



**Comhairle Contae
Dhún na nGall**
Donegal County Council

3-Year Capital Budget 2024 - 2026

29th November 2023

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1. Chief-Executive's Report

Introduction and Context

I submit for your consideration the Three-Year Capital Programme for the period 2024 – 2026. The capital programme is prepared having regard to the amount of capital funding that is already confirmed from external or internal sources and, as is the case in the majority of the 2025 and 2026 projections, is based on best estimates available at this time.

In that context, the Three-Year Capital Programme estimates that Donegal County Council's total capital expenditure for 2024 will be of the order of €248,788,949, with capital expenditure for the three-year period estimated to approach €1,022,406,467.

In recent years, the opportunity to engage in larger scale capital investment in the County has increased significantly, aided in no small part by the additional funding opportunities that have been sought and secured from sources at national government level, and on a cross-border and trans-European basis.

Total capital expenditure in 2022 amounted to €114,789,446, with the 2023 capital budget amounting to €292,113,149. The following table provides a clear indication as to the rate at which Donegal County Council's capital expenditure has been increasing in recent years.

Programme Group	2017 €	2018 €	2019 €	2020 €	2021 €	2022 €	Totals €
Housing & Building	15,188,742	22,635,385	24,402,796	32,386,107	22,588,269	28,489,104	145,690,403
Road Transportation & Safety	19,684,065	45,536,378	49,042,390	46,088,886	53,063,395	55,734,783	269,149,897
Water Supply and Sewerage	418,990	267,250	334,157	264,702	356,222	650,368	2,291,689
Development Incentives & Control	909,586	2,966,018	1,291,515	1,271,201	2,715,669	4,627,311	13,781,300
Environmental Protection	1,308,492	1,845,966	2,477,825	2,816,029	4,702,701	7,467,445	20,618,458
Recreation & Amenity	4,819,171	7,358,488	7,679,830	8,822,166	10,233,957	11,545,405	50,459,017
Agriculture, Food & the Marine	565,612	577,593	505,571	635,841	1,152,662	781,461	4,218,740
Miscellaneous Services	1,111,989	1,801,113	3,081,720	2,730,848	2,668,327	5,493,569	16,887,566
Totals	44,006,647	82,988,191	88,815,804	95,015,779	97,481,202	114,789,446	523,097,070

As always, the Council will continue to focus on efforts to maximise funding opportunities for capital investment in the County. Donegal County Council is well positioned to develop, compete for, and deliver capital investment projects, of all scales, large and small, that can respond to the challenges we face and accelerate economic development in the County and in the northwest region. As has been stated previously, the scale of the Council's ambition remains high, and we continue to allocate resources to bringing forward projects and programmes of work that can deliver on our developmental goals for the County.

Like many opportunities arising for capital and infrastructure development, such projects will require a significant contribution from Donegal County Council in terms of co-financing and project development/management. Whereas this is a challenge that must be managed, it is essential that every effort be made to seize the opportunities that now present for large-scale infrastructural developments, which are impactful over the longer term, and have the potential to enhance the economic, social and community fabric of the County for the benefit of the County's citizens and businesses.

Some of the primary areas of expenditure in 2024 will involve:

- A focus on progressing the housing capital programme, with 129 units to continue in construction on Council land into 2024, with a further 227 units due to commence in 2024, and with an estimated cost of €33.6m in 2024
- In addition, five further turnkey projects, comprising 123 units are expected to commence on site in early 2024, with an estimated spend during 2024 of €14.8m
- 20 house acquisitions are also included in the Capital Budget for 2024 at a cost of €3.6m
- Further interventions in the Social Housing area through the Energy Efficiency Retrofit Programme, Capital Assistance Schemes through Approved Housing Bodies, Voids Programme and Extensions & Adaptation Works
- Continuing to implement the Countywide Footpath Programme, under which a total fund of €6.7m has been set aside, with specific works being agreed at Municipal District level
- Advancement of the Ten-T project in 2024 on the N13, N14 and N15
- Continued investment in improvement projects along the N56 roadway and other national roads
- Investment in Greenway infrastructure, with a dedicated management team tasked with developing further project proposals to shovel-ready stage
- Continuing investment through the Marine Capital programme for piers and harbours
- Continued investment in the Regeneration and Development of strategic Towns across the County through the URDF and RRDF programmes
- A continuing programme of investment in strategic economic infrastructure supporting the community and tourism sections and including iconic attractions
- Continued investment through EU sourced funds and across multi-sectoral areas
- The continuation of a multi-annual programme to maintain the Council's capacity in the areas of Information and Communications Technology
- The further progression of Taking-in-Charge of estates and in the completion of works to remediate unfinished housing estates
- Investment in environmental areas including landfill remediation, recycling, beach improvement and leisure centres
- Investing in climate action and climate mitigation measures across all sections of the Council where opportunities arise
- Investing in energy saving initiatives in Council buildings and advancing the development of the North West Energy Agency

Co-funding from Own Resources

The principal sources of generating the local contributions required to co-fund external capital investment are:

1. Loan Financing
2. The Development Contribution Scheme (DCS)
3. Transfers from Revenue
4. Use of Reserves

The level of income available from the DCS Fund can only be applied to the extent that it has been collected (i.e., cash received, not as accrued/levied). Similarly, the availability of transfers from Revenue, as a source of co-funding for capital investment, remains limited – as Members will be aware from the annual Revenue Budget discussions and meetings. Additionally, the judicious use of limited Capital Reserves, established in many cases from operating surpluses on the Revenue Account, provides additional capacity in limited but targeted areas. The Council's ability to service new borrowings in respect of capital works is, as always, determined by the extent of the Council's capacity to fund repayments from the Revenue Account, and must take account of existing commitments.

In May 2022, the Council approved loan financing in the sum of €20m for the purpose of co-financing the capital programme. To date, €16m has been drawn down and secured at a fixed rate over 20 years. The remaining €4m relates to the Public Lighting programme and will be drawn down in advance of works commencing. An additional €17m was drawn down in 2023 (€7m of which has a corresponding income line from Donegal 2040 DAC). However, additional borrowing capacity and/or concessions with respect to the level of grant funding or rate of co-financing will be required to fully deliver the capital programme in the years ahead. The recent calls for RRDF projects have offered Donegal a reduced co-funding requirement of 10%, which is helpful and acknowledged.

Notwithstanding the considerable co-funding constraints outlined, the Council will continue to seek to ensure that it is best placed at any given time to be able to take advantage of potential capital funding opportunities that arise.

Proposals for the 3-Year Capital Programme 2024 – 2026

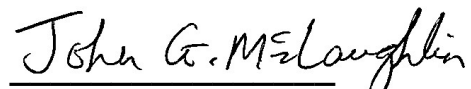
A Three-Year Capital Programme in the sum of €1,022,406,467 is presented for the period 2024 – 2026, broken down per Programme Group as detailed in the Statutory Tables.

The Statutory Tables reflect the gross estimated expenditure for the period 2024 – 2026 (noting my earlier comments relating to the unknown detail of capital funding generally in respect of 2025 and 2026).

As previously stated, it is only the first year of the three-year programme that can be presented in detail. Each Director of Service has provided an analysis of proposed expenditure for their respective directorate, which is included in the detail of this report. The table that follows this introduction provides an overview summary of capital expenditure per directorate for 2024.

The total estimated capital expenditure of €248,788,949 as indicated for 2024 is conditional on a range of factors and assumptions, including the allocation of grants, level of DCS collectable, loan sanction approval from DHPLG, and availability of co-financing.

The work of the Council in the years ahead, in terms of capital investment in a post-Brexit and post-Covid environment, will be extremely important to the County and its citizens. The Council will remain ambitious in terms of developing and competing for capital investment opportunities and maximising sources of external funding for worthwhile and impactful projects. The Three-Year Capital Programme 2024 – 2026 reflects that level of ambition, and I would like to thank the Elected Members for their vision and for their role in guiding and supporting the projects and proposals that are contained within this programme.


John G. McLaughlin
Chief Executive

Donegal County Council Capital Expenditure Programme per Directorate 2024

Directorate/Spend-Heading	Estimated Expenditure 2024 (€)
Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services	
Social Housing Investment Programme	52,450,000
Land Acquisition	2,000,000
Improving the Social Housing Stock	5,750,000
Voluntary Housing	5,000,000
Housing Grants	3,750,000
Traveller Accommodation	437,000
Defective Concrete Blocks Scheme	21,250,000
Library / Cultural Services	1,000,000
Total	91,637,000
Roads & Transportation	
National Primary & National Secondary	10,929,098
General Road Improvements including Development Charges Schemes	250,000
Footpath & Lighting	600,000
Roads Specific Capital	34,100,000
Bridge Works	1,300,000
Greenway Projects	20,100,000
Marine Capital	1,020,000
Total	68,299,098
Community, Enterprise & Planning Services	
Unfinished Housing Estates	200,000
Takeover of Housing Estates	2,000,000
RDP/Leader	1,040,000
Town & Village Renewal	1,151,747
CLAR Scheme	538,266
Outdoor Infrastructure Scheme	1,150,400
Fort Dunree	1,690,598
Bundoran Destination Towns	634,313
Community Recognition Fund	2,900,000
URDF/RRDF (Letterkenny 2040, Killybegs 2040, Burtonport & Arranmore)	16,754,444
Letterkenny Urban Adventure Sports Project	160,000
Other Community Development	963,083
Total	29,182,851
Water & Environment Services	
Rural Water Programme	2,500,000
Leisure Centres	2,410,000
Public Conveniences	180,000
Beach and Coastal Improvement Programme	200,000
Waste Management	2,600,000
CFRAMS	1,900,000
Energy Agency	3,330,000
Other	390,000
Total	13,510,000
Economic Development, Information Systems & Emergency Services	
Inishowen innovation Hub, Buncrana	250,000
Alpha Project Letterkenny	5,600,000
Beta Business Centre	9,400,000
Development at The Common, Lifford	3,300,000
Donegal Town OPSS & Bundoran Outdoor Spaces	1,245,000
Information Systems Infrastructure	905,000
Total	20,700,000
Roads Management Office*	25,460,000
Overall Total	248,788,949

2. Head-of-Finance's Report

In preparing the Three-year Capital Programme, the Council is required, as per Section 135(3) of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended), to ensure that:

"In considering the question of resources likely to be available to it, the local authority shall so consider [the Three-Year Capital Programme] -

- (a) on the basis of a realistic and prudent assessment of the [financial] position [of the local authority], and
- (b) on the basis of the information available to it at the time and having regard to the measures proposed by the authority to raise funding itself."

The Council continues to apply a rigorous approach to the management of capital projects and programmes, with a continued focus on managing projects within approved and defined budget lines. The objective of this is to ensure that no unfunded capital balances arise.

Available budgets from external sources (department allocations, other grants, etc.) and from internal sources (reserves, Development Charges, etc.) are detailed within this report. Development Charges, in line with audit requirements, are reflected on a cash-collected basis i.e., the Development Charge figures quoted in this report reflect the best available estimates of the actual cash that is expected to be collected from this source during the three-year period 2024 to 2026.

Similarly, it should be noted that proposals may also rely on the current best estimates as to the funding elements and sources anticipated to be available during the period 2024 – 2026, especially in instances where confirmation is still awaited on a definitive funding package for a particular project or programme. It should be noted that projects will only proceed on confirmation of a complete funding package.

There is always a level of uncertainty as to the degree of availability of capital funding in the medium to long term. This means that only projects and programmes for 2024 can be presented in detail. Therefore, in general, the level of capital activity and funding available for the years 2025 and 2026 is presented on the basis of best estimates as to the level of funding that is anticipated to be available for those years.


Richard Gibson FCCA
Head of Finance

3. Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services

Section 3.1 – Local Authority Housing

3.1.1 - Housing Construction Programme 2024 – 2026

The Council plans to deliver over 1,200 units under Housing for All. The table hereunder sets out the projects planned for delivery at this time, over the period 2024 – 2026.

	Units
Projects On-Site	
The Meadows, Buncrana	1
Raphoe	11
Crana Crescent, Buncrana	16
Trusk Road, Ballybofey	19
Donegal Town (P 3)	24
Gallows Lane, Lifford	29
Drumkeen	5
Letterkenny	14
Letterkenny	18
Letterkenny	32
Acquisitions - Co. Wide	7
Part V's (various locations)	9
Killylastin, Letterkenny	11
Bundoran	42
Projects at Tender or Advanced Design Stage	
Creeslough	3
Glenties Fire Station	3
Oran Hill, Letterkenny	34
Dungloe	45
Rockytown, Buncrana (P2)	54
SI (Kilcar)	1
Convoy	24
Ballybofey	14
Donegal Town	35
Letterkenny	21
Gweedore	29
Habinteg, Castlefin	34

Projects at Design / Planning Stage	
Letterkenny	90
Malin	9
Gleneely	10
Killybegs	17
Barrack Hill, Carndonagh	21
Lifford Common	60
Carrigart	8
Laghey	4
Stranorlar Fire Station	8
Tamney	10
Projects at Planning Stage	
Letterkenny	18
High Road, Letterkenny (Phase 1)	50
Glencolmcille	6
SI's	5
St Johnston	30
Letterkenny	28
Letterkenny	130
Creeslough	11
Carrigart	35
PV's - Co. Wide	30
Acquisitions - Co. Wide	60

Projected Three Year Capital Budget (Construction of Social Housing on Council Land) 2024 – 2026

The table below sets out an indicative three-year budget for in-house design and construction projects on Council land, over the coming three-year period. 129 units will continue in construction on Council land into 2024, with a further 227 units due to commence in 2024, with an estimated cost of €33.6m in 2024.

	2024	2025	2026	Total
Construction Prog	€33,600,000	€61,000,000	€51,200,000	€145,800,000

3.1.2 – Land Acquisition

The Council has identified land acquisition as a key component of our delivery strategy. Work is continuing at pace to secure such lands with a number of proposals at various stages in the process. Progress is being made, and the projected land purchase costs, at this time, for the next three years is set out in the following table.

Projected Land Acquisition Costs 2024 – 2026

The Housing Agency is progressing the acquisition of lands identified by Donegal County Council, under the new Land Acquisition Fund. The potential for separate Council land acquisitions is budgeted for below.

	2024	2025	2026	Total
Land	€2,000,000	€5,000,000	€7,000,000	€14,000,000

3.1.3 – Social Housing through Turnkey Acquisition

The turnkey acquisition model is progressing in towns throughout the County and delivery of high-quality housing in significant numbers will be provided. This is one of the key mechanisms being used to meet the social housing need under the current Social Housing Investment Programme. Five further turnkey projects, comprising 123 units are expected to commence on site in early 2024, with an estimated spend of €14.8m during 2024. Below are projected costs associated with turnkey acquisitions over the period 2024 – 2026:

	2024	2025	2026	Total
Projected Turnkey Acquisitions	€14,800,000	€34,500,000	€19,200,000	€68,500,000

3.1.4 – House Acquisition Programme (Single Units)

While Housing for All has a renewed focus on new build, there is also scope for delivery via other strands. In this regard, projections for single house acquisitions over the forthcoming three-year period, are included below.

Projected Budget Single House Acquisitions 2024 – 2026.

Year	Projected House Acquisitions	Projected Spend
2024	20	€3,600,000
2025	30	€5,400,000
2026	30	€5,400,000
Total	80	€14,400,000

3.1.5 – Specific Instance (SI) Properties

During the forthcoming three-year period, the Council plans to advance a number of Specific Instance Properties in the Council, and this is reflected in the projected budget below.

Projected Budget - Specific Instance Properties 2024 - 2026

	2024	2025	2026	Total
Specific Instance	€450,000	€3,150,000	€3,150,000	€6,750,000

3.1.6 – Approved Housing Body Sector

The projections in respect of delivery to be provided by the AHB sector through the Capital Assistance Scheme and Capital Advanced Leasing Facility are set out below.

Projected Funding to the AHBs 2024 - 2026

	2024	2025	2026	Total
Capital Assistance Scheme	€5,000,000	€5,000,000	€5,000,000	€15,000,000

3.1.7 – Improving the Social Housing Stock

The Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage provides funding under a number of programmes for Local Authorities to refurbish and improve the social housing stock. The detail of these programmes is set out below:

a) Energy Efficiency Retrofit Programme

This programme was introduced in 2021 to retrofit social housing units to a B2/Cost Optimal standard. Since its introduction, the Council has secured funding of €10m under the Programme, which will see a total of 413 units in sixteen estates throughout the Country retrofitted by the end of this year. The works carried out covered insulation works, windows and doors replacements, heat pump and BER Certificate, both pre and post works. The Council will continue to engage early with the Department each year going forward to ensure that we can maximise funding to provide more energy-efficient homes for our tenants.

b) Returning Void/Vacant Properties to Productive Use

The Council has been successful again this year in making bids to the Department for funding under the Voids Programme, which was introduced in 2014. By the end of 2023, the Council will have refurbished over 1,248 vacant properties to a high standard of re-letting under the Programme. Over €9.9m will have been sourced under the programme by year end, with the balance funded from the Council's own resources. The Council will continue to source funding from the Department under this Programme. The expenditure and income associated with the operation of this programme is accounted for in the Revenue Account.

c) Extensions and Adaptation Works

The Council carries out small-scale adaptation works, including extensions, to its social housing stock on an ongoing basis as needs arise. In most cases, this is for tenants with special needs and/or disabilities, with approximately 50 households benefiting from works carried out under this programme on an annual basis. An annual spend of €750,000 is anticipated in this regard. The Council can recoup 90% of the expenditure from the Department, with the balance being funded from the Council's own resources.

Improving the Social Housing Stock	2024	2025	2026	Total
Energy Efficiency Retrofit Programme	€5,000,000	€5,000,000	€5,000,000	€15,000,000
Extensions / Adaptations	€750,000	€750,000	€750,000	€2,250,000

3.1.8 – Assistance to Persons Improving Houses

Financial assistance is available to private homeowners to improve their homes under the Housing Adaptation Grant, Mobility Aids Grant, and Housing Aid for Older People Grant schemes. The Department provides 80% funding towards these grant schemes with the balance funded from the Council's own resources.

