

CONTENTS



6



33



37



27

NEWS & VIEWS

5

RENEWABLE ENERGY

6

Kilkenny is leading the way in a countywide sustainable and renewable energy initiative, which the organisers believe has the potential to be replicated both nationally and globally.

OFFALY REGENERATION

18

Green Offaly – Ireland's first green regeneration initiative – will enable communities to undertake their own development projects. It was set up in response to the Government's Project 2040 Seminar 'Empowering Communities in the Fight against Climate Change'.

DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL

21

Findings from a new study on how Dublin's system of housing could learn from the Vienna Model of Housing for the 21st century were discussed at a seminar on 'Demography, Migration, Integration and Housing'.

MEATH COUNTY COUNCIL

27

Meath County Council plans to spend €454 million on housing and building, roads, transportation and safety, the environment, economic development, and recreation and amenity over the next three years.

LIMERICK CITY DEVELOPMENT

33

Limerick's iconic Opera site – the largest inner-city commercial development outside of the capital – will be developed over a six-year period at a total cost of around €180 million.

EU REGIONAL POLICY

37

David Minton, Director for the Northern and Western Regional Assembly, reviews emerging EU priorities and their impact, regionally and locally, in Ireland post-2020.

TOURISM INVESTMENT

44

A new report has revealed plans by Ireland's city and county councils to invest over €150m to develop 256 new tourism projects, which will include new walking trails, discovery centres, cultural plazas and sports facilities.

LONGFORD COUNTY COUNCIL

51

The €230m Center Parcs holiday resort, due to open later this summer, forms a major part of the overall Action Plan for Rural Ireland, and has put the spotlight firmly on Longford County by placing it on the national stage.

DIRECTLY-ELECTED MAYORS

58

In tandem with the Local and European Elections on 24 May, plebiscites will take place in Cork City, Limerick and Waterford for directly-elected executive mayors. And if passed, it could be some years before mayoral elections take place in these local authority areas.

FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

65

Under the Fingal County Council's three-year Capital Programme (2019-2021), the multi-million euro Swords Cultural Quarter development will appoint a project management team this summer to oversee the initiative.

LOCAL ELECTION BALLOTS

69

Ireland's system of listing candidates on ballot papers in alphabetical order is manifestly unfair and leads to perceived electoral discrimination, claims barrister Anthony Moore. He argues it's time for a ballot paper for the 21st century.

LGMA SERVICES

74

Paul Dunne, chief executive of the Local Government Management Agency, outlines the important partnership role which his agency plays in providing research and specialist

CONTENTS



expertise services to local authorities across the country.

WASTE MANAGEMENT 78

With underground waste management systems now in operation across several EU countries, could these systems present a way forward for local authorities here in Ireland?

NORTH WEST REGION 83

A new and integrated approach to creating a prosperous, thriving and sustainable North West City Region from Donegal and Derry councils was recently presented to a North West Regional Assembly delegation.

KILDARE ROAD SAFETY 85

Kildare's steady track record of road safety awareness is mainly due to the successful partnership between Kildare County Council, Kildare Garda Division, Road Safety Authority and the emergency services.

SHANNON INTERNATIONAL 87

Shannon International Development Consultants, established in 2003 to harness the expertise of Shannon Free Zone and the Shannon Region, are now working on local regeneration projects with

city and county councils around the country.

GOOD PRACTICE 89

Local authorities collaborating nationally to improve services locally was the main focus of the 2019 'Good Practice in Local Government' conference, organised by the National Oversight and Audit Commission.

REGIONAL STRATEGIES 91

The Regional Spatial Economic Strategies have outlined ambitious visions for the Eastern & Midland, Northern & Western and Southern Regional Assemblies up to 2031 and beyond.

EURO FOCUS 95

A new interactive map, which can be used to learn about each EU Member State's vision for the future of Europe, now enables users to explore potential areas for policy alignment, or divergence, between Ireland and other EU countries.

EUROPEAN GREEN AWARDS 96

Limerick has been shortlisted for the European Green Leaf 2020 Award, and joins the cities of Lappeenranta in Finland and Mechelen in Belgium as the three finalists.

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14 Upper Fitzwilliam Street,
Dublin 2.

Tel: 01-6785165
Fax: 01-6785191
Email: info@localauthorities.ie

Managing Director: Patrick Aylward
Editor: Grace Heneghan
Graphic Design: Catherine Doyle
Advertisement Co-ordinator
Audrey Fitzgerald

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