development in North Kerry. Coach drivers are refusing to travel the road and this is having an adverse impact on Ballybunion Golf Club. He called on the government to provide funding for this work as a matter of urgency. While the work on street cleaning is reasonable the issue is enforcement and fast food outlets should provide their own bins. Additional staff and litter wardens should be taken on to address the litter problem. While there has not been a problem with flooding at the Cashen in the past few years most homeowners cannot get insurance. He called for the dredging of the Cashen and he called on management to pursue this with the OPW.

Cllr. Beasley added that housing is the biggest problem facing the county and despite the recent remarks by the Taoiseach there is no acceptable level of homelessness. Members were informed that houses would be built in the past few years but that did not materialise. It is proposed to commence the construction of 20 houses in Ballybunion at the end of 2018 and also 7 in Listowel and he hoped they would proceed on schedule. He referred to the recent rodent problem in Causeway and asked that it would be addressed immediately.

Cllr. S. Fitzgerald thanked staff for organising the recent Tomás Aigheas commemorative event. It is vital that the WAW continues to be promoted and that a number of discovery points would be provided. Car parking and public toilets should also be provided. The Dingle Hub is a new initiative and more Hubs should be developed as it brings high speed broadband to the area. These Hubs bring high quality employment. Cllr. Fitzgerald welcomed the employment of a few additional staff in 2017. Progress is ongoing on the Dingle Inner Relief Road, car parking and the N86 and he hoped these projects would progress early in 2018. A more significant housing programme must be implemented to address the demand for social housing and he hoped funding would be forthcoming from the Department for the construction of housing. He recently met an English

couple who were unaware of NPPR and the original charge was €200 but with penalties they are now facing a bill in excess of €7,000 together with LPT. These people were living abroad and were not informed of this charge and he requested that a letter would issue to the Government to assist these people. Cllr. Fitzgerald referred to the Council offices in Dingle which are not ideal and he asked that suitable accommodation would be identified in the near future. Place names in Dingle are a problem and signs should read Dingle Daingean Uí Chúis and he asked that staff would be instructed to do this.

Cllr. M. Healy-Rae welcomed the statement by the Chief Executive that the Council would co-fund flood relief works and she asked that such works would be undertaken in both Glenflesk and Castleisland. There is a reference to the construction of 20 houses in Rathmore / Barraduff and she requested clarification on the exact location of the houses. Cllr. Healy-Rae welcomed the 5 apartments and 1 house to be constructed at Pinewood and she asked that there would be greater consultation with residents as there is already a problem with parking in this estate. Recently there was a problem with access for an Ambulance. The HAP Scheme is not successful as the thresholds are too low. Cllr. Healy-Rae referred to Page 36 of the Chief Executive's Report under the heading Adaptations and Extensions to Council Dwellings where it states an allocation was received in respect of adaptation and extensions to Council dwellings for people with a disability and she asked if funding was provided for house extensions for people who do not have a disability. Many tenants living in overcrowded conditions have been refused extension and she asked what is the criteria to qualify for an extension. Cllr. Healy-Rae requested an update on the LAP for Killarney. She welcomed the prioritising of the N22 Farranfore to Killarney road for approval by the TII and she highlighted that the By-Pass from Castle Lough to Lissivigeen should also be prioritised. Public lighting is a major issue and in one estate in Killarney a number of lights are broken for months which is unacceptable. In conclusion Cllr. Healy-Rae asked how much of a loan for burial grounds was being sought.

Cllr. J. Moloney agreed with the views expressed by Cllr. Gleeson in relation to the harmonisation of rates and he was opposed to any reduction in the 8 years as previously agreed. He welcomed progress on the Great Southern Greenway and he asked if the funding of €400,000 earmarked is adequate to complete the project. He asked if the additional staff referred to in the report relates to the replacement of staff that have retired or is it additional staff. A number of staff in the Listowel MD will retire in the next few years and they must be replaced. Cllr. Moloney concurred with Cllr. M. Healy-Rae in relation to public lighting and he asked that the new contract would ensure that value for money is achieved. He acknowledged that the contribution to Writers Week is now paid from the county fund.

Cllr. S. Locke stated that the lack of outdoor staff is one of the biggest issue in the Tralee MD. A number of staff will be retiring and he called for assurances that they will be replaced and that additional staff will be taken on. He welcomed

the footpath programme. In relation to the taking in charge of estates he called on developers to carry out the works required to enable the estate to be taken in charge. Cllr. Locke referred to the Tenant Purchase Scheme and asked if the tenant must have paid water charges to qualify for the Scheme. The Mitchels Regeneration Scheme is nearing completion and he asked if there are other areas in need of regeneration. He asked how many people caught dumping illegally are brought to court and how much are the fines imposed by the Court. Cllr. Locke complimented all volunteers in Tralee who helped retain the Gold Medal in the Tidy Towns Awards in 2017. He welcomed the allocation for the installation of smoke alarms including carbon monoxide alarms. An allocation is included in the Budget for Killarney Sports and Leisure Centre and he asked if a provision is made for Tralee Regional Sports and Leisure Complex which needs to be upgraded. He also welcomed the allocation for the County Museum. Cllr. Locke asked that a survey of trees would be undertaken to identify those that are dangerous following the recent storms. All trees should be trimmed. In conclusion Cllr. Locke highlighted the amount of silt in the River Lee where 2 of the eyes of the bridge are blocked with silt and he asked that they would be addressed.

