

6th January 2009

Agenda Item No. 2 of the January Council Meeting to be held on 12th January 2009

RE: Corporate Plan-Annual Progress Report 2008

Dear Chairperson and Members,

This report is being presented to the Council in accordance with the requirement of Section 134 of the Local Government Act 2001. The report sets out in summary fashion progress made in relation to commitments set down in the Council's Corporate Plan for the period 2004-2009. The report specifically highlights the progress made during 2008 and follows the same format as the Corporate Plan itself.

1. Population Growth and Economic Development

The Council continues to promote population growth and economic development through targeted infrastructure provision, proactive forward planning and active marketing and collaboration with other agencies. Continued progress in relation to the provision of social and physical infrastructure is detailed elsewhere in this report. The Council's Forward Planning Unit continued to work on the preparation of the new Leitrim County Development Plan 2009-2015 with the Managers Report and Recommendations on Submissions received in relation to the proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Plan circulated to members in December 2008. Work has also commenced in-house on the preparation of Village Design Statements for Dromod/Rooskey and for Carrigallen.

Further actions were carried out to build on the major Council-led initiative to raise the profile of the county as an excellent location to invest and set up business, as well as enjoying a great quality of life. A critical analysis of the attributes of the county, and their relevance to various business sectors, was carried out to determine the key selling points for the county. This work positions the county well to move to more targeted promotion of the county for inward investment. A new DVD promoting the county from a business perspective was also developed and launched during the year. The County took part in the Look West promotional initiative of the Western Development Commission and also commenced a full redesign of the county's portal website – www.leitrim.ie – which will be a key point of contact and information in regard to the economic development of the county. The Council also led the redefining of the role of the Economic Development Group of the County Development Board which provides a very strong and targeted basis for the joint working of the key economic development agencies both at county and regional level.

Broadband availability and penetration remained a key focus of the Council during 2008. Further new third level courses also commenced in 2008 demonstrating the continued success of the Leitrim Third Level initiative. During 2008 the focus on the development of the Leitrim tourism product in conjunction with the County Development Board and in close co-operation with tourism bodies at both local and regional level continued. Two significant tourism initiatives have been developed during 2008 – ‘Experience Leitrim 2009’ builds on the success of the Roots Festivals and sets about providing visitors with a ‘Taste of Leitrim’ while plans are at an advanced stage for the hosting of the first ever Sean MacDiarmada Summer School in June 2009. The marketing of the county also continued throughout 2008, supported by Fáilte Ireland and the Tourism Trade in the County. Further significant infrastructure investment in the tourism product was also secured during 2008 and three angling projects have commenced along with a major investment program at Glencar Waterfall including additional parking, redevelopment of the path to the waterfall and a new looped walk around the waterfall.

2. Quality Environment

In terms of supporting and safeguarding our Quality Environment substantial progress continued to be made with enhancement works undertaken in a number of towns and villages. Activities under the Council’s Estate Management Programme, in conjunction with an extensive Planned Maintenance Programme, have also been instrumental in renewing and improving the Council’s housing stock and living environments in our housing estates.

The Lough Allen Catchment Plan was completed during 2008 - the Plan identifies ways to promote the economic, social and cultural development of the area, with particular emphasis on the tourism development potential while having due regard to the protection and conservation of the key elements of this environmental asset. The Council also continued to participate in the preparation of the 3 River Basin Management Plans relating to water bodies in County Leitrim. The Draft Plans went on public display on 21st December 2008 with an extensive public consultation process to be undertaken over the coming six months.

Leitrim County Council was again selected as a finalist in the Chambers Ireland Environmental Awards for our waste management achievements in the areas of education, awareness, enforcement and provision of recycling infrastructure. County Leitrim, for the fourth consecutive year, also achieved the third highest rate of glass recycling in the country. A revised Waste Management Plan was adopted during the year and the Council continued to expand other initiatives including the Green Schools Programme, and the ‘Adopt a Road’ and ‘Adopt a Bring Bank’ participation levels. A special electrical goods collection day was again very successful. Activity in relation to Environmental Enforcement has also increased, particularly in the area of Discharge Licences, Illegal Dumping, C&D Waste and Fly-Tipping.

During 2008 Leitrim County Council also completed the preparation of the Major Emergency Plan in line with the requirements set down in the Major Emergency Framework Plan which came into operation at national, regional and county level on September 30th 2008. This required close co-operation with all emergency services in the North West Region – Donegal, Sligo and Leitrim.

3. Infrastructural Delivery

2008 was another successful year in the context of infrastructural delivery both in terms of physical and social infrastructure. The NRA is expected to appoint new Consultants in relation to the upgraded Carrick-on-Shannon Bypass in the coming weeks. Consulting Engineers have been appointed to carry out the design work on a new footbridge across the River Shannon in Carrick-on-Shannon. Progress also continued during the year on the route selection for the re-alignment of the N16, with the Manorhamilton to Glencar section complete by the end of 2008. Continued investment was also made in the County's non-national road network with substantial improvement works carried out in a number of locations throughout the county.

The Water Services Investment Programme made significant progress during the year, which has led to improvements in quality and capacity throughout the county. With the pipeline contract complete for the Leitrim Towns and Villages Sewerage Scheme, the €10.5m Design Build Operate Contract was signed on 1st December 2008. The Carrick-on-Shannon new scheme contract, valued at €7.9m, will be signed in January 2009. The South Leitrim Water Scheme extension is on-going and should be complete by mid 2009.

There was also continued progress in achieving the objectives of the Social and Affordable Housing Action Plan with significant ongoing investment in the upgrading and expansion of the Councils Housing stock through remedial works, central heating and preventive maintenance programmes. The assessment process in relation to a major multi-annual plan through the Interreg Program is nearing completion and it is expected that this process will see a number of important projects funded in respect of County Leitrim in 2009, with Leitrim County Council being the lead partner in most cases.

In terms of social infrastructure the provision of playgrounds continued to be a priority with the completion of the Carrigallen Playground and development of a new playground in Drumkeerin and final phase of improvements to the McDermott Terrace playground in Manorhamilton. A playground has recently commenced construction in Dromod while plans are at an advanced stage for a new playground in Drumsna. A key project for 2008 was the construction of the Carrick on Shannon Town Park which is now at an advanced stage and should be open early in 2009.

A major renovation and redevelopment design for Mohill Library was also progressed during the year and it is expected that the design will go forward for the Part VIII planning process in January. In addition an approval in principle has been issued to the Department in respect of a new branch library in Carrick on Shannon. This project is one of the key objectives identified through the process of preparation of the new Library Development Plan 2009-2013 which will be put forward to the Council in draft form in early 2009.

4. Quality Customer Services

Among the initiatives undertaken in 2008 was the re-alignment of the engineering work areas on an electoral area basis to provide a more streamlined service to members and customers. The Council's Disability Implementation Plan was

adopted in March 2008 following extensive consultation with disability groups. A Disability Advisory Group to oversee the implementation of the Plan has also been established. The internal Customer Service Working Group continued to review and progress customer service issues and initiatives in 2008. Our Customer Contact Management System has been further enhanced and has also been shared with a number of other local authorities. Work profiles and areas of responsibility for all office-based staff have also been developed and published on the Council intranet while work is ongoing on the development of Frequently Asked Questions & Answers for the Council's website. A policy in relation to the availability of information in alternative formats was developed and information leaflets and application forms were developed and distributed. A signage renewal programme has been implemented in a range of Council buildings in light of requirements under the Disability legislation and the Official Languages Act 2003 while implementation of the Council's Action Plan under the Official Languages Act 2003 also progressed. The facilities and services available in our Libraries also continue to be enhanced while the Council also continued to improve its e-services including extensive redevelopment and enhancement of the Council's website to meet accessibility standards.

5. Community Participation

The involvement of the citizens of the county in local government is critical for a shared understanding of what the local authority is trying to achieve. The Community Forum continued its excellent work as a network of community groups during the year and worked with the Council in the holding of elections for community representatives to the board of the newly formed Leitrim Integrated Development Company, which will be responsible for rural development and social inclusion initiatives over the coming years. The Council's Estate Management Programme, Pride of Place and Floral Pride competitions, Cathaoirleachs Awards Scheme, Environmental Awareness Programme and Village Enhancement Programmes are all good examples of community participation which once again worked extremely well during 2008. The Council also sponsored the County Rehab Awards for the first time in 2008, to acknowledge and contribute to the work of this very important organisation in the county.

The Council also completed its policy/framework document in relation to the establishment of a new Youth Council. The new FAI partnership has also harnessed significant opportunities for engaging with young people through the medium of soccer. The Council is also developing a program of promotion of positive mental health through sports. The Arts program continues to play a pivotal role in the county through ongoing assistance to a variety of art organisations and other community led initiatives. The very successful Lunasa program drew to a close in 2008 – the programme saw extensive engagement with schools, residential homes and communities throughout the county. The Arts program also continued a number of social inclusion type initiatives including a project with Drumsna Development Association, supported by Mental Health Ireland and other projects at childcare and young children level. 'Flights of Fancy' was another unique initiative developed by the Arts Office and funded through the Percent for Art Scheme in relation to major capital programmes – the project involved 11 performance art events in the towns and villages included in the Leitrim Towns and Villages Waste Water Scheme. These very successful events were organised in

conjunction with local communities and the project provides the basis for the potential further development of performance arts in these locations.

The adoption of the Council's Disability Implementation Plan and the establishment of a Disability Advisory Group, comprising disability representatives, elected members and staff will ensure that the needs of people with disabilities are reflected in all of our work programmes.

6. Communications

Leitrim County Council continued to pro-actively interact with the local media throughout 2008 as a noticeboard for activities and with articles and reports on various initiatives and services. A Media Liaison Officer has been nominated to co-ordinate enquiries and dealings with the media generally. Our websites are valuable conduits for the dissemination of information, as are the formal and informal networks such as the Community Forum, the SPCs, the County Development Board, Comhairle na n-Óg, the Disability Advisory Group and the various interactive workshops used for the preparation of plans etc. The bi-monthly 'Whats On Guide' published by the Arts Office provides detailed information on cultural activities throughout the county. Environmental Education, Estate Management, Community Fire Safety and Community Participation Programmes are all essential to the Council in the context of communications. The Council again participated in the National Junior Achievement Programme in local primary and secondary schools in 2008. The Programme is designed to teach enterprise skills to young people and to target those at risk of leaving school early.

7. Corporate Support Services

2008 saw a continued emphasis on staff training with a particular focus on Health & Safety Training. The Council continues to implement a risk-based approach to Roadworks, under revised Health & Safety procedures. The ICT programme for Elected Members was also progressed together with further development of the Members Extranet. The Council's website was extensively redeveloped and enhanced to meet accessibility standards while the project to migrate all network folders to 'Active Directory' to enhance and simplify management of network resources was also progressed. The National and Local Service Indicators were reviewed and revised during the year and these have been kept under regular monitoring. An internal staff survey was undertaken during the year to identify and address any issues arising in relation to Performance Management, Training, Communication and Staff Welfare generally. In the context of financial management, further improvements were made in 2008. The independent Audit Committee has also been established – the Committee has an advisory role in promoting good accounting practices, ensuring better and more informed decision-making and improving the focus on value for money throughout the organisation.

Our approach in relation to all of our activities continues to be underpinned by a commitment to the continuous review and rationalisation of our structures, processes and services with the focus firmly on quality service delivery. Given the current economic circumstances, and requirements to achieve payroll savings and efficiencies generally, an extensive review of processes and structures has been initiated to ensure that the organisation is best placed to respond to the challenges ahead.

Conclusion

The foregoing achievements were made possible through the combined effort of the elected members and staff of this authority. 2008 has been another successful year for Leitrim County Council and I want to take this opportunity to sincerely thank and publicly acknowledge the effort of all concerned in making continued significant progress throughout 2008.

Yours sincerely,

Jackie Maguire

Jackie Maguire
Leitrim County Manager

6th January 2009

Agenda Item No. 3 of the January Monthly Meeting Agenda to be held on 12th January 2009

RE: Capital Programme for the forthcoming 3 years

Dear Chairperson and Members,

In accordance with Section 135 of the Local Government Act 2001 the Council must, at the beginning of each financial year, receive an updated report of the planned Capital Programme for the forthcoming three years. In the case of this Council this reporting requirement is substantially made by quarterly progress reports submitted to the Council on an ongoing basis. As the last report of this nature was given to the Council in December this report is for practical reasons kept brief with more detailed information being available in the aforementioned December report.