Assistance to Persons Improving Houses	2024	2025	2026	Total
Grants for older people & people with disabilities	€3,750,000	€4,000,000	€4,000,000	€11,750,000

3.1.9 – Traveller Accommodation

The Council are in the final year of the current Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019 – 2024, preparations for a new incoming programme will commence in the last quarter of 2023. The Council continues to meet and exceed accommodation targets and objectives as set out in the programme on a yearly basis in consultation with the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee.

A significant number of additional small scale Traveller accommodation projects were completed throughout 2023 and a range of other accommodation solutions were delivered through standard lettings, HAP and LTL schemes. In addition, mobile home and caravan replacements were provided in specific emergency cases. It is anticipated that targets and objectives as set out in the Traveller Accommodation Programme for 2024 will be achieved. Traveller-specific capital projects this year included 3 new permanent bays (€220,000), Modular Home provision (€90,000) and Group Housing unit refurbishment (€60,000). A further refurbished unit is expected to be delivered by the end of 2023 (€67,100). A number of projects are at an advanced stage in terms of funding approval with the Department for progression in 2024 including the provision of two Modular homes, refurbishment of two dwellings and the refurbishment of a Group Housing unit.

Traveller Accommodation	2024	2025	2026	Total
	€437,000	€280,000	€200,000	€917,000

3.1.10 – Defective Concrete Blocks

The Defective Concrete Blocks Grant Scheme for private homeowners is administered by the Council on behalf of the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage. Grants payable under the scheme are fully recoupable from the Department.

Our social housing stock is also affected by Defective Concrete Blocks. In this regard during 2022, the Department approved the establishment a Project Team to focus on the remediation of social homes damaged by defective concrete blocks. The team has been set up and will be expanded as works commence. It is anticipated that the Council will receive approval shortly to commence the process of remediating affected vacant social homes and also carry out preventative works on properties to keep Tenants in their homes for a number of years until alternative accommodation can be found and their properties remediated permanently.

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	2024	2025	2026	Total
Traveller Accommodation	€437,000	€280,000	€200,000	€917,000

Anticipated expenditure is outlined below:

Item	2024	2025	2026
Preventative works on Social Homes damaged by Defective Concrete Blocks.	€2,750,000	€2,750,000	€2,750,000
Remediation of Social Homes damaged by Defective Concrete Blocks.	€18,500,000	€30,000,000	€60,000,000
Total	€21,250,000	€32,750,000	€62,750,000

Section 3.2 – Cultural Services Division

3.2.1 - Projects Planned

Libraries Capital Investment Programme

The Council was successful in securing €1m part-funding in 2018 through the previous Libraries Capital Investment Programme from the Department of Rural and Community Development towards the overall cost of developing a new library in Donegal Town.

An application for Stage 1 approval, for a further €2.1m, under the new Libraries Capital Investment Programme 2024-2027 has been submitted to the Department of Rural and Community Development. Results are pending. The new programme provides 50% funding with a match requirement by the Council. Anticipated expenditure is outlined below.

Archives Centre

The potential to develop an Archives Centre to properly preserve and make archives publicly available is being considered by the Council. The Prior School, on the site of the former Lifford Army Barracks, is potentially suitable for this and it is proposed to develop plans accordingly. Following preparation of a conservation report in 2021, an application was submitted to the Historic Structures Fund for €24,500 (with the Council providing 20% match funding) which was successful. This funding covered asbestos and bat surveys and allowed for remedial works to render the building waterproof. A feasibility study will be carried out next, following which additional external funding sources will be explored to develop the Prior School as the County Archives Centre. The reuse of the historic Prior Endowed School will assist in the conservation of this proposed protected structure in the ownership of Donegal County Council and is consistent with Donegal County Council's responsibilities in addressing climate change.

The Council plans to develop an Archives Centre in Lifford in order to properly preserve and make archives publicly available. The Prior School, on the site of the former Lifford Army Barracks, is potentially suitable for this and it is proposed to develop plans accordingly. Given the nature of the building, tenders have recently been sought in this regard from suitable Architectural Practices with a view to preparing a Feasibility Study with Architectural Conservation Design and Cost Estimate Services for the Project.

The reuse of the historic Prior Endowed School will assist in the conservation of this proposed protected structure in the ownership of Donegal County Council and will also be consistent with Donegal County Council’s responsibilities in addressing climate change.

Other Cultural buildings

It is hoped that funding for small scale capital works will be made available under the new Libraries Capital Programme for small scale refurbishment and maintenance works in libraries.

It is expected that further investment in improvement works in other cultural buildings will be made by the Council during the lifetime of this capital programme. Some of these works relate to ventilation, insulation, and energy saving, as well as to general repairs and maintenance, working towards having planned preventive maintenance rather than reactive as at present. In addition, there will be investment to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and to improve health & safety standards and accessibility.

Historic graveyards

At least 50 historic graveyards are in the care of Donegal County Council. These graveyards are social and cultural assets and of interest to the Donegal community at home and abroad. The Council, taking a cross-directorate approach, proposes to explore internal and external funding sources during the next three years to enable conservation plans and appropriate works to be carried out. These historic graveyards are archaeological monuments in the guardianship of Donegal County Council and protected under the National Monuments Acts. The proposed research and conservation works will assist Donegal County Council in meeting its statutory obligations.

Capital funding projections for the three-year period 2024 – 2026 are as follows:

	2024	2025	2026
Libraries & other Cultural Services buildings	€1,000,000	€2,000,000	€2,000,000

4. Roads & Transportation

4.1 – National Roads Major Capital Projects

All National Road projects are fully funded by Transport Infrastructure Ireland, except for the Ten-T Priority Improvement Project and TEN-T N13 Bridgend to County Boundary Route Improvement which are currently part-funded by the EU CEF (Connecting Europe Facility). The immediate government funding profile for the TII over the next 4 years is set out in the National Development Plan 2021 to 2030. The spend nationally on National Roads is significantly diminished and this downward trend is expected to continue up to 2026. This current national investment policy does not positively discriminate in favour of regions such as Donegal and the North West which did not benefit from the roll out of the Motorway Network over the last 25 years.

All National Road projects are planned and designed with full cognisance of evolving national policies, including, but not restricted to, national climate action and sustainable development policies. A significant Active Travel and Greenways programme is currently underway across the county. All Greenway projects (with the exception of the ongoing projects between Lifford and Castlefin, and Muff and Three Trees) and Active Travel projects on national road such as on the N56 in Letterkenny are funded by TII.

4.1.1 - TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal

The TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project (TEN-T PRIP) involves three priority sections of the National Road Network in Donegal.

- Section 1 N15/N13 Ballybofey – Stranorlar Urban
- Section 2 N56/N13/N14 Letterkenny to Manorcunningham, including N13 Lurgybrack, dual carriageway upgrade to Manorcunningham Roundabout, and N56 link road over R. Swilly to Creamery Roundabout on N56/Ramelton Road.
- Section 3 N14 Manorcunningham to Lifford/Strabane

The key milestone in 2023 was the submission of the Preliminary Business Case to the Department of Transport (July 2023). Latest indications are that the Department are progressing with procurement of an external expert review board as required under Government public project development procedures. In addition, and in tandem, internal departmental project appraisal reviews are to be carried out. As any decision by the Government is subject to those processes being completed. As such it is not possible to say with any certainty when the project will come before cabinet for decision.

The DCC Project Management team of RPS/Barry Transportation continue to manage and update the documents to incorporate any changes to standards or policy particularly affecting the CPO and land needs. For example, recent standard changes will require some additional lands at a number of locations. The project team continue to liaise with landowners on any such matters. Early engagement with severely affected land/homeowners and to proceed with advance negotiations has been requested but it has not been sanctioned by TII to date.

TEN-T Estimated Expenditure Profile 2024– 2026			
Years	2024	2025	2026
Projected Expenditure	€2.2m	€3.0m	€4.4m

Table 4.1 Ten-T Estimated Expenditure Profile to 2026

The projected expenditure profile allows for the completion of statutory processes and oral hearing between 2024 and 2025. The start of the process and the overall schedule of expenditure is wholly subject to the timing of Government, Department and TII approvals. The completion of the process is subject to Statutory Process, Oral Hearing, and potential Judicial Review. Initiation of procurement process, essential advance works such as Archaeology, and some land acquisition may still be possible as early as 2025. The method of delivery of the project as a whole or section by section has not been determined as yet, however, it is important that all sections of the project proceed through the Statutory Processes together. Importantly, CEF funding for 2023 and 2024 will help support the project financially as well as to raise its profile nationally. It is critical that continued funding is secured to enable the project to continue to progress forward.

4.1.2 - N14/N15 to A5 Link and A5 Western Transport Corridor

The N14/N15 to A5 Link structure and associated elements are now progressed and integrated fully into the TEN-T PRIP CPO, EIAR and Design Report. Donegal NRO continues to liaise and consult fully with the Department for Infrastructure (DFI) Northern Ireland regarding design, programme, and planning, as well as transboundary impacts and assessments.

The Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) inquiry on the A5 WTC concluded on 2nd June 2023. The PAC has now forwarded its final advisory report on its inquiry to the DfI NI who are now considering same.

4.1.3 - Current National Roads Major Capital Projects at Construction

Major recent works on the N56 in the west of the County are now substantially complete, with N56 Dungloe to Cloughbolie and the N56 Letterilly to Glenties (Kilraine) Phase 1 closed out. The final section from Glenties to Kilraine is at tender and may proceed to construction in late 2023. A formal opening ceremony to mark the completion of this overall project is planned for 2024.

4.1.4 - Current National Roads Major Capital Projects at Design Stage

TEN-T N13 Bridgend to County Boundary – Northern Ireland Border (Derry)

The N13 Bridgend to County Boundary (TEN-T) Route Improvement Project focuses on a 1.2 km long section of the N13 National Primary Route through the village of Bridgend and onto the border with Northern Ireland (Derry), where it connects to the A2 Buncrana Road.

Phase 2 – Options Selection for this project is now almost complete, a preferred route corridor has been identified and is currently programmed for Peer Review by TII before year end.

Subject to TII approval the project will progress to Phase 3 – Design and Environmental Evaluation through 2024.

Donegal NRO has been successful in securing €1.1m in co-financing for continued design and development of this project from the European Commission’s Climate Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA), under the current Connecting Europe Facility Programme (CEF II). It is expected that with CEF funding the design and planning phases will be completed by 2025, however, the future progression of the project beyond that will depend on the securing national investment in new roads infrastructure.

Other minor projects at Design Stage

Other minor projects (below €20m) are continuing to steadily progress through the project management and project appraisal processes are:

- N56 Doonwell to Drumbrick
- N15 Corcam Bends
- N56 Falcarragh-Gortahork

4.1.5 - Current National Roads Major Capital Pipeline Projects

As previously advised the following ‘pipeline’ projects are a sample of those currently being promoted by DCC for TII funding:

Selected Pipeline Projects
N13 Stranorlar to Letterkenny (9km)
N13 Manorcunningham to Bridgend (21km)
N56 Inver to Killybegs (Five points) (14km)
N15 Stranorlar to Lifford (19km)
N56 Dungloe to Gweedore (15km)

Table 4.2 Pipeline Projects (non-exhaustive list)

In the light of the projected reducing national investment in Major Projects in the coming years it is currently unlikely that there will be any progress on these in the short term. Focus will therefore be on asset management and renewal and minor projects.

4.2 National Road Safety Projects

Safety projects on national roads are identified initially through TII HD15 Network Safety Ranking and NRA HD17 Road Safety Inspection.

Six projects continue to be progressed under HD15/17 in 2023.

4.2.1 Safety Schemes at Construction

N56 DL_157.5 Four Lane Road Safety Improvement Scheme

This project is now substantially completed. The project's completion has been significantly delayed as a result of a number of factors. The project is fully funded by TII.

4.2.2 - Safety Schemes at Design

N14 Feddyglass RSIS and Pavement Project

The commencement of the N14 Feddyglass project has been deferred to 2024 due to structure design issues in 2022/3 and seasonal environmental restrictions. Works are programmed to commence in Q2 2024

N15 McGroary's Brae

The contract has been awarded on this minor improvement project and contractor mobilisation is imminent. The project has a 16-month program. Safety alongside the busy N15 as well as ground conditions are some of the key difficulties faced on the project. When completed it will be a significant improvement providing route consistency and better safety and function for all road users.

N15 Lough Mourne

This project entails completion of 100m of new hard shoulder and clear zone construction. A consistent cross section will have safety and operational benefits for all road users. A CPO is currently being progressed.

N15 Laghey

This project will provide a new roundabout junction at the busy R232 Pettigo Road/N15 intersection. Part 8 planning is expected in 2024 with detailed design and CPO if necessary to follow.

N3 Lissacholly

Design of this junction is well advanced but subject to ongoing TII approvals.

4.3 - Greenways and National Road Active Travel

4.3.1 Greenways

There are currently a number of TII funded Greenway projects being delivered across Donegal. Details of these projects and their allocations are provided in the table below. These are being managed by the Donegal National Roads Office in conjunction with a dedicated team from the DCC's Road Design Section.

Name	Estimated Construction Cost	Current Phase	2024 Funding Application	Status
Inishowen Greenway- Buncrana – Carndonagh Section	€21,000,000	Phase 1: Concept & Feasibility	€700,000	Phase 0 Gateway Statement has been approved by TII. ROD/Aecom have been appointed as technical consultants for the project. The consultant has completed the phase 1 deliverables. DCC now await approval to move to phase 2 Options Selection. In phase 2 route options will be presented in the second public consultation to be held in Q1 of 2024, followed by the emerging preferred route corridor later that year.
Barnesmore Gap Greenway	€31,000,000	Phase 2: Options Selection	€600,000	ROD/Aecom appointed as Design Consultant for Phase 1 to 4. Phase 1 Gateway Statement has been approved by TII. Phase 2 ongoing. Assessment of Route Corridors and terminus points complete. Emerging Preferred Route Corridor selected. Public Consultations 1, 2 & 3 held in 2023. Phase 2 deliverables expected to be completed in Q1 2024.
Burtonport to Letterkenny Greenway	€56,000,000	Phase 1: Concept & Feasibility	€1,100,000	Phase 0 Gateway Statement has been approved by TII. ROD/Aecom have been appointed as technical consultants for the project. The consultant has completed the phase 1 deliverables. DCC now await approval to move to phase 2 Options Selection. In Phase 2 route options will be presented to the public in the second public consultation to be held in Q1 of 2024 followed by the emerging preferred route corridor in a third public consultation later that year.
Inishowen Greenway - Bridgend to Buncrana & Newtowncunningham Sections	€23,000,000	Phase 1: Concept & Feasibility	€725,000	This project has been recalibrated to align with the TII project management guidelines, the code of practice and the recently developed standards. DCC have completed the Phase 0 deliverables and procured technical consultants for project phases 1-4. It is

				anticipated that the consultant shall commence their duties promptly and proceed at pace, with the first public consultation to be held in Q1 of 2024.
Carrigans to Lifford Greenway	€13,000,000	Phase 1: Concept & Feasibility	€675,000	Project to follow on from SEUPB NWGN project and provide linkage into Derry. Phase 0 Gateway approval received and Technical consultants procured for project phases 1 to 4. It is anticipated that the consultant shall commence their duties immediately with the first public consultation to be held in Q1 of 2024.
Inishowen Greenway - Three Trees to Carndonagh	€27,000,000	Phase 1: Concept & Feasibility	€800,000	Project to follow on from SEUPB NWGN project and complete the loop around Inishowen. Phase 0 deliverables complete and tenders are currently being sought for the appointment of technical consultants for Phases 1 to 4. It is anticipated that the consultant shall commence their duties in 2024 with the first public consultation to be held in Q1 of 2024.
TOTAL	€171,000,000		€4,600,000	

Progress will be dependent on approval of funding by TII under 2023 allocation.

4.3.2 National Roads Active Travel

A pipeline of active travel projects along our National Road network will continue to be developed around the county. An allocation was received in 2023 for the **N56 Letterkenny Urban (Dry Arch Rdbt to Mountaintop Rdbt)**. This phased project will look at both traffic management and active travel along and across the urban N56 in Letterkenny. The project will be delivered in conjunction with implementation of applicable elements of the Letterkenny Transport Plan.

The **N56 Four Lane Road** is now substantially completed with full new cycle and pedestrian facilities including new signalised crossings to be phased in. Signalisation of the Pole Star and other primary junctions are core to the Letterkenny Transport Plan.

The signalisation of the **Pole Star Roundabout** has been completed and commissioning of the traffic signals is ongoing. This element of the project does not extra traffic capacity at this location, it aims to better share that capacity that exists across the 4 arm of the roundabout and also facilitate pedestrians, cyclists and other vulnerable road users.

The next phase will look at active travel facilities and junction changes between the Pole Star Roundabout and the Creamery Roundabout. These have already been through the Part 8 planning process and construction/implementation is expected to start in Q4 2024 subject to approvals and funding. Subsequent phases will include the N56 Creamery Roundabout to the Knocknamona roundabout and from the Knocknamona roundabout to the Mountain Top. Further assessments, planning and design are required on these elements in 2024/5.

Other Active Travel Projects being pursued are:

- N15 Cappry (Cappry to Ballybofey Speed Limits)
- N56 Ardara to Glenties
- N56 Portnablagh
- N56 Dunkineely/Bruckless

4.4 – National Road Pavement Strengthening Design and Construction

4.4.1 Pavement Asset Repair and Renewal Programme (PARR) 2023

Three PARR Projects with a combined length of 7km, and a combined construction cost of over €3.5 million, have been successfully delivered during 2023.