Cllr. J.J. Culloty highlighted that a lack of staff is an issue for each Municipal District and the Chief Executive indicated at a previous meeting that 2 temporary staff would be employed in each MD. He asked if they would replace staff that retire or would they be additional to the existing staff compliment. Each MD needs a velocity patcher as roads are deteriorating. The development of wind farms is resulting in a lot of damage to the roads in the area and funding must be secured from the developers to repair them. A footpath programme is essential as is the development of Áras Pdraig and the Sara Lee site. A cycleway should also be developed on the Muckross Road and he asked that priority would be given to the completion of the Lough Leane Loop. The loop walk in Castleisland should also be progressed. Cllr. Culloty complimented the staff in the Housing Department on their excellent work especially on housing grants which are vitally important for the elderly. Homelessness is not acceptable and some people must live with family which is unfair as it results in overcrowding. Vacant properties should be considered as part of the solution to the housing problem. Cllr. Culloty commended the Libraries on the excellent service they provide. In conclusion he stated he was not in favour of reduction the number of years for rates harmonisation.

Cllr. J.F. Flynn called for the employment of additional outdoor staff. Some private roads are very busy and consideration should be given to taking them in charge. He asked that priority would be given to improving the Killarney road. Cllr. Flynn emphasised the need for the Council to cut hedges and to recoup the cost from the landowner. He did not believe that employing additional enforcement officers would solve the problem. The public lighting budget is inadequate and should be increased. He welcomed the proposed Footpath Programme and he asked that a footpath would be provided in Castlemaine, where a section is missing. The Government should invest more in the provision

of broadband. Kerry is a rural county and many people cannot work from home due to the lack of broadband. He understood it is proposed to build houses in Ardmoniel only, yet the Council owns lands in other areas and he asked that the land would be sold to someone who would be willing to develop the land. Cllr. Flynn referred to turn key developments and added that in Kerry just 10% is provided to the developer while in Cork this figure is 30% which is more reasonable. Cllr. Flynn asked that the Local Area Plan would be reviewed as soon as possible to ensure that additional land is zoned for development.

Cllr. L. Purtill called on the Council to recruit construction workers to expedite work on houses. Hedge cutting continues to be a problem which must be seriously addressed. Roads that were damaged during the construction of wind turbines should be repaired. The footpath at Doonard Crescent, Tarbert is dangerous and he asked that it would be included in the Footpath Programme. Cllr. Purtill referred to illegal dumping and asked that CCTV would be utilised in the hope of identifying those responsible. This applies to one area in particular between Ballylongford and Listowel where refuse is dumped every week.

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. J.F. Flynn, SECONDED by Cllr. S. Fitzgerald it was agreed to suspend Standing Orders to allow the meeting to continue.

Cllr. J. Lucid read the following into the record of the meeting:

“On Housing and building I would like to mention the fact that there is a proposal to build 200 units in 2018. I welcome this but feel that if there is to be any impact seen in dealing with the housing crisis we need to build more social and affordable housing. The lack of supply in the market is the single source of all our housing problems, we have substantial shortage with a high number on the waiting list and this lack of supply is forcing house prices and rent costs through the roof.

On roads, the re-introduction of the Local Improvement Scheme in 2017 is welcome and must be continued in 2018 and every year going forward. Many private roads are in a very poor condition and it will take years of investment to clear the current waiting list not to mind numbers waiting to get on the list.

Roads along with Wild Atlantic Way must be maintained at the highest possible level to enhance the tourist experience. Many North Kerry roads are in serious need of investment. The Minister and the TII must address the Dale Road. This is the main route from Tralee to Ballybunion and the section from Abbeydorney to Ballinclogher is just in an unacceptable state. Residents and road users in the area have endured this situation for many years now. This road will do nothing to improve the economy and tourism for Ballybunion.

I would like to acknowledge and welcome the dredging work and cleaning of drains on both sides of the R551 between Buncurrig and Ballymacquinn. We need additional resources to improve the management of Ardkearagh lake and river. The current budget provided for clearing the area where the river joins the sea. New sluice gates need to be fitted and further drainage at Banmore and Toherbane will improve drainage capacity and this is necessary to ensure that the R551 stays flood free.

As Chair of the LMD I must welcome the decision of Bord Pleanála to give a green light to the Listowel bypass. I hope that the concerns of the people living along the new route will be considered fairly as the project progresses. This is a very significant and important development for the future of Listowel. I also welcome the progress with the development of the Listowel Greenway, this will be a very important amenity for the area.

On Water Services, I want to refer to group water schemes. The Clanmaurice Group Water Scheme in my own area has 1600 consumers and the management teams involved here and in other schemes have been there from the time they were initially set up (in early 1970s) and cannot and should not be expected to continue in this role any longer. I am aware that Irish Water has proposals for taking group schemes under their control, but the terms and requirements they are setting down will be impossible to achieve for most of our group schemes. What will happen when the managements of the schemes are no longer there will it fall back on the Council. We need to be proactive here, deal with this matter now.

