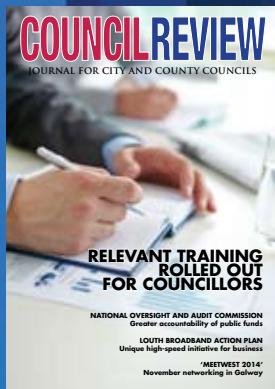


# contents



## EDITOR'S COMMENT

The Local Government Reform Act 2014 has certainly introduced a raft of far-sweeping changes to our local administration system – to name but a few, the abolition of town councils, a reduction in the number of councillors and local authorities, plus the merger of city and county councils in Limerick, Waterford and Tipperary.

The then Minister Phil Hogan said in the run-up to the 2014 Local Elections that such changes were “necessary to bring our local government system up to date” and that such cost-saving measures were needed to streamline the local administrative process.

Phil Hogan has since moved to Brussels where he is the new EU Commissioner for Agriculture, with Labour's Alan Kelly now at the department's helm in the Custom House.

In reference to streamlining the process, it will be interesting to see how the inaugural president of the Association of Irish Local Government (AILG) sets about introducing more relevant regional seminars and events for councillors.

In this issue, Cllr Padraig McNally, who is current chairman of Monaghan County Council, talks candidly about plans to roll out only such training seminars on issues such as finance, housing and planning for local representatives. He says that far too many conferences and training events are being organised by individuals and organisations, claiming that they were making big money on them.

In a separate role McNally will be able to directly oversee how the councils he represents actually spend their money. He was selected by fellow AILG members to represent the association as a member of the National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC), which has the power to review and assess the functions and spending of local government.

‘Council Review’ also talks to Pat McLoughlin, chairman of this agency, which was set up in July to oversee how local authorities go about their work. With the first meeting of its members in September, much of how NOAC will carry out its work has yet to be decided.

Grace Heneghan, Editor  
grace@oceanpublishing.ie

## 5 NEWS UPDATE

## 19 EURO FOCUS

## 23 LOCAL GOVERNMENT AWARDS

The 2014 Excellence in Local Government Awards will see 13 awards presented across a variety of categories ranging from Supporting Active Communities; Local Authority Innovation to Local Authority Economic Efficiencies.

## 25 MEETWEST 2014

Galway City Council plays host to MeetWest 2014 on 20 and 21 November; an opportunity for companies to meet up for a two-day business networking forum at the Galway Bay Hotel.

## 27 ASSOCIATION OF IRISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT

As the Association of Irish Local Government prepares to take the lead in educating local representatives on issues ranging from finance to housing and planning, its president Padraig McNally talks candidly about streamlining conferences and training events for councillors.

## 33 NATIONAL OVERSIGHT & AUDIT COMMISSION

Recent local government reform has paved the way for increased accountability in how public funds are spent, with the establishment of a new agency to oversee how our councils perform. Chair of the National Oversight and Audit Commission Pat McLoughlin says his organisation can maintain its impartiality.

## 37 AIRO HOUSING MONITOR

NUI Maynooth has teamed up with Dublin City Council to roll out the All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO) online monitoring tool to map housing data for the Dublin region.

## 41 DUBLIN DASHBOARD

The new Dublin Dashboard provides citizens, researchers, planners, policy makers and companies with real-time information, time-series data, and interactive maps about all aspects of the capital.

## 43 EU CITY BRANDING

Dublin City Council has taken the lead in a unique €1 million EU City Branding Initiative to develop a more integrated and innovative approach to brand management across European Atlantic cities.

## 45 LOUTH BROADBAND PROJECT

The Louth Economic Forum's Broadband Action Plan aims to make the county a leader in the provision of high speed broadband for the business community.

## 49 WATERFORD CITY & COUNTY COUNCIL

Waterford City and County Council is currently raising awareness on biodiversity and promoting sustainable development. Funded under the Ireland-Wales programme, the project aims to foster community involvement in surveying and conservation of wild mammal populations in both countries.

## 51 YOUNG ENVIRONMENTALISTS

Ireland's environmental education and youth organisation ECO-UNESCO is now calling on all local authorities to link up with its Young Environmentalist Awards project for 2015.



Padraig McNally,  
AILG  
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Pat McLoughlin,  
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Michael Curran,  
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## 55 AMBASSADOR PROGRAMME

In much the same way that The Gathering in 2013 harnessed the nostalgia and goodwill of the diaspora, Wexford County Council is harnessing the pride and civic spirit of its own successful sons and daughters through its innovative Ambassador Programme.



Anne Doyle, Wexford  
Ambassador  
Page 55

## 61 E-LEARNING PROGRAMME

A new e-learning course on equality law for frontline staff across the public sector, including government departments, local authorities, the health sector and semi-state companies, has been developed by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission.

## 63 DIGITAL CONFERENCE

Donegal County Council's 'Connecting the Wild Atlantic Way' Digital Marketing Conference gave delegates an insight into digital marketing activities and how the Wild Atlantic Way touring route can increase visitor numbers in Donegal.



Limerick  
Transformation  
Page 65

## 64 LIMERICK TRANSFORMATION

Limerick City and County Council has commissioned some of the world's leading artists to inject colour into many of the Treaty City's derelict sites and buildings over the last few months. The council's project is just one innovative way it's supporting Limerick City of Culture by transforming open spaces.



ESB WestWave  
Energy  
Page 75

## 69 INTEL DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

The next phase of the digital revolution will witness vast changes in everything from medicine and transport to farming and manufacturing. Intel Ireland's Philip Moynagh, Vice President in the Internet of Things (IoT) Group, recommends investing in IoT fundamentals and applying IoT to the nation's biggest problems and opportunities.

## 75 ESB WEST WAVE PROJECT

The ESB is to develop Ireland's first wave energy project off the west coast by 2018. The WestWave project will demonstrate our ability to construct, deploy and operate wave energy converters successfully, and will also pave the way for future commercial initiatives.

## 81 SOCIAL HOUSING

Dublin City Council's new €16.9 million development Thornton Heights forms part of the regeneration of St Michael's Estate in Inchicore, and includes social housing and facilities management services provided by Circle Voluntary Housing Association.



President Michael D.  
Higgins  
Page 81

## 83 ATHLONE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Under its new strategic plan, Athlone Institute of Technology is set to become a technological university and has set itself a number of goals for the future growth and development through 2018. This includes developing a new research centre and positioning itself as an innovation partner for industry.

## 84 EPA RESEARCH

The Environmental Protection Agency's new research programme is now open to researchers and companies, in a bid to support positive and pragmatic research into the issues that affect the environment, with €7 million being made available under the programme's first funding call in the areas of climate, water and sustainability.



Dara Lynott, EPA  
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