4.4.2 Pavement 2024 to 2026

Donegal NRO continues to work in partnership with TII to prioritise proposed PARR projects on a rolling 3-year programme. Indications are that overall funding of the PARR program will reduce over the coming years. The NRO has requested funding from TII for the proposed 2024 PARR Projects outlined in Table 4.3 below.

Proposed PARR Priority	Length (m)	Initial Cost Estimate	TII Scheme Name	Current Status
1	2,500	€1,500,000	N14 Tullyrap to Ballyholey	Tender
2	4,330	€2,150,000	N15 Laghy to Drumnacroil	Design
3	3,500	€1,700,000	Lurgybrack to Listillion	Design
4	2,500	€1,575,000	Lischooley to Castlefin	Design
5	1,800	€1,800,000	Castlefin Village	Design

Table 4.3 Proposed Pavement (PARR) projects 2024

4.5 – National Roads - Estimated Capital Spending for 2024 to 2026

The predicted capital spend for 2024 to 2026 for the NRO is €62.3m. The general reduction, relative to previous periods, is due to the completion of a number of major projects in the period up to 2023 and the expected overall reduction in allocations to National Road projects. This will be somewhat offset by expenditure on Greenways and Active Travel projects which will incur substantial expenditure from 2025 on.

Section	2024 €m	2025 €m	2026 €m
TII Support Grant (NRO and DCC RDO)	3.0	3.0	3.2
National Roads Capital Projects (Design and Construction)	5.0	4.0	10.0
National Road Pavement Strengthening (NS and NP)	5.5	4.0	4.0
National Road Safety Projects (HD15/HD17)	3.0	1.0	3.0
Greenways/Active Travel	6.1	6.5	3.3
Bridge Management (Maintenance, Refurbishment and Rehabilitation)	1.0	2.0	2.0
ANNUAL TOTALS	23.6	20.5	25.5

Table 4.4 Expected capital spend 2024 to 2026

4.6 – Non-National Roads Projects

Generally, Non-National Roads, Road Safety, and Bridges projects are funded through the Department of Transport. While some projects may be regarded as capital, these are accounted for in the Annual Revenue Budget.

Applications for Department of Transport (DoT) Specific Grant projects and Strategic Grant projects have become more challenging in recent years. In 2021, a five-year programme was approved by Plenary Council and was submitted to DoT for funding consideration. Over the last 2 years 16 of the 26 schemes have progressed through various phases of project development through both DOT Specific Grant funding and through other funding sources as opportunities arose. The Council will continue to progress those projects not yet completed as funding is made available. The Council will continue to engage with the Department of Transport (DoT) to deliver the entire programme over the coming years.

Progress has also been made on a number of large strategic projects, with the status of same summarised below:

- R263 Fintra Bridge and Realignment Project
 - CPO approved by ABP in 2022
 - Notice to treat issued in 2023 and land negotiations have progressed well
 - Tender for procurement of main contractor to construct scheme to commence in December 2023
 - Construction to commence in 2024 for a 2 year period.
- Letterkenny Southern Network Project
 - Strategic Assessment Report was approved in 2022
 - Consultant appointed to progress Phases 1 and 2 in accordance with the Project Management Guidelines Project

The following table sets out the proposed expenditure for Non-National Roads Projects for 2024-2026:

Expenditure Heading	2024 €	2025 €	2026 €	Total €
Bridge Maintenance	1.3M	1.4M	1.5M	€4.2M
Specific Capital Projects	4.5M	4.5M	4.5M	€13.5M
Strategic Capital Projects (LKSNP/Fintra Bridge)	6.0M	6.0M	10.0M	€22.0M
Total	11.8M	11.9M	16.0M	€39.7M

NTA Active Travel

NTA Active Travel funding has been allocated since 2021 and significant work has been carried out at smaller town/village locations over the past 3 years with many of the footpath projects constructed by the Area Roads teams to close out this year. The NTA has advised that Donegal County Council is receiving a significant share of the budget in the northwest region and hopes to maintain its €4.5M annual allocation in the coming years. It has advised that for the next phase of funding, larger scale active travel projects incorporating cycle facilities in larger population towns will be prioritised. The design/planning stages for the more complex projects are now well underway and will facilitate the delivery of larger scale cycle infrastructure and modal shift opportunities including the reassignment of existing road space to alternative transport modes.

Active Travel Projects 2024-2029	€27.0M
Letterkenny Active Travel Project - Phase 1 (Pathfinder)	€6.0M
Letterkenny Active Travel Project - Phase 2	€6.0M
Buncrana Active Travel Project	€3.0M
Ballyshannon to Bundoran Active Travel Cycle Scheme	€3.0M
N15 Lifford Cycleway	€0.6M
Twin Towns Old Railway Line Cycleway	€1.2M
Safe Routes to School Programme (@ 5 per annum)	€2.0M
Rathmullan One-Way	€0.8M
Low-Cost Junction Tightening / Pedestrian Crossing Schemes	€1.0M
Permeability Schemes	€1.0M
Close out of 2022/2023 Active Travel Projects	€2.4M

4.7 – Public Lighting

Currently, the Council has 19,044 public lights. The Council manages and maintains its full inventory of lighting stock through its public lighting management information system.

Public Lighting is a significant energy user, using 50% of the Council's total power usage to light our route network. The Government energy targets require the Council to reduce its energy usage by 50%, from a baseline in 2016, which equates to a reduction of 3m kwh.

To deliver on this energy deduction, the Council embarked on a programme of upgrading public lighting from traditional SOX/SON lamps to energy-efficient LED lamps through various projects funded through revenue budget, TII grants and loan funding, through the support of Elected Members.

Progress on Energy Reduction:

2016 15,000 public lights @ 6 MWh power usage with 0% LED

2023 19,422 public lights @ 4.5 MWh power usage with 77.5% LED

Despite a 30% increase in the Council's lighting stock, a 25% reduction has been achieved in the energy usage. Once the RMO regional LED upgrade contract commences in 2024, this will complete the Donegal Public Lighting LED upgrade programme and should achieve the required energy reduction and associated national 2030 target.

4.8 – Footpath and Lighting Programme

The Council adopted a motion in 2017 to provide funding to implement a multi-year footpath and public lighting programme utilising a combination of funds from IPBMI, State/Agency Grants, Development Charges, and other own resources. Construction started on individual improvements in 2018 and will continue through 2023. A fund in the sum of €4.2m was initially ring-fenced for this programme. A further €1m was added in 2020 and again in 2021, whilst a further €500,000 was added in 2022.

4.9 – Vehicle Restraint Systems

Vehicle Restraint Systems (VRS) or crash barriers are installed at locations for a variety of purposes. This is to minimise injuries to the occupants of vehicles which leave the carriageway, to provide protection to third parties who may otherwise be adversely affected by errant vehicles, and to protect a structure from damage by being struck by an errant vehicle which would result in the instability of a structure. TII have programmes in place for both the renewal of existing VRS that may have been damaged or VRS that require improvement and also for locations where a new VRS is required. These programmes are for National Roads only.

On Regional and Local Roads, the Department for Transport fund the erection of new VRS at locations where they are required through their accident prevention programme. However, no programme exists for the repair or renewal of VRS that have been installed in locations in the past and where there are no current accident statistics at the location.

All new installations of VRS, whether at a new location or at the site of a legacy VRS, must be designed in accordance with current standards and specifications. It may be the case that the location of a legacy VRS may not be suitable for the erection of a new VRS, and additional or alternative works may be required at the location. There are sections of legacy VRS that require re-assessment due to changes in the adjacent road alignment or due to potential deterioration since they were first installed. It is proposed that, at a Municipal District level, Elected Members may utilise Minor Infrastructure and Public Lighting Fund to commence a programme of assessment of locations of legacy sections of VRS and addressing the hazards that are identified at these locations.

4.10 – Piers & Harbours Capital Development

Donegal County Council owns, manages, and maintains 100 harbours along the Donegal coastline. It has invested €40M (sourced from DAFM, An Roinn, BIM and Council Capital contribution) in Piers & Harbour infrastructure in the last 10 years.

Applications will be made under any DAFM programme offered for 2024-2026 and in accordance with the terms and conditions of same. Works to be undertaken will include:

- Pier & Harbour Safety Measures
- Aids to Navigation (AtoNs)
- Crane/Winch facilities
- Pontoon provision (where FSL is approved)

In the 2023-2025 Capital Report, the Council reported the need for more significant capital investment and applied for and secured a final total BALAMI grant of €26,514,500 with an additional 5% match funding allocation from the Council for a total construction budget of €27,910,000. The deadline for works completion and full expenditure for this programme of funding was 3rd November 2023, which was a very ambitious and challenging deadline. The 21 projects completed under the BALAMI grant are listed below:

Donegal County Council Project	Total Construction Budget
Ballyness Pier Refurbishment	€50,000
Binwee	€65,000
Burtonport Leading Lights Upgrade	€50,000
Cladnageeragh	€100,000
Inishbofin Crane / Improvement Works	€100,000
Lenane Pier Boat Yard	€300,000
Maghery Pier Refurbishment	€60,000
Port Inver Slipway	€340,000
Rosbeg Leading Lights	€20,000
Pollawaddy Pier	€40,000
Bunagee	€30,000
Moville Pier	€30,000
Ramelton	€50,000
Mullinasole	€100,000
Roshine	€100,000
Rosbeg	€110,000
Stackamore Crane Replacement	€115,000
Kincasslagh	€120,000
Port Inver Pier Crane	€130,000
Portacrin Pier, Gola	€130,000
Greencastle	€16,320,000

In addition, the Council fully funded the cost of staff, consultants and fees associated with environmental assessments, all costs associated with the preparation and processing of foreshore leases and associated studies and all legal costs.

Of the 28 BALAMI projects approved for funding during 2022, foreshore leases/licences are still awaited from DAFM/DHLGH as appropriate for 6 projects equating to €8.05M. There is a strong indication from the Minister of Agriculture Food and Marine that special funding will be made available in 2024 to complete said projects, subject to approval of said FSL. FSL statutory public consultation for Rathmullan, Burtonport, Glengad and Bunbeg commenced in October 2023. Discussions are ongoing with DHLGH regarding environmental concerns raised in relation to works at Ballyshannon and Mevagh.

One project is still under construction at Portsalon (€1.5M), which should be completed by end of March 2024 and the Council will engage with DAFM regarding funding opportunities for same.

In 2024, the Piers & Harbours team will re-focus its energies on the preparation of Foreshore Leases for new projects and dredging works. It is proposed to review development opportunities at Greencastle and partnership opportunities to progress the Harbour Development Project, which received EIAR planning approval in 2008. The first step is to secure the FSL for the entire project.

Location	Project Description	Project Estimate €
Port Pier Inver	Pier Extension	2,750,000
Teelin	Pontoon Development	500,000
Burtonport	Phase 3 – Slipway and Pontoon Development	1,500,000
Killaut Pier	Pontoon Development	150,000
Rutland.	Pontoon Development	300,000
Rathmullan	Pontoon Development	300,000
Greencastle	Queensport Quay	5,000,000

Following ongoing engagement with the Island’s Committee, the Piers & Harbour’s team continues to liaise with An Roinn na Gaeltacht with respect to improvement works at Rannagh Pier and Magheraroarty Pier.

4.11 – Roads Projects Funded from Development Charges

The total estimated amount of General Development Charges that will be provided for the Roads Directorate is currently estimated at €250,000 annually for the period 2024 to 2026. These estimates will be the subject of further review in advance of each respective budget year and will take account of the payment trend of DCS at that time to update the expected available budget accordingly.

The projects to be built under available Development Charges will be prioritised by the Municipal Districts.

In addition to general DCS, the Council collects Specific Development Charges for specified works required to facilitate specific developments, and these charges will be spent on the projects for which they are levied.

4.12 – Projects Funded from Private Works Contributions

From time to time, monies are made available to the Roads Department to undertake specified works on the public road network. An example of this would include funding for the repair of roads damaged by third parties (e.g., EIR, Uisce Eireann, etc.).

Projects of this nature are reported as capital projects. However, they tend to be of low value, short duration, and impossible to predict in advance with any certainty. Such projects are mentioned here for completeness but will not form part of the Roads Capital Budget.

4.13 – Non-TII Funded Greenway Projects

North West Greenway Network

In 2015, Derry City & Strabane District Council (DCSDC) in partnership with Donegal County Council (DCC), Transport NI, and Sustrans, established the Active & Sustainable Travel Forum (ASTF) and the Forum's North West Greenways Action Plan forms the basis of a strategic and co-ordinated plan for the development of a network of greenways throughout the North West.

In line with the aims and vision set out within the North West Greenway plan, partners Derry City & Strabane District Council, Donegal County Council, Transport NI (TNI) and Sustrans secured funding approval for a project costing €14,861,188, with 85% of the funding coming from the EU's INTERREG VA 2014-2020 programme (administered by SEUPB) and 15% matching funding provided by the two governments. This has enabled the partners to progress with design, development & delivery of the cross-border greenway routes to achieve a rise in modal shift.

The objectives of the North West Greenway Network are aligned to the key messages associated with the funding:

- a. Increase modal shift – move away from a car-dependent culture
- b. Contribute to the region's overall sustainability by providing health, social, economic, and environmental benefits
- c. Create and promote a strong unifying brand
- d. Support local authorities in promoting access & infrastructural improvements
- e. Develop a connected region
- f. Promote health, wellbeing, and the wider societal benefits of cycling/walking

The project lifespan was initially from 1st January 2017 to 31st December 2021. An extension of time has been approved with closeout no later than December 2023. Three separate projects were included in the NWGN and the status of each project is as follows:

- Route 1 – 32.5km: Derry-Buncrana
- Route 2 – 10.5km: Muff-Derry
- Route 3 – 3.5km: Strabane to Lifford

From a Donegal perspective, both Route 2 (2.3km) and Route 3 (2.5km) have been successfully completed. Due to the complexities of route 1, it was agreed that it could not be delivered within the deadline of the programme and will now progress under TII funding.

In lieu of route 1, SEUPB has agreed to the delivery of 2 substitute and connected Greenway projects, located at Lifford – Castlefin and an extension of the completed Muff Greenway towards Quigley’s Point. Planning processes for both projects were completed in 2022, with land purchase, detailed design, tender documentation preparation all ongoing in Q4 2022 and Q1 2023. Both projects were tendered for construction in Q2 2023 and construction is ongoing. Both councils remain committed to delivering the kms of greenway required to meet the NWGN Project objectives. This is an ambitious programme that requires the continued support of the elected members, landowners and the local communities.

Donegal County Council co-funding of approximately €2 million will be required to complete this project as per the terms of the offer, while SEUPB has provided additional funding of the order of €4.5M, in support of the shortfall arising from increased construction costs associated with current inflation and supply chain issues. Furthermore €3 million of additional funding has been secured from the Department of Transport to help fund the completion of the schemes in 2024.

5. Water & Environment Services

5.1 – Water Services

5.1.1 – Uisce Éireann

The Water Services (No. 2) Act of 2013 transferred responsibility for policy and funding for public water services from local authorities to Irish Water (now Uisce Éireann). The responsibility for investment programmes, including the prioritisation of projects, transferred to Uisce Éireann.

Donegal County Council, and all other local authorities, signed respective Master Cooperation Agreements (MCA) with Uisce Éireann on the 5th May 2023. This MCA replaced the previous Service Level Agreement and facilitates the transfer of responsibility for the direct management of public Water Services in Donegal to Uisce Éireann from an agreed “Effective Date” of the 13th September 2023, up to 2026.

The Council’s capital & design division continues to play a key role in the rollout of projects locally on behalf of Uisce Éireann, under the terms of the MCA. There has been an extensive programme of major water and wastewater projects progressed through planning, design, and construction stages in Donegal as part of the current Uisce Éireann Capital Investment Plan since 2014.

Minor capital upgrade/replacement requirements to wastewater treatment infrastructure have been identified at several locations throughout Donegal by the Elected Members and Water Services staff in recent years. This was highlighted as requiring investment during the County Donegal Development Plan 2018-2024 process. These needs include essential upgrades required to wastewater treatment plants that impact negatively on bathing water quality, and increase risk as regards the retention of our highly valued Blue Flag beaches. The programme also includes investment required in advance of the rollout of the Uisce Éireann Capital Investment Plan (2020-2024), and essential upgrades of prioritised housing estate wastewater treatment plants.

The Investment Plan is UÉ's capital budgetary plan for the water services network for the period of 2025-2029. This will be the fourth plan to date, with previous ones being from 2014-2016, 2017-2019, and 2020-2024. The plan will prioritize investments in drinking water quality, leakage reduction, water availability, wastewater compliance, efficiencies, and customer service. The plan aligns with the strategic direction given in the Government’s WSPS and UÉ's longer-term WSSP. The plan will undergo several phases of stakeholder consultation and CRU review before submission as part of the RC4 regulatory period review process.

The first phase of stakeholder engagement on the methodology for the preparation of the plan was carried out by Uisce Éireann in April and May 2023. The draft investment plan was open for submissions from local authorities up to the 5th of May 2023.

Uisce Éireann undertook a second phase of engagement with stakeholders on the Draft Investment Plan in Q2/Q3 2023, before submitting a Final Investment Plan to the CRU later in 2023. Donegal County Council made a submission to Uisce Éireann during both phases of the consultation process. The submissions focused on the importance full engagement with Local Authorities in the development of County Development Plans aligning with both local and national priorities. The lead in relation to development should be taken from local authorities to ensure that investments are targeted to meet local needs.

5.1.2 - Group Water Schemes takeover by Uisce Éireann

The Group Water Scheme takeover process requires that all technical, legal, and financial requirements meet the standards set out by Uisce Éireann.

Under the Multi-Annual Rural Water Programme, funding is available to assist group water schemes in the takeover process.

Donegal County Council’s Rural Water Team has been engaging with group water scheme committees and Elected Members in order to progress the takeover of group water schemes where requests have been received.