The programme for the forthcoming 3 years will be in accordance with the programme agreed by the Council in recent times including,

- The Statutory Assessment of Housing Need was completed in March 2008 and the net need identified was 295 households. The net need figure will be used by the Department to determine the future capital allocation for the housing programme. It is anticipated that a new Housing Action Plan 2009-2014, to address the needs identified through the Housing Assessment, will be prepared and agreed with the Department in 2009, following publication of the new Housing Act. A total of 47 new units of accommodation were completed under the Council's Social and Affordable Housing Plan in 2008 with works in progress on an additional 25 units of accommodation.
- The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government published revised arrangements for the appraisal, assessment and progression of voluntary housing projects in May 2008. Leitrim County Council and Cluainín Voluntary Housing Association received approval under the Capital Assistance Scheme for the advancement of a circa €3m voluntary housing project at Main Street, Drumkeerin to provide 22 units of accommodation for elderly residents. It is expected that construction of the project will commence in early 2009.
- The Draft Leitrim Traveller Accommodation Programme 2009-2013 was published in November 2008. The Draft Programme provides for the redevelopment of Tawlaughtmore Halting Site, Mohill with the development of group housing on the site. The Programme must be adopted by the Elected Members by the 30th of April, 2009. Phase II of the redevelopment of Shannonside View Halting Site, Rosebank, Carrick-on-Shannon was completed in 2008 with the overall Scheme providing 14 units of accommodation - 8 group scheme dwellings and 6 service bays.

- A Remedial Works Scheme for the refurbishment of 20 rural cottages - 10 in the North of the County and 10 in the South - commenced in 2008. The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government issued a call for submissions for further remedial works projects and a design brief for remedial works schemes on the following estates has been submitted to the Department for consideration –
 - o South Leitrim Estates – Treanmore, Mohill & Dristernan, Drumshanbo
 - o North Leitrim Estates – Sheena, Drumkeerin
 - o Rural Houses Phase II – Countywide
 - o North Leitrim Estates – Drumlease, Dromahaire.

- The Council Water Services Investment Programme will see construction progressing in 2009 in relation to the Carrick on Shannon Sewerage Scheme, the Leitrim Towns & Villages Sewerage Scheme (11 No.), the Kinlough/Tullaghan Water Supply Scheme, the South Leitrim Regional Water Supply Scheme and Advance Works in relation to the North Leitrim Regional Water Supply Scheme Phase II (Leckaun, Fivemilebourne). It is envisaged that the North Leitrim Regional Water Supply Scheme Phase II - Moneyduff Treatment Plant & the Kiltyclogher & Rossinver Trunk Watermains – will commence in 2010 in addition to the Leitrim Sludge Management Plan and the South Leitrim Regional Water Supply Scheme (Feasibility Study on Extension). Schemes that are envisaged to start in 2011 include Bundle No. 2 of the Leitrim Towns & Villages Sewerage Schemes (9 Villages), the South Leitrim Regional Water Supply Scheme Plant Upgrade and Network Improvements in Carrick, Ballinamore and Dromahaire. The Rural Water Programme will continue to show improvements for the County's Group Water Schemes and it is anticipated that the next 3 year period will see the resolution of issues in relation to quality deficient schemes. It is anticipated that a Water Conservation Programme will commence in 2009. This will be an ongoing programme which will address the issue of Unaccounted For Water and will also include a publicity programme that will educate the public in relation to the need to conserve water.

- The Fire Services Plan adopted by the Council in 2004 outlines planned infrastructural improvements subject to funding being forthcoming from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. The contract for the purchase of a site for the replacement fire station at Manorhamilton is being finalised and it is expected that sanction will be received to design and seek tenders for construction and to commence construction in 2009. Approval in principle has been obtained for the renovation of Ballinamore Fire Station. Infrastructural and equipment requirements accruing from the recently introduced National Major Emergency Framework Plan are currently being procured and training associated with this new structure is ongoing.

- The new Library Development Plan has just completed the drafting phase and has identified priorities for the service over the next five years. In the short term the planning process and tendering should be completed for Mohill Library extension and redevelopment while the delivery of a new branch library (c.500 sq m) in Carrick on Shannon continues to be the key priority. In addition the progression of alternative facilities in Dromahaire is targeted for in the medium term.

- Implementation of the Tourism Development Strategy “Developing Leitrim's Tourism” continues to be facilitated through funding under the Tourism Product

Development Sub-Programme: Infrastructure Fund. Angling projects at the Shannon (Carrick), Lough McHugh and Gulladoo Lake are now well advanced with a significant investment being made on further improving the Glencar Amenity. These works include new parking, replacement of walkway to the waterfall and a new walking route on the Old Bog Road.

- The feasibility of provision of additional artists' studios in unused/underutilized facilities in the County, building on the success to date of studios in The DOCK and SOLAS in Balinamore, will be investigated in anticipation of a new national funding scheme for such facilities.
- The new Rural Development Programme announced recently, to the value of €10.8m for Leitrim, is a most welcome allocation particularly in the current uncertain economic climate. Leitrim County Council (through the County Development Board) worked closely with the local company in the development of this plan for the county. The plan gives significant opportunities for infrastructure projects in areas such as community infrastructure and tourism. It is expected that projects such as those above can be facilitated through this program in the aftermath of the conclusion of the Fáilte Ireland Soft Infrastructure Program. The Council, through the Community and Enterprise Department, will be working closely with both communities and Leitrim Integrated Development Company in relation to the roll out of this program.
- The Lough Allen Catchment Plan was completed in 2008 and the Council intends to establish an implementation group shortly. This group will be made up of all the key stakeholders and should provide the impetus to see actions being delivered in relation to the appropriate development of this area.
- Under the Social and Community Facilities Capital Scheme 2007 an allocation of €150,000 was received for the development of a new Town Park and the redevelopment of the existing tennis courts in Carrick on Shannon. The project progressed throughout 2008 and it is expected to be concluded in early 2009. Discussions are ongoing with the landowners, who have been extremely co-operative in the process, in regard to improvements to the tennis courts as part of this project.
- In regard to the Council's Play and Recreation policy a revised draft policy is expected to be published shortly. During 2008 playgrounds were developed in Drumkeerin, improvements were carried out at McDermott Terrace, Manorhamilton and Carrigallen was completed and opened. Works have commenced on a new playground for Dromod and the design is complete for Drumsna which should commence shortly also. The identified locations of Kinlough, Dromahaire and Leitrim Village remain a priority and should available resources and suitable sites be secured the Council would hope to develop these facilities in the coming years.
- Work is due to commence shortly on a mini-pitch at Mohill, co-funded with the FAI. It is hoped that the partnership with FAI will provide additional opportunities for the delivery of other such facilities in the county over the next three years.
- The Roads Capital Programme for the three year period 2008-2010 will comprise of improvement works on the National Roads which will be funded through the National Roads Authority and on the Non-National Roads which will be financed by the Department of Transport.

- Non-National Roads projects activity will be based on the 2008-2010 Restoration Improvement Works Programme. The Council will continue to seek funding to carry out 8-10 Specific Improvement projects at chosen locations on Regional Roads and at other locations which are considered to merit inclusion. A submission for such projects has been made for funding in 2009. It is expected that the 2009 allocations will be announced circa end of January.
- It is expected that work will commence in 2009 on the widening of Rooskey Bridge in conjunction with Roscommon County Council. We will continue our efforts to secure funding for Hartley Bridge and for Lennox Bridge on the R280.
- It is intended that the signage programme on regional roads in the county will continue in 2009.
- Efforts will continue to seek funding from CLAR for Class 3 local roads and from all other sources such as PEACE and INTERREG for appropriate roads and roads related projects.
- Approval has been sought from the National Roads Authority to appoint a consultant for the Carrick on Shannon to Dromod Road Scheme which includes the Carrick on Shannon Bypass. It is expected to be brought to Compulsory Purchase Order stage within this review period.
- Approval has been sought from the National Roads Authority to commence detail design work on the Manorhamilton Bypass and Manorhamilton to Glenfarne sections of the N16.
- Design and planning approval will be complete in early 2009 for a pedestrian bridge over the River Shannon at Carrick on Shannon. An application has been made to the National Roads Authority to construct the bridge in 2009. It is expected that the 2009 allocations will be announced circa end of January.

Yours sincerely

Jackie Maguire
Jackie Maguire
Leitrim County Manager

LEITRIM COUNTY COUNCIL

23rd December 2008

**Aras an Chontae,
Carrick-on-Shannon.**

To: Each Member,
Leitrim County Council.

Re: **Notice of Intention to Dispose of Land at Breffni Crescent, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim**

Dear Councillor,

Notice is hereby given in accordance with Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 of the County Manager's intention to dispose of land described hereunder for a sum of €127 to Breffni Community Development Company Ltd., Breffni Crescent, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim

Registered Owner

Description of Land

Leitrim County Council

Portion of land in the townland of Townspark Td., Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim (0.628 hectares)

The Council originally disposed of 0.603 hectares to the Townspark Association in order that they could erect a purpose built Community Development Building. Breffni Community Development Company Ltd. then requested an additional portion of land be transferred in order to provide them with a recreational area. The total area to be disposed of is 0.628 Hectares as outlined on dwg 220/963.L.R

Conditions:

1. Breffni Community Development Company Ltd. will be responsible for all the legal costs involved in the transaction.
2. The disposal of the portion of land is conditional that the land would be retained for recreational use only
3. The land is not suitable for additional development of housing
4. Revoke Section 83 & Section 88 Notice dated 30th May 2000 (Notice to Dispose of 0.603 hectares to Townspark Residents Association), approved by the Members at the Council Meeting on 19th June 2000

This item will be included on the Agenda of the January Council Meeting at which it may be considered.

Yours sincerely,

Sinead Flynn

Administrative Officer.

Housing Section.

/mc



Leitrim County Council

Leitrim County Library

Development Plan 2009-13

Final Draft

5 January 2009



Leitrim County Library Development Plan 2009-2013

Final Draft

5 January 2009

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www.aidanwalshconsultancy.com

Leabharlann Chontae Liatroma

Leitrim County Library

Mission Statement

To provide a high-quality welcoming, modern, responsive and inclusive library service for all, which fosters reading, provides information and supports learning, culture and recreation.

Tá sé mar aidhm againn seirbhís leabharlainne d'ardchaighdeán agus nua-aoiseach a chur ar fáil do gach duine. Seirbhís a mbeadh freagrach agus iniatach agus a chothaíonn léitheoireacht. Seirbhís a chuireann eolas ar fáil agus a thacaíonn le léann, cultúir agus le caitheamh aimsire.

1. Executive Summary

Bracketed numbers quote the paragraph numbering in the body of the full Plan.

Background & Brief

Introduction (2.1)

Aidan Walsh Consultancy was commissioned by Leitrim County Council in June 2009 to work with Leitrim County Library on the development of a Development Plan for 2009-2013. In particular, the commission was expected to provide an external perspective and to suggest priorities for development.

Work programme (2.2 - 2.9)

The Consultancy was briefed to involve Library staff as much as possible. All nine branches were visited and workshops held with all staff and with the Plan Steering Group. The programme also called for consultation with senior Council officers and with external stakeholders such as An Chomhairle Leabharlanna and County Leitrim Partnership.

Dedicated focus group meetings were also held with special interest stakeholders. Following the preparation of an Issues Paper for consideration by the Steering Group, a presentation was made to a joint meeting of the Community Cultural & Enterprise SPC and the Library Advisory Committee. Drafts of the Plan were subsequently prepared.

The Library Service today

Growth and potential (3.1 - 3.2)

Leitrim County Library has experienced significant growth in recent years including the opening of its new Library Headquarters and branch at Ballinamore and new branches at Manorhamilton, Kiltyclogher and Carrigallen. The Library is also increasingly attracting note in national library media. This five-year Plan will build on recent growth and position the Library for further service development when better economic times return.

Local policy context (3.3)

County Leitrim is distinguished by robust physical terrain and considerable length which are barriers to easy service provision. Although the population levels are now stable, the County has a widely scattered population that is largely rurally-based. It also has higher than national average numbers from the over-60 age group and lower than national numbers from the 15-39 year age group. All of these factors present challenges to a service provider.

Leitrim County Development Board charts these factors in its 2002-2012 strategy and implicitly recognises the role of the Library in addressing issues. This Plan seeks to make the Library's role and profile more explicit and defines specific actions which support the broader cultural and social priorities of the Council.

75 years and more (3.4 – 3.7)

The Library service is funded and operated by Leitrim County Council through its Community, Culture and Enterprise department. Council provided €1,472,118 in its 2008 estimates of expenditure. It employs 29 staff, 7 of which are either temporary or part-time.

In 2005, Leitrim County Library celebrated 75 years of service which started modestly with one staff member in one small room in 1931. Today the Library has 9 branches which are fully automated and members can access their accounts online.

Membership of the Library is free and stood at 5,727 in December 2007. Borrowing books and reader services still form the core of the Library's work although internet usage increased dramatically, by 100%, in 2005 and 2006.

