



Streetscape Enhancement Measure 2021

Measure Outline

Town and Village Renewal Scheme



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1. Introduction

Our Rural Future is the Government's five year strategy to revitalise rural Ireland and includes a commitment to upgrade and enhance shopfronts and street facades in our rural towns and villages.

This activity will be funded by the Department of Rural & Community Development (DRCD) through this 2021 Streetscape Enhancement Measure. This is an additional Measure introduced as part of the Town & Village Renewal Scheme. €7 million is being made available under this Measure in 2021

Improving the visual appearance of our urban streetscapes increases pride and confidence in our home towns and villages, making them more attractive places to live, work and do business.

Many local authorities already fund such measures locally and this national initiative builds on local experience and affords a degree of local discretion to individual authorities to tailor the scheme to local demand and according to local priorities.

This Measure will support activity such as painting (including murals), signage replacement, shopfront improvement, lighting, and canopies.

Local Authorities can tailor their own individual schemes to local priorities and local demand as long as the scheme is consistent with this Measure Outline.

2. Streetscape Enhancement Measure 2021

2.1 Focus of Measure

The focus of this measure is to support the upgrade and enhancement of shopfronts and street facades of defined areas within selected rural town/village centres.

Each Local Authority will be provided with a grant allocation which they can use to deliver this Measure through their own scheme developed and delivered locally. The 26 local authorities that will be provided with a funding allocation under this measure are set out in Appendix 1. Given the focus of the scheme, an allocation has not been provided to Dublin, Cork and Galway City Councils, together with South Dublin and Dun Laoghaire – Rathdown Councils.

2.2 Grant Allocations

Each Local Authority will design their own scheme to suit their own individual circumstances provided that the requirements of this Measure Outline are adhered to.

Each Local Authority will be grouped into one of 3 bands and provided with a grant allocation of €320,000 (Band A), €260,000 (Band B) or €220,000 (Band C). The amount provided to each Local Authority is determined by the number of towns in each County with a population of between 500 and 15,000 people. Counties with a greater number of towns and villages will receive a larger allocation.

2.3 Administration and Technical Support

Up to 10% of the total allocation per county is allowable for Local Authority administration and technical costs, and for engaging external expertise where appropriate. This 10% is contingent on the full delivery and completion of the scheme works within the advised timeframes and in line with this Measure Outline.

2.4 Selection of towns/villages by Local Authority

A minimum of 2 prioritised towns or villages must be selected by each Local Authority. It is a matter for the Local Authority to determine how these towns are selected.

It is open to each Local Authority to select more than 2 towns/villages where they consider this to be appropriate based on anticipated demand at a local level (*Note all works must be completed and funding drawn down in 2021*).

The flexibility to select additional towns is subject to a maximum of 6 towns/villages in total for Local Authorities receiving €320,000 (Band A), a maximum of 5 towns/villages for Local Authorities receiving €260,000 (Band B), and maximum of 5 towns/villages for Local Authorities receiving €220,000 (Band C).

| Allocation | Total Grant | minimum No.Towns/Villages | maximum No.Towns/Villages |
|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Band A | 320k | 2 | 6 |
| Band B | 260k | 2 | 5 |
| Band C | 220k | 2 | 4 |

Local Authorities must also indicate the areas within the selected towns/villages that will be covered by the Measure. Locations within each town or village should be chosen based on the Measure objective which is to improve the character and appearance of town/village centre locations.

Where the an existing streetscape scheme is operational in a selected town/village, the Local Authority must clearly set out how this DRCD funding will be additional to what is already in place, how the DRCD funding will be advertised locally and how the DRCD funding will be referenced in any funding documentation. (See 2.11 Existing Schemes Section below)

2.5 Eligible Towns/Villages

The Measure is targeted at towns or villages with a populations of up to 15,000 people.

2.6 Eligible Premises

Commercial, residential or unoccupied buildings in town/village centre locations as defined by the local authority.

2.7 Eligible Works

Eligible works include painting, signage replacement, shopfront improvement, scaffolding, materials, lighting and planting – see Appendix 2 for list of eligible works.

2.8 Grant Rates

Grant funding will be provided at the following rates:

- 70% for Individual premises – matched funding 30%
- 80% for Joint applications (groups of 3 or more adjacent premises) – matched funding 20%
- 100% - Where painting is undertaken by direct labour by applicant

2.9 Timeline for Delivery

Local Authorities will have a maximum of 7 weeks from Wednesday **4th August** to advance projects to commencement of work stages.