5.1.3 - Multi-Annual Rural Water Programme 2024-2026

The Rural Water programme has provided a very effective and beneficial means of delivering improvements to water services at a local level over the past decade. The primary focus over the last number of years has been to improve water quality and supply to private group scheme consumers, and to bring the schemes into compliance with the Drinking Water Directive.

Donegal County Council received an allocation of €2,724,826 in October 2019 in relation to projects under the Multi-Annual Rural Water Programme. Progress has been made on a wide variety of projects during 2023, and a number of these projects will continue into 2024. A new multi-annual programme is expected for the period to 2024-2026 and the work done by DCC since 2019 will support a strong application for that programme.

The following table sets out the estimated projected allocation for County Donegal under the Rural Water Programme for 2024, 2025 and 2026, subject to confirmation of the Programme funding by the Department.

Rural Water Programme	Expenditure Projections		
	2024	2025	2026
	€2.0m	€2.0m	€2.0m

5.2 – Environmental Services

5.2.1 – Landfill Restoration Programme

Donegal County Council was granted waste licences by the EPA for six landfill facilities under the Waste Management Act 1996. All six facilities are now closed. The waste licences granted required the Council to carry out engineered restoration works at all six facilities within a certain timescale following their closure. Five of these facilities had been restored, with the Balbane Landfill Facility remaining outstanding. Details of the Balbane works, and further infrastructural works to reduce operational costs are detailed in sections 5.2.2 - 5.2.4 below.

5.2.2 – Balbane Landfill Facility

A contract to restore this facility by means of the construction of an engineered cap and an Integrated Constructed Wetland commenced in 2021 and was substantially completed in early 2023. The total final cost of the scheme was €2.97m, which has been fully funded by the Department of the Environment, Climate & Communications. A retention payment will be due to the works contractor in Q4 2024 and Q1 2025.

Total Project Cost Estimate €2m	Expenditure Projections for Period		
	2024	2025	2026
	€0.2m	€0.1m	€0m

5.2.3 – Ballynacarrick Landfill Site

Leachate from Ballynacarrick landfill is currently transported to Letterkenny Wastewater Treatment works for treatment. It is proposed to develop an Integrated Constructed Wetland (ICW) at Ballynacarrick Landfill site as a lower-cost alternative. The design, tender and construction of an ICW, with associated land acquisition, is currently estimated to cost €4.4m. Department funding is awarded annually for these types of landfill works. It is anticipated that, in addition to the funding received in 2023, further funding is expected to be provided in 2024-2026. It is envisaged that the vast majority of the cost of the project will be Department grant funded.

Total Project Cost Estimate €4.4m	Expenditure Projections for Period		
	2024	2025	2026
	€1.9m	€2.0m	€0.6m

5.2.4 – Other Landfill Works

Hydro-geological studies have been completed at all six licensed landfills in recent years, as required by the EPA. These studies have given rise to a programme of further investigation and remedial works at all six sites. A cost of €200,000 over three years is estimated. Minor capital upgrades/replacements are an ongoing feature of landfill maintenance at all sites, with an estimated €100,000 being required annually.

Local Authorities, the EPA, and the WERLAs have also engaged in a process to complete risk assessments in relation to historic landfill sites (Section 22 Sites) across the country. DCC received funding for works at a historic site in Dungloe in recent years from the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications and it is anticipated that further funding will be allocated in the coming years.

The estimated cost of progressing the above listed works is summarised in the table below. Delivery of the projects will depend on securing funding from the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment, and will require some co-financing from Donegal County Council.

Landfill Works	Annual Funding Allocations Sought		
	2024	2025	2026
Hydro-geological Costs	€50,000	€50,000	€50,000
Minor Capital Replacement	€100,000	€100,000	€100,000
Section 22 Sites	€350,000	€150,000	€50,000
Total Annual Cost Estimate	€500,000	€300,000	€200,000

5.2.5 – Rural Group Sewerage Schemes

Donegal County Council has sought funding to address the large number of private housing developments which are served by developer provided infrastructure (DPI) but has been allowed to fall into disrepair and abandonment. Most of these developments are beyond the extremities of existing sewerage networks or are located in rural areas in which such a network is never likely to be provided. These abandoned systems are contributing significant pollution loads to receiving waters and are seriously compromising the local authority’s capacity to meet its obligations under the Third Cycle River Basin Management Plan.

In keeping with the Council’s Climate Adaptation and Mitigation strategies, a focus will be placed on the resolution of these sewage treatment deficits using sustainable, low-energy demanding, nature-based solutions such as Integrated Constructed Wetlands, where sufficient land is available.

Rural Group Sewerage Schemes	Expenditure Projections		
	2024	2025	2026
	€0.5m	€0.5m	€0.5m

5.3 Recycling Centres

The Council-owned Recycling Centres at Letterkenny, Milford, Stranorlar, Carndonagh, Laghey and Dungloe are managed and operated by a contractor on behalf of the Council.

Extensive capital infrastructure has been advanced at the six centres, each of which has an area where recyclables may be recycled free-of-charge and an area where charges apply. Items such as glass, cans, textiles, batteries, and electrical goods are all accepted free-of-charge.

At the Letterkenny Recycling Centre, recyclables from the six recycling centres around the County are sorted and mechanically baled. A covered-in structure is proposed to enhance the facility, which will allow work to continue during inclement weather conditions, enhance the working conditions for staff on site, and improve the quality of materials that are stored on site. Facilities shall also be provided for the acceptance of waste paints and the introduction of a paint reuse scheme.

Annual capital maintenance works is programmed at each of the recycling centres countywide.

Recycling Centre Capital Maintenance / Upgrade	Expenditure Projections		
	2024	2025	2026
	€95,000	€95,000	€95,000

5.4 - Bring Banks

The Council has progressed capital works at over 74 Bring Banks sites throughout the County where members of the public may recycle glass, cans, and textiles.

Bring Banks plastic receptacles are subject to high levels of wear and tear, and the banks and internal cables are monitored regularly. They need to be maintained to a high standard and are replaced by Donegal County Council where required. The cost of purchasing a new bring bank is €550. There are 484 bring banks throughout County Donegal. A programme of replacing 15% of banks annually is needed in order to maintain these facilities and sustain their use by the public. An annual provision of €40,000 over the period 2024 – 2026 is required.

An incremental programme of upgrading the Bring Bank facilities in County Donegal continues to be implemented on an annual basis. Depending on the site, upgrading works can include the installation of fencing around the site, construction of a plinth, signage, and the installation of CCTV. A new bring bank location at the Udraras site Gaoth Dobhair will be completed in 2023 at a cost of €60,000. The annual cost of this work countywide is estimated to be in the region of €50,000 for 2024-2026. Upgrading of the existing site in Donegal Town is also due to commence.

The above capital programmes for recycling centres and bring banks will require funding from Own Resources. Opportunities to reduce the financial burden on the Council will be pursued if new grants arise.

Bring Banks	Annual Funding Allocations Sought		
	2024	2025	2026
Bank replacement	€40,000	€40,000	€40,000
Incremental Upgrade Works	€50,000	€50,000	€50,000
Annual Cost Estimate	€90,000	€90,000	€90,000

5.5 – Donegal Air Quality Monitoring Programme

The Environment and Emergency Services Strategic Policy Committee reviewed the rollout of the National Ambient (Air Quality) Monitoring Programme in recent years.

- The review concluded that where information on local air quality and its impact on the environment and health is available to the public, it helps to change the attitude of those still choosing to burn smoky coal or other specified fuels.
- The introduction of the Solid Fuel Regulations at the end of October 2022 effectively extends the low smoke zone from specified agglomerations (including Letterkenny in Co. Donegal) to all areas in the country.
- The proposed installation of five live PM10/PM 2.5 monitors would enable the public to check results online at any time on the Council's web site.
- According to the Asthma Society of Ireland, there are 13,000 Asthma sufferers in Donegal; fine particulate matter from the burning of smoky coal is one of the known triggers of Asthma attacks.

Donegal is served by several Air Quality Real-Time Indicator Monitors throughout the County. The EPA have installed a Tier 1 Monitor at Malin Head, while two real-time air quality monitoring sites were commissioned in partnership with the EPA in 2019, a Tier 2 monitor in Letterkenny and a Tier 3 monitor in Buncrana. The Council is planning on continuing to expand our air quality monitoring network in 2024 and in subsequent years. Further air quality monitoring sites will be rolled out in a number of locations including Donegal Town, Ballybofey and Dungloe.

The estimated annual cost of this air quality monitoring programme for the three years 2024 – 2026 is €35,000 and is to be funded through a combination of Department and Own Resource funding.

Donegal Air Quality Monitoring Programme	Annual Funding Requirements		
	2024	2025	2026
	€35,000	€35,000	€35,000

5.6 – Public Convenience Capital Investment Programme

There is a variety of public-convenience services provided across the County at 55 locations. This ranges from:

- 28 permanent Council-owned structures (some of which are open on a seasonal basis), which are maintained by a combination of Council staff and community groups.
- 5 permanent privately-owned facilities operated with Council subvention.
- 19 temporary beach services during the bathing season
- 3 number year-round temporary services at key Community & Enterprise promoted locations.

A further review of the type of public conveniences that are appropriate for different situations throughout the County has been initiated by the Environment team with updates to be brought back to the Climate Action and Environment Strategic Policy Committee in 2024.

This review includes consideration of the following headings:

- Development of a capital investment programme to carry out essential improvements at prioritised existing public conveniences.
- Improved accessibility at public conveniences
- Enhancement of public convenience services provided through increased engagement with community groups and the business community via the Community Toilet Scheme
- Working closely with the DCC Regeneration Team to include enhanced accessible public conveniences in their programme countywide.

The estimated cost of the public convenience capital investment programme for the three years 2024 – 2026 is summarised in the following table.

Public Conveniences Upgrade Cost Estimate €100,000/annum	Annual Funding Allocations		
	2024	2025	2026
	€180,000	€180,000	€180,000

The work programme is to be resourced through a combination of Own Resource and Department funding.

5.7 – Coastal and Beach Improvement

The Donegal mainland coastline is 1,134km long, and constitutes over 17% of the total national coastline. Donegal County Council actively maintains and promotes 21 Designated Bathing Areas (DBAs) under varying National and International initiatives. These DBAs alone require considerable maintenance and investment.

An increasing number of visitors are enjoying our coastline each year. This coastal tourism is promoted by the Wild Atlantic Way campaign, with specific locations being promoted through initiatives such as the international Blue Flag and Green Coast beach awards. There is a need to meet the requirements and expectations of visitors to our coastline to complete their experience.

A review of facilities and services at our 21 designated bathing areas was undertaken by DCC in recent years and was considered by the Climate Action and Environment Strategic Policy Committee. Of the 21 designated beaches, 14 beaches have had infrastructural improvements in recent years to improve accessibility for visitors of all abilities. A further seven beaches now require investment to enhance access. The cost estimate for these works is €135,000 per annum. The work undertaken in this area will be crucial in continuing to complement the 'staycationing' initiatives described in Division D of the 2023 Revenue Budget Preambles (the tourism infrastructure, business and marketing activation scheme).

The Coastal Erosion programme includes the completion of the Glenties MD Coastal Erosion Study in 2024, and ongoing monitoring in subsequent years. A further €30,000 per annum is programmed for a number of localised Soft-Engineering Coastal Erosion projects throughout the County.

The following table summarises the anticipated funding that will be required to address the findings and recommendations of this review.

Beach and Coastal Improvement Programme	Annual Funding Allocations Sought		
	2024	2025	2026
Beach Access / Infrastructure Improvements	€135,000	€135,000	€135,000
Coastal Erosion Study (Glenties MD) & Ongoing Monitoring	€35,000	€30,000	€30,000
Coastal Erosion Projects (Localised Soft-Engineering)	€30,000	€30,000	€30,000
Total Annual Cost Estimate	€200,000	€195,000	€195,000

The work programme is to be resourced through a combination of DCC and Department funding.

5.8 – Leisure Centres

5.8.1 – Buncrana Leisure Centre

The proposed refurbishment of Buncrana Community Leisure Centre continues to be progressed by Donegal County Council, in collaboration with the Buncrana Community Leisure Centre Committee.

A design team for the project was appointed by DCC in 2021 and consisted of consultants for both the Architect-led Design Team (Lot 1) and Quantity Surveying and Project Management Team (Lot 2).

Stage (1) Preliminary Design was completed in 2023 at a cost of €68k plus VAT.

The next phase of the design work i.e., Stage (2) Parts (i) and (ii) has progressed through 2023 with Part 8 Permission currently out for public consultation. A decision is due in early 2024. This work will cost €102k plus VAT.

The final Stage of design work i.e., Part (iii), includes completion of detailed tender documents, tender action, evaluation and award and will cost a further €204k plus VAT. This will progress through 2024.

Options for the funding of the demolition and construction phase of the project, in addition to the Department's Swimming Pool Allocation of €3.8m, are actively being explored by DCC and the Capital Delivery Unit. These options include RRDF funding as part of the *Re-empower Buncrana* Project.

Projected expenditure for the period 2024-2026, which is based on preliminary estimates, is included in the table below.

5.8.2 – Ballyshannon Leisure Centre

Funding of €300,000 (70%) for Energy Efficiency measures at Ballyshannon Leisure Centre has been secured from the Department via the 2022 Sports Capital grant, with works currently 80% completed. A further grant of €78,734 (30%) has been secured under the Community Energy Grant 2023 to allow further Energy Efficiency works to be carried out in 2024. These two projects when completed will result in 30-40% Energy Savings and a reduction of 160 tCO₂ per annum of Carbon emissions.

5.8.3 – Leisure Centre Capital Maintenance Programme

There is an emerging need for capital maintenance and replacement works at each of the existing leisure centres in the County ranging in age from 10-30 years. This is necessary to protect the asset and to maintain each facility to a required standard to attract and retain customers. Capital replacement requirements will be informed by periodic structural and fabric assessments of the various facilities. This programme is currently estimated to require an annual investment of €750,000. This work programme is to be resourced through a combination of DCC and Department funding.

5.8.4 – Leisure Centre Energy Efficiency Programme

An invest-to-save programme is being developed by DCC for improved energy performance systems at the existing leisure centres to address climate action targets and the significantly increasing energy & fuel costs. This programme will require an estimated €3m over the period 2024-2026. This work programme is to be resourced through a combination of DCC, SEAI and Department funding. It is intended to take the learnings from the Ballyshannon project and best practice initiatives nationwide into projects in our other Leisure Centres

Leisure Centres	Annual Funding Allocations Sought		
	2024	2025	2026
Buncrana Leisure Centre	€360,000	€5,000,000	€8,500,000
Ballyshannon Leisure Centre Energy Efficiency Project	€500,000		
LC Capital Maintenance Prog	€750,000	€750,000	€750,000
Other LCs Energy Efficiency Programmes	€1,000,000	€1,000,000	€1,000,000
Total Annual Cost Estimate	€2,610,000	€6,750,000	€6,750,000

5.9 – Flood Relief Schemes

In May 2018, Minister of State at the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, Kevin Moran, T.D. launched 29 Flood Risk Management Plans for all the main river basins, identifying an initial total of 118 flood relief projects to protect the main flood risk areas throughout the country. This number increased to 119 with the addition of the Burnfoot project, following a Cost Review Report completed in May 2018, which was commissioned in the aftermath the 2017 flood. These Plans and projects are a key part of the overall flood risk management strategy set out in the National Development Plan 2017 – 2028, involving total investment of almost €1 billion over the ten-year timeframe of that plan. As it is not possible to implement all of the 119 projects at the one time, a total of 57 projects have been prioritised, following discussions with local authorities, for the initial tranche of investment and delivery based on the level of risk and number of properties to be protected.

In total, fifteen flood relief projects have been identified for County Donegal as part of the 119 projects. Six of the Donegal projects were identified to be progressed in a first phase of implementation. These projects include Lifford, Castlefin, Burnfoot, Downings, Glenties, and Kerrykeel. In November 2019, the OPW approved the progression of three further flood relief schemes in Donegal – in Ballybofey and Stranorlar, Buncrana and Ramelton. In addition to these six, there is an ongoing flood relief project at design stage for Raphoe. The OPW and the Council are working closely to progress these projects, with the OPW leading on the delivery of Lifford and Raphoe, and the Council leading on the remaining eight projects. Initial public consultation processes have been completed for the FRSs in Ballybofey and Stranorlar, Buncrana, and Ramelton in 2021, in addition to the consultations that took place on the other schemes in 2020. A wide variety of survey, modelling, and optioneering works have been ongoing across all schemes. A dedicated website, www.countydonegalfrs.ie, has been established and provides a portal to information on all schemes. Quarterly newsletters are published, and quarterly briefing notes are provided for elected members on all schemes.

As a minimum, each scheme must consider climate change through the Climate Change Adaptation Plan required as a deliverable under the brief. In summary, the plan requires that the Consultant assess and consider the potential impacts of climate change in the development and design of the options for a preferred Scheme. This includes the consideration of Potential Future Schemes (flood relief schemes) that may be necessary to provide the required Standard of Protection (SoP) under various future scenarios (which include sea level rises, increased fluvial flows and urbanisation). The plan also includes the identification of the potential amendments or additions to the options for a preferred Scheme under current conditions (referred to as Adaptation Options) that may be necessary over time to maintain the defined SoP, or in other ways mitigate potential future risk, in a cost-efficient and locally acceptable manner.

Green measures, such as Nature-based Catchment Measures, have been very much to the fore in Climate Change Adaptation drafts to date. These include consideration of leaky dams, gravel riffles, hedge plant and many more nature-based interventions which would be implemented over the lifespan of schemes to reduce flows from the catchment and dampen the impacts of climate change.

The Minister of State for the Office of Public Works announced on the 2nd May 2023 that flood relief schemes for Donegal Town and Letterkenny are to proceed. The announcement also included for the funding for three additional staff for Donegal County Council, the OPW is now funding five staff in total in Donegal County Council who are dedicated to managing, jointly with the OPW, flood risk schemes across twelve communities in Donegal.