In Leitrim in 2006, borrowing of books and other items dropped by 6.6%, although this needs to be seen in context. Since opening its new branches and buildings between 2002 and 2005, Leitrim County Library experienced record growth in borrowing with growth levels of 10-23% over different years.

The key to increasing and maintaining borrowing lies in the Library's investment in purchasing new stock and it will be of continuing importance therefore for the Library to maintain and increase its Book Fund as the Plan progresses.

Users of public libraries throughout the country are not confined to those borrowing books. Leitrim County Library also reflects this national visitor pattern, with 197,700 visits made in 2007 to its five main branches, undoubtedly supported by the impressive and broad annual programme of activities at each branch, ranging through exhibitions, lectures, workshops, displays and children's activities.

Leitrim County Library holds an important and well regarded collection of local history material, which is accessible at Ballinamore Library. The number of enquiries increased greatly in 2007, by 61% and personal caller enquiries increased by 100%.

Overall, The Council's investment in the Library is bearing fruit. Nevertheless, it's important that any public institution reviews its work and challenges comfort zones. Reaching younger people, for example, is critical to the development of future adult readers and serving a dispersed rural population is a key consideration for Leitrim. This Plan provides an opportunity to address these matters.

A Situation Review

The national policy context (4.1 – 4.3)

The 1998 Government review of public library policy in the report "Branching Out" identifies key issues for Irish public libraries, including the following;

- Delivering better service through enhanced opening hours
- Improved ICT and information services,
- A target spend on book stock of €3.27 per head of population

- Provision of adequate infrastructure
- Improvement in marketing of library services

In June 2008, a revised strategy “Branching Out –Future Directions” recommended

- More capital investment
- Extending grant to book stock and ICT and more ICT investment
- Increasing book-stock target to €3.77 per head of population
- Develop of cultural programmes and cultural resources
- Becoming gateways for government and cultural information

Leitrim County Library has worked in recent years to achieve the national standards of library service which were defined in “Branching Out”. In particular, the Library has delivered on the recommended extended hours and also met the target spend on book stock.

It may well be, at least in the short term, that Government funding may not be forthcoming for “Branching Out - Future Directions”.

Nevertheless, it is quite likely that its foundation principles of social inclusion, better public service and greater access, will actually increase as drivers of change as the government strives to get an even greater return from current investment. In that context, the Leitrim Library Plan must continue to take account of government strategy and policy.

Public attitudes to the Library (4.4 -4.6)

PLUS (Public Library User Survey) was a two-week survey of all visitors to each library branch or service point and was undertaken in September 2007 at most public library authorities. PLUS was developed nationally by An Chomhairle Leabharlanna to gather attitudes on the current state of libraries, as users saw them.

The results for Leitrim show that in many areas Leitrim County Library exceeds the national average levels of satisfaction with

- current levels of opening hours
- the range of material on offer in your own language
- users coming to seek information
- finding the information that users came for
- level of computer service
- numbers coming to use computers

Reference library use was also higher in Leitrim than the national average usage.

In other areas, the PLUS results show some underperformance by Leitrim County Library when compared to the national average results.

Compared to the national average results, smaller numbers of users surveyed came to their local library in Leitrim

- to borrow books
- to borrow CDs
- to borrow DVD and Videos
- to borrow Talking Books
- to borrow Large Print Books

When users were asked how often they visited the libraries in Leitrim, answers showed some consistent differences between national averages, suggesting more first time visits than the national average.

Higher numbers of users also lived further from branches in Leitrim than on average nationally.

Leitrim County Library User Profile (4.7)

Leitrim attracts higher numbers of female users, 68.3% as against 63.2% nationally. Its age group user profile is very similar to the national average, with 17.1% drawn from 25-34 year bracket, 23.8% from the 35-44 and 17.7% drawn from the 45-54 year bracket. These are the largest age group users. In the 15-19 age group, Leitrim departs from the national averages, attracting 9% of this group, compared to 4.5% nationally. Leitrim also attracts smaller numbers of retired people, 16% against 19.3% nationally.

Analysis of the Leitrim PLUS results (4.8)

It is clear from the results that the investment of recent years in new branch buildings has delivered positive user opinion across many areas of the library service, exceeding national averages of satisfaction in many instances. Some problem areas for the Library also emerged and the Plan includes some objectives which will address these matters.

- The drop in borrowing is almost certainly a snapshot of the time of the survey, rather than a trend. In broad terms, the Library has hugely increased its borrowing since 2002.
- DVDs, Videos, Talking Books and Large Print Books were borrowed less often in Leitrim than was the case nationally.

Historically, the Library has had fewer resources to invest in newer media which are especially popular with both the younger user (DVDs and Videos) and the older (Talking Books and Large Print Books).

Maintaining the Book Fund is the key to retaining and increasing borrowing and the Plan proposes that this be done.

The possible introduction on a Mobile Library Service would also provide a significant increase in services to retired people living in rural Leitrim.

Stakeholder feedback about the Library service (4.9)

Primary School Teachers were unanimous and spontaneous in vouching their appreciation for the staff of the Library service who they described as helpful, professional and knowledgeable.

Teachers from the Manorhamilton and Ballinamore areas expressed satisfaction with the range of books available and elsewhere, teachers asked for a greater range of books.

Teachers asked when other branches would be modernised since some smaller ones could not currently handle groups or events. They also suggested that there was a general lack of awareness within the community of the Library's services.

The Active Aged focus group warmly praised the staff of all branches for their helpfulness. They asked for more fiction & history at Carrick-on-Shannon and a microfilm reader for local history resources at Carrick-on-Shannon, a reflection of the inadequate size of this branch for the counties' largest town. They also sought more talking books in Irish. The Group also stated that

- The Library service as a whole needs better promotion
- There is a general lack of awareness of the services the Library provides

The expressed opposition to the further development of fixed branches, which they saw as unsustainable.

The residents of the Ballinamore Asylum Seekers hostel voiced positive views, saying that they felt included and welcomed. They also had some requests which again focus attention on book stock and its importance to the Library. They asked for

- Irish history & African history books
- Newer editions of children's books
- More teaching books for children
- Multiple copies of books

Staff of County Leitrim Partnership in Drumshanbo confirmed other comments about the unsuitability of some branches to hold events because of size restrictions and they welcomed proposals to improve branches.

The group further commented that the profile of the Library was poor in many areas and that people are unaware of the services it offers

In broad terms, the group asked for fresh book stock as they find children very selective; children will not be retained as readers if the book stock is uninteresting or remains unchanged.

The Adult Education section of Leitrim VEC stressed the key importance of getting young people to read as this skill is fundamental to their later progression. It therefore suggested that a mobile service, if introduced, should target primary schoolchildren as a priority.

A consultation was held with a Council officer whose work supports Leitrim Community Forum. The Forum itself found difficulty in engaging 18-25 year olds with its work and it was suggested that the Library should target this age group with special activities and with book selection.

The Forum has never formally considered a relationship with the Library service but would be open to do so, especially regarding distribution of information through the branch network and through the possible mobile library service.

Library staff input and the stakeholder input all formed part of the plan development process. The proposals in the Plan grew from these ideas and concerns while also meeting government and library policy priorities, especially in the area of social inclusion.

An inclusive service

Introduction (5.1 -5.2)

Social inclusion policies seek to develop strategies and schemes which reach out to marginalised groups and serve people who cannot access normal services, for economic or social reasons. County Leitrim has a relatively ageing population and it remains a county dominated by a dispersed rural population; both factors restrict easy access to library services. The Plan looked especially closely therefore at the opportunity to develop a Mobile Library Service for Leitrim

Mobile Library Development (5.3)

An Chomhairle Leabharlanna reports a growth of Mobile Library Services in recent years in Ireland. In 2005, Donegal County Council and the Western Education & Library Board established a joint mobile service for the border areas. Roscommon has recently re-introduced a Mobile Service and County Sligo is actively considering the introduction of a Mobile Service. Cork County Library operates six mobile library vehicles, serving five separate routes.

Mobiles can reach areas and people that regular library services cannot always reach. Nationally, the 2002 PLUS surveys demonstrated that mobiles were 75% used by women, as against a 66% usage of fixed branches and that mobiles attract a proportionately higher number of users in the middle and upper age ranges.

Branches and Mobiles (5.4)

Leitrim County Library has had much success in developing branches and buildings in recent years. It has nine branches, serving 28,950 people, a high number by comparison with some neighbouring counties. Yet, there is continued pressure from some small village communities to establish branches in their areas.

There is clear evidence of the need to confirm and continue the branch development proposals that the previous Library Development Plan identified at Carrick, Mohill and Dromahair. The stakeholder feedback quoted was also quite consistent and strong in seeking better branches, especially for Carrick-on-Shannon.

The Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government normally provides 100% funding for the purchase of mobile library vehicles. Small branch developments, on the other hand, do not attract government support. The spread of existing branches is also taken into account when applications are assessed. With 9 branches in Leitrim, it is quite likely that new branch development funding applications from Leitrim County Library would not be successful.

It is therefore recommended that the Council prioritises the development of a Mobile Library Service, over and above the development of further small branches. The growth of a larger network of small branches would not be financially sustainable, even in the short term.

- Each new fixed branch is likely to cost approx. €250,000
- The single mobile vehicle will cost €250,000
- The mobile vehicle purchase is fully funded by government

Operating costs (5.5)

A fixed branch will attract annual running costs. One or two part-time appointments are needed per branch, together with rental and maintenance costs. A mobile service, on the other hand, will require the appointment of one driver.

The table below provides an estimate of costs associated with operating a mobile, based on information supplied by other counties.

Item	Annual estimated costs
Insurance, fuel, subsistence	€20,000
Staffing	€45,000 gross cost
Re-stocking books	€15,000
Total each year	€80,000

In Year One, €30,000 would also be needed as a once-off investment in purchasing stock for the Mobile. Year One costs would therefore total €100,000 while annual recurring costs will total €80,000 thereafter. The estimate of staffing is based on the cost of a full-time Driver Assistant and a part-time Library Assistant to provide administrative support.

Other reasons for establishing a mobile service (5.6)

Cost is but one factor in considering the introduction of a Mobile Library Service for Leitrim. The following positive and negative factors are also relevant.

Negative

- Cannot serve housebound people
- Onboard IT cannot be used for sufficient length of time
- Stopping rota can be unsuitable for some users

Positive

- Serves smaller villages, not currently served
- Provides a flexible response to demand for village branches
- Mobile libraries reach remote communities and users
- A Mobile can also serve the rural schools network that do not have locally accessible branches
- A Mobile can serve pre-schools, after-schools, residential and nursing homes and active aged groups
- A Mobile can serve 25 stops per week
- Judging on the experience of other counties, larger numbers of books would be issued by mobiles, relative to small branch issue numbers

Perhaps the biggest message the Library can send, though introducing a Mobile, is its willingness to reach out to its community and meet its users where they live. A mobile is a sign of a responsive and flexible service that genuinely wants to expand its user base and meet changing needs, lifestyles and working patterns.

The mobile service and schools (5.7)

Currently, Leitrim provides an extremely limited service to schools. It has no dedicated full-time service for schools. A Mobile Library Service in Leitrim must therefore see schools as one of its principal targets,

effectively replacing the schools van and driver that the Library operated until 1988, but now widening out to the community at large.

- There are 42 primary schools in the county, a manageable number
- 25 schools are rural and would need priority servicing

Stakeholder feedback on Mobile Libraries (5.8)

The primary teachers consulted for the Plan warmly welcomed the possibility of a mobile or schools service. Their main reasons were

- Renewed book stock is essential to engage students
- Teachers are very restricted in getting students out of classroom through time restrictions and cost considerations
- Mobiles bring the library to users

The Active Aged groups commented on the cost of a mobile service and said that it would need to be cost-effective by serving a broad range of stakeholders

- Schools should be included to maximise benefits of the mobile service
- Hospitals were specifically mentioned as target users
- Partnerships with carers could reach housebound people
- The Active-Aged groups suggested forming partnerships with Post Offices to act as book drop-off points or depots, where stopping times were limited
- Frequency of stopping was seen as less important than the opportunity to get new books into the hands of borrowers

Leitrim VEC Adult Education strongly supported the idea and suggested targeting leisure readers to catch and retain interest in reading at a young age. The primary schools would form the most important single target group for the mobile, it believes. It emphasised the importance of stimulating reading and the development of critical faculties through book clubs etc. The VEC also welcomed the mobile as demonstrating the Library's willingness to reach out to its community.

County Leitrim Partnership welcomed the possibility of a mobile service and asked that it include Traveller sites in its stopping rota. Officers also suggested that book stock for schools needed renewal and expansion as modern schoolchildren are discriminating and selective readers. A mobile could help address this matter.

An Chomhairle Leabharlanna acknowledged the cost of operating mobiles but suggested that they had some key advantages, including reaching isolated communities.