The timeline is as follows:

| | Deadline |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Announcement of Measure | Wed 4th Aug. |
| Two weeks to inform DRCD of the selected towns/villages and the areas within those towns/villages. This should include details referenced below (section 2.11 Existing Schemes) in respect of towns/villages where an existing scheme is already operational. Details to be provided to townandvillage@drcd.gov.ie | Tue 17 Aug. |
| Three weeks for Local Authority to advertise and receive applications. | Tue 7 Sept. |
| Two weeks to select successful applicants, and to confirm to the DRCD the level of applications received and the funding allocated to approved works. Details to be provided to townandvillage@drcd.gov.ie | Tue 21 Sept. |

(Where a local authority is in a position to select successful applicants, indicate funding allocated and detail the overall level of applications prior to 21 September, the authority is encouraged to commence the measure as soon as possible.)

Where funding allocated to any Local Authority is not fully allocated to works in that Local Authority area, the DRCD may reallocate the funding to another Local Authority.

Local Authorities may commit up to 5% more than their available budget, on the expectation that not all works will be delivered on time or that some works will be delivered under budget.

Projects must be completed and all funding requests submitted to DRCD by mid November 2021.

2.10 Quotations

The following procurement rules apply, as a minimum, to the individual projects funded:

2 x Contractor quotations;

1 x Materials quotation;

(Note: 3 written quotations for contracts above €5,000 as per National Procurement Guidelines)

2.11 Existing Schemes

The funding cannot be used to replace existing schemes or existing financial commitments already approved by the Local Authority.

Where the Local Authority wishes to utilise this funding in towns or villages that are already the subject of an existing scheme funded by the Local Authority or otherwise (e.g. a county wide scheme), it must identify at the outset:

- how this funding will be additional to what is already provided; and
- how the beneficiaries of the funding and the wider public will be fully informed that the funding is being provided through this DRCD Measure.

This information must be submitted at the same time as information on the selected towns is being reported to the DRCD. Form TVRS S.1 will accompany this document for completion.

2.12 Publicity

Local Authorities will acknowledge the support of the Department of Rural and Community Development, and reference '*Our Rural Future*' in all public announcements, scheme documentation and advertising, as appropriate, relating to the Measure.

In addition, the Department may seek to use the details of the works funded in each town or village in the broader promotion of its policies, including through the use of the photographs which are required to be submitted by the Local Authority at claim drawdown stage (see point 5 of Section 4)

3. Checklist for Local Authorities-Minimum Documentation to be retained

- Photograph prior to commencement of project.
- Completed Application Form.
- Photograph of completed project.
- Quotations
- Invoices
- Evidence of payment

4. Funding Conditions

Non-Compliance with the conditions as outlined or non-compliance with any additional stipulations agreed during contract negotiations may result in the requirement to refund part or all of the grant aid awarded.

All expenditure under the Town & Village Streetscape Enhancement Measure 2021 is subject to the terms of the Public Spending Code <http://publicspendingcode.per.gov.ie/> . The following requirements are also applicable;

Requirements

- 1 Works will be expected to commence and be completed in line with the timelines set out in this Measure Outline.
- 2 The Department may de-commit funding allocated to works under the Measure where the works are not completed within the time specified, and where the express agreement of the Department to extend the funding arrangement has not been agreed in advance.
- 3 The grant funding for the approved works will be provided from the Department's capital budget.
- 4 A match funding contribution as set out in this Measure Outline is required
- 5 **Payments:** The Department will release 80% payment upfront to the Local Authority once successful applicants been identified by the Tuesday 21th September as per timeline noted above.

The remaining 20% payment may be recouped upon completion of works based on vouched expenditure and must be drawn down from the DRCD by mid-November 2021.

The draw down request must be accompanied by a report on each town detailing the works undertaken and certification by Director of Service. **This report must include sample before/after photographs to confirm works have been completed and which may to be used for promotion purposes.**

- 6 Up to 10% of the net total allocation per county is allowable for Local Authority administration and technical costs, and for engaging external expertise where appropriate. This 10% is conditional on the full delivery and completion of the scheme works within the advised timeframes. The 10% will not be provided where the scheme is not delivered in line with this Measure Outline and within the permitted timeframe. See Paragraph 2.9 Timeline for Delivery and Appendix 1 which set out Admin/Technical support provision.