I have to say I welcome the very positive development with the proposal to create Agri & Financial Technology Hubs in conjunction with Dairymaster, Tralee IT and FEXCO. This is about creating indigenous jobs and we need more of these to provide opportunity for young people to work and make a good life for themselves in this county. Progress with LNG is very important for the Tarbert/Ballylongford area. In fact success here will have a major impact on the North Kerry economy. I must also mention the co-funding schemes such as the Town & Village, Community Support Fund and so on. I welcome the investment of 200k in three Town and Village projects in the LMD for Listowel, Ballybunion and Ballyheigue. I also welcome the formation of the Chamber Alliance in Listowel under Chairman Stephen Stack and feel this will have a hugely positive influence on development for Listowel going forward. The CEO and the Council are to be commended for the role they play in the economic development of the county and in supporting our local industries.

I have to say that I welcome that funding is being provided for coastal erosion. However the allocation of €460k for this issue will not make any impact with the scale of the problem we are dealing with in places like Ballyheigue, Banna and the Cashen area. I ask that the OPW and the European structural funds would make resources available, deal properly with problems that are getting worse with each passing year.”

Cllr. N. Moriarty welcomed the proposed works on the N70 together with proposed Ring of Kerry strategic improvements and she asked if these works include the New Line road to Waterville. She welcomed funding for LIS and she recently moved a notice of motion asking that new applications would be invited for this Scheme. She asked that funding would be provided for emergency and hardship cases. Cllr. Moriarty concurred with the views expressed by previous speakers in relation to cul-de-sac roads and she asked that they would be considered for inclusion in the Roads Programme. Many of these roads serve tourism areas and they are widely used. She welcomed the new reporting procedure for public lighting and the LED Replacement Programme and she asked if it would be allowed to utilise matching CLÁR funding for this purpose. She acknowledged the fantastic service provided by Libraries and she welcomed the increased membership. They provide a service to people targeted under SICAP. Cllr. Moriarty welcomed the provision for a new mobile library who provide an excellent service. She hoped that the self service model for the Library would not be a pre cursor to a people less service. The national tender model for Libraries is not good for local businesses and the LGMA were asked to do a cost benefit analysis on it. The commitment to the development of WAW viewing points is welcome. Fáilte Ireland grants will now be administered by local authorities but clarification on the criteria should be provided to community groups as she wanted to ensure there is not reduction in support for such groups.

Cllr. N. Foley referred to present staffing levels which are inadequate and she asked if additional staff will be taken on and will those who retire in the near future be replaced. There are serious flaws in the HAP Scheme in relation to the thresholds and she asked if this Scheme will be reviewed. Cllr. Foley also asked if the Tenant Purchase Scheme is being reviewed by the Department. There are significant issues with public lighting and she understood the contract is up for review shortly. She asked if health and safety issues will be taken into consideration in this review and not just cost. She acknowledged the tremendous work done by Litter Wardens and she asked if there was any scope to employ additional staff in this area. Cllr. Foley also acknowledged the excellent service provided by all libraries and added that they have been innovative in making the service accessible to all. The increase in the number of computers for the public to access the internet is also welcome and she asked if computers are designated for research they should only be used for this purpose. She asked if there is scope for the mobile libraries to visit schools.

Cllr. Foley commended the Arts Department and congratulated them on the success of Culture Night when in excess of 60 events were held. She asked that an application would be made to extend Culture Night to a weekend event. In conclusion Cllr. Foley asked when will national funding for CFRAMS be allocated.

Cllr. P. Connor-Scarteen welcomed the application submitted for funding for coastal protection works at Sneem. He agreed that members should await the legislation on vacant properties before a levy is imposed on them and members should be balanced and fair. 42% of the road network is in poor condition and he

welcomed the works on the Ring of Kerry. He asked that the New Line Waterville would also be included. In the past he called for the establishment of a dedicated unit to oversee the treatment and eradication of Japanese Knotweed but he acknowledged progress has been made in this area. Cllr. Connor-Scarteen highlighted that in order to meet the 2020 targets additional LED lights must be provided in the public lighting network. It is time there was a comprehensive footpath and drainage programme. It is essential that a footpath and public lighting are provided to Ard Bhearna housing estate. Additional outdoor staff are urgently required and he hoped temporary staff would be made permanent in 2018. Cllr. Connor-Scarteen expressed concern at the small number of single rural dwellings that it is proposed to construct in 2018 as it is not adequate. He complimented the Tourism Unit on their great work. Priority should also be given to the repair of footpaths in burial grounds and serious consideration needs to be given to the provision of a columbarium wall in some burial grounds as it would result in a saving to both the Council and families. In conclusion he asked that water would be provided in all burial grounds.