The schemes will help the communities in Letterkenny and Donegal who have suffered the impacts of flooding over a long period of time. The OPW is also testing a new delivery model for these schemes, which will inform the best way to implement 60 more schemes across Ireland. The Government has committed €1.3 billion to deliver these schemes by 2030 and protect 23,000 properties from river and coastal flood risk.

Currently there are twelve flood relief schemes at design across Donegal that are due to go to planning as follows:

- Raphoe, being led by the OPW is due to be submitted shortly to the Minister for Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform for confirmation under the Arterial Drainage Acts.
- Planning permission is scheduled to be submitted for flood relief schemes being led Donegal County Council over the coming 12 months for Burnfoot, Castlefin, Na Dúnaibh (Downings), Glenties, Ballybofey, Stranorlar, Buncrana and Luddan, Ramelton.

Flood Relief Schemes	Anticipated Expenditure		
	2024	2025	2026
Estimate costs	€1,900,000	€3,750,000	€21,000,000

5.10 – North West Regional Energy Agency

Donegal County Council is currently leading the establishment of a Regional Energy Agency for the North West City Region (Donegal County and Derry City and Strabane District Council areas). Both Local Authorities have jointly agreed a strategy of reaching net-zero carbon emissions from their energy systems by 2045, with the NW Regional Energy Agency (Agency) now established and will be the main delivery vehicle. The Agency will be a standalone Company and became operational in 2023.

The Agency has recently secured a range of external funding to advance the Agency's Work Programmes, which will target energy efficiency improvements in domestic and public buildings initially. Funding sources include NWRDG, EU LIFE Programme, EU City Facility and the Shared Island Fund.

NW Regional Energy Agency	Annual Funding Allocations Sought		
	2024	2025	2026
NWRDG	€50,000	€50,000	€50,000
EU LIFE Programme	€180,000	€180,000	€180,000
EU City Facility	€1,500,000	€1,500,000	€1,500,000
Shared Island NW Decarb Project	€1,600,000	€4,400,000	€2,400,000
Total Annual Cost Estimate	€3,300,000	€6,130,000	€4,130,000

5.11 Burial Grounds

The Council's Roads & Transportation Directorate oversee a limited maintenance programme of a number of historic burial grounds in Donegal. Other burial grounds are largely controlled by various churches who generally provide the necessary burial arrangements.

The Council has not provided a new burial ground in an extended period. The Elected Members have raised this matter at Plenary Council for a number of years.

In 2020, Donegal County Council undertook a significant survey of graveyard provision and capacity in the county. The survey examined the status of all graveyards within the functional area of Donegal County Council.

The Council is actively considering the provision of a new burial ground and is working with a number of stakeholders, including:

- The Inter-Church Group on Community Graveyard Provision in Donegal
- The Black and Ethnic Minority Group
- The Intercultural Platform
- Non-Denominational Groups

This engagement has allowed the Council to gain a wider understanding of the requirements for multi-denominational burial arrangements in Donegal.

The initial focus will be on areas of greatest need, particularly the greater Letterkenny area, which has the largest population and the greatest cultural diversity. This approach can then be considered as a potential model for the rest of the county.

The Council are considering potential sites from its own land bank and lands adjacent to existing burial grounds in the greater Letterkenny area.

Suitable site assessment criteria are being developed and will include:

- Location
- Public consultation
- Accessibility
- Environmental impact
- Topography
- Geology

An essential part of the process will be for the Council to continue to actively engage with the stakeholders listed above, with the Elected Members, and with other relevant groups.

The outcome of these assessments and engagements will be reported back to the Climate Action and Environment SPC and the Elected Members in Plenary Council in the coming months.

Therefore, funding for the provision of a Burial Grounds Capital Programme in County Donegal in the 2024 – 2026 Capital Budget is proposed as follows.

Burial Grounds Capital Programme	Anticipated Expenditure		
	2024	2025	2026
Estimate costs	€170,000	€250,000	€250,000

Costs will include for scoping, preliminary design, public consultation, environmental assessment and planning, land acquisition, and construction. This work programme is to be resourced through a combination of own resources and potential external funding.

6. Community Development & Planning Services

The Community Development & Planning Services Directorate continues to manage a wide-ranging capital programme which will be presented under the following headings:

- Section 6.1: Community Development Division.**
Section 6.2: Regeneration and Development Division.
Section 6.3: Major Projects Division.
Section 6.4: Planning Services Division.

The planned programme of investment set out below aims to maximise the opportunities to source external funding while limiting the demand for co-funding from internal resources where possible.

6.1 – Community Development Division

6.1.1 – Projects in Progress

Project Name	Funder(s)	Details
Rural Development Programme (RDP/LEADER)	EU/Dept	The Donegal Local Action Group (LAG) have been awarded €10.4m for the delivery of the new LEADER programme to cover the period 2023-2027. €7.8m of this funding will be for project costs which will be allocated by the LAG across the duration of the programme in partnership with Implementing Partners across the county.
2021 Town & Village Renewal Scheme (Main Scheme)	Dept/Own Resources	Three towns were awarded funding under the Town & Village Renewal Scheme 2021 (Main Scheme): Churchill, Moville and Newtowncunningham. Work on these projects is ongoing with all projects due to be completed in early 2024. Countywide funding was also approved under the Relocation Marketing Campaign with the project due to finish in Q1 2024. Total funding (inclusive of 10% match funding) amounts to €488,888.
2022 Town & Village Renewal Scheme (Main Scheme)		Five towns and villages across the County were awarded funding under the 2022 Town & Village Renewal - Main Scheme with one location awarded funding under the Streetscape Enhancement Measure (SEM) and a further project funded under the Project Development Measure (PDM). Work is progressing in Carndonagh, Convoy, Dungloe, Manorcunningham and Stranorlar (PDM) with projects to be completed in 2024. Total funding (inclusive of 10% match funding) in €970,260.00. Work was completed in Lifford in 2023 under the 2022 Streetscape Enhancement Measure.
Malin Head (Phase 3)	Fáilte Ireland/Own Resources	The development and implementation of a Visitor Management Plan for the Malin Head Signature Discovery Point got underway in 2019. The plan will shape future development in Malin Head in the years ahead. The preparation of planning applications to develop the plan has been delayed with ongoing negotiations continuing with landowners. The Council is committed to progressing the construction of Phase 1 subject to securing planning approval and pending the availability of funding.

Bundoran (Destination Towns)	Fáilte Ireland/Own Resources	Fáilte Ireland launched its national 'Developed & Emerging Tourism Destinations Investment Scheme' in March 2019 with the aim of boosting the attractiveness and tourism appeal of towns across the country. Donegal County Council submitted an application to Fáilte Ireland seeking funding of €500,000 for a project in Bundoran in September 2019. Confirmation was received in May 2020 that the application was successful. Total funding (inclusive of match funding) amounts to €669,313. Detailed designs work on the project is ongoing with the project to be fully completed by June 2024.
Local Authority Weatherproofing and Outdoor Dining Infrastructure Scheme	Failte Ireland/Own Resources	Donegal County Council received confirmation on 3 rd January 2022 that an application for funding under the Local Authority Weatherproofing and Outdoor Dining Enhancement Scheme in Letterkenny was successful with €137,000 approved for the project adjacent to An Grianán Theatre. Part 8 planning approval has been obtained with the appointment of a contractor to undertake the construction in its final stages with construction to be complete by the end of Q1 2024.
Platforms for Growth, Platform 2, 'Facility Centres for Water Sports Activities'	Fáilte Ireland/Own Resources	The second Platform for Growth, launched in January 2020, a closed call scheme for Local Authorities only, focused on developing water sports activity centres across the country. The aim of this funding call was to provide facilities with a hub in each locality from which multiple water sport operators can base themselves. These best-in-class facilities will include changing facilities, showers, toilets, secure storage, and enclosed spaces for inductions to take place. Donegal County Council submitted funding applications at 3 No. locations across the county; Tullan Strand - Bundoran, Downings & Marble Hill. When Failte Ireland announced the successful applications in April 2021, the projects in Bundoran and Downings obtained approval. Both projects will be progressed further in 2024 with applications for planning approval and other statutory consents being sought in consultation with relevant stakeholders. Total funding available from Failte Ireland is €1,700,000 inclusive of VAT.
2020 Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (Measure 3)	Dept/Own Resources	Funding applications were submitted under the 2020 Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) Measures 2 & 3 on 30 th November 2020. Funding of €500,000.00 was announced in March 2021 for the Burtonport to Letterkenny Greenway Phase 1, Part 2: The Muckish Railway Walk Enhancement. Work on Part 1 of the Muckish Railway Walk Enhancement, comprising a 2km section, funded under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme 2018 Measure 2 was completed in 2021. The procurement of a bridge consultant together with the detailed design of the works is ongoing with the procurement of a contractor to undertake Part 2 including the bridge replacement taking place thereafter. It is anticipated that Part 2 will be completed by the end of Q3 2024. Total funding (inclusive of 10% co-funding) is €555,555.

2021 Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (Measure 2 & 3)	Outdoor	Dept/Own Resources	Two projects were awarded funding under the 2021 Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) Measures 2 & 3, which were announced in late November 2021. Funding of €200,000 was approved for the Letterkenny to Burtonport Greenway Phase IV Part 4, The Muckish Railway Walk Enhancement under Measure 2 while funding of €269,682 was approved for the Sliabh Liag Cliff Experience under Measure 3. Engagement with landowners, site surveying, design and tendering works was progressed in 2023 with construction works due to be completed on both projects by the end of Q2 2024.
2022 Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (Measure 1)	Outdoor	Dept/Own Resources	Five projects were awarded funding under the 2022 Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) Measure 1 which were announced in August 2022: Anney Bay Path, Kincasslagh Tower, Kirkstown, Rosslongan Estate Walks and Slí na Finne (Bealach na Gaeltachta). All projects are being progressed in partnership with relevant stakeholders with construction expected to be completed in Q2 2024. Total funding (inclusive of 10% co-funding) is €166,666.
2022 Recreation Infrastructure Scheme Project Development Measure	Outdoor	Dept/Own Resources	Two projects were awarded funding under the 2022 Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) Project Development Measure which were announced in August 2022: Fintragh to Largy Coastal Path & Proposed Pontoon/Bunagee Jetty in Culdaff. Both projects are being progressed in partnership with relevant stakeholders. Total funding (inclusive of 10% co-funding) is €111,111.
2022 CLÁR Scheme (Measure 1) (Developing Community Facilities & Amenities)		Dept/Own Resources	Fourteen projects received funding in June/September 2022 under CLAR Scheme Measure 1 namely: An Machaire Le Cheile, Muileann Coirce Leitir CTR, Rosnakill Tourism & Activity Centre, Killea Community Park Centre, Gairdin na gCeadfaí, Arranmore Community Gym, Glenmaquin Nature Based Playspace, Outdoor Gym & Calisthenics Stations in The Bath Green Movice, The Termon Complex Pettigo, Desertegney Youth Club incl. Dunree Football Club, Rosses Park Community Walk Dungloe, CLG Ard an Ratha, Movice Green Carpark & Pobal Eascarrach – Ballina Resource Centre. Total funding allocated (inclusive of 10% match funding) amounts to €766,666. Six of the projects namely An Machaire Le Cheile, The Bath Green Movice, Desertegney Youth Club, Rosses Park Community Walk Dungloe, Movice Green Carpark & Pobal Eascarrach were completed in 2023 with the remaining projects due for completion in consultation with the relevant stakeholders in Q2/Q3 of 2024.
Letterkenny Adventure Project	Urban Sports	Northern & Western Regional Assembly/ Own Resources	Donegal County Council was granted Part 8 planning approval for the Letterkenny Urban Adventure Sport project in March 2020. Enabling works on the project funded by Sport Ireland under the Dormant Accounts Fund, administered by Donegal Sports Partnership were completed in January 2022. The Northern & Western Regional Assembly under the Designated Urban Centre Grants Scheme approved funding of €357,000 in early August 2022 to deliver the various elements of the projects to include a 'Pump Track' and a 'Performance Space'. Total funding (inclusive of 50% match funding) is €714,000. The 'Pump Track' and 'Performance Space' elements of the project were completed in 2023 with the final phase due to be complete in early 2024.

Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme	Dept. of Health (DOH)	<p>Six capital projects were funded under this programme, three in each of the pilot programme areas. Works on the projects listed below were completed in 2023.</p> <p><u>Inishowen</u> Enhancement of Walking Trails at Drumfries – Meendoran (€44,667) Barrack Hill Playground Project (€124,204) Moville Playground Project €81,027</p> <p><u>Gaeltacht</u> Dungloe Foreshore Playground Project (€79,442) is due to be complete in November 2022.</p> <p>Works on the following projects will be completed in 2024.</p> <p><u>Gaeltacht</u> This phase of Muckish Railway Walk Enhancement (€73,638) will be complete by the end of Q1 2024. Scioból na bhfear, Tory Island. (€95,834) Total funding available for 2024 is €169,472.</p>
2023 Community Recognition Fund	Dept. of Rural & Community Development	<p>Donegal County Council has been awarded €3.1m under the Community Recognition Fund 2023. 50 No. projects are being funded throughout the County including the following projects being undertaken by Donegal County Council, Waterworld Bundoran (€225,000), Donegal Town (€150,000), Killybegs (€75,000), Castlefin (€100,000) and Stranorlar (€200,000). Work on the Waterworld Bundoran project will be complete by the end of Q1 2024 while the four remaining projects will be progressed to completion before October 2024.</p>
Capital Grant Funding Scheme, Play and Recreation 2023	Dept. of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth	<p>Funding of €15,833 (75%) has been allocated from the Dept. under the Play and Recreation Capital Grant for refurbishment of The Mall Playground in Ballyshannon. Match funding of 25% (€5,278.00) has to be provided by the Council which brings the funding available to €21,111. Work on this project will be complete by the end of Q1 2024.</p>
Playgrounds	Own Resources	<p>Refurbishment of equipment at several existing playgrounds is planned during the period 2024-2026. Proposed expenditure will total €600,000 (2024: €300,000; 2025: €300,000).</p>

6.1.2 – Projects Planned

Project Name	Funder(s)	Details
2023 Town & Village Renewal Scheme (Main Scheme)	Dept. of Rural & Community Development/ Own Resources	<p>6 No. towns and villages applications will be submitted to the Town & Village Renewal Scheme 2023 (Main Scheme) before the application deadline on 10th November 2023 comprising of 1 No. project at €500,000, 4 No. projects at €250,000 and 1 No. additional project for an inhabited offshore island up to a maximum of €250,000. It is understood that the Dept. will announce funding for successful projects in Q1 of 2024. The potential funding being sought (inclusive of 5% co-funding in 2024, previously 10%) amounts to €1,842,105.</p>

2023 CLÁR (Measure 1)		Dept. of Rural & Community Development/ Own Resources/ Community Groups	15 No. applications were submitted to the Dept. under CLÁR Measure 1 before the 6 th of June 2023 deadline. The total funding sought, inclusive of 10% match funding, was €842,139. It is understood that the Dept. will announce funding for successful projects before the end of 2023 with projects to be complete by March 2025.
2023 Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) (Measure 1)		Dept. of Rural & Community Development/ Own Resources	7 No. applications were submitted to the Dept. under the 2023 Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) Measure 1 on 5 th of September 2023. The total funding sought, inclusive of 10% match funding, was €235,473. It is understood that the Dept. will announce funding for successful projects before the end of 2023 or in early 2024.
2023 Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) (Project Development Measure)		Dept. of Rural & Community Development/ Own Resources	2 No. applications were submitted to the Dept. under the 2023 Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) Project Development Measure on 5 th of September 2023 namely the Swilly-Way Riverside Walk and Ballyconnell Estate & Gardens. The total funding sought, inclusive of 10% match funding, was €111,110. It is understood that the Dept. will announce funding for successful projects before the end of 2023 or in early 2024.
2023 Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) (Measures 2 & 3)		Dept./Own Resources	4 No. funding applications were submitted to the Department on 26 th of October 2023 under the 2023 Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) Measures 2 & 3. Measure 2 applications; Millside Walk, Fintown (€223,501), MacManus Estate Rosslongon, Donegal Town (€224,560) & Gartan Lough Walking Avenue – Donegal ETB (€225,250); Measure 3 application; Muckish Railway Walk (€559,873). It is understood that the Dept. will announce funding for successful projects in Q1 2024. Total funding sought (inclusive of 10% co-funding) amounts to €1,233,185.
PEACEPLUS		SEUPB / Own Resources	<p>Donegal County Council has been awarded an indicative allocation of €7,635,396; Under Theme 1 Investment Area 1.1 Co-designed Local Community PEACEPLUS Action Plans. The Programme's strategy aims to address the needs arising from the peace process and build on the opportunities to boost economic growth, stimulate social and economic regeneration, promote social inclusion, particularly for those at the margins of economic and social life and make a significant and lasting contribution to peace and reconciliation.</p> <p>Three thematic strands have been selected upon which to design the content of the PEACEPLUS Action Plan for Donegal:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Local community regeneration and transformation 2 Thriving and peaceful communities 3 Building Respect for All Cultural Identities <p>Applications opened for submission of PEACEPLUS Plans on 14th June 2023, with a closing Date of the 14th of December 2023.</p>

6.1.3 – Outdoor Recreation Strategy 2023-2029

The Donegal Outdoor Recreation Strategy 2023-2029 which was led by Community Development Division in conjunction with the Donegal Local Community Development Committee/ Local Action Group, was officially launched by Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD on 7th June 2023. Donegal's first outdoor recreation strategy is closely aligned with the ambitions of the National Strategy for Outdoor Recreation - Embracing Our Great Outdoors and supports the objectives of Donegal County Councils emerging County Development Plan, the Local Economic and Community Plan and the Tourism Strategy for Donegal.