- 7 Where it is established that works have not been completed or delivered in line with this Measure Outline, the Department may request the Local Authority to repay any funding received or a penalty may apply as determined by the DRCD.
- 8 Where changes have been applied to an approved works that are outside the overall framework of this Measure, without Departmental approval, the grant funding may be reduced to reflect the amended works.
- 9 All appropriate financial, Public Procurement and accounting rules and regulations must be complied with, and each Local Authority will fully account for the funding received in a timely manner.
- 10 Full and accurate documentation to support all expenditure should be maintained in the Measure file by the Local Authority and must be accessible by Department officials for audit purposes at all times, for a period of six years from the date of completion of the project.
- 11 Local Authorities will acknowledge the support of the Department of Rural and Community Development, and reference 'Our Rural Future' in all public announcements, scheme documentation and advertising, as appropriate, relating to the project. In addition, the Department may seek to use the project in the broader promotion of its policies.
- 12 Local Authorities will provide any reports and information relating to the delivery of this Measure as may reasonably be requested by the Department.
- 13 Local Authorities will provide a contact point/points to the Department to facilitate payment and information requests. The Department should be updated on any changes to contact personnel in a timely manner.
- 14 A checklist confirming compliance with funding conditions relating to the grant aid will be required upon project completion.

5. Monitoring of Funding

- a) The Department may carry out on-the-spot pre or post-payment checks on a minimum 5% of project payment claims to verify compliance with funding conditions, project delivery and the reality of expenditure where appropriate. Payment claims will be selected on both a risk and random basis.
- b) The checks will include an examination of the Measure file together with any other relevant documentation identified during the course of the on-the-spot check.
- c) The Local Authority will make books and accounts available to the Comptroller and Auditor General as required.

Appendix 1

€7 million allocation

| BAND | Local Authority | Works €000s | Maximum Administration & Technical Assistance¹ €000s | Total Grant €000s |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|--|--------------------------|
| BAND A | Cork County Council | 288 | 32 | 320 |
| | Kildare County Council | 288 | 32 | 320 |
| | Donegal County Council | 288 | 32 | 320 |
| | Limerick City and County Council | 288 | 32 | 320 |
| | Meath County Council | 288 | 32 | 320 |
| | Galway County Council | 288 | 32 | 320 |
| | Clare County Council | 288 | 32 | 320 |
| | Tipperary County Council | 288 | 32 | 320 |
| | Wicklow County Council | 288 | 32 | 320 |
| BAND B | Kerry County Council | 234 | 26 | 260 |
| | Mayo County Council | 234 | 26 | 260 |
| | Louth County Council | 234 | 26 | 260 |
| | Wexford County Council | 234 | 26 | 260 |
| | Fingal County Council | 234 | 26 | 260 |
| | Kilkenny County Council | 234 | 26 | 260 |
| | Offaly County Council | 234 | 26 | 260 |
| | Cavan County Council | 234 | 26 | 260 |
| | Laois County Council | 234 | 26 | 260 |
| BAND C | Waterford City and County Council | 200 | 20 | 220 |
| | Carlow County Council | 200 | 20 | 220 |
| | Leitrim County Council | 200 | 20 | 220 |
| | Sligo County Council | 200 | 20 | 220 |
| | Westmeath County Council | 200 | 20 | 220 |
| | Longford County Council | 200 | 20 | 220 |

1. Up to 10% of the total allocation per county is allowable for Local Authority administration and technical assistance costs, and for external expertise where appropriate. This use of 10% of the funding allocation for this purpose is optional; alternatively, the Local Authority may choose to utilise the full funding allocation for works only.

| | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|-----|----|-----|
| | Monaghan County Council | 200 | 20 | 220 |
| | Roscommon County Council | 200 | 20 | 220 |

Appendix 2: Eligible Works

| | |
|---|--------|
| WORKS | |
| Green enhancement of entrances/ terraces with planting | €500 |
| Painting of building/shopfront in carefully selected colours which will complement the host building and streetscape. Mural (agreed in advance with Local Authority) | €1,500 |
| Decluttering and repair of shopfronts. (Decluttering can include such works as removing unnecessary signs, flagpoles, wiring etc.) | €2,000 |
| Careful illumination and lighting of architectural features of buildings. | €4,000 |
| Improvements to shopfront window displays and staging. | |
| Replacement of signage with traditional wooden fascia with wooden/hand painted lettering OR contemporary design | |
| Canopies/Awnings complementary to the materials of the shopfront and building (including street furniture). | |
| Replacement of existing shopfront with traditional painted wooden shopfront OR contemporary design | |
| Maximum per building | €8,000 |