Cllr. N. Kelleher welcomed the 80% recoupment of the restoration of the National Pay Agreement by the Department for 2018 and he requested clarification on what the position would be into the future. Government block grants were replaced by LPT and this local authority took good decisions and did not reduce it but they got nothing in return from central government while other local authorities are getting €17m from the Equalisation Fund. He asked how much was brought from the Capital Account to revenue for Budget 2018 and what is the balance in the Capital Account. Cllr. Kelleher acknowledged that the Department is reviewing the €200m to be provided by IPB to local authorities and he asked what will the net gain be to Kerry County Council. He further asked what is Kerry County Council's liability to IPB. The levying of rates on vacant commercial premises needs to be referred to the MDs and he asked that this would be done. Upcoming Budgets will be challenging for local authorities if the government does not provide funding. He welcomed the proposed investment in the Machinery Yard over the next few years. Cllr. Kelleher highlighted that in the past he requested that litter bins would be provided on the Muckross Road but they have not been provided to-date. He agreed with Cllr. Connor-Scarteen that columbarium walls should be provided in a number of larger burial grounds and he asked that this would be considered. He referred to Page 109 of the Chief Executive's Report and the section on Burial Ground Capital Works and he asked how much of a loan will be required for this work. One of the mobile libraries is off the road and he asked if it will be replaced. A roundabout should be installed at the Lewis Road Junction and he asked that this would be provided until the outer Ring Road is constructed. Cllr. Kelleher asked that an advertisement would be placed in the local media seeking expressions of interest in the Sara Lee site and Áras Padraig. In conclusion Cllr. Kelleher asked that Armagh House would be developed as Killarney needs this facility.

Cllr. T. Barry highlighted that not enough houses are being constructed especially in Listowel and he requested an update on the construction of 7 houses in Listowel. There are issues with social housing leasing and he was aware of a lady who was in private rented accommodation who had to leave the house she was renting as it was being done up only to discover it was leased to the Council. Residents Associations should be encouraged as they bring a sense of community to the estate. In conclusion Cllr. Barry complimented Tidy Towns Committees on their excellent work.

Cllr. B. Cronin referred to the Lewis Road Junction which he stated was very dangerous. The members for Killarney MD requested a meeting with TII but they have not agreed to this meeting to-date. He asked when and where will this meeting take place. Some sections of footpaths are in a poor condition and these must be prioritised in the Footpath Programme. Vast parts of rural Kerry do not have high speed broadband and the service providers were invited to a Council meeting to discuss this issue. These companies are only interested in the more densely populated areas but it is important that all parts of the county have a good broadband service from an employment and business point of view. The water pipe network from Crohane to Barleymount is in a deplorable condition and there have been numerous interruptions to the water supply in this area. He asked that this section of the pipe network would be replaced. Many local roads are in a bad condition and they should be repaired. Cllr. Cronin requested an update on the design of the new bridge at Listry. Elected members and the general public have expressed their concern at the signage for the bridge prior to the current works and motorists are ignoring the signs. There is a need for appropriate signage at this bridge. A planning application has been lodged for a playground in Firies in conjunction with the school and this will be a vital facility for the children in the area. He recorded his gratitude to all involved.

Cllr. Cronin expressed his dissatisfaction at a letter that issued to members advising them not to report faults with public lighting to individual staff members and he requested clarification on this issue prior to the vote on the Budget. He was elected to represent his constituents and giving him a phone number for an outside body is not acceptable. Great progress has been made on the treatment of Japanese Knotweed and this needs to continue. He requested that the same method of spraying would be used where the Council has removed bends and erected concrete fencing as many of these areas are completely overgrown. Cllr. Cronin complimented the Litter Wardens and he asked that CCTV cameras would continue to be used to address illegal dumping. Since the LPT meeting in September he has encountered a lot of anger from property owners, particularly in rural areas, who feel they are not getting anything in return for the payment of this charge. Footpaths are not provided or repaired, hedges are not cut and public lights are not repaired. He asked what are property owners getting from the payment of this charge. In conclusion Cllr. Cronin asked how much of a loan is required for the development of burial grounds.

Cllr. T. Ferris advised that having reviewed the minutes of the Budget meetings over the past few years she made specific proposals and asked specific questions but she did not get specific replies and votes were not taken on her proposals. She believed the necessary legislation is in place to allow members to levy rates on vacant commercial premises. Ms. McAllen mentioned that it is challenging as there is not enough housing units yet vacant commercial units could be converted to housing units. In 2015 Cllr. Nolan proposed that this issue would be referred to the SPC but members were not provided with the report referred to by Ms. McAllen and she understood it was not discussed by the relevant SPC. Cllr. Ferris PROPOSED that rates would be imposed on vacant commercial units subject to the following: full rebate for the first 3 months and 50% for the next 3 months following which the property would be liable for rates. Cllr. Ferris asked if the 4,200 social housing units referred to in the Report are owned by the Council or does it include units rented from the private sector. She asked if the staff in the Procurement Office were employed in other Departments prior to the being reassigned to this Office and were they replaced and if not why not.

Cllr. D. Quigg SECONDED Cllr. Ferris's proposal.