The county wide strategy will guide and facilitate the sustainable development and management of outdoor recreation up to 2029 and beyond by providing an authentic outdoor recreation experience for all while protecting the unique and diverse landscape and waterscapes and delivering social, economic and environmental benefits for local communities and visitors alike. Its preparation involved extensive consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, the community, and the public, ensuring the delivery of a collaborative strategy to support and strengthen the sustainable development of the outdoor recreation sector in Donegal.

The Strategy sets out six themes including Collaboration, Environmental Integrity, Facilities and Visitor Servicing, Inclusivity, Training and Education & Awareness and Participation and is supported by fifty-nine strategic actions to guide, nurture and sustain outdoor recreation in Donegal. It is intended that specific actions will be aligned to funding programmes such as the Project Ireland 2040 RRDF, EU funding ORIS, Town & Village Renewal, CLAR and Leader Programmes. The Donegal Outdoor Recreation Strategy provides a clear blueprint to sustainably grow and improve both land and water-based recreation activities throughout the county and identifies a range of initiatives, interventions and strategic actions to be implemented over the lifetime of the Strategy.

As one of only a small number of local authorities across the country who have developed an outdoor recreation strategy, Donegal County Council are now actively delivering on the actions as outlined in the Strategy, most specifically with our colleagues in Sport Ireland and the Donegal Sports Partnership in relation to the newly created role of Outdoor Recreation Co-ordinator based in the DSP and working with related stakeholders across the County guiding and informing the development of outdoor recreation in Donegal.

Section 6.2 – Regeneration & Development Division

6.2.1 – Projects in Progress

Project Name	Funder(s)	Details
Letterkenny 2040 (First Award)	DHLGH(URDF)/ Own Resources	<p>Under the Urban Regeneration & Development Fund (URDF), the Council was successful in 2018 in securing funding for the first phase of the urban regeneration project 'Letterkenny 2040'. The total value of this phase of the project inclusive of approved project cost uplifts is €2,826,110 comprising funding award from the URDF of €2,119,583 with a match funding obligation of €706,528. for three sub-projects. Sub-project A, preparation of Letterkenny 2040 Regeneration Strategy is now complete and available at www.letterkenny2040.ie and sub-project C, public realm is now complete.</p> <p>The status of sub-project B in relation to acquisition of strategic site is that the lands are now in the possession of Donegal County Council which is enabling advancement of the phase 1 development of Alpha/Beta and Public Realm. Negotiation on compensation continues in parallel. The value of this strand is €1,568,148.</p>
Letterkenny 2040 (Second Award)	DHLGH(URDF)/ Own Resources	<p>The Councils successful application to URDF Call 2, entitled 'Letterkenny 2040 (Phase 1): To Re-energize and Connect the Historic Town Centre' has secured an allocation for total project cost of €19.3m (comprising €14.5m URDF support together with match funding committed by the Council in the sum of €4.8m). Project costs will remain under review at each stage of project development and as the approval gateways under the Public Spending Code are navigated.</p> <p>The project will advance sub-projects to varying stages as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The further enhancement of the Cathedral Quarter (cathedral Quarter Park/Church Lane Shared Surface Scheme and Market Square Reimagined) ▪ The re-purposing of the Courthouse ▪ Strategic land assembly towards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Renewal of Lower Main Street ○ Advancement of a Regional Transport Hub ○ Enhancement of 'LK Green Connect,' walking, cycling and parkland infrastructure. <p>Following submission of Preliminary Business case, Detailed Project brief and Procurement Strategy, DHLGH approval to proceed with tendering processes for design services and acquisitions was secured in March 2023. DHLGH advise that each sub- project will now progress on its own timeline including the preparation of individual Final Business Cases prior to appointment of construction contractor.</p>

Letterkenny2040 (Third Award)	DHLGH(URDF)	On the 11 th of July 2023, Minister O'Brien announced an allocation of €4m under URDF Call 3 for Donegal County Council in relation to Letterkenny Regional Centre. URDF Call 3 focusses on enabling Local Authorities to tackle long-term vacancy and dereliction in Letterkenny town centre and on the acceleration of residential development. The programme will provide a rolling fund to Local Authorities to enable acquisition and design and civil works that may be required to de-risk property to make it more attractive for onward sale. A funding agreement has been completed and returned to DHLGH together with submission seeking DHLGH reconsideration for inclusion of a number of properties within the approved programme was submitted on 25 th August 2023. Team to commence background work that will inform recommendations on priority properties for target under URDF Call 3
Back to Ballyshannon	DRCD (RRDF)/Own Resources	<p>A transformational project to re-energise, re-imagine and sustain the social, cultural, historical, physical and economic fabric of Ballyshannon's historic town centre. Value: €247,500. (RRDF funding approved €185,625)</p> <p>Acquisition of the key regeneration site in Market Yard was completed by year end 2022. The Team continues to work towards the publication of a planning scheme, to develop this project as a shovel ready capital project targeted for future Category 1 RRDF funding.</p> <p>It is anticipated that design work will complete and work to prepare publication of a statutory planning scheme will occur in Q4 2023.</p>
Ramelton Historic Town Centre	DRCD (RRDF)/Own Resources	<p>Ramelton Re-Imagined. Category 2 Value: €249,159 (RRDF funding approved €186,869) To be closed out Q4 2023 Category 1 Value: €7,949,868 (RRDF funding approved €6.3m)</p> <p>Part 8 planning for this project was confirmed at a Plenary Meeting of the Council on Wednesday 6th of April 2022.</p> <p>The Detailed Design phase is now complete, and it is intended to open a construction tender in Q1 of 2024 ahead of a projected commencement to site later in 2024. The process of project handover to the Council's Capital Project Delivery Unit (CPDU) has commenced. CPDU will manage the construction and handover stage of the project.</p>
Carndonagh Tus Nua (Land Acquisition)	DRCD (RRDF/Capital Housing Fund)	As a part of the Tús Nua Regeneration Project in Carndonagh, the Team is continuing to manage negotiations with the Inishowen Co-Op in relation to the MART site and the potential opportunity for collaborative acquisition, regeneration and redevelopment interests. In this regard Avison Young have been appointed to act as Valuers on the Councils behalf and negotiations remain ongoing. It is intended to reach a conclusive position in this regard in 2024.

Repowering Buncrana	DRCD(RRDF)/Own Resources	<p>Category 2 value: €1,461,745 (RRDF funding approved €1,169,396) to procure Architect Led Full Integrated Design Team for the preliminary design, planning scheme design and detailed design of the 'Repowering Buncrana' regeneration project together with support to acquire the former Garda Barracks, St Oran's Road and other limited acquisition of land to cater for necessary enabling works.</p> <p>Decision Gate 2 approval was subsequently received on 3rd April 2023 and this project is therefore now approved to proceed to tender.</p> <p>A sale agreed position has been reached in respect of the town centre acquisition interest enabled by this project. The property concerned is the former Garda Barracks at St. Orans Rd, Buncrana. The Councils legal services have now been instructed to close out and complete this acquisition and this is ongoing. The property will be redeveloped as an economic development proposition as a part of this project with a forward view towards job creation and inward investment.</p> <p>A detailed tender package for the procurement of Architect Led Full Integrated Design & PSDP Team services has also now been prepared and is undergoing final review before opening the formal tender process on eTenders.</p>
Milford Town Centre First (TCF) Plan	DRCD	<p>In late 2021 the Department of Rural and Community Development sought nominations for towns to be considered as part of the 1st Phase of the Town Centre Masterplan Initiative. Minister Heather Humphries TD subsequently announced that Milford was successful in securing €100,000 under the call.</p> <p>GM Design Associates Ltd were appointed as the successful consultancy service to deliver the Town Centre First Plan for Milford on Tuesday 14th February 2023, the Draft Milford Town Centre First Plan was published for public consultation from the 10th of July to the 4th of August 2023. The Consultants are now working to complete the Milford TCF Plan, which involves, inter alia, translation, response to submissions and environmental screenings and the project will be formally launched before year end with a scheduled completion date of November 2023.</p>

6.2.2 – Projects Planned

Project Name	Funder(s)	Details
Ballyshannon RRDF Project	DRCD (RRDF)/Own Resources	Work continues towards the publication of a planning scheme, to develop this project as a shovel ready capital project targeted for future Category 1 RRDF funding with an approximate value of €8m. It is anticipated that design work will complete and work to prepare publication of a statutory planning scheme will occur in Q4 2023.

<p>A Heritage Led Regeneration Project – Rathmullan</p>	<p>DRCD (RRDF)/Trust Funding/Own Resources</p>	<p>This project proposes to build on the significant work done to date by the 'Way Forward Group' in Rathmullan in progressing a 'future use feasibility study' for the Napoleonic Gun Battery in conjunction with Pasparakis Friel.</p> <p>In 2021 the Team explored and confirmed the scope of a broader transformational heritage led regeneration project for Rathmullan which might meet the RRDF eligibility criteria. A formal Part 8 planning scheme for this project was published on Thursday 24th November 2022. Submissions or observations were required to be made in writing on or before 4:30pm on Wednesday 18th January 2023. A Chief Executives Report on the proposed development was brought before the Elected Members for consideration at a Special Meeting of the Council on 13th February 2023 when Members decided to proceed with the development as proposed.</p> <p>Work is now continuing to position the project for application to future calls of the Rural Regeneration & Development Fund (RRDF) for category 1 (capital) projects. The next stage in project development work concerns the preparation of a Business Case. In this regard FPM were appointed on 25th September 2023 to provide services for an Economic Appraisal including a Business Plan and Financial Analysis of the project. This stage of the project is being funded from own resources and co-funding from The Way Forward Group enabled by The Tomar Trust.</p>
<p>Milford Town Centre First (TCF) Plan</p>	<p>DRCD</p>	<p>Q4 of 2023 will see the launch of the Milford Town Centre First Plan together with the development of an agreed priority project(s) emerging therefrom to Part 8 planning/statutory consent stage. As a part of the 2024 work programme, it is proposed to examine all suitable opportunities to progress the hierarchy of projects identified in the Milford TCF Plan and including specifically the opportunity for further development of the agreed priority project by means of a Category 2 application to the RRDF or towards capital funding stage by means of a Category 1 application to the RRDF as appropriate.</p>
<p>Creeslough Village Plan & Community Regeneration Project</p>	<p>DRCD (RRDF)/Own Resources/ARUP</p>	<p>Donegal County Council, the Creeslough Working Group and the Creeslough Community Association supported by Arup launched a public consultation process to prepare a Village Plan and community regeneration project for the Creeslough Community in May 2023.</p> <p>On 27th July 2023 a formal Part 8 planning scheme for the Creeslough Community Regeneration Project was published. A Chief Executives report on the proposed Part 8 development and the statutory consultation process was brought before the Elected Members at a plenary meeting of Donegal County Council on Monday 25th September 2023 when the Members decided to proceed with the development as proposed. Planning consent for the project is now confirmed.</p> <p>Work is now continuing to position the project for application to future calls of the Rural Regeneration & Development Fund (RRDF) for category 1 (capital) projects. The next stage in project development work</p>

		<p>concerns the preparation of a Business Case, ground and site investigations and the preparation of detailed project costings. In this regard Jennings O'Donovan & Partners Limited Consulting Engineers were appointed on 15th September 2023 to provide structural & civil engineering design services for the project, including PSDP services and geotechnical investigations. On 25th September 2023 FPM were appointed to provide services for (i) Community Engagement and Company Formation, and (ii) an Economic Appraisal including Financial Analysis of the project. This work will now continue in earnest.</p> <p>ARUP are continuing work to prepare the final Creeslough Village Plan. This work involves translation and formatting prior to confirmation of appropriate launch arrangements before year end.</p>
Dungloe Town Centre Regeneration Project	DRCD (RRDF)/Own Resources	<p>Further to the formal launch of the An Clochán Liath (Dungloe) Regeneration Strategy & Action Plan and in accordance with Delivery Area 2 of the Work Programme (as set out by the Chief Executive un report to Council and CPG in January 2019) it is proposed to develop a Town Centre Regeneration Project in Dungloe in 2024. This project will be informed by the Regeneration Strategy & Action Plan and will be agreed with Elected Members of the Glenties Municipal District. Early work stages will involve identification and confirmation of the project to be advanced together with appraisal of the project development options and agreement on the delivery pathway (own resources and/or Category 2 application to the RRDF).</p>
Rural Regeneration & Development Projects	DRCD (RRDF)/Own Resources	<p>It is anticipated that further calls under the RRDF will open in 2024-2026 (Category 1 & 2). Further applications will be developed and submitted to this Fund when calls open in line with Delivery Area 2 of the Work Programme (as set out by the Chief Executive in report to Council and CPG in January 2019).</p>
Urban Regeneration & Development Projects	DHLHG (URDF)/Own Resources	<p>Work will continue in 2024 on the further development and delivery of the five sub-projects which were successful in the second URDF award and these projects will be brought through planning, acquisition, detailed design and capital delivery in accordance with their delivery programmes towards 2027. It is anticipated that a further call under the URDF will open in Q4/2023 or Q1/2024 and further projects will be developed, and applications submitted to this Fund when the anticipated call opens in line with Delivery Area 1 of the Work Programme (as set out by the Chief Executive in report to Council and CPG in January 2019) and the emerging project priorities from the Regeneration Strategy.</p>

6.3 – Major Projects Division

6.3.1 – Projects in Progress

Project Name	Funder(s)	Details
Platforms for Growth, Platform 1, 'Immersive Heritage & Cultural Attractions'	Fáilte Ireland/Own Resources	<p>Donegal County Council received confirmation from Fáilte Ireland in May 2021 that the Fort Dunree application was one of four successful applications across the country with funding of €9,251,000 being made available. 25% co-funding is to be provided by Donegal County Council which brings the overall funding available to the project to circa. €12,500,000.</p> <p>The project is currently in the development phase. Part 8 Planning Consent is being sought before the end of 2023 and construction will commence in Q3 of 2024 with construction concluding in Q2 of 2026.</p>
Riverine Community Park	Unfunded	<p>Previous funding secured by Donegal County Council, in partnership with Derry City and Strabane District Council through the European Union Programme for Peace and Reconciliation (Peace IV) ends in December 2023. The project could not be delivered in this timeframe, so funding has been withdrawn.</p> <p>A new funding application has been submitted under the European Union Programme for Peace and Reconciliation (PEACEPLUS) under the specific objective of Re-imagining Communities to finish the project which will create a new community park space and infrastructure at Lifford and Strabane. Works to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pavilion Building ▪ Outdoor Wetlands and Park Space ▪ Outdoor Flexible Multi-Functional Space ▪ Family Space ▪ Cross-border Pathways and Park Infrastructure (Walkways and Greenways) ▪ Safe River Access ▪ Linkages between Lifford and Strabane. <p>In addition to the delivery of the park, the project will also deliver several Community Animation Programmes to encourage participation by the public in the design of the park and ultimately in the use of constructed park.</p> <p>The project has established the Riverine Community Forum, comprising of 32 representatives from a wide variety of local community groups on both sides of the border. Engagement with this group will continue to ensure ongoing interest in the project while funding is awaited.</p> <p>A decision on the funding application is expected in Q2 of 2024.</p>
Killybegs 2040 – A Town Centre Regeneration Project	DRCD (RRDF)/ Own Resources	<p>This project proposes the refurbishment and extension of Island House (a derelict building on the Harbour) to use as a Digital Hub and Tourist Information Centre with integrated Civic space, new pedestrian infrastructure and parking arrangements. The value of the project is €5,423,583 and funding of €4,067,311 has been confirmed from the RRDF.</p>

		Construction commenced in October 2022 following an official sod turning ceremony by the Minister Charlie McConalogue TD on 3rd October. Construction is scheduled for completion in Early 2024.
Burtonport/Aranmore – Harbour to Island Regeneration	DRCD (RRDF)/ Own Resources	<p>This project includes works at Burtonport to improve traffic management, parking, and ferry access arrangements in the Harbour area together with public realm works and associated acquisition and demolition works. A Shore Front Amenity development on Aranmore Island consisting of beach access, parking, recreational facilities, and an outdoor events space is also included. The value of the project is €4,118,932 and includes funding of €3,089,199 from the RRDF.</p> <p>The Shore Front Amenity development on Árainn Mhór was completed in Q2 of 2022 and formally opened by the Minister for Rural and Community Development on 22nd July 2022.</p> <p>The Harbour redevelopment works in Burtonport commenced early in 2022 and have been substantially completed in Q3 2023.</p>
The SEED project - Ballybofey & Stranorlar	DRCD (RRDF)/ Own Resources	<p>This project will deliver the restoration and redevelopment of the former Ritz cinema as an Enterprise Centre, the redevelopment of an existing public car park to create a new high quality, multi-functional civic space with enhanced pedestrian linkages and accessibility, façade enhancements to the Ballybofey Shopping Arcade and the development of replacement and additional car parking. The value of the project is €9,756,969 and funding of €8,781,272 was sought from the RRDF. Grant funding for this project was announced on 14th May 2021.</p> <p>A formal letter of offer was received on 20th August 2021 and DRCD approval to move to detailed design was confirmed in September 2022.</p> <p>The appointment of an Integrated Design Team has been made in Q1 2023 with detailed design works ongoing.</p>
The Tús Nua - Regeneration Project Carndonagh.	DRCD (RRDF)/ Own Resources	<p>This project will deliver a new multi-use hub located in a regenerated heritage building for a range of uses including: a co-working space & fabrication laboratory, office space, youth space, a community kitchen and public amenities. The project also includes a shared workspace and retail space for the designer maker industries together with enhanced public realm at the Diamond and improved pedestrian accessibility and linkages. The value of the project is €9,542,852 and funding of €8,218,982 has been confirmed from the RRDF.</p> <p>A formal letter of offer was received on 23rd July 2021 and DRCD approval to move to detailed design was confirmed in August 2022.</p> <p>The appointment of an Integrated Design Team has been made in Q1 2023 with detailed design works ongoing.</p> <p>Construction of some individual project elements will be done in 2024 in advance of the main refurbishment works.</p>

Burtonport Harbour Redevelopment (Phase 2)	DRCD (RRDF)/ Own Resources	<p>This project builds upon previous RRDF support for Phase 1 Ailt an Chorráin (Burtonport)/Oileán Árainn Mhór (Aranmore Island) 'Harbour to Island' Regeneration Project. It will deliver a new Ferry Terminal Building and Enterprise Building at the Harbour. The value of the project is €2,295,290 and is being funded from the RRDF and the Council's own resources.</p> <p>Detailed design has now been completed, with construction tenders obtained and currently being assessed, with construction to commence in Q1 2024.</p>
Strategic Urban Regeneration Site - Letterkenny	Multiple - including URDF, Shared Island, BEDF and Own Resources	<p>The new Alpha and Beta innovation and enterprise proposals and associated public realm works will cost €30m to construct and are funded by a combination of Shared Island, Border Economic Development Fund and DCC own resources.</p> <p>An Integrated Design Team has been appointed and detailed design is complete. The construction tender will be issued in Q1 of 2024 and construction will commence in Q2 of 2024. The development will be complete in Q3 of 2025.</p> <p>A separate URDF funded demolition works package will be delivered in Q1 of 2024.</p>
Donegal Regional Salt Barn	DoT	<p>This project provides for a new regional salt barn and co-located roads depot at Ballyshannon. Land acquisition was completed early in 2022. Engagement with DoT is underway to finalise the capacity requirements of the barn and thereafter a specialist design consultant will be procured to progress the part 8 planning, detailed design and construction tender documents followed by construction in 2024.</p> <p>Cost estimates for the project will not be known until the capacity requirements of the barn have been finalised.</p>

6.3.2 – Housing Estate Improvement Works and Unfinished Housing Estates

While the national Unfinished Housing Developments database has not been updated in 2023, some progress has been made on the fourteen estates in the County which remain on the list. Three have been completed and taken in charge, while developers have reengaged, and works are in progress or new planning applications have been submitted in a further seven and they remain at varying levels of completion and occupation. Other potential routes to resolution will continue to be pursued for the remaining four.