The PLUS survey results also reported on travel distances of users. In Leitrim, perhaps unsurprisingly, higher numbers of users lived further from branches than on average nationally. A mobile service can help address this distance problem.

Social Inclusion and a mobile service (5.9)

Despite funding cutbacks, support for social inclusion strategies is likely to remain a priority, especially as mobiles reach isolated communities & the elderly in rural areas especially. Given Leitrim's higher than average older age profile and given the Leitrim County Development Board's commitment to older people, to rural communities and to combating

social exclusion, the development of a Mobile Library Service is strongly recommended.

Objectives and Strategies 2009-13

Introduction (6.1)

This Plan is designed to cover a medium to long-term period of 5 years. The Strategic Aims set out below, define the future direction of the Library. The Strategic Aims relate to the primary work areas of the Library including core functions.

Mission Statement and Values (6.2 – 6.3)

Library staff considered a new statement of vision or mission and suggested the following for Leitrim County Library.

To provide a high-quality welcoming, modern, responsive and inclusive library service for all which fosters reading, provides information and supports learning, culture and recreation

Staff also agreed that they attach importance to the following values to the Library and its work; -

- A welcoming place
- Inclusive of all
- Accessible to all
- A provider of information and knowledge
- Enjoyable
- Responsive
- A focal point for the community

Strategic Aims for the next five years (6.4)

Seven principal strategic aims were defined which grew from the analysis and consultation presented earlier. It is proposed that the work of the Library for the next five years be re-organised from its present¹, infrastructure-led approach to a user-focussed approach.

Looking ahead, therefore, the following work areas are proposed

Aims
<p>Strategic Aim 1 Continue branch development and develop a mobile library service</p>
<p>Strategic Aim 2 Promote and foster reading throughout the branch network</p>
<p>Strategic Aim 3 Develop the Library as an information and cultural resource</p>
<p>Strategic Aim 4 Promote Irish language and culture</p>

¹ "Leabharlanna Chontae Liatroma, Library Development Programme 2003-2006", October 2002.

Strategic Aim 5

Modernise the marketing and promotion of the Service

Strategic Aim 6

Promote, develop and make local studies resources available

Strategic Aim 7

Develop the managerial framework of the service

The tables which follow below provide detail and timing proposals.

Capital costs (6.5)

The Plan proposes that the three building and renovation projects from the previous 2002-2006 Development Programme be rolled forward. Estimates of the capital funding needed have been prepared.

Staff costs (6.6)

Within this Plan, an assumption is made of continued funding from Leitrim County Council. An additional post will be needed to operate a new mobile library vehicle, if Council decides to accept the recommendation of this Plan. A post at Driver Assistant grade is proposed which would cost €45,000 annually, gross cost, inclusive of part-time administrative support from a Library Assistant.

Staff structure and teams (6.7)

The completion of the proposed new staffing proposals is a key element in the implementation of this Plan. To take proposals and projects forward, the Library needs to assign specific responsibilities to senior personnel and the Plan makes some specific recommendations within the tables which follow below.

2. Background and Brief

2.1 Commissioning consultancy work

Aidan Walsh Consultancy was awarded a contract in June 2008 to assist Leitrim County Library with the formulation of a Development Plan for a five year period. The work required to develop the Plan centred on three complimentary approaches, facilitation of discussion, internal and external consultation and lastly, research and writing.

Following a commissioning meeting in Carrick-on-Shannon on June 12, a work methodology was agreed.

2.2 Initial meetings

Meetings were held initially with the Director of Services, the County Librarian and with senior library staff to

- Refine the Brief and agree the methodology
- Gather views on the future strategic direction of the Library
- Set the Library planning process and format within the overarching Council planning cycle and format
- Identify key stakeholders for consultation
- Agree date and locations for focus group consultation meetings
- Gather documentation

2.3. Visits to all nine library branches

Following discussion, it was agreed that all nine branches would be visited, instead of the four visits originally proposed.

2.4 Consulting all the Library Staff

2 half-day workshops were held with library staff on July 2 to begin the thinking process around the Plan itself. These sessions looked at

1. A Draft Mission Statement for the County Library

2. Draft values statements
3. The current Library Objectives and draft Objectives for the incoming 5-year Programme
4. A SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats)

2.5. Consultation with key stakeholders .

It was agreed to consult the following bodies and gather their views about the future direction of the Library

- An Chomhairle Leabharlanna
- Leitrim County Development Board (through Director of Services)
- County Leitrim VEC, Adult Education section
- County Leitrim Partnership
- Leitrim Community Forum

Telephone or email consultations were agreed for other stakeholders such as secondary school principals and residential homes

Consultation sessions were agreed with four Focus Groups as follows

- Focus Group 1; Primary School Teachers.
- Focus Group 2; Active Aged groups
- Focus Group 3; Asylum Seekers
- Focus Group 4; County Leitrim Partnership

2.6. General Public consultation

As part of the Plan development process, the Library placed advertisements in local newspapers throughout north and south Leitrim, inviting comments about the Library. One response was received from a user in Ballinamore Branch.

2.7. Drafting the Plan

Following the completion of the principal consultative visits, which included delivery of presentations to three Focus Groups, an Issues Paper was prepared for discussion by the Development Plan Steering

Group. Responses to this Issues Paper were integrated into the Draft Plan. The Steering Group is composed of senior library staff and representatives from branches².

In November a joint consultative meeting was held with Leitrim County Library Advisory Committee and Leitrim County Council Community & Enterprise Strategic Policy Committee. Following a presentation, views were then sought on the Library and its future proposals. This was later followed by a workshop with senior library staff at which the detailed strategies for achieving the Plan were discussed. Written drafts were then prepared, comments invited and amendments made, leading to this Final Draft for Council consideration.

2.8. The Brief for the work

Appendix 1 contains the full Brief for this planning work as issued by Leitrim County Council.

Broadly speaking, the contents of this Draft are as follows;

- Mission & Values Statements
- A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis of the Library today
- A Situation Review of the Library, to include analysis and audit as your Brief requires
- Report on consultations undertaken
- Analysis of external environment
- The development of a set of Strategic Objectives
- The development of Strategies under each Objective
- Recommendations on priorities
- An Executive Summary

2.9 Summary of work undertaken

To date, the following work has been completed;

- Preliminary introductory briefing to staff, Carrick-on-Shannon, June 12

² Library Development Plan Steering Group composed of the following: Chairman, Seán O Suilleabháin, Gabrielle Flynn, Executive Librarian, Hilda King, Ballinamore Branch, Mary Conefrey, Local Studies, Teresa Kelly, Manorhamilton Branch, Marian Mulvey, Drumshanbo, Breda Sweeney, Dromahair Branch.

- Commissioning meeting, June 12
- Meetings with County Librarian, June 30
- Meeting Director of Services, July 2
- Preparation and delivery of two staff workshops, Drumshanbo, July 2
- Visit all 9 library branches, July 8, 9, 10 and interview staff at each branch
- Meet Director, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna, Dublin, July 25
- Meet the Transition Year Class, St. Claire's Comprehensive School, Manorhamilton, September 16
- Preparation and delivery of Focus Group meeting with Primary School Teachers, Ballinamore, September 16
- Preparation and delivery of Active Aged Focus Group, Drumshanbo, October 13
- Preparation and delivery of Asylum Seekers Focus Group, Ballinamore, October 14
- Interview, Leitrim County Council Community Forum support officer, October 15
- Meeting VEC Adult Education Officer, Carrick-on-Shannon, October 15
- Preparation and delivery of Focus Group consultation to Partnership, Drumshanbo, October 15
- Written consultation with Secondary School principals
- Written consultation with residential and nursing homes
- Preparation of issues paper, October
- Presentation to joint meeting of Library Advisory Committee and SPC, Carrick-on-Shannon, November 11
- Workshop with Steering Group, Ballinamore, November 20
- Submission of First Draft Plan, December 7
- Submission of Second Draft Plan, December 12
- Submission of Final Draft Plan, January 5, 2009

3. The Library Service today

3.1 Growth

This Plan is being prepared following a number of years of great growth and development of Leitrim's Library service. Highlights include

- The establishment of a new Library Headquarters and branch at Ballinamore in 2005
- The establishment of a new branch at Manorhamilton, also in 2005
- The opening of new branches in Kiltyclogher (2004) and Carrigallen (2002)
- The completion of the full computerisation programme

This recent investment by the Council in its County Library has made material difference to the services it offers within its new branches and its HQ. The Service has also been making a national impact and it has an increased profile on the national library scene.

Irish Library News, produced by An Chomhairle Leabharlanna (The Library Council) increasingly features Leitrim County Library; two recent features come to mind

- The launch of Leabhair Gaeilge do Phaisti in October 2006 where parents and children were invited to come along and see the new collection of Irish language books for children
- The Seachtain na Gaeilge events programme throughout the county was featured in June 2008

3.2 Potential

The consultancy work focussed on the preparation of a 2009-2013 Development Programme for the County Library. The Plan will allow accurate definition of the current position of the Library and identify and plan for its future needs.

Under the Local Government Act, 2001, the Council is required to prepare and adopt a Programme for the operation and development of its Library Service.

Despite these recessionary times, Leitrim County Library has the potential to further build its reputation and its services over the period

of the Plan. The Plan must look ahead, beyond the current serious downturn in public finances. When better times return, it will be important that Leitrim County Library stands prepared with its development proposals and is ready to take up any opportunity that economic growth will bring.

It is also important that the Plan takes account of disability, equal status and social inclusion policies when looking ahead to the next five years of the Library's development.

3.3 The local policy context

For a service provider like Leitrim County Library, the county is distinguished by a very long physical extent and a robust physical terrain, all barriers to easy communication.

The county population stood at 28,950 at the 2006 census³ an increase of 12.2% since 2002. The significant population decline of post-famine years was halted during this decade. Leitrim remains a thinly populated county with a highly scattered population, largely rural based, all of which are challenges for a Library service. Additionally, the county has a smaller proportion of 15-39 year old people than the national average whereas its over-60s group is larger than nationally.

Leitrim County Development Board (LCDB), like the Library service, is managed through the Community, Culture and Enterprise department of the Council. LCDB's current 2002-2012 strategy⁴ identifies some objectives which the Library can play a part in achieving, including the following

- To improve the quality of life of rural dwellers
- To improve facilities for schoolchildren
- To develop further and third level education
- To make Leitrim an area where people would be attracted to work
- To promote the development of rurally based services to meet the needs of older people
- To enable and empower young people

³ Central Statistics Office. "Census 2006 Preliminary Report", July 2006

⁴ Leitrim County Development Board, "Social, Economic and Cultural Strategy for County Leitrim, 2002-2012"

- To encourage young people to appreciate the positive values of their home county
- To ensure that the arts is recognised as a fundamental part of life
- That Leitrim's heritage will be valued, preserved and enhanced
- To promote cultural awareness with special emphasis on Irish language and culture
- To recognise and accept cultural identity in Leitrim

The section of the LCDB Strategy which deals with culture, arts and heritage, does not cite the Library by name although the Library is the largest and longest established cultural service that the Council operates. Its role is implicit; this Plan seeks to make its role and profile more explicit and to define specific actions which support the broader cultural and social priorities of the Council.

3.4 75 years and more

The Library service is funded and operated by Leitrim County Council through its Community, Culture and Enterprise department. Council provided €1,472,118 in its 2008 budget.

In 2005, Leitrim Count Library published "Leabharlann Chontae Liatroma; 75 bliain ar an Saol – Leitrim County Library 1931-2005". The publication marked 75 years of service to the county which started modestly with one staff member in one small room in 1931. Today the Library has 9 branches as follows

- Ballinamore (HQ and local branch)
- Carrick-on-Shannon
- Carrigallen
- Dromahair
- Drumshanbo
- Kiltyclogher
- Kinlough
- Manorhamilton
- Mohill

Membership of the Library is free and stood at 5,727 in December 2007. Borrowing books and reader services still form the core of library

work in Ireland, a positive position in contrast to a declining readership in the UK libraries.

In Leitrim 2006, borrowing of books and other items decreased by 6.6%. This lessened in 2007, when 109,935 books and items were borrowed, a decrease of 3%. Both decreases need to be set in context. Since opening its new branches and buildings between 2002 and 2005, Leitrim County Library experienced record growth in borrowing. Borrowing changed as follows; -

Year	Issues	% change
2002	69,230	
2002	76,463	Increase 10%
2003	87,896	Increase 15%
2004	98,593	Increase 12%
2005	121,365	Increase 23%
2006	113,473	Decrease 6%
2007	109,935	Decrease 3%

The key to increasing and maintaining borrowing lies in the Library's investment in purchasing new stock and it will be of continuing importance therefore for the Library to maintain and increase its Book Fund as the Plan progresses.