Cllr. P. Daly highlighted that over the past 3 years in September members were informed there was a shortfall of €3m in the Budget yet the gap was bridged by the Budget meeting. He would prefer if commercial units were converted to housing units rather than converting housing units to commercial units. Cllr. Daly asked what was the Capital balance that transferred to Kerry County Council from Tralee Town Council in 2014 and how much is still remaining. He believed this is the time to utilise this balance for the benefit of the town. The average waiting time for housing for a single person in Tralee is 13 years and many houses in the Mitchel's area are reserved for disabled or the elderly. The housing needs of the people of Tralee are not being met. There is no Council owned Transfer Station or refuse service in the Tralee MD. Cllr. Daly asked if rates harmonisation was abolished how much of an increase in income would result. In conclusion Cllr. Daly expressed his disappointment that there is no derogation from LPT for the less well off.

Cllr. D. McCarthy highlighted that there is a shortage of outdoor staff and if possible additional staff should be taken on in 2018. Extra funding is required for hedge cutting which is a major problem on many local and regional roads. Public lighting is a problem that needs to be addressed also. Cllr. McCarthy commended Tidy Towns groups on their excellent work. In conclusion he suggested that young people should learn to drive at school and that they would acquire a driving licence as part of the Leaving Certificate.

Cllr. M. Kennelly highlighted that roads were damaged as a result of the construction of wind farms and the laying of the gas pipe as far as Listowel and while these roads will be repaired he expressed concern that the roads used for diversions, particularly in Moyvane, which were damaged by the heavy traffic will not be repaired. He welcomed the additional roads funding for 2018 and he

PROPOSED that it would be spent in North Kerry. Cllr. Kennelly welcomed an Bord Pleanála's decision on the Listowel By-Pass and he added that we need to ensure maximum benefit from it. In Listowel one family was evacuated on two occasions because of flooding and he called on management to ensure the necessary remedial works are carried out to ensure this area will not flood again. Initially there was opposition to the North Kerry Greenway but fears have been allayed and he hoped it would progress in 2018. When the gas pipeline was being laid in Moyvane members asked that Irish Water would provide funding to allow the water pipe to be replaced as there has been a number of interruptions to the supply in this area. However Irish Water has not allocated funding for this work to-date. He called on officials to contact Irish Water with a view to getting funding allocated for this work. Cllr. Kennelly asked how many ghost estates are in Kerry but in particular in North Kerry. He expressed concern at staffing levels and highlighted that it took 12 months to repair one vacant house and this is unacceptable. It is proving very difficult to get builders to carry out this work. In Dublin local authorities are taking on apprentice plumbers, electricians etc and this should be considered in Kerry also. The penalties for NPPR are a disgrace and are unjustifiable. He welcomed the subvention for Ballybunion Leisure Centre and he asked if a subvention is given to Listowel Community Centre.

Cllr. D. Quigg highlighted that there is a lack of housing in Killorglin and the Mid Kerry area which is very disappointing considering the amount of land the Council owns in this area. He agreed that apprentices should be taken on by the Council as there is a lot of work for plasterers, carpenters, painters etc. The IDA have not delivered jobs for Kerry and there is a lack of employment opportunities in Kerry. Kerry County Council should take the lead and establish a team to go to Europe to meet potential investors. Income from LPT will be €14.48m in 2018 and property owners want to know what this is being used for as they do not see the benefits. Road safety is very important and there is no cycling proficiency training in schools and already lives have been lost on the roads. Cllr. Quigg then referred to Councillors Allocations and stated that members need to have more of say where this funding is being directed as he was not permitted to allocate funding to the Tomás Aigheas Commemoration. The completion of applications for LEADER funding is labour intensive and as a result he was concerned some groups may be excluded. There is an administrative role there to assist groups who want to apply for LEADER funding. In conclusion Cllr. Quigg asked that Killorglin Courthouse would be given to the community.

Cllr. M. Cahill referred to the former St. Finans Hospital and suggested that this building could be used to develop a centre to train people from all over the country for the hospitality sector. He added that greater efforts should be made to engage more actively with the diaspora.

Cllr. A. Thornton highlighted that the road infrastructure in North Kerry is in a deplorable condition. As a county we cannot continue to try to meet national and EU energy targets for wind energy. A gas pipeline is being laid to bring gas to Listowel but funding has not been provided to repair the roads used for

diversions. Also funding is not in place to repair infrastructure damaged during the development of wind farms. She asked that funding would be identified for this purpose and that an application for funding would be submitted to the relevant Department. Development levies for this type of development are not adequate to repair the damage caused during the course of construction of wind farms. The development of the new burial ground in Lixnaw is subject to funding but this has been the case for some time. She requested clarification on the timescale for the development of this burial ground. Cllr. Thornton referred to the provision in the Budget for the Killarney Sports and Leisure Centre and stated while she was not opposed to this provision could they apply for grant aid elsewhere. There is huge demand for social housing in North Kerry yet it is only proposed to build 33 houses there which is 9% of the housing programme. In conclusion Cllr. Thornton stated there was agreement that the cleaning schedule for Ballybunion Beach would be reviewed to ensure the Blue Flag is retained.

Cllr. J. Healy-Rae stated he was opposed to Cllr. Ferris' proposal regarding rates on vacant commercial properties.

