

NOAC SEMINAR SHOWCASES GOOD PRACTICE AND INNOVATION

Local authority projects ranging from climate action, virtual public consultations to citizen interaction were showcased at the annual Good Practice in Local Government seminar, hosted by the National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC) and the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA), in partnership with the County and City Management Association, (CCMA), as part of Innovation Week 2021 last November.

Local authorities continually seek to innovate in their service delivery and citizen engagement, noted Peter Burke TD, Minister of State for Local Government and Planning, during his welcome address at the annual seminar in Kilkenny Castle on 9 November 2021.

Noting that the NOAC's role in highlighting good practice in local government had never been more relevant, Minister Burke pointed out that local authorities had a lot of practical experience

in demonstrating excellence and that it was appropriate that they shared that knowledge with each other.

Brendan McGrath, Chief Executive of Galway City Council and Chair of the CCMA, said: "Whether implementing technical solutions or improving internal business processes, our focus is always on improving efficiency and delivering quality public services to citizens. The projects are a sample of the innovations happening throughout the country, and we hope they will serve to inspire and further develop innovation within the local government sector."

NOAC Chair Michael McCarthy pointed out that the projects showcased at the seminar served to "demonstrate the Commission's important role in supporting the development and enhancement of good practice by local government bodies".



Peter Burke TD, Minister of State for Local Government and Planning, pictured with Michael McCarthy, NOAC Chairman, as he opened the Good Practice in Local Government seminar in Kilkenny Castle on 9 November 2021.



The Weather Impact Register (WIRE) App will assist local authorities to record and review the impacts of weather events and climate trends in their own areas in the future.

PROJECTS AND INNOVATIONS

***The Weather Impact Register (WIRE) App:** Developed by the Climate Action Regional Offices (CAROs), this app provides a GIS-based tool through which local authorities can record and review the impacts of weather events and climate trends in their areas to inform climate adaptation planning into the future.

GOOD PRACTICE IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT



The regeneration of lands next to Galway's Ceannt Station is one of several such projects underway in the city.

*** Galway City Council's collaborative approach to develop several connected and interlinked Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) projects:** Through dialogue with partners, these projects were developed and refined to form a cohesive proposal for investment in compact growth in the city that will unlock and support €4bn of public and private investment and fast-track the integrated sustainable growth of the city core.

***Meath County Council's Sustainable Development Goals at Local Level:** As part of an EU-funded URBACT project, the council nominated Trim to work with 18 other locations across Europe to feed local information and ideas into a pilot project. The ultimate goal is to achieve an integrated action plan that could be replicated across other towns or scaled up to county level.

***Dun-Laoghaire Rathdown County Council's Virtual Development Plan:** A virtual room was set up to facilitate online consultation and facilitate online access to the DLR Draft County



Trim Courthouse – Meath County Council nominated Trim to take part in the EU-funded URBACT project to localise the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Development Plan 2022-28, providing an opportunity for individuals and groups, who could not view the plan in person due to Covid restrictions, to view the plan in a similar layout to what would have been provided in a physical display.

***The provision of remote working hubs to create sustainable and vibrant rural communities in Longford:** Longford County Council has adopted a cross-departmental approach to the development of rural working hubs, identifying the regeneration department as the primary contact in the development of hubs with the IT section playing a key collaboration role, also through its implementation of the County Digital Strategy.

***Streetscape development in Cork City Council to meet the needs of businesses and communities during Covid:** Cork City Council made permanent changes to the city centre and suburbs during Covid, using extensive partnership structures including transport, Gardaí, elected members and business representative organisations. Changes were based on agreed principles and as a result 17 streets have been permanently pedestrianised and 4.7km of cycle routes have been installed.



As part of Cork City Council's streetscape development plan, many streets have been permanently pedestrianised to enable a more 'people-centred' city.

***A Chatbot to provide information to citizens and businesses about Fingal County Council's response to Covid:** Fingal implemented a 'Chatbot' on its website in 2020 to provide information to citizens and businesses about the council's response to Covid. During a time when offices were closed to the public, the chatbot offered another information channel for the public in addition to phone, website and social media, with the added benefit of being available at a time and place of the citizen's choosing.

For more information on the seminar and to view all case study presentations visit <https://noac.ie/good-practice-in-local-government-seminar-2021>