Borrowing is greatly facilitated by computerisation. In Leitrim, in addition to Library Headquarters at Ballinamore, all nine branches are fully automated and members can access their accounts online.

Internet access is provided free of charge in all branch libraries. Usage increased dramatically, by 100%, in 2005 and 2006. It dropped by 10% in 2007 but remains an important public service, much treasured by our new immigrant communities as well as by native-born members.

Users of public libraries throughout the country are not confined to those borrowing books. Research⁵ revealed that during just one week in

⁵ Research undertaken in advance of the 2007 PLUS (Public Library User Survey) survey.

June 2007, over 285,000 visits were made to public libraries across the country. Annual visits to public libraries across the land generally are now in excess of 14 million – this is an increase of 16% since the previous user survey was carried out in 2002⁶.

Leitrim County Library also reflects this national visitor pattern, with 197,700 visits made in 2007 to its five main branches in Ballinamore, Carrick-on-Shannon, Manorhamilton, Mohill and Drumshanbo. These levels of use are undoubtedly supported by the impressive and broad annual programme of activities at each branch, ranging from exhibitions, lectures, workshops, displays and children's activities.

Outreach and cultural activities are important features of the Library's service. Much time and effort is devoted to managing events which bring fresh audiences into the library branches and which diversify the libraries' service to the general public, at all levels of knowledge and age.

During 2007, these activities in Leitrim County Library included

- John McGahern exhibition
- World Book day
- Seachtain na Gaeilge events
- Irish conversation classes
- Leitrim People Abroad exhibition (during Leitrim Roots festival)
- Readers Groups at a number of branches and Junior and Senior Library Clubs
- Storytelling for schools
- Christmas Arts & Crafts Fair
- The Bealtaine active-aged festival
- Talks by writers Carlo Gebler and Tom McCaughren
- History Live workshops on the Flight of the Earls

Leitrim County Library holds an important and well regarded collection of local history material, which is accessible at Ballinamore Library. The number of enquiries increased greatly in 2007, by 61% and personal caller enquiries increased by 100%. Additionally, the Library is now

⁶ Information from An Chomhairle Leabharlanna

establishing a County Archive and shares an archivist post with neighbouring County Longford.

3.5 Performance

The library service in Leitrim has also performed well against some national indicators of performance, as follows

Items issued per head of population
2007, 6th place out of 32
Registered users as a percentage of total population (19.8%, 5,700)
2007, 14th place out of 32
Number of internet sessions per 1000 population
2007, 2nd place out of 32

3.6 Staffing

A new staff structure was recently agreed and is in the process of implementation. At present, the Library employs the following staff at the grades shown;

Staff numbers and grades at Leitrim County Library	
1	County Librarian
1	Executive Librarian
1	Assistant Librarian
3	Senior Library Assistants
3	Library Assistants
1	Assistant Staff Officer
12	Branch Librarians (permanent)
4	Branch Librarians (temporary)
1	Archivist (shared with Longford)
2	Cleaners (part-time)
29	Total

The Library has a well regarded staff complement that is also well trained and qualified. Many staff members have taken library qualifications, often through distance learning. The Council has supported this process financially.

3.7 Solid growth

The Council's investment in the Library is bearing fruit. This chapter records its achievements and the next chapter will record its positive reputation with its customers and the appreciation of its users.

Nevertheless, it's important that any public institution reviews its work and challenges comfort zones. Libraries need to respond to changing demographic and changing work and leisure patterns. The next chapter of this Draft Development Plan will review the Library more closely and begin to formulate responses to challenges and need.

Reaching younger people, for example, is critical to the development of future adult readers and to up-skilling the workforce as well as developing the imagination. Equally, serving a dispersed rural population is a key consideration for Leitrim and the Plan provides an opportunity to address these matters.

4. A Situation Review

4.1 A critical review

Building on the libraries achievement, set out in Chapter 3, this chapter now provides an analysis of its performance against national benchmarks where these are available. While citing shortcomings, it will also point up opportunities to better serve users and address national strategic priorities in both library development and in government policy on social exclusion. We start this process by looking at national library policy.

4.2 The national context- Branching Out

In 1998, the Government published a comprehensive review of public library policy in the report "Branching Out". The report itself took regard of two wider national policies, ensuring that Ireland embraces the opportunities of the "Information Society" and the establishment of an inclusive society.

"Branching Out" identified key issues for Irish public libraries, including the following;

- Delivering better service through enhanced opening hours, improved IT and information services, improved equality of access and developing lifelong learning
- The provision of adequate infrastructure to allow libraries to play their role in developing the "Information Society"
- Improvement in both range and quality of book stock
- A target spend on book stock of €3.27 per head of population
- Improvement in marketing of library services

In June 2008, the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government published a revised strategy, "Branching Out-Future Directions". Its recommendations covered the following ground

- More capital investment
- Extending grant to book stock and ICT
- More ICT investment
- Increasing book-stock target to €3.77 per head of population the from the current €3.27 (Leitrim County Library provided €3.28 in 2007)
- Re-assessing current performance measures

- Further reviewing of opening hours
- Piloting new service delivery methods
- Providing training
- Developing policies for collections development
- Increasing school's grant
- Developing cultural programmes and cultural resources
- Developing a marketing strategy and continue PLUS
- Becoming gateways for government and cultural information

With the recent Budget, the status of this new Branching Out report, at least in the short term, must remain unclear.

4.3 Branching Out in Leitrim

Leitrim County Library has worked in recent years to achieve the national standards of library service which were defined in "Branching Out". In particular, the Library has delivered on the recommended extended hours, which were that library branches serving 10,000 or above would be open through lunchtime each day, open each Saturday and on two evenings at least each week⁷. Leitrim has risen to the challenge even though it does not have an individual branch that serves 10,000 or above.

It may well be, at least in the short term, that Government funding which underpinned the successful roll-out of Branching Out will not be forthcoming for Branching Out-Future Directions. Nevertheless, it is quite likely that its foundation principles of social inclusion, better public service and greater access, will actually increase as drivers of change as the government strives to get an even greater return from current investment. In that context, the Leitrim Library Plan must continue to take account of the Branching out-Future- Directions report.

The key principles of the recent report were summarised by An Chomhairle Leabharlanna as follows

- Focusing on the development of library infrastructure including new buildings, refurbishment works and protection of architecturally important library buildings
- Improvement of the range and quality of stock

⁷ "Branching Out", page 48

- Development of the role of the public library service in lifelong learning
- Recognition of libraries as centres of culture.

4.4 PLUS (Public Library User Surveys)

An Chomhairle Leabharlanna co-ordinated the first national survey of public library users in 2002, designed and analysed by a professional market research company. Leitrim did not participate then, but it did take part in the second PLUS in 2007.

Called PLUS (Public Library User Survey), the work was undertaken to gather attitudes on the current state of libraries, as users saw them. Each county was separately surveyed and results were provided to each of the participating local authorities. National trends and averages also emerged from the PLUS survey work.

4.5 Leitrim exceeding national trends

PLUS is based on a two-week survey of all visitors to each library branch or service point and was undertaken in September 2007 at most public library authorities.

This Consultancy analysed the statistics which PLUS provided and this work yielded some very useful information. For example, in many areas Leitrim County Library exceeds the national average levels of satisfaction.

When asked what users thought of current levels of opening hours,

- 87% nationally agreed that they were good or very good
- In Leitrim, satisfaction levels exceeded the national averages, standing at 90.5%.

When asked what users thought of the range of material on offer in your own language

- 59% nationally agreed that they were good or very good
- In Leitrim, 67% agreed, again exceeding national levels of satisfaction.

Numbers coming to seek information in Leitrim also exceeded national averages,

- The national level stood at 39.5%.
- In Leitrim it stood at 53.2%

There was also a higher level of satisfied customers in Leitrim

- 73.6% said that they found the information they came for
- 67.8% was the national average

Again, Leitrim showed higher satisfaction levels with the computers provided

- 90.7% agreeing that they were good or very good,
- As opposed to 85.8% nationally

Higher than average numbers came to use computers

- 76.2% in Leitrim
- Against 69.3% nationally

Reference library use was also higher in Leitrim

- Standing nationally at 10%
- In Leitrim it stood at 15.5%.

4.6 Some areas of underperformance

In other areas, the PLUS results show some underperformance by Leitrim County Library when compared to the national average results.

The national surveys showed that 70% of users came to their library to borrow books.

- In Leitrim, this stood at only 50%.

Borrowing CDs in Leitrim accounted for 8.4% of visitors

- 11.6% was the national average in this area

DVD and Video borrowing are also lower in Leitrim

- 7.6% coming to borrow DVDs and Videos in Leitrim
- Against 14.5% nationally

The same applies to borrowing Talking Books

- 4.7% in Leitrim
- Against 10.0% nationally.

Numbers coming to borrow Large Print Books also showed a difference

- 6.7% of users coming to do so in Leitrim
- Against 11.6% nationally

When users were asked how often they visited the libraries in Leitrim, answers showed some consistent differences between national averages, suggesting more first time visits and less regularity of visiting than the national average. The less frequent weekly and other visits may be attributable to the longer month-long borrowing period in Leitrim; in many other libraries borrowing is more restricted.

	First visit	Once a week	Once a fortnight	Once every three weeks	Once every four weeks	Very occasionally
Leitrim	8.8%	31.95	18.5%	14.3%	11.8%	14.9%
National average	4.0%	36.3%	23.3%	16.0%	9.4%	10.9%

Higher numbers of users also lived further from branches than on average nationally. In answer to the questions on how far they lived, users responded as shown in this table.

	10km	11-15km	7km	Over 20km
Leitrim	10.2%	10.2%	7.1%	8.9%
National	6.2%	7.1%	5.7%	5.4%

4.7 User profile

In terms of user profile, Leitrim attracts higher numbers of female users, 68.3% as against 63.2% nationally. Its age group user profile is very similar to the national average, with 17.1% drawn from 25-34, 23.8% from 35-44 and 17.7% drawn from 45-54. These are the largest age group users. In the 15-19 age group, Leitrim departs from the national averages, attracting 9% of this group, compared to 4.5% nationally. Leitrim also attracts smaller numbers of retired people, 16% against 19.3% nationally.

4.8 Analysis of the Leitrim PLUS results

The PLUS survey results for Leitrim provide some interesting pointers about the public's view of the current service. It is clear that the investment of recent years in new branch buildings has delivered positive user opinion across many areas of the library service, exceeding national averages of satisfaction in many instances. The Council and the Library can take credit for these positive results and build on them for the future.

Some problem areas for the Library also emerged and these were discussed with the Steering Group. The Plan includes some objectives which will address these matters.

The drops in borrowing recorded in paragraph 3.4 are reflected in the PLUS results but they almost certainly reflect a snapshot of the time of the survey, rather than a trend. In broad terms, the Library has hugely increased its borrowing as paragraph 3.4 showed. Maintaining the Book Fund is the key to retaining and increasing borrowing and the Plan proposes that this be done.

DVDs, Videos, Talking Books and Large Print Books were borrowed less often in Leitrim than was the case nationally. Continued investment is needed if the Library is to attract and retain users of these resources. While it attracts larger numbers of 15-19 year olds, as PLUS showed, this is almost certainly a reflection mainly of computer usage.

Historically, the Library has had fewer resources to invest in newer media and the lower borrowing reflects this lower level of investment. Since these media are especially popular with both the younger user (DVDs and Videos) and the older (Talking Books and Large Print Books) the Library needs to focus some more spending on this area.

As PLUS showed, Leitrim also attracts smaller numbers of retired people, 16% against 19.3% nationally, so here again it need to focus resources to meet the needs of this important market segment. The maintenance and future increase in the Book Fund needs to be prioritised in order to allow the Library to attain the national average of satisfaction with these particular services. The proposed introduction of

a Mobile Library Service would also provide a significant increase in services to retired people living in rural Leitrim. This is further discussed in Chapter 5, below.

4.9 Stakeholder feedback about the Library service

The Council asked for a broad and inclusive consultative process to include both external and internal stakeholders. The following special consultations were therefore conducted.

- Focus Group 1; Primary School Teachers.
- Focus Group 2; Active Aged groups
- Focus Group 3; Asylum Seekers
- Focus Group 4; County Leitrim Partnership staff

4.9.1 Primary School Teachers

Teachers were unanimous and spontaneous in vouching their appreciation for the staff of the Library service who they described as helpful, professional and knowledgeable. This confirms the positive findings of the PLUS survey which was discussed at 4.5 above.

Teachers from the Manorhamilton and Ballinamore areas expressed satisfaction with the range of books available, a clear reflection of the new stock which these new branches received for their new buildings. Elsewhere, teachers asked for a greater range and specifically asked for

- More Irish language books
- More new titles to retain children's interest in reading
- Books for boys
- Books for over-10 year olds
- More books for learners of English

Teachers asked when other branches would be modernised since some smaller ones could not currently handle groups or events. They also suggested that there was a general lack of awareness within the community of the Library's services.