The Chief Executive confirmed that substantial progress has been made in the treatment of Japanese Knotweed in particular along national routes and it is hoped to expand this programme to the non-national roads in 2018. She confirmed that the Arts Budget has increased over the last 2 years and additional national funding was also secured. This has facilitated the delivery of a larger programme. The IPB dividend is being considered by IPB and the Department at present. The Repair and Leasing Scheme is a good scheme that could benefit rural Kerry. Concerns around the issue of planning in relation to this Scheme were brought to the Department's attention and the Scheme may be amended. €62m was allocated to Kerry for the Housing Programme and targets set out. By the end of 2018 these targets will be exceeded by 40%. She agreed that there is a significant housing list and added that 90% are in private rented accommodation.

The Chief Executive referred members to Page 38 of her Report where it indicates that in excess of 300 units in total will be delivered in 2017 and 2018. An assessment of the Council owned lands was also carried out and the impact of the 2018 programme on them. Significant work has been carried out on housing provision and construction and another call for Turn Key proposals will be made in the near future. If the Scheme allows for 10% then that is what will be offered to developers. In relation to the national Broadband Scheme there are 2 bidders currently and it is likely to be mid 2018 before the contract is awarded. Kerry County Council has appointed a broadband officer to assist companies coming into the county. Homelessness is a serious issue and that situation is managed. A few approaches have been taken including assigning a number of our own properties as transient properties for 6 months. The number of homeless is growing and it is being managed carefully. In relation to travellers the Chief Executive advised that Kerry has a strong Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee which is recognised nationally as one of

the most successful committees. There has been substantial funding invested in this area. In relation to the taking in charge of estates the Chief Executive confirmed there has been a lot of progress in this area. The proposal that she put forward that there would be an increase of 2 staff per MD was based on a 10% increase in LPT but as grant levels increase a limited number of positions will be filled. The outcome of the review on the Machinery Yard will now be discussed with staff and any investment must be self-financing. It is intended to purchase 2 new dura patchers in 2018.

In response to requests for footpaths the Chief Executive advised with the increase in the Restoration and Maintenance allocation a footpath programme will be presented to members and with a contribution from Councillors Allocations she was confident that a meaningful footpath programme would be in place for 2018 and 2019. In relation to littering from plastics she advised that a new private operator is collecting plastics. Members referred to the need for the Adare and Macroom By-Passes but the link to and from Kerry with the Cork Limerick road is vital for the future development of the county. The development of the next phase of the Dingle Relief Road is important to facilitate access to lands for development. The Chief Executive acknowledged that the HAP levels are low in Kerry and this was brought to the attention of the Department. Over the past 2 meetings members expressed concern at the level of service they receive in relation to the reporting of issues with public lighting and as a result the process was reviewed and members were advised of the appropriate contact number to be used to ensure a better level of service. In relation to Burial Grounds a loan application was on the October Agenda for approval by Council. The CPO for the burial ground in Killarney has been confirmed and it is intended that work would commence shortly. Funding has been allocated to get the North Kerry Greenway through planning and a strategy will be drawn up which will determine funding. If planning was approved the project would be better placed to avail of funding. An application was made for a capital grant for Tralee Sports and Leisure Complex and the outcome is awaited. A carbon monoxide alarm programme is in place for Council houses. The Part 8 process was commenced for the Ardmoniel housing development and that was rejected by the Department. It was at design stage for 3 years and while there were a number of issues with it if it was not for the dedication of staff it would not have been finalised. Provision of €200,000 is made in the Budget for coastal erosion works and assuming a 10% contribution is required this provision would allow for an investment of €2m.

In response to queries regarding the inclusion of the New Line, Waterville the Chief Executive confirmed that it is included in the proposed works. Funding is provided for a second mobile library. There is different legislation in relation to vacant properties for the cities and outside of the cities the only way a levy can be applied is per MD. While this may be a driver for urban areas it may have a negative impact on other areas. Some staff in the Procurement Department were newly employed while others were working in the Town Councils until they were amalgamated with the County Council. Regardless of who administers LEADER applications it is a complex process. While capital balances may have

transferred from the Town Councils, expenditure to-date and liabilities more than outweigh the balance that transferred. In response to queries regarding development levies on wind farm developments the Chief Executive highlighted that in accordance with the new Development Levy Scheme significant levies for this type of development will apply and their impact on infrastructure will also be taken into account.

Ms. A. McAllen highlighted that the €2m provision for housing loans covers the repayment of the interest only on loans raised by the Council to fund various housing loan schemes. The 3 year programme for the Machinery yard is reflected in the Budget as self-financing. Details of the Burial Grounds Capital Works is set out on Page 109 of the Chief Executive's Report. The recoupment from the Department for the National Pay Agreement is paid on a once off basis. Discussions are ongoing with IPB and clarification must be received regarding liabilities etc. If rates harmonisation was abolished it would result in an increase in income of €275,000. In conclusion Ms. McAllen stated that works on Lixnaw burial ground are subject to loan funding.

Cllr. J. Healy-Rae clarified that a dura patcher would be required per engineering area and he requested clarification on how they will be self-financing. He again expressed his opposition to the imposition of rates on vacant commercial properties. Cork County Council introduced rates on vacant properties and as a result a number of hotels were demolished.

Cllr. J.F. Flynn requested that a conference would be held for the diaspora and that a committee would be established to maintain contact with them. He understood the houses at Ardmoniel were still at design stage. Cllr. Flynn asked why Kerry County Council only offers 10% for turn key developments when Cork County Council offers 30%. He PROPOSED that Kerry County Council would increase the 10% to 30%.