The Council continues to work through the remaining unfinished estates which received funding under the Government's Site Resolution and Taking in Charge funding programmes. Further resolution works will continue as part of the 2024 UFHD's Work Programme with an expected spend of €200,000.

6.3.3 – Taking-in-Charge – Residential Housing Estates

The Council continued to progress the taking-in-charge of residential estates throughout 2023 and will continue this process throughout 2024. Up to the end of October 2023, a further 50 estates were sent to Municipal District meetings seeking approval from Members to have them taken in charge in accordance with Section 180 of the Planning Act.

The Council has, since 2019, submitted reports to Uisce Éireann in respect of approximately 150 estates, seeking their agreement to proceed to Taking in Charge, and this work continues in relation to all the legacy estates for which applications have been received.

Discussions are advancing with Uisce Éireann in relation to the estates which have been awarded funding under the Multi-annual Developer Provided Water Services Infrastructure (DPI) Resolution Programme and it is expected that works at Dromore Park, Killygordon and Hazelwood/St. Jude's in Lifford will be completed in early 2024.

The funding allocated amounts to 75% of the estimated cost of the works with the Council obliged to provide the matched funding requirements. It is anticipated that these works will form most of the work programme for 2024.

Agreement has been reached with Uisce Éireann in relation to several estates with problematic sewage pumping stations, where there are insufficient planning securities or bonds to complete the resolution works required to bring the estates to an acceptable standard, in line with the Memorandum of Understanding agreed between Uisce Éireann and Local Authorities for the taking in charge of estates connected to the Uisce Éireann controlled or owned network.

Works have been completed under this arrangement at Mountain View in Letterkenny, Greyrocks in Milford and a contractor has been appointed for Errigal View in Letterkenny and tenders for Ash Meadows in Stranorlar are being assessed at time of writing. Uisce Éireann have funded the remediation of the water and wastewater services element of the works, and the Council are responsible for funding any other elements of the works, including roads, footpaths, and street lighting.

Several unresolved sites continue to be addressed using funds realised from developers' bonds. It is anticipated that around €300,000 from this funding source, subvented by the Council's own resources where appropriate, will continue to be spent in each year during 2024-2026.

The Council will continue to engage with relevant parties to try to arrive at acceptable resolutions for those estates which have not yet been completed but where planning bonds or securities are available for resolution works.

6.4 - Planning Services Division

6.4.1 – Development Charges / Development-Contribution Scheme

In accordance with Circular Letter Finance 08/2008, the estimate of development contributions (DCS & Specific Charges) to be collected in 2024 (based on receipts to date in 2023) is circa €1.28m.

Community Development & Planning Services Directorate Capital Table 2024-2026 (Projects in Progress)

Description	Projected Cost* Per Annum			Proposed Sources of funding*	
	2024	2025	2026	Council	External
Projects in Progress					
RDP/LEADER	€1,040,000	€3,120,000	€3,120,000		€7,280,000
2021 Town & Village Renewal Scheme (Main Scheme)	€230,000	€20,000		€30,000	€220,000
2022 Town & Village Renewal Scheme (Main Scheme)	€921,747	€48,513		€97,026	€873,234
Malin Head, (Phase III)	€100,000	€300,000	€500,000	€225,000	€675,000
Bundoran (Destination Towns)	€634,313	€35,000		€169,313	€500,000
Local Authority Weatherproofing and Outdoor Dining Infrastructure Scheme	€151,000	€8,000		€22,000	€137,000
Platform for Growth 2, 'Facility Centres for Water Sports Activities'	€130,000	€850,000	€1,320,000	€600,000	€1,700,000
2020 Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (Measure 3)	€527,755	€27,800		€55,555	€500,000
2021 Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (Measure 2 & 3)	€353,268	€18,600		€42,187	€329,681
2022 Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (Measure 1)	€158,266	€8,400		€16,666	€150,000
2022 Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme Project Development Measure	€111,111			€11,111	€100,000
2022 CLAR Scheme Measure 1 (Developing Community Facilities & Amenities)	€538,266	€28,400		€56,666	€510,000
Letterkenny Urban Adventure Sports Project	€160,000			€100,000	€60,000
Slaintecare Healthy Communities Programme	€169,472				€169,472

2023 Community Recognition Fund	€2,900,000				€2,900,000
2023 Play & Recreation Capital Grant	€21,111			€5,278	€15,833
Playgrounds	€300,000	€300,000		€600,000	
PeacePlus		€3,054,158	€3,054,158		€6,108,316
Strategic Urban Regeneration Site – Letterkenny (First Award) Land acquisition	€923,726	€102,636		€256,591	€769,771
'Letterkenny 2040' (Second Award)	€2,000,000	€10,166,000	€7,178,000	€4,836,000	€14,508,000
URDF Letterkenny 2040 (Third Award) (Rolling Fund)	€2,000,000	€2,000,000	€1,000,000		€5,000,000
Back to Ballyshannon	€91,500			€22,875	€68,625
Ramelton Re-Imagined	€3,175,560	€4,744,308	€30,000	€1,589,974	€6,359,894
Carndonagh Tus Nua (Acquisition of Mart Site)	€731,250				€731,250
Repowering Buncrana	€750,751	€710,994		€292,349	€1,169,396
Platforms for Growth, Platform 1, 'Immersive Heritage & Cultural Attractions'	€1,690,597	€5,583,493	€4,587,642	€3,063,699	€8,798,033
Killybegs 2040 – A Town Centre Regeneration Project	€2,180,000	€1,120,000	€0	€825,000	€2,475,000
Burtonport/Aranmore – Harbour to Island Regeneration	€187,150	€1,120,000	€0	€326,788	€980,362
The SEED Project - Ballybofey & Stranorlar	€2,329,985	€4,659,985	€2,329,969	€931,994	€8,387,945
The Tús Nua- Regeneration Project Carndonagh	€500,000	€4,484,426	€4,484,426	€1,210,734	€8,258,118
Burtonport Harbour Redevelopment (Phase 2)	€1,665,686	€555,229		€229,091	€1,991,824
Unfinished Housing Dev-Developers' Bonds	€200,000	€100,000	€50,000	€70,000	€280,000
Take Over of Housing Estates	€2,000,000	€1,500,000	€500,000	€1,500,000	€2,500,000
Totals:	€28,872,514	€44,665,942	€28,154,195	€17,185,897	€84,506,754

* Due to the nature of external funding applications, projected costs and timelines are best estimates

7. Economic Development, Emergency Services & Information Systems

7.1 – Economic Development Division

- 7.1.1 The Economic Development area is comprised of the Economic Development Division and the Local Enterprise Office (LEO)/Small Business Support Division and is part of the wider Economic Development, Emergency Services and Information Systems Directorate.
- 7.1.2 Both the Economic Development Division and the Small Business Supports Division (LEO) will contribute to the delivery of projects under initiatives including the Regional Enterprise Development Fund & Border Enterprise Development Funds (REDF & BEDF), Failte Ireland initiatives such as Outdoor Dining Schemes, Department of Tourism et al. initiatives us as Outdoor Public Space schemes, as well as the Urban and Rural Regeneration Development Funds (URDF) and the Rural Regeneration Development Funds (RRDF), alongside colleague Council services.
- 7.1.3 The Economic Development Division is advancing proposals that will have implications for Capital expenditure in the following areas:
- Land and building optimisation for economic development purposes.
 - Opportunity site acquisition for economic development purposes
 - Funding and investment opportunities from Central Government and State Agencies for economic development purposes
 - As appropriate, downstream Brexit investment requirements, in a Donegal context, for economic development purposes.
- 7.1.4 A number of proposals are currently being advanced, particularly from the perspective of post Brexit offerings for relocation or second site location opportunities. This includes maximising the potential of Council owned land and properties. The need for the development of Serviced Land Initiatives for Economic Development Purposes was identified by Grant Thornton in their Responding to Brexit report and the Economic Development Division is currently working with the Councils Capital Delivery Team and other Council services to develop a multiuse park at The Common, Lifford with similar proposals being considered for other locations in the county.
- 7.1.5 A new Business and Innovation Quarter is currently being developed in Letterkenny town centre with a view to enhancing greater levels of innovation and business development in the region. This will comprise of the 17,500 sq. ft Alpha Innovation Centre and the 43,000 sq. ft Beta Business Centre providing over 60,000 sq. ft Grade A office accommodation in a prime town centre location.
- 7.1.6 The Inishowen Innovation Hub, which secured funding under the Regional Enterprise Development Fund has now progressed to practical completion, with final works now progressing to maximise occupancy of the centre in 2024.

7.1.7 Economic Development Capital Investment Programme 2024 – 2026

Description	Projected Cost Per Annum *			Proposed Sources of funding 2024 – 2026 *	
	2024	2025	2026	Council	External
	€	€	€	€	€
Inishowen Innovation Hub, Buncrana	250,000			250,000	
Alpha Innovation Centre **	5,600,000	6,000,000		3,725,000	7,875,000
Beta Business Centre **	9,400,000	10,000,000		1,400,000	18,000,000
Development at The Common, Lifford **	3,300,000			3,300,000	***
Donegal Town Diamond OPSS**	900,000			650,000	250,000
Bundoran Outdoor Spaces**	345,000			61,000	284,000
Totals:	19,795,000	16,000,000	0	9,386,000	26,409,000

* Total cost of co-financing requirements is subject to final costing and procurement

** The Council's Capital Delivery Team is progressing the delivery of these capital projects in association with the Economic Development Division

*** Capital costs will be recouped from HSE, Housing Capital & Private sector on disposal of specific sites at this location

7.1.8 As part of the Economic Development Division, the Strategic Funding Unit continues to proactively engage with potential external funding bodies and agencies, with the objective of matching strategic Council objectives with appropriate external funding programmes, both National and EU, to maximise funding and co-financing opportunities to enable further development in the County. New EU Funding Programmes will continue to open in 2024 and the Strategic Funding Unit will continue to engage with various programme bodies, Council Services and partner organisations with a view to ensuring that the Council is well positioned to avail of opportunities as they arise.

7.2 - Information Systems

7.2.1 Donegal County Council's Information Systems infrastructure serves 106 locations countywide and is one of the largest Local Authority networks in Ireland.

The infrastructure comprises: -

- 82 Servers
- 1,687 Desktop & Notebook Computers
- 352 Printers/Scanners/Plotters
- 29 Print Management Multi-Function Devices (managed solely by Information Systems)
- 85 Other Multi-Function Devices (managed by Reprographics Section with support from Information Systems)
- 380 Tablets
- 700 Mobile Phones
- 200 Other data devices
- 275 IP Telephone handsets

Together with this ICT infrastructure, a wide range of Council business systems and applications are managed on a daily basis.

7.2.2 In addition to operational support on the networks and applications, a comprehensive systems programme is implemented annually. The systems programme is designed to support the Council's Corporate Plan and Customer Services Action Plan. It assists business units in Donegal County Council to work more efficiently and effectively, as well as delivering improved customer service applications.

Capital Investment Programme

7.2.3 Ongoing Revenue budgets fund maintenance and support of existing infrastructure and applications on an annual basis, including significant financial outlays that are made to the Local Government Management Agency and Microsoft.

7.2.4 An upgraded networking, hardware, telephony, security and systems upgrade project got underway in 2021. During 2021 Information Systems invested heavily in upgrading the Communications and Network infrastructure replacing core routers at HQ and in the Public Services Centres as well as replacing 60 switches at HQ, Public Services Centres and many other key offices such as the Local Enterprise Centre, Stranorlar Training Centre and Letterkenny Fire Station.

During 2022, Information Systems invested in excess of €200k on implementing an IP Telephony system and Contact Centre Support Solution for the organisation with the rollout of that solution completed in early 2023. This system replaced an Analog PBX Telephone System that was originally installed over 28 years ago.

In the years 2024 – 2026 the Information Systems Department Capital Expenditure will fall into the following main categories:

- Communications and Networking Improvements (Local and Wide Area Network Upgrades)
- Replacement Compute & Storage Infrastructure
- Business Continuity & Backup Solutions
- Enhanced Information and Cyber Security Solutions
- Digital Transformation & Improved Corporate Information Systems and Applications
- Cloud based desktop office automation systems.

7.2.5 Over the last number of years cyber-attacks and similar forms of criminal activity have wreaked havoc across the globe for organisations and businesses, including the public sector. The Council, in common with other public authorities, needs to keep abreast of these threats by using the best defence mechanisms available. Additionally, General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) became law in 2018, with increased obligations for bodies holding personal data, and increased fines for breaches of these enhanced obligations. The need for continual investment in this area to both protect Council systems and data as well as ensuring compliance with GDPR Regulations is now a given across the public sector so capital investment in our core Server and Storage infrastructure and also in cyber security solutions and services will be a priority for 2024 and beyond.

7.2.6 Over the period 2024 – 2026 the ongoing systems implementation and upgrade programme will also continue. Work will be prioritised on an annual basis and will target systems and applications with significant payback for the Council in terms of operational efficiencies. For example, systems such as automated power management for PC’s & laptops, IP Telephony and electronic meeting solutions have already and will continue to bring significant benefits and financial savings to the Council. The imminent launch of the Local Government Digital and ICT Strategy 2030 will shape our Digital Transformation journey towards the target of 90% of all applicable public services being available and consumed online by the citizens of the country by 2030. This ambitious objective of the Connecting Government 2030 strategy will require strong financial support and investment in resources by Donegal County Council in the next 6 – 7 years.

Information Systems - Estimated Capital Commitments 2024 – 2026

Work Area	2024	2025	2026
Communications & Network Infrastructure	€50,000	€50,000	€50,000
Core Server & Storage Infrastructure	€600,000		
Business Continuity & Backup Solutions	€25,000	€40,000	€40,000
Data & Cyber Security Solutions	€100,000	€75,000	€75,000
Digital Transformation	€50,000	€50,000	€50,000
Cloud Services	€40,000	€50,000	€50,000
Total	€865,000	€265,000	€265,000

** The full costs of these investments over the 3-year period will be borne solely by Donegal County Council.

Information Systems - Priorities for 2024

- 7.2.7 The priority project for 2024 is a new Compute & Storage infrastructure for the organisation which will be tendered in Q4 2023 or Q1 2024. The current server estate and data storage infrastructure at HQ Lifford is currently on extended warranty (greater than 8 years old) and swiftly reaching end of life due to the continual growth of all data sets across the various directorates. This infrastructure needs to be replaced by the end of Q3 2024 in advance of the extended warranty renewal due date.
- 7.2.8 In 2024, further investment is required in Security, Management and Monitoring Systems in order to further improve cyber security protection. This will include an investment in new Backup and Replication systems as well as improved Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery solutions. This will involve a move away from the traditional backup-to-tape environment to back up-to-disk and backup-to-cloud solutions. This requirement will be included in the Compute & Storage tender referenced above.

Investment in other cyber security solutions and services will be required as well in 2024 as the need to have 24x7x365 monitoring of our ICT infrastructure is fast becoming a critical tool to have in our armoury in order to effectively manage the cyber security threats of the modern world.

7.3 – Emergency Services

7.3.1 – Fire Stations

Following the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (the Department) advising in 2016 that the Department was open to considering a suitable fire station project for the south of the County from Donegal County Council, an evidence-based consultancy report was completed in mid-2018, with a subsequent recommendation from the Chief Fire Officer that a single location, two-pump station, supplemented by a hydraulic platform, and serviced by a fifteen-member crew, be submitted to the Department for funding. The Elected Members did not accept this recommended approach and resolved that the preference was for the retention of two locations and stations. This position has been made clear to the Department for some time and it is intended that discussions will continue in order to bring this matter to satisfactory conclusion at the earliest date possible.

The station priority list submitted to the Department in 2020 placed Glencolmcille Fire Station as priority No. 3 at a 2020 estimated cost of €1,570,724.

It is not anticipated that this project will progress until the fire station project in the south of the County is substantially advanced or concluded.