Finally, teachers warmly welcomed the possibility of a Mobile Library Service which would serve schools. They pointed out that their biggest problem is finding the time to bring classes out of school. Their opportunities to bring groups out are also greatly limited by cost.

Bringing the books to the schools was therefore seen as a cost-effective and time-efficient solution.

In the light of the comments from teachers about difficulty in getting out of school, the Library should retain its current events provision at current levels rather than increase the frequency.

4.9.2 Active Aged Focus Group

Three active aged groups from north and south Leitrim attended a consultation meeting. The representatives had previously consulted with their full memberships at regular meetings; thus the views recorded here are widely representative.

The Focus Groups warmly praised the staff of all branches for their helpfulness. They commented positively about the choice of books at Ballinamore but asked for more fiction & history at Carrick-on-Shannon and a microfilm reader for local history resources at Carrick-on-Shannon, a reflection of the inadequate size of this branch for the counties' largest town. They also sought more talking books in Irish.

The Group made two further key points

- The Library service as a whole needs better promotion
- There is a general lack of awareness of the services the Library provides

When consulted about a possible mobile service, they offered the following views-

- Strong preference for a mobile because it would be flexible
- It would serve residential homes
- It would need to be cost-effective by serving a broad range of stakeholders
- Hospitals were specifically mentioned as appropriate stopping points
- Partnerships with carers could reach housebound people
- Schools should be included to maximise benefits of a mobile service
- Partnerships with Post Offices could act as book drop-off points or depots, where stopping times were limited

The frequency of stopping by the proposed mobile service was also seen as less important than the opportunity that the mobile provided to get new books into the hands of borrowers. This reflected the views of many other stakeholders, like teachers who suggested that new and less worn stock was needed to attract and retain the interest of younger readers.

The expressed opposition to the further development of fixed branches, which they saw as unsustainable.

4.9.3 Focus Group 3; Asylum Seekers

The residents of the Ballinamore Asylum Seekers hostel were consulted at a specially convened meeting. The group voiced positive views about the Library, as follows

- They felt included and welcomed
- They saw it as public information place

They also had some requests which again focus attention on book stock and its importance to the Library. They asked for

- Irish history & African history books
- Newer editions of children's books
- More teaching books for children
- Multiple copies of books so that request waiting periods are reduced

4.9.4 Focus Group 4; County Leitrim Partnership staff

A presentation about the Plan was made to a full staff meeting of County Leitrim Partnership in Drumshanbo. Their perspective was sought as an agency working to combat exclusion. The group were very enthusiastic about a potential mobile library service which they saw an example of reaching out to users. They also made the following points;

- The mobile could include traveller halting sites in its stops
- Parents would bring children to mobiles
- Schools stops would be key to the success of the mobile
- Actual use of a mobile would be of social benefit to children

The group also confirmed other comments about the unsuitability of some branches to hold events because of size restrictions and they welcomed proposals to improve some branches.

The group further commented that the profile of the Library was poor in many areas and that people are unaware of the services its offers, instancing internet access.

In broad terms, the group asked for fresh book stock to be provided at both branch and mobile level. From their work, they believe that children are very selective and will not be recruited or retained as readers if the book stock is uninteresting or remains unchanged.

4.10 Transition Year, St Claire's Manorhamilton

A consultative meeting with students yielded some interesting perspectives from this age group.

- Students felt welcomed at their local library branch
- Most pupils were library members
- Nevertheless, they professed and exhibited a lack of awareness of library activities
- Students disliked group visits because they were asked to sit in the children's area of the branch
- Not unexpectedly for this generation, students asked for more and faster electronic resources

4.11 VEC

The VEC has responsibility for both adult education / lifelong learning and for some secondary school provision. The Adult Education section was consulted for this Plan. It sees the role of the library as central to both areas of its responsibility. It stressed the key importance of getting young people to read as this skill is fundamental to their later progression. It therefore suggested that a mobile service should target primary schoolchildren as a priority. It also suggested that the Library should target younger people as leisure readers and suggested that the potential mobile library service should concentrate resources on this area.

4.12 Secondary Schools

All second level schools were invited to contribute their views about the library service and ideas for its future development. A written response⁸ praised the service and singled out the importance of maintaining support for reader development.

4.13 Leitrim Community Forum

A consultation was held with a Council officer whose work supports Leitrim Community Forum which is the representative body for the community and voluntary sector in Leitrim covering 350 groups. The Library was seen as an important community resource. The Forum itself found difficulty in engaging 18-25 year olds with its work and it was suggested that the Library should target this age group with special activities and with book selection. This cohort experienced the highest suicide rate in Leitrim and was also exposed to drug trafficking more than other cohorts. The Library should consider supporting the Forum through providing ongoing information on public issues like drugs awareness.

The Forum would see the proposed mobile service as a welcome development.

The Forum has never formally considered a relationship with the Library service but would be open to do so, especially regarding distribution of information through the branch network and through the proposed mobile service.

4.14 SWOT analysis

Through the representative Steering Group, Library staff were consulted and kept abreast of the plan process. The Consultancy also visited all branches and met staff individually. Additionally, at the July 5 staff workshop in Drumshanbo, a staff analysis of current Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats was led by the consultant. The table below summaries the results.

⁸ Thanks to Ballinamore Post-primary School

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated and well educated /trained staff • The nine branch network • Some good branch buildings • Good location of some branches • Extensive opening hours • Good local studies facilities • Free online access • Good IT equipment, i.e. PCs, scanners • Free membership • Warden system for circulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some poor branch buildings • No events space in some branches • Some poor internal and external signage • Too few audio-visual resources • Limited web presence • No children's web • Limited disabled access • Inadequate coordination of advertising and promotion • Communication on management issues • Lack of promotional opportunity for staff
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linking with local agencies / groups • The plan process itself • Digitisation of local studies / online availability • Promotion and profile raising • Providing better schools service • Better services to active aged • More communication on management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition for people's leisure time • Affluence providing alternative reading opportunities • Not keeping up with trends in service provision, i.e. Skype or Wi-Fi • Absence of seating in some branches

Library staff input and the stakeholder input all formed part of the plan development process. The proposals in the next two chapters grew from these ideas and concerns while also meeting government and library policy priorities, especially in the area of social inclusion.

5. An inclusive service

5.1 Introduction

Social inclusion is a core value of government policy across both national and local domains. Social inclusion policies seek to develop strategies and schemes which reach out to marginalised groups and serve people who cannot access normal services, for economic or social reasons. County Leitrim has a relatively ageing population and it remains a county dominated by a dispersed rural population; both factors restrict easy access to library services.

The Plan looked especially closely therefore at the opportunity to develop a Mobile Library Service for Leitrim and this chapter presents the findings. This proposal has already been presented to both the Library Steering Group, to the SPC and the Library Advisory Committee and was positively received.

5.2 A Mobile Library Service for County Leitrim

Leitrim County Library had a schools delivery van until 1998. It never operated a Mobile Library Service although it has been conscious of the opportunity to provide an improved service to schools and to examine the possibility of establishing a mobile service. These matters were cited within the Library's previous 2003-2006 Development Plan⁹. The Plan provides a key opportunity to consider the "pros" and "cons" of providing such services.

5.3 Mobile Library Development

An Chomhairle Leabharlanna reports a growth of Mobile Library Services in recent years in Ireland.

In 2005, Donegal County Council and the Western Education & Library Board established a joint Mobile Service for the border areas. They accessed Peace II funds. Roscommon has recently re-introduced a Mobile Service. County Sligo is actively considering the introduction of a Mobile Service, at present, to serve both rural and targeted urban audiences.

⁹ Copy provided by County Librarian to consultant

Cork County Library operates six mobile library vehicles, serving five separate routes and also serves the hinterland of Cork City. Cork sees its recently renewed mobile service vehicles as a part of its response to the reading and information needs of the public. Elderly people have especially welcomed the service and the vehicles are all disabled-friendly. Cork sees the mobile as bringing the local authority to the heart of the community and addressing the needs of the individual citizen.

Mobiles can reach areas and people that regular library services cannot always reach. Nationally, the 2002 PLUS surveys¹⁰ demonstrated that mobiles were 75% used by women (as against a 66% usage of fixed branches in 2002) and that mobiles attract a proportionately higher number of users in the middle and upper age ranges.

In considering a mobile service, this trend is an important one to note. More women than men use libraries generally (in 2006, 63% women, as opposed to 37% male, according to the most recent PLUS). Serving and building on existing users must for a factor in the Library's thinking for the future. As the PLUS survey showed, Leitrim attracts slightly higher numbers of female users, 68.3% as against 63.2% nationally, so it has a good audience base here that it needs to consolidate, while also mindful of the need to attract higher numbers of younger people and of males in general. A mobile service can address both areas.

5.4 Branches and Mobiles

The library has had much success in developing branches and buildings in recent years, including a new Library Headquarters and branch at Ballinamore, a new branch at Manorhamilton and the opening of new branches in Kiltyclogher and Carrigallen.

It has nine branches, serving 28,950 people, a high number by comparison with neighbouring counties with larger populations.

- Mayo has 17 branches serving 123,839 people
- Sligo has 4 branches serving 60,894 people
- Longford has 6 branches serving 31,068 people
- Roscommon has 7 branches serving 53,774

¹⁰ Information from An Chomhairle Leabharlanna

- Fermanagh has 3 branches serving 57,627

Yet, there is continued pressure from some small village communities to establish branches in their areas. The previous Library Service Development Plan 2003-2006 proposed the extension of services, as follows-

- A new premises for Carrick-on-Shannon branch
- Developing the present library branch at Dromahair
- The re-development of Mohill branch
- The possibility of establishing a Mobile Library Service

There is clear evidence of the need to confirm and continue with the above proposals, as a visit to these branches at Carrick and Dromahair will confirm. The stakeholder feedback quoted in Chapter 4 was also quite consistent and strong in seeking better branches, especially for Carrick-on-Shannon.

The Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government normally provides 100% funding for the purchase of mobile library vehicles. Despite present uncertainty, it is likely that this policy will remain in place, since mobiles reach isolated communities and the elderly in rural areas especially and thus serve the social inclusion strategies that government promotes.

Small branch developments, on the other hand, do not attract government support of 100%. In fact, to attract An Chomhairle Leabharlanna support for a funding application, a proposed branch needs to

- Be at least 1000 square feet in size
- Serve 1000 people in immediate are
- Serve 3000 people in its catchment

The spread of existing branches is also taken into account when applications are assessed and new branch proposals that may meet population and size criteria are often failed because of the relative proximity of other branches. With 9 branches in Leitrim, it is quite likely that this view would be taken of any new branch applications form Leitrim County Library.

It is therefore recommended that the Council prioritises the development of a Mobile Library Service, over and above the development of further small branches. The growth of a larger network of small branches would not be financially sustainable, even in the short term. It is important to bear the following mind-

- Each new fixed branch is likely to cost approx. €250,000
- The single mobile vehicle will cost €250,000 but
- The mobile vehicle purchase is fully funded by government

5.5 Operating Costs

A fixed branch will attract annual running costs. One or two part-time appointments are needed per branch, together with rental and maintenance costs. A mobile service, on the other hand, will require the appointment of one driver.

The table below provides an estimate of costs associated with operating a mobile, based on information supplied by other libraries.

Item	Annual estimated costs
Insurance, fuel, subsistence	€20,000
Staffing	€45,000 gross cost
Re-stocking books	€15,000
Total each year	€80,000

In Year One, €30,000 would also be needed as a once-off investment in purchasing stock for the mobile. Year One costs would therefore total €100,000 while annual recurring costs will total €80,000 thereafter. The estimate of staffing cost is based on the grade of Driver Assistant (full-time) and part-time administrative support from a Library Assistant.

Management at the Library will also need to consider how library staff can be scheduled to accompany the mobiles, perhaps on certain runs only, for example to residential homes or to secondary schools only. Providing a specialist library member to meet mobile users would provide many opportunities to develop reader services, deepen contact and allow responses to individual reading and information requests.

5.6 Other reasons for establishing a mobile service

Cost is but one factor in considering the introduction of a Mobile Library Service for Leitrim. The following positive and negative factors are also relevant.