Cllr. J. Finucane confirmed there are one or two areas where vacant commercial properties are an issue but it would create hardship to have an overall scheme to address these. While he welcomed progress on the treatment of Japanese Knotweed he understood the costs involved are substantial and he suggested that Kerry County Council should tender to do this work on behalf of other local authorities or bodies as it would yield significant income.

Cllr. P. Daly highlighted that the Tralee/Fenit walkway will cost €1.5m and while a provision of €100,000 is made in the Budget he PROPOSED that €670,000 would be used from the capital balance from Tralee Town Council to allow 50% of the project to be completed in 2018.

Cllr. S. Locke stated he had requested that the legislation governing the Tenant Purchase Scheme would be amended. He requested clarification on the location of the proposed 28 houses at Balloonagh Estate.

In response Mr. M. O'Donoghue advised that the legislation has not been changed and the houses at Balloonagh Estate will be to the rear of the school.

Cllr. N. Kelleher suggested that the Council's liability to IPB should be bought out. He requested an estimate of proposed expenditure by the Machinery Yard over the next 3 years. He asked how much is in the Capital Account and in relation to Cllr. Ferris's proposal regarding the imposition of rates on vacant properties he suggested that a letter should issue to the Minister for Housing to allow this to be done per DED.

Cllr. M. Healy-Rae asked if the Council is in negotiations with the Department in relation to HAP thresholds.

Cllr. T. Ferris stated while she appreciated the legislation is different for Limerick City, Limerick County Council imposed rates on vacant properties and it is working well. For this reason, she could not understand the opposition to her proposal. In relation to the Repair and Lease Scheme Mr. Ginty put forward a proposed change that commercial properties would be converted to residential units in an effort to get property owners to avail of the Scheme. Cllr. Ferris commended the compassion shown to businesses on hardship grounds. She had proposed that 100% rates would apply to a property that was vacant for in excess of 6 months. She **SECONDED** Cllr. Daly's proposal.

Cllr. M. Kennelly highlighted that the problems in Kilmoyley are ongoing since he was Chair of the Listowel MD and it is having a negative effect on the community. Some works were carried out but others are outstanding and he requested an update. In conclusion Cllr. Kennelly stated he was opposed to Cllr. Ferris's proposal.

Cllr. J.J. Culloty noted that €1.5m is allocated to landfills and this is in excess of 1.5% of the overall budget. This is a substantial sum and there is little to be gained in return for it. Cllr. Culloty asked that priority would continue to be given to the elimination of Japanese Knotweed.

Cllr. J. Finucane opposed Cllr. Daly's proposal. He **PROPOSED** the adoption of the Budget without amendment.

Cllr. P. McCarthy **SECONDED** this proposal.

The Chief Executive advised members that whatever Cork City Council is doing in relation to turn key developments must have legislative backing. She supported the proposal to hold a Conference for the diaspora in 2018. It is a matter for the members of Tralee MD if they want to use their councillors allocation to bring the Tralee Fenit Walkway through design. It defies logic to fund what the government would normally fund. It is important to get the Kerry Greenways on the National Strategy.

Cllr. Ferris stated that in 2015 Ms. McAllen informed members that the capital balance from Tralee Town Council was €9.6m.

The Chief Executive advised that she could not discuss the baseline figure for the Machinery Yard as discussions must first take place with staff and unions and efficiencies must be achieved. There is a significant debit balance outstanding for the Machinery Yard. The funding provided for Killarney Fire Station is for the provision of 3 bays.

Ms. McAllen referred to members queries in relation to IPB and stated the overall liability to the council over the last number of years can only be estimated and discussions are ongoing in relation to the model to be used. At that time Kerry County Council's liabilities had not crystallised. An update will be provided to members as further information becomes available in the coming months.

Mr. C. O'Sullivan stated extensive discussions had taken place in relation to Kilmoyley with the local committee and residents. Works commenced on the housing estate but there was concern regarding proposed works on the graveyard. A section of the community blocked the Council from continuing the works.

Cllr. N. Kelleher requested details of the provision for IPB and also the provision being made to purchase machinery.

The Chief Executive again advised that in the past the Machinery Account was funded from the Capital Account but it is now funded from the Revenue Account.

Ms. A. McAllen highlighted that a provision of €600,000 is made as this is likely to be the Council's liability to IPB for prior year commitments.

The Chief Executive clarified that no funding was transferred from the Capital Account for the Machinery Yard budget, it is within the Revenue Budget. Discussions must first be concluded with staff and the unions.

A vote was then taken on Cllr. Ferris's proposal as follows which was seconded by Cllr. D. Quigg.

That Kerry County Council impose a 100% exemption from rates on vacant commercial properties for the first 3 months of vacancy, 50% for the following 3 months and 0% exemption thereafter.