7.3.2 – Fire Appliances, Associated Vehicles and Buildings

The Fire Service has been awarded capital funding during 2023 from the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management (NDFEM) for the following projects:

- 2 no. Class B fire appliances as part of the NDFEM Fire Appliance Procurement Programme for 2023-2025.
- 1 no. 8,000 litre Water Tanker appliance, bringing to two the number of such vehicles in the fleet.
- 2 no. L2H2 vans for fire service operations, to replace fire brigade jeeps that are used to carry sign, lighting and guarding equipment, and
- 1 no. 4WD SUV for Rostered Senior Fire Officers.

It is anticipated that the delivery of these vehicles will span 2024 and 2025, given order, build and delivery lead times.

In addition, Donegal County Council has made a request to the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management for capital funding for a stand-alone building at Letterkenny Fire Station to provide additional training accommodation and vehicle storage.

7.4 – Civil Defence

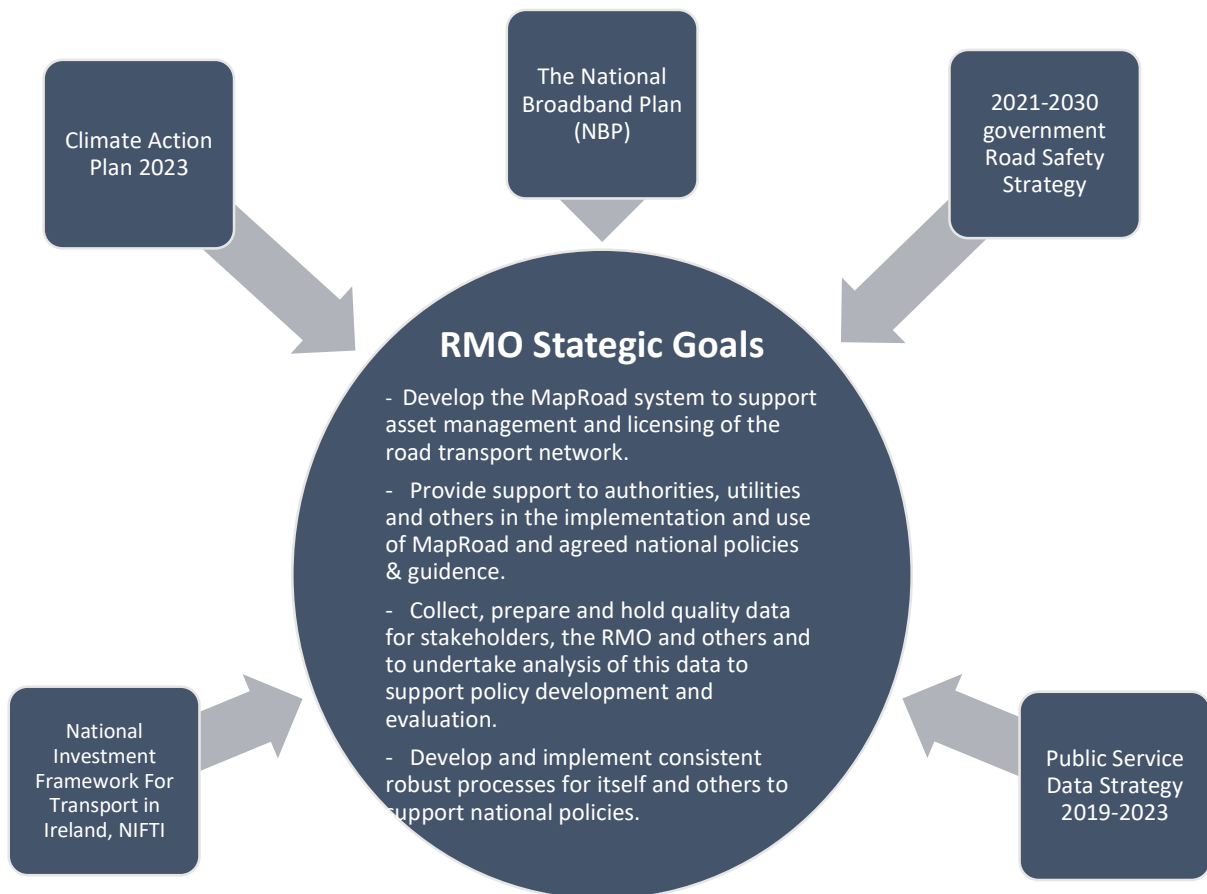
The Department of Defence secured additional funding through the Dormant Accounts Fund in early 2023, to continue the upgrading of the excising vehicle fleet around the country. Following the success of the funding application submitted by Civil Defence, in 2023 Donegal Civil Defence was allocated €36,000 towards the purchase of a replacement minibus.

The current garage space at the Civil Defence Headquarters is no longer adequate to house the Civil Defence vehicle and boat fleet, therefore it is intended to submit a business case to the Civil Defence Branch in early 2024, to fund the erection of a covered parking area for the 4WD fleet.

8. Roads Management Office (RMO)

The Road Management Office (RMO) is a local authority shared service under S.149A of the 2001 Local Government Act. It operates under agreements between each local authority, Transport Infrastructure Ireland, the National Transport Authority and Donegal & Cork County Councils. It is mandated in its work by the Department of Transport (DoT) under performance delivery agreements with it.

The overall strategic goals of the RMO are support to national policies and strategies. These are summarised below:



The work of the RMO in support of these strategic goals can be broken into the following work areas:

- Coordination & Centralisation of agreed areas of work,
- Collation of Information
- Analytics & Auditing
- Communication & Management
- Training & Process Improvement
- New Development and Research
- Ensuring strong governance of RMO and its processes

Objectives are set under these work areas that the RMO develop into supporting tasks. This is agreed annually with the Board of the RMO. The objectives for 2023 are set out below.

Coordinate and centralise agreed areas of work:	Collation of information	Analyse and audit data	Communications and Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •MapRoad Software development •Manage utility training and insurance compliance for roadworks •Coordinate the implementation of Asset Ops Licensing for Uisce Éireann post SLA. •Maintain and expand centralised billing •Administer funds for sector (eg Climate Action Fund, EEOS) •Procure items (eg Regional Road Survey, legal advice for specific stakeholders) •Implement Public Lighting business case 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Support sector in uploading agreed roadworks (including ATI) programmes data to MapRoad •Support Utilities and Road Authorities in the implementation of Purple Book requirements •Procuring Third Party datasets to support sector from MapMakers •Support CCMA and DOT in obtaining Collision data •LA16 collision data gathering •Development of UMR reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Support LA in compiling NOAC, DOT and other returns •Manage reports and developments requested by stakeholders (eg backlog calculations, Regional Road Survey³) •Prepare reports for stakeholders (eg compliance with DOT survey standard) •Analyse, review and improve quality of data contained in MapRoad •Review performance of applicants in MRL •Review Public Lighting Data with lead authorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Prepare reports for stakeholders & stakeholder groups (eg JULA utilities, DECC for NBP, utilities and authorities) •Undertake regional workshops with authority staff (eg NBI, RMO) •Meet regularly with large utilities regarding issues arising from licensing •Present findings and updates at conferences •Support compliance of DOT Pavement Survey standard³ •Manage national deposit scheme

Improve Knowledge through Training and Support; Research and Development	New development and Research	Ensure strong governance of RMO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training and support to Roadworks Licensing, Road Authority and MPL Public Lighting users. • Participate in working groups we are invited onto (HVForum, Drainage, CARO etc) and lead those we set up with RMO Board (LA16, Active Travel, etc) • Support others and RMO development of reports for sector and government • Develop training courses with LASNTG and other stakeholders (eg IAT) • Present at various fora (IAT, TII, LASNTG Conferences) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve reporting of pavement data in MapRoad • Implement Bridge Asset Management Requirements of DOT • Implement Roadworks Licensing for Uisce Éireann AO • Explore use of large data sets and AI in application to Roads • Assist DOT with specific projects (eg RibGeom) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recover monies due to authorities and RMO • Manage Grant Claims including DOT, CAF, ECOS • Meet DOT, TII and NTA regularly to report on PDA requirements • Ensure appropriate data sharing / processing arrangements are in place for data • Monitor expenditure and take necessary corrective actions • Ensure Compliance with Public Spending Code • Carry out internal audits of processes undertaken

The RMO is funded by all local authorities, DoT, NTA and TII. Expenditure in relation to the RMO is accounted for on an 'Agent Works Recoupable' basis. As such, it is not reported in the Council's Revenue Budget. For the sake of transparency, it is reported on herein as part of the 3-Year Capital Programme.

It is anticipated that the level of expenditure over the 3-year period 2024 – 2026 will be in the order of €82.4m. This is broken down as follows:

Item	2024 Expenditure	2025 Expenditure	2026 Expenditure
Office Running Costs and Software Development	€5.36m	€5.36m	€5.36m
Supports to Public Lighting retrofit programme from Climate Action Fund	€9.8m	€8.3m	€0.3m
Administration of Centralised Billing for Road Licensing	€10.3m	€17.3m	€20.3m
Total	€25.46m	€30.96m	€25.96m

9. Statutory Tables

LOCAL AUTHORITY - COMHAIRLE DHÚN NA NGALL					
CAITEACHAS AGUS IONCAM DO 2024 - 2026					
CLÁRGHRÚPAÍ	CAITEACHAS		IONCAM		Ranníoc Chomhairle Contae Dhún na nGall
	MEASTACHÁN	GLACTHA	MEASTACHÁN	GLACTHA	
1. TITHÍOCHT & TÓGÁIL					
1.1. Tithíocht An Údaráis Áitiúil	€266,700,000		€266,700,000		€225,000
1.2. Cúnamh Do Dhaoine Ag Cur Tithíochta Ar Fáil Dóibh Féin	€15,000,000		€15,000,000		
1.3. Cúnamh Do Dhaoine Ag Cur Feabhasúcháin Ar Thithe	€128,500,000		€128,500,000		€2,350,000
1.8. Riarachán Agus Ilghnéitheach	€917,000		€917,000		
IOMLÁN-CLÁR 1	€411,117,000		€411,117,000		€2,575,000
2. IOMPAR DE BHÓTHAR & SÁBHÁILTEACHT					
2.2. Feabhsúchán Bóithre	€308,465,765		€308,465,765		€4,050,000
2.3. Trácht Ar Bhóithre					
2.8. Riarachán Agus Ilghnéitheach	€82,380,000		€82,380,000		€0
IOMLÁN CLÁR 2	€390,845,765		€390,845,765		€4,050,000
3. SOLÁTHAR UISCE & SÉARACHAIS					
3.1. Soláthar Uisce Poiblí					
3.2. Scéimeanna Poiblí/Séarachais	€0		€0		€0
3.3. Feistiú Priobháideach	€7,500,000		€7,500,000		€0
3.8. Riarachán Agus Ilghnéitheach					
IOMLÁN-CLÁR 3	€7,500,000		€7,500,000		€0
4. DREASACHTAÍ FORBARTHA & RIALÚCHÁN					
4.1. Pleanáil Úsáide Talún					
4.2. Forbairt Thionsclaíoch					
4.3. Dreasachtaí agus Rialu Forbartha	€4,350,000		€4,350,000		€1,570,000
4.5. Cur Cum Cinn Suinne I Measc An Phobail Áitiúil					
4.8. Riarachán Agus Ilghnéitheach					
IOMLÁN-CLÁR 4	€4,350,000		€4,350,000		€1,570,000

**LOCAL AUTHORITY - COMHAIRLE DHÚN NA NGALL
CAITEACHAS AGUS IONCAM DO 2023 - 2025**

CLÁRGHRÚPAÍ	CAITEACHAS		IONCAM		Ranníoc Chomhairle Contae Dhún na nGall
	MEASTACHÁN	GLACTHA	MEASTACHÁN	GLACTHA	
5. COSAINT CHOMHSHAOIL					
5.1 Díúscairt Dramhaíola	€6,355,000		€6,355,000		€855,000
5.2 Úirleachas	€670,000		€670,000		€0
5.3 Sábháilteacht Struchtúr Agus Áiteanna	€600,000		€600,000		€600,000
5.4 Cosaint In Aghaidh Dóiteáin	€0		€0		€0
5.5 Measúnú Truailliúcháin	€40,345,000		€40,345,000		€40,000
5.8 Riarachán Agus Ilghnéitheach	€0		€0		€0
IOMLÁN-CLÁR 5	€47,970,000		€47,970,000		€1,495,000
6. ÁINEAS AGUS TAITNEAMHACHT					
6.1 Linn Snámha	€19,410,000		€19,410,000		€11,094,000
6.2 Leabharlanna	€5,000,000		€5,000,000		€5,000,000
6.3 Páirceanna, Spásanna Oscailte, Ionaid Áineasa	€0		€0		€0
6.4 Áineasa/Taitneamhachtaí Eile	€133,178,702		€133,178,702		€26,534,948
6.8 Riarachán Agus Ilghnéitheach	€0		€0		€0
IOMLÁN-CLÁR 6	€157,588,702		€157,588,702		€42,628,948
7. TALMHAÍOCHT, OIDEACHAS & SLÁINTE & LEASA					
7.1 Talmhaíocht	€1,520,000		€1,520,000		€125,000
7.8 Riarachán/Ilghnéitheach	€0		€0		€0
IOMLÁN-CLÁR 7	€1,520,000		€1,520,000		€125,000
8. SEIRBHÍSÍ ILGHNÉITHEACHA					
8.1 Ceannach Talún Agus Forbairt	€0		€0		€0
8.2 Planda Agus Ábhair	€0		€0		€0
8.5 Riaracháin Chosaint Cheartais/Tomhaltóra Tomhaltóra	€0		€0		€0
8.6 Damáiste Do Mhain	€0		€0		€0
8.8 Riarachán Agus Ilghnéitheach	€1,515,000		€1,515,000		€1,515,000
IOMLÁN-CLÁR 8	€1,515,000		€1,515,000		€1,515,000
IOMLÁN NA GCLÁRGHRÚPAÍ UILE	€1,022,406,467		€1,022,406,467		€53,958,948

**LOCAL AUTHORITY - DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL
EXPENDITURE AND INCOME FOR FINANCIAL YEARS 2024 - 2026**

PROGRAMME GROUP AND PROGRAMME	EXPENDITURE		INCOME		DCC Contribution
	ESTIMATED	ADOPTED	ESTIMATED	ADOPTED	
1. HOUSING & BUILDING	€0		€0		€0
1.1. Local Authority Housing	€266,700,000		€266,700,000		€225,000
1.2. Assistance to Persons Housing themselves	€15,000,000		€15,000,000		€0
1.3. Assistance to Persons Improving Houses	€128,500,000		€128,500,000		€2,350,000
1.8. Administration and Miscellaneous	€917,000		€917,000		€0
TOTAL	€411,117,000		€411,117,000		€2,575,000
2. ROAD TRANSPORTATION & SAFETY					
2.2. Road Improvement	€308,465,765		€308,465,765		€4,050,000
2.3. Road Traffic	€0		€0		€0
2.8. Administration & Misc (RMO)	€82,380,000		€82,380,000		€0
TOTAL	€390,845,765		€390,845,765		€4,050,000
3. WATER SUPPLY & SEWERAGE					
3.1. Public Water Supply Scheme*	€0		€0		€0
3.2. Public Sewerage Scheme	€0		€0		€0
3.3. Private Installations	€7,500,000		€7,500,000		€0
3.8. Administration & Miscellaneous	€0		€0		€0
* Historical expenditure included					
TOTAL	€7,500,000		€7,500,000		€0
4. DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES & CONTROLS					
4.1 Land Use Planning	€0		€0		€0
4.2 Industrial Development	€0		€0		
4.3 Development Incentives & Control	€4,350,000		€4,350,000		€1,570,000
4.5 Promotion of Interest - Local Community	€0		€0		
4.8 Administration & Miscellaneous	€0		€0		
TOTAL	€4,350,000		€4,350,000		€1,570,000

**LOCAL AUTHORITY - DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL
EXPENDITURE AND INCOME FOR FINANCIAL YEARS 2023 - 2025**

PROGRAMME GROUP AND PROGRAMME	EXPENDITURE		INCOME		DCC Contribution
	ESTIMATED	ADOPTED	ESTIMATED	ADOPTED	
5. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION					
5.1 Waste Disposal	€6,355,000		€6,355,000		€855,000
5.2 Burial Grounds	€670,000		€670,000		€0
5.3 Safety of Structures & Places	€600,000		€600,000		€600,000
5.4 Fire Protection	€0		€0		€0
5.5 Pollution Control	€40,345,000		€40,345,000		€40,000
5.8 Administration & Miscellaneous	€0		€0		€0
TOTAL	€47,970,000		€47,970,000		€1,495,000
6. RECREATION & AMENITY					
6.1 Swimming Pools	€19,410,000		€19,410,000		€11,094,000
6.2 Libraries	€5,000,000		€5,000,000		€5,000,000
6.3 Parks, Open Spaces, Recreation Centres etc.	€0		€0		€0
6.4 Other Recreation & Amenity	€133,178,702		€133,178,702		€26,534,948
6.8 Administration & Miscellaneous	€0		€0		€0
TOTAL	€157,588,702		€157,588,702		€42,628,948
7. AGRICULTURE, EDUCATION HEALTH & WELFARE					
7.1 Agriculture	€1,520,000		€1,520,000		€125,000
7.8 Administration & Miscellaneous	€0		€0		€0
TOTAL	€1,520,000		€1,520,000		€125,000
8. MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES					
8.1 Land Acquisition	€0		€0		€0
8.2 Plant & Materials	€0		€0		€0
8.5 Administration of Justice & Consumer Protection	€0		€0		€0
8.6 Property Damage	€0		€0		€0
8.8 Administration & Miscellaneous	€1,515,000		€1,515,000		€1,515,000
TOTAL	€1,515,000		€1,515,000		€1,515,000
ALL PROGRAMME GROUPS TOTAL	€1,022,406,467		€1,022,406,467		€53,958,948