Negative

- Cannot serve housebound people
- Onboard IT cannot be used for sufficient length of time
- Stopping rota can be unsuitable for some users

Positive

- Serves smaller villages, not currently served
- Provides a flexible response to demand for village branches
- Mobile libraries reach remote communities and users
- A mobile can also serve the rural schools network that do not have locally accessible branches
- A mobile can serve pre-schools, after-schools, residential and nursing homes and active aged groups
- A mobile can serve 25 stops per week
- Judging on the experience of other counties, larger numbers of books would be issued by mobiles, relative to small branch issue numbers

Perhaps the biggest message the Library can send, though introducing a mobile, is its willingness to reach out to its community and meet its users where they live. A mobile is a sign of a responsive and flexible service that genuinely wants to expand its user base and meet changing needs, lifestyles and working patterns. This thinking underlies the recent renewal and expansion of Mobile Library Services throughout Ireland.

5.7 The mobile service and schools

Mayo County Library operates an extensive and active dedicated service for schools. Four members of staff provide a mobile book lending service to 187 primary schools. They also work with 70 schools, which are defined as disadvantaged. Special resources, guidance and support is provided to teachers in all areas of children's literature, in both

reading and literacy development, alongside curriculum support resources for new subjects like art, music and science.

In that context, Mayo was able to discontinue its adult mobile service while maintaining its service to schools. It also operates an extensive 17 branch network.

Leitrim County Library looked closely at mobile services in three neighbouring counties in Fermanagh, Roscommon and Monaghan. It found that in all three counties there was a full mobile service and also a schools library van that served schools. In the main, the mobile library in those counties did not serve schools.

Currently, Leitrim provides an extremely limited service to schools. It has no dedicated full-time service for schools. Its current service is largely limited up to drawing down government book grant for schools and working with teachers to select the books. It does not have the capacity to regularly exchange these books, so its further contact with schools and their needs is very limited indeed.

A mobile service in Leitrim must therefore see schools as one of its principal targets for the new service, effectively replacing the schools van and driver that the Library operated until 1988, but now widening out to the community at large.

- There are 42 primary schools in the county, a manageable number
- 25 schools are rural and would need priority servicing

5.8 Stakeholder feedback on Mobile Libraries

The primary teachers consulted for the Plan warmly welcomed the possibility of a mobile or schools service. Their main reasons were

- Renewed book stock is essential to engage students
- Teachers are very limited, through time restrictions and cost considerations, at getting students out of classroom
- Mobiles bring the library to users

The Active Aged groups commented on the cost of a mobile service and said that it would need to be cost-effective by serving a broad range of stakeholders

- Schools should be included to maximise benefits of the mobile service
- Hospitals were specifically mentioned as target users
- Partnerships with carers could reach housebound people
- The Active-Aged groups suggested forming partnerships with Post Offices to act as book drop-off points or depots, where stopping times were limited
- Frequency of stopping was seen as less important than the opportunity to get new books into the hands of borrowers

The Leitrim Community Forum office believed that a mobile would be warmly welcomed. It saw the proposed mobile as an important community resource, through which it could also distribute its own information.

Leitrim VEC Adult Education strongly supported the idea and suggested targeting leisure readers, to catch and retain interest in reading at a young age. The primary schools would form the most important single target group for the mobile, it believes. It emphasised the importance of stimulating reading and the development of critical faculties through book clubs etc. The VEC also welcomed the mobile as demonstrating the Library's willingness to reach out to its community.

County Leitrim Partnership, which has responsibility for the social inclusion programme in Leitrim, welcomed the possibility of a mobile service and asked that it include Traveller sites in its stopping rota. Officers also suggested that book stock for schools needed renewal and expansion as modern schoolchildren are discriminating and selective readers. A mobile could help address this matter.

An Chomhairle Leabharlanna acknowledged the cost of operating mobiles but suggested that they had some key advantages, including reaching isolated communities. An Chomhairle Leabharlanna continues to strongly support the 100% funding for purchasing mobile library vehicles.

The PLUS survey results also reported on travel distances of users. In Leitrim, perhaps unsurprisingly, higher numbers of users lived further

from branches than on average nationally. A mobile service can help address this distance problem. In answer to the questions on how far from their local library users lived, people responded as shown in this table.

	10km	11-15km	7km	Over 20km
Leitrim	10.2%	10.2%	7.1%	8.9%
National	6.2%	7.1%	5.7%	5.4%

5.9 Social Inclusion and a mobile service

Despite funding cutbacks, support for social inclusion strategies is likely to remain a priority, especially as mobiles reach isolated communities & the elderly in rural areas especially. Given Leitrim's higher than average older age profile and given the Leitrim County Development Board's commitment to older people, to rural communities and to combating social exclusion, the development of a Mobile Library Service is strongly recommended.

6. Objectives and Strategies 2009-13

6.1 Introduction

This Plan is designed to cover a medium to long-term period of 5 years. The Strategic Aims set out below, define the future direction of the Library. The Strategic Aims relate to the primary work areas of the Library including core functions.

The Aims and also the Objectives organised under each Aim grew from the consultation process and from the ideas and contributions of Library staff. They grew naturally from the analysis of the PLUS results, the Situation Review that was presented in Chapter 4 and the evaluation of the proposed Mobile Library Service which was discussed in the preceding chapter. All proposals were informed by the stakeholder consultations.

6.2 A Mission Statement for the Library

From the outset, this Consultancy was clearly briefed to consult as widely as possible and to involve staff as closely as possible. To this end, two half day staff workshops were prepared and delivered. The two workshops were asked to consider the purpose and functions of their Library.

Having looked at the statements of mission or vision that other libraries use, the following statement was suggested as a new Mission Statement for Leitrim County Library.

To provide a high-quality welcoming, modern, responsive and inclusive library service for all which fosters reading, provides information and supports learning, culture and recreation.

6.3 Values

The staff workshops were asked to consider what the values of the Library should be. They agreed that they attach importance to the following values; -

- A welcoming place
- Inclusive of all
- Accessible to all
- A provider of information and knowledge

- Enjoyable
- Responsive
- A focal point for the community

6.4 Strategic Aims for the next five years

The staff workshops also worked to define the main work areas for the future. This exercise helped define the most important concerns and the potential opportunities for better service. Based on the previous discussion around mission, values and on the SWOT, staff proposed that the work of the Library for the next five years be re-organised from its present¹¹, infrastructure-led approach to a user-focussed approach.

Some of the proposals contained within the previous Development Programme¹² are clearly still needed and these should be rolled forward.

They include

- Moving or developing a new premises for Carrick-on-Shannon branch
- Developing the present library branch at Dromahaire
- The re-development of Mohill branch

The previous Programme included a commitment to an evaluation of a proposed Mobile Library Service. This is provided in the preceding chapter.

Looking ahead, therefore, the following work areas are proposed

Strategic Aim 1

Continue branch development and develop a mobile library service

Strategic Aim 2

Promote and foster reading throughout the branch network

Strategic Aim 3

Develop the Library as an information and cultural resource

Strategic Aim 4

¹¹ "Leabharlanna Chontae Liatroma, Library Development Programme 2003-2006", October 2002.

¹² "Leabharlanna Chontae Liatroma, Library Development Programme 2003-2006", October 2002

Promote Irish language and culture

Strategic Aim 5

Modernise the marketing and promotion of the Service

Strategic Aim 6

Promote, develop and make local studies resources available

Strategic Aim 7

Develop the managerial framework of the service

The tables which follow below provide detail and timing proposals.

6.5 Capital costs

The Plan proposes that the three building and renovation projects from the previous 2002-2006 Development Programme be rolled forward. Estimates have already been prepared of the capital funding needed for these projects.

The Mohill and Dromahair proposals may qualify for 100% support with re-stocking from DOEHLG under "Branching Out-Future Directions". The Branching Out Steering Group recommended that the existing library capital programme be extended to include the provision of grant aid for furniture, fittings, ICT and stock in those new library buildings being provided by library authorities, without Exchequer funding.

The Dromahair and Mohill proposals would be eligible to apply for this grant aid. Given current public funding constraints, it is not currently known if funds to implement this new programme will be forthcoming.

The proposed mobile library vehicle, as previously outlined in Chapter 5 would be eligible for 100% support from government, if approved.

6.6 Staff costs

Within this Plan, an assumption is made of continued funding from Leitrim County Council. Where an additional expense proposed, it is shown separately, as at paragraph 6.5 above.

An additional post will be needed to operate a new mobile library vehicle, if Council decides to accept the recommendation of this Plan. A post at Driver Assistant grade is proposed which would cost €45,000 annually, gross cost. Details of cost have previously been shown at paragraph 5.5.

6.7 Staff structure and teams

As previously mentioned, some new staff appointments and upgrades were recently agreed and are in the process of implementation.

The completion of these staffing proposals is a key element in the implementation of this Plan. To take proposals and projects forward, the Library needs to assign specific responsibilities to senior personnel and the Plan makes some specific recommendations within the tables which follow below. It is recommended that the Library continues to seek implementation of the outstanding appointments as soon as conditions permit.

Strategic Aim 1

Continue branch development and develop a mobile library service

Objectives	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
1. Continue planning for development of a new Branch Library in Carrick-on-Shannon	v	v	v		
2. Continue proposal to develop a new library branch at Dromahair.	v	v			
3. Progress the re-development of Mohill Branch Library and implement the sensory project findings at Mohill Branch	v	v			
4. Prepare and submit an application for funding to introduce a Mobile Library Service for County Leitrim and associated stocking, housing and loading bay		v	v		
5. Initiate discussion with Council regarding a post to operate the proposed Mobile Library Service		v			
6. Investigate opportunities for additional book storage, archives space	v				
7. Implement Council Disability Plan throughout Library Service	v				

Strategic Aim 2

Promote and foster reading throughout the branch network

Objectives	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
1. Designate a senior officer to lead on reader development initiatives	v				
2. Seek to maintain the annual book and stock purchase fund at the nationally recommended level	v	v	v	v	v
3. Implement "frontline" reader development training for all staff	v				
4. Purchase and add new audio, large print books and new video and DVD format resources aimed at older and younger age groups, respectively	v	v	v	v	v
5. Continue to publicise the access software and hardware already installed in branches	v	v	v	v	v
6. Continue annual involvement in national initiatives such as Children's Book Festival, Library Week and Bealtaine active-aged festival	v	v	v	v	v
7. Review and agree a support policy for the current reading groups throughout the network of branches.	v				
8. Provide further access for users to online research resources such as encyclopaedia and newspapers	v	v	v	v	v
9. Forge links with relevant agencies to assist, promote and foster reading	v	v	v	v	v

Strategic Aim 3

Develop the Library as an information and cultural resource

Objectives	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
1. Designate a senior officer to lead on event co-ordination and planning throughout network	v				
2. Maintain Library involvement with annual National Science Week	v	v	v	v	v
3. Develop an annual Winter Lecture Programme on varying themes	v	v	v	v	v
4. Continue to organise events in branches in support of local festivals and events	v	v	v	v	v
5. Continue to encourage and facilitate approximately six annual exhibitions in libraries and develop local exhibitions such as the 2009 Sean Mac Diarmada exhibition	v	v	v	v	v
6. Provide a range of public sector and tourism information at all branches	v	v	v	v	v
7. Ensure expansion of computer access within new or re-developed branches	v	v	v	v	v
8. Ensure that the proposed new Mobile Library Service vehicle has full internet access for users		v			
9. Work with new migrant communities to showcase their culture through exhibitions at Library branches	v	v	v	v	v

Strategic Aim 4

Promote Irish language and culture

Objectives	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
1. Maintain Seachtain na Gaeilge activities annually	v	v	v	v	v
2. Contribute to the implementation of the Council's Irish language scheme	v	v	v	v	v
3. Promote opportunities for the public to conduct business with Library through the Irish language medium	v	v	v	v	v
4. Provide opportunities for interested staff to improve their knowledge of Irish	v	v	v	v	v
5. Ensure that all new directional and building signage includes both Irish and English text	v	v			
6. Continue the Comhrá classes in branches throughout the network	v	v	v	v	v
7. Promote the availability of Irish language children's books	v		v		v

Strategic Aim 5

Modernise the marketing and promotion of the Service

Objectives	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
1. Designate a senior officer with responsibility for coordinating publicity and promotion for the Library	v				
2. Design, translate and print new Library information leaflets about Library resources and services for placement in homes, business, shops and other outlets	v	v			
3. Review current library web pages and consider the addition of a dedicated children's page		v			
4. Consider the establishment of a blog or alternative electronic communication medium, attached to the website	v				
5. Build a structured relationship with the Council's arts section and seek opportunities to integrate library information into arts promotion and marketing	v	v	v	v	v
6. Use "overdue notices" mailing to distribute information and event literature	v	v	v	v	v
7. Modernise the building and directional signage to take account of disabled users	v	v	v	v	v
8. Forge links with relevant agencies to market and promote the Library and its services	v	v	v	v	v

Strategic Aim 6

Promote, develop and make local studies resources available

Objectives	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
1. Initiate a programme of cataloguing and digitisation of photographic images		v	v	v	v
2. Develop digital virtual exhibitions and place online	v	v	v	v	v
3. Scan school register and roll books, in conjunction with the County Archives		v	v	v	v
4. Maintain and add to the existing oral history resource at Ballinamore HQ	v	v	v	v	v
5. Continue to service enquires and researchers, as required	v	v	v	v	v

Strategic Objective 7

Develop the managerial framework of the service

Objectives	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
1. Continue implementation of agreed staff re-structure	v				
2. Maintain the regular branch review system and follow up on issues raised	v	v	v	v	v
3. Develop a regular and more frequent branch visit rota	v	v	v	v	v
4. Review ICT hardware and software on an annual basis	v	v	v	v	v
5. Ensure a regular, possibly electronic flow of appropriate management information to each branch	v	v	v	v	v
6. Hold two library-dedicated annual meetings with all staff	v	v	v	v	v
7. Review this Development Plan and use as template for review at annual staff meetings	v	v	v	v	v
8. Continue bi-monthly staff meeting of HQ staff, local studies staff and of branch librarians	v	v	v	v	v
9. Prepare a written Staff Training Policy and continue to provide work-related training for staff	v	v	v	v	v
10. Draft a written Child Protection Policy	v				

Appendix 1 The Brief for the review

Leitrim County Council through Leitrim County Library Service is in the process of developing a new Library Development Plan for the period 2008-2013.