The vote resulted as follows:

For: Cllrs. Barry, Beasley, Daly, Ferris, Locke, Quigg **(6)**

Against: Cllrs. Cahill, Connor-Scarteen, Cronin, Culloty, Finucane, Fitzgerald, Flynn, Gleeson, Grady, J. Healy-Rae, M. Healy-Rae, Kelleher, Kennelly, Lucid, D. McCarthy, P. McCarthy, McEllistrim, Moloney, Moriarty, O'Connell, O'Shea, Purtill, Spring, Thornton, Sheahan **(25)**

Not Voting: None **(0)**

The Cathaoirleach declared the proposal DEFEATED.

Cllr. Daly called for a vote on his proposal regarding funding for the Tralee/Fenit walkway.

In response the Chief Executive advised Cllr. Daly that the funding for his proposal is not in the Capital Account which is the central source of funding. It is planned to bring the Tralee/Fenit Walkway through planning and to include it in a Scheme. This proposal is not acceptable.

Mr. M. O'Donoghue advised members that the methodology used for turn key developments is allowed by the Department. Extensive discussions are ongoing with the Department and stage payments for construction cannot apply.

17.11.13.03 Adoption of the Council's Budget for the Local Financial Year ending 31st December, 2018

Cllr. J. 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, 2018 as presented by the Chief Executive and as set out in Tables A,B ad C be and is hereby adopted.

Cllr. P. McCarthy SECONDED this proposal.

A vote was taken which resulted as follows:

For: Cllrs. Cahill, Connor-Scarteen, Cronin, Culloty, Finucane, Fitzgerald, Flynn, Foley, Gleeson, Grady, J. Healy-Rae, M. Healy-Rae, Kelleher, Kennelly, Locke, Lucid, D. McCarthy, P. McCarthy, McEllistrim, Moloney, Moriarty, O'Connell, O'Shea, Purtill, Spring, Thornton, Sheahan **(27)**

Against: Cllrs. Barry, Beasley, Daly, Ferris, Quigg **(5)**

Not Voting: None **(0)**

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

17.11.13.04 Determination of the Annual Rate on Valuation for the Local Financial Year ending 31 December, 2018

Cllr. B. 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 31 December 2018,

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. P. McCarthy SECONDED this proposal.

TABLE A - CALCULATION OF ANNUAL RATE ON VALUATION							
Summary by Service Division		Summary per Table A 2018				Estimated Net Expenditure Outturn 2017 (as restated)	
		Expenditure	Income	Budget Net Expenditure 2018			
		€	€	€	%		
Gross Revenue Expenditure & Income							
Housing and Building		26,706,510	26,244,702	461,808	0.8%	625,023	1.1%
Road Transport & Safety		33,795,230	20,926,777	12,868,453	23.1%	12,025,905	21.9%
Water Services		15,194,293	14,106,351	1,087,942	2.0%	775,839	1.4%
Development Management		13,840,208	5,329,361	8,510,847	15.3%	8,198,555	14.9%
Environmental Services		18,160,398	4,374,535	13,785,863	24.8%	13,771,599	25.1%
Recreation and Amenity		8,277,365	622,911	7,654,454	13.7%	7,576,516	13.8%
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare		2,770,746	2,043,830	726,916	1.3%	640,378	1.2%
Miscellaneous Services		17,963,669	7,354,802	10,608,867	19.0%	11,319,164	20.6%
		136,708,419	81,003,269	55,705,150	100.0%	54,932,979	100.0%
Provision for Debit Balance							
Adjusted Gross Expenditure & Income	(A)	136,708,419	81,003,269	55,705,150		54,932,979	
Financed by Other Income/Credit Balances							
Provision for Credit Balance							
Local Property Tax			14,480,857	14,480,857			
Sub - Total	(B)			14,480,857		54,932,979	
Net Amount of Rates to be Levied	(A-B)			41,224,293			
Value of Base Year Adjustment				364,760			
Amount of Rates to be Levied (Gross of BYA)	(D)			41,589,053			
Net Effective Valuation	(E)			524,783			
General Annual Rate on Valuation	D/E			79.25			

A vote was taken which resulted as follows:

For: Cllrs. Cahill, Connor-Scarteen, Cronin, Culloty, Finucane, Fitzgerald, Flynn, Foley, Gleeson, Grady, J. Healy-Rae, M. Healy-Rae, Kelleher, Kennelly, Locke, Lucid, D. McCarthy, P. McCarthy, McEllistrim, Moloney, Moriarty, O'Connell, Purtill, Spring, Thornton, Sheahan **(26)**

Against: Cllrs. Barry, Beasley, Daly, Ferris, Quigg **(5)**

Not Voting: None **(0)**

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

17.11.13.05 Report on the Capital Programme 2018 – 2020

Cllr. J. Finucane PROPOSED that the Chief Executive's Report on the Capital Programme 2018 – 2020 as incorporated into the Report on the Budget be noted.

Cllr. S. Fitzgerald SECONDED this proposal and it was unanimously agreed.

17.11.13.06 Approval of additional Expenditure for 2017

Cllr. D. Grady PROPOSED that we the members of Kerry County Council resolve that the additional expenditure for 2017 as set out in the Column titled "Estimated Outturn 2017" on Table F in the Local Authority Budget, as circulated, be and is hereby approved.

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

The meeting concluded at 3.45pm.

Liam Quinlan
Meetings Administrator

Cathaoirleach of Kerry County Council