Terms of Reference

Leitrim County Council intends to prepare a new Library Development Plan for the next five years. This Library Development Plan is being prepared following a number of years of unprecedented development in Leitrim's Library service, which has included the following: Establishment of a new Library Headquarters and branch at Ballinamore, Establishment of a new branch at Manorhamilton, Opening of a new branch in Kiltyclogher, Opening of a new branch in Carrigallen, Significant advances in the computerisation within the Library service, significant expansion of on-line facilities and the expansion of a local studies service.

In addition the development of this new plan is timely given the expected publication of the second branching out report on the future of the library service in Ireland in the coming months.

The Council intend to recruit the services of a consultant to assist in the development of the library plan and to provide the following services as part of the process of developing the new plan:

Preliminary:

1. Review of existing services provided by Leitrim County Library Service
2. Documentation of the level of service provided (much of which will be available through the Library Management systems).
3. Review and Mapping of the current Library service points given the Geographic and demographic profile of the County

Infrastructure:

1. Evaluation of the provision of a Mobile Library Service and / or additional branch services in order to deal with identified omissions from the current spread of library service points in the County
2. Assist in the determination of key capital investment requirements needed for the delivery of the service in a more comprehensive way, such as the County town of Carrick-on-Shannon.

Customer Service:

1. Review and development of recommendations in regard to Library opening hours based on usage patterns
2. Review and determination of recommendations in relation to range of activities to be carried through the Library service.
3. Review of the usage and development of recommendations in relation to the further development of on-line services both within the branch and through the library/Council's web sites.
4. Review and development of recommendations in relation to the promotion of the Library service in the County
5. The identification of new services/development opportunities presented through the existing branching out program and the new "Branching Out" programme to be launched.

Outreach Services:

1. Review of and the development of recommendations in relation to the School Library service.
2. Review of and recommendations in relation to the provision of Library service to the House bound and Residential homes within the County
3. Review of and recommendations in relation to the provision of services to the National Anti Poverty Strategy identified target groups within the County
4. Review of and recommendations in relation to the role of the Library service for the purpose of the recreation among young people.

Appendix 2 Career summary, Aidan Walsh

Profile

Aidan Walsh left the Northern Ireland Museums Council in March 2001, having served as Director since 1993. Previously Curator of the pioneering Monaghan County Museum in the Republic of Ireland, he developed an art gallery and policy for art alongside a regional museum of history, archaeology and traditional life.

He is now an independent consultant, based in Ireland, but working in the cultural sector throughout Ireland and the UK.

An archaeologist by training, he qualified from National University of Ireland Galway (NUIG) in 1970 and was also conferred FMA by UK colleagues in 1998, (Fellow of the Museums Association). In 1983 he directed an archaeological excavation at the celebrated Iron Age earthwork, the "Black Pig's Dyke" in County Monaghan.

Within the museum profession, Aidan Walsh served twice as Chairman of ICOM-Ireland (International Council of Museums) and once as Chair of ICOM-UK. He also chaired the Irish Museums Association and represented Northern Ireland on the Council of the Museums Association. He was appointed on several occasions to the board of the National Museum of Ireland, Dublin.

Throughout his career, Aidan Walsh has also broadened his knowledge of the cultural sector. He served on the Northern Ireland Library & Information Services Council, Belfast from 1997-1999. He also twice chaired the County Monaghan Arts Festival Committee and served also on the former Cultural Relations Committee of the Department of Foreign Affairs, Dublin. He currently sits on the Company of the Tyrone Guthrie Centre for Artists, an artist's retreat funded by the two Arts Councils in Ireland.

A European and International Dimension

International work has been a notable feature of Aidan Walsh's career. In 1980, as Curator of Monaghan County Museum, Ireland, he was awarded the Council of Europe Museum Prize. In 1989 he was invited to sit on the Brussels-based EU Committee for Cultural Heritage.

In 1997 he was also invited by the Council of Europe to join a team of experts, which reviewed the Cultural Policy of Lithuania. From 1999-2001 he sat on the Reform Task Force of ICOM, the UNESCO non-governmental organization, based in Paris. The RTF undertook a root-and-branch review, which led to significant strategic change within ICOM (International Council of Museums).

He has the distinction of holding the presidencies of two National Committees of ICOM (the International Council of Museums), in Ireland and in the UK. He currently sits on the Executive of INTERCOM, the International Committee for Management in Museums.

Appendix 3 Acknowledgements

I am very grateful to everybody listed here for their knowledge and courtesy during this planning process, especially to those I met or consulted on a number of occasions. I am also especially grateful to staff that attended and participated in the consultative workshops.

The following were consulted, interviewed or met ; -

Council committees

Members of Leitrim County Council Community & Enterprise SPC
Chair and members of Leitrim County Library Advisory Committee

Council Staff

Joseph Gilhooly, Director of Services, Community & Enterprise, Leitrim County Council

Library steering group

Sean O Suilleabháin, County Librarian, Leabharlann Chontae Liatroma,
Gabrielle Flynn, Executive Librarian, Leitrim County Library
Hilda King - Ballinamore Branch
Mary Conefrey - Local Studies
Teresa Kelly - Manorhamilton Branch
Marian Mulvey - Drumshanbo Branch
Breda Sweeney - Dromahair Branch

Library staff

Mary Bohan
Theckla Carleton
Mary Corby
Helen Corcoran
Caroline Farrell
Martina Feeney
Mary Gannon
Fiona Gilroy
Deirdre Hall
Evelyn Kelly
Karen Lonican

Mary McGowan
Margaret McCabe
Anna McKiernan
Veronica McKeon
Damien McHugh
Caroline McCartin
Caroline Martin
Orla Parkinson

Stakeholders

Eithne Banks, Ballinamore Post-primary School,
Paul Kirkpatrick, Community Forum support, Leitrim County Council
Tom Lavin, Manager, County Leitrim Partnership and his staff
Norma McDermott, Director, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna, Dublin
Donal O Scollai, Adult Education Officer, Leitrim VEC
Participants in the Primary School Teachers Focus Group
Participants in the Active Aged Focus Group
Participants in the Asylum Seekers Focus Group
Transition Year Class, St. Claire's Comprehensive School, Manorhamilton

Appendix 5 Council Meeting 12th January 2009

9th January 2009

**To: Cathaoirleach and Each Council Member
Leitrim County Council**

**Re: Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998
Draft Traveller Accommodation Programme 2009 - 2013**

Dear Member

This Report has been prepared in compliance with Section 11 of the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998. Under that Section I am required to prepare a report on the submissions, which were received by the Housing Authority in relation to the draft accommodation programme during the appropriate display period.

Notice was given in accordance with Section 9 of the 1998 Act that Leitrim County Council proposes to adopt a draft Traveller Accommodation Programme for the period 2009 – 2013. A copy of that Draft Traveller Accommodation Programme was available for inspection during office hours at the Housing Office, Leitrim County Council, Aras an Chontae, Carrick-on-Shannon, at Council Offices in Ballinamore, Dromahaire and Manorhamilton and at the Branch Libraries in Ballinamore, Carrick-on-Shannon, Carrigallen, Dromahaire, Drumshanbo, Kiltyclogher, Kinlough, Manorhamilton and Mohill from Wednesday, 5th November 2008 up to and including Monday 5th January 2009. The Notice indicated that regard would be had to any submissions in writing received by Leitrim County Council within that period.

A copy of the Notice and the draft Traveller Accommodation Programme 2009 – 2013 issued to the following:-

- Mohill Traveller Development Group
- Rosebank Traveller Development Group
- Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee
- Leitrim Inter Agency Traveller Services Group
- Irish Traveller Movement
- Housing Strategic Policy Committee
- Traveller Accommodation Unit, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government
- Health Service Executive West
- County Leitrim Partnership

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- Cavan County Council
- Donegal County Council
- Longford County Council
- Roscommon County Council
- Sligo Borough Council
- Sligo County Council

One submission was received by Leitrim County Council during the appropriate display period – this submission was from Pavee Point Travellers Centre on the 18th December, 2008.

Summary of Submission Received from Pavee Point

The submission contains a “Checklist for Local Authorities on finalising Traveller Accommodation Plans 2009 – 2013” and is attached at Appendix 1.

Response

In preparing the draft Traveller Accommodation Programme 2009 – 2013, Leitrim County Council held extensive consultations with local Travellers, Traveller Representatives and Traveller Development Groups from April 2008. In addition, to ensure that a comprehensive assessment of accommodation needs was obtained, each of the County’s Traveller family units was invited to participate in the assessment process. Proposals to meet specific accommodation preferences and needs arising are included in the draft Traveller Accommodation Programme 2009 - 2013.

Leitrim County Council is satisfied that the issues and concerns highlighted by Pavee Point have been adequately addressed in the draft Traveller Accommodation Programme 2009 – 2013.

Consideration by the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee

Details of the Pavee Point submission, together with the proposed comments/response as outlined above were considered by the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee at its meeting on 8th January, 2009. The Committee unanimously endorsed the proposed response and recommended the draft of the Leitrim Traveller Accommodation Programme 2009 – 2013 to the Council for adoption, without modification.

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Recommendation

It is proposed to proceed with the draft of the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2009 – 2013 without modification or amendment. I recommend the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2009 – 2013 for adoption.

This matter will be listed on the agenda for the January 2009 meeting of Leitrim County Council.

Yours sincerely

Jackie Maguire
County Manager

Appendix 6 – Council Meeting – 12th January 2009
Report of Transportation S.P.C. Meeting held on Tuesday, 9th December 2008

Carrick on Shannon Parking Byelaws

Parking Meters are installed. Working well from operation point of view.
Feedback has been positive

Taxi Byelaws

New Taxi Bye-Laws have been introduced and working satisfactorily.

Winter Maintenance

The Winter Maintenance Programme operation was explained.
The meeting agreed that copies of the Winter Maintenance plan be circulated to all Councillors and the local Garda.
It was agreed that local plans would be put in place to deal with areas that are not on the gritting routes.

Signed: John McGuinness
Director of Services, Infrastructure

Date: 12th January 2009

Signed: Enda Stenson
Chairperson, Transportation S.P.C.

Date: 12th January 2009

**Report of Community, Cultural and Enterprise Development
Strategic Policy Committee Meeting
held on 18th December 2008**

1. Receive update on implementation of Council's Arts Plan.

The members of the SPC noted the Interim Review of the Leitrim Arts Strategy 2006 – 2010 and agreed that it be issued to interested parties in the Arts Community. A copy of the Report will also issue to all members of the Council.

2. Discuss Terms of Reference for Lough Allen Catchment Plan Implementation Group

The Terms of Reference are now prepared which provide for the following in relation to the Implementation Group:

- Total membership cannot be greater than 15.
- Core membership shall consist of relevant Local Government, Local Development, State Agencies, Business and Community & Voluntary Forum Representatives. In addition the Implementation Group can opt to include membership up to a further 30% of core members, subject to the approval of Leitrim County Council.
- The core objective of the Implementation Group is to positively support and identify opportunity to assist in the implementation of the Lough Allen Catchment Plan and to carry out actions, if desirable, relevant and in agreement with Leitrim County Council to implement the plan

The Terms of Reference were examined in detail. It was decided to adopt these on condition that a member of staff from Roscommon County Council be invited to participate, owing to the fact that part of Lough Allen adjoins the Roscommon border.

The SPC then broke up to join the Library Development Committee to discuss the Draft Library Development Plan.

Signed:

Thomas Mulligan
Cllr Thomas Mulligan
SPC